



## Orange Beach Mardi Gras 2009 by Ken Grimes, Jr.

The time of year has arrived to pull out the purple, green and gold and bag those beads. For folks along the Gulf Coast, Mardi Gras is a special time with plenty of crazy costumes, shiny masks and festive music and the Orange Beach parade atmosphere is guaranteed to be family friendly and fun for all ages. The beach highway offers a unique venue for great parades, day and night with few barricades and plenty of places to tailgate or just pop out the folding chair and catch some throws. The trumpets and drums of the second line are being polished and the zydeco music is blaring as krewes and individuals all over Baldwin County and the Alabama Gulf Coast are gearing up for Mardi Gras 2009 which will be soon. Everything you need to enter a float or entry into the **Orange Beach Mardi Gras** parade on Tuesday, February 24<sup>th</sup> is online at [www.cityoforangebeach.com](http://www.cityoforangebeach.com) at the Home Page then click Events. Applications and payment are due two weeks prior to parading to be eligible to parade in Orange Beach before an estimated 30,000 spectators lining the two mile stretch along Perdido Beach Boulevard. Fat Tuesday's parade will roll in Orange Beach promptly beginning at 1:30pm at the traffic light at the former Ruby Tuesday's and ending this family fun activity at the traffic light at Highway 161. Bring your chair and grab those beads as around fifty entries will roll down the beach road in this parade that typically takes about an hour from start to finish. If you are tailgating and watching from the Winn Dixie, Bruno's or Publix intersections, the front of the parade should arrive about 2:15pm but the highway will be closed just before the parade begins to ensure safety of the public and all spectators. Musical entertainment includes local artists led by Brent Burns himself riding on the city's Marlin float followed by the Gulf Shores High School Dolphin Band and more. Feel free to let the good times roll and shake it up a bit as the bands march on by.



*Sirens of the Sea in Orange Beach*

The good times roll all weekend on the Alabama Gulf Coast as the Fat Tuesday revelry kicks off at 10am down Highway 59 in Gulf Shores as the **Gulf Shores Mardi Gras Association** presents its annual parade starting at Gulf Shores City Hall and travels south to the Beach Highway. Roadways will shut down around 9:30am so be sure to get to your spot early and kick off Fat Tuesday in style. Organizing chairman Judy Kaiser continues to do an excellent job in bringing the community together for a lot of fun and exposure to our carnival spirit along the beach.



Orange Beach is host to two night parades with the **Mystical Order of Mirams** parading on Friday, February 20 starting at 6:30pm on the same Orange Beach parade route. The Mystical Order of Mirams, an all-woman, Orange Beach based Mardi Gras Krewe was formed in February 2006 and is near 100 members strong and the organization is growing as it is still in its infancy, yet hopes to leave a legacy of giving back to the community. Staying with Mardi Gras tradition, Miram members ride on theme based parade floats built in Mobile, Alabama by professional float builders and their Marshals will ride on horseback. In this third year of parading, the Mirams have made their mark by getting things done in year one as they were formed, organized a parade, held a ball at the Sportsplex and began to support community events like the National Night Out sponsored by the Orange Beach Police Department. The organization is accepting associate members this year in an effort to build the membership by 50-100 additional members. For more information on the Mystical Order of Mirams go to [www.mirams.info](http://www.mirams.info).



*A Huge Red Snapper will be seen on the route. . . Is it in the boat or driving it?*



*Mirams 2007 parade float*

Orange Beach Mardi Gras weekend continues with festivities on Saturday night as the Mystics of Pleasure parade in Orange Beach starting at 6:30pm on Highway 182 or beach highway near Live Bait and will roll from West to East past Highway 161 all the way to the Perdido Pass Bridge. This new route of just over three miles will take the colorful floats past Zekes, San Roc and all accommodations along the beachside once again. Parking on the side of the highway is allowed but not on private property marked off with traffic tape. Your courtesy of these properties is appreciated.



*Mystics Mermaid float*



The "Mystics" are an all-male, Orange Beach based Mardi Gras Krewe that was formed in 2001 and is near 250 maskers strong. Proud of its history in being the first group to provide a night time parade for the Alabama Gulf Coast, the Mystics parade will feature a special Queen, leading the parade with the entourage of Past Queens soon to follow. Following in true mardi gras parade tradition, plenty of Hogs will roll, Harley Davidson bikes that is, as parade marshals deck the two wheel cycles with plenty of beads and throws. Past parades on Saturday night in Orange Beach have attracted tens of thou-

sands providing a huge crowd. Watch for big fun as the Mystics of Pleasure roll down the beaches of Orange Beach on Saturday, February 21, 2009.

To find information on all of these events log onto the City of Orange Beach website at [www.cityoforangebeach.com](http://www.cityoforangebeach.com) and click Events. Parking at parades in Orange Beach is allowed safely out of traffic off the shoulders and in parking lots along the route. City of Orange Beach and the City of Gulf Shores offices and services will be closed for Fat Tuesday so get your city business done early as everyone gets to participate in Mardi Gras. Have a safe carnival season! Let us know your feedback on any of the parades coming to the Alabama Gulf Coast by emailing [abateman@cityoforangebeach.com](mailto:abateman@cityoforangebeach.com) . We want to hear from you on your experiences in 2009.



The City of Orange Beach works closely with each Krewe to ensure a family atmosphere and parades for all ages are provided. We hope that your 2009 Mardi Gras "experience" is a great one and wish you a wonderful year. For more information log onto [www.cityoforangebeach.com](http://www.cityoforangebeach.com) or go to [www.orangebeach.com](http://www.orangebeach.com) for details.



### Public Notices

*Perdido Beach Blvd (aka Hwy 182) will be closed for parades Friday, Feb 20 & Saturday, Feb 21, 2009 from 6:15pm -7:45pm and on Tuesday, Feb 24 from 1:15p-2:45p in Orange Beach, Alabama. Thank You! City Services Closed on Tuesday, February 24, 2009*



## STEVE BAKER LEADS FAT TUESDAY PARADE

The City of Orange Beach is proud to announce that Mr. Steve Baker, Principal of Orange Beach Elementary School, will be the Grand Marshal of the Orange Beach Mardi Gras Parade. The Parade is to be held Tuesday, February 24 at 1:30pm along Perdido Beach Boulevard.

Mr. Baker will be accompanied on the Grand Marshal float by his wife Susan and his son Rocky, who is in second grade at Orange Beach Elementary. The Baker's also have a daughter Whitney who will soon be starting graduate school at Auburn University. Mr. Baker has been the principal at Orange Beach for eight years and was the vice principal of Gulf Shores Middle School before that so he has instilled the love of learning in lots of youth on the Island. "It is such an honor to be chosen to be Grand Marshal," stated Mr. Baker, "My son Rocky is almost as excited as I am to be leading the parade."



Steve Baker OBES

The City of Orange Beach works closely with each Krewe to ensure a family atmosphere and parades for all ages are provided. We hope that your 2009 Mardi Gras experience is a positive one. Weather forecasts look to be mild and pleasant for the parades along beach highway. We encourage spectators to watch for children and be cautious of people crossing the roadways before and after the parades. Have a great time and be sure to stop and have a meal or buy a condo for your family. For more information, log onto [www.cityoforangebeach.com](http://www.cityoforangebeach.com) or go to [www.orangebeach.com](http://www.orangebeach.com) for details.



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