

The Indiana Casino Gaming News

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French Lick shows early success

Orange County is looking forward to "better days," beginning this month, after witnessing the overwhelming early success of its new French Lick Casino & Resort.

After years of lobbying, talking, building and hype, Indiana's newest casino finally threw open its doors with a VIP opening Oct. 31 and a public premiere Nov. 3.

It all began with the Oct. 31 ribbon-cutting ceremony, followed by the first spins of the French Lick Casino slot machines. Hundreds of invited guests watched as Connie Carnes, daughter of the late Jack Carnes, tearfully played the first dollar on a two-cent slot machine. Jack Carnes had been a longtime local supporter of casino gaming, helping lead the push to bring a riverboat to French Lick before his tragic death in a car accident two years ago.

"This was his dream," Connie Carnes said simply, after finishing her play.

The rest of the day was marked by excitement as about 4,000 invited guests had their run of the slots and poker ta-



Connie Carnes, daughter of late Orange County casino advocate Jack Carnes, plays the first dollar at the French Lick Resort Casino.

bles until midnight. Then, the casino closed for two days to prepare for the public opening at 8 a.m. Friday, Nov. 3.

Within four hours of that opening, more than 2,500 people entered the casino, according to casino spokesperson Dyan Welsh. And things haven't slowed down since.

That success has many locals - from government officers to businesses to everyday men and women - excited about the possibilities casino gaming could bring to strug-

gling Orange County. Already, the casino has created new jobs and investment, through its own construction, through renovation of the historic Donald Ross Golf Course, and through the hotel that came with the casino.

And now that the \$382 million facility is open, it immediately becomes the area's top tourist attraction. With 84,000 square feet of space - including a 42,000-square-foot gaming floor - the casino is expected to draw plenty of visitors.

Columbia Sussex and Aztar merger closer to reality

Columbia Sussex, which recently won a bidding war for Aztar Corp., appears ready to take over the helm of Evansville's Casino Aztar, after earning approval from the Indiana Gaming Commission.

In a 4-1 decision, the commission voted to approve the acquisition, which will allow Columbia Sussex to take own-

ership and begin to operate the casino once the acquisition is final. The Gaming Commission also learned the Aztar President and General Manager Jim Brown will stay on at the casino after the merger is completed.

"We're delighted that Jim will continue as GM at the



Evansville property," said William Yung, Columbia's owner and CEO.

"And we expect to take advantage of

his experience by expanding his role in Columbia Sussex's community relations program."

That announcement, which included naming Brown the

company's new vice-president of community relations, also included a pledge to continue Aztar's tradition of strong involvement in the Evansville community.

The merger now awaits approval from the Nevada Gaming Board and Louisiana Gaming Control Board before becoming final.

Creating a new era of Prohibition

As many of you know, one of the final acts of the 109th Congress was to pass a bill aimed to stop most forms of gambling over the Internet.

While we acknowledge that those adopting it did so with the best intentions, I have to question how effective this new legislation will be in preventing online gambling.



Already, some Web sites have gone out of business, and others are going quickly. But those sites shutting down aren't necessarily the serious "problem" sites; in fact, they are the sites that operated with some semblance of legitimacy. These were the sites that collected exactly what they were owed, paid out when they lost, and generally operated in such a manner that no one involved was ripped off.

The problem with this new law is that those semi-legitimate sites are likely the only ones it will shut down; with all of the technology now available, I'm afraid Congress has created a new form of Prohibition, where Internet gambling will go on without any air of regulation or legitimacy. And while all illegal gambling is a problem, this is about to become an even larger problem.

Instead of creating a blanket regulation such as this, with no real effective method of enforcement, Congress needs to take another, deeper look at this issue. Internet gambling isn't something that can be shut down via a cursory new law; to have a full understanding of the available technology - and, thus, to have a chance at real enforcement - requires more study.

That's what I believe is needed here: More study. Congress needs to look into this to try to create a law that spells out a means of enforcement that is effective, realistic, and executable.

Without that, we're simply re-entering Prohibition.

- Mike Smith, Executive Director



In Brief...

Horseshoe heroes save casino guest's life

Nothing seemed unusual about October 23.

Horseshoe Casino security guard Kelsha Bates started her day like normal: She woke up, got dressed, came to work. But by the end of the day, she'd done something quite unusual - and quiet heroic: She'd saved a Horseshoe guest's life.

Kelsha received a call at work, stating that there was an ill guest on a bus on property. Kelsha, a trained EMT, responded immediately; within seconds, Kelsha boarded the bus, finding the guest unconscious. She found no pulse, and the guest was having difficulty breathing. Kelsha instantly attempted to help

her regain consciousness.

Chuck Strehlow, another EMT who was beginning his shift, and Supervisor Tarrance Salter quickly came to Kelsha's aid. The trio worked together to perform CPR and chest compressions. They also used an automatic external defibrillator to help save the guest's life. Thanks to these three heroes, the guest started to breathe better just as an ambulance was arriving.

Since the incident, the guest's sister has called Horseshoe to thank these team members and other Horseshoe staff who helped save her sister's life. The guest is doing much better now.

Caesars Indiana dives into Kentuckiana Walks

Employees at Caesars Indiana took their first foray into the Kentuckiana Heart Walk last month - and succeeded with flying colors.

In its debut performance, Caesars Indiana was among the top teams at the Heart Walk; the casino's H.E.R.O.s (Harrah's Employees Reaching Out) also were the top

team in the Harrison County walk, held October 1. A total of 243 H.E.R.O.s participated in the two walks, raising more than \$20,000.

Caesars entered the Heart Walk after Neil Walkoff, the casino's assistant general manager, was named to the board of the Kentuckiana American Heart Association.



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Admission and Wagering Taxes

Admission Tax, October '06	\$ 6,569,189
Wagering Tax, October '06	\$ 58,507,144
Admission Tax, Fiscal YTD	\$ 27,532,247
Wagering Tax, Fiscal YTD	\$190,151,195
Total Admission and Wagering Tax	\$217,683,442

*Fiscal Year Defined as July 1 to June 30

TV poker tournament draws 182 'real people'

A Chicago man walked away with more than \$120,000 last month after winning Chicagoland's first televised poker tournament, which took place at Majestic Star Casino.

The No Limit Texas Hold-'Em Heartland Poker Tour stopped at Majestic Star on October 28, when 182 players began competition for the grand prize. Those 182 were the survivors of several qualifying rounds, which saw more than 650 players attempt to qualify.

"The tournament exceeded all expectations as hundreds of players made their way to our 21-table poker room to play satellites, qualifiers, and ultimately, the main event," said Dom Niro, Poker Room Manager at Majestic Star Casinos. "And, after nine hours of intense card playing, the qualifiers 'played down' to the final six."

Those finalists returned

Sunday, October 29, with cards flying at 11:30 a.m. Four and a half hours later, the Heartland Poker Tour crowned its newest champion, Joel C. of Chicago, who made off with the \$122,335 grand prize.

In second place was Dennis D. of Menominee, Ill.; he took home \$61,167, while third-place winner Brian T. of Chicago took \$39,321.

In all, tournament winnings totaled \$435,000 – and the players got to be on TV.

"Unlike other televised tournaments, Heartland Poker Tour is unique. Our motto is 'Real People, Unreal Money,'" said Todd Anderson, General Partner of Heartland Poker Tour. "We give regular people the opportunity to participate in a televised Poker tournament without the large entry fee. Our players are more plumbers than professionals.

"We were very excited



ABOVE: Champion Joel C. of Chicago poses with his winnings after the final round the Heartland Poker Tour at Majestic Star. RIGHT: The final six players sit for the championship round.



about our tournament at Majestic Star. This tournament had the largest prize pool in the history of HPT."

Ohio voters deny slot sites; Indiana county wants new casino

An Ohio ballot initiative that would have brought slots to several Ohio locations was defeated at the polls this month, eliminating the Buckeye state's chances for expanded gaming in the coming year.

Despite tremendous publicity and a \$20 million campaign, Buckeye voters rejected the Learn & Earn initiative in the November 7 election. The plan would have brought up to 31,500 slots to nine sites in Ohio, including several race-tracks and two other locations in Cleveland.

The proposal also would have given 30 percent of state-wide gaming profits to education, creating college scholarships for local residents.

According to the Cleveland *Plain-Dealer*, the \$20 million spent on Learn & Earn made this the most expensive ballot initiative in the state's history. Despite that, though - and despite the education hook that many proponents believed would seal the deal - the issue failed to catch on with either state office-holders or voters.

This election marked the third time since 1990 that Ohio voters defeated a gaming initiative at the ballot boxes. It now is unknown if or when Ohio again will put this subject before Buckeye voters.

Voters in Clark County, Indiana, have decided that they are ready for a casino. The question is, when will a casino be ready for them?

A decade after resoundingly rejecting casino gaming, Clark County residents gave an enthusiastic thumbs-up to the idea this Election Day. According to Jeffersonville City Councilman John Perkins, who came out in favor of the initiative, the marked turnaround came after eight years of experience with nearby Caesars Indiana.

The last time the issue was on the ballot, Perkins told the Louisville *Courier-Journal*, opponents "ran pictures and ads of prostitutes standing under street lights" to scare voters.

But after seeing the safety of and economic benefits from nearby Caesars, voters clearly changed their minds.

Of course, that could mean very little, in a practical sense.

Before Clark County could receive a casino, that casino would have to have a gaming license from the state. At present, all 11 of the state's gaming licenses are in use.

Thus, in order for gaming to come to Clark County, the state would have to create a new license, or an existing casino would have to either shut down or move.

Horseshoe market analyst on loan to United Way

Tom Kopanda wants to help improve the quality of life in Northwest Indiana and the surrounding communities.

You won't see him going door to door asking for donations from residents, though if asked to do so he'd gladly oblige. He's just that kind of guy. No; Tom's way of giving back to all Americans for the last 25 years has been as an Indiana guardsman. In 2004, he was among the 400 guardsman deployed to Iraq for 12 months to assist in our country's war efforts.

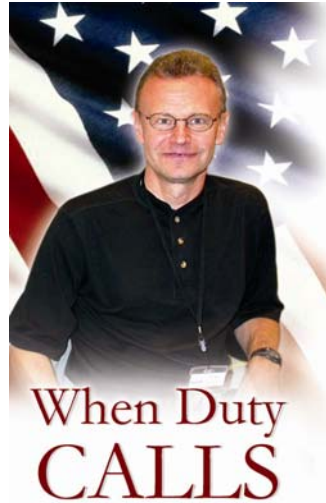
Now, as a member of the Horseshoe Casino team, Tom again is doing commendable work – this time, in representing Horseshoe's 2,300 employees in community service.

For the past 11 weeks,

Tom has served double duty as a Horseshoe Marketing Analyst and Lake Area United Way loaned executive — with more time going into his work as a loaned executive. During the summer, Tom was hand selected by Rick Mazer, Senior Vice President & General Manager, to represent Horseshoe as a loaned executive to assist United Way in its 2006-2007 giving campaign.

"I am very honored to represent Horseshoe," Tom said. "Knowing that the company I work for takes a proactive leadership position each year by doing good deeds, such as partnering with the United Way, makes me very proud."

Tom is one of six loaned executives from various businesses throughout the area.



During the 13-week program, business representatives work full time as United Way campaign staffers. Tom's client groups include the retail and communications sectors. He spends his days visiting busi-

nesses, conducting presentations, and motivating and encouraging company leaders responsible for spearheading their own employee United Way campaigns.

"Every time I go out, I am touched by someone or something," Tom said. "I really can't pinpoint anything that stands out. There's always something heartfelt that happens."

Horseshoe's employee campaign began Oct. 30, and Tom is excited to return in time to encourage his fellow co-workers to contribute to the 2007 campaign.

"Every gift is appreciated. It goes toward helping someone in ways you really can't begin to measure . . . Everyone matters, and every gift matters."

Majestic Star lends a hand at local fund-raisers



David Schugar, vice-president and general manager of Majestic Star Casinos, shares smiles with Illinois Sen. Barack Obama during the Rev. Jesse Jackson's recent birthday party.

(Standing) Warden Karen Jones, Sheriff Roy Dominguez, Arlene Pearson and Chareice White of Majestic Star Casino, along with (Sitting) Millie Powers and Karry Rogers of Majestic Star, and Gabrielle Griswold, executive vice-president of Sky Value Airline, join forces to support the American Heart Association's fund raiser.



Gaming terms

Ax – 1) When the house takes its cut.

Discard – 1) Playing card that is removed from the deck until the next shuffle; 2) Used cards.

Fever – 1) Gambling habit; 2) In craps, the number five.

Handle – A total amount of money that changes hands over and over through a series of bets before it is actually won or lost.

Octant – In roulette, a term referring to any group of five number that are physically adjacent around the wheel.

Shill - An employee who sits down at an empty table and acts as a player to help get the game started.

