



Las Vegas Advisor

COUPONOMY

Paying to Park

by Anthony Curtis

It's here! What was previously unthinkable is set to start up on June 6. That's the day MGM Resorts International will begin charging for parking in its garages at New York-New York, Monte Carlo, Bellagio, Aria, and Vdara, with its other properties following a few days later. I wondered if they would go through with it, but their resolve was firm ... kind of.

The originally announced plan has undergone a few modifications. Notably, Nevada residents will not be charged until at least the end of the year and perhaps not even then. The vocal locals pitched such a fit over the news that MRI was dissuaded from including them in Phase 1. But while Nevadans don't have to pay, they do have to follow an irksome protocol: Free parking for locals will require scanning a Nevada driver's license at a kiosk.

Yikes! Does that sound like a set-up or what? MRI has gone on record saying that the information won't be saved and stored, but this requirement still figures to cause as much angst for anyone with privacy concerns as having to pay a \$10 fee. The good news is the scanning process doesn't require that you insert the license into the machine; rather, you pass it over a scanner.

As for non-locals, there are only two outs: quick trips and status. Stays of less than one hour are gratis, which means you can run in and out to make a sports bet or cash a ticket. The fee is also waived for higher tier levels in the M life players club—specifically, you

need a minimum of Pearl status for free self-parking and Gold, Platinum, or Noir for free valet.

Others, including registered hotel guests and those who come for dinner, a show, or even to gamble, will be charged fees ranging from \$5 to \$10 for garage parking and \$8 to \$18 for valet, depending on length of stay and the property. For example, if you self-park at Aria (and most of the other MRI casinos), the fee is \$7 for staying 1-4 hours and \$10 for 4-24 hours; at Excalibur, Luxor, and Monte Carlo, it's \$5 and \$8, respectively (self-parking is free at Circus Circus). Hotel guests will have in-and-out privileges, but they'll still get hit with the daily parking charge, on top of the resort fee, at checkout.

As for the payment procedure, the full details haven't been divulged. But signs up in the garages say "parking payment must be made at pay stations," which sounds like you have to pay before you get to the exit gates.

Will there be long lines at the gates or payment kiosks? Maybe, but here's something I've already experienced from attending two sold-out events (a George Strait concert and the Alvarez/Khan fight). For the concert, I used alternative free parking arranged by a friend who has a condo at Vdara. For the fight, I paid the \$20 event fee to park in the Monte Carlo garage. Upon leaving Vdara I was ensnared in a long line, but I flew right out of Monte Carlo. Why? *Because hardly anyone paid to park in the garage.* The irony of all this

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NEWS

Casinos

Palms—The Palms has been sold to Station Casinos. Other than the general announcement, which included the sale price of \$312.5 million, very little additional information has been released. The deal is expected to close later this year and it's likely that the name will be unchanged given the strong brand recognition of the Palms.

Lucky Dragon—Following reports of funding problems for the nearly completed hotel-casino on W. Sahara near the Strip, the development company behind the resort now says that financing is in place that will allow it to open before the end of this year. The unique project is being billed as the "first casino resort to deliver an authentic Asian lifestyle experience" in Las Vegas. Lucky Dragons' distinctive features will include signs in Chinese first and English second, multilingual staff members, and a high-end tea garden.

Sands Arena—Las Vegas Sands Corp. says that it will partner with Madison Square Garden Co. to build a 400,000-square-foot 17,500-seat arena behind the Venetian and Palazzo. The venue will feature luxury-seating options, clubs, and lounges, and be specifically designed for music and entertainment, but will also be suited to hosting sporting events and serve as a general conference center for trade shows and conventions. The project appears to be less speculative than Sands' previously announced 65,000-seat

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is that the best play, at least for events, might be to fork over the dough.

Most will likely seek alternative parking of some type. For example, the parking lots at Excalibur, Tropicana, and Hooters provide easy access to MRI properties on the south end of the Strip. Those casinos might not like this idea, but they might also be willing to trade a poached parking spot for the increased likelihood that customers who wouldn't have otherwise visited might find their way in now.

While this may come as a surprise to you, I'm on neither side of the argument. By that, I mean that I understand the motives of both MRI and the customers who don't want to pay and I'm all for letting the market decide. But I have to scratch my head at some of the attempts by MRI to support the move. In one email to a customer, they write, "The environment in Las Vegas has changed dramatically in the decades since amenities like low-quality dining, lodging, and free parking were offered to attract customers." I really doubt that it's persuasive to anyone to know they're being charged imposed fees to compensate for the eradication of that "low-quality" dining and lodging that probably attracted them to Las Vegas in the first place.

Slot Joints Closing

This month is your last chance to visit the two downtown slot houses that are closing on June 27—Mermaids and La Bayou (the Girls of Glitter Gulch gentlemen's club is also closing). These joints had a long and interesting history, which we'll recount in the July issue. In the meantime, get yourself down there for one more hot dog at Mermaids and a last strand of souvenir beads from La Bayou before they're no more.

Cherry Picker

On the heels of the serious gambling books *Cheating at Blackjack*, *Knock-Out Blackjack 2nd Edition*, and *The Law for Gamblers*, we've just

Presidential Lines

Here are the current lines on the presidential race from the offshore sports book 5Dimes. Hillary Clinton is the favorite to win the Democrat nomination at -3000, followed by Bernie Sanders at +1800. With Donald Trump the presumptive candidate, there's no longer a line on the Republican side. There is one, however, on the Republican vice president, with the field the favorite at -400 over second favorite Newt Gingrich at +280. The Democrats have dropped from -300 to -200 to retain the presidency, due in part to the possibility that Clinton will face federal charges (over her email debacle) at some point, for which there's also a line with NO the -300 favorite.

received the shipment of our newest title, *Cherry Picker—A Literate Look at Losing at the Slots*. This is a book for those who play the slots with pride and don't care what anyone thinks about it. Really? We published that? Yep. Here's why.

HP's senior editor Deke Castleman loved the prose, so that was a big leg up to start, and I liked the author's utilitarian approach to gambling for entertainment. I don't endorse it, mind you, but I appreciate the different perspective. I also liked the book's detours into subjects like classic automobiles, rock 'n roll, gambling literature, OCD, Buddhism, hallucinogens, planning a road trip, and more.

After much discussion, we acquired it. Then, before the book was finished, the author passed away after a sudden illness. We've published more than 100 books and that's never happened before. Mark Shechner is survived by his wife, Nettie (who makes a few appearances in the book), and at least she's been able to see Mark's project come to fruition. (A resident of Buffalo, Nettie sent us a month's supply of hot wings when the book went to the printer. How cool is that?)

Cherry Picker isn't for everyone, but I'd be surprised if anyone didn't find something redeeming, or nostalgic, or amusing, or even enlightening, in the read. Check the wrap for our best publisher's discount. ■

News continued

football stadium that will require the approval of a public-financing plan before it can go forward. It's projected that the arena would be completed in 2018.

Resorts World—The Nevada Gaming Control Commission has signed off on a series of approval applications, including suitability assessments on various key executives and corporate entities, marking the most significant progress in a year for Resorts World Las Vegas. Phase I of the project was originally slated for completion sometime this year. Now the latest estimated opening date is early 2019.

Westin—The casino portion of the off-Strip Westin is closing. Known as Max Casino as a nod to the property's former incarnation as the Maxim, the machines and tables will be removed to make room for a new restaurant. It's expected that the William Hill race and sports book there will also close.

Barcelona—The former Barcelona Casino in North Las Vegas has been converted to Siegel Slots and Suites.

Moulin Rouge—An under-the-radar "groundbreaking" ceremony was held last month at the site of the old Moulin Rouge. A group called Moulin Rouge Holdings plans to build a \$100

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LAS VEGAS ADVISOR

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LAS VEGAS ADVISOR (ISSN 1064-167X USPS 008602) is published monthly and is available for \$50 per year (\$60 Canadian; \$70 foreign purchasers) and \$5 per single issue at 3665 Procyon St., Las Vegas, NV, 89103. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Las Vegas Advisor, 3665 Procyon St., Las Vegas, NV 89103. All information is current at press time. Listed offerings are subject to change at any time. Huntington Press ©2016

LAS VEGAS' TOP TEN VALUES

With The Park's ceremonial stint at #1 concluded, the Ellis Island steak dinner reclaims its rightful spot at the top of the list as Las Vegas' best ongoing value. As you'll read in **DINING**, we tried a couple of good bargain steaks this month, but none come close to the combination of quality and price of the EI offering. Served 24/7 in the Café, the filet-cut sirloin comes with soup or salad, choice of potato, and green beans. To get the \$7.99 price you have to print out two coupons from an EI kiosk, the second after playing at least \$5 in any slot machine with your club card inserted.

While checking out a change in the *Mac King* deal (see below), we dropped in next door at Casino Royale to get a \$1 Michelob. The casino's new center bar is now in full operation and you'd expect they might raise some prices, but the 24/7 Michelob deal (#3) is still going strong.

Returning to the list after being bumped by The Park is the lunch comp at Crown & Anchor (#9). Play \$20 through a machine and get anything on the menu. Hours are 8 am-2:30 pm at the east location (Tropicana/Maryland Pkwy.) and 11 am-3 pm at the west (Spring Mtn./Decatur). If you miss lunch, the offer is extended until 6 pm on the east and 7 pm on the west.

It's always a dilemma when a Top Tenner raises prices and *still* belongs on the list, which was the case this month with the *Mac King* show. As explained in **ENTERTAINMENT**, Mac will be back, but while the show takes its turn in the penalty box, we're inserting the free photo with \$1 million at Binion's in the #10 spot. It doesn't have quite the cache of the original, when all of the bills in the display were hundreds (they're mixed now), but it's still a cool souvenir available 9 am-11:30 pm. The photo takes 30 minutes to process.

Notes: The shrimp cocktail at Skyline (#2) is served at the main bar. The \$1 oysters at the Venetian (#4) are available daily from 5 to 6 pm in the bar area at db Brasserie. The \$9.99 prime rib special at the Downtown Grand (#5) is served in S+O daily from 5 to 10 pm and comes with a vegetable and mashed potatoes. The Plaza rebate (#6) is a reimbursement of up to \$500 in losses, paid in free-play via two installments on the first and second day after playing; must be a new club member. The hot dogs at South Point (#7) are sold from a cart in the sports book from 10 am until they close down the cart around 5 pm. Get steak & eggs, ham & eggs, or a hamburger & fries for \$4.99 when you show your club card in the Sourdough Cafés at Arizona Charlie's Decatur and Boulder (#8), served 24 hours, except 6 am-mid. Mon.-Fri. at Boulder.

1. **Steak Dinner** • *Ellis Island* • 24 hours • **\$7.99**
2. **Shrimp Cocktail** • *Skyline* • 24 hours • **\$1.49**
3. **Beer** • *Casino Royale* • 24 hours • **\$1**
4. **Oysters** • *Venetian* • Daily • **\$1**
5. **Prime Rib** • *Downtown Grand* • Daily • **\$9.95**
6. **\$500 Rebate** • *Plaza* • Daily • **Free**
7. **Hot Dog** • *South Point* • Daily • **\$1.25**
8. **Breakfast/Burger** • *Arizona Charlie's* • 24 hours • **\$4.99**
9. **Lunch Comp** • *Crown & Anchor* • Daily • **\$20 buy-in**
10. **Photo** • *Binion's* • Daily • **Free**

News continued

to \$150 million hotel and casino there, though no solid timetables or funding plans have been disclosed.

Revenues—Nevada's statewide gambling win declined 3.0% in March compared to the same month last year. The Strip win was down 4.0% and downtown was off 4.2%. There were also declines in North Las Vegas (-8.8%) and on the Boulder Strip (-7.5%), while the Balance of County notched the only increase in the state, up 2.5%. The college basketball championship tournament helped generate an all-time record sports bet-

ting handle of \$458 million, with \$422 million of it wagered on basketball and an estimated \$295 million attributed to March Madness betting (wagering totals aren't broken out between college and pro). The books won \$9.7 million on a low 2.1% hold.

Visitor volume was up 2.9% for the month; a 21% increase in convention attendance contributed. The weekend occupancy rate was 97.5%.

Airline traffic was up 5.5%, with 4.1 million passengers passing through McCarran in March. The first quarter passenger count is up 7.1% over 2015 and increased service from multiple new routes is in the works. Chinese aviation authorities have approved a

request for non-stop flights between Beijing and Las Vegas. If approved by the U.S. Dept. of Transportation, Hainan Airlines could begin offering round-trip flights by September. South Korea is currently the only Asian country with flights directly to Las Vegas. Japan and Singapore both discontinued prior services more than a decade ago. Norwegian Air Shuttle will initiate Las Vegas-to-London routes beginning Oct. 31, with one-way tickets announced at an introductory price of \$199. And Jet Suite, a public charter operator, is set to begin service between Las Vegas and Burbank, California this month. Because the airline

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operates out of private terminals, the security regimen is less stringent and wait times are reduced. Introductory one-way tickets have been announced at \$129 when purchased in advance.

Gambling in the U.S. and Beyond

California—Gardena’s Normandie Casino, the oldest card club in the state and once dubbed the “Poker Capital of the World,” announced that it will close within four months, the time-limit granted by the state Gambling Control Commission to find a buyer for the property following a money-laundering scandal that cost its long-time owners their license. Larry Flynt is expected to be the buyer, with ru-

mored plans to convert the space into a Vegas-style hotel-casino. Nearby, the former Hawaiian Gardens Casino is completing a \$90 million renovation and will reopen as the Gardens Casino later this year. The facility will have new bars and restaurants, and more than 300 table games.

Ohio—The former Horseshoe Casino Cleveland is now Jack Cleveland Casino. It joins nearby Jack Thistle-down Racino in the name change.

Online—The online take in New Jersey hit \$17 million in April, an all-time high that’s being attributed in part to PokerStars’ entrance into the market. PokerStars was responsible for 46% of poker revenue; however, Borgata remained the leading total-revenue generator with \$4 million, followed by PokerStars’ partner, Resorts, with \$3.5 million. In other PokerStars-related

news, the online poker platform Full Tilt has been discontinued and its players merged into the PS system. PokerStars acquired Full Tilt in 2012 after its fortunes fell following the seizure of its funds in the Black Friday government shutdown.

Gambling in the Media

A May 17 article at Forbes.com titled *Inside the Blackjack Ball: An Exclusive Look at the Gathering of the Smartest Gamblers in the World* provides a detailed account of this year’s event, along with mini-profiles of several Huntington Press authors who were in attendance.

The May 9 *Bloomberg Businessweek* contains an article titled “And for My Next Trick ...” that profiles Criss Angel, labeling him “the biggest name in Las Vegas magic.” ■

DINING

Eating Las Vegas (On the Cheap)

The most frequent complaint we hear about our *Eating Las Vegas* books is that the recommended restaurants are all expensive. We don’t disagree completely, but it’s simply the nature of the book: The city’s best restaurants are featured, and naturally, the best tend to be the most expensive. But some aren’t.

Each restaurant in the “Essential 50” lists one of four price designations: “\$125 and up,” “\$75 to \$125,” “\$25 to \$75,” or “\$25 or less,” which reflects the per-person cost for a complete meal. Prices continue to rise in Las Vegas, so there are fewer in the last category than in previous editions, but there are still five this year: District One, Monta Ramen, Lulu’s Bread & Breakfast, El Dorado Café, and The Goodwich sandwich shop.

The next lowest level, \$25 to \$75, has 13 more: Border Grill (at MBay), Carson Kitchen, Chada Street, Cleo (SLS), Glutton, Inyo, Lotus of Siam, Marche Bacchus, Other Mama, Sen

of Japan, Yardbird (Venetian), Yonaka, and Yusho (Monte Carlo). (Artisanal Foods Café is also listed in the book, but it recently discontinued dining service.)

Additionally, the Chinatown section and the rest of the back of the book cite dozens of low-cost restaurants in several categories, including one titled “Cheap Eats/Local Favorites.”

Secret HH

As you’ll see in the reviews that follow, we hit a few happy hours last month, plus we’ve been listing details about happy hours of all sorts for several years in ENTERTAINMENT. This month we got a notice of a new HH in Lakeside at Wynn Las Vegas that runs daily from 5:30 to 7 pm and features Hawaiian specialties, including a selection of pokes, island-style fish & chips, and raw oysters. Sounds awesome, only no prices are listed in either the press release or on Wynn’s website, which leads us to wonder how happy it can really be. The only solution is to go, eat, and pay; they can run, but

they can’t hide (the prices). We’ll do just that and let you in on the secret next issue.

Reviews

Steak Special (Poker Palace)—One reliable constant is that North Las Vegas’ Poker Palace will always have some sort of good dining special going on. Currently, it’s a steak dinner served 24/7 for \$7.98. No salad or baked potato with this one, but the expertly cooked 16-ounce T-bone comes with mashed potatoes & gravy, green beans, and a roll. This is a solid steak deal, but as has always been the case going way back to the days when a lobster fresh out of a tank here was \$10, you have to fade the Poker Palace to get the good deal. It’s a ways away from the Strip and the local crowd there might be intimidating to some, so be forewarned. If you’re a group of guys out on the town, however, you’ll fit right in. Parlay with \$2 beer specials at the bar.

Chili Dog (Gold Coast)—The ex-

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cellent hot dog cart in the sports book at the Gold Coast now offers chili as an option. A hot dog is still \$1.50, with onions, kraut, and relish at no extra charge, or you can make it a chili dog with the works for \$1 extra. This is a big messy hot dog, so find a seat (or a trash can to stand over). We're not rating Gold Coast over the \$1.25 dog at South Point (see TOP TEN), but the chili makes it close.

Beerhaus (Happy Hour)—Beerhaus is the most accessible restaurant in The Park at T-Mobile and there's a good dining play there during happy hour. From 4 to 6 pm and 10 pm till

close, there's a set menu with only a few items, but one is a free-range chicken sandwich with crispy onions, arugula, and pickle topped with "herb mayo," which tastes a little like barbecue sauce. This big sandwich normally goes for \$10, but it's just \$4 during happy hour and a heck of a value at that price. Several draft beers are also \$4.

Table 10 (Happy Hour)—In February, we wrote about a creative "chalkboard" happy hour at the snack bar in Table 10 at Palazzo, with different items available from 5 pm till they're gone. We showed up to learn that it's been suspended while the area is renovated, so instead we tried the HH at the bar, which features \$1.50 raw

oysters daily from 3 to 6 pm. These aren't as good as our Top Ten-ranked \$1 oysters at db Brasserie next door at the Venetian, but they're available an extra two hours daily. And the best part of this one are some good wines by the glass for half price.

The Barrymore (Happy Hour)—When we list the details of a happy hour in ENTERTAINMENT, we're going only on a description that we've been given. If a HH sounds particularly good, we try it and usually follow up with a review. That's how it went down with "Social Hour" in The Barrymore at Royal House, but here the reality didn't live up to the description. For starters, some of the items advertised weren't available. The oysters Rockefeller and sliders were best, but the oysters are three for \$9 and the sliders are \$4 apiece, so neither is much of a bargain. Saving the day is a cool outdoor seating area and \$2 draft PBR and Rolling Rock. The HH runs daily from 5 to 7 (and they don't open the doors a minute before 5).

Cheffini's (Container Park)—Cheffini's serves up specialty hot dogs for \$5-\$9. Sounds like a lot for a dog (especially compared to the cart dogs at Gold Coast and South Point), but they heap so much on 'em that one is all you need for a meal. For example, the Grand Father (\$8.99) comes with pork belly, red bell peppers, caramelized onions, crushed potato chips, spicy mayo, pickle mango, and a fried quail egg. Too much? Then go for a less ambitious version, including the Naked Dog with choice of two toppings for \$4.99. We tried the El Mexicano, a bacon-wrapped dog with pepper relish, onions, tomatoes, and avocado for \$6.99. Pretty good, but we'll stick with the carts.

Jaburrito—A lot of noise was made about this place when it opened on Sahara across from Palace Station, partially because it's run by the chef from the highly respected sushi house, Soho. The buzz has since died down and we'd say rightfully so. This fusion of sushi and Mexican food comes off as a mishmash of low-grade fish and

LOCAL CORNER—Echo & Rig

440 S. Rampart Blvd., 702-489-3525

This is the place for people who love steakhouses, but are fed up with fancy steakhouse prices. Echo & Rig keeps prices down by offering several non-traditional cuts, such as hanger, flat iron, skirt, spencer, and flank steaks, for under \$30. Properly butchered and prepared, these are as good as filets, T-bones, and other more recognized cuts. For example, we had a grilled hanger steak for \$26.20 that matched up with steaks we've eaten on the Strip at more than twice the price. If you're stuck on filet, rib eye, and New York strip, Echo & Rig serves those too for \$35.80 each, which is as high as prices get on this menu.

The selection is diverse, with fish and other seafood dishes for \$22 and chicken for \$19. Entrées come with homemade garlic chips, a large ("Rockefeller") mushroom, and a sauce of your choice, so you'll probably want to add an appetizer or a salad. The E&R appetizer line-up is epic, with 27 of them spread over three price categories—\$5.90, \$8.20, and \$9.80. From black Tuscan kale to grilled octopus, they're good enough to order a few and skip the entrée (which we sometimes do when catching a game at the bar). Among the best ones we've had are steak tartare, ahi poke, crab cakes, sweet fire cauliflower, and the incredible portabello-mushroom fries.

Along with the food and pricing, a lot going on here contributes to the all-around good experience. Service is first rate, there's a beautiful patio if you want to eat outside, a full butcher shop is open downstairs, and from 3 to 6 pm and 10 pm to close, E&R puts on one of the most creative happy hours in town (LVA 9/15). But the real topper is free corkage for wine. Echo & Rig has a good wine selection at decent prices, but if you want to bring in your own, they'll open and serve it at no charge. This is the only place we know of in Las Vegas with free corkage, and less than a mile south on Rampart a Lee's Discount Liquor and a Total Wine & More are almost next door to each other. Pick out a bottle or two and bring them along to save another big chunk of change.

Echo & Rig is located in Tivoli Village on the west side of town, across the street from Suncoast. Hours are 11 am-11 pm weekdays and 9 am-11 pm weekends. It's a bit of a trek, but worth it.

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ADVANCE PLANNER

HEADLINERS AND EVENTS

JUNE

6/5	• Caravan Palace Brooklyn Bowl • \$22/\$27	6/21-6/22	• Cabrera Conducts Tchaikovsky Smith Center • \$26-\$96	7/8-7/10	• Widespread Panic Hard Rock • \$55-\$175
6/5	• Hellyeah w/Escape The Fate SLS LV • \$24.99-\$259.98	6/23	• Mariachi Sol de Mexico G. Nugget • \$31.61/\$42.51	7/9	• Bailamos • Cannery • \$20
6/5	• Jeff Dunham Caesars Palace • \$49.50-\$89.50	6/23	• Stephen Kellogg Brooklyn Bowl • \$20	7/9	• Best of My Love Silverton • Starting at \$20
6/6	• Metal Church & Armored Saint Brooklyn Bowl • \$25/\$30	6/24	• Cheech and Chong Treasure Island • \$57.18/\$98.05	7/9	• Chicago • Palms \$68.81-\$188.08
6/6	• Selena Gomez M Bay • \$43.7-\$115.60	6/24	• Felix Cavaliere's Rascals G. Nugget • \$20.71-\$107.91	7/9	• Kirk Whalum Aliante • \$32.50-\$68.50
6/9	• Preservation Hall Jazz Band Brooklyn Bowl • \$25-\$40	6/24-6/25	• Carlos Mencia Orleans • \$38.10-\$59.90	7/9	• Tribute to the Bee Gees M Resort • \$19.99-\$29.99
6/10	• Billy Gardell Treasure Island • \$49.95-\$69.95	6/24-6/25	• Charo • South Point • \$25-\$35	7/9-7/10	• ALO • Hard Rock • \$23.50/\$49
6/10	• Melissa Manchester G. Nugget • \$20.71-\$107.91	6/24-6/25	• Garth Brooks T- Mobile Arena • \$85	7/15	• Happy Together G. Nugget • \$53.41-\$162.41
6/10-6/11	• Mariah Carey Caesars Palace • \$55-\$250	6/25	• Cage the Elephant Hard Rock • \$45-\$150	7/15	• Judy Collins Santa Fe Station • \$27.50-\$49.50
6/11	• Martin Nievera M Resort • \$38-\$52	6/25	• Eli Young Band Brooklyn Bowl • \$25	7/15	• Nicky Jam • Planet Hollywood • \$60.50-\$160.50
6/11	• Mindi Abair Aliante • \$32.50-\$62.50	6/25	• Ms. Pops Fernandez Silverton • Starting at \$34	7/15	• Taste of Chaos Cosmo • \$36-\$66
6/11	• Tomorrow's Bad Seeds Brooklyn Bowl • \$20/\$25	6/25	• Najee • Aliante • \$32.50-\$68.50	7/15	• Twenty One Pilots Hard Rock • \$42.50-\$200
6/11-6/12	• Fab Four • Orleans • \$27.20-\$49	6/25	• Pops Fernandez Silverton • \$34-\$75	7/15-7/16	• Dennis Miller Orleans • \$59.90-\$87.15
6/11-6/12	• Let's Hang On Suncoast • \$22-\$44	6/25-6/26	• Shirley Alston Reeves & The Chiffons • Suncoast • \$22-\$44	7/15-7/16	• Reba, Brooks & Dunn Caesars Palace • \$59.50-\$205
6/14	• Cymande • Brooklyn Bowl • \$25	JULY		7/16	• Dixie Chicks T- Mobile Arena • \$54-\$154
6/15	• Kim Simmonds & Savoy Brown Hard Rock • \$20-\$49	7/1	• Brian Wilson Hard Rock • \$34.50	7/16	• Psychedelic Furs Brooklyn Bowl • \$30/\$35
6/16	• Alison Wonderland Cosmo • \$30/\$35	7/1	• Don McLean Boulder Station • \$27.50-\$55	7/16	• Streetlight Manifesto Hard Rock • \$20/\$35
6/16	• Bassrush Massive LV Hard Rock • \$40/\$95	7/1	• Tommy James & the Shondells G. Nugget • \$31.61-\$162.41	7/16	• World Fighting Championship E. Cannery • \$25-\$50
6/16	• Plan B • M Bay • \$35/\$45	7/2	• Brit Floyd Hard Rock • \$35-\$125	7/17	• Stephen Marley Brooklyn Bowl • \$26-\$56
6/16-6/19	• Ringling Bros./Barnum & Bailey Circus • T&M • \$15-\$80	7/2	• Bryan Adams Cosmo • \$32-\$77	7/22	• BJ Thomas G. Nugget • \$20.71-\$118.81
6/17	• Dennis Edwards G. Nugget • \$31.61-\$140.61	7/2	• Outlawz w/Tha Dogg Pound Brooklyn Bowl • \$25-\$45	7/22	• Eagles of Death Metal Hard Rock • \$27
6/17	• Slipknot w/Marilyn Manson MGM Grand • \$30-\$65	7/2-7/3	• Steven Tyler • Venetian • \$40	7/22-7/23	• D. L. Hughley Orleans • \$43.55-\$65.35
6/17-6/18	• Steven Wright Orleans • \$43.55-\$65.35	7/2-7/4	• 311 • M Bay • \$57	7/23	• 70s Soul Jam Cannery • \$27.95
6/17-6/19	• Christopher Titus South Point • \$20-\$30	7/6-7/8	• Garth Brooks T- Mobile Arena • \$85	7/23	• Alan Cumming Smith Center • \$59-\$99
6/17-6/19	• Electric Daisy Carnival LVMS • \$90-\$335	7/7	• Idaho • Smith Center • \$19-\$89	7/23	• DigiTour Summer Hard Rock • \$25-\$129
6/18	• Dru Hill Brooklyn Bowl • \$35-\$50	7/7	• Tarrus Riley Brooklyn Bowl • \$20/\$25	7/23-7/24	• Blink-182 Hard Rock • \$45-\$250
6/18	• Piano Men Suncoast • \$17.50-\$33	7/8	• Adam Carolla Treasure Island • \$37.6/\$65.35	7/26	• Chris Botti Smith Center • \$29-\$99
6/19	• Pete Rock & C.L. Smooth Hard Rock • \$25/\$49	7/8	• Jędrzejczyk vs Gadelha MGM Grand • \$44-\$204	7/29	• Duran Duran M Bay • \$45.83-\$129.36
6/19	• Steely Dan Caesars Palace • \$59.50-\$225	7/8	• John Waite G. Nugget • \$20.71-\$118.81	7/29	• New Edition w/Kenny Edmonds Hard Rock • \$59.95-\$225
		7/8	• Mayer Hawthorne Hard Rock • \$26.35		
		7/8	• Throwback Sizzling Jam Orleans • \$40-\$125		

ADVANCE PLANNER

SHOW NOTES

- *ShowStoppers* at Encore has added a new low-tier price of \$70.85; the former lowest ticket was \$109.
- Ticket prices for *Sin City Comedy & Burlesque* at Planet Hollywood have been decreased from \$52.36/\$63.36 to \$43.01/\$52.36.
- Ticket prices for *Tommy Wind* at the Tommy Wind Theater have been increased from \$53.50 for all seats to \$64.40/\$75.30.

WEATHER

JUNE

Mean 84° Avg. Max. 99° Avg. Min. 68° Pools: Open
The first of the dry months. Welcome to the desert.

Attire: Minimal.

JULY

Mean 90° Avg. Max. 105° Avg. Min. 73° Pools: Open
Dry, sauna-like heat. Sun worshipers enjoy 85% sunny days.

Attire: The skimpier the better. It's not mandatory, don't wear it.

AUGUST

Mean 88° Avg. Max. 102° Avg. Min. 73° Pools: Open
A very hot and wet month. Desert electrical storms are spectacular but can cause dangerous floods on and around the Strip.

Attire: Summer cool, bathing suits.

KEY DATES

JULY

- 6-8 Deafnation World Expo—23,000
- 8-10 UFC Fan Expo—30,000
- 24-26 Cosmoprof North America—30,000
- 31-8/3 ASD Las Vegas—35,000
- 31-8/4 Las Vegas Market—50,000

AUGUST

- 2-4 SuperZoo West—20,000
- 15-17 MAGIC—85,000
- 25-27 Orgill Fall Dealer Market—32,000

SEPTEMBER

- 7-9 Super Mobility Week—40,000
- 13-15 Solar Energy Trade Show—15,000
- 14-16 Speciality Graphics Annual Nat'l Convention—23,000
- 15-17 Int'l Vision Expo West 2016—14,000
- 21-23 Interbike Expo 2016—25,000
- 26-28 Nat'l Mining Assoc. Expo 2016—50,000
- 27-29 G2E: Global Gaming Expo 2016—26,000

ROOM RATES

JULY

WEEKDAY

Wild Wild West • \$35
El Cortez • \$42
Silver Sevens • \$43

Palace Station • \$48
Downtown Grand • \$53
Rio • \$54

Hard Rock • \$91
Palms • \$104
Cromwell • \$125

WEEKEND

Wild Wild West • \$75
AZ C. Decatur • \$90
El Cortez • \$99

Silverton • \$102
Westgate LV • \$106
Tuscany • \$113

Palms • \$164
Red Rock Resort • \$191
Green Valley Ranch • \$221

AUGUST

WEEKDAY

Wild Wild West • \$35
El Cortez • \$37
Four Queens • \$39

Palace Station • \$43
Circus Circus • \$50
Rio • \$54

Hard Rock • \$83
Paris • \$91
Palms • \$104

WEEKEND

AZ C. Decatur • \$50
Wild Wild West • \$75
El Cortez • \$88

Silverton • \$73
Palace Station • \$105
Orleans • \$120

Palms • \$154
Red Rock Resort • \$176
Hard Rock • \$179

SEPTEMBER

WEEKDAY

Wild Wild West • \$35
El Cortez • \$39
Four Queens • \$39

Palace Station • \$40
Circus Circus • \$49
Downtown Grand • \$53

Hard Rock • \$87
Palms • \$104
Caesars Palace • \$124

WEEKEND

AZ C. Decatur • \$63
Wild Wild West • \$75
Plaza • \$104

Silverton • \$73
Palace Station • \$105
Sam's Town • \$114

Red Rock Resort • \$216
Hard Rock • \$217
Palazzo • \$247

Best rates at press time from sample of 54 Las Vegas casinos. Rates NOT guaranteed, subject to change without notice, and do not include tax. Lower prices may be available online.

uncomplementary flavors. Add tortilla strips and you can't decide whether you want to dip it in soy or salsa. Ja-burrito might work for raw-fish newbies who are really hungry (the burritos are big), but if you're at all particular about your fish, this won't cut it.

Dining Notes

The price of the Sunday brunch at Suncoast has been lowered \$3 to \$14.99 and just \$9.99 with a club card.

The price of the Wednesday lobster special at the Ale House (LVA 4/14) has been raised \$2 to \$18.95 and the Thursday prime rib is up \$1 to \$13.99.

The price of the 24-hour 16-ounce rib eye at Jackson's (LVA 10/14) has been raised \$1 to \$15.99 and a 10-ounce rib eye has been added for

\$13.99. The Monday-only prime rib is also up another dollar to \$14.99.

The mysterious Beauty & Essex has opened at the Cosmopolitan. We're not sure what it is exactly, but it's described as a restaurant, bar, and nightclub set inside a pawn shop.

A new restaurant, Brioche by Guy Savoy, has opened at Caesars Palace. It was inspired by his quick-service pastry-and-savories Goût de Brioche concept in Paris.

Chef Robert Irvine of Food Network fame will open a new restaurant at the Tropicana in 2017. It's the first major news from owners Penn National since they purchased the resort last August and promised a major dining overhaul.

With a Canter's Deli soon to open at The LINQ Promenade, a second Canter's is planned for Tivoli Village. The Tivoli restaurant will be larger than

the one at the LINQ and is expected to open this fall.

Chef Masa Takayama's barMasa and Tetsu Teppan Grill will both close at Aria on July 31. Chef Masa will not relocate in Las Vegas and Aria hasn't announced plans to replace the restaurants.

All McDonald's venues have closed in MGM Resorts International casinos. They are expected to be replaced by Johnny Rockets.

The Cantina has closed at Tuscany Casino and will be replaced by Pub 365, currently slated for a July debut. Our Member Rewards offer for the Cantina is being honored in Marilyn's Café.

We were on the right track with last month's warning off of prior favorite Diamond China on Sahara—the restaurant has closed and reopened as Fortune Fountain. ■

ENTERTAINMENT

Review

Lionel Richie—*All the Hits*

Planet Hollywood

Sep. 21, 24-25, 28,

Oct. 1-2, 5, 8-9, 12

\$94.07/\$155.57/\$177.37/\$188.27

This show is nothing if not perfectly named. You'd be hard pressed to come up with a pop star over the past three decades with more hits than Lionel Richie, and darned if he doesn't perform just about every one of them: "You Are"; "Hello"; "Stuck on You"; "Dancing on the Ceiling"; "Say You, Say Me"; "Truly"; "Running With the Night"; "Penny Lover"; "Endless Love." Now add in the Commodores songs: "Easy"; "Still"; "Lady (You Bring Me Up)"; "Sail On"; "Night Shift"; "Three Times a Lady"; and "Brick House." And the big finale combines "We Are the World" and "All Night Long." If you can't pinpoint all those titles, you'll recognize the music and probably know most of the lyrics. At least everyone else in the audience did when we were there. So

much so that Lionel pointed the mic outward on several occasions and let us do the singing.

At 66, Richie is in good shape and is energetic on stage. Three LED screens follow his moves, interwoven with vintage images of different periods of his long career. All in all, it's a pretty fine stroll down memory lane with some laughing, singing, and spontaneous dancing mixed in.

If you're even a moderate Lionel Richie fan, this is an exceptional two hours of entertainment, but there are a couple of negatives. The first is price. As we wrote last month, announced prices were raised even before the show opened. They start at a fairly lofty \$94 (after taxes and fees) and take a big jump to \$156 at the next tier level. Fortunately, those big screens go a long way toward making the lowest-priced seats acceptable. The second problem is availability. These days, the "residency" performers often run on funky schedules and in this case, the next block of shows doesn't show

up until September. As good as *All the Hits* is, though, it figures to be extended, possibly even with additional dates added before the current planned return.

Drinks Before

If you plan to do some partying before the Lionel Richie show, the best move is to fuel up outside. Specifically, the Halo Bar at the entrance to the theater is the play. A bottle of Bud at Halo is \$5, while a draft Bud inside the theater is \$12. The draft is a 24-ouncer, but it's still cheaper and far less of a hassle to do most of the drinking before you go in. Halo is only a few steps away from the entrance, so getting there on time won't be an issue. *Halo, is it me you're looking for?*

Topgolf

OK, this place is impressive. Since Topgolf Las Vegas opened at MGM Grand close to deadline, the only exposure we've had was on its press night,

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

when everything was free. So while we can't assess prices at this time, we can attest that it's one heck of a complex. Of course, if you're a golfer, this place was made for you. The massive driving range (see newsletter cover) takes up almost the entire area that used to be the MGM Grand amusement park and features 108 climate-controlled hitting bays. Rentals begin at \$30. The golf balls are embedded with chips allowing them to be tracked off the tee, with diagnostics of your drives displayed on a nearby monitor. The indoor portion provides lots to do for non-golfers, with two pools, five bars, a concert venue, special-event spaces, and an extensive food menu. You can enter the complex free of charge to access the public areas and bars, and TVs are everywhere (300, we're told), making it a cool place to watch a game, or several games at one time.

Bars and Happy Hours

(Note: These types of deals can change quickly. Call to verify.)

Botiggliia at GVR has a happy hour Mon.-Fri. from 5 to 7 pm, with \$6 drinks and appetizers, and half-price bottles of wine on Thursdays.

The Carmel Bar at Rampart has a daily happy hour from 4 pm to close, with drinks and small plates starting at \$5.

Rose. Rabbit. Lie. at Cosmo has a happy hour on Wednesday and Thursday only from 6 to 7 pm, with small plates and drinks under \$10, including \$2 oysters.

Wildfire Valley View has a daily happy hour from 3 to 6 pm and 11 pm to 6 am, with \$3 drafts, \$4 cocktails, \$5 wine, \$5 appetizers, and a \$7 burger & beer.

Other Mama (LVA 4/16) has a new daily happy hour from 4 to 6 pm, with \$3 draft beer, \$5 cocktails, and \$5-\$10 small plates.

Dog Haus Vegas has a happy hour Mon.-Fri. from 3 to 6 pm and daily from 1 to 4 am, with 2-for-1 beer and wine and \$1.25 burger and hot dog sliders.

Notes

- *Legends in Concert*, the current longest-running show on the Strip, celebrated its 33rd anniversary last month.
- *The Scintas* have settled into a limited, but ongoing, gig at the Plaza, playing two Fridays and Saturdays of every month through November. This month's dates are the 3rd, 4th, 24th, and 25th. This is an excellent show with tickets starting at \$29.
- Barbra Streisand will play the T-Mobile Arena on Aug. 6. Tickets were still available as we went to press, starting at \$100. Streisand first played Las Vegas in 1963, billed as an "extra added attraction" in a Liberace show.
- The debut of *Mind Live!*, "the recalibrated Criss Angel show at Luxor that was supposed to open in May, has been pushed back to an unspecified date.
- The Fremont Street Experience "Rock of Vegas" summer concert series has another good line-up this year, beginning with 3 Doors Down on June 11. Other scheduled groups include Robby Krieger, Verticle Horizon, Melissa Etheridge, and Smash Mouth. The concerts are free.
- The annual "Junefest" concert will be held this year on June 11 in the outdoor amphitheater at Sunset Station. The concert features Pat Benatar, and Neil Giraldo, Lou Gramm, and Big Bad Voodoo Daddy. Standing-room tickets are \$29, with reserved seating available for \$59, \$69, and \$89.
- The "Electric Daisy Carnival" runs June 17-19 at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway; more than 250 bands are scheduled to perform.
- The new nightclub Jewel has opened at Aria. At 24,000 square feet, it's much smaller than the mega-clubs in town and is using the same strategy as the Wynn's Intrigue in marketing itself as "intimate."

See the **ADVANCE PLANNER** for dates, prices, and additional show updates.

Park on Fremont has a happy hour Mon.-Fri. from 4 to 7 pm, with \$3 well drinks, \$4 domestic beer, \$5 craft beer, and \$6 appetizers.

The Montecristo Cigar Bar has

opened at Caesars Palace.

A new PT's Gold has opened on the southeast side of town at Sunset and Whitney Ranch.

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Reader Leader

We just went to the Mac King show and the information in LVA needs updating. Here's what we found. The players club had plenty of discount tickets—no players card needed, just tell them the size of your party. The \$9.95 on the coupon was lined out. We went to the box office and the deal was laid out like this: Buy a drink for \$10.99 plus some mystery fees and taxes to bring the total to \$14.73 per ticket. Still a screaming deal. For an extra \$6 per ticket they give you VIP seating and buffet tix, also a deal if you're hungry. Mac was awesome (fifth time) and our visiting friends (first timers) found his show to be far superior to the surprisingly boring Penn and Teller show we caught that evening. We had to agree. By the way, Mac announced that he had been with Harrah's for 16 years, and just signed with them for four more.

LVA: Great report. We've verified your information and taken the show off the Top Ten list in keeping with our policy on price increases. A bigger point than the \$1 increase is that you now need two people to use the offer, making it \$29.46 for two with two drinks. As you say, it's "still a screaming deal." The reality is, *Mac King Comedy Magic* at Harrah's remains one of the best shows in town at any price, and is certainly still the best value even with the changes, so expect Mac to be back on the Top Ten list soon (as in next month).

A PKWY Tavern has been announced for the spot previously occupied by Made LV in Tivoli Village, which will presumably result in it becoming the first in Tivoli to have bartop gaming.

In Table 10 at Palazzo, a glass of Justin Cabernet is \$13.52 and a Bud is \$6.49. In T-Mobile Arena, a draft Tecate

Light is \$13. In the bar at Shadow Creek golf course, a Heineken is \$8.11 (nope, not everything there is comped). At Oak & Ivy in Container Park, a Firestone Pivo or a Heineken is \$6.49. In Bin 702 at Container Park, a Stella Artois or a Joseph James Fox Tail is \$6.49. In BeerHaus at The Park, a Bud or a draft Modelo is \$6.49. At Nora's, a Peroni is \$5.95. At Rounders Blue Diamond, a draft Newcastle is \$5.75. At Montana

Meat Company S. Durango, a Bud is \$5. At Halo in the Miracle Mile Shops at Planet Hollywood, a Bud is \$5. At Great American Pub, a Heineken is \$4.50. In Miller's Ale House at Town Square, a draft Bud is \$4.28. At Town Center II, a draft Bud is \$3.50. At Inn Zone W. Flamingo, a Bud is \$3.25. At Loose Caboose S. Buffalo, a draft Bud is \$3. At the Poker Palace main bar, a Modelo or a draft Heineken is \$2. ■

GAMBLING

WSOP 2016

The 47th World Series of Poker kicks off as this issue goes to press and runs through mid-July.

For the first time ever, credit cards can be used to pay *some* entry fees: only for tournaments with fees of \$1,500 or less and the registration must be done online. Online registration itself is also new, and actually a more consequential change, as it will allow those who use it to avoid the long lines that materialize for the big events (and perhaps help lessen those lines).

Other technological and digital innovations include an increase in live web streaming, more accurate and up-to-date access to player chip counts via the WSOP website, plus an online-poker-tournament schedule tailored to accommodate players taking part in the live events.

One other change of note is that prizes will be paid to 15% of the field this year, up from the customary 10%. The increased number of in-the-money positions will come at the expense of the amount of the higher shares, but a similar adjustment in last year's Main Event was received favorably, leading to the change.

There are eight new events this year, and 69 total. Opening day is June 1, with the traditional "Casino Employees" tournament. Other important events are the \$565-buy-in "Colossus" beginning June 2; the \$1,500-buy-in "Millionaire Maker," with a guaranteed prize of at least \$1

million for both first and second, on June 10; the \$50,000-buy-in "Poker Players Championship" on July 3; the new "Tag Team" event, featuring teams of four, on July 6; and the \$1,111-buy-in "Little One for One Drop" that will wrap up the meet on July 17. Conspicuous in its absence is a DraftKings-sponsored event. Last year the DraftKings 50/50 was one of the highlighted tournaments, but there's no sign of the beleaguered fantasy sports company this year.

The Main Event starts on July 9 and runs through July 18, when the final nine players will be determined. The final table will again be contested after a three-month break, reconvening on October 30. Same as four years ago, the date of the final has been moved up a week to avoid running simultaneously with the U.S. presidential election, making the usual "November Nine" the "October Nine." All finalists are guaranteed a minimum \$1 million prize. All the tournaments are free to watch and this is an event worth experiencing if you're in town. Follow important day-by-day results by monitoring "Today's News" at LasVegasAdvisor.com.

Alternative Poker Tournaments

Every year, several tournaments run concurrently with the World Series. These alternative tournaments all have more events than the WSOP, most with significantly lower buy-ins. Here are the main ones (listed in order of their

Main Event dates).

The Binion's Poker Classic runs through July 5, with most buy-ins below \$250. The Main Event begins June 26 with a \$565 buy-in. There's also a daily \$75-buy-in event at 6 pm.

The Golden Nugget's Grand Poker Series runs through July 3. Most buy-ins are \$100-\$350 with the \$570-buy-in Main Event starting on June 29.

Planet Hollywood's Phamous Poker Series Goliath runs through July 5. Buy-ins start at \$100 and many are under \$250. The \$1,650-buy-in Main Event begins July 7.

The Venetian's Deep Stack tournament runs through July 24, with \$200-\$600 buy-ins for most events. The \$5,000-buy-in Main Event begins July 17.

There will also be plenty of tournament action lasting through the end of the WSOP dates in almost all of the poker rooms around town.

Betting App News

MGM Resorts International has released its playMGM mobile betting app, which can be downloaded from the Apple iTunes store. MRI's app is somewhat late to the party, but it's the first to allow 24/7 betting, making it the most accessible in the state. The app can be funded at any of MRI's 10 Las Vegas sports books.

Also, TI has quietly brought back its mobile app after discontinuing it late last year.

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The positive impact of mobile wagering has apparently been more significant than anticipated and it's been reported that the Nevada Gaming Commission is considering allowing mobile wagering from all 50 states. Customers would be required to sign up in person at a Nevada sports book, but could subsequently wager while outside the state. The regulation is in the early discussion stages and there's a ways to go before it could be put in place (assuming they can square it with the feds).

Monster Dog Comes In

When Leicester City won English soccer's Premier League last month, it pulled off one of the biggest sports upsets ever. It's difficult to compare a future bet of this type to one-off upsets, such as Buster Douglass beating Mike Tyson or the U.S. hockey team's "Miracle on Ice," but the odds were far longer against a Leicester championship, with English bookmakers reportedly taking bets at 5,000-1 at the beginning of the season. A \$100 bet by one of the Leicester faithful (they hadn't won the championship in 132 years of being in the league) paid \$500,000! It was likely bad news for future big-dog bettors, as the UK bookmakers are vowing to never again hang odds that long on any proposition, though it's difficult to imagine an Elvis sighting topping out at a mere 500-1 or thereabouts. (Yep, the Elvis proposition is one you'll find in the English betting shops.)

Gambling Notes

CGT complaint—The Nevada Gaming Control Board has filed a complaint against CG Technologies (formerly Cantor Gaming) for underpaying customers on winning sports bets. The complaint alleges underpayments of \$700,000 spread over more than 20,000 wagers, apparently all parlays. The underpayments were caused by a software glitch (about \$100,000 was also *overpaid*), but the complaint says CGT knew about it,

Video Poker Lost and Found

The new Montecristo Cigar Bar at Caesars Palace has different pay schedules on its bartop machines, depending on which side of the bar you're on. Both are bad, but the front side is mildly less so, with 6/5 Bonus Poker (96.87%) the best game from \$1 to \$25. The games on the back side start at 25¢, but the best schedule is 6/5 BP that pays 150 coins for any 4-of-a-kind (96.18%). The other options are the same as those described for CET properties in the May *LVA*, with returns as low as 94.19% for 8/5/4 Double Bonus. Amazingly, they'll still comp at least one drink (with plenty of restrictions on what you can have) for a \$20 buy-in, and you're losing at a rate of only about 4.8¢ per hand playing the back side for quarters vs. 15.7¢ per when playing the front side for dollars.

The online database vpFREE2 reports that a few machines in the high-limit room at Wynn Las Vegas and one at Encore have added NSU Deuces Wild (99.73%) in denoms from \$5 to \$100.

Although the D has dialed back its offerings of late, the good 8/5 BP progressives are still in place

upstairs at the Vue Bar and Wednesdays are triple-points days in June.

We're starting a list of non-casino bars dealing 7/5 BP (98.01%), given that the return is a significant 1.1% better than bars where the best game is 6/5 BP. The two latest we've come across are Loose Caboose W. Flamingo and Dillon's Sunset.

Inn Zone W. Flamingo has 9/6 Jacks or Better at 50¢ and up, but royals pay only 2,500 coins. It's a bit deceptive, but the 98.88% return is better than the 7/5 BP bars mentioned above and with less of a drain as you play.

Shifty's claim that it would bring back its 9/6 JoB games last month proved false.

There are no Bob Dancer video poker classes currently scheduled. They're expected to resume in the fall. In the interim, be sure to check out Bob's weekly Tuesday column at LasVegasAdvisor.com. Also, the "Gambling with an Edge" podcast, with Bob and Richard Munchkin, airs live on Tuesdays from 4 to 5 pm PST at vegasallnetradio.com, with archived shows available at BobDancer.com.

didn't rectify it, then tried to block the state's investigation. Gaming is seeking a \$600,000 penalty and disciplinary action. CGT has 30 days to respond.

Taj poker—After more than a year of dormancy, the poker room at Trump's Taj Mahal in Atlantic City has reopened. The room was Atlantic City's busiest in the late '90s when it was used for key scenes in the movie *Rounders*.

Horse racing—With Nyquist winning the Kentucky Derby and Exaggerator the Preakness, there'll be no Triple Crown this year. The line on any horse winning the Triple Crown before the Derby was NO -800/YES +600. Also, Canterbury Park in Minnesota is experimenting with lowering its pari-mutuel takeout. Whereas the racing industry typically retains 18% of

the pool on straight wagers and over 20% on exotics, Canterbury has begun holding 16% and 18%, respectively.

Lottery—Last month's sixth largest jackpot in Powerball history was hit for \$429.6 million by a single ticket in New Jersey. The prize will be split among eight investors. The winning numbers were 5-25-26-44-66 and a Powerball of 9.

Slots—A visitor from Texas hit a \$1 million jackpot at the Golden Nugget last month on a Wheel of Fortune machine.

Tournament Record—Muckle-shoot Casino in Auburn, Washington, set a world record for running the largest (most players) slot tournament ever. The winner of the free-to-enter event that drew 3,173 players took down \$21,000 and a trip to Vegas. ■

FAST TRACK

Deals

Get a 2-for-1 brunch at **Silverton** on Sundays in June (except June 19). Print out the necessary coupon at a casino kiosk.

As part of the **Fremont's** ongoing 60th Anniversary celebration, earn 100 points (\$100 coin-in) on Thursdays and get a breakfast or lunch buffet comp good till 2 pm the next day. Earn 200 points for a dinner buffet redeemable same-day only. Also on Thursdays, get free cupcakes at 2 pm in the Filament bar.

Look for an ad in *Seven* magazine for a free 20-ounce beer at **Ellis Island**.

The **Cannery's** paycheck-cashing schedule that we published last month was changed the following week. The rewards are now determined by a random spin that appears to be significantly less valuable than it was previously.

Miscellaneous

Las Vegas added 10,220 residents in 2015, making it the **28th most populous city in the U.S.** With 623,747 residents, Las Vegas came in above Baltimore and below Oklahoma City. Henderson ranked 67th with 285,667 residents. New York City was first with 8.6 million, followed by Los Angeles with 4.0 million, and Chicago with 2.7 million.

The **water level at Lake Mead** dropped to 1,074.7 feet above sea level in May, its lowest point since 1937 when the lake was first filled. It's expected to drop to below 1,071 feet by the traditional low point of the year this month. As a consequence of the low levels, the ruins of the previously submerged Mormon-founded town of

St. Thomas are now accessible and the remains of a B-29 Superfortress is at a depth that can be easily reached by divers. The plane crashed into the lake during a "secret mission" in 1948.

Legendary sports better **Billy Walters** was arrested last month by the F.B.I. on both criminal and civil charges involving possible insider trading. Implicated in the affair, but not charged, was professional golfer Phil Mickelson. The current situation is not Walters' first brush with the law, having previously been acquitted on charges of both illegal gambling and money laundering, the accounts of which are detailed in our book, *Gambling Wizards—Conversations with the World's Greatest Gamblers*.

Las Vegas was ranked first in Trip Advisor's 2016 *Summer Vacation Value Report* as the world's "**top summer vacation city.**" The designation is based on booking interest on the Trip Advisor website. Cancun was ranked second and Orlando was third.

The **16th National Conference on Gambling and Risk Taking** runs June 6-9 at the Mirage. Held only once every four years, it's considered by many to be the most prestigious gambling conference in the world.

The 24th Annual Convention of the **Casino Chip and Gaming Token Collectors Club** (CCGTCC) runs June 23-25 at South Point. Multiple dealers will be in attendance buying and selling casino collectibles and vintage gaming memorabilia, and casino host Steve Cyr, the subject of our book *Whale Hunt in the Desert*, is the keynote speaker at the banquet. Admission is \$10 on the 23rd, \$5 on the 24th, and free on the 25th; ages 18 and under are free. ■

LAST SECOND FLASH

Build it on the Riv

Sands Corp. president Rob Goldstein recently told the Southern Nevada Tourism Infrastructure Committee that building a proposed 65,000-seat football stadium on Tropicana Ave. as originally suggested "may be disappearing as an option." The alternative? Goldstein floated the site of the former Riviera, which probably won't be welcomed by the Convention and Visitor's Authority, given its plan to expand the Convention Center into that space. Other alternatives mentioned were land near SLS and the site of Cashman Field.

PT's 50th

PT's Entertainment Group opened its 50th tavern in May. PT's Ranch 215 & S. Durango will hold its grand opening celebration on June 9, with the public invited for complimentary appetizers, drink specials, and a \$50 matchplay from 6 to 10 pm.

Big Colored Rocks

If you're looking for an offbeat day trip, check out the new "Seven Magic Mountains" display. It's an al fresco public art installation comprising seven colossal towers made of dayglo-painted boulders stacked on top of one another to heights of 25 to 35 feet each and positioned in the middle of the desert. There's no charge and all you have to do is find it. Though accessible from I-15, the sure way to get there from the city is to follow Las Vegas Blvd. south about 12 miles till you run into it.

Bunk Beds

If you can't come up with something new, bring back something old. The LINQ has outfitted a dozen of its hotel rooms with bunk beds. To our knowledge, it's a Las Vegas hotel first.

Sunday Funday 29

This month's Sunday Funday online poker tournament will run June 19. The prize pool includes \$100 for the winner, plus LVA memberships and our new books. There's no charge to play. See you at noon PST/3pm EST on the 19th at Play.LasVegasAdvisor.com.