

SPECIAL GUEST ARTIST, BANDS AND EVENT INFORMATION

Special Guest Artist:

Dave Bennett brings his musical talent and virtuosity for the very first time to Sounds of Mardi Gras. He will perform with **Groovus, Tom Rigney and Flambeau and Bob Schulz Frisco Jazz Band**. You do not want to miss one of the most talented and popular musicians on the festival circuit.

Special Sets:

Be sure to catch some of the special sets we have this year. **Dave Bennett** will perform three special sets including a **Benny Goodman set**, a **Gospel set** and his ever-popular **Jerry Lee Lewis Rock and Roll set**. **Carl Sonny Leyland** will perform a **Boogie Woogie set** with his **Boogie Woogie Boys**. **Gino and the Lone Gunmen** will be joined by **Carl Sonny Leyland** for a **Blues set** and a **Rockabilly set**.

New Bands:

This year we add a Bay Area favorite to our lineup, **Okie Weiss & The Zydeco Playboys**. Okie and his group will keep the dance floor moving with high-energy Zydeco and Americana music. The **Riverboat Rustlers** is a new youth band from Clovis which will be performing at our festival for the very first time. Don't miss your opportunity to see these new bands.

Returning Bands:

Returning favorites include **Alpha Rhythm Kings, Bob Schulz Frisco Jazz Band, Cheryl's Vintage Jazz Band, Dave Stuckey and The Hot House Gang, Gino and the Lone Gunmen, Groovus, Holland & Coots Jazz Quintet, San Lyon, Southern Comfort, Tom Rigney and Flambeau and We3 + 2** with the addition of another band member this year. Our returning Youth Bands are **Reedley River Rats** and **The New Traditionalists (TNT)** sponsored by the **Sacramento Jazz Education Foundation**.

Parades:

The **FRI Parasol and Pom-Pom Parade** theme is "Let the Good Times Roll". Join in and transport yourself to New Orleans participating in a vibrant street parade celebrating good times with music and friends. Bring your own decorated parasol or borrow one of our umbrellas or pom-poms so that you can enjoy the fun parading through the music venues.

The **FRI "Shiver Me Timbers" Parade** is a **Pirate-Themed Parade**. Join the party

dressed to sail the seven seas in your pirate gear or just enjoy the spoils of the adventures of the other partygoers. Either way, come and enjoy yer grog and chew the fat with yer mates! Have a grand time, me hearties! Yo-ho-ho!

The SAT “**Puttin’ on the Ritz**” Parade is your chance to step back into the dazzling era of the Roaring Twenties. The elegance of a beaded flapper dress and a tux with top hat always take us back to those storied days of glamour and exuberant optimism. This year, dress to the nines and enjoy both the parade and the Valentine’s Day Dance.

The SAT **Masquerade and Costume Parade** is the **Grand Finale** of our Festival Parades. Explore your creativity and go all out for this one! The theme is about having fun, and life is definitely more fun in a costume. This parade is your opportunity to cut loose and celebrate Mardi Gras NOLA-style without leaving California.

Dance Parties:

The **FRI Night Swing Dance** and **SAT Mardi Gras Party** are themed sets for listening and dancing. On **FRI** you will want to stay to the very end to party with the **Alpha Rhythm Kings**. On **SAT** you will not want to miss a the **Mardi Gras Style** celebration with **Zydeco, Swing and Rockabilly**, nor the SAT afternoon, **Valentine’s Day Dance** with special sets by **We3 +2** and **San Lyon**.

Room Reservations

2026 SOMG Double Tree Reservations are currently sold out. Linda recommends to check [2026 DoubleTree Online Reservations](#) every couple of days to see if there are any openings.

The newly remodeled [SureStay by Best Western](#) is across the street from the Convention Center parking structure and the DoubleTree parking lot. This is a reasonably priced and convenient alternative. Free breakfast is included.

Lastly, attendees can choose to stay at the recently remodeled [La Quinta](#). This is also a reasonably priced alternative that is just a short Festival Shuttle ride away from all the fun. This hotel also includes free breakfast.

Badge Sales, Band Links, Band Schedule

Sounds of Mardi Gras 2026 Online Badge sales are still available but a credit card is required. If you prefer to avoid the 4% convenience fee, you can print out an order form and send a check. The deadline to receive checks for badge sales is Jan 31, 2026, so please make sure to mail your checks ASAP. Of course, you can always buy your badge or wrist bands and even make a sponsorship donation at the festival.

The web page with the [2026 Invited Bands and Jammers Link](#) to band music and

videos is now available.

The [2026 Band Schedule](#) has also been published on the web. The schedule is subject to change but changes to the schedule will be uploaded to the website and an email will go out to everyone. You can also link to the schedule on your smart phone by going to our home page at www.fresnodixie.com. Thank you for your support. We look forward to seeing everyone very soon.