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# Local artists compete to attend music festival

## Bands contend for tickets to renowned Americana Music Fest, conference in Nashville

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Tallahassee bands, Phillip Solomon Stewart and the Pulse Band (above) and The New 76ers (below), are among 13 local acts competing to win tickets to the Americana Music Festival and Conference, held in Nashville, Tenn. in September. / Photos courtesy of Randi Atwood

Written by LINDSAY MARSHALL Staff Writer

Thirteen local bands are in the running to win an all-expenses-paid trip to the Americana Music Festival and Conference in Nashville, Tenn., held in in September, as part of the Americana Music Fest Contest hosted by the Council on Culture and Arts (COCA), a local agency.

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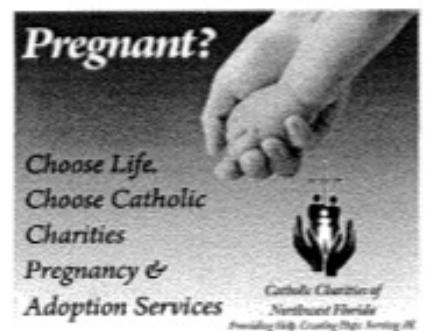
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The Americana Music Festival and Conference is a four-day festival with workshops during the day, and concerts throughout the venues in Nashville at night. There are more than 70 acts scheduled to perform at the festival. COCA's contest ended on August 17, and the winner will be chosen based on which band receives the most votes on both COCA's Facebook page and the contest's website. On Thursday, August 23, at 10:30 a.m., COCA will announce the



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winner in a press conference open to the public at its headquarters.

"Americana is an umbrella of genres," COCA spokesperson Holly Thompson said. "We have a wide variety from folks who focus on blues and classic rock, to folks who do indie country. They are all original, though, and write their own music even if they do covers in their sets as well."

The musicians participating in the contest are local and surrounding area artists. The roster includes The New 76ers, The Wallin'

Wolves, King Cotton, Philip Solomon Stewart and the Palace Band, Sarah Mac Band, The Currys, Podunk Village Turnip Truck, Roger Goram/SoulCreek, Drew Tillman Band, Wanderfoot, The Drama Kids, The Dusty Gravelers and Ric J. Edmiston.

"We invited these musicians to submit an mp3, photo, weblink and a short description," said Thompson. "Whoever gets the most votes wins the prize passes to a professional development conference, so they can get in there and make some connections and networking."

Tickets to the conference are not the only prize for the winning band. Thanks to Extended Stay Hotels and Music Lessons Express, hotel and gas money will be covered.

"At night they get to hear some great music," said Thompson. "During the day, they get to learn about promoting their music."

This is the first contest COCA is hosting, and is a perfect fit with what the agency represents—to support artists and their journeys.

COCA works diligently with local classical music artists, and is now expanding to the flourishing Americana scene. Ultimately, with their efforts, COCA is bringing Americana music to the forefront in the community.

"We are open to other ideas in hip-hop and jazz and rock," said Thompson. "Our ears are open. That's what we're here to do."

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