

Lady A concert blurs lines between country and rock

By Kathryn Reed

STATELINE – If the phone rang at a quarter after one Saturday morning, blame it on Lady Antebellum. As an encore to their 17-song concert Friday night, the trio delivered their most recognizable song “Need you now.”

And to make sure the audience knew the lyrics, they were asked to sing the chorus as their own encore. After all, many at the sold-out concert at Harveys had been singing most of the night.

It's a quarter after one

I'm all alone

And I need you now

Said I wouldn't call

But I've lost all control

And I need you now



Lady
Antebellum
plays a sold-
out show July
29 in

Stateline.

Photos/Kathryn

Reed

The ballad earned Lady A, as fans call them, Song of the Year honors at this year's Grammy Awards. They collected four other statuettes that night – Record of the Year, Best Country Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals, Best Country Song, and Best Country Album.

Having released their first album just three years ago, they aren't slowing down. Their next album "Own the night" will be in stores Sept. 13. They played songs from it, including the title track.

"That's the whole concept of the next album – own the night. Live in the moment," vocalists Charles Kelley told the crowd.

Hillary Scott and Kelley's voices are much more powerful live than recorded. Watching the two of them interact on stage is a bit like a music video with the subtle choreography.

Dave Haywood, while he sings, is better known for the work he does with his hands – whether it's stroking the keyboard, guitar or mandolin.

They write most of their work, though sometimes record songs from others. "Hello world" is one of those songs, which they executed so well midway through the concert.

Scott rivaled Sara Evans' rendition of "A little bit stronger" – and with good reason, Scott penned the lyrics.



Charles Kelley
and Hillary
Scott

Kelley spent most of the time interacting with the audience, crooning to those in the front row as he paraded around the stage in jeans that left nothing to the imagination and a tight V-neck T-shirt.

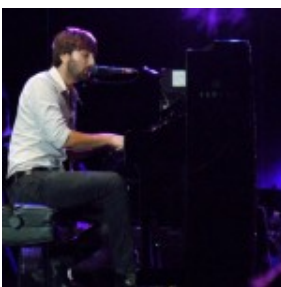
“This is the most beautiful area I’ve ever seen. It’s gorgeous,” Kelley said.

Scott, too, played to the crowd. In particular she singled out 8-year-old Mackenzie, saying how “American honey” reminded her when she was the youngster’s age.

Despite this being their third time to play the South Shore, most in the audience were first-timers to see the group live. Three years ago they made an appearance at the Hark Rock. In May 2010, Lady A opened for Tim McGraw. By that time they were winning Grammys and Country Music Awards. It’s hard to know if that concert sold-out because of Lady A or McGraw.

While Troy Olsen put on a good 30-minute act before Lady A took the stage, he clearly was the warm-up guy.

The whole night started a half hour late to accommodate Mother Nature who thought it a good idea to unleash a downpour as thousands of people were making their way to the outdoor venue.



Dave Haywood

Despite all the cowboy hats, at times it felt and sounded more like a rock concert with the five-member back-up band and the lights.

While all of this brought a tremendous amount of energy to the show and had people dancing more than sitting, the rock overpowered the country.

Being confused about the genre of music was reinforced when they played Aerosmith's "Sweet Emotion" and Prince's "Kiss."

After their 90-minute performance, my mom said, "It was good, but that was not country."

Playing Lady Antebellum's "I need you now" album in the car while waiting 50 minutes (no exaggeration) to get out of the parking garage had her back believing they are country artists.

Harveys Outdoor Concert Series has five more shows:

Aug. 9 – Phish – sold out

Aug. 10 – Phish – sold out

Aug. 13 – Big Four

Aug. 19 – Miranda Lambert with Little Big Town

Sept. 10 – Sammy Hagar & The Wabos.