

The Indiana Casino Gaming News

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Note from the President

In the last 15 years, Indiana's casinos have provided tremendous benefit to the people of Indiana.

I'm not talking about the tax money generated for projects around the state - though those have been a tremendous benefit. Nor am I talking about the philanthropic efforts that have helped people across the state.

I'm talking about the jobs. It isn't an exaggeration to say that the jobs created by Indiana's casinos have changed lives all across the state. In this issue, we've featured two of those stories - stories of people whose lives have been changed because they work at Indiana casinos. Both are truly inspirational stories; what's amazing is that they are only the tip of the iceberg. Walk into any casino in Indiana, and you will encounter several team members whose lives have been made better by their jobs.

That's why casinos benefit more than the state of Indiana. Casinos benefit the *people* of Indiana.

- Mike Smith, President



Casino Jobs Have Changed Lives

Rita Richardson never saw herself working at a casino.

For 33 years, she worked on the line at General Motors; she assumed she'd stay there until she was ready to retire. But when the company started closing plants, Richardson suddenly found herself forced into early retirement. When her husband was laid off from the RCA plant, things suddenly became very difficult.

"I sat at home for two years, only making enough on my retirement to cover the basics," Richardson said. "I had a car in the driveway, but no money for gas; I'd spent 33 years doing one thing, and didn't get any job offers because I didn't have experience doing anything else."

When word came that Hoosier Park would be opening a casino, Richardson and her husband went to the job fair. The people there helped her create a resume; they helped her apply for two jobs.

Today, both Richardson and her husband are proud members of the Hoosier Park Casino team.

"I work in the uniforms department, and I love it," Richardson said. "And my husband got a job; he started in housekeeping and was transferred to the count room in the casino."

"Hoosier Park has been the answer to so many people's prayers who lost jobs in the GM plant closings."

Richardson's sentiments aren't unique; Hoosier Park Casino alone created more than 700 jobs when it opened in Summer 2008. And it isn't just Hoosier Park; as of March 2010, Indiana's casinos had created more than 15,000 jobs. Some of those were relatively new - for example, when Horseshoe Casino in Hammond opened its new casino last year, it added more



(Above, Right) Aztar's Joanna Weigle; (Left) Hoosier Park's Rita Richardson

than the clothes on their back.

The team at Casino Aztar immediately stepped in to help Weigle - who had, at the time, been employed at Aztar less than eight months. She received money from the casino's Employee Hardship Fund to help with rent and utility deposits; meanwhile, her fellow team members brought in furniture, toys, baby items, and bedding to help Weigle and her children get back on their feet. One team member even volunteered to drive them to visit prospective new homes, as they had no other form of transportation.

Within a week after the fire, the employees at Casino Aztar had a moving truck, and were working together to move Weigle and her children into a new home.

"Even before that, I knew Aztar was a great place to work," Weigle said. "But I will never forget what happened to me and my family, and the tremendous outpouring of kindness we received from my co-workers here at Aztar."

than 150 new positions.

Even better is the atmosphere people like Rita Richardson find themselves in when working at a casino. As Casino Aztar's Joanna Weigle recently learned, casino team members become like a family - and when one of their fellow team members is in trouble, they band together to help.

Weigle is one of Aztar's 960 team members, almost all of whom have been hired from the Evansville area. A single mother, she went to sleep in her rental home one night recently, only to awaken to the smell of smoke. After escaping the burning building with her two children, she and her family found themselves homeless, and with nothing more

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Executive Chef Ashley Archer (top right) and his team prepared two courses for Meals on Wheels.

Ameristar culinary staff shines in kitchen for Meals on Wheels

Ameristar East Chicago stepped up to help feed those in need, playing a major role in the ninth annual Meals on Wheels Dine with the Chefs Gala.

The event, held March 7 at the Avalon Manor in Hobart, Ind., featured two courses prepared by the Ameristar culinary staff – including one planned and one cooked on the fly, after organizers found themselves short an appetizer

course. Executive Chef Ashley Archer and his team prepared the dinner's main entrée – a short rib dish – then added a sweet potato ravioli appetizer at the last minute.

"This function was a successful one, and would not have been that way without all the support of (Ameristar's) chefs," said Chef David Siano, one of the event's organizers, in a letter thanking Ameristar

for adding the appetizer to its contribution. "We were really pressed at the time, and Ameristar really came through.

"I didn't see anything left on the plates that came back to the kitchen, so that should tell you what the guests thought of (the food)." All proceeds from the event went to Meals on Wheels.

March revenue rises slightly

March proved a good month for Indiana's casinos – though not quite as good as state officials would have liked.

Overall revenue at Indiana's casino properties showed a slight uptick from a year earlier, at \$908 million for the month. That number was up 0.8 percent from a year ago, when Hoosier casinos brought in \$901 million; however, wagering income remained flat from a year earlier – and came in below the state's expectations, according to *Business First of Louisville*.

In a month when Indiana officials predicted \$360.3 million in wagering revenue, Indiana's casinos came up 1.7 percent short, at \$354 million. This in spite of a 193.2 percent increase in wagering at Indiana's two newest properties, located at the state's horse tracks. Those two casinos – Indiana Live! and Hoosier Park Casino – made \$85.9 million in wagering revenue, as opposed to only \$29.3 million in March 2009.

Internet gaming gets new advocate

American Gaming Association open to Web-based betting

The American Gaming Association came down off the fence this month, announcing it is "open to the concept of legalized Internet gambling."

That statement, by association CEO and president Frank Fahrenkopf, came after the association officially changed its stance at a board meeting in early March. The reasoning, according to *Card Player* magazine (which interviewed Fahrenkopf about the issue), was the gaming association's decision that technology capable of properly regulating online gaming now exists.

"We now believe that Internet gaming can be properly regulated so long as there is a tough regulatory framework that is in place," Fahrenkopf told *Card*

Player. "We would be open to looking at legislation that's out there to see whether it provides the consumer protections we think are so important."

Members of the AGA remain divided on whether a framework for legalized online gaming should come from the federal or state government, which has thus far kept the group from taking an official position on legislation like that offered by Congressman Barney Frank. That bill would legalize online gaming at the federal level (though it is, by most accounts, unlikely to be acted upon during the current Congressional session).

The entire Fahrenkopf interview is available at cardplayer.com.

Casinos 'kept beckoning' Savage to the industry

Ameristar East general manager tried other industries before finding his calling

Some might say Pete Savage was born into the casino industry.

"I grew up in Las Vegas," said Savage, the senior vice president and general manager of Ameristar East Chicago. "I always say that, if you grew up in Vegas, you're probably in the casino business – just like if you grew up in Detroit, you're probably in the car business."

After spending his early days in casinos, Savage tried a few things outside the industry. He went back to school in his 30s, earning an undergraduate degree in accounting and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Nevada at Las Vegas. He even took a job in another industry, working as a certified public accountant (he still holds his CPA. But the casino industry "kept beckoning," and eventually, he went back.

He has been at Ameristar East Chicago since November – a position he took after spending two years running a pair of racetrack casinos in upstate New York. Before that, he spent five years as the general manager of a casino in Black Hawk, Colorado.

"I knew Ameristar was a good company from my time in Colorado," Savage said. "When I was there, they came in and basically took over a bankrupt property and completely turned it around from a physical plant standpoint. It was amazing to see the transformation of that team – I was very, very impressed by them.

"So when the opportunity came up to work for Ameristar, I jumped on it."

What he's found is a "challenging" position; in spite of a less saturated market than



he'd seen in Colorado, where he said there were 25 casinos in a three mile range, he noted that the other casinos around him now all are "very competitive."

"Obviously, there are bigger properties out there with a lot

more amenities," he said. "That challenge makes it fun; I've met a lot of my contemporaries here already, and they're great people."

Over the next few years, Savage has a few goals for Ameristar. One, he noted, is obvious: to increase the casino's market share. He also hopes to bring stability to a position that has turned over multiple times recently.

He also hopes to get to know the area, and to travel the Midwest with his wife. They have been married for 11 years.

"We like to travel," Savage said. "We visit the Vegas area quite a bit, because both of our families are still there; and we want to explore the Midwest. When we were in New York, we explored that area; we just like traveling and visiting the region."

Barden Gary Foundation sending students on college tours

Five Gary, Indiana, students will enjoy a life-changing collegiate experience this year, thanks to the Barden Gary Foundation.

The Foundation, created by Majestic Star owner Don H. Barden to encourage students to reach their full scholastic potential, last month announced its plans to sponsor five students to attend Giving Education Meaningful Substance's, also known as GEMS, 24th annual Historical Black College Tour. The students – David Lee, Dyanmond Battle, Melanie Lucas, and Gwendolyn Fine of West Side High School Academy and Jelisa Brown of Emerson Visual Performing Arts – will visit 13 colleges and universities around the country.

"With the support of the Barden Gary Foundation, this

contribution will allow our organization to further educate students about historically black colleges and universities, teaching life skills, exposing our youth to campus life and stress the importance for students to understand how critical it is to pass the SAT test", said James Piggee, founder of GEMS.

"The Barden Gary Foundation will invest \$2,500 in sponsoring the five student winners," said Chareice White, president of the foundation. Our board of directors is very committed to providing the resources that are needed in helping to educate our youth. We applaud Mr. Piggee on twenty four years of providing a positively unforgettable educational experience for the youth of Northwest Indiana."



On the tour funded by the Barden Gary Foundation, students will have the chance to visit Morehouse College, Clark Atlanta University, and Spellman College in Atlanta; Paine College in Augusta, GA; Savannah State University in Savannah, GA; Claflin University in Orangeburg, SC; Florida A&M University in Tallahassee; Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, AL; Alabama State University in Montgomery; Oakwood College and Alabama A&M University in Huntsville, AL; Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, AL; and Tennessee State University in Nashville.

Upcoming events

April/May Casino Entertainment:

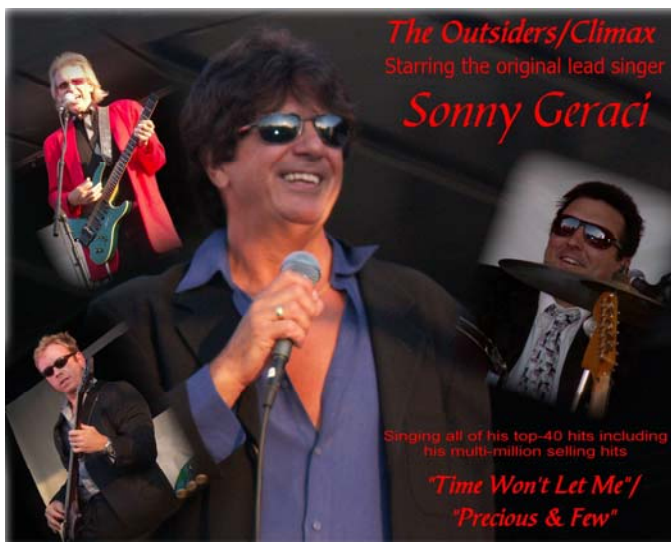
Eddie Griffin: Friday, April 23;
7:30 p.m. at Horseshoe
Hammond

Lemon Wheel: Friday & Saturday,
April 23 and 24; 9 p.m. at Indiana
Live!

Patti LaBelle: Saturday, May 15; 8
p.m. at Grand Victoria

Sonny Geraci & The Outsiders:
Friday and Saturday, May 21 &
22; 8 & 10 p.m. at Casino Aztar

Village People: Saturday, May 22;
7 and 10 p.m. at Hoosier Park



Sonny Geraci



The Village People



Pattie LaBelle



One North Capitol, Suite 520 • Indianapolis, IN 46204
Phone: 317-231-7030 • Fax: 317-231-7035 • info@CasinoAssociation.org
Problem Gambling Hotline: 1-800-994-8448

Admission and Wagering Taxes

Admission Tax, March '10	\$ 7,159,303
Wagering Tax, March '10	\$ 80,378,806
Admission Tax, Fiscal YTD	\$ 60,165,832
Wagering Tax, Fiscal YTD	\$558,000,804
Total Admission and Wagering Tax	\$8,521,094,416

*Fiscal Year Defined as July 1 to June 30

The Casino Association of Indiana (CAI) was formed to support the Indiana casino industry. Currently, there are 12 member properties in the CAI. We will utilize the highest standard of ethics and integrity to promote and protect the interests of the Indiana Casino Gaming Entertainment Industry through advocacy, communications and education.