

FOLK FESTIVAL: All ages and walks of life came together in Sisters

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inviting space for performers.

"I'm a huge live-music fan, and incorporating great music with our business is a dream come true for me," Aaron Okura said.

The late-night venue featured five dynamic acts during the festival.

Each year there are hundreds of dedicated volunteers that are the heartbeat of the festival. They check badges, set up and tear down, staff the tents and tables, arrange displays, support the artists and a slew of other tasks.

Sisters resident Jeanie Ogden has been volunteering as an artist liaison for three years.

"It helps me feel more

connected to the community. It's nice to be involved even if it's a small way," Ogden told *The Nugget*.

Bend musician guitarist and lead singer for The Love Puppies, David Skelton, has volunteered as the artist liaison supervisor for the past seven years.

"Sisters Folk Festival's Creative Director Brad Tisdal reached out to me years ago and we began a new process to help the artists out with their needs," Skelton said.

"Besides checking in and out of all the artists merchandise, we also handle any questions that they have, including where their lodging is. We just want to make sure that the artists don't have anything to worry about except performing. Our whole job is making their transition from driving 10 hours to get here to get on stage without a hitch. We want to give them a

soft place to land so they can focus on performing while they're here."

At 6:15 p.m. at Village Green Park on Friday, The East Pointers from Canada kicked off the festival with their high-energy traditional Celtic music with that added twist of contemporary to a packed house (*see related story, page 17*).

Folks walking dogs, strolling babies, or even folks with their entire family, made their way across Village Green Park to eat a little or sit a spell in their chair or curl up on a blanket with or without an arm-band that gets you into a venue. Even without a ticket, folks became part of the Sisters community, brought together by the event, enjoying themselves under the warm sunny skies during the day or under the starry skies at night.

Eva Sanders and her husband, Bill, from Terrebonne have been coming to the festival for 10 years and enjoy every minute of it.

"We wouldn't miss the Sisters Folk Festival for the world," Sanders said. "Each year there is something uniquely different to listen to, and you can't go wrong with Sisters as the setting."

And just because the festival was sold out didn't mean folks couldn't enjoy a little fantastic music and hear the amazing performers for free over the weekend. The Fir Street Park stage was a free venue that included Americana Project students on Saturday.



PHOTO BY JAY MATHER

Chuck Prophet rocked the tent at Melvin's last weekend.

The festival offered up a slate of workshops — informal performances with Q & A between songs.

Alasdair Fraser — known as Scotland's premier fiddler ambassador — and talented cellist Natalie Haas performed at Sisters Coffee venue, which was a workshop. Fraser, a fiddler since he was 8 years old, answered a question about the return of traditional Scottish music.

"There is a bit of a revival going on in Scotland. Musicians are looking for their true voice again, we're putting the Scottish blood back in the system now. And more and more musicians

are playing their own native music. And as we find our voice again the arts flourish."

And the folk music tradition of passing the torch from generation to generation was in full flower.

Megan Rose, a graduate of Sisters Folk Festival's Americana Project, performed for her very first time at The Open Door venue.

"I was so happy and giddy to be a part of the festival. And to everyone who has been supporting me or the past four years in the crowd made everything perfect," she said. "There were so many mentors for me in the Americana Project."



PHOTO BY JAY MATHER

Ruthie Foster made a triumphant return to the folk festival stage.

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