

The Indiana Casino Gaming News

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Casinos join in Summer Celebration

The nation's largest African-American event returned to Indianapolis last month, and once again, the Casino Association of Indiana was a sponsor.

This year's Summer Celebration – a chief fund-raising event for the Indiana Black Expo – came through the state capital July 12-22, with an estimated 350,000 people from around the country in attendance.

Ever year since 1971, the event has been a benchmark of the African-American community as local and national celebrities and members of the business and corporate community join individuals and families to celebrate African-American tradition and culture. The celebration includes business workshops, health and wellness, employment opportunities, spiritual enrichment opportunities, exhibits, youth activities, and entertainment.

This year, the attendees were expected to pour about \$72 million into the Indianapo-



Above: Marketing Directors Shelby Curry (Horseshoe) and Edward Williams (Resorts).
Right: Attendee Bonita Edison walked away with a brand new 32" color TV, courtesy of the Casino Association of Indiana.



lis economy during the 11-day event; about \$22 million of that came from people who traveled more than 50 miles to the event, making the Summer Celebration the fourth-largest convention in Indianapolis this year.

The Casino Association of Indiana was among the 700 vendors that participated in this year's event, and also provided several of the 1,500 vol-

unteers working the Celebration.

As a major fund-raiser for the IBE, Summer Celebration was expected to raise more than \$2 million. Last year's event cleared a total of \$2.3 million.

The money will go toward the Indiana Black Expo's year-round youth and family programs.

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In a pinch, \$70,000 in revenue helps Harrison County

Government officials in Harrison County, Indiana, this month received a much-needed financial bail-out from their casino-generated tax revenue.

The county's solid waste district received an emergency appropriation of \$70,000 from casino revenues, allowing it to continue operation. Without that money, the district would not

have been able to make the week's payroll, and it would have had to shut down.

The district's estimated \$406,000 annual budget goes toward running a recycling program from the county's industrial park, located north of Corydon. Unfortunately, the district's tax levy generates only about \$225,000 a year, meaning that it has to rely on surpluses from the

The solid waste district received an emergency appropriation of \$70,000 from casino revenues.

Harrison County income tax to stay afloat.

This year, however, that surplus ran out, which meant that the Harrison County Council and Harrison County

Commissioners had to find some way to come up with the needed money. After a heated debate over the issue, the Council agreed to appropriate the necessary \$70,000 from casino tax funds; in a special meeting late last month, the County Commissioners agreed to write the check.

The vote came just in time to meet payroll.

Why Indiana should encourage growth

For the last week, I've been keeping my eye on the Illinois government.

Our western neighbors are talking about expanded gaming - possibly as many as four new casinos in the Chicago-land area. Needless to say, this would bring new competition to our northern casinos - just as possible expanded gaming in Kentucky could create new competition for our Ohio River casinos.



For the last 12 years, Indiana has relied on revenue from the gaming industry. We create jobs, which leads to increased income tax; we pay admission taxes, gaming taxes, and property taxes that roll straight into the state coffers. And when the state gets in trouble, they turn to gaming to help out; the most recent example is Indiana's "racinos" - horse tracks that soon will, for a licensing fee of \$250 million each, have their very own slot machines.

It's a terrific arrangement for everyone involved; the casinos make money, the state makes money, and our guests get all the fun and excitement that comes from a casino environment. But with all the out-of-state competition cropping up, we have to make sure Indiana's casinos stay at the top of the game.

Which is why I wondered, during this past year's legislative session, why legislators kicked around the idea of charging our casinos to expand. They increased the top tax bracket; they talked about fees to expand, to create new entertainment venues - to invest in our host communities.

I know of no other business in the state of Indiana that actually is *charged* to expand. In fact, that conflicts with the very notion of growth. This growth will keep us ahead of the game in competing with other states; it will keep the tax dollars flowing into Indiana's coffers. And it will create new jobs, new economic opportunities, and new tax dollars for the state.

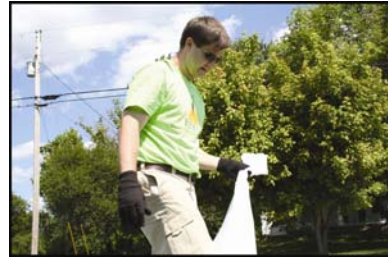
This kind of growth is good for everyone. And that's why I hope, when the legislature returns in 2008, they aren't still talking about stunting it.

- Mike Smith, President



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In Brief...

Caesars H.E.R.O.s clean up local highway

Drivers along Indiana State Road 111 saw a new crew out cleaning the road last month.

A group of Caesars Indiana's H.E.R.O.s (Harrah's Employees Reaching Out) took time in July to clean about two miles of roadway near the casino property. The group, comprised of Caesars Management and Facilities representatives, cleared trash and debris from the side of the road.

In all, the team - which was working toward an Adopt-A-Highway project - cleared more than 90 large bags of garbage from the side of Indiana State Road 111 on July 18.

The casino employees are working to adopt that stretch of the highway, keeping it clean for travelers and for casino patrons headed toward Caesars Indiana. They will continue to work to keep it clean.

Indian casino becomes Michigan's 2nd largest

A new casino, recently opened in Southwestern Michigan, may bring some unwanted competition to Indiana's northern casinos.

The Four Winds Casino Resort, located in New Buffalo, Michigan, aims to bring gamblers from "Indiana, Michigan, and the Chicago area," according to an article in the *Detroit Free Press*. It will provide a major source of competition to Detroit's three existing casinos; however, if Four Winds succeeds in bringing gamblers from Indiana and the Chicago area, it

could also draw business away from several Indiana casinos.

The casino, owned by the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians and run by Lakes Entertainment Inc., opened to the public Thursday, August 2. It includes 130,000 square feet of gaming space, 3,000 slot machines, 110 table games, six restaurants, and a 165-room suite hotel.

That makes the Four Winds Michigan's second-largest casino, after the Soaring Eagle Casino in Mt. Pleasant.

Admission and Wagering Taxes

Admission Tax, July '07	\$ 7,797,306
Wagering Tax, July '07	\$37,648,739
Admission Tax, Fiscal YTD	\$ 7,797,306
Wagering Tax, Fiscal YTD	\$37,648,739
Total Admission and Wagering Tax	\$45,446,045

*Fiscal Year Defined as July 1 to June 30

Casino helps with schooling, home ownership

How many opportunities has the casino industry given Reggie Dotson?

First, there was the scholarship. Then, the first job, the master's degree, and the promotions. And let's not forget the house Reggie purchased with the casino's help.

"Working in the casino industry has drastically improved my life," Reggie said. "From giving me my first opportunity to work in a large business setting, to broadening my abilities and scope in the communication arena ... to having an opportunity to meet, grow relationships, and work with business professionals, working for the casino industry has been one of the driving forces behind it all."

For Reggie, that "driving force" began in 1996, when he was preparing to graduate



Reggie Dotson

high school. The East Chicago casino was offering three scholarships – one for \$10,000 a year, and two for \$5,000 a year. Reggie wrote the application essay, sat for the interviews, and received a renewable \$5,000 scholarship.

He took the money to Indiana University, where he graduated with a four-year degree in journalism. That led to a job at a Chicago conferencing company; quickly, though, Reggie moved back to the industry that had helped pay for his education.

And since that time, he's moved up the ranks.

"I started as an Internal Communications Specialist for what was, at the time, Harrah's East Chicago," Reggie said. "Since that time, I was promoted to the role of Marketing Communication Specialist in 2004, specializing in PR, communications and community relations, and was recently promoted to the role of PR/Communications Manager in April 2007."

In that time, Reggie bought his first house and obtained his master's degree – both with the help of his employer.

The house purchase happened in 2005, with the help of Resorts East Chicago's Housing Assistance Program. The program provides employees with up to \$5,000 for closing and other costs associated with purchasing a home in East Chicago.

As for the master's degree – that happened in May 2006, with Resorts reimbursing of Reggie's tuition up to \$2,500 a year.

"So, while I did need some additional financial aid, the Resorts assistance helped me tremendously, and allowed me not to have to rely on student loans."

So now, with his promotion and master's degree in hand, Reggie is excited about his future in the casino industry.

"I take great pride in telling everyone that the casino industry is a great industry to work for," Dotson said. "If you work hard, apply yourself, count and thank God for your blessings, you can go as far in the industry as your mind and your dreams allow you to go."

Employees awarded Shining Star

Two long-term employees received Grand Victoria Casino's Shining Star Award this month, honoring their years of service and dedication to both Grand Victoria and the local community.

Slot Floor Attendant Christina Becker and Table Game Dealer Curt McKenzie received the monthly employee awards for July. Becker, a local resident, has worked at Grand Victoria since the casino's opening, August 28, 1996; McKenzie has been on board since September 5 of that year.

In accepting the award, Becker talked about how much she has



Curt McKenzie

enjoyed working for Grand Victoria – including her favorite part of the job, interacting with the casino's patrons, many of whom she now knows on a first-name basis. Along with her work at the casino, Becker is involved in



Christina Becker

numerous community organizations, including local baseball leagues and the local Cub Scouts, where she had been long-time leader.

McKenzie dedicated his award to all the employees within his department.

Horseshoe gives \$2,500 to help elderly patients

Horseshoe Casino Hammond gave a gift to the ailing elderly in Northern Indiana this month, with a donation to the region's Alzheimer's patients.

The casino presented a \$2,500 donation to Alzheimer's Services of Northern Indiana this month. The group, an affiliate of Alzheimer's Foundation of America, is a not-for-profit organization in its 25th year serving 14 Northern Indiana counties.

Alzheimer's Services of Northern Indiana relies on donations such as this to continue its mission of providing help and hope to northern Indiana families afflicted with this horrible disease. The organization helps by providing free services such as support groups, informational classes, and a weekly Care Connection telephone support network offering national speakers and a 24-hour toll-free helpline.

Gaming Commission job an 'exciting' opportunity

Kenny Rowan never imagined himself in the gaming industry.

The native of Brazil, Indiana, planned to spend his life in law enforcement; he joined the Vigo County Sheriff's Department right out of school, and moved to the Indiana State Police two years later.

Then, Kenny received an offer that changed his career.

"I was brought in and had the opportunity to (help) start an agency from the ground up, which really intrigued me," he said. "I thought that was exciting – it was something you don't get very many chances to be able to do."

After 10 years with the Indiana State Police, Kenny was offered the chance to



Kenneth Rowan

build the new Gaming Agents Enforcement division of the Indiana Gaming Commission. The new group would be charged with investigating gaming crimes and enforcing gaming regulations in Indiana's casinos – a job that had, until that point, been handled by the state police.

So who better than a state police officer to oversee the department? Kenny had spent the past several years teaching at the Indiana State Police Academy; he thus knew how

to train officers, and how to build a curriculum tailored to the unique responsibilities of these new gaming agents.

"There are the two sides we have to balance out," Kenny said. "They are tasked with investigating gaming crimes, but they also have to handle the regulatory issues. So they are continually updating their training in table games, slot machines, and how games are cheated ... plus, on the traditional side of it, they continue to train on their firearms, defensive tactics, chemical mace – the traditional law enforcement."

Two years in, the challenges of the job remain exciting to Kenny. As of March 17, all 11 Indiana casinos are be-

ing overseen by his agents; so now, his job has become less developing curriculum, and more maintaining training and overseeing regulation.

And he loves doing it; every day, Kenny commutes almost an hour from Brazil, Indiana, to Indianapolis to work. Then, in the evenings, he returns home to his wife of 13 years, Amy, and their two children, 10-year-old daughter Mikayla and 10-year-old son, Kennedy. Between the job and his family, Kenny doesn't have much time for hobbies – he likes to read, exercise, and root for the Colts – but that's okay with Kenny.

"I've been here since 2005," he said, "and I've enjoyed it every day."

Responsible Gaming Education Week



A table at Caesars Indiana is set to remind employees and guests about Responsible Gaming Education Week.

This month, Indiana's casinos joined the American Gaming Association in observing Responsible Gaming Education Week from August 6-10.

Over the course of the week, numerous casinos took part in Responsible Gaming activities. From employee training sessions

to quizzes and contests themed around responsible gaming, our casinos sought to educate both employees and the public on the importance of responsible gaming.

The Casino Association of Indiana encourages all gamers to "Keep it Fun," and to be responsible when they visit their local casinos.



Resorts East Chicago posted signs around its casino, including this one near the entrance, to remind visitors and staff about Responsible Gaming Education Week. It was one of several reminders offered by the casino.



A Human Resources representative runs a seminar for Caesars employees, reminding them their responsibilities in helping customers "Keep it Fun" while visiting the casino.