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## Canada's Gambling Watch Network's e-mailed Newsletter

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Volume 7- September 11, 2006 – Issue 040

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We are not alone in our struggle against the continuing expansion of gambling in Canada. Going to <http://www.citizenvoice.ca> will give you more information on this group, while Game Planit reveals the truth about slots and other Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs). See how deceptive the machines can be from virtual reels to concealed odds. All things in the EGMs are designed to addict the player. Visit <http://www.gameplanit.com> for more. Anyone who wants to join the class-action suit against Loto-Québec, or wanting to know more on that issue, will find a link on website [www.vivaconsulting.com](http://www.vivaconsulting.com) pointing the way.

Also: a group of activists in Nova Scotia established the Web site [gameovervlt.s](http://gameovervlt.s), it has many stories that show what pathological gambling does to individuals and their families. Our Blueprint for action to reform Canadian gambling law, policies & practices into real public interest will be e-mailed to anyone who asks for it.

We're always open to Guest Editorials and Letters to the Editor. Placing an item doesn't mean that we agree with the opinion expressed. As a coalition of a variety of groups and people, our "party line" leaves room for differences of opinion, and we welcome them!

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### Help!

We are always looking for persons who have the time, the interest and the ability to help us finding news articles about gambling from coast to coast. We are doing our best to be a Canada-wide organization, but the fact that many newspapers restrict access to their site to subscribers makes it necessary to find activists in all provinces to make sure that items of importance are not missed. All that our activists need is a computer and access to the Internet. Do not be afraid of your own inexperience: in the seven years of our existence, we have more than once helped new people to get started!

At this point we should add that Canada's Gambling Watch Network also needs financial support. For some seven years our expenses have been paid from the pockets of generous activists, and a few years ago we tried to get regular supporters. We will continue to gain subscribers to our Newsletter. The minimum membership is \$10 per year, the regular will be \$20 annually, and any bigger gifts will be welcome. We cannot issue receipts that will be recognized by Canada's taxation system. How can we be active against gambling without becoming political? Cheques or money orders, made out to Canada's Gambling Watch Network, should for now be mailed to our Editor: Johannes DeViet, 50 Seaforth Court, London ON N5V 3L1. Our Treasurer, Art Tiesma, will be away from home for a few weeks.

Due to the closing of our former Internet server, our Web site is presently inaccessible. Its contents are a part of our extensive archives, so it can be rebuilt. We are badly in need of a volunteer Web Master or Mistress with the ability and the willingness to do so.

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### Editor's Notes

For the next month, we'll be unable to stick to the word weekly we used to have in the heading of our Newsletter. During this time our two workers who are mostly involved in

gathering our news and the production of our Newsletter are moving to other quarters. The fact that we are now connected to the Internet through *Rogers* is another reason for delays. Its system is totally unfriendly to an organization with address books as large as ours. During the next month, it's more likely that our letters will come every two weeks.

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#### **Unbalanced reel gaming machines - Tim Falkiner, Australia, and Roger Horbay, Canada.**

This article reveals how carnival games are better-scrutinized and regulated for game fairness and honesty than the Electronic Gambling Machines we have in our casinos and slots lounges. For that reason we are convinced that this article shows that a federal investigation by the RCMP into the regulatory approval processes of EGMs in Canada is badly needed.

#### **ABSTRACT**

Electronic gambling machines (EGMs) have gained a notorious reputation for generating problem gamblers. This paper notes that gambling machines developed separately from table games. It examines the standards applicable to table games and carnival games and the gaffs (cheating methods) used by crooked casinos and carnival grifters. It considers historical and modern gambling machines in the context of these standards and cheating methods. There are uncomfortable parallels between some characteristics of reel EGMs and those of gaffed table and carnival games. Bringing reel EGM standards into line with those applied to straight table games and carnival games would make them safer for the players. Just ask for this interesting paper, and we'll e-mail it to you immediately.

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#### **On-line gambling**

In the USA several politicians are making efforts to get the Senate to take the same steps that the House of Representatives took. In the mean time the 9/9 Casino City wrote in a 6-page article that the United States federal government is not taking gambling seriously and Americans are all going to pay for it.

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#### **British Columbia**

Four newspaper items report the \$42M sale of Vancouver's Edgewater Casino to Paragon Gaming, a Las Vegas operator: the 8/30 Globe and Mail, the 9/2 & 6 Vancouver Sun, and the 9/6 Province. The deal approved by Justice Grant Burnyeat calls for the new owners to make a full payout to the creditors of the casino.

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#### **Alberta**

'Bishop stands ground' is the heading of a 9/1 Calgary Sun article telling that Bishop Fred Henry boycotted the Calgary Catholic school district's Mass to mark the beginning of the school year at the convention centre, sticking to the vow he made after trustees allowed local Catholic schools to continue using casinos and bingos for fundraising. The Sun, the CBC and the Herald report that the Bishop and the trustees had a good conversation, and that they will have more talks in the coming weeks. At issue is the \$2M the schools raise through casinos and bingos directed to programs such as music, drama, athletics and field trips. It's also used to build play structures and help low-income students pay school fees. 'Staff at Edmonton's Palace Casino are threatening to strike Saturday over low wages and poor benefits, says their president', is a line in the 9/6 Edmonton Sun. 'Even with tips the more than 200 employees are struggling to make ends meet at the casino, located in West Edmonton Mall', the president said. Gateway Casinos said "it is unfortunate negotiations have broken down ... however, we will continue to work towards a settlement." In a letter to the Editor that appeared in the next day's Edmonton Journal, a casino's vice-president

claims that Casino dealers can easily earn \$20 per hour, and the 9/9 Journal states that the workers have voted to walk the picket line.

In 'Enoch Reserve thinks big with new casino', a 9/7 Edmonton Journal item, we're told by an official: "this will be the premier destination resort in all of Western Canada," as he points skyward at the canopy over the entrance, a timber-frame structure meant to protect tour groups from the elements as they descend from fleets of charter buses. The canopy is 35 metres by 28 metres. At its opening, in October, the place will have 600 slots; and that number may be doubled if enough gamblers show up in this \$178M complex. Bars and dining facilities ring the circular gam(b)ling area, and floor-to-ceiling windows will allow fans to look at two NHL-sized hockey rinks. We expect to hear more of this place later.

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### **Saskatchewan**

'New laws allow poker fans to go all in for charity', a 9/2 StarPhoenix item, quotes David Morris, spokesperson for the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Association: as follows: "As of July 1 it is no longer illegal to hold poker or Monte Carlo events at public venues. There are restrictions in the new laws though, as proceeds have to be used exclusively for charitable (or) religious purposes; charities can only hold a poker event once a month."

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### **Manitoba**

'Lottery scheme unfair', a piece in the 8/28 Winnipeg Sun, says that business owners and community developers in provincial parks are outraged over the NDP government's latest gambling profit-sharing scheme; the move to share more revenue from VLTs with natives to help increase their standard of living leaves some communities on provincial park land - who are exempt from receiving government kickbacks on VLT revenue - feel they're getting the short end of the stick.

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### **Ontario**

'Bingo charities hit hard by anti smoking laws' is the title of a letter to the editor printed in the 9/2 Windsor Star. The letter's contents are confirmed by an article in the 9/6 Star that reports the closing of two halls by the end of September, one month after the company operating the halls went into receivership with debts exceeding \$9M. Two days later the Star writes that a charity group, formed in the wake of bingo hall closures, wants the province to declare a state of emergency in Windsor; their spokesman says the province has a larger-than-expected surplus in revenues and can afford to write a cheque that will lessen the impact of the sudden decline in bingo revenue for 650 organizations and the thousands of people they serve, and on 9/9 the Star writes that charities were given more bad news when the City of Windsor informed them they will each be limited to 38 bingo sessions a year starting Jan. 1. On the same day the Sarnia Observer writes that its city's struggling bingo industry and charities will be meeting with the mayor and city staff on September 13 to discuss how to deal with their situation.

'Ongoing slottrack delays leave horsemen champing at the bit', the heading of an item in the 9/1 Belleville Intelligencer, expresses the impatience of horsemen who'd like to see their dying and -in our opinion outdated- 'sport' put on the life support of very addictive slot machines.

In the 9/2 Sault Star we read that a two-time winner of million-dollar lottery prizes won't do time behind bars for embezzling \$79,000 from an employer to stoke her addiction to

slot machines. Now bankrupt and living on social assistance, she will serve a 15-months conditional sentence in the community, with six months under virtual house arrest.

'How crime dragnet fished up names from law and order world' is an interesting article in the 9/2 Toronto Star. It is related to the 9/5 Toronto Star article reporting that Shoniker, a lawyer, will be jailed for 15 months for money laundering.

In the 9/2 Windsor Star, we read that Sports betting is on its way to Casino Windsor with a new sports lounge opening next week. It will allow visitors to bet on all professional sports as well as U.S. college football -- activities that are illegal in Detroit. The 9/8 Star confirms the 170-seats lounge is opening on that day.

In the 9/4 Sault Star, we're told that it's been more than a year since city council asked the OLGC to move more jobs to Sault Ste. Marie, but the Crown corporation has yet to react to the report the city submitted. Sault MPP David Oraziotti said: 'It's an issue that's still very much on my mind and front and centre.'

The 9/7 Globe and Mail tells a story about the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation that should make any citizen's blood boil. The OLGC spent up to \$6M to re-brand itself. It wants to drop the letter C from its OLGC name so it will have a brand that "represents trust and integrity." The OLGC's CEO was also grilled about why its contract with the advertising agency that created the Premier's campaign ads more than doubled after the '03 election. In '04, Bensimon-Byrne received a new three-year contract for the lottery valued at \$2.8M. The firm's previous three-year contract was valued at \$1.4M.

On this same day the Niagara Falls Review writes that Casino Niagara will be hosting a series of free rock concerts for anyone 19 years or older, while the Ottawa Citizen writes that the revenue of Ontario's three large commercial casinos in the border regions which have long been cash cows for the government coffers, will be slashed almost in half over a three-year period.

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### **Quebec**

We're somewhat amazed that in 'Suicide prevention campaign is pressing', an item in the 9/1 Gazette, there's no reference to the province's gambling-related suicides.

The 9/4 Globe and Mail writes that according to a report in the Montreal daily La Presse, undercover inspectors will visit the more than 2,500 establishments in the province with VLTs. They will be on the lookout for violations, such as actively promoting VLT play, lending money to players, having a cash machine in proximity and allowing intoxicated or under-aged patrons to gamble.

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### **New Brunswick**

'Moncton has long waiting lists for addictions treatment', a CBC 8/23 News Item, tells us "We used to be able to see [people with gambling problems] within seven to 10 working days, now we're looking at months", while in 'Campaigning Liberals promise money for drug addiction programs', an 8/27 CP/CBC article, gambling isn't even mentioned.

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### **Nova Scotia**

By now, it's a well-known fact that scratch tickets are among the most addictive types of lottery items invented. In spite of that, the 8/30 Halifax Herald says Atlantic Canadians can now show their support for Halifax's bid to host the 2014 Commonwealth Games by playing a new line of sports-themed scratch tickets according to the president/CEO of the Nova Scotia Gaming Corp. Not everyone supports this action. "I think with the problem that gambling has created in this province that it's reprehensible of them to try to feed on

these people to raise money for the Commonwealth Games," said Bruce DeVenne, who feels the hundreds of millions to be devoted to the Games could be spent more wisely. Two days later this paper reports on a strange kind of bingo in support of the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation fundraiser Shinerama

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