

# 'Our Way' fitting tribute to Sinatra, Sammy

Platters, Coasters, Drifters bathe Sahara showroom with fun, upbeat tunes

By Dianna Saffold  
Sentinel-Voice

I love driving up to the Sahara Hotel & Casino because they must have some of the most accommodating valet parkers in Las Vegas. Though it sits at the end of the strip practically alone, the Sahara, with its exotic aura, definitely holds its own.

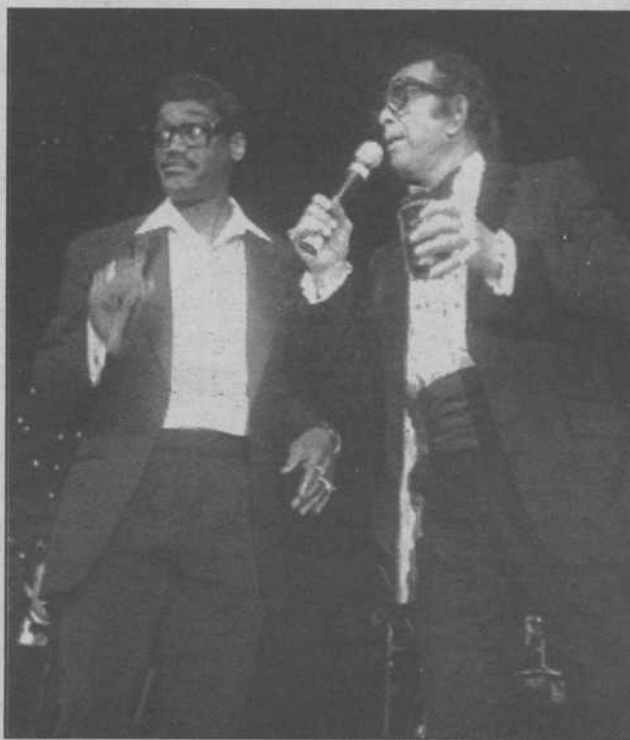
Its tag, "This Place Is Hot," is like a hook that stays with you. The Sahara is celebrating fifty years of fun, and we shall celebrate with them in the Congo Room as we join the Platters, Cornell Gunter's Coasters and Beary Hobb's Drifters.

A couple of years ago I had the pleasure of experiencing The Coasters for the first time. I could tell you what they did then, because they pretty much did the same thing this time. They performed songs that made the Coasters famous: crowd favorite "Charlie Brown," which of course, if you've seen the show before, you know it was really about Lucy. They traditionally pull

an unsuspecting female fan from the audience and she becomes Lucy, singing the hook and dancing right along with the famous Coasters.

When member Steve Smith took that baritone voice to the audience, it was definitely a pleasant surprise. Members Donald Pickney, Dennis Anderson, Steve Smith and Early Clover are seasoned performers, doing what made the Coasters famous; songs over fifty years old that the audience could still relate to, classics such as "Yakety Yak," "Poison Ivy," and "Love Potion #9." The Coasters never let you down with their unending hits and stage presentation.

From one set of stars to the next; The Platters were announced as three kings and a reigning queen. The unique balladeers opened with their classic hit, "Only You." During their reign, which appears timeless, the Platters have sold 120 million records, 16 of them gold. To the audience, the Platters softly asked, "Can you tell the Platters what



Sentinel-Voice photo by Dianna Saffold

Celebrity imposters Lambus Dean, left, and Bill Whitton honor Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr., members of city's legendary quintet, the Rat Pack.

time it is?"; and what music-appreciating fan does not know that answer...of course, it's "Twilight Time."

It's a feeling dripping with love that sweeps the room, prompting the audience to

clap at the mere recognition of their songs. However, the classy move that I wondered if anyone caught was how each time the crowd did show their appreciation with applause, a member of the Plat-

ters would nod graciously and say, "Thank you"...and I love that style. The reigning queen, Christine Love — the sole female of the group, also referred to as "the Platters' Dish" — flexed her vocal chords with, "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow/Someone to Watch." She held that last note until I started to squirm. Now it was time for the Platters to sweat, and that I had never seen...a sweating Platter.

I enjoyed the upbeat tunes that had been added to their show, including the piano piece performed by 32-year veteran Derrick David, who actually sang with an original Platter, the late Tony Williams. It was here that we enjoyed "My Prayer," which, of course, segued right into Platter trademark, "The Great Pretender." The upbeat twist the Platters put on some of their classic music brought a new feel to their show. Good job!

The Drifters — oh, excuse me...The Beary Hobb's Drifters — seized the stage

with an unbridled passion wrapped up warmly in a coat of energy. They came right out to party with "On Broadway." The energy was contagious. It spread through the crowd like a party virus. When their synchronized choreography slid them into that "Magic Moment," it was so different, so very new... "Everybody clap your hands, put the magic in the moment!" they shouted. Now, let us cha cha. Ladies, don't you love to see the crooners do that extended slide to the left — then to the right? Well, they put that move on us and we all went "Under the Boardwalk."

The Platters, Cornell Gunter's Coasters and Beary Hobb's Drifters are a great entertainment package. Gary Kuppel and the Casino Bandits were the house band and a damn good one. If dips into the pool of nostalgia turn you on, then you need to catch this show.

Appearing nightly in the Sahara Congo Room\* at 8 (See Tribune, Page 14)

## DMX-led 'Cradle 2 The Grave' weekend's top film

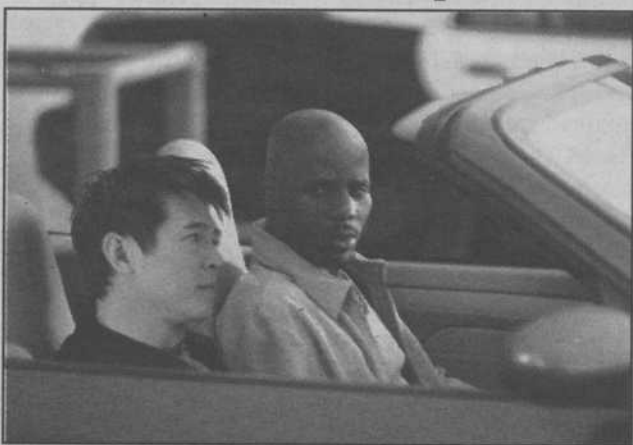
LOS ANGELES (AP) - The pairing of a rap star and a martial arts heavyweight pushed "Cradle 2 The Grave" to the top of the box office.

The high-octane action-adventure film featuring rapper DMX as a gang leader and martial arts star Jet Li as a Taiwanese intelligence officer took in \$17.1 million in its opening weekend, according to studio estimates Sunday. "Cradle" follows DMX and Li as they form an unlikely alliance in a film that mixes stolen diamonds, kidnapping and a plot to distribute a deadly new weapon of war.

"That combination of rap and martial arts stars equals big box office pretty consistently," said Paul Dergarabedian, president of box-office tracker Exhibitor Relations.

"Old School" aged well in its second weekend, holding onto second place with \$13.9 million. The comedy stars "Saturday Night Live" alum Will Ferrell, Vince Vaughn and Luke Wilson as thirtysomething partiers who form a college fraternity.

"Daredevil," Ben Affleck's superhero adven-



Rapper-actor DMX (right) and action-actor Jet-Li anchor "Cradle 2 The Grave," which ruled the weekend box office.

ture, dropped to third place with \$11 million after two weeks in the No. 1 slot.

The romantic comedy "How To Lose A Guy In 10 Days," with \$10.1 million, and the musical "Chicago," with \$8.1 million, rounded out the top five.

"Chicago," a front-runner for a best picture Oscar, crossed the \$100 million mark over the weekend, making it the highest-grossing musical since "Grease" in 1978. It's now earned \$105.2 million in North American theaters.

Serious films continued to struggle against lighter fare.

"People are still enjoying the escapism,"

Dergarabedian said.

"The Life of David Gale," starring Kevin Spacey as a capital-punishment opponent who lands on death row, earned \$4.4 million, finishing in eighth place. The Civil War epic "Gods and Generals" earned \$2.8 million to finish ninth.

The weekend's top 12 films grossed an estimated \$85.8 million. With just one major studio debut for the weekend, that was a drop of almost 10 percent from last weekend, when four big films opened in the top 10. The weekend box office was up 4.6 percent from the same weekend last year.

it's a shame a tree had to die for this.

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