

The Indiana Casino Gaming News

A Monthly Publication of the Casino Association of Indiana

Volume 6, Issue 6.....June 2009

Horseshoe staff chips in for pets, troops, cancer

Supporting our troops. Helping our pets. Giving hope to cancer patients.

For the employees of Horseshoe Hammond, giving back to the community is always a priority. And in May and June, they stepped to the plate to help three different groups, through three different events.

It started at the beginning of May, when Horseshoe employees were asked to bring in items for local animal shelters. Over the course of the month, the Horseshoe team generously donated food, toys, and medications for the animals staying in these shelters, helping ensure that they had all of the supplies necessary to get through the summer months.

Then, over the Memorial Day weekend, members of the Horseshoe slot department donated tasty goodies to help raise money for an overnight Relay for Life event. The event was designed to spread awareness of cancer prevention, treatments and cures; to celebrate survivorship; and to

raise money for research to find more treatments for cancer. Funds raised by the event were given to local groups to provide advocacy and assistance to people suffering from various forms of cancer.

Horseshoe team members also will be partnering with the American Cancer Society and community members from Hammond to take part in Relay for Life on June 12 and 13.

Relay for Life brings together more than 3.5 million people across the country each year to celebrate the lives of those who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost, and fight back against a disease that takes too much.

And finally, throughout the month of June, Horseshoe team members will once again sponsor a supply drive for troops. The drive will benefit military personnel stationed overseas and is a way for Horseshoe employees to show their support of the troops standing up for the United States. Team members are



Employees of Horseshoe Hammond's slot department pose with food donated for this year's Relay for Life event - one example of Horseshoe's community involvement this spring.

donating food, snacks, toiletries, DVDs, magazines,

books, socks, insoles, phone cards and special gifts.

Illinois bill encourages casino improvements, expansion

Officials in Illinois are looking to respond to intense out-of-state gaming competition by encouraging casino properties in their state to improve, expand, and invest.

The Illinois Senate recently passed a bill that would drop the state's \$3-per-person admission tax on all casinos that either have made at least \$45 million in capital investments since January 2006, or that would now make capital investment in that amount.

That includes investment in the casino, the property, or in creating non-gaming amenities as part of the property.

"I believe, in the end, this will encourage operators to invest more in their casinos," Sen. Mike Jacobs, D-East Moline, told the Galesburgh *Register-Mail*.

The bill, which cleared the Senate with a 40-13 vote, would cost the state and local communities several million dollars in admission tax reve-

nues. But legislators hope to make up for that shortfall by adding 1 percent to the tax casinos pay on their adjusted gross receipts - receipts that, they hope, would increase greatly thanks to the investments created by the bill.

The result, proponents say, would be a win-win situation, with the casinos saving on the admission tax and drawing additional revenue from their investment, and the state and local communities coming out

ahead thanks to the increased tax on adjusted gross receipts.

Tom Brimberry, city administrator of East Peoria, Illinois (home of the Par-a-Dice casino), told the *Register-Mail* that he would be concerned about his community's losing the admission tax.

But in the end, he said, he "would be pleased to see legislation that would encourage the Par-a-Dice and other gaming facilities to expand and invest in capital projects."

Celebrating Responsible Gaming

Responsibility is a cornerstone of our industry.

Each member of the Casino Association of Indiana feels a responsibility toward its host community—a responsibility it fills through investment in the community, through philanthropy, and through the countless hours of service given by its employees.



Our industry bears a responsibility toward the state, evidenced through the billions in taxes we have paid since the first casino opened in 1995.

But, most importantly, we as an industry have a responsibility toward our patrons. We are responsible for providing them the best product, the best service, and for showing them a great time when they come to visit our properties.

Each year, the CAI and its members are active participants in Responsible Gaming Education Week (RGEW). The purpose of RGEW is to remind both casinos and their patrons to keep it fun.

This year, the theme for RGEW—which will be held from August 3-9—is “Know the Code.” That theme is a reference to the American Gaming Association’s (AGA) Code of Conduct for Responsible Gaming, which was first implemented five years ago to serve as a guideline for responsible gaming practices. In essence, it is an industry pledge to employees, patrons, and the public to integrate responsible gaming practices into every aspect of daily operations.

During RGEW and the time leading up to it, the AGA encourages all casinos across the nation to remind its employees about its own responsible gaming practices—and to ensure that they are being implemented. This is a commitment Indiana’s casinos hold to every single day—and one that we renew each year during RGEW.

Please stay tuned for more details of this year’s RGEW activities.

- Mike Smith, President

Inside Indiana Casinos



Aztar restaurant bucks trend

While the nation’s economic downturn has taken a large bite out of many in the restaurant business, at least one Evansville eatery is thriving.

Max & Erma’s, located in Evansville’s Casino Aztar property, has seen a tremendous up tick in sales over the past year. After an increase in sales in the fourth quarter of 2008, Max & Erma’s has posted a whopping 17.15 percent sales increase in the first quarter of 2009. That increase is based on

numbers from the same time period in 2008.

“Our achievement can be directly attributed to the teamwork shown by our employees,” said Trenten Hall, the restaurant’s general manager. “Their dedication to service is remarkable, and it has paid off in sales.”

Above, the staff of Aztar’s Max & Erma’s is pictured in uniform. The restaurant chain is based out of Columbus, Ohio, with the first store opening in 1972.

Country bands battle in French Lick

French Lick Casino Resort has gone country this month, with 16 country bands from three states duking it out for a grand prize of \$10,000.

Those 16 finalists in the French Lick Resort’s 10K Country Band Challenge all began their road to the grand prize on May 22, with the first performances of the preliminary round. Continuing May 23, 24, and 29, each night of the first round

saw four bands dueling for two spots in the June finals.

Round two ran June 5-6; as in the first round, audience applause determined the winner of each pairing. Now, four bands remain, with each scheduled to perform June 12. Then, on June 13, the final two bands will compete for a panel of four judges.

The \$10,000 winner will be chosen that night.



One North Capitol, Suite 520
Indianapolis, IN 46204
Phone: 317-231-7030
Fax: 317-231-7035

Email info@CasinoAssociation.org
Problem Gambling Hotline: 1-800-994-8448

Admission and Wagering Taxes

Admission Tax, May '09	\$ 7,013,732
Wagering Tax, May '09	\$ 82,884,661
Admission Tax, Fiscal YTD	\$ 72,408,987
Wagering Tax, Fiscal YTD	\$724,116,148
Total Admission and Wagering Tax	\$796,525,135

*Fiscal Year Defined as July 1 to June 30

Universities team up to probe gambling disorders

Two major American universities will take center stage in the study of gambling disorders, thanks to a new partnership announced this month by the National Center for Responsible Gaming (NCRG).

The NCRG Centers of Excellence in Gambling Research will be at Yale University and the University of Minnesota, with a focus on employing a long-term, institutional approach to conducting innovative and multidisciplinary research and education programs about gambling disorders. The group's work will be managed by the Institute for Research on Gambling

Disorders – an independent program of the NCRG.

Each program will receive a three-year grant from the NCRG for a total of \$402,500.

"In 1996, the NCRG launched the first competitive grants program in the U.S. to fund research into gambling disorders," Glenn Christensen, chairman of the NCRG, said in a news release. "The creation of the Centers of Excellence in Gambling Research marks a true evolution in our approach to funding research – one we are confident will contribute to seminal findings on gambling disorders in the years ahead."

For more information on the centers, visit the Institute's Web site at www.gamblingdisorders.org.

The two locations for the Centers of Excellence were chosen by an independent panel of peer reviewers. Their research programs will focus on basic questions about gambling addiction and be directed by a principal investigator who is a recognized expert in the field of gambling disorders.

At Yale, that expert will be

Dr. Marc Potenza. He will lead a team examining the various factors that influence the treatment of gambling disorders. At the University of Minnesota, Dr. Jon Grant will lead a team in developing a model of impulsivity that will allow researchers to identify young adults at risk for becoming pathological gamblers.

In addition, both Centers will conduct innovative, science-based public education programs.

For more information on the centers, please visit the Institute's Web site at www.gamblingdisorders.org.



Beach Boys to sing at casino

Yet another big-name band is coming to Indiana this month, courtesy of Indiana's casino gaming industry.

Rock legends the Beach Boys will be at Hoosier Park Racing and Casino on Saturday, July 11, for a performance in The Yard (the outside area located between the casino and racetrack). Tickets are available at Shelby's Gifts, located on the property's terrace level,

or by calling (765) 642-7223.

Over the last 40 years, the Beach Boys have produced 36 top 40 hits and four No. 1 singles, including "Help Me Rhonda," "I Get Around," "Good Vibrations," and "Kokomo."

The concert at Hoosier Park will feature the group's current lineup, including original member Mike Love and long-time band member Bruce Johnston.

Economic punch hits nation's casinos, but is softer in Indiana

Like nearly every industry in America, the economic downturn has hit the casino industry – though not as hard as some might expect.

According to the American Gaming Association's "State of the States" report – widely regarded as the most comprehensive report of its kind – gaming revenue nationwide totaled \$32.54 billion in 2008. That represented a 4.7 percent drop from 2007; it also was the second-highest total in the industry's history, falling only behind the previous year's record total.

Thanks in part to the addition of casinos at Indiana's two horse tracks, Indiana's gaming industry actually saw a slight increase in 2008.

"The U.S. is grappling with the most severe economic downturn in more than a half-century, and – like nearly every industry – the commercial casino industry has been hit hard," said Frank J. Fahrenkopf Jr., president and CEO of the AGA. "However, it continues to be an important provider of jobs and direct gaming taxes, helping states, communities, and families weather the economic storm."

According to the report, commercial casinos returned more than \$5.6 billion in tax revenues to gaming communities across the country, helping provide vital public services like transportation, infrastructure, and education.

The report also indicated that the industry provided jobs to more than 357,000 people, who earned a total of \$14 billion in wages, salaries, and benefits.

Another 29,600 people earned more than \$2 billion in wages from jobs in the gaming equipment manufacturing sector. That industry saw a direct economic impact of \$12.7 billion from the casino industry in 2008 – a 6.7 percent increase over 2007.



Majestic Star employees and their families took part in this year's "Walk Now for Autism" event, sponsored by Autism Speaks. The event, which took place at Chicago's Soldier Field, was a fund-raiser for autism research and awareness.



This month, the French Lick Resort Casino opened its new, 8,000-square-foot High Limits area, located just off the main gaming floor.

Members of the Ameristar East Chicago team warm up for the Great Strides Cystic Fibrosis Walk by doing the "Cupid Shuffle." The event was held May 17.



Campaign pushes for slots at Ky. racetracks

The Kentucky Equine Education Project (KEEP) is at work again this month, attempting to persuade Kentucky legislators to allow casino gaming at the state's horse tracks.

In an effort to combat the Kentucky legislature's continued reluctance to approve casino gaming, officials from KEEP this month have launched a public relations campaign to bring slots to the horse tracks. Through both a series of glossy brochures – which have been mailed to 250,000 homes – and radio spots, KEEP officials contend the state's famed horse industry could be in trouble without a boost from video gaming similar to what is at Indiana's tracks.

"Expanded gaming at tracks in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Florida, and Indiana have given those states a competitive edge, luring away our owners, trainers, and horses," the KEEP narrator warns in the radio ad, which has aired in several areas including Louisville and Lexington. "Kentucky tracks are being forced to cut race days and some are on the verge of closing forever."

Executives from Churchill Downs also have been part of the intense lobby, gathering in Louisville recently to plead the case for video gaming terminals. And Governor Steve Beshear, whose election came after he ran a strongly pro-gaming campaign, has joined in, telling the Associated Press that the stakes for Kentucky's \$4 billion horse industry – which employs about 100,000 Kentuckians – are too high not to take action.

Opponents of gaming in Kentucky say they are not worried about the campaign, because they do not believe there is enough legislative support to bring slots to the racetracks.

But KEEP Chairman Patrick Neely told the AP that legislators need to understand the consequences of not acting.

"We just felt that, right now, it is imperative for us to communicate as broadly and succinctly as possible what our industry is facing," he told the AP.