

arts & entertainment news

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PHILADELPHIA

Queen Latifah ‘Unable To Accept’ Award For Personal Reasons

Queen Latifah is “unable to accept” an award named for a pioneering opera singer, citing personal reasons. The Marian Anderson Award made the announcement on its website. The organization wasn’t more explicit, and Queen Latifah’s spokeswoman did not immediately return an email Friday. The award is given in Philadelphia to critically acclaimed artists for their humanitarian work.

— The Associated Press



Photos by Michael Johnson | Daily Sun

Comedian Howie Mandel performs for the sold-out crowd at the Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center on Friday.

BACKSTAGE PASS

Insights on stage, screen and beyond.

Howie Mandel Makes Audience Part of Show

By KRISTEN FIORE
Daily Sun Senior Staff Writer

As comedian, actor, television host and “America’s Got Talent” judge, Howie Mandel jumped out onto the stage to a chorus of applause and cheers, he, too, let out a loud, “Woool!”

“I’ve never known how to answer that sound,” Mandel said.

The comedian brought his stand-up act to the Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center on Friday night for two packed performances.

He delivered a quick-paced and barely scripted routine, and his natural flow of humor made for a hysterically thrilling show.

A lot of his comedy included participation from the audience, which he quickly spun into jokes.

“You know what, I had an act and then I met you people,” Mandel said after a long exchange with the audience. “Did you all come in the same golf cart?”

The room filled with shrieks of laughter as he made the sign language interpreters sign dirty phrases and joked about traveling, his wife and doctors appointments.

“We watch him mostly on ‘America’s Got Talent,’ and he’s really clever,” said Jon Hartwig, of the Village of Charlotte. “I just like the guy.”

These days Mandel is most known for being a judge on “America’s Got Talent,” but he got his start doing comedy in the ‘80s and eventually worked his way up to producing shows like “Take it All” and “Deal with It” and hosting the popular “Deal or No Deal.”

“I grew up watching his comedy, so I wanted to see him in person,” said Joy Lynch, of the Village of Briar Meadow. “His comedy is dry and straightforward.”

Mandel’s set at The Sharon was straightforward and honest, and that’s what made it hilarious. He created a light, but comfortable, atmosphere for the audience, which shouted out answers to his questions.

“I didn’t see the ad for tonight’s performance,” Mandel said at one point. “Did it say ‘Come on in and chat with Howie?’”

Mandel’s interaction with audience members became just as much a part of his set as his jokes, however.

“People will be like, ‘Oh, I went to see Howie Mandel.

TANDEM

Continued from A1

The Williamses and tandem cyclists from The Villages will welcome visitors from around the country to ride together and have fun in and around Florida’s Friendliest Hometown.

The PANTHERS Tandem Bike Club of Florida will host the ninth annual Florida Tandem Rally on Oct. 19-21, giving dozens of tandem bicyclists — including some from Minnesota, New York and Texas — an opportunity to explore The Villages and surrounding communities via designated routes.

Jack Deacon and his wife, Pat, have been tandem-riding for 32 years now, racking up the miles in countless rallies across the United States — including The Villages.

“A group of tandems together is a wonderful, picturesque kind of thing,” said Jack, of the Village of Fernandina. “And you know people are having fun, you know people are cooperating, particularly when they’re riding in a group.”

Bob Thompson, a PANTHERS founder and Village of Winifred resident, saw the need for rallies in the Sunshine State after noticing how many Florida tandems were traveling to participate in events out of state. The PANTHERS (Partners Aboard Neat Tandems Happily Enjoying Riding Simultaneously) now host two rallies each year in Florida.

“I said, ‘Well, we’ll start a club so all the riders in Florida just don’t have to go so far every year to attend a rally to meet with friends,” said Thompson, who rides with his wife, Jan. “That’s the main reason for putting the club together, and that’s the main reason for holding the rallies is just to bring the group together twice a year. It creates a lot of good friendships and bonds with people like that across the states.”

Participating tandems will begin and end each of their rides — regardless of their distance traveled — at the Waterfront Inn at Lake Sumter Landing. On Saturday, for example, tandems will have

the option of bicycling on a 35-, 45- or 55-mile route.

“It’s kind of fun having people come from out of town and showing them where we ride,” said Dick Young, a PANTHERS member along with his wife, Patty. “You get a flavor for this part of Florida.”

Kathy Williams said the club deserves credit for making the rally such a popular event.

“They do a great job of pulling everything together and making everybody feel welcomed,” she said. “The rides are very friendly for different speeds because people ride different levels — and they just cover everything.”

Even off their bicycles, tandems will have time to bond during an ice cream social Oct. 19 and a lunch buffet and dinner banquet Oct. 20.

Kathy said she and Hank enjoy being able to meet other tandem couples through the rally.

“It’s interesting just to see the other bikes and talk to the other people who have different bikes. You learn a lot,” said Kathy, of the Village of La Belle. “It’s good to know that

there are so many more bikes out there.”

Though Thompson expects a slight decline in participation at this year’s rally, given the Southern Tandem Rally is the week before, he said the PANTHERS aren’t worried about overall attendance.

“We just want everybody who comes here to have a good time and to enjoy The Villages,” Thompson said.

Interested tandems can still sign up for the rally by filling out an application by Friday, the first day of the event. Applications may be obtained at floridatandemclub.org or at the Waterfront Inn on Friday.

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Comedian John Mendoza performs his set as he opens for Howie Mandel on Friday at The Sharon.

He was OK, but you should’ve heard us,” Mandel joked. Eventually he wondered if the whole thing was a dream.

“I’ll wake up and say, ‘Honey, I just had a weird dream about a place called The Villages,’” Mandel said.

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