

# The Indiana Casino Gaming News

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## Keenan named Aztar general manager

In late March, Columbia Entertainment – the new owner of Casino Aztar in Evansville – named Maureen Keenan as Aztar’s new Casino General Manager.

She becomes only the second general manager in the casino’s 12-year existence; her predecessor, Jim Brown, opened the casino as GM in 1995. Brown, who was also chairman of the Casino Association of Indiana’s board, resigned last month.

Along with Brown, Keenan helped open Casino Aztar. She has been the property’s head of Finance and Administration since 1995.

“We are fortunate to have Maureen in position to take over,” said William J. Yung, CEO of Columbia Entertainment. “She knows property operations inside and out, and has been integral to our compliance programs. She has a strong sense of the community. And she is a proven business manager. We are confi-



*Maureen Keenan, Casino Aztar’s new Casino General Manager*

dent that Casino Aztar will continue to flourish under her direction.”

The move makes Keenan the only woman currently heading a major Indiana casino. She has been in the lodging and gaming industries for 24 years, since joining the Tropicana Casino in Atlantic

“We are confident that Casino Aztar will continue to flourish under her direction.”

— William J. Yung, CEO of Columbia Entertainment.

City in 1983. She was named Controller of that property in 1994, before moving to Casino Aztar in 1995.

Keenan has a master’s degree in organizational management from the University of Phoenix and has studied accounting at Atlantic Community College in New Jersey and auditing at Stockton State College, also in New Jersey. She also holds a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from the University of Charleston.

A member of Who’s Who Society of Professionals, Keenan is married and the mother of two children.

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## Ameristar Casinos to purchase Resorts East Chicago

A Las Vegas-based company has announced plans to purchase Resorts East Chicago in the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2007.

Ameristar Casinos, Inc., said it will purchase the Chicagoland property for \$675 million. Resorts East Chicago currently is owned by Resorts International Holdings LLC – an closely-held affiliate of Colony Capital – which purchased the casino from Harrah’s in 2004.

John Boushy, chief executive officer of Ameristar, was quoted in the Chicago *Tribune* as saying he wants to get into the Chicagoland casino market, which he



*The property at Resorts East Chicago, shown here in a publicity photo.*

called “underserved” despite the presence of two Majestic Star casinos and the

currently-expanding Horseshoe Hammond in the nearby area. According to the *Tribune*, Boushy said he sees tremendous potential for growth in the area.

Among Ameristar’s plans for the property, they said, are to make improvements to the property. Currently, Resorts East Chicago has four levels of gaming, including 1,900 slots, 60 table games, and a hotel. Ameristar plans to expand the gaming facility, improve access to the casino, add parking, and upgrade non-gaming offerings.

# A look at this year's gaming legislation

With April ticking down, it's time once again to prepare our goodbyes for the legislature.

When this month ends, so does their session. And it's been a busy one for the casino industry; that's why now seems a good time to take a look at our issues, where they stand, and what Indiana's gaming industry will look like come May 1.



First, it appears that slots at Indiana's two race-tracks may be legalized.

This month, the Senate passed a bill that will allow up to 1,500 slot machines at each track, with a licensing fee of \$400 million each. That comes after the House voted to allow unlimited machines at each track, for a license fee of \$100 million each. The bill currently is headed to a conference committee, where the two houses will try to iron out differences before sending a compromise bill back for House and Senate approval.

But while the racetracks prepare for their slot machines, another attempt to legalize gaming machines appears headed in the opposite direction. At the beginning of the session, "Cherry Masters," the video gaming machines found predominantly in bars and truck stops, appeared headed for a vote toward legalization.

After the session started, though, the Senate instead moved to crack down on these machines, increasing enforcement - and possibly even appointing a special prosecutor to deal with cases that county prosecutors refuse to go after.

Finally, Indiana's riverboat casinos may get new games, as the legislature looks to expand the types of games casinos can offer - so long as they pass the rigorous muster of the Indiana Gaming Commission. Once they are approved, they should provide customers with even more choices and excitement.

Stay tuned to this space next month for a look at how each of these issues plays out in the legislature's final weeks.

- Mike Smith, Executive Director



## In Brief...

### Horseshoe continues work on new casino

Spectators in Hammond looked on in awe this month when the first part of the new Horseshoe Hammond showed up in town.

A 50,000-square-foot rectangular module coasted into the Hammond Marina, where it will eventually be submerged as one of six that form the base of Horseshoe Hammond. This is the first module to arrive for the project.

For the moment, the huge module is anchored outside the Marina garage. As the project progresses, its weight will submerge it beneath the water, and the new casino, entertainment venue, and 650-seat buffet will be built on top.

All of this is part of Horseshoe's casino renovation, a \$485 million project. It is expected to open in the summer of 2008.

### Nevada gamblers wager on cloned mules

How do you pick up tourism on a slow weekend in Nevada?

In Winnemucca, Nevada - about 165 miles east of Reno - you could develop a mule race, known as the Winnemucca Mule Races, Show, and Draft Horse Challenge. And, to add a little flavor, you could try racing natural bred mules against clones.

Last year, heads of the show decided to pit naturally-bred mules against those cloned from champion bloodline racers. The result was a huge boom in both attendance and

interest. The event, which annually draws about 3,000, saw a 13 percent increase in money gambled, and a boost in attendance.

Of course, organizers said that the additional revenue didn't cover the cost of the event. But they did drum up tourism on a slow weekend - and gained attention as far away as London, where organizers received calls for radio interviews.

The Nevada Gaming Commission has okayed a repeat of the event this year. It will occur June 2 and 3 in Winnemucca.



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## Admission and Wagering Taxes

Admission Tax, March '07	\$ 7,784,110
Wagering Tax, March '07	\$ 83,281,100
Admission Tax, Fiscal YTD	\$ 62,578,646
Wagering Tax, Fiscal YTD	\$545,086,268
<b>Total Admission and Wagering Tax</b>	<b>\$607,664,914</b>

\*Fiscal Year Defined as July 1 to June 30

# Caesars treats Meals on Wheels

Beneficiaries of the Southern Indiana's Meals on Wheels program got a treat this month courtesy of Caesars Indiana.

Not only did Caesars participate in two events, helping bring food to hundreds of area residents, but it put on one of the most exciting Meals on Wheels events of the year: The first ever Chili Con Caesars. The event featured nine celebrity chefs vying for the Pepper Award, given to the chef with the best chili recipe.

The mayors of Jeffersonville, New Albany and Scottsburg, Indiana, all were joined by three county sheriffs, a judge, a county commissioner, and Caesars General Manager Ed Garruto in the cook-off. The winner was Lifespan Resources, Inc., which operates the area's Meals on Wheels program – the organization walked away with the benefits of a silent auction, while the 400 guests were treated to both the celebrity chilies and a chili buffet.

And that wasn't all: In addition to sponsoring the



*Above: New Albany Mayor James Garner and Caesars Assistant GM Neil Walkoff deliver to a Meals on Wheels beneficiary.*



*Left: Judy Hess of Caesars presents a \$2,500 check for the Meals on Wheels program.*

event, Caesars surprised Lifespan with a check for \$2,500 to go toward the Meals on Wheels program. That brought the total result of this evening to 1,526 meals for homebound seniors and the disabled in four Indiana counties.

Nine days before this

event, some of those beneficiaries were treated to something special, when their meals were delivered by New Albany Mayor James Garner and Caesars Assistant GM Neil Walkoff.

The occasion for that treat was national "Meals of Mayors" day.

# East Chicago anniversary celebration set

Despite its upcoming sale, plans are going on for Resorts East Chicago's second anniversary bash this month.

The casino, which recently announced its coming purchase by Ameristar, will celebrate two years under the Resorts name. Resorts International Holdings LLC purchased the casino, along with two others, in 2004.

To commemorate the anniversary, Resorts East Chicago will host a number of promotional events. The anniversary week begins April 23 and will run through April 29; in that time, guests will earn their shots at cash and a number of prizes, including a Harley Davidson, a golf trip to Myrtle Beach, and a share of \$20,000.

And on the anniversary itself, guests will have a shot at winning \$1,000 every half-hour between noon and 9 p.m.

The whole bash will wrap up Sunday, April 29 with Resorts \$20,000 Anniversary Slot Tournament, where the top 25 contestants will win their share of \$20,000. The first prize winner will take home \$10,000.

# 'Real People, Unreal Money' stuffs pockets with \$500,000 in prizes

The Heartland Poker Tour swooped into the Majestic Star Casinos for a weekend last month, sending several local players away with their share of more than \$500,000 in winnings.

The televised tour brought its mantra of "Real People, Unreal Money" into the Chicagoland area March 17-25 for a week of No Limit Texas Hold 'Em. Hundreds of players sat down in Majestic Star's 21-table poker room for the tournament's qualifiers, satellites and – finally – the main event.

"Once again, the Heartland Poker Tour exceeded all our expectations," said Dom Niro, Majestic Star's Poker Room Manager. "The players 'Played Down' to the final six after nine hours of intense card playing. The final six came back Sunday morning ... and after about four and a half hours of intense play, the new Heartland Poker Tour champ was crowned."

That final round saw six players competing for their share of the \$503,440 prize pool. The first place winner, Jimmy K. of New Lenox, Illi-



*Jimmy K. of New Lenox*

nois (pictured) went home with \$140,963; a second place

prize of \$70,482 went to Gio M. of Chicago, and Joseph D. of Merrillville, Indiana took home \$45,310 for third prize.

"That was probably the most exciting final table we've ever had," said Todd Anderson, producer of the Heartland Poker Tour. "The atmosphere was fantastic, and we had some really wild hands and river cards. Those guys had a good time – especially our new champion. It's going to make for a great TV show."

The Heartland Poker Tour will return to Majestic Star July 21-29.

# Managers work on playground

A meeting of casino managers recently turned into a major community service event in French Lick, Indiana.

Managers from Benchmark Hospitality properties across the country – some as far away as Hawaii – descended on the company's newest property, the French Lick Casino & Resort, last month for a three-day manager's meeting. But somewhere between meetings and touring the facility, these 150 members of the company's management team decided to leave their mark on French Lick.

So the men and women rolled up their sleeves and made their way to the Springs Valley Schools and the Wee Care Day Care Center – all areas that needed a little tender loving care. The group, dubbed "Hometown Hospitality" volunteers, helped re-construct and paint playground equipment,



*A Springs Valley school playground gets a spruce-up from Benchmark.*

mulch, landscape, and paint classrooms.

With the help of Lindsey's Lumber and the Springs Valley Hardware Store, which donated the necessary supplies, the Hometown Hospitality crew donated about 450 man-hours of volunteer service to improve the grounds.



*A member of the Benchmark Hospitality management team sweeps up the sidewalk outside a Springs Valley School.*

## World Trade Organization cracks down *Law against Internet gambling ruled unfair; could lead to sanctions against United States*

American laws against Internet gambling could lead to trade restrictions with other nations, after the World Trade Organization ruled the law unfair.

The twin Caribbean island nation of Antigua and Barbuda filed a claim in 2003, saying that the United States' law against gambling over the Internet – including offshore betting – was harming their country's economy, and was unfair. The base of their claim was the exceptions to the American law for off-site betting on horse races.

According to the ruling, the United States could keep its law – no matter what damage it does to the Antigua economy – if the law were equally applied to Internet gambling within the United States. But as long as off-site horse race betting is allowed over the Internet, the law is "unfair."

The World Trade Organization already has ruled once that the law is unfair. This month's ruling simply states that the United States has not done what is necessary to fix the problem.

"It vindicates all that we have been saying for years about the discriminatory

practices of the United States in this area," Antigua Finance Minister Errol Cort said in a statement. "We look forward to the United States opening its markets."

There are 32 licensed casinos in Antigua, with 1,000 employees and an annual revenue of about \$130 million. Seven years ago, those casinos were bringing in about \$1 billion per year.

That's why Antigua – with the support of British gaming companies – filed the complaint with the WTO in 2003. Now, they can seek trade sanctions against America, unless the law is changed to either allow Internet gambling both on-shore and off, or the exception is removed for off-site gambling on horse racing.

This ruling makes Antigua the smallest nation to successfully file a claim in the WTO's history.

It is unknown if the United States will appeal the WTO's finding. Early indications are that, if they do not, Congress will not remove its exception for off-track betting, but instead will ease its restrictions on Internet gambling.

## Gaming terms

**Credit Slip** – Voucher or printed form that, when completed, accounts for the value of chips taken away from a table.

**Fan** – To lay the deck of cards out on the table for observation and verification.

**Joint Bank** – A situation where two players combine their resources and play jointly off the total sum, sharing in the win or loss.

**Probability** – A statistics term describing the likelihood that one among a number of possible outcomes of an event will occur.

**Straddle** – In poker, a bet of twice the ante, placed by the second player before the deal.