

The 4th Annual Tommy Johnson Blues Festival was successful once again. Although “Mother Nature” failed to cooperate, the brave participants and visitors to this year’s activities dealt with the extremely cold weather with warm sprits for the love of the blues AND Tommy Johnson. The day started with the Sun peeping through the cloud letting us know that it’s ok and no matter how you plan, or what you plan, you can’t do anything about the weather.

This year’s line up included, Ben Payton whose recent illness did not stop his performance. The smooth sounds of his guitar and sharpness of his execution showcase His remarkable talent as an great guitarist. As an added surprise to Ben’s act Grady Champion as always showed up and showed out. Eden Brent the only female to take the stage showed that women can hold their own in a market that’s dominated by men. Mr. J. T. Watkins, “The Ladies Man” took the stage singing “Hey Girl, I want to talk to you.” I think most of the ladies though he was singing to them. Blues “Boy “Willie belted out some of those bluesy tunes that say “Willie Baby, Don’t go. Mr. Frank O showed up and commanded the stage. His talent for writing, producing and singing was evident as he performed tune after tune reminding us that he is a star.

We can’t forget about the folks that worked to keep things running smoothly, the MC’s for the evening were DJ Black of WMPR radio station and DDT. They kept the stage light with their jokes and funny personalities.

Special thanks to all that help to make The 4th Annual Tommy Johnson Blues Festival a Success, Mississippi Arts, Commission , The Tommy Johnson Family, the Vendors The Planner, The various marketing teams, The Hosting Hotel Hampton Inn, Cooper’s Downs and all who attended.

Hey SPECIAL thanks to the lady with the dream Vera Johnson Collins. Keep ~~dreaming~~ Vera, they do come true. A special friend and guest to the festivities, Mr. Charles Evers stated that when he got started with the Medgar Evers Homecoming there were only a few, and now it’s HUGE.....

By: Frances Hall