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Guitarist opens new music school in Sudbury

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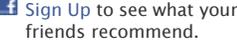
Peter Wiernik teaches a guitar lesson on Monday evening at his new business, Sudbury School of Music, located at 348 Boston Post Road.



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By **Jeff Adair/Staff Writer**
GateHouse News Service

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SUDBURY — Even though many families don't have money to pay for the "extras" in this tight economy, Peter Wiernik, who recently opened a school offering ensembles and private lessons on all instruments, including guitar, piano, saxophone, drums and voice, believes his business will see a steady stream of customers.

"Music is still very important in our lives, as it has been throughout human history," says Wiernik, 44, who has been teaching guitar in his home for more than 15 years and last week opened the Sudbury School of Music, 348 Boston Post Road. "You know Plato wrote about the importance of music and considered the study of music to be on a par with the pursuit of knowledge in any other subject."

Wiernik, a native of Columbia, Md., spent his high school years in New York City. He came to the Boston area to attend the Berklee College of Music, from which he graduated with bachelor of music degree in performance (guitar). He also holds a master of music degree in music Education from Boston University.

He and his wife, **Alison Keslow**, a bass player who performs at venues across MetroWest, have lived in Sudbury since 1999. The two are parents of two boys, Skyler, 7, who plays piano, and Dorian, 4, a drummer.

"They both play other instruments too," said Wiernik. "Of course I got them each a guitar by the time they were 1 or 2 years old."

Wiernik talked with the Town Crier about his background and the visions for his music school.

Tell us how you got your start in music?

I have been playing music all my life. My mom and my sisters all played piano, and we had a wonderful time playing and singing songs together when I was a kid. I started formal training on the violin when I was 6 years old, and continued that until I was about 13. I was very fortunate to live near an excellent violin teacher, a man named Angelo Gatto who was quite well known in the classical music world. At the same time, I was very drawn to the guitar, which I began teaching myself at age 8. When I was 12 or 13, I took guitar lessons for a few months from a guy named Bruce Casteel, who really helped me a lot.

On the Web

 [Sudbury School of Music](#)

Why did you choose guitar?

The guitar just really spoke to me. Every musician has his or her own "voice," and mine is best expressed through the guitar.

Do you still perform?

Rarely. I am very involved in teaching music at this point, and raising a family, which leaves very little time for anything else.

You studied under the legendary **Charlie Banacos**. What were those lessons like?

Amazing. I learned way more from Charlie than I ever could from any school. He taught the art of improvisation in a way that no one else could come close to. He was an amazing man who had an almost supernatural understanding of what it takes to help each individual student advance along their own path. It's hard to explain, he taught me so much about music, teaching, and life.

Tell us about your performance career?

I'm semi-retired from performing now, but a few years ago I was very active in the Boston and New England music scene. Of course I did all the wedding band stuff, and night club band stuff, but my passion has always been instrumental music. I love playing in a guitar trio (guitar, bass and drums) usually with some combination of rock, funk and jazz styles. Most of the music that I have written for my own bands is in that vein.

So your wife, **Alison Keslow**, is also a performer. What's it like playing in a band with her?

Well, Alison is very active in the live music scene these days. She performs all over the place with four or five different bands right now. Usually when I get to play with her, it's more of a recording studio thing. I'm looking forward to working with her on a couple of tracks for her new CD, which will be out in 2012. We have a lot fun doing stuff like that - she's a great bass player and a great friend.

How long have you been teaching?

I started teaching guitar lessons even before I went to Berklee, but as far as making a career of it, I've been doing that full time since I graduated in 1994. I was also a public school music teacher for a few years.

Why should a student come to your studio? Will both newcomers and experience musicians benefit from lessons?

Yes, I teach students of all ages and abilities. The advanced players usually come to me because they need help taking their skills to the next level, or because they have questions about some aspect of theory, composition or technique. Beginning and intermediate players may come because I can take them from where they are, help them build on what strengths they do have, and show them how to proceed from there. I'm generalizing of course; it's a very individual experience really. Each student has different needs and different skills, and I tailor each lesson to address those factors.

Why open a music school now?

Because our town needs one, and this is my calling in life. I get a lot of joy and fulfillment out of watching students grow through music, and the students have a lot of fun making beautiful sounds.

For more information, visit: <http://sudburyschoolofmusic.com/index.html>

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