

FLATLAND BLUES FESTIVAL LINE UP ANNOUNCED

The hosts of the Third Annual Flatland Blues Festival have announced the lineup for this year's festival to be held June 3rd and 4th in Russell. The event is hosted by Friends of the Deines Cultural Center, Russell Main Street and Russell Arts Council.

Performers for the festival held at the County Fair Grasslands are **Shemekia Copeland, Anthony Gomes, Cephas and Wiggins, Queen Bey, Watermelon Slim and the Workers, and Lemuel Sheppard.**

Shemekia Copeland, daughter of the late Texas blues guitar legend Johnny Clyde Copeland, has played with Buddy Guy and B.B. King, has shared the stage with Taj Mahal, Dr. John and Koko Taylor, and was named the Contemporary Blues Female Artist of the Year at the 2005 W.C. Handy Awards and is nominated for this year's Blues Music Award in the same category.

In his second year at the Flatland Blues Festival, Canadian **Anthony Gomes'** cross-cultural musical reflection draws from Soul, Gospel, Rock, and R&B, and blends it all together with blues. Gomes has created a unique sound and is leaving his imprint on American Roots music. Anthony Gomes is an experience.

According to *Living Blues*, guitar and harmonica duo **Cephas & Wiggins** "remain today's premier Piedmont blues guitar and harmonica duo." Phil Wiggins says, "People automatically think of sadness and depression when they think of blues. But the blues is uplifting music, music to rejuvenate you, to nourish the spirit. When you get down, the blues will pick you up again."

Bill 'Watermelon Slim' Homans and the Workers have a southern-style, blue-collar approach to the blues that has met with resounding reaction from newfound fans, critics, promoters and the grass roots blues scene in venues all across the country. With three albums in four years, the blues community officially recognizes Watermelon Slim as one of the best contemporary international blues artists. He was nominated for a 2005 W.C. Handy Award for Best New Artist Debut.

Queen Bey has a wide repertoire of jazz and blues standards along with innovative and often unknown songs that are drawn from her first-hand experiences working with the legends of jazz and blues. She has a natural and understated approach and is considered a contemporary master continuing the tradition of great singers like Sarah Vaughn, Ella Fitzgerald, and Dinah Washington.

Kansas's best-known traditional acoustic blues musician, **Lemuel Sheppard** has brought his special blend of folklore and blues to every part of Kansas for almost 20 years. Self taught, Lemuel began playing guitar at the age of nine in Kansas City's rich jazz and blues atmosphere. He is not only an interpreter of African-American folk music, but composes much of his own repertoire.

2006 is the third year for the Flatland Blues Festival put on by three non-profit organizations to provide access to quality blues music in central Kansas. Many local businesses help to sponsor the event, and this year, some funds are provided by the Kansas Arts Commission Touring Artist Program.