

Voigt Music Centers

1401 W Court St., Janesville
(2 blocks west of Five Points)

756-0081

1712 Cranston Rd., Beloit
(Between Hwy 51 and Prairie Ave)

365-2276

Hours: M-F 10AM to 6PM;
Sat 10AM to 5PM; Closed Sundays
www.voigtmusic.com

Tony Farrell, Jr.
Vice President, Voigt Music Center



BizSnaps

A Snapshot look at local businesses

When was the business started? The business was started in March of 1939 by Clint Voigt in downtown Beloit as the Honolulu Conservatory of Music, specializing in Hawaiian guitar lessons. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Voigt started broadening the selection of instruments offered to include acoustic guitars, band and orchestra instruments and pianos. When the Beatles craze hit in the 1960's Mr. Voigt started offering electric guitars, amplifiers, drums, PA equipment and organs, making the store a full-line music store. In the early 1970's, my Mom & Dad, Tony and Londa, started a full-line music store in Janesville called The Bandwagon, located on East Milwaukee Street. In the mid 1970's, my parents and Mr. Voigt decided to merge the two businesses. Mr. Voigt and my Mom focused on operating the retail businesses, while my Dad focused on cultivating the school service division, specializing in serving the band and orchestral needs of area school districts, music directors, and families. In October of 2000, after devoting over 60 years of his life to the business, Mr. Voigt decided to retire and our family purchased all of his shares. After nearly 40 years in the business, my Parents are still very active in the day to day operations and are an invaluable asset, along with our 10 other dedicated employees.

Describe your products/services? Today we are a full-line music store, offering sales of band and orchestra instruments, guitars, basses, drums and percussion, amplifiers, digital pianos and keyboards, and sheet music and books, along with a wide array of musical accessories. We also offer lessons in almost every category and a repair service for just about anything in our industry. In addition, we offer a low-cost, "no-hassle" band and orchestral instrument rental plan. For as little as \$20 per month, a student can use one of our music director approved instruments with no long-term commitment. Included in the price of the rental is our 'Repair and Replacement Plan' that covers all repairs, damages, fire, theft, vandalism and even the included accessories such as mouthpieces, oils & greases, swabs, straps, rosin and orchestra instrument strings, as well as free loaners in the event of a needed repair. Our rental plan has been in continual evolution, based on input from our customers and the many music directors we work with. The latest improvement is that we will now allow our customers to apply the first two month's of rental fee paid towards the already discounted purchase of a new instrument. Along with our 12 month same- cash payment plan through American General Finance, this makes purchasing a new instrument easier and more cost-effective than ever. A large part of our commitment to service includes our school road service. Along with our hometowns of Janesville and Beloit, we have been invited to service over 20 area school districts and over 60 music directors at least once a week, or more often if needed. This service consists of providing instruments, supplies, support and a repair service to the directors, as well as taking care of any needs of our customers, right at their school. We want to be incredibly easy to do business with, and this service offers the ultimate convenience.

What do you do, product, service or philosophy, which differentiates you from your competitors? The philosophy of our business is based on three principles: quality products, fair prices, and exceptional service. We truly believe that if we put these three things above everything else, we will continue to be successful. As for products, we carry the most sought after and best names in our industry, like Getzen, Yamaha, the Conn-Selmer family of products, Gemeinhardt, Knilling, Jupiter, Peavey and Fender to name a few. Although many of these product lines are difficult to acquire, we were fortunate enough to have many of these great suppliers seek us out as their only area authorized dealer, due to our long history of applying the three principles mentioned above. Our prices have always been honest, fair and competitive at a local and national level. If a customer should find it for less somewhere else, we will do our best to meet or beat the price, while still offering our exceptional customer service, even at the cost of lost profits.

What have you learned from this business? I've learned that it takes really hard work, long hours and a commitment to customer service (and each other) to make a small, family business succeed. Just because you have a store open doesn't mean you will automatically prosper I've found that you have to keep earning the business, day after day. I've also learned that you can't do it all yourself - you have to surround yourself with employees that you can trust to give their best every day and that share the same passion for customer service as you do.

What or who has had the most influence in the way you do business? There are three people that I have to credit for influencing how we do business today. Mr. Voigt taught me the mechanics of running a successful small business; accounting, budgets, marketing, inventory planning, etc. My Parents taught me the customer service and relationships aspects of the business, which remains the cornerstone of our business today.

Do you have a favorite saying that applies to your business? A favorite tag line of ours is "Giving Tomorrow's Musicians the Right Start Today!" Although we cater to beginners, amateurs and professionals alike, it is helping beginners get successfully started in music that gives us the most joy.

What do you find most rewarding about this type of work? The most rewarding aspect of our business is seeing the difference music makes in people's lives. Even in my relatively short 15 years in the business, I have at least played some small role in helping thousands of beginning musicians either enjoy making music for fun, or even make a career out of it. I have helped a guitarist get a good instrument to start playing when he was a young teen, then helped his band get the equipment they needed to gig out during college, then eventually having the privilege of helping his thriving band program as a band director-a true story!

What type of customers uses your products/services?

Any person that wants to enhance their lives and the lives of others with the joy of making music.

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