



## PRESS RELEASE

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**Tryon, NC** – This is a story about the gift of giving and how one man's way of saying "thank you" may inspire others to help support one of Tryon's local treasures. This particular treasure, Tryon Arts & Crafts, is a local nonprofit organization that celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this April.

"The opportunity to give back to someone or something that has made a big impact on your life can be the beginning of something very special." According to Jay Lichty, one of the most pivotal moments in his life came in the summer of 2009. The phone rang one afternoon with the news that he had been accepted for the final spot in a guitar building workshop to be held at Tryon Arts and Crafts. This was not your typical workshop.

Lichty, who had been on the waiting list for months, was hoping for the chance to study with Wayne Henderson, a world renowned luthier and musician from the Appalachian region. Henderson's guitars are considered masterpieces throughout the world and are praised for their craftsmanship and tonal qualities. Guitar players have been known to wait over ten years to be able to obtain one of these superbly and painstakingly hand built instruments.

Henderson was scheduled to teach a ten day workshop on how to build a guitar and the class was limited to four students. For ten jam-packed days Wayne Henderson and his assistant, Don Wilson, a master guitar builder in his own right, taught the group of eager students. Through the instruction and mentorship of Henderson and Wilson, the students learned how to choose the best woods, carve the inside bracing and string their handcrafted instruments. The end result came in the form of four beautifully handcrafted guitars and four really happy guys.

Lichty, who has been a general contractor/builder for most of his life, had seen a decline in work due to the economy and was looking for other ways to use his talent. He had already caught the bug for building instruments because of his love for music. Lichty, who plays the banjo, guitar, mandolin, ukulele and bass, was working towards a new career when the Tryon Arts and Crafts workshop was announced. Having already built several ukuleles, Lichty saw the opportunity to step into guitar building under the guidance of an instructor as important as Wayne Henderson as the chance of a lifetime.

Lichty combined all that he learned in the workshop with what he had previously discovered while building ukuleles, to launch his dream job; building fine handcrafted instruments. Since then, word has spread about Lichty Guitars. He currently sells his instruments through music stores and his website, [www.lichtyguitars.com](http://www.lichtyguitars.com), but primarily through word-of-mouth, which is resulting in a steady stream of custom-orders.

As a thank you to Tryon Arts & Crafts and a way to support a fabulous resource in our community, Jay has donated an OM Acoustic Guitar for their 50th Anniversary Celebration. The

guitar, which has a retail value of \$2,000 will be one of the highlights at the Tryon Arts & Crafts auction on April 24th, 2010. The guitar will be on display in the gallery prior to the auction. Lichty would like to encourage members of the community to support this local treasure and to bid generously for items during the auction to show support for Tryon Arts & Crafts.

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*Tryon Arts and Crafts is a non-profit organization that exists to provide creative opportunities for everyone through education, instruction and expression of heritage and contemporary arts and crafts in a friendly, stimulating and enriching environment.*

*For more information about our organization, please contact the office at (828) 859.8323 or visit our website, [www.TryonArtsandCrafts.org](http://www.TryonArtsandCrafts.org).*