

Reggae ‘wailers’ rock Reno

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March 1, 2010



Featuring reggae hits that they made famous during their work with Bob Marley, The Wailers performed on Saturday at the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino. Photo by Brian Bolton/Nevada Sagebrush

When reggae bands Keyser Soze and The Wailers took the stage at the Grand Sierra Resort on Saturday, they turned the concept of performance into an experience. Fans of all ages came together for an evening of harmony, dancing and music.

Keyser Soze, a Reno reggae band, opened the show with an array of upbeat songs. As the crowd swayed, lead singer Rodney Teague belted out an impressive range of notes and danced with his saxophone. The group sang fan favorites such as “Unloyal” and “Not For You.” Wailers, known for more than four decades of recording and backing Bob Marley, opened the show with an instrumental piece before lead singer Aston Barrett took the

stage. Donning dreadlocks and a typical Rastafarian getup, Barrett took the fans through a set of Marley favorites such as “Could You Be Loved” and “One Love/People Get Ready.” The band also took fans through “I Shot The Sheriff,” prompting them to sing and dance along.

“I shot the sheriff, but I didn’t shoot no deputy,” Barrett sang as he clapped and swung his dreads in line with the beat.

Fans were treated to a full-length commemoration of Bob Marley and did so while helping a good cause. Proceeds from the show (tickets were \$22) went to the “I Went Hungry Campaign,” which donates money to help save starving citizens around the world. The Wailers, who started the program, are partnered with the World Food program and have launched numerous campaigns in hopes of feeding those in need.

Though both bands did a fantastic job and kept the crowd smiling, it was the crowd that deserved commendation. In a packed show at the Grand Sierra Theatre, fans of all ages and styles filled the room. Rasta-loving teenagers danced and chatted with older Marley fans, creating a friendly and open atmosphere. Even during set changes, the crowd continued to sway.

Unlike most shows, there was no barrier in between the performers and audience, which prompted numerous fans to hop on stage and dance with Barrett and the band. A toddler, older woman and teenage girl all had their chance in the spotlight as they shimmied against the guitar player and danced for the crowd.

In an environment that normally has fans shoving to the front, trying to avoid other people, or being scolded by security, tension was at an all-time low. Ultimately, the crowd took in a great performance and made the entire night an experience full of dancing, laughs and a good time.

Original URL: <http://nevadasagebrush.com/blog/2010/03/01/reggae-‘wailers’-rock-reno/>