

Festival artist delivers soulful blues

By Ceili Cornelius
Correspondent

Ron Artis II and his band The Truth are among the headliners for this year's Sisters Folk Festival.

Artis' voice contains elements of old-style jazz, with a driving blues beat from the band behind him. He produces a smooth blues guitar sound and rich vocals.

Based out of the North Shore of Hawaii, Ron Artis II, named after his father, is the eldest son in a family of 11. Artis grew up making music with his family and played in the Ron Artis Family Band. Until 2015, the band was on the road touring around Kailua on the island of Oahu. Later, Artis and his brother Thunderstorm Artis recorded their own duo album, a collection of singer-songwriter music titled "What Music Means to Me" in 2016.

"Music for me was always a way of life. It never differed in being a career and doing it for fun," Artis told *The Nugget*.

In late 2016, Ron Artis II and The Truth was born. Every year for his birthday, friends and family from around the island would have a jam session. One year Artis wondered, "Why not do something with this?" So, The Truth was born. The band is made up of Ron Artis II, his brother Stephen Artis and bassist and family friend Riley Paakaula. Ron Artis II and The Truth started creating and producing their own blues music and touring around Hawaii.

They caught the attention of Bob Hurley of Hurley Surf. Hurley and Hurley Studios in Costa Mesa, California, funded the band to record their first full-length album. Hurley hired the engineer and gave the band the studio time and resources at Hurley

Studios.

"It was a great opportunity and the best environment to record the songs we've wanted to lay down for a while," Artis said. "We were able to capture the emotion of a live show on an album, which is often hard to do in studio. But Hurley studios was just so fun and Bob Hurley had the perfect environment for recording; we just had so much fun doing it."

"Soul Street" was released earlier this year. Many of the songs, Artis said, were actually written in the studio.

"We wanted to leave room for songs that we ended up writing in the studio with the environment we had around us in Costa Mesa," he said.

Not only did he catch the attention of Bob Hurley, but other well-known names as well, including Mick Fleetwood and Jack Johnson. Artis had the opportunity to open for Mick Fleetwood on tour with his blues band. He also worked a lot with Johnson and went on the road with him and worked with him in studio. Most recently he has worked with GI Love and Special Sauce.

After playing the Sisters Folk Festival, Artis and the band will be heading to Cape Cod to be featured as artists at Love's first annual "Roots and Blues Fest."

"I feel very grateful to work and perform with artists that I have so much respect for," said Artis.

Artis grew up listening to all types of music, so he likes to incorporate a variety of sounds in his own music. When he plays solo shows without the band attached, "the music is more singer-songwriter acoustic sounding; with the band, it is funky, dance, blues sounding," he said.

"We love making



PHOTO PROVIDED

Ron Artis II and The Truth will play at the Sisters Folk Festival on Saturday and Sunday, September 8-9.

music you can feel, and the emotions of soul come through in the sound," he said. "We try to write music that spreads a positive message, and share something that we love to create a more positive outlook on life, that's what we try to do for audiences with our music."

Artis feels lucky to be able to do music as a lifestyle and way of life.

"It doesn't necessarily feel like a job, because I am sharing something that I love to do and hopefully spread that positive message," he said.

Artis and his family and band are currently touring around Oregon, visiting Ashland and Portland before heading to Sisters.

"I look forward to hearing and meeting other artists I

wouldn't have necessarily met otherwise, that's the great thing about playing a festival meeting all the people and other artists there," he said.

His wife and baby are travelling with him and will be spending time in Sisters.

"I look forward to getting some practice time in and spending time with my family before heading to the East Coast," he said.

Ron Artis II and the Truth will be playing on Saturday and Sunday of the Sisters Folk Festival, which runs September 7-9. For information visit www.sistersfolksfestival.org.

County mulls parking ban near Smith Rock

TERREBONNE, Ore. (AP) — Deschutes County could ban parking on two roads near popular Smith Rock State Park and instead use a shuttle to transport visitors to the park from off-site parking.

The Bulletin reports that on some popular weekends in spring and summer, the park received reports of more than 200 vehicles parked on two streets.

The park features stunning rock formations and is extremely popular with rock climbers. It's required off-site parking for major events since 2016.

Smith Rock State Park Manager Scott Brown says the number of day-use and camping visitors has more than doubled in the past five years. He says that popularity has stressed the environment and degraded the visitor experience and parking issues have impacted its neighbors.

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