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**BLUES ANGEL MUSIC CELEBRATES 25 YEARS IN PENSACOLA**

**PENSACOLA, FL, AUGUST 15, 2022:** Blues Angel Music was founded in August of 1997 by retired Navy Captain and fighter pilot Jim DeStafney. He and his wife Nan, a retired Navy forensics officer, own and operate the business, employing around 40 people including full-time staff, part-time staff, and contract employees.

Over the last 25 years, the two have grown the store from its one-man, 1,000 square foot beginnings into a 15,000 square foot, full-line music store, complete with a fully-staffed school of music; school band and orchestra instrument rentals; audio, video, and lighting installation service; short term PA and instrument rental; a world-class instrument repair shop; door to door piano moving service; and just about any instrument a person can think of.

The owners and employees’ desire to serve the community through music sparked the creation of the Blues Angel Music Foundation, a nonprofit entity focused on creating opportunities for and promoting music education and therapy for everyone from childhood on.

Blues Angel Music has been named a NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants) Top 100 Dealer 11 years running—one of only a small handful of businesses to do so—and has also been voted Small Business of the Year, Best of the Bay, and Best of the Coast. It is the goal of every crew member at Blues Angel Music to be the Gulf Coast’s “go-to” spot for aspiring musicians as well as gigging professionals.

**About Jim DeStafney, founder of Blues Angel Music**

Most military pilots, when they retire, become commercial pilots. Jim DeStafney, however, is not most pilots. “On my last tour of duty, I just assumed I would do what most of the guys in my position did – become a commercial airline pilot,” he said. “I didn’t relish the idea. After flying fighters, the idea was pretty boring.” A lover of music and not a fan of stagnation, Jim just wanted to move forward and do what he loved, so in 1997 he opened Blues Angel Music.

Of the journey, Jim says “My customers have become my friends, and my employees have become family.” Twenty-five years later he is still running a family business; working on guitars and talking to people – he's just got a lot more family members helping him do it.

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