

The Poudre River Irregulars



An exuberant
New Orleans
Dixieland jazz band
from Fort Collins,
Colorado

The Poudre River Irregulars are a colorful New Orleans Dixieland jazz band noted for their exuberant energy and sound musicianship. Drawing inspiration from New Orleans jazz pioneers Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton, they play a wide variety of traditional jazz, from ragtime through the classics of the twenties and thirties up to early swing. Whatever they play, their music is always upbeat and joyful.

Based in Fort Collins, Colorado, this popular band plays for concerts, dances, private engagements, and civic events all over the Northern Colorado region. Their best-known gig is at Avogadro's Number, a well-known restaurant near the Colorado State University campus, where they play on the first Friday of each month to sellout crowds. During the summer they're also a frequent attraction on the Fort Collins Municipal Railway (trolley).

The band consists of six fine musicians from the Fort Collins-Loveland area of Northern Colorado

(see the back of this page for their bios). As well as a full schedule playing live, they've recorded two popular CDs. You can hear samples from those on their web site, www.prijb.com, where there's also a printable form to order one or both if you're so inclined.

About the name: The Cache la Poudre River was named by early French explorers who stashed gunpowder at intervals along its banks. Its upper reaches now provide recreation for kayakers, rafters, and fishermen, while supplying water for Fort Collins and surrounding agricultural areas. The local pronunciation is "POO-der."

As to "Irregulars": when the band was forming in 1994, personnel changes were frequent and abrupt. The group has long since stabilized but keeps the name because it suggests the free and easy spirit of their music. (Think of a motley militia ready at a moment's notice to take on an engagement with deftness and high spirits.)



The Poudre River Irregulars (Left to right) Oscar DeSoto (drums), Gene Libbea (bass), John Leisenring (trombone), Ted Turner (banjo), Bob Cooke (cornet, leader), Clark Burnside (clarinet)

About the musicians:

Bob Cooke (leader, cornet) was a founding member of Denver's Queen City Jazz Band in 1958 and formed the Platte River Jazz Band in 1974 before moving to Fort Collins where he started the Poudre River Irregulars in 1995. He is an imaginative cornetist and a leader who inspires enthusiasm in the band and joy in his audiences.

John Leisenring (trombone) has performed in 35 states and 10 foreign countries and is an exceptional player, equally at home with classical, mainstream jazz, and New Orleans/Dixieland. Since he moved here after retiring from the University of Missouri at KC he's found more opportunities to play than he ever imagined.

Clark Burnside (clarinet) is an exciting player who began playing Dixieland jazz in high school and was featured with the UCD Claim Jumpers (the University of Colorado's Dixieland jazz ensemble) at the Sacramento Jazz Festival.

Ted Turner (banjo) is a student of banjo styles and adds interest to the band's arrangements by blending different traditional jazz styles in subtle ways. He has a strong commitment to the rhythm and is also valuable as a blues and jazz vocalist.

Gene Libbea (pronounced "Luh-BAY") (**string bass**) played with the Nashville Bluegrass Band for 10 years (during which they won four Grammy awards). A widely experienced musician, he anchors the band with his powerful and rhythmic bass style and attention to harmonic details.

Oscar DeSoto (drums) is a great swinging percussionist, well known on the local jazz scene. He divides his time between his drum playing and a Fort Collins icon, the Starry Night coffee house, which he owns and manages with his wife Ann Wojtowick.

For bookings, schedules, or general information about the **Poudre River Irregulars**, contact:

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See our web site at www.prijb.com

