

Belafonte to take Lied Center stage

Singer, actor and human rights activist Harry Belafonte had to cancel his last Lincoln performance because of illness, but he will make up for lost time this weekend.

Belafonte will perform his calypso-tinged music on Saturday night at 8 in the Lied Center for Performing Arts, 301 N. 12th St.

Belafonte's career has been a varied one. The Harlem-born entertainer got his start studying drama, but it was his singing voice and original songs that wowed his classmates.

He was the first artist in history to sell one million copies of an album,

Dropped Notes

for "Calypso" in 1955. He was also the first black Emmy Award winner, for his television show, "Tonight with Belafonte." He won a Tony Award for the Broadway show "John Murray Anderson's Almanac" and has starred in films such as "Island in the Sun" and Robert Altman's "Kansas City."

His human rights activism has

garnered him honors from the American Jewish Congress, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Peace Corps. Belafonte received the Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Prize in 1982.

Saturday's musical performance will be a mix of new and old songs, and his band features a varied lineup of musicians.

Pre-performance talks will take place in the Lied's Steinhart Room 55 and 30 minutes before the show.

Tickets are \$39, \$35 and \$31. Student tickets are half-price.

Reggae band has atypical history

By Shelley Mika

Staff writer

With decades of experience, performances with famous Jamaican musicians and the title of best band at the 1982 Reggae Sunsplash music festival, one would think the Blue Riddim Band's background typical of any successful reggae band.

But Blue Riddim has a rather atypical story. For one, the band is not from Jamaica. In fact, it now resides in Kansas City, Mo., far from the clear, blue waters of the Caribbean.

Blue Riddim's roots go back further than Kansas City, though.

"In the early '70s, I was living in New York playing in an R&B band," said Steve McLane, the drummer and an originating member of Blue Riddim. "We started hearing reggae on the radio. It seemed to be a really obvious dance form that was being ignored."

Rhythm Function, as McLane's R&B band was then named, branched out in its musical styles and began exposing the music of Jamaica to Americans. In 1977, when the band added horn players Scott Korchak and Bob Blackett to capture more closely the reggae sound, Blue Riddim was born.

"The horn melodies they play are beautiful," said Carter VanPelt, host of the reggae radio program "400 Years" on local radio station KZUM.

Blue Riddim may not be the only American reggae band, but one of the things that sets it apart is its true understanding of not only the rhythm of reggae but also the roots of the music. Blue Riddim doesn't simply emulate a reggae sound, it has endeavored to understand and incorporate all of the historical developments of the music.

"We're able to cover the history of (reggae) — ska to rock steady to reggae to dancehall. We run the gamut while keeping respect for the roots," McLane said.

VanPelt agreed that Blue Riddim successfully performs the music despite the fact that the band doesn't originate from reggae's homeland.

"People say they close their eyes and feel like they're listening to a Jamaican band," VanPelt said.

But Blue Riddim also is able to incorporate other influences in its music.

"Their style draws heavily on the rocksteady and ska of the late '60s.

Blue Riddim



WHERE: Royal Grove, 340 W. Cornhusker Highway
WHEN: Saturday, 8 p.m.
COST: \$10 at the door
THE SKINNY: Reggae legends take the stage to rock.

But there's a heavy jazz and R&B influence, too," VanPelt said.

Among the band's successes are a Grammy nomination in 1986 and opening slots for performers such as Burning Spear, Peter Tosh, Bob Marley and Culture, just to name a few.

Not to mention the band regularly sells out its own shows. But perhaps the most notable and affirming point in Blue Riddim's history was its performance at the 1982 Reggae Sunsplash.

McLane said that because of a scheduling problem, Blue Riddim's performance began at dawn but succeeded in winning over the audience.

"As fate would have it, at the same time we sang the line to a song that went, 'It's best to rise with a smile on your face,' the sun rose over the mountains," McLane said.

Blue Riddim's appearance made such an impact that the band won the honor of "best band," despite the audience's skepticism of an American group.

"The fact that they captured the fancy of 25,000 Jamaicans really validates what they do," VanPelt said.

"Going to Jamaica and playing for Jamaicans made it real," McLane said.

"I don't think they realized how far their music had reached."

Though the members of Blue Riddim have lightened their tour schedule in the past years, McLane said the band looks forward to playing in Lincoln.

"We're taking it one step at a time. When it feels right (to begin touring again) we'll do it. Lincoln was one of the great places to play," McLane said.

McLane also said he hopes the show will draw both fans of reggae as well as anyone who has even a slight interest in it.

"We hope everyone keeps an open mind," McLane said. "We want to make people move their feet. When we get to their feet, we can get to their hearts."

Third 'Millionaire' winner credits luck

NEW YORK (AP) — A lowly moth was worth a million dollars to an aspiring screenwriter on ABC's "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire."

Joe Trela, a 25-year-old customer-service representative for a computer company, became the third contestant to win the big prize on an edition of ABC's hit game show that aired Thursday night.

The Cal Tech graduate was fortunate to get a \$1 million question that was about computers. He was asked what insect shorted out an early super-computer and inspired the term, "computer bug."

Asked to choose between a moth,

roach, fly or Japanese beetle, he correctly identified the moth as the culprit.

"I was lucky, which I guess was good enough," he said Thursday.

Trela certainly wasn't pressured into rushing his way through the game. He took nearly 15 minutes — although it was edited down for broadcast — to identify which baseball player appeared in the most World Series games.

"The producers were getting kind of cranky with me," he said.

By the time he had won \$32,000, Trela had used all three of his lifelines. That meant he had to answer the big-

money questions without help from a friend or the audience.

Trela, from Gilroy, Calif., is the youngest person to win the game. The show now airs in 52 countries, and there's been only one top-prize winner outside of the United States. A contestant in South Africa won earlier this month.

Trela, who is a bachelor, hopes to landscape his mother's backyard with the money, and maybe visit a friend in England. He won't say whether he plans to quit his job, but figures the money will give him the freedom to finish a science-fiction screenplay he's been writing.

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'ER' star Edwards carries show; key is dedication to character

BURBANK, Calif. (AP) — Anthony Edwards sinks into cushions in his trailer on the set of "ER," a light stubble dusting his face. He's traded his green scrubs for a red-wool sweater, rumpled pants and running shoes.

On this afternoon at soundstage 11 on the Warner Bros. lot, with his scenes already completed and hardly anyone paying attention, Edwards is perfectly playing his character, the beleaguered Dr. Mark Greene, without even trying.

"I'm so sickeningly close to it that I don't know if I separate so well anymore," he said.

There was the handsome George Clooney, the intense Eriq La Salle, the doe-faced Noah Wyle, the gritty Julianna Margulies and the graceful Gloria Reuben. But it has been the low-key Edwards who has anchored the show, making "ER" an NBC juggernaut for the past six years.

He provides another impressive

performance in an episode that aired Thursday at 9 p.m. titled "Under Control," in which everything that could go wrong in the hospital seemingly does. It's the only original episode airing this month.

"There are days where the doctors go, 'Oh, why this day? Was it a full moon or what was it in which so many things just multiply?'" Edwards said. "This is an episode where they try to capture that, 'Oh, no one would ever believe all this would happen at once.'"

How much is he like Dr. Greene, anyway?

"What I like about playing Mark Greene is there's a lot of things about him that I would like to be," Edwards said. "I'd like to be that committed, to be that good at something."

His commitment is acting, but don't tell that to him.

"What I'm committed to doing is pretending," he said, laughing, "which is very different. It's absolutely what I do for a living. I'm incredibly lucky.