

Summer 2026

Louisiana Folk

Official Newsletter of the Louisiana Folklife Center

The 46th Annual Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival
July 18, 2026

The 46th Annual Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival will be held in air-conditioned Prather Coliseum on the Northwestern State University campus in Natchitoches on Saturday, July 18. The 2026 festival theme is “America the Beautiful.” The festival’s curated showcase of Louisiana folk artists, food vendors, and crafts vendors will open at 9 am, with live entertainment scheduled for 9:45 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Zydeco dance lessons will be given at 10 a.m. on the East Stage and Cajun dance lessons will be offered at 4:15 a.m. on the Main Stage. Adult admission to the festival is \$10 per person, or \$6 per person after 5 p.m. Admission is free for children ages 12 and younger.

The 2026 festival will include three stages of live music featuring artists including Gal Holiday and the Honky Tonk Revue, the Winnsboro Easter Rock Ensemble, Kevin Naquin and the Ossun Playboys, Catahoula Drive, Native Nations Intertribal, Geno Delafosse and French Rockin' Boogie, Poisson Rouge, the Wayne “Blue” Burns Band, and Kovanda’s Czech Band! Performances by cultural groups include the Louisiana Czech Heritage Dancers and the Rising Dragon Lion Dance Team, and the Thistle Dancers and Pipers, among others. Live music and performances begin at 9:45 a.m. and end at 9:30 p.m. The Louisiana State Fiddle Championship will be held in the Magale Recital Hall, 1:30-4 p.m. The Louisiana State



Fiddle Championship is accepting pre-registrations through July 11 and offers numerous cash prizes in the Championship Division. This year also includes a Gumbo Cook-Off, in which professionals and hobbyists alike can compete in one of multiple categories and demonstrate their cooking skills! Registration and the Cooks’ Meeting will take place at 8:00 a.m. There is no entry fee. Tasting and judging will begin at 12:30p.m., and winners will be announced at 3:30 p.m. Gumbo must be cooked on-site outside of Prather Coliseum .

For complete festival details, please visit www.nsula.edu/folklife. Please RSVP to the Facebook event and invite friends by searching “Natchitoches NSU Folk Festival” on Facebook, and follow us on Twitter at @NSUfolklife. We hope to see you there!

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What To Know Before You Go

Hall of Master Folk Artists 2026 Inductees

Wayne “Blue” Burns, Blues Musician, Honorary Festival Chair

Dustin Fuqua, Traditional Filé Maker

Becky Meziere-Thomas, Pine Needle Basket Maker

Induction ceremony will be held at 11:30 a.m. on the Main Stage inside Prather Coliseum. All are welcome!

Location: The Festival will be held on Saturday, July 18 in comfortable, air-conditioned Prather Coliseum, located at **220 South Jefferson Street**, on the campus of Northwestern State University in historic Natchitoches, LA.

Directions: To reach the Coliseum, take **Exit 138** (the Natchitoches exit) from I-49. From Shreveport, turn left; from Alexandria, turn right onto Hwy. 6/University Pkwy. Continue along the road for approximately 4 miles and turn right onto South Jefferson. Prather Coliseum is on the right, just past the President’s house and the tennis courts.

ADMISSION

\$10.00 per person, *cash only* (price includes sales tax)

\$6.00 per person after 5 p.m.

FREE for children 12 and under

Purchase your ticket at the Prather Coliseum Box Office

Festival Box Office Opens at 9 a.m.

Download the Donation Form at www.nsula.edu/folklife



Audio
Description



Accessibility Information

Prather Coliseum and the CAPA Annex/Magale Recital Hall are fully wheelchair accessible. ASL interpretation, assistive listening devices, and audio description will be made available upon prior request. The deadline to request ASL interpretation, assistive listening devices, and audio description services is July 10, 2026. Please contact folklife@nsula.edu or call (318) 357-4332 for requests.

Note: Alcohol is not allowed or sold on the site. Ice chests, outside food and drinks are prohibited.

Event Overview



The 2026 t-shirt will be available for sale at the Festival in the Country Store, alongside shirts from past years' festivals and more!

The 2026 t-shirt will be available in both white and light blue.

Find Us Online!

<https://www.nsula.edu/folklife/>



<https://www.facebook.com/NSULAFOLKLIFECENTER>



<https://twitter.com/NSUfolklife>



<https://www.youtube.com/@louisianafolklifecenter4109/>



pinterest.com/nsulafolklife

Saturday July 18, 2026, 9am - 5pm

Tentative Exhibits & Demonstrations

Cammie G. Henry Research Center
Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Historic Site
Mr. Danny's Magic
NSU Creole Heritage Center—Dr. Kent Peacock
Fort Jesup State Historic Site
USDA Forest Service, Kisatchie National Forest
Day of the Dead—Cynthia Ramirez
Briarwood: Caroline Dormon Nature Preserve

KidsFest

KidFest is an area dedicated to child-friendly activities and is a fun way for children to examine their own cultural and family traditions as well as those from around the state. KidFest will be available during the festival, 9 a.m. -5 p.m., in the main exhibit area.

Admission to KidFest is free for children attending the festival.

Outside Demonstrations

Red River Smiths
West Baton Rouge Museum

Silent Auction

A Silent Auction will be held **from 9 am-3 pm** in Prather Coliseum. Items for the Auction will be donated by various craft vendors. Revenue from the Auction will be used to pay for some of the many festival expenses.

****Must be 18 years or older to bid, and must be present to win****

Louisiana State Fiddle Championship

The Louisiana State Fiddle Championship will be held in Magale Recital Hall which is housed in the CAPA Annex located at 140 Central Avenue, 1:30-4 p.m., during the Folk Festival. Fiddlers from around the state will compete for cash prizes and ribbons in two general divisions of play: Non-Championship Division and Championship Division. Participants may play in either the Non-Championship or Championship Division (**not both**). All Fiddlers may also enter the Twin Fiddles category. Pre-registration is open now through July 11 at www.nsula.edu/folklife.

Those who enter the Championship Division will compete for the Grand Champion title. The two top fiddlers from each group in the Championship Division—ages 0-21, 22-59, 60 and above—will compete for cash prizes and the opportunity to be recognized as the state's best fiddler.



Fiddle Championship Schedule

12:00-1:00 pm Late Registration, Magale Recital Hall, 1st floor, CAPA Annex

12:00-1:00 pm Winnsboro Easter Rock Ensemble, Magale Recital Hall

1:00-1:30 pm Clogging Lesson with Clancey Stewart, Magale Recital Hall

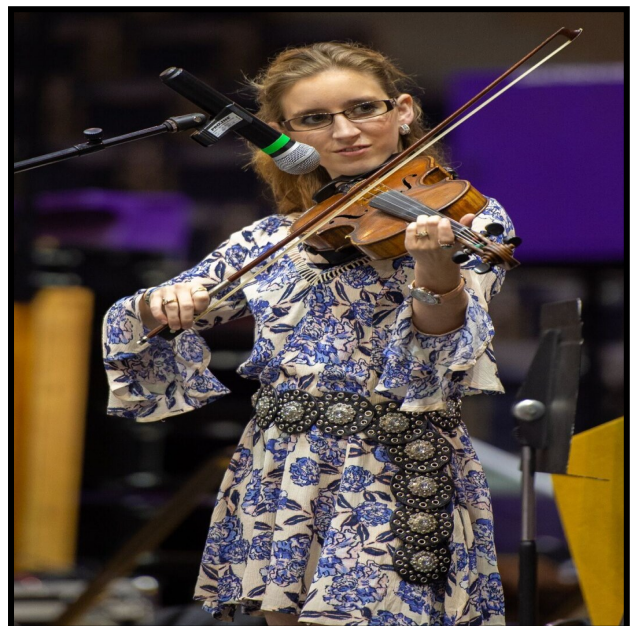
1:30-4:00 pm LA. State Fiddle Championship, Magale Recital Hall

5:00 pm Grand Champion will perform on the Festival's main stage in Prather Coliseum

Workshop

Clogging Workshop with Clancey Stewart

Join Clancey Stewart, 2014 Ozark Folk Center "Musician of the Year," for a free clogging workshop at 1 pm in the Magale Recital Hall. Learn this traditional staple of Appalachian culture from a real master folk artist!



Clancey Stewart, 2018 LA State Fiddle Champion (photo by Chris Reich)

YOU keep the Fiddle Championship alive!

The Fiddle Championship needs your support to remain an ongoing event!

_____ \$50 Supporter, 2 passes (all events)

_____ \$100 Friend, 4 passes (all events), 1 t-shirt

_____ \$250 Patron, 8 passes (all events), 2 t-shirts & Stage Signage

_____ Other Amount, \$ _____



In addition, you will receive recognition from the stage, listing in the Festival Program and on the website, and the opportunity to present a prize.

Make checks payable to: **NSU Foundation** and write “**Fiddle Championship**” on the memo line.

Mail to: Northwestern State University, Louisiana Folklife Center, Natchitoches, LA 71497

The Louisiana Folklife Center is unable to officially endorse political candidates or parties

Gumbo Cook-Off

By popular demand the Gumbo Cook-Off is back! The Gumbo Cook-Off will be held outside of Prather Coliseum between 8:00 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. during the folk festival. Professional and novice chefs are invited to participate in any of our three categories: poultry plus (chicken, duck, turkey, wild game, sausage, etc.), seafood, or people’s choice. Participants may enter one, two, or all of the three categories of the competition.

All gumbo must be cooked on-site, with no commercial or pre-made roux allowed. Poultry, meat, seafood, rice, and broth or stock may be prepared in advance or on-site, and canned broth is allowed. Entries must be cooked using propane gas or open cookfire outside of Prather Coliseum. Running water and assigned cooking spaces will be available for each participant.

Each Head Cook is responsible for preparing a minimum of 2 GALLONS of gumbo to be judged in a specific category and for preparing 16 ounces for judging from that same 2 gallons. Each entry requires a separate registration form. After one p.m., gumbo may be sold to festival patrons at “a buck a cup.”

- Entries will be judged on:
- Appearance: looks like a good gumbo – colors of roux and other food items in gumbo
 - Aroma: smells appetizing
 - Consistency: stirs like a good gumbo
 - Texture: a balance of quantity of ingredients
 - Flavor: tastes like a good gumbo



Elvin Shields, Alan Broussard, and Terry Heinsohn, winners of the 2012 Gumbo Cook-Off.

Gumbo Cook-Off Schedule	
8:00 a.m.	registration and Cooks’ meeting, N-Club Room, Prather
8:45 a.m.	cooking officially begins
12:30 p.m.	judging begins by contest judges
1:00 p.m.	sales to public (“Buck-a-Cup”) open
3:15 p.m.	announcement of winners, Main Stage

Festival Schedule

West Stage	Main Stage	East Stage
	9:45-10:30 Thistle Dancers and Pipers	
10:00-10:45 Joyful Sounds	10:45-11:30 Kovanda's Czech Band with the Louisiana Czech Heritage Dancers	10:00-10:45 Zydeco Dance Lessons with the CMFA Dance Troupe
11:00-12:00 Native Nations Intertribal	11:30-12:00 Welcome Ceremony The National Anthem LA Folklife Hall of Master Folk Artists Induction Ceremony	11:00-12:00 Geno Delafose & French Rockin' Boogie
12:15-1:15 Gal Holiday and the Honky Tonk Revue	12:15-1:15 Catahoula Drive	12:15-12:30 Rising Dragon Lion Dance Team
	1:15-1:30 Fijian Traditional Dance with the Rokobou Family	12:45-1:45 Kevin Naquin and the Ossun Playboys
1:30-2:30 The Wayne "Blue" Burns Band	1:45-2:00 Rising Dragon Lion Dance Team	2:00-2:15 Ed Huey
	2:15-3:15 Geno Delafose & French Rockin' Boogie	2:30-2:45 Fijian Traditional Dancing
2:45-3:45 Poisson Rouge	3:15-4:15 Native Nations Intertribal	3:00-4:00 Catahoula Drive
4:00-5:00 Kovanda's Czech Band with the Louisiana Czech Heritage Dancers	4:15-5:00 Cajun Dance Lessons with the CFMA Dance Troupe	4:15-5:15 Gal Holiday and the Honky Tonk Revue
5:15-6:15 Homegrown Tomaters	5:00-5:30 Louisiana State Fiddle Champion	
	5:45-6:45 Kevin Naquin and the Ossun Playboys	5:30-6:30 PM The Snake Doctors
	7:00-8:15 Poisson Rouge	
	8:30-9:30 The Amazing! Rhythm Disciples w/ special guest Clancey Stewart	

Invited Craftspeople — Saturday, July 18, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm ONLY!!

Neal Ainsworth, handmade wooden toys, swings, & bird feeders
Judy Allen, jewelry
Bayou LaCombe Choctaw, Native American crafts
Sarah Bearden, Bearberry Farm, jams, jellies, pickles, handmade quilts
Martin J. Benoit, Louisiana Ink Art, ink drawing
David Bergeron, One-of-a-kind frames & furnishings
Casey Bigpond, ball sticks and basket
Eloise Boudreaux, ceramics
Judith Braggs, Black folk art quilts
Blake Brodhead, carvings and paintings
Deborah Buco, clay ceramics
Brandon Cagle, thrown pottery/pottery wheel
Sean D. Callander, ceramics
Campiti Historic Museum Quilters, quilting
Cane River Soap Company, Mike & Kim Walthall, handmade soaps, scrubs, lotions & candles
Laura Glen Carlson, handmade jewelry
Christy Benoit Castille, shuttle tatting
Jeff & Gloria Causey, garfish scale designs, alligator buttons, & wildlife crafts
Rex Childress, wooden toys/carvings
Tom Colvin, weaving
R.V. Couch, handmade musical instruments
Cowboy Candy, canned goods
Kirk E. Dupre, cigar box guitars
Stephanie Escudé, Native American dolls
James & Julie Eubanks, woodturning, hand crafted charcuterie boards, egg boards
Extreme Cypress, John & Roxanne Grubb, trinket boxes, puzzle boxes and other cypress wood products reclaimed from hundred-year cypress bar wood and logs
Rose Fisher, Native American baskets
Cindy Fuqua, pottery
Dustin Fuqua, gumbo filé
Marcelle Guidry, fiber, clay
Mark Gustafson, wood and metal
Jerry Hale, Acadian Brown Cotton of Louisiana, textiles
Charolette Harrell, embroidered work
Bre Harris, bronze sculptures, architectural elements, custom designer furniture, paintings, and fine art prints
Cliff & Marilyn Hernandez, wood carvings
Charles Hill, wooden toys
Ethan Hill, video game, cartoon series
Susan Hill, Susie Q dolls, handmade sock dolls
Vickie Holbrook, Native American craft
Ho Minti Society, Native American crafts
Renae Jackson, pottery
Vernon Johnson, handcrafted wood bandsaw, jewelry boxes
Pat Juneau, Fabricated metal sculptures
Ginger Kelly, Functional glass art
Kenneth Kerry, turkey calls, knives, baskets, folk art, wooden turtles
Cindy Killgore, fiber
Ashley Lambert, beadwork
Mitch Landry, metal
Lynn Langhoff, fiber
Christine Ledoux, Freestanding & Wall-Mounted Mosaic Sculptures, New Orleans, LA
Juanita Leonard, paintings, sculptures, folk art items
Greg Little, wood

Tammy Lloid, spinning & weaving
Louisiana's Bounty/Alva Whittington/Shirley Ingram, hand turned wood bowls, etc. & wooden rocking chairs, driftwood pieces
Rick Kom, framed art and magnets
Kenneth Lindner, wood crafts
Steven Madere, Chinaberry and corn necklaces
Millard Mangrum, pottery & fleur-de-lis items
Jerry Masters, woodturning crafts
Dwight P. Mayeux, quill pens & historic writing
Becky Thomas-Meziere, pine needles baskets, handmade beadwork
Janet Miller, hand spinning
Allie Monette, smoked cookies, herbal wellness products
Chris Moore, iron work, birdhouses
Paul Morgan, wooden crafts and toys
David L. Morris, woodwork
Native Ties, Alfreda Mathieu, handmade jewelry, dreamcatchers, water drum
NWLA Basket Makers, Geraldine Zelinsky, longleaf pine needle and sweetgrass baskets
Timothy & Felica O'Bryan, stones, minerals, crystals, wire wrap jewelry
Ann Groves Odell, sewing; recycled necktie fashions, quilted portraits, okra ornaments & crawfish earrings
Natashia Paul, Chuupul Leather Bags
Rose Payton, confections
Fred A. Pittman Jr., handcrafted knives
Andrew Pollack, Sculpted & Blown Glass
Barbara Pourteau, chair caning
Red River Quilters, Tonya Evans, quilts & quilting
Rising Sun Youth, Choctaw-Apache of Ebarb, drinks
Riverside Pecan Co., pecans & pecan products
Travis Robertson, bow ties
Gary H. Rock, wood
Susan Rodrigue, functional stoneware pottery
Catherine Rouchon, polished stones & crafted sterling silver jewelry
Sharon Rouchon, basket weaving
St. Augustine Catholic Church Confraternity of Christian Mothers, Gail Jones, quilting
Stan Routh, architectural drawings
Margaret Riley Santhanam, textiles, Choctaw & Chickasaw crafts
Elizabeth "Liz" Sauls, horse tack accessories
Wayne Schultz, leather belts, wallets
Barbara Seegraves, gourd art
Steve Seneca, art portraits
Rachel Shaddox, handmade soaps
Elvin Shields, twisted wire toys
Gladys Celestine Shutt, Native American basket maker
Rhoda Stevenson, paper-mâché and paper-clay items
Ruth Stevenson, knitting & crochet
Swept Away Brooms, Sharon Jackson, broom making
Talimali Band, handmade arts & crafts
Gene Tomko, Louisiana Music Map
Frieda Tuma, pysanky eggs
Alice Tyler, Clifton-Choctaw beadwork
John Vidrine, honey, honey sticks, creamed honey, and goat milk soap
Deborah West, Lipan Apache Tribe of Texas, dolls, moccasins, etc.
Myrna Wilson, Koasati (Coushatta) pine straw baskets
Sam Wrobel, Polish Paper Cutting

Narrative/ Informance Sessions, July 18, Prather Coliseum N-Club Room

Informances combine interviews with informal musical performances.

- 10:00-10:45 Making the First Cypress Fiddle
- 11:00-11:45 Traditional Carding, Spinning, and Weaving
- 12:00-12:50 Fijian Traditional Culture
- 1:00-1:45 Traditional Foodways
- 2:00-2:45 Revitalizing Heritage Languages
- 3:00-3:45 Music Informance with Kevin Naquin and the Ossun Playboys
- 4:00-4:45 Music Informance with Poisson Rouge

Thanks For Your Support!

Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival Contributors

City Bank & Trust Company	Atmos Energy	Susan & Terry Howard
Natchitoches Wood Preserving Inc.	Cleco Power LLC	David and Linda Clark
The Harrington Law Firm	Drs. Bryan and Cissy Picou	John Clifton Conine
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P. Howard Matt/Yvonne Longon	Wayne & Sandra McCullen	
Art Williams	Pete and Jeanette Gregory	
	Mikell Sue Hatley	
	Sidney Evans III	

Supported in Part by Grants and Donations from the Following

By the People: Conversations Beyond 250 is a series of community-driven programs created by humanities councils in collaboration with local partners. The initiative was developed by the Federation of State Humanities Councils and the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage.



The Louisiana Folklife Center
Natchitoches, LA 71497-0014
(318) 357-4332

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2026 Natchitoches -NSU Folk Festival

“America the Beautiful”

*Make checks payable to **NSU FOUNDATION** and write “Folk Festival” on the memo line*

Mail to: **Northwestern State University, Louisiana Folklife Center, Natchitoches, LA 71497**

<u> </u> Friend (\$25) Receives: 1 pass (all events)	<u> </u> Member (\$50) Receives: 2 passes (all events)	<u> </u> Sponsor (\$100) Receives: 4 passes (all events), 1 T-shirt
<u> </u> Patron (\$250) Receives: 8 passes (all events) and 2 T-shirts	<u> </u> Grand Patron (\$500) Receives: 10 passes (all events) and 3 T-Shirts	<u> </u> Benefactor (\$1000) Receives: 20 passes (all events) and 4 T-shirts
<u> </u> Grand Benefactor (\$2500) Receives: 30 Passes (all events) and 5 T-shirts	<u> </u> Sustainer (\$5000) Receives: 60 Passes (all events) and 10 T-shirts	<u> </u> Folklife Visionary (\$10,000) Receives: 100 Passes (all events) and 20 T-shirts

All funds received before July 1st 2026 will receive listing in the Festival Program and on our website. In addition, Benefactors, Grand Benefactors, Sustainers, and Folklife Visionaries will have their logo displayed on the Main Stage, and mentioned in news releases/advertising/social media.

NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: _____

T-shirt size(s) _____

Funds received after July 1, 2026 may not be listed in the Festival Program.

Fair market value of items received may not be deducted from your Federal Income Tax.

The Louisiana Folklife Center is unable to officially endorse political candidates or parties

Thanks for supporting the Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival!!!