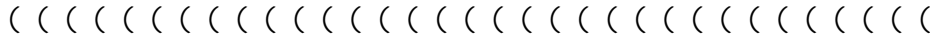




**3rd Annual Aiken and Friends Fest
Americana/Roots Music Festival
Set for October 4th!**

Paul Thorn to Join Mike Aiken as Headliner



August 29th-For Immediate Release



The stage is set for the third annual Smithfield Music's [Aiken and Friends Fest](#) scheduled for October 4th in the historic and picturesque town of Smithfield Virginia (latitude 36.984 degrees North, Longitude 076.63 degrees West). Joining festival founder as co-headliner this year is singer/songwriter **Paul Thorn**. Paul joins the ranks of past performers which include last year's artists Ray Wylie Hubbard and Danny Flowers.

Aiken dreamed up the event while sailing from Florida to Maine a few years back. "I was thinking about the music you are exposed to along the east coast while I traveled at sailboat speed, about 6 mph. The idea of holding an Americana style festival in a small waterfront town appealed to me. Coastal Southern Virginia seemed like a natural fit with its working heritage from both land and sea and melting pot of musical styles.

The event has grown each year in popularity. This year the festival includes two outdoor daytime stages featuring local, regional, national and international acts including Canadian artists Twilight Hotel and Linda McRae. The festival culminates with the evening performances by Aiken and Thorn at the intimate Smithfield Little Theatre.

The Aiken and Friends Music Fest draws thousands of folks from around the area and beyond. Proceeds benefit music education in the Isle of Wight County. More information can be found at www.aikenandfriendsfest.com



Meantime Aiken continues to make waves with his new project, ***Hula Girl Highway***, celebrating with a recent in-store record release party held last month at Birdland Music in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Aiken's tropical music is reminiscent of the young Jimmy Buffett, when the Parrothead thing was new, fresh and not yet a parody of itself. "

Mike Regenstreif -Montreal Gazette

Hula Girl Highway is a twelve track record filled with Mike's signature breezy feel good Americana, rootsy sound, sprinkled with a Caribbean flavor and his stylized musical arrangements (Mike plays most of the stringed instruments). Eight of the songs are original compositions, the rest are covers that he selected with great deliberation.

"Mike Aiken is a seafaring musical troubadour, singing of his experiences traveling around the world in his sailboat. "Hula Girl Highway" makes you feel like part of the crew!"

Paul Shugrue-WHRO-FM NPR

"Play this on a hot summer's day with a long cool drink in your hand and allow the music to take you on a musical cruise around the world."

David Knowles Maverick Magazine ****

Mike, a singer/songwriter/sailor has been able to do combine his three greatest passions in life, music, sailing and adventure, living aboard his 42 foot cutter and traveling the world making music. Besides founding The Aiken and Friends Music Fest Mike also produces the successful Aiken and Friends Cruise on the Schooner Alliance.

The first week (Feb 23-March 02 2009) is already sold out, reservations are being taken for the second. This weeklong songwriting workshop takes place on a beautiful 105 foot three masted schooner and sails through the San Blas Islands Panama in the Western Caribbean. Of course it also includes sailing, diving and unexplored beaches.

For More Information:

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