

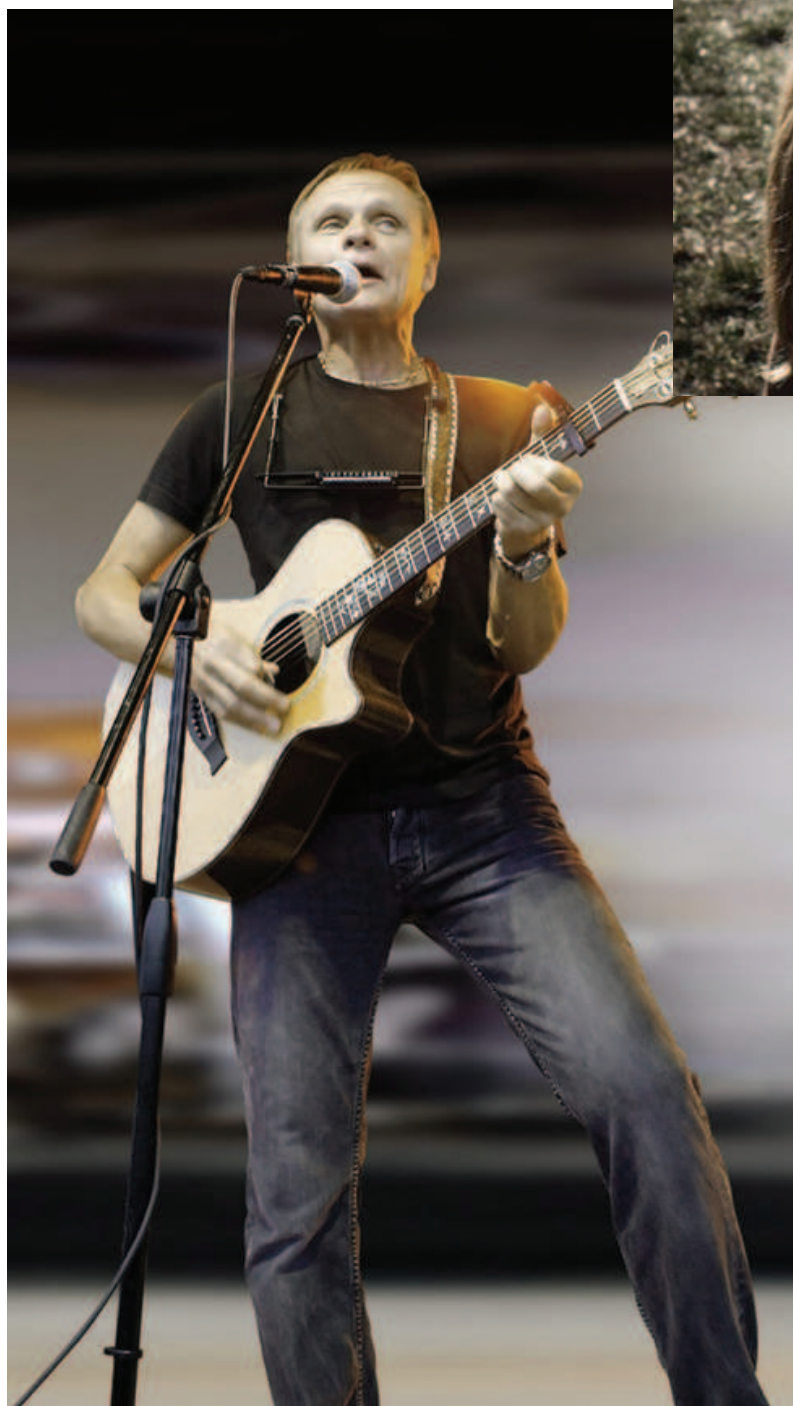
Winter means sweet music during annual two-day festival

The Winter Music Festival will feature nearly a dozen acts as well as an artisan fair

The Florence Winter Music Festival takes place Jan.16 and 17 at the Florence Events Center. Co-headliners Shook Twins and Jonathan Edwards will add depth, spice and variety to the Oregon Coast's premier winter music festival, previously known as the Winter Folk Fest.

An additional 10 musical acts, an artisan fair and food sampling broaden the festival's traditionally tasty menu.

The two-day event is an exciting and diverse bright spot in what can be a dreary time in the Pacific Northwest. It draws attendance from up and down the West Coast from among those who enjoy quality Americana, bluegrass, and contemporary folk music.



By expanding its offerings without discarding its traditional folk music past, organizers are highlighting several rising performers from the Pacific Northwest.

Identical twins Katelyn and Laurie Shook anchor their exciting Indie folk-pop band with an eclectic, amusing and whimsical approach featuring banjo, mandolin, ukulele and glockenspiel, as well as electric and acoustic bass and guitar. USA Today says the group "is ready to rattle the music world."

Jonathan Edwards, a true singer-songwriter in a league with James Taylor, Carole King and Jim Croce, marks four decades of a stellar career. He continues to tour and deliver songs of passion, insight and humor with his signature pure-and-powerful tenor voice. Edwards scored a massive Top 5 hit with the catchy and defiant protest song "Sunshine (Go Away Today)" in 1971. He followed with "Shanty," a harmonica-enriched tune with lots of bouncy, bluesy piano. His newest album, "Tomorrow's Child," features numerous Nashville luminaries like Shawn Colvin, Vince Gill, Alison Krauss and others.

Ten different local, regional, and

nationally known artists will fill the stage with a series of concerts beginning at 11 a.m. each day. These include Crow and the Canyon, Cabin Fever NW, John Craigie, Ian McFeron, True North, Bob Haworth, Danny Barnes and the popular contemporary folk music duo Pretty Gritty.

Local flavor includes Siuslaw High School graduate Billy Jones, an up-and-coming singer; and singer/songwriter Molly Hardin, who played at the Backstreet Gallery during the 2015 Rods 'n ' Rhodies event.

The festival also includes a two-day Artisan Fair with dozens of art, craft, and food vendors exhibiting and selling their wares during and between concerts. Doors open for the Artisan Fair at 10:00 a.m. Saturday and Sunday. Concerts begin at 11 a.m.

Organizers are retaining other traditional elements of the weekend including the Saturday Pie Sale (which continues Sunday or until the pies run out), but this year will see the addition of food tastings, a new caterer, and collaborative events at City Lights Cinema.

"The goal isn't to change the event as much as it is to refresh the sound and expand the appeal with more variety, all the while retaining the overall flavor a predominantly acoustic blend of Americana, bluegrass, and contemporary music," says Rachel Pearson, chairperson of the Friends of the Florence Events Center committee which raises support for the FEC and produces the event.