Presidential Address
PVSS 2008

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MCV, 1988 - 1995

H.M. Lee
Ochsner
(Jazzfest 1999)

Sam Money
From the Latin "carnelevamen"
Translation: "Farewell to flesh"

Officially begins on January 6th
- Twelfth Night (Feast of the Epiphany)

Ends on Midnight, Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras)

Most locals refer to the 2-week season immediately prior to Mardi Gras as carnival.
Mardi Gras
(Fat Tuesday)

- Last day of this pre-Lenten celebration known as “carnival”
- Originally created by the Catholic Church for “the masses” to celebrate prior to Lent
- Next day is Ash Wednesday
  - Beginning 40 days of Lent prior to Easter
When is Mardi Gras?

- 47 days prior to Easter
  - (40 days of Lent + 7 Sundays)
- Always on Tuesday
- February 3rd – March 9th
Carnival Organizations: “Krewes”

- All private organizations
- No external funding allowed
- Most Krewes have a parade
- Riders on the floats mostly members
- Each member pays for his own “throws” (beads, stuffed animals, etc)
  - ~$ 500 – $ 2000 per person
  - 53 parades, 150-1500 riders per parade
Krewes

- Most Krewes have a King and Queen
  - Selection process varies
- Some Krewes have a ball
  - Many connected with debutante presentation and formal tableaux
    - Invitation only, very formal
  - Other with HUGE parties
    - More fun! Tickets can be purchased
- Many (but not all) Krewes parade
Carnival History in New Orleans

- “old-line” Krewes (all male)
  - 1857 Mistick Krewe of Comus
  - 1870 Twelfth Night Revelers
  - 1872 Rex, Momus
  - 1882 Proteus

- 1901 Zulu, first African-American Krewe
- 1959 Iris, first Female Krewe

- SuperKrewes (co-ed)
  - 1967 Endymion
  - 1969 Bacchus
  - 1994 Orpheus
1872

- Russian Grand Duke Alexis Romanoff visited New Orleans
- Help inspired a “royal” event
- The Rex organization was born
Early Rex Proclamations
The colors of carnival

- Purple - Justice
- Gold - Power
- Green - Faith
Rex – King of Carnival

- Rides at the front of the Rex parade on Fat Tuesday
- A member of the Rex Organization
  - ~60ish man with major civic/business impact on New Orleans
- HUGE honor within the city

Dr. John Ochsner, 1990
Rex and his royal pages, toasting prior to the beginning of the parade
Queen of Carnival

- The queen of carnival
  - 20 year old debutante
  - Daughter of a Rex Krewe member
  - Also an immense honor within the city

Dr. John Ochsner
Anne Storey Charbonnet
His Majesty, Rex, and his consort

1990
Rex Den after Katrina
Parades

- "Time slot" for each Krewe’s parade is the same each year
  - VERY steeped in tradition
- Parades almost daily for 2 wks preceding Fat Tuesday
- Parade days closest to Fat Tuesday most prized
“Masking”

- By tradition, float riders must be masked during the parade.
- The captain and lieutenant remain masked during the balls.
Early Parades
Comus 1872
Mardi Gras then....
Turning the corner of St Charles and Canal Street
The Boeuf Gras
Rex
Rex Captain and Leutinent
Zulu
Some Kings Take themselves More Seriously than others....
Night-time parades
Flambeaux
Bands on the Parade Route
Mardi Gras Indians
Costuming

- Traditional for the public to costume for Fat Tuesday
The Best Kept Secret….

- For the locals, Carnival is about the four “F” s
  - Family
  - Friends
  - Food
  - Fun
Ball Invitations
Early Rex Ball Invitation
Rex Ball
Rex Ball – The Grand March
Early Rex Court
Rex Court  2008
Rex Ball Attire
White ties and tails (men), Ball gowns (women)
Bowing to the Court

Duchess and Duke of Windsor
Bourbon Street
Bourbon Street
(It’s a tourist thing, really….)
But REALLY, this is not what Carnival is all about!
(at least not for the locals)
COME VISIT!

Ask a local to give you the “skinny” on the REAL Mardi Gras