

NOGAMBLING in Indiana

Indiana Coalition Against Legalized Gambling NEWSLETTER

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ICALG FACES ANOTHER GAMBLING YEAR AT THE STATE HOUSE

By Lorin L. Clemenz

We are glad the General Assembly is over for 2007. Our politicians act as though gambling revenue is the only solution to Indiana's financial problems. Evidently the pockets are so deep the revenues are never ending and have no social costs. Both assumptions are incorrect. The privatization of the state lottery was not successful but Governor Daniels has indicated the issue will be back in 2008 for reconsideration. The biggest defeat we encountered was the approval of 2,000 slots machines at each of Indiana's two racetracks. We also were disappointed the Gaming Commission allowed more latitude with the casinos' building plans.



Clemenz

Our focus from now through February 2008? Here are concerns:

1. To oppose any attempt to privatize the State Lottery. Enough is enough. It would be great to see the Lottery banned but that is not going to happen in the near future. No form of gambling in Indiana is as prevalent in all the communities of Indiana as is the Hoosier State Lottery. Politicians also promote it as an answer to the brain drain of Indiana's best students. Money could be allotted to search for and recruit world-class scientists for our universities and to grant scholarships to students for merit and need. To reach this goal, we are asked to forget about the ones suffering the most because they have very little discretionary funds. Lower income Hoosier want to live the American dream of having luxuries, too, and gambling seems to be the only possible way of achieving that dream in their minds.
2. The addition of 2,000 slot machines at Indiana's two racetracks has several issues we must face.
 - a. It is anticipated that there will be a renewed attempt to legalize Electronic Gambling Machines for bars and private clubs. The argument will probably be put forward that the precedent has already been set by the slots at the racetracks. If this happens, it will be the largest expansion of gambling since permitting riverboat casinos.
 - b. The illegal Cherry Masters are supposed to be put out of business. Will the enforcement of this ban be ongoing or will it slacken in time as it leaves the publics mind?
 - c. How will the additional slot machines increase the problem of pathological gamblers? Our greatest gambling addictions are associated with riverboat casinos. Ten of the eleven are at the borders of Indiana. The new slots will be closer to Central Indiana and will attract more compulsive gamblers

within Indiana. The riverboat casinos have about 60 percent of addictive gamblers from our neighboring states. To accomplish these goals and challenges, we need your assistance. Your opinions need to be voiced throughout the year to our elected officials. Do not wait until 2008 to share your concerns with your State Representative, Senator and Governor Daniels. Every voice is important but it must be shared with those who can and will be able to influence the passage or defeat of a bill.

2007 NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST LEGALIZED GAMBLING/ NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST GAMBLING EXPANSION CONFERENCE

1 p.m. Friday, October 12 thru 5 p.m. Saturday, October 13
Sheraton National Hotel
900 S. Orme Street
Arlington, VA 22204
(just outside Washington DC close to Reagan National Airport)
Registration info for the conference and the hotel is on www.ncalg.org

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Gambling opponents, community leaders, gambling regulators, government watchdogs, elected officials, aides, faith leaders, educators, treatment providers, media, students, former gamblers, or anyone interested in facts, research and truth about gambling should come.

TOPICS INCLUDE:

Research, consumer issues, state lotteries, Internet gambling, on and off reservation tribal gambling, senior gambling, regulation issues, public policies treatment, gambling's connections and influence, equipping activities and more!

YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT IS APPRECIATED

Financial assistance is always appreciated. It can and will be used for special projects, for our newsletter, and for bringing in support for Indiana causes. We have appreciated Tom Grey coming to help us in planning and strategizing for issues we face in the General Assembly. If you desire to support the fight against the expansion of legalized gambling in Indiana please send a check to: Rev. Richard Hamilton, 4000 N. Meridian, Apt. 2G, Indianapolis, IN 46028. Make check payable to: ICALG. Thank you.

IMAGINE – GAMBLING CONTINUES TO EXPAND IN INDIANA

By Janet Jacobs

Under the influence of inspiration expressed by episcopal leadership within Hoosier United Methodist Together's July/August 2007 edition, I begin to perceive imagining-thoughts about our State of Indiana in light of the two articles (also, in the same issue) that focused on gambling.

Interestingly, snippets from the titles provide diverging implications: "Problem Gambling Conference a Success" "Indiana Sinks Deeper." Pairing this composite with Bishop Mike's invitation for us to "keep dreaming the kind of Indiana that God imagines and how we can become a part of that movement of God," both reality and developing reality (sometimes termed "the future") come to mind.

Most emphatically, in January 2001, when the proposal to initiate a new outreach to problem gamblers and their loved ones was offered to me, my human instincts responded, "God, Your thoughts are definitely not my thoughts!" Never, could (and would) I have imagined what was to develop.

Thus we took, and continue to take, always-new steps within Gambling Recovery Ministries that remains a regional (and points beyond) one-of-a-kind, faith-based outreach in the United States and, perhaps, in the world.

In the following, fittingly entitled Imagine!, you will read spoken comments and true stories and reports, which have been presented to me over the past six years. Expressed, first, are reflections of reality that may remain today. By contrast, the second part includes images and statements that, hopefully, will continue to progress and flourish.

Imagine!

- The 1998 Louisiana State University study of problem gambling in Indiana found 5.3 percent adults were problem gamblers and 0.8 percent were compulsive [pathological] gamblers . adolescents in grades 6-12 had a problem gambling rate of 11.2 percent and a compulsive gambling rate of 7.5 percent That was 1998, prior to the *Texas Hold'em/ Poker* craze.
- National trends in gambling participation from 1975-1999 found adult gambling increased from 68 percent to 86 percent and women's patterns have grown to resemble those of men (National Gambling Impact Study Commission of 1999).
- Often heard: "We don't have too many people in our area who gamble; I don't know of anyone who has gambling problems."
- Disordered gambling is an invisible problem: gamblers can chase highs for longer periods without being noticed . and;
- Children of compulsive gamblers have a much harder time understanding consequences, as the family gambling problem is less concrete. (ABC Wellness Center, Scottsdale, Arizona) They, also, tend to have more difficulty with forgiveness issues.
- The 1999 National Gambling Impact Study Commission

stated that within 50 miles of a casino, the rate of problem gambling doubles.

Imagine!

- From an international trainer of gambling addiction counseling: "Anything you [Gambling Recovery Ministries] can do in this field is significant!"
- The State of Indiana ranks second in the nation with regard to tax revenues received from the gambling industry (American Gaming Association).
- From a recent caller to the GRM office: "I called you because you're the only one in the phone book."
May the Holy Spirit bless your thoughts as you consider these stated realities; and may your prayers seek the Lord's footsteps that travel ahead - and lead us - through and beyond the bend.

The Rev. Janet Jacobs welcomes comments and questions. Contact her at 812-926-1052 or e-mail at jjacobs@grmumc.org.

A three-day conference titled "Partnership for the Future: Examining the Impacts of Problem Gambling in Society" will be held Sept. 19-21 at French Lick. Log on to www.inareaumc.org and go to "No Gambling in Indiana" on the home page to click on to a conference brochure.

The following are excerpts are from a commentary written by John W. Wolf and published in the Post Tribune Aug. 14.

SPORTS GAMBLING – SURPRISED?

We should not be surprised at the alleged corruption of a National Basketball Association official accused of gambling on games he refereed.

Remember Pete Rose, one of the best hitters in the history of baseball, who was barred for life after playing the bookies - even against his own team? Continual denial did not win him Hall of Fame induction, and later he confessed to the whole sordid mess.

Americans go on sports gambling sprees around the time of the World Series, the Super Bowl and the NCAA basketball tournament. Sports betting is legal only in Nevada, but it always provides a threat to the integrity of the sport. The NCAA has a vice president, Bill Saum, assigned to the gambling issue.

It is serious enough when a 13-year NBA veteran referee, Donaghy, is charged with manipulating the spread of NBA games at the bequest of the mob. It is even more horrible when we see NFL Atlanta Falcons quarterback Michael Vick investigated for allegedly organizing a gambling ring that bets on which dog can mangle another dog — then kill the losers. Gambling corrupts sports, any sport.

"Gambling is the only addiction promoted by government," said the late Sen. Paul Simon of Illinois. When the state promotes gambling, it is no surprise that gamblers seek to profit from both professional and amateur sports. Gambling corrupts sports.

John W. Wolf is one of the founders of and former Coordinator of the Indiana Coalition Against Legalized Gambling.

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