

Volume 55 Edition 7

July 2026 Submit

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By the 15th of each month



A Non-Profit Corporation for Traditional Arts

Notes from Board President, Ron Bohigian

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Concert-goers were treated to another fine performance by **Laurie Lewis and Nina Gerber** at the Wolk Garden on Sunday, June 7th. I regrettingly missed the event as I recover from an ear infection (thank you wonderful grandchild...I'll not mention his name to protect the otherwise innocent). But to be fair, viruses are always swirling about and we're all potential vectors. .

Megan and I got to play for students at Powers-Ginsburg a couple weeks back. As usual the kids were great. Next day we got a "thank you" from their teacher including the following excerpts from students' responses:

"This is my best day ever." —Antonio V.

"I love to hear the music. It makes me want to dance." —Adrian B.

After we played our set, their teacher had her students play us a tune on their recorders. The class was led by a boy sitting up front. He was the wiggly one with an obviously active mind and body. We, both having been teachers, recognized this from the start. It was all good.

We often get a warm laugh when we ask students about their experiences with music. In one third grade class, when we asked if anyone is learning music, a boy (eight years old, mind you) raised his hand and said, "I use to play the guitar..."

Congrats to **Erika Leonard** for organizing a start-up group of budding musicians. Find her write-up in this newsletter and her invitation to join them.

Thanks to each of you for helping to make our FFS a success

The Fresno Folklore Society "Flyer" is a monthly publication.

FFS P.O. Box 4617 Fresno, CA 93744

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My Bluegrass Odyssey Part 3

By Dick Estel

I was absolutely convinced that I attended every Parkfield festival from 2001 through 2019 except 2007. However, I can find no record of the 2002 event, not in my journal, not in my on-line travel blog, and no photos. I don't have a program for that year.

There's no doubt that a festival was held that year. An on-line search produced an article from the Monterey County Newsletter, dated May 9, 2002, with quotes from the promoter and the band line-up. Most of the band names were familiar to me, but this does not prove anything – many of the same acts returned year after year.

The first few Parkfield events were promoted by Pat and Rosie Conway, who I believe hailed from Porterville. They dubbed those early events the Camp Rude Festival, and the article mentions the Camp Rude motto: Less rules, more fun. Pat went on to say, "The main festivals you go to are over-managed, micromanaged to the point it's no fun."

Unspoken was the rumor, confirmed by some fairly reliable sources, that the Conway's were kicked out of the Father's Day Festival in Grass Valley, sponsored by the California Bluegrass Association (CBA). I have never attended that event, but information about it in the CBA newsletter, Bluegrass Breakdown, makes it clear that there are certainly plenty of rules.

With or without Parkfield, I was not deprived of bluegrass music in 2002. The previous year I had made the acquaintance of Ivan Rosenberg, a highly skilled resonator guitar (Dobro) player whose band was based out of Montana. I asked him if there were any festivals in that state in July. I was planning a trip to Ohio, where I would spend nearly a month at an RV park in Fulton County, where my parents were from, and where they were spending the summer. On the way back I would be taking US Highway 2 along the northern edge of the US.

He told me that there was bluegrass every Tuesday night at the Top Hat Bar in Missoula. Heading home from Ohio in 2002, I was able to make that fit my schedule, going south from US 2 on US 93 and setting up for two nights in a nice RV park about ten miles from town.

The evening was interesting and enjoyable. The Top Hat seemed like a typical Montana dive (don't think moose heads and cowboy hats, but mostly young people in shorts and T-shirts, lots of beer signs on the wall, smoke, talking, and four pool tables constantly busy).

The jam session prior to the "official" band was actually more enjoyable than the scheduled group, which had a LOUD sound system, plus lots of patrons talking over the music. Ivan said he had told a lot of people about Tuesdays at the Top Hat, but I was the first to actually show up. He played with a changing group of about ten people. As always at jam sessions, there were people there who had never been there before, including a young couple from Portland who did a great version of the Hazel Dickens classic, *My Better Years*. And as usual, throughout the jam everyone jumped in and played like they had rehearsed for hours. I returned to my trailer, ready to move on the next day and well satisfied with my side trip to Missoula.

On the way home I visited Glacier and Crater Lake National Parks, and did some other stuff, none of it related to bluegrass.

Back home after my two-month trip, there was an event much closer to home – the Hobbs Grove Festival in the country near Sanger, a small town a few miles southeast of Fresno. (In some years it was known as the Kings River festival.)

Hobbs Grove was best known as a Halloween venue, but it had also become the location for a small festival featuring mostly local bands. It drifted back and forth between the two names, but for convenience I'll refer to it as Hobbs Grove for all nine years I attended.

My first time there was in 2001, but the only information I have to document that is a sentence from my journal about the 2002 event, a reference to "the outstanding singer from last year." If our ancestors and predecessors were as bad as I sometimes am at keeping records, it's no wonder there are disagreements over the accuracy of historical accounts.

On Friday, September 13, 2002, younger grandson Mikie and I went out in the trailer, and had pizza for dinner. The area where people could park was about two or three acres of grass, so Mikie could run around to his heart's content, hunting for bugs, often a favorite activity for five-year old boys.

The next day the festival started at 10 a.m. Mikie continued his bug hunt in the area away from the spectators. Through the day, he started playing with various kids. At the peak there was a group of at least ten, from age 3 to about 12. He did not even want to stop for lunch, and cried when we left for the trailer at 9 p.m., having had only 11 hours of playtime.

Daughter Teri, her husband Tim, and his parents, Marge and Rocky joined us later that day, but only Teri stayed overnight.

The festival was advertised as Bluegrass and Country, with "country" in small letters, but it should probably have been reversed. In my view, the three essential bluegrass instruments are banjo, mandolin and fiddle, and electric guitar is rarely acceptable. Groups can sound fine with only two of the essentials, but that's probably a minimum. Nearly half the groups had electric guitar, and played music that was more country than bluegrass. That said, at least it was older honky tonk style. Not one group had all three "essential instruments," and few had even two. Most of the groups that were all acoustic played music that leaned toward Irish or old-time rather than bluegrass. There were only two groups that I would consider true bluegrass.

One of the best groups was A Full Deck, which had a hot fiddler and an electric guitar that fit in with what they were doing. In another group, the outstanding singer from the previous year, Dee Richter, sang even more songs this year, and when not singing, played old-time fiddle tunes. But their group had an electric guitar that did not fit well.

The other group I enjoyed a lot was Kenny Hall and the Long Haul String Band. Kenny was well-known to readers of this newsletter, had been active in this area for over 30 years and was known throughout the US among old-time musicians and fans. Their music was definitely Irish and old-time, patterned on Gid Tanner and the Skillet Lickers. Kenny played mandolin (not the bluegrass style instrument) and fiddle, but I liked it better when he played mandolin.

I see that I have reached my preferred word count, and to stay on the editor's good side, I will end this here and cover the rest of 2002 in the next installment.



Dee Richter



Ivan Rosenberg
at Parkfield

Bluegrass in the Park continues on June 26th with three outstanding bluegrass bands: The **Kings River Boys** (June 26th), **The Element** (July 3rd) and **Silver City**, back to Clovis from the Mother Lode on July 10th. All concerts start at 6:30 in the Veteran's Memorial Park (Liberty Park) 901 Fifth Street Clovis. Bands are only paid through the generosity of audience tips so please bring some cash, along with your picnic dinner. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed in the park
(Karana Hattersley-Drayton, Director Bluegrass in the Park).



Kings River Boys



The Element



Silver City



Bluegrass In The Park Schedule for 2026



Music from 6:30 p.m. until dusk at 901 Fifth St, Clovis in Liberty Park, just east of Old Town and the Veterans Memorial Building, in front of the Law School
Bring a chair or blanket, a picnic supper, your family and friends and be ready for a good time!
Bluegrass in the Park is sponsored by the California Bluegrass Association. Like us on Facebook!

Date	Band Name and Musicians
June 26th	The Kings River Boys Jack Kinney (banjo), Henry Warde (guitar), Ella Warde (fiddle), Henry Johns (dobro), John Cogdil (bass)
July 3rd	The Element Doug Carlton (dobro/harmony vocals), Steve Hal (banjo), Jonathan Hall (bass) Michael McDonald (guitar/vocals) Bob Garcia (mando).
July 10th	Silver City Leta Simons (guitar/vocals), Dan Pollak (bass/vocals), Dave Corina (mandolin) Giorgi Khokhobashvili (fiddle).
AUGUST-SEPTEMBER (Concerts start at 6 pm)	
August 28th	Pipe on the Hob (Celtic) Donn Beedle (fiddle/viola/mandolin), Karana Hattersley-Drayton (vocals/keyboard/bodhran), Carl Johnsen (hammer dulcimer/penny whistle), Kathryn Johnsen (Celtic harp/keyboard).
September 4th	Uncle Ephus Ron Zastovnik (mandolin), Jean Kilpatrick (fiddle), Doug Cornelius (vocals/percussion), Steve Barnett (vocals/guitar), Linda Dryden (vocals/autoharp), Barbara LaRae (banjo/dobro/harmonica/guitar/vocals), Edwin Hawke (bass).
September 11th	Sugar Pine Chuck Thrapp (guitar/vocals), Dave Novell (guitar/vocals), Robyn Flory (vocals), Jeff Gurule (banjo/vocals), Ron "Beamm" Murray (Ubase /vocals).
September 18th	Tall Can Koozi Adam Johnson (guitar/vocals) Dalisay Johnson (fiddle/vocals), Dan Kehler (bass/vocals).
September 25th	Ripe for Pickin' Donn Beedle (fiddle/viola/mandolin/vocals), Kevin Campbell (vocals/guitar), Pat Kemble (dobro), Tom Naiman (banjo/vocals), John Mooneyham (bass).

Dailey & Vincent

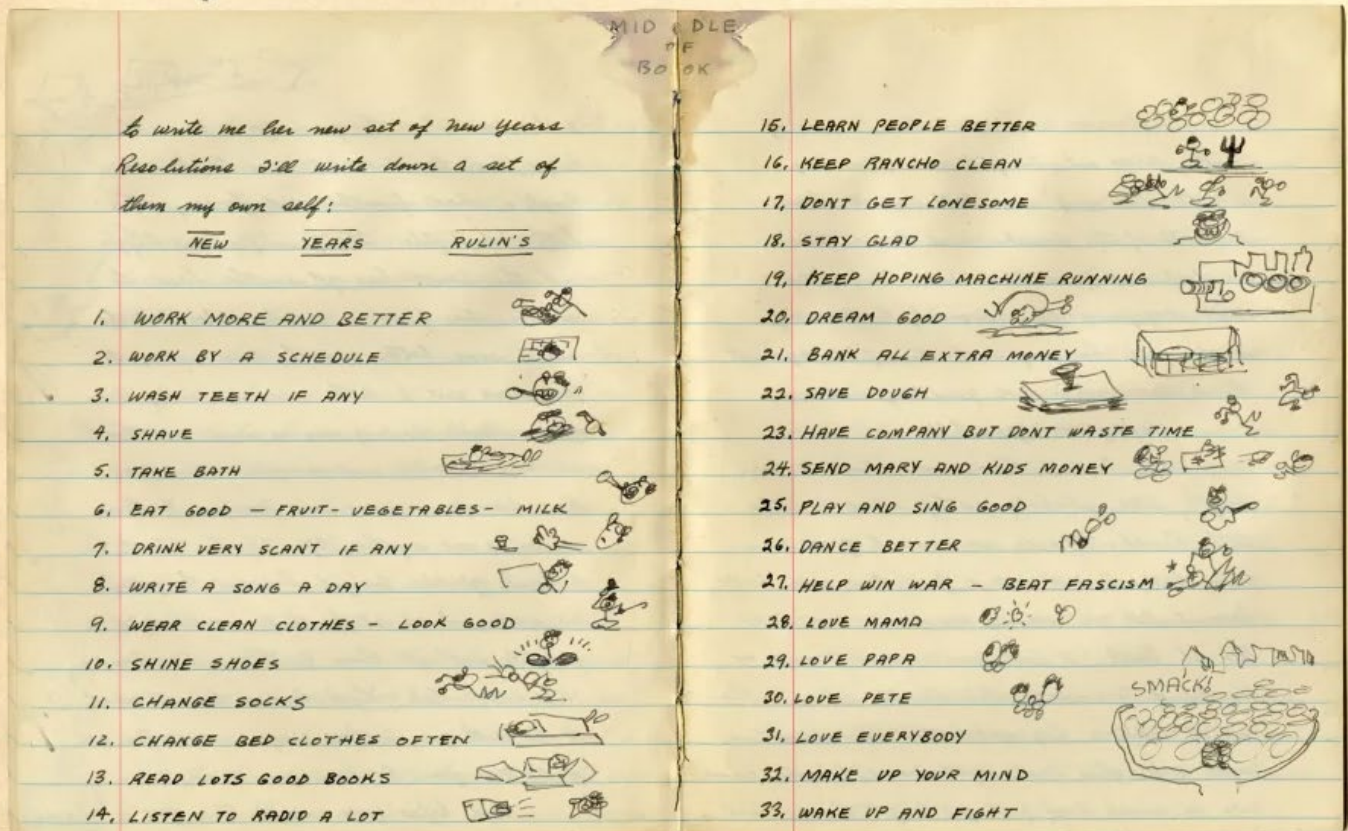
Friday, July 31, 2026 Tower Theatre, Fresno Doors 7:30 PM · Show 8:30 PM

Few acts in American roots music can match the vocal chemistry of Jamie Dailey and Darrin Vincent. Grand Ole Opry members and three-time Grammy nominees, Dailey & Vincent have spent nearly two decades proving that bluegrass, country, and gospel are strongest when they're woven together — and their live show is where that all comes alive. With virtuosic musicianship, deep harmonies, and a genuine warmth that fills any room, this is an evening of American music at its finest.

Tickets on sale now at fresnotowertheatre.com



Woody Guthrie New Years Rulin's



Woody Guthrie moved to 74 Charles Street in Greenwich Village, New York in December, 1942. He wrote this list of Rulins in the center-fold of his journal on New Years Day, 1943. This little gem provides insight into his daily concerns at the time, the big and the small ones.

Poster Design by Steven Brower

SOME JUNE DOINGS

What a great concert from Laurie Lewis and Nine Gerber. Such musicianship. There was a good crowd for the Wolk Folk Garden on June 7th. The weather cooperated as well (hot spell waited a few days). We are so lucky to have these ladies living in California. They performed music from various cds and had them for sale as well. Laurie's vinyl album, "Trees", was available and she gave us some tips on what to do with it if you had no turntable. The last time they were here, the power cut out part-way through and, while the "engineers" were trying to get it back on, Laurie and Nina came down through the crowd and serenaded us "troubadour style." On Thursday, June 11, Respite By The River was at the River Center, in front of the Hallowell House. Jeff Bowman and his steel drums provided the music portion with Raymond Gonzales and Robin Seaberg to back him up. Talia Lakshmi Kolluri read a short story from her collection **"What We Fed to the Manticore"**. It was a story about a pigeon from the pigeon's point of view. Unfortunately, the power stopped part-way through the story, and she had to go on in as loud a voice as she could muster, while being interrupted by the large bullfrog that lives in the pond there as well as an occasional car zooming past on the adjacent road. Worth the time to go? Yes. The next Respite By The River will be in August. On Sunday, June 14, Pat Wolk celebrated her 92 and ½ birthday at her home with a potluck, swimming, and a "bunch" of musicians that were on hand to play and sing for Pat. Much dancing and laughter. Still ahead of us this month is Bluegrass in the Park on Friday, June 26, at Liberty Park in Clovis (next to the Veterans' Memorial Building). The featured band will be The Kings River Boys (Jack Kinney, Henry Warde, Ella Warde, Henry Johns, and John Cogdil. I am looking forward to it and hope the weather doesn't let us down.

(Sue Wirt)



Check the 2026 schedule for Respite by the River at

<https://riverparkway.org/activities/respite-by-the-river/>

Music 6-7 PM Reading 7-8 PM 11605 Old Friant Road, Fresno, CA 93730



Steven Sanchez

On August 13 Steven Sanchez, whose debut book, *Phantom Tongue* (Sundress Publications), was chosen by Mark Doty for the Rochelle Ratner Memorial Award. He is a CantoMundo Fellow, a Lambda Literary Fellow, and the inaugural winner of the Federico Garcia Lorca Poetry Prize for an emerging Latinx poet. He lives in Fresno, California, where he completed his MFA in Creative Writing at California State University, Fresno **Tip Jar** is a local band just having fun while entertaining you with a mixture of blues, pop, rock, and original tunes.



Tip Jar

DUES ARE DUE AGAIN

Just when you thought it was safe, here come the dreaded deadlines for dues renewal. The due date for annual membership renewal for Fresno Folklore Society is July 1. There is usually an article in the June newsletter, but, alas, I forgot to put it in there. So here it is, the REMINDER. Ours is an all-volunteer organization and the dues are used to pay for newsletters, cost of website, insurance for events, tickets, advertising, cost of maintaining access to on-line tickets, post office box rental, etc. Your money is used wisely and carefully managed. Attention would be appreciated. If you are new to the Society and joined after March 31, you are good for another year. If not, please remit your dues through website: fresnofolklore.net or by mail to Fresno Folklore Society, P. O. Box 4617, Fresno CA, 93744. (Sue Wirt)

At the California Autoharp Gathering in May, guitarist Kenny Sultan handed his guitar to his blues harpist partner Tom Ball, who played a beautiful piece from the repertoire of Bahamian guitarist Joseph Spence. In my book [Wind Blowing Across a Field](#), I interviewed musician Jody Stecher who had visited Spence in Nassau, and recorded him for the record *The Real Bahamas*. Jody was very inspired by the man. Here is a little of the interview.

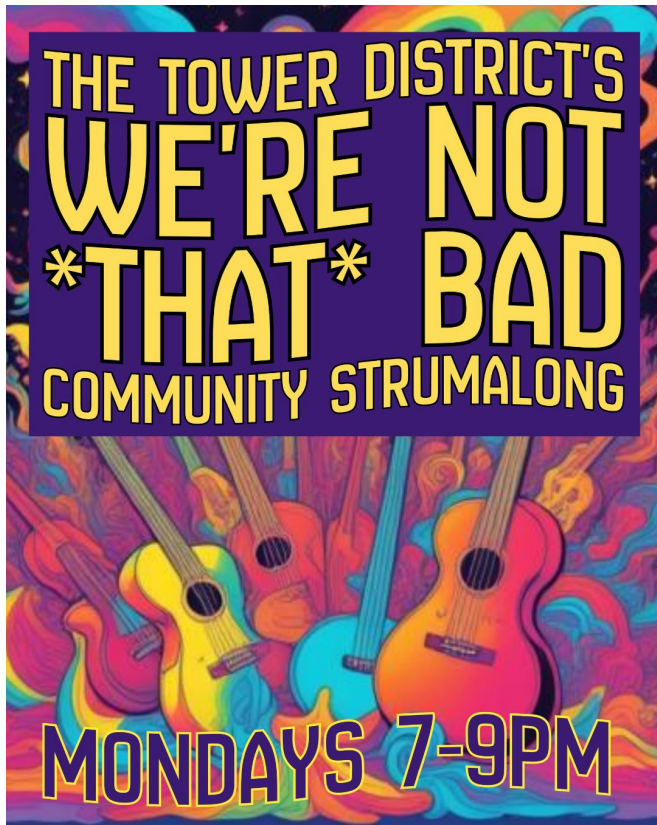
(Evo Bluestein)

He seemed to be expecting us. I'll never forget the first words he said to us, 'You like banana?' He gave us great bananas from his tree in the back yard. It was a house he built as a stonemason. His wife, Louise, had just made fresh conch fritters. She was from Cat Island, and he was from Andros. He had some shape note hymnals, printed by James Vaughan, in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. 'These books mon, they have a lot of funny songs.' I learned later that 'funny songs' meant 'fun to sing.'

I never tried to imitate Spence; it's beyond my ability. Nobody played like him. Later, I figured out how he did certain things, but the inspiration wasn't to sound like him, but to sound like me—Spence inspired me to be *me*.

Where he lived, there were burial societies. You contributed a few dollars every year and you'd have a decent sendoff with flowers and singers at your funeral. There was a repertoire that included *Bid You Goodnight*. Spence's music was very polyrhythmic, sung to those rhythms and some of the harmonies. With Spence's rhythmic grunting vocals, thumb bass, and fingers on the treble strings, he had this polyphonic, polyrhythmic music. Rhythmically it was African; harmonically it was European hymns. He had the rhythmic phrasing sense of a jazz musician, but not the harmonic sense. Harmonically it was old-fashioned church music.





We're pleased to announce the successful launch of the Tower District's

'We're Not THAT Bad' Community Strum-Along!

Playing together **Mondays, 7-9pm**, we are beginning musicians coming together to have fun learning to make music together. All beginning musicians are welcome - as well as all experienced musicians who are HAPPY to play with beginners and understand that our focus is to support a successful, positive, joyful experience for beginners.

We started with a bang on June 1, with quite a few skilled players showing up to support our launch. One drove from Modesto just to help support the launch and left with the idea of starting a similar group in Modesto.

The following sessions have brought together a core group of beginner to intermediate players working together to figure out a system, rhythm, and pace that helps everyone have fun learning and playing together.

So that anyone can look at and practice the songs we play in advance, if they wish, and so that we can literally be on the

same page, we're using the *Rivertunes Jammies Songbook*, downloadable free at rivertunes.net.

The songs we focus on depend on which Monday of the month it is and where the songs are alphabetically in the *Jammies Songbook*: first Monday, songs with titles starting with letters A-F; second, G-L; third, M-R; fourth, S-Y, and fifth will be the full book.

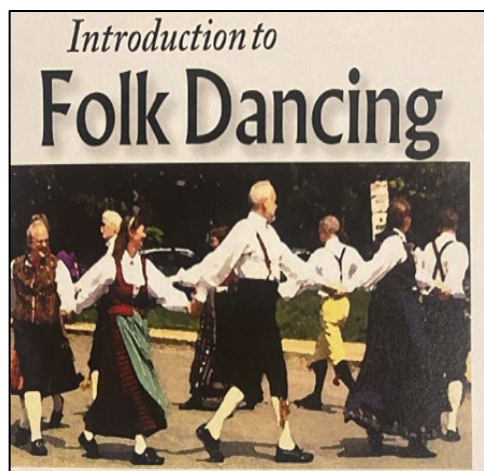
We start by choosing the songs within that week's section that those in the room want to play. If there's one none of us want to play, we skip it. We also go back and revisit ones we want to play again from previous sections. We show a PDF of the song on a big TV and have multiple music stands with binders so everyone can see the lyrics and chords follow along. There's no need to know how to read music - the songs are lyrics with chords, and we play it in the key given on the PDF rather than changing it.

After we pick a song, we find and play a version on YouTube or Spotify so we can hear the melody. While it's playing, each person figures out their chords, which might mean choosing just one or two and focus on doing them really well at the right time.



Our playing space, which we're calling "Casa Nieves", is Ruben Nieves' living room **at 635 East Floradora**. Ruben and his partner, Erika, are the two who launched and host the strum-along.

Please contact Erika at eileonard@me.com or at **510-334-2242** if you have any questions. We'd be happy to have you play with us if this sounds like a fun way to spend a Monday evening. And, please spread the word to others you believe might enjoy it! **(Erika Leonard)**



Mondays 6pm	<i>Have some fun</i> learning the basics of Folk Dancing. Classes include dance instruction and practice. Come with or without a partner. Newcomers of all ages are welcome!
	Classes are led by members of the Fresno Scandinavian & Nordic Folk Dancers and the Fresno International Folk Dancers.
July 13 & 27 August 10 & 24	Woodward Park Regional Library 944 E. Perrin Ave. 600.3135



JULY 2026 EVENTS

Every Wednesday: Kenny Hall Jam @ Santa Fe Basque Restaurant, 5-7 PM FREE

Every Sunday: Turf in the Bog @ Yosemite Wine Tails, 40409 Hwy 41, Oakhurst, 1-5 PM, Irish flute & bodhran

Second Sunday monthly: Irish Jam @ La Boulangerie in Fig Garden Village, 1-3 PM FREE

Every Monday: We're Not That Bad Community Strum Along @ 635 E Floradora, 7-9 PM FREE

Every Monday: HonkyTonk Jam hosted by Marc Poschman and Miss Mikal Sandoval @ Santa Fe Basque Restaurant 5-7 PM south patio (Maroa and Simpson). Bring your instruments and play along. FREE

Second Saturday monthly: Old Time Fiddlers and Music Jam @ Santa Fe Basque 2:00- 4:00 PM (Maroa and Simpson). FREE

Every second and last Monday monthly: Tower District Bluegrass Jam @ Goldstein's, 1279 N Wishon 6-8 PM

EVENTS

Fri June 26: Bluegrass In The Park, King's River Boys @ Liberty Park, Clovis 6:30-8:30 PM (see article)

Fri July 3: Bluegrass In The Park, The Element @ Liberty park, Clovis 6:30-8:30 PM (see article)

Fri July 10: Bluegrass In The Park, Silver City @ Liberty Park, Clovis 6:30-8:30 PM (see article)

Mon July 13: Folk Dancing @ Woodward Park Library, 6 PM (see notice)

Mon July 27: Folk Dancing @ Woodward Park Library, 6 PM (see notice)

Fri July 31: Dailey & Vincent A Beautiful Life Tour @ Tower Theatre 7:30 PM (see article)

FUTURE EVENTS

Fri Aug 28: Bluegrass In The Park, Pipe On The Hob @ Liberty Park, Clovis 6:30-8:30 PM (see article)

Fri Sept 4: Bluegrass In The Park, Uncle Ephus @ Liberty Park, Clovis 6:30-8:30 PM (see article)

Fri Sept 11: Bluegrass In The Park, Sugar Pine @ Liberty Park, Clovis 6:30-8:30 PM (see article)

Fri Sept 18: Bluegrass In The Park, Tall Can Koozi @ Liberty Park, Clovis 6:30-8:30 PM (see article)

Fri Sept 25: Bluegrass In The Park, Ripe For Pickin' @ Liberty Park, Clovis 6:30-8:30 PM (see article)

Grateful for Your Support of Our Fresno Folklore Society

A HUGE THANK YOU to all of our paid members below. Your dues promote music in our community. Folklore Society membership runs from July 1 to the end of June. You can mail us a check or pay through PayPal on our website at fresnofolklore.net.

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Allan Fifield	Don Lange Family	Juliene Mason	Mike & Mary Neidhamer Smith
Allen Lintvedt	Don Loweburg	Jon Adams	Miles & Marilyn Ross
Allen & Erin Smith	Donna Naffziger	Judy Bezzerides	Mona Faulkner
Andrea DeZubiria	Dvera saxton	Judy Nibler	Nancy Griggs Family
Andrew Hagopian	Dwight & Shari Wilcox	Julie Cline	Nancy Hatcher
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			William Gray Family
			Ximena & George Schimpf
			Zana Frownfelter



A Non-Profit Corporation for Traditional Arts

Would you like to become a member of the Fresno Folklore Society?

The Fresno Folklore Society (FFS) is a non-profit community-based organization. It sponsors traditional music, dancing, and other traditional art forms. FFS hosts potlucks and jam sessions; it encourages and promotes new musicians through classes, recording opportunities and other support. FFS members share visions and concerns for a peaceful and just world and actively support efforts to create an eco-friendly environment.

Membership Levels: \$25.00 individual; \$35.00 family; \$50.00 corporate sponsor

Membership information: 559-222-9801

NEW MEMBER? Yes ☐ No ☐ RENEWING? Yes ☐ No ☐ RENEWING AFTER LAPSE? Yes ☐ No ☐

Number of family Members: _____ The monthly copy of the Society Flyer is delivered by email to the address below.

Membership payments are Due July 1st each year

Current e-mail address: _____ Phone: _____

Name(s): _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Individual: _____ Family: _____ Corporate Sponsor: _____ Affiliated member: _____

Are you willing to provide volunteer help with Fresno Folklore Society events? Yes ☐ No ☐

What are your special folklore interests? _____

For more information visit our website at www.fresnofolklore.net

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