

Band hitting The Corduroy Road

By: Casey Phillips

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The Corduroy Road, a reference to logs laid over the mud suck of undeveloped byways in the early 1900s, fit the bill, Carman said. "I'm not huge on metaphors, but it seemed appropriate for us starting out, he said. "We knew it was going to be a bumpy road, but we would eventually reach our goals and get where we were aiming to go."

At the time, the band's core consisted of Carman, a banjo/harmonica player, and Solise, a guitarist/vocalist, both of whom grew up in the hills of eastern Kentucky. Shortly after the two started playing together, however, Carman moved to Athens, Ga., eventually dragging Solise along for the ride a couple of years later.

Then, the anticipated bumps came. "He (Solise) quit his job and moved, and we had to make it work from there, living in a one-bedroom apartment for a while and just making ends meet," he said. "But it's not about making money or getting rich. It's about doing what you really love to do."

Eventually, things settled down and opportunities began to open up in Athens for the two to sing their high-energy, vintage songs about mayflies in the porch light, coming home to sweethearts and stories of soot-caked coal stokers.

This year, the band will take to the road full time, expanding their touring schedule to venues throughout the region, including JJ's Bohemia, where they'll play tonight on a bill with a friend, singer/songwriter Paleface.

There are bound to be more obstacles to overcome, but with a newly beefed-up sound courtesy of two new members, drummer John Cable and bassist Tim Helms, the band's outlook is brighter than ever, Carman said. "(We) had the skeletons of these songs ... but with the drums and bass, they've added the meat to it and filled out each composition, which is just fantastic," he said. "The songs are finally turning into what Dylan and I had envisioned them to be when we wrote them."