

WEEKENDER

NEPA'S #1 ARTS ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

Enter Keyw ords Here

SEARCH

[Home](#) // [Music](#)

Faith in himself and his music

by **Karah Jennings**
Weekender Intern

If you ask Jack Woodbridge about his story, he'll tell you that he doesn't think it's interesting. But in reality, Jack's story is not only fascinating, but it's also inspirational and one that is sure to tug on your heartstrings.

A few lucky people know what they want to be growing up, and even fewer, luckier people follow through with those dreams. As an advertising major at Penn State University, Woodbridge was lucky to take extra classes in the college's school of music.

"I really wanted to work with music," Woodbridge says. "Music was always attached in some way; I didn't want to teach, I didn't want to perform classically. ... I thought maybe I wanted to write jingles."

Woodbridge cites Darren from "Bewitched" and "Charlie from Two and Half Men" as characters with his ideal job.

"I could just imagine myself at my piano, in my beach house," Woodbridge says. "That would be so cool."

Woodbridge, a Scranton native, is now living in New York City and classifies himself as a songwriter/singer.

"I wasn't running around the circuits performing, I was a songwriter, a really good songwriter, man," Woodbridge jokes. "Out of frustration, I started to sing my own demos. And someone said to me, 'You have a really good voice, why don't you sing your own songs?'"

Since his days of songwriting, Woodbridge has found success composing. He has two off-Broadway scores, a rock opera for National Public Radio and two albums of his own, "Picture This" and the new "Jack of Hearts." He'll debut songs from "Jack of Hearts" during a performance on Saturday, June 26 at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Scranton.

After writing his first song at the age of 11, Woodbridge always knew he wanted to be a songwriter.

"I made a makeshift home studio in my mother's basement," Woodbridge says with a laugh. "Steven Spielberg used to make movies in his mother's basement; a lot of people started out in their mother's basement."

After playing with numerous bands in the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre area, Woodbridge wanted to make it big. His journey wasn't easy, and he had to take chances to truly pursue his dream.

"I was so committed and so determined, I moved to New York without a job with only the \$1,700 I made by playing piano and working."

Woodbridge's story seems almost like a movie you've seen 100 times — until he signed up for a medical study group at the National Institute of Health because of some lower back problems. This is where fate stepped in.

What the doctors discovered during Woodbridge's study was a tumor on the very bottom of his spine; it was the first tumor to ever be found in that spot.

"I asked the doctors if I could come back in three months for surgery," Woodbridge says. "And they said to me, 'No, you need to come back in 10 days, and you need to get your life in order.'"

Woodbridge stayed in the NIH for the remainder of his study, went back to New York and quickly started working.

"I kept thinking my life might be changed," Woodbridge says. "I quickly started to write songs about the experience, and I decided I would begin recording an album."

Woodbridge contacted Dean Bailin, the producer for his first CD, and told him what he wanted to do. And in the next 10 days, armed with his favorite piano and one microphone in Bailin's studio, Woodbridge recorded his second album, "Jack of Hearts."



Jack Woodbridge, Sat. June 26, 8 p.m., St. Luke's Episcopal Church (232 Wyoming Ave.). Tickets: \$20 in advance at Duffy Accessories (218 Linden St., Scranton), by calling 888.800.POCO or visiting www.PocoNotes.com or www.nepatickets.com; \$25 at door. Meet-and-greet w/ wine and refreshments following show.

MUSIC

	Recap of 2010 MTV Movie... 01:59		Crystal, Lee to compete in... 01:53
	AP Entertainment 01:09		An interview with And The... 04:50
	Only 3 remain in American Idol 01:43		From rehab to rebirth, singer... 01:59

PREVIOUS 1 NEXT

INSULATE NOW & SAVE MONEY on utility bills!

USA INSULATION
COMFORT. SAVINGS.
energy efficiency.

Click or call today!
570-961-7500

License #PA027005

OIL SPILL

National Wildlife Federation
Donate now

Punch Card
Zombies

American Airlines
American Eagle
to Chicago

Non-Stop Jet Service from
Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International

"I just said, 'Roll the tape,'" Woodbridge says. "And whatever came out, came out. I would just write these songs and then sing and play them live."

Woodbridge thought that if something were to happen to him, at least the album could be finished. He hired a photographer, and "it was like fate lined up, everything just happened."

Woodbridge headed into surgery and luckily got sent home five days later. The surgery was a success, and Woodbridge would survive. After taking a year off from songwriting, a friend encouraged him to go back to work.

"It's what I do," he says. "I think I'll always be recording and writing."

Shortly after going back to work, a dream of Woodbridge's came true. He was asked to do a song for a movie called "The Secret Friend." It was an independent, short film.

"The song came out so relevant to everything else that was going on in my life, I put it on the album," Woodbridge says. "It made sense."

After everything he's been through, Woodbridge stays optimistic.

"I've been really fortunate," he says. "No matter what happens with me, I can say I tried. I've always been that kind of person; I say hats-off to anybody. I say go for it.

"When something happens and you think it's going to be the end of your life, amazing things can happen. Some of my dreams have come true; it's not always the end of the world. If you have faith in yourself and faith in your art, don't give in, don't cave in."

w

0 COMMENTS



Karah Jennings - Weekender Intern

weekender@theweekender.com



Most viewed Music stories

1. REVIEW: Phish digs deep in Hershey
2. REVIEW: Sweet sounds of Sugarland
3. Roadside Graves grow at sustainable pace
4. Steve Kimock embraces his PA roots
5. MUSIC ON THE MENU: Memories of concerts past
6. CD REVIEW: New Porn's new poetry
7. Much more than Petty theft
8. Change they can believe in

* in past 7 days

HOME MODEL MAN BLOGS EVENTS WEEKENDER LIVE MUSIC PHOTOS EXTRA CLASSIFIEDS

ABOUT THE WEEKENDER | DISTRIBUTION SITES | ADVERTISE | CONTACT THE WEEKENDER | PRIVACY POLICY |

THE WEEKENDER, 90 E. MARKET ST., WILKES-BARRE, PA 18703 | (570).831.7375

COPYRIGHT © 2010 THE WEEKENDER. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.