

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 be a guest artist 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:

Dave Bennett will perform three special sets which include a **Benny Goodman Set**, a **Gospel Set** and his ever popular **Jerry Lee Lewis Rock and Roll Set**. **Carl Sonny Leyland** will perform a special **Boogie Woogie Set** joined by 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** will keep the dance floor packed with high-energy Zydeco and Americana with a rhythm you can't sit still to. The **Riverboat Rustlers** is a new and local youth band from Clovis which will be performing at our festival for the very first time.

Returning Bands:

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**. Our returning Youth Bands are **Reedley River Rats** and **TNT (The New Traditionalists)** 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 imagine yourself in New Orleans participating in a vibrant street parade celebrating with music and friends. Pick up a parasol or bring your own and if you have neither, then, pick up a pom-pom so you too can enjoy the fun as you parade through the music venues.

The **FRI “Shiver Me Timbers” Parade** is a **Pirate Themed Parade** for which you are encouraged to dress up in anything pirate. Join the party dressed to sail the seven seas or just party and enjoy the spoils of your adventures.

The **SAT “Puttin’ on the Ritz” Parade** is a throwback to the age of the Flapper and Dandy. The elegance of a flapper dress and a tux with top hat are always a sight that immediately takes us back to the 1920’s. This year, dress up and enjoy both the parade and a Valentine’s Day Dance.

The **SAT Masquerade and Costume Parade** is the **Grand Finale of our Festival Parades**. Every year we see the most amazing costumes. The theme is just about having fun. Living life is always more fun in a costume. This parade is the closest we come to celebrating Mardi Gras in NOLA. Just enjoy and have fun.

Dance Parties:

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 with the **Alpha Rhythm Kings**. On SAT you will not want to miss a **Mardi Gras Style** celebration with **Zydeco, Swing and Rockabilly**. SAT afternoon, spend it at the **Valentine’s Day Dance** with someone special or just friends 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 definite alternative which is very reasonably prized.

Last, we have had attendees stay at [La Quinta](#) which was also completely remodeled. This is also a reasonably prized alternative just a short Festival Shuttle ride away from all the fun. Both the SureStay and La Quinta have a free breakfast.

Badge Sales, Band Links, Band Schedule, Dance Lessons

Sounds of Mardi Gras 2026 Online Badge sales are still available but requires a credit card. If you prefer to avoid the 4% convenience fee, you can printout an order form and send a check. Of course, you can buy your badge or wrist bands and even make a sponsorship donation at the festival.

The web page with band links to videos of invited bands are now available. You can find links on our home page at www.fresnodixie.com.

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.

Dance Lessons will once again be offered. Look for the times and rooms in the Band Schedule. Fri evening, **Alfredo** will teach a beginning **Country Two Step** so you can begin to dance and enjoy the **Classic Country Music of Southern Comfort**. Fri morning Alfredo returns with a beginning **Classic One Step** perfect for anyone who does not think they can dance but knows how to walk. **Alfredo** will then teach a beginning **Zydeco Two Step** so you can get on the dance floor to the music of **Tom Rigney and Flambeau** as well as **Okie Weiss and the Zydecon Playboys**. By popular request and great reviews, **Bob and Dawn** return to teach **Savoy Style Swing** on both Fri and Sat mornings. We are happy to also have our very own local and popular Dance Instructors, **Chris and Veronica** teaching Balboa on Sat morning. Last of all, **Twin Carol** assisted by **Twin Mary** bring their enthusiasm and charisma to teach on both Fri and Sat mornings. Dance lessons are a great way of meeting and making new friends but also gives you a chance to find new dance partners. **Don't just tap your feet, get up and try out some new steps.**