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March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month

This March, the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) is hosting the 20th annual Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM), an initiative designed to educate and raise awareness about the issue of problem gambling and promote resources for those affected. A press release issued by the NCPG states:

“Problem gambling impacts millions of people in the United States and can have serious consequences for individuals, families and communities. Approximately 2 million adults in the US are estimated to meet the criteria for pathological gambling, while another 4-6 million adults are considered to have mild or moderate gambling problems; that is, they do not meet the full diagnostic criteria for gambling addiction but meet one or more of the criteria and are experiencing problems due to their gambling behavior. On average, each individual affected by gambling addiction impacts an additional seven to twenty people in their families and communities.”

During Problem Gambling Awareness Month, organizations nationwide work to raise awareness of the prevention, treatment, and recovery services available to individuals adversely affected by gambling. The grassroots campaign brings together a wide range of stakeholders, including NCPG State Affiliates, public health organizations, advocacy groups, professional sports leagues and gambling operators.

“The 20th anniversary of Problem Gambling Awareness Month is a milestone worth celebrating,” said Keith Whyte, Executive Director of NCPG. “For two decades, this initiative has helped to raise awareness about problem gambling. We hope that this year’s events will continue to educate and empower

communities across the country and reduce the impact of problem gambling.”

NCPG has developed a free toolkit of PGAM resources for individuals and organizations participating in advocacy and awareness activities throughout March. This year’s campaign hashtag is #PGAM2023, which participants are encouraged to use across various social media platforms.

For more information about problem gambling awareness month and tools for increasing awareness of problem gambling, please visit the NCPG’s [website](#).

Responsible gaming tools help keep March Madness wagering fun, says Michigan Gaming Control Board

In a [press release](#) issued on March 1, the Michigan Gaming Control Board (MGCB) notes that March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month and that it fully supports the efforts of the NCPG. “For 20 years, the NCPG has led efforts every March to heighten public awareness of problem gambling and the tools available to prevent, treat and recover from this sometimes-hidden addiction. The MGCB supports NCPG’s efforts to promote responsible gaming and improve awareness, Henry Williams, Michigan Gaming Control Board Executive Director said. “You may be caught up in the excitement of the gaming or sporting event but don’t forget to bet responsibly,” said Mr. Williams. “Gambling should be for entertainment, and it shouldn’t come at the expense of meeting your personal or family needs and obligations.”

The press release further observes: “You may believe your wagers are a slam dunk, but you can’t count on making a winning play every time you place a bet. It’s smart to keep control of your bankroll by planning your moves to limit wagering during March Madness or any other time of the year, advises the Michigan Gaming Control Board”.

“Follow these tips to have fun safely:

- **Set budget and time limits:** Set a timer on your watch or phone if you’re visiting a casino or use the tools authorized operators and providers offer patrons on their internet gaming or sports betting sites to establish account funding, wagering and time limits.
- **Frequency:** Gamble no more than four days per month or once per week.
- **Limit types:** Don’t play more than two types of games regularly.
- **Know how the games work:** Before placing a bet, make sure you understand the game.
- **Take breaks:** Step away and think about the time and money you’ve spent.
- **Keep wagering affordable:** The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Abuse suggests gambling no more than 1% of household income monthly. If you borrow money or use funds intended for necessities, you may lose more than you can afford.
- **Stay self-aware:** Avoid gambling if you are upset, stressed or in an addiction recovery program, and limit your intake of alcohol or cannabis.
- **Stick to your budget:** Don’t chase losses or think of gambling as a way to make money. If you’re out of money, it’s time to quit.
- **Don’t count on luck:** Good luck strategies don’t increase your odds of winning.
- **Keep it fun:** If it isn’t fun, stop wagering.

Sign up for a self-exclusion program if you are experiencing a gambling problem. The MGCB offers two self-exclusion options:

- The [Responsible Gaming Database](#): Choose complete exclusion for one or five years from all Michigan-authorized internet gaming providers, internet sports betting providers or both. Operators and providers may choose to apply self-exclusion broadly, which may prohibit gambling in other states, too.
- The [Disassociated Persons List](#): Voluntary signup prohibits visiting the three Detroit casinos for a minimum of five years.

Operators and providers offer their own internet self-exclusion programs on their websites under the responsible gaming or help sections.

If you believe you may have a gambling problem, please call the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services 24-hour, toll-free helpline at 1-800-270-7117. More information on problem gambling resources is available on the [MDHHS website](#).”

Michigan Lottery Works with NCPG to Address Problem Gambling

The Michigan Lottery is promoting awareness of problem gambling and the availability of prevention and treatment services in conjunction with the National Council on Problem Gambling this month. [Michigan Lottery Connect](#) has posted a website with information on warning signs of problem gambling, problem gambling screening tools, various responsible gambling tools (setting limits, self exclusion, and time and deposit limits) that it offers. Additionally, the site lists various places to go for help and support including the following:

- Michigan Problem Gambling Helpline: 1-800-270-7117 — a toll-free, confidential, one-on-one helpline available 24/7 to any Michigan resident seeking help for a gambling problem.
- [National Council on Problem Gambling](#) — serves as a national advocate for programs and services to assist problem gamblers and their families.
- [Gamblers Anonymous](#) — a fellowship of individuals who share the common desire to stop gambling.
- [Gam-Anon](#) — a fellowship of individuals who have been affected by a loved one’s problem gambling.
- [Michigan Department of Health and Human Services](#) — provides a variety of services to Michigan residents affected by problem gambling, which include the Michigan Problem Gambling Helpline and programs for treatment and prevention.
- [Michigan Association on Problem Gambling](#) — a Michigan organization helping gamblers and

their family members by presenting prevention and recovery information.

The Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi and FireKeepers Casino Hotels Announce Annual Contributions to the State of Michigan and Local Revenue Sharing Board

The Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP), owners of FireKeepers Casino Hotel in Battle Creek, announced the tribe’s contributions to the State of Michigan and the FireKeepers Local Revenue Sharing Board (FLRSB) today. For the second consecutive year, combined contributions exceed \$26 million and lifetime combined contributions exceed \$287 million. A combined \$26.4 million in combined contributions created check presentations of just over \$20 million to the State of Michigan and \$6.1 million to the FireKeepers LRSB. This brings the total monies NHBP has contributed to the State of Michigan to over \$214 million and over \$72 million to the FLRSB and creates a combined lifetime contribution, which totals more than \$287 million.

Two checks were presented from NHBP and FireKeepers. The state check was presented to Nate Engle, Regional Liaison of Community Affairs for Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, while the FLRSB check was presented to FLRSB Chairperson Derek King.

“These distributions reflect the ability of FireKeepers management and staff to leverage a beautiful property to attract and retain guests from across the region,” stated Jamie Stuck, Tribal Council Chairperson for the NHBP. “They faced challenges from staggering inflation and high gas prices, to tight labor markets and growing competition, with enthusiasm, and a compelling competitive drive to deliver excellent service.”

FireKeepers has increased its employee base to 2,072 Team Members with paid labor costs which

totalled \$104.2 million in 2022, an increase of 12.4% over 2021. Since opening, the labor total exceeds \$919 million. This investment includes total wages, health insurance, 401k match and incentives. The property is on track to break the \$1 billion dollar mark over the course of 2023.

“The FireKeepers Way is a path of hospitality excellence, where our team consistently delivers a Vegas-style experience, with a warm and welcoming environment, filled with engagement, enthusiasm and appreciation,” stated Frank Tecumseh, Chief Executive Officer at FireKeepers Casino Hotel. “We look forward to 2023 with optimism, based on our service history and an upcoming calendar filled with exciting promotions and superstar entertainment.”

A 2016 Compact Amendment between NHBP and the State of Michigan provides for a payment of up to \$500,000 per year of state revenue sharing payments to the Michigan Native American Heritage Fund. Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi Chairperson Jamie Stuck and Vice Chairperson Dorie Rios are appointed members to the Heritage Fund Board. In 2022, this fund provided financial assistance and/or reimbursement to eleven schools and educational services institutions to defray the costs of projects that promote positive relationships and accurate information on the history and role of Michigan’s Indian tribes and Native Americans in the state. Grant recipients include Saranac Community Schools to rebrand to a new mascot that is culturally responsive, Hartford Public Schools to implement at new curriculum to help build meaningful connections with students, as well as Chippewa Hills and Lansing school districts, Michigan College Access Network, and Western Michigan University’s Native American Affairs Council.

The check presented to the FLRSB is the thirteenth distribution since the first distribution in Feb. 2010, when the NHBP presented a check to the FLRSB for nearly \$2 million. The \$72,330,282 distributed to date have benefited a diverse array of groups, including:

- Harper Creek Community Schools

- Calhoun County Road Commission
- Emmett Township
- Calhoun County
- Calhoun Intermediate School District
- Kellogg Community College
- Willard Library
- Athens Township
- Marshall Township
- City of Marshall
- City of Battle Creek
- Athens Area Schools
- Village of Athens
- Battle Creek Public Schools
- Marshall Public Schools
- Lakeview School District
- Pennfield School

The Pokagon Band and its Four Winds Casinos Celebrate the Grand Opening of Their New Hotel and Amenities at Four Winds South Bend

The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians and their Four Winds® Casinos hosted a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony today to celebrate the Grand Opening of their new 23-story hotel tower at Four Winds South Bend, according to a [press release](#) issued earlier this week. Pokagon Citizens and invited guests, along with the media were in attendance to officially welcome the public to the expansion which features 317 rooms including 83 suites, Cedar Spa, Edgewater Café, Ribbon Town Conference and Event Center, an outdoor swimming pool on the third floor, and terraces with spectacular views. The completion of this expansion marks the latest addition to the casino resort which opened in January of 2018.

Commenting at the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, Rebecca Richards, Tribal Chairwoman of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi said, “The historical significance of South Bend to the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi, also known as Ribbon Town to our Tribe, cannot be understated. We have called this land home for hundreds of years and we are extremely proud to offer this incredible casino resort, with all of its new features and amenities,

to our fellow residents in the community and the region. The continued success of our Four Winds Casinos and our ability to make a financial investment of this size would not be possible without the experience of our incredibly talented Four Winds Casinos operations team. We couldn't be more proud of the result and are extremely excited for the public to experience everything Four Winds South Bend has to offer."

Frank Freedman, Chief Operating Officer of Four Winds Casinos added, "Prior to the opening of our first casino resort in New Buffalo, Michigan in 2007, the Pokagon Band had a vision to set a new standard for gaming in the Midwest. Over the last 16 years we've created unique destination experiences for our guests that continually raise the bar with new features, amenities, and attention to detail with a focus on excellent service. Today marks another important milestone as we continue to deliver on that vision and showcase the unique gaming and entertainment experience that the Four Winds brand is known for. I would personally like to thank the Pokagon Tribal Council and Gaming Authority for their support along this journey, as well as everyone that had a hand in the successful completion of this project. Whether you're visiting Four Winds South Bend for work, play, or

an escape from your everyday, we look forward to welcoming you and having you enjoy an experience that is uniquely Four Winds."

Four Winds South Bend's now offers:

- Luxury hotel rooms, suites and hospitality suites feature all the amenities you expect to find at a luxury resort.
- Cedar Spa offers a variety of traditional and unique spa therapies.
- The Edgewater Café is located on the third floor of the hotel and features cuisine inspired by the sun and sea.
- Ribbon Town Conference and Event Center is a 24,000 square foot multiuse facility that has 16 meeting rooms, a ballroom with seating for 800.

