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*Editor in Chief:*

**David D. Waddell, Esq.**  
Phone: 517.507.3859  
[waddell@rmclegal.com](mailto:waddell@rmclegal.com)

*Senior Gaming Analyst  
& Editor:*

**Robert R. Russell, II**  
Phone: 517.507.3858  
[russell@rmclegal.com](mailto:russell@rmclegal.com)

*Reporter*

**Douglas L. Minke**  
Phone: 313.221.9380  
[minke@rmclegal.com](mailto:minke@rmclegal.com)

*Reporter*

**Blaine R. DeGracia**  
Phone: 517.507.3857  
[degracia@rmclegal.com](mailto:degracia@rmclegal.com)

*Subscription information:*  
[info@michigangaming.com](mailto:info@michigangaming.com)

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**RMC Ventures, LLC**

University Place Center  
333 Albert Ave, Suite 450  
East Lansing, MI 48823  
Phone: 517.507.3860  
Fax: 517.908.0235  
[www.rmclegal.com](http://www.rmclegal.com)

# The MICHIGAN GAMING Newsletter



## ONE YEAR CELEBRATION FOR FOUR WINDS CASINO RESORT

On August 2, 2008, Four Winds Casino Resort will celebrate its one year anniversary since opening its doors.

The Four Winds Casino features a 130,000 square foot gaming floor with over 3,000 slot machines and 100 table games. The casino gaming facilities, coupled with a 165-room hotel and events center, employ more than 2,000 workers. For more information about Four Winds Casino Resort, please select the following link: <http://fourwindscasino.com/>.

According to John Miller, Chairman of The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, "[w]e're very proud of the impact that the Four Winds Casino Resort has had on the local community. This includes the creation of thousands of jobs and donations to The Pokagon Fund, which is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to enhancing the lives of the residents in the New Buffalo region through the financial support of local governments, non profits, charities and other organizations."

Under their Tribal Class III Gaming Compact with the state, the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians is required to pay 8 percent and 2 percent of net revenue from slot machines, semi-annually, to the state and local government respectively, so long as certain obligations are met.

Spokesperson for the Pokagon Band, Tom Shields, President of Marketing Resource Group, said "the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians is involved in productive talks with representatives from the state of Michigan on these payments." He noted that the Pokagon Band feels that the state of Michigan's introduction of Club Keno games by the Michigan Lottery was a violation of the 1998 Class III Compact as it relates to payments owed to the

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state, and thus a resolution to this dispute is required. He emphasized that the Tribe is encouraged that a settlement can be reached. Mr. Shields noted that, as it relates to the 2 percent payments required to be paid to the local municipalities, the Tribe has had specific concerns over the make up of the local Board and the rules that the body is currently operating under. Thus, the Pokagon Band has sought the involvement of representatives from the state in order to solve these issues and make sure that payments made locally are in compliance with the Class III Gaming Compact.

Four Winds Casino Resort is located in Midwest Michigan just off Exit 1 of I-94, near the Michigan / Indiana border, just 75 miles east of Chicago.

## **FIREKEEPERS CASINO CONSTRUCTION BEGINS**

Construction for FireKeepers Casino began on May 7, 2008 and has since been making great progress, according to a casino press-release. The steel skeleton of the casino is taking shape and the opening of the class III Tribal casino is slated for the summer of 2009.

Located on Michigan Avenue near Exit 104 of I-94, just outside of Battle Creek, Michigan, the FireKeepers Casino project is owned by the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Indians. The actual casino will be managed by Gaming Entertainment (Michigan), L.L.C., a joint venture between Las Vegas-based Full House Resorts Inc., and RAM Entertainment, L.L.C., a privately owned investment company.

“The Tribe is very pleased with the progress that we are making in the construction of FireKeepers Casino. We have waited a long time to bring economic development and jobs to not only tribal members but also to the greater Calhoun County region,” stated Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Tribal Chairperson, Laura Spurr.

It is expected that the FireKeepers Casino project will create over 2,000 jobs, approximately 700 for the construction of the casino as well as 1,500 permanent jobs.

According to Casino General Manager R. Bruce McKee, “FireKeepers Casino will be seeking to hire employees who are outgoing, friendly and customer service oriented.” More importantly, McKee emphasized the utilization of local businesses to provide goods and services to the future casino.

The FireKeepers Casino project calls for the construction of a \$300 million, 236,000 square-foot facility to be built on 78 acres of land in Emmett Township. When completed, the casino is expected to offer 2,500 class III slot machines, 90 table games and 20 poker tables.

For more information on the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Indians, please visit <http://www.nhbpi.com/>. For an intriguing view of the real-time live progress of the FireKeepers casino construction please visit <http://oxblue.com/pro/open/clarkcc/firekeepers>.

## **FEDERAL COURT OF APPEALS REJECTS MICHGO’S REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION**

Last Friday, July 25, 2008, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia (Court) entered an Order denying the request of Michigan Gambling Opposition (MichGO) for rehearing on the Court’s April 29, 2008 decision in favor of the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) in the case of *Michigan Gambling Opposition v Kempthorne, et al.*

MichiGO has challenged the DOI’s decision to take 147 acres of land into trust for the benefit of the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians (the Gun Lake Band) in Wayland Township, near Grand Rapids, Michigan.

On Tuesday, July 29, and in response to the Court’s ruling, MichGo filed an “emergency motion for stay of mandate pending petition for certiorari” with the Court. The motion filing, along with prior public comments by MichGO’s attorneys, suggests that MichGO is planning to

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appeal to the United States Supreme Court. MichGO will likely face a difficult hurdle at this next level, as the Supreme Court only hears approximately 5% of the cases filed with the tribunal.

The Gun Lake Band is currently in discussions with the Michigan Senate concerning the approval of a Class III Gaming Compact, which would allow it to offer class III casino style games once all regulatory processes are met at the federal level.

The Gun Lake Band plans to build a \$200 million casino with an estimated 2,500 slots and 80 table games in Wayland Township, south of Grand Rapids in Western Michigan. In addition, it is estimated that the casino would employ over 1,800 people and create more than 3,100 indirect jobs. The casino would be obligated to pay between 8%-12% in tax revenue to the state and 2% to local governments.