

FORT BRAGG BLUES FESTIVAL

MAY 1-3



2026

WELCOME to the 2nd Annual

FORT BRAGG BLUES FESTIVAL

MAY 1-3 2026

fortbraggblues.com



FORT BRAGG BLUES FESTIVAL



One Festival, Many Voices

Celebrating the Diversity of the Blues

As the salt air of the Pacific meets the soulful grit of the Delta, we invite you to lean back and let the rhythm take over. This weekend, we aren't just listening to music; we are witnessing a collective legacy. The artists gathered here have traveled from across the map to join us on the Mendocino Coast, creating a lineup that is truly a map of the American experience.

Our stage is alive with a staggering diversity of sound. We have the fiery, soul-drenched vocals of Louisiana's Gemini*ii*DRAGON (featuring the stinging guitar of Linwood Taylor) and the groundbreaking 'Bollywood Blues' of the Bay Area's own Aki Kumar. We are honored to host the legendary slide guitar of Grammy-nominee Roy Rogers & The Delta Rhythm Kings, alongside the powerhouse 'sweet blues therapy' of Tia Carroll & Her Awesome Band.

The roots of the North Coast run deep this year, from the hard-driving, Indigenous-infused blues of the Black Horse Blues Band to the gritty, award-winning soul of Mike Hammar & The Nails. We'll journey through the upbeat, syncopated rhythms of Steve Lucky & The Rhumba Bums (featuring Miss Carmen Getit) and the 'mountain-blues' spirit of the Matt Axton Band. Whether it's the traditional, story-driven Americana of Red's Blues Band (with special guest Kenny Marchese), the foot-stomping energy of Rowland & Tumblin', or the hometown vibes of the Mighty T-Bones—there is a heartbeat here for everyone.

If you were to add up the "mileage" of these musicians, you would find centuries of collective experience. We are talking about thousands of nights in dimly lit clubs, decades of global touring, and a lifetime of devotion. Some of our performers have shared the stage with icons like Ray Charles and B.B. King, while others are the fresh torchbearers of the genre's future.

The diversity you see this weekend—ranging from traditional acoustic roots to amped-up electric rock—is proof that the Blues is a big tent. There is room for everyone here. Whether you're a lifelong "blues-head" or a first-time listener, we are so glad you've joined our community.

Let's get the music started!

Welcome to the 2nd Annual Fort Bragg Blues Festival!

On behalf of the City of Fort Bragg, it is my absolute honor to welcome you to our beautiful coastal home for the second annual Fort Bragg Blues Festival. Whether you are a neighbor from down the street or a visitor who has traveled across Northern California to join us, we are thrilled to have you here. This festival was born out of a desire to raise the vibe of our community—to celebrate the unique character of our town while providing a world-class destination for music lovers.

A core mission of this event is ensuring that every resident can take part in the celebration. To that end, the City is especially proud to host the Free Community Concert on Saturday, May 2nd, from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM. This year we're featuring a well-loved local band, The Mighty T-Bones!

We invite everyone to join us at the newly renovated Harold O. Bainbridge Park (at Harrison Laurel) to enjoy the music and see the beautiful improvements to one of our favorite local gathering spots. The City is honored to be the major sponsor of this festival. By bringing together the incredible talents of musicians from Sacramento, the Bay Area, and beyond, we aim to do more than just host a concert. We are here to shine a light on our local businesses, foster deep community pride, and create an immersive three-day experience that resonates long after the final note is played.

From the historic charm of our downtown to the breathtaking vistas of Noyo Headlands Park, we hope you take the time to explore everything Fort Bragg has to offer. Enjoy the local flavors, visit our shops, and let the rhythm of the blues guide you through our corner of the world. Thank you for being part of this tradition. Let's make this weekend one to remember!



Warmly,

Isaac Whippy
City Manager, City of Fort Bragg

Fort Bragg Blues Festival

FREE COMMUNITY CONCERT

FEATURING:



No tickets needed!

Don't forget
your sunscreen,
camping chairs
and hats!



WHEN & WHERE:

Saturday, May 2nd,
2026 from 11:00
a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Bainbridge Park
360 North
Harrison Street



Sponsored by the City of Fort Bragg



Long Road Home

A History of the Blues

The Blues is more than a genre; it is the heartbeat of American history. It began in the red clay of the Mississippi Delta and the sweltering tobacco fields of the Piedmont. Born in the late 19th century from the “field hollers,” work songs, and spirituals of enslaved African Americans, the Blues was originally a survival mechanism—a way to “sing the pain” so it wouldn’t consume the soul.

The Influence on the Oppressed and the Poor For the enslaved and their descendants, the Blues was a secret language of resilience. It provided a rhythmic structure to endure back-breaking labor and a communal space to express the “sorrow songs” of life under Jim Crow. For the rural poor, whether in the Delta or the hills of Appalachia, the Blues was the “people’s

news.” It told stories of floods, droughts, bad luck, and lost love. It was a music of the Earth, played on cigar-box guitars and harmonicas—instruments that could be carried in a pocket or a sack.

The Reach to the Privileged and the Intellectual By the 1920s and 30s, the Blues began to captivate the intellectuals of the era. Ethnomusicologists like Alan Lomax realized this primitive music was actually a sophisticated oral history of a people. Intellectuals of the Harlem Renaissance and later the 1960s Folk Revival saw the Blues as the ultimate expression of humanism—raw, honest, and intellectually complex in its simplicity. It challenged the high-society notion of what “art” could be, proving that a three-chord progression could hold

as much emotional weight as an opera.

A Legacy Shared by Musicians and All Music The Blues is the “Big Bang” of modern music. It moved North during the Great Migration, plugging into amplifiers in Chicago to create the electric sound that would define a century. Without the Blues, no Rock ‘n’ Roll, no Jazz, no R&B, and no Hip Hop. It influenced generations of musicians—from Muddy Waters and B.B. King to the British Invasion of the Rolling Stones and Eric Clapton, all looked to the Delta for inspiration

Today, the Blues remains a living. It continues to remind us that no matter how much the world changes, the human need to turn hardship into harmony remains eternal.

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2026 Fort Bragg Blues Festival Band Line-up & Schedule:

THURSDAY, April 30

ROARING 20's BLUES FEST
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TRAIN

Party your way into Blues Fest weekend aboard the Skunk Train for an intimate night at Glen Blair Bar with *Stella & The Starlights*.

FRIDAY, May 1

Red's Blues Band

with Kenny Marchese on Guitar
Town Hall 2:00 to 3:30 PM

Black Horse Blues Band

Tall Guy Brewing 4:30 to 6:00 PM

Tia Carroll & Her Awesome Band

Town Hall 7:30 to 9:00 PM

SATURDAY, May 2

Free Community Concert

Mighty T-Bones

Bainbridge Park Pavilion

11:00 AM to 12:30 PM

Noyo Headlands Park

Gates Open Noon

GeminiDRAGON

Featuring Linwood Taylor on
Guitar

1:00 to 2:30 PM

Mike Hammar & The Nails

3:00 to 4:30 PM

Roy Rogers &

The Delta Rhythm Kings

5:00 to 6:30 PM

Town Hall

Rowland & Tumblin'

8:30 to 10:00 PM

SUNDAY, May 3

Noyo Headlands Park

Gates Open 11:00 AM

Matt Axton Band

12:00 to 1:30 PM

Steve Lucky & Rhumba Bums
featuring Miss Carmen Getit

2:00 to 3:30 PM

Aki Kumar

4:00 to 5:30 PM

Town Hall

363 N. Highway 1, Fort Bragg, CA 95437

Tall Guy Brewery

**262 N. Franklin St.,
Fort Bragg, CA 95437**

Harold O. Bainbridge Park

**360 N. Harrison St.
Fort Bragg, CA 95437**

(All are within 3 blocks of each other along Laurel St.)

Noyo Headlands Park

At Cypress St. entrance

directly across from Taco Bell. This park overlooks the Pacific Ocean. That means whether you're coming from the north or the south, you turn west.

A person is silhouetted against a bright sunset over the ocean. The person is standing on a dark, rocky outcrop. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong glow and casting long shadows. The ocean is visible in the background, with waves breaking against the shore. The overall scene is serene and scenic.

FORT BRAGG BLUES FESTIVAL LOCATIONS



Red's Blues Band


Reds Blues Band with Special Guest Kenny Marchese on Guitar. Bio: Red's Blues Band is a four-piece Sacramento Blues Hall of Fame band from Sacramento, California, featuring Beth Reid-Grigsby, aka Sacramento Red, on lead vocals and harmonies, RW Grigsby, bass and vocals, Doug Crumpacker, guitar/harmonica and vocals and Tim Wilbur, drums/percussion and vocals, and often have special guests on their shows. Guitarist

Kenny Marchese, also a member of the Sacramento Blues Hall of Fame, will be our special guest for the Fort Bragg Festival. We play traditional blues, as well as a lot of original Americana/Roots music.

Beth and RW founded Red's Blues in 2012. The band has released four CDs, and recently released two original digital singles in September, '25, available on our website and all outlets. Over the years our CDs have featured some of Northern

California's finest guest artists, such as Rick Estrin, Steve Freund, Jon Lawton, Johnny Burgin, Sid Morris, Mark Hummel, John Cocuzzi, Kyle Rowland, sax players Nancy Wright and Terry Hanck, Kid Andersen of Greaseland fame, Anson Funderburgh, Mike Keller and Wes Starr, many of whom have performed with us live multiple times.

RW is also the bassist on the 2014 Grammy-nominated and BMA-winning CD, Remembering Little Walter by Mark Hummel and the Blues Survivors.



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Black Horse Blues

Hailing from the heart of Lake and Mendocino Counties, the Blackhorse Blues Band (often referred to as B.H.B.B.) is a powerhouse ensemble known for their «amped-up» brand of ferocious blues-rock. Led by Randy Peters (Guidiville Rancheria), member of the Pomo Nation, the band has built a decades-long reputation for delivering a gritty, high-energy sound—often described by the members themselves as “gruff and grime.” First formed in the early 1990s, the Blackhorse Blues Band has become a staple of the North-

ern California music scene. The band’s identity is deeply rooted in their heritage, blending the soulful, storytelling traditions of the blues with a hard-hitting rock edge. The group has spent years touring Indian Country and the regional festival circuit. They are celebrated not just for their technical skill, but for their ability to evoke deep emotion through what they call their “ferocious” blues-rock style. Whether playing at tribal celebrations, local venues in Willits and Ukiah, or on national platforms, they remain one of the most respected

Native American blues acts in the The Band’s legacy is defined by over thirty years of musical excellence and a deep-seated commitment to their Northern California roots. As influential elders of the Lake and Mendocino County music scenes, the group has earned national acclaim, most notably being featured on the national radio program Native America Calling as “Music Makers” for their contribution to the modern Native American sound. Comprised of Pomo and local area musicians, they serve as vital cultural ambassador.

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Tia Carroll & Her Awesome Band



Born in Richmond, California, Tia Carroll is a powerhouse blues, soul, and R&B vocalist who has been a staple of the San Francisco Bay Area music scene for over three decades. Known for her “sweet blues therapy,” Carroll’s vocal style is often compared to legends like Tina Turner, Koko Taylor, and Aretha Franklin, yet she maintains a unique, high-energy stage presence that has earned her an international following. Carroll has shared the stage with icons such as Ray Charles, B.B. King, and Gladys Knight along with Jimmy Mc-

Cracklin, Syl Johnson, Sugar Pie DeSanto, Tommy Castro, Elvin Bishop, Igor Prado and Eric Gales. While she has toured extensively across Europe, Brazil, and Asia, she reached a new milestone in 2021 with the release of *You Gotta Have It*. Recorded at the famous Greaseland Studios in San Jose, the album earned critical acclaim and a Blues Blast Music Award nomination

Accolades: A pioneer of the San Francisco Bay Area music scene for over three decades, Tia Carroll has amassed an impressive array of honors that

reflect her status as a “diva of today’s blues.” Her professional recognition includes being named the West Coast Female Blues Vocalist of the Year (2007), the Jus’ Blues Music Foundation’s Traditional Blues Woman of the Year (2008), Band Leader of the Year (2009), and R&B Vocalist of the Year (2011). In 2012, she won Best Female Vocalist at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Corporate Band competition, and her international influence was solidified with “Blues Contributor” awards in Spain and Brazil.

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GeminiDRAGON

Featuring Linwood Taylor

The Louisiana vocalist established herself as a fiery banshee who blurred the lines of Blues, Rock and Soul and paid homage to both the old and the new. By having one foot in the past but the other foot in the present all the while mentally exploring the future. Comparisons to KoKo Taylor, Mavis Staples and Tina

Turner aside. GeminiDragon has established herself as a fierce vocalist with a smoky tone and rich tapestry of textures that evoke visual images of the songs she's singing and the mental emotions of them as well.

Accolades & Accomplishments: GeminiDRAGON has toured the world and played

many of the biggest Blues festivals in the U.S. (Waterfront Blues Festival & North Atlantic Blues Festival To Name A few! Guitarist Linwood Taylor spent many years playing with Blues Legend Joe Louis Walker and traveled the world with him as well.





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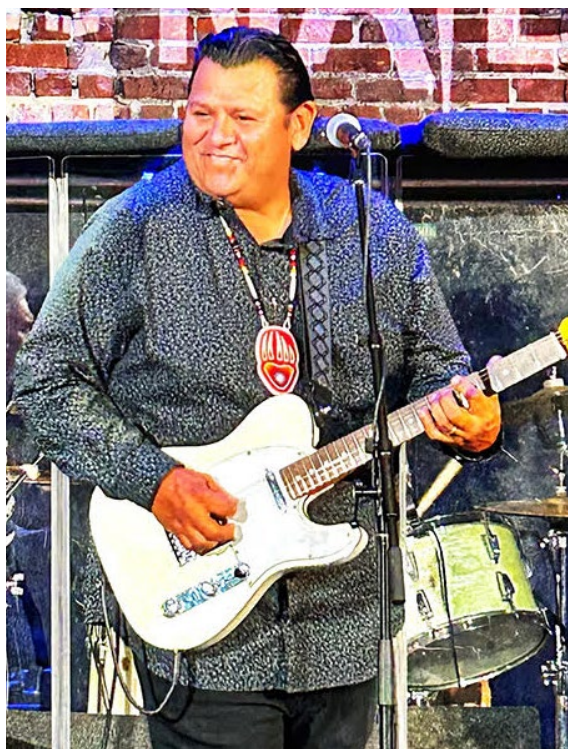
Mike Hammar and The Nails

Mike Hammar spent over 25 years carving out a distinct legacy in the blues scene. Influenced early on by his father and legends like T-Bone Walker and B.B. King, Hammar transitioned from a seasoned sideman to a frontman in 2001. Leading his band, The Nails, he is dedicated to performing original music that blends traditional roots with a modern, eclectic energy. Since

their debut album *Going Hom* in 2004, Hammar and his crew featuring “The Professor” Mike Boykin, Sparky Gehres, Greg Merino, and Allan Carroll have garnered international airplay and critical acclaim. Their 2024 release, *Raised in The Dirt*, serves as a reflective tribute to their Central California heartland roots. Known for heartfelt vocals and stinging guitar work,

Hammar continues to push the boundaries of the genre, delivering high-energy performances that have earned him a place alongside the biggest names in modern blues.

Mike Hammar and The Nails achieved a major milestone by winning the Monterey Bay Blues Festival’s Battle of the Blues Bands in 2009. Most recently, they represented the Sacramento Blues Society at the 2026 International Blues Challenge in Memphis, where they advanced to the semifinals. Their discography has reached global audiences via Sirius XM’s B.B. King’s Bluesville, and they are two-time winners of the Modesto Area Music Award for Best Jazz/Blues Band. Notable recognitions also include an Independent Music Award nomination for “This Ain’t Goodbye” and a Native American Music Award nomination.



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Roy Rogers & The Delta Rhythm Kings

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Roy Rogers has been considered one of the world's preeminent master Delta slide guitarists with many decades of touring the globe. Over 20 recordings to his credit, Rogers has garnered 8 Grammy nominations for producing, as a recording artist, and as a songwriter. His collaborations have garnered major media accolades worldwide for producing critically

acclaimed Grammy nominated recordings for John Lee Hooker and Ramblin' Jack Elliott, as well as collaborations with Bonnie Raitt, Carlos Santana, Bela Fleck, Allan Toussaint, Sammy Hagar & Ray Manzarek among others.

Known for his searing performances that have been named a festival favorites including New Orleans Jazz Fest,

North Sea Jazz Festival in Holland, Montreux in Switzerland, Pistoia in Italy, + North American festivals in Canada & the United States, with more than 4 decades of touring the world. Rogers is planning a release of the new single videos from the new release "The Sky's The Limit" - his first recording in 10 years with product releases in January 2026.

*There is no "better" in the Blues.
There is only "true" or "false."*

Ry Cooder



Rowland & Tumblin’

Kyle Rowland powers through the reeds of a Harmonica, honoring the rich traditions of American rhythm & blues, soul, and gospel.

Rowland quickly and naturally developed his own sound, with help from a few of his heroes such as James Cotton, Lazy Lester, Hubert Sumlin, Billy “Boy” Arnold, Matt “Guitar” Murphy, Henry Gray, Charlie Musselwhite, and many others. Through these pioneers, Rowland learned specific techniques of stage presence, the music

business, and several highly revered harmonica secrets, evident in his performances. In August of 2022, Rowland signed an endorsement deal with the Hohner harmonica company, which he has proudly used for his 20+ year career. Recently, with the help of Hohner, Rowland has had the opportunity to teach and provide harmonicas to hundreds of children across the United States, Mexico, and Cuba. In the Spring of 2025, Rowland was picked up by Little Village Foundation, a

California-based record label, releasing NOT HOLDING BACK! in January 2026, produced by Rick Estrin and Kid Andersen. Rowland’s record, NOT HOLDING BACK! features Rockin’ Johnny Burgin, Bob Welsh, Jim Pugh, June Core, Ronnie James Weber, Anson Funderburgh, and many other heavyweights.

Do not miss an opportunity to catch Kyle and his band, Rowland & Tumblin’, and snag a copy of NOT HOLDING BACK!



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Matt Axton Band

Axton's distinct baritone voice, unique finger-picker guitar style and wealth of legacy stories land perfectly in an intimate listening room or a honky tonk.

Axton tours nationally playing large festivals and iconic institutions as well as opening for acts. He has recorded with music legends Steve Feroni (Tom Petty), Hal Cragin (Iggy Pop), DurgaMcBroom (Pink Floyd) and collaborated on projects

such as "Abbey Road Reimagined. A Tribute to the Beatles" where Aaron Badgley of Spill Magazine called Axton's cover of "Octopus' Garden" a "pure genius." Axton honors his deep legacy roots at every show with his own versions of his family's #1 hits "Heartbreak Hotel," "Joy to the World" and many more. Boasting over 300 original songs and founder of the Americana Joy Music Series and Tahoe Joy Festival,

Axton proudly continues the family tradition of bringing just a little more musical "Joy to The World."

His live performances are equally celebrated; he has headlined major events like the Donner Lake 4th of July celebration for crowds of 3,500 and has shared the stage with premiere acts such as Midland, Paul Cauthen, Jim Lauderdale, and Nikki Lane.



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Steve Lucky & The Rhumba Bums

Called “Instant Crowd Favorites” by the San Francisco Blues Festival, Steve Lucky & the Rhumba Bums deliver an electrifying stage show defined by intense energy and a witty “battle of the sexes”. Since 1993 the group has earned a global reputation for superior musicianship, captivating audiences from Hollywood’s leg-

endary Derby to the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland. The band’s heart lies in the chemistry between Steve Lucky and Miss Carmen Getit.

Seattle-born Lucky, a piano prodigy and music historian, honed his craft performing with legends like Johnny In 1994, the Rhumba Bums reached new heights

with the addition of Getit. A dynamic vocalist and “striking” blues guitarist, with everyone from Lowell Fulson to Willie “Big Eyes” Smith. Blending swing, jump-blues, and vintage R&B, the Rhumba Bums remain a premier force in American roots music, bringing a “wild show” and “superior musicianship” to every stage they hit.

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Aki Kumar

San Jose's "King of Bollywood Blues," infuses Blues, Rock n Roll and Country with the vibrant songs of his Indian heritage, creating a unique and electrifying musical fusion. With soulful vocals, masterful harmonica skills and an undeniable stage presence, Kumar brings a fresh perspective to the blues scene, captivating audiences worldwide. Aki Kumar's band features some of the very best SF Bay Area blues musicians and was

voted "Best of Silicon Valley" 2024 in Metro Silicon Valley. Kumar's "Little Village" releases "Aki Goes To Bollywood" (2016) and "Hindi Man Blues" (2018) are considered ground-breaking albums that have garnered international critical acclaim.

In 2020, Kumar made major news with the world-wide launch of his album "Dilruba" on Sony Music. 2025 marked a milestone year for Kumar with

the release of his self-produced "Little Village" album "God Bless The USA" Aki Kumar has made multiple appearances at The Hardly Strictly Bluegrass, San Jose Jazz & SF Jazz Festivals, and has been featured on PRI "The World," KQED Arts and CBS Bay Area.

He has toured extensively over the years, including in Europe, Scandinavia, Russia, Australia, India and South America.

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Thank You to our Nonprofit Partners!



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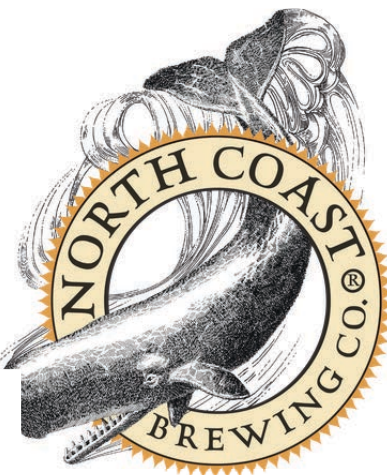
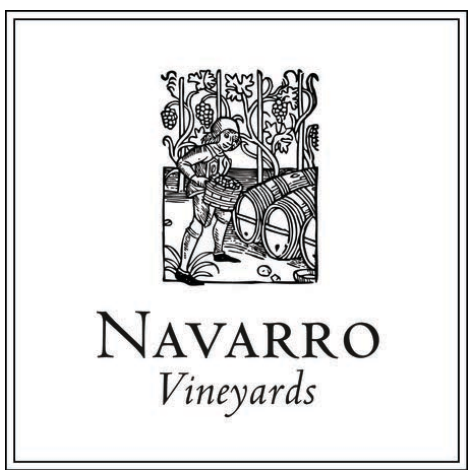
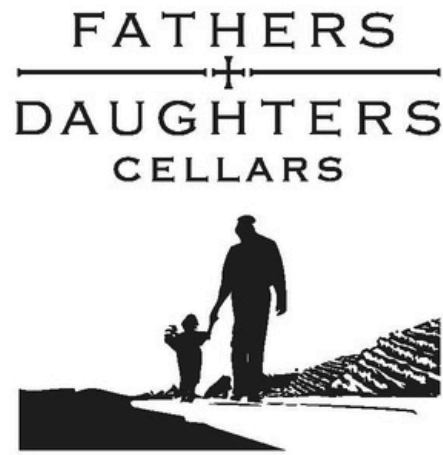
SURF & SAND LODGE



NOYO HARBOR INN



HARBORVIEW BISTRO & BAR



Thank You to our Blues Festival Committee & our Wonderful Volunteers!



Fort Bragg Blues Festival Committee includes:

Blanche Yates, Omie Behrns,
Adelaide La Toree, and Summer Sinnette.

Our Volunteers Include:

Joe Seta (MC)

Desiree Ramos (MC & Day-of Logistics)

Event Lead & City Representative: Adelaide La Torre

Production Assistant: Blanche Yates

Greenroom: Omie Behrns, Summer Sinnette,
Rick Green & Lynn Weiss

Spreadsheet Master/Admin: Cheryl Jasper



Bobbi LeBlanc, Suzanne Sheldon, Terry Ramos,
Jim Wills, Rick Green, Libby Neumaier, Lynn Weiss,
Patrick Quan, Angela Ballatore, Alexander Brittain,
Jen Lewis, Barb McKey, Simone & John Pisas,
Elyse Brumeloe, Patti Angeletti, Joanie Seidel,
Fall Weiss, Chris Hartsveldt, Gail Richard, Jeff Sweat,
Eva Mee, Sunny Cannon, Janie Notmeyer, Taani Story,
Lauralee Brown, Lizzy Wills, and Sam Chapman.

Producer's Notes on the 2nd Annual Fort Bragg Blues Festival!

First, a heartfelt thank you for supporting our festival in its second year. Building something like this from scratch is daunting, but when fans start arriving, the music starts playing, and the dancers start grooving, I am soulfully assured we are doing the right thing.

New for 2026

If you joined us last year, you'll notice we've grown! We are now outdoors for two days in a truly stunning new location: the Noyo Headlands Park overlooking the breathtaking Pacific Ocean. As anyone who recreates in Northern California knows, the weather offers no guarantees. We suggest you gear up with layers and a cozy blanket—or better yet, pick up our 2026 “Collectors Hoodie,” a unique design that will change every year.

We are also thrilled to

introduce our “Roaring 20s” Kick-off event on the Skunk Train! It's a throwback to the glamorous tradition of Gatsby and Prohibition lore. Feel free to dress the part as you enjoy a live DJ on the rails and a champagne greeting at Glen Blair Bar. We'll be dancing the night away to Stella and the Starlights, who bring the spirit of New Orleans swing and early blues to life. Don't forget to visit our 1920s-era backdrop for a professional photo—a joyful surprise that will land in your inbox a week after the soirée!

Another new addition this year, we've introduced this digital guide to help you navigate the weekend. Just download it on youuse it to read up on the bands, learn about our sponsors, and find the best places to stay or dine.

In a world where we

don't always agree, we can surely agree on this: Blues music moves us in ways that make us feel more connected as humans. And personally, I think we could all use a little more of that right now, don't you?

Thank you for helping us raise the vibe in our little corner of the world. We could not do this without YOU!

Pam Bell,
Festival Producer

SPECIAL THANKS to our wonderful Blues Fest Committee and volunteers!

