



## FIRST FARMERS HOSTS NIGHT OF 60'S R&B MUSIC

*Concert to celebrate Middle Tennessee's Largest Night of Classic Music  
and bank's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary*

**PULASKI, Tenn., (June 3, 2009)** – It might not be the summer of love, but for folks that love the southern soul Rhythm & Blues music of the 60's, it will be a summer concert few will want to miss.

And it will mark a century of bank service to the Middle Tennessee area by First Farmers.

On Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, First Farmers & Merchants Bank in Pulaski will be hosting three legendary R&B recording artists and musicians – Percy Sledge, Clarence Carter and The Midnighters -- at an event being billed as A Classic Musical Summer Night. Doors at the Christian Life Center on the Martin Methodist College campus in Pulaski, where the concert will be held, will open at 6:30 p.m. with the show starting at 8:00 p.m.

The concert, to benefit the Boys and Girls Club of Pulaski, is intended to raise money, as well as thank the people of Middle Tennessee for 100 years of patronage to First Farmers Bank, headquartered in Columbia, and its 17 branch offices. Tickets are \$20 for general admission, \$25 for reserved seating to the left of the stage and \$30 for reserved seating on the floor in front of the stage. They can be purchased at any First Farmers Bank in Middle Tennessee, as well as the Outlook store on the Pulaski square.

“With this being our centennial year, we thought it would be great to celebrate 100 years of service to Middle Tennessee with an enjoyable summer concert,” said Marcus Houston, Giles County senior banking executive, First Farmers. “We’re hoping folks will join us for a cool night of R&B music and memories, since many of these songs were a vital part of our youth. Besides that, supporting this event will go far in helping the youth who are involved with the Boys and Girls Club.”

All of the performers have extensive musical histories.

Percy Sledge will forever be associated with the 1966 anthem "When a Man Loves a Woman," which morphed him into one of the key figures of deep Southern soul during the late 1960s. He recorded at Muscle Shoals studios in Alabama and was also a pioneer of country-soul, singing songs written and recorded by Charlie Rich and Kris Kristofferson.

Sledge began his professional music career as a member of the vocal group the Esquires Combo, going solo in 1966. That summer, "When a Man Loves a Woman" became a mega hit for the singer, topping both the pop and R&B charts. It later resurged to prominence in the late 1980s and early 1990s thanks to its inclusion in movie soundtracks and television commercials. A jeans commercial in the late 1980s also popularized the song in England. Other top 10 R&B hits followed, but none with the staying power of "When a Man Loves a Woman."

Sledge still performs today with his Aces Band and was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2005.

Known for the 1970 hit "Patches," Clarence Carter continues to tour the R&B circuit. Challenged by blindness and self-taught on the guitar, Carter majored in music at Alabama State College in Montgomery and, like Sledge, recorded in the studios of Muscle Shoals in the 1960s. Three of his songs -- "Slip Away" (1968), "Too Weak To Fight" (1969) and "Patches" (1970) – found their way to the top ten pop and R&B charts.

A six-piece band also from Muscle Shoals, the Midnighters was founded in 1985 as backup band for Bobby Lewis, a singer who, at the time, had a hit song "Tossin' and Turnin'." Lead by vocalist Earnest Davis, the group features a number of studio, stage and back-up musicians whose resumes include accompaniment to a virtual who's who of the music world. At one time, drummer James Count even backed up Percy Sledge.

Today, the band's musical styles include R&B, soul, rock and vintage oldies, with an emphasis on Muscle Shoals, Memphis and Motown tunes. They've opened for such artists as The Temptations, Delbert McClinton, T. Graham Brown, Shirley Brown, and Shenandoah.

“The concert is being staged with the support of the Alabama Music Hall of Fame in Tuscumbia, Alabama, of which all performers are members,” Houston said. “Many of these musicians have close ties to the music that has emanated through the years out of Muscle Shoals and represent the R&B sound well. It should really be a fantastic evening for everyone.”

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***About First Farmers & Merchants Bank***

*Founded in 1909, First Farmers & Merchants Bank (Member FDIC) is one of the most successful independent banks in Tennessee, with total assets of approximately \$917 million and deposits in excess of \$758 million. An additional \$2.7 billion in assets is held by its Trust & Financial Management Department. Headquartered in Columbia, Tenn., the bank operates 17 offices in a seven county area in Middle Tennessee that includes Maury, Lawrence, Marshall, Hickman, Giles, Dickson and Williamson counties. It is distinguished by its commitment to traditional, personal banking relationships that incorporate state-of-the-art technology to provide the highest possible level of service. For additional information, visit [www.fandmbank.com](http://www.fandmbank.com) or call the main office at 931.388.3145.*