

Chickasaw Nation's New SaltCreek Casino Opens



Chickasaw Nation officials conducted a ribbon-cutting ceremony on December 18 at SaltCreek Casino, marking the opening of the Nation's first economic endeavor in Grady County, OK.

"Opening of SaltCreek Casino is a significant first step in our vision for expanding tourism and economic development in Grady County. SaltCreek employs nearly 200 local residents, and we expect it to attract more people from outside the area who will patronize local businesses and spur economic development and job growth for years to come," said Chickasaw Nation Gov. Bill Anoatubby.

Located nine miles north of Chickasha, Okla., on U.S. Highway 81, SaltCreek Casino is 36,000 sq. ft. and houses more than 550 electronic games and six table games. It sits on 190 acres of previously undeveloped land, which took a little more than one year to properly prepare for construction of the casino, said Bill Lance, CEO of the Chickasaw Nation Division of Commerce.

"From the beginning of construction until today, we placed high importance on creating a first-class facility," said Lance. "We took great care in building the necessary infrastructure as well as preserving the surrounding land."

Lance said some land improvements included the installation of a 155,000-gallon water tank, dedicated turn lanes from Highway 81 northbound and southbound lanes as well as the construction of an access road and two major bridges connecting the casino and highway.

In addition to the gaming amenities, SaltCreek Casino features: Fork Café, a 44-seat restaurant with a home-style menu; a full-service Brook Bar; and Reflections, a high-end retail store featuring such select items as Oakley sunglasses and apparel, designer purses and Bedré Fine Chocolate.



Chickasaw Nation Gov. Bill Anoatubby, center with large scissors, is joined by from L-R: Pocasset Vice Mayor Mary Beets, Pocasset Mayor Christie Rainey, Bud Andrus, President, Chickasha Chamber of Commerce, SaltCreek General Manager Justin Yaholam; John Kennedy, Irish Realty; Chickasaw Commerce CEO Bill Lance, Gov. Anoatubby, Lt. Gov. Jefferson Keel; tribal legislators Nancy Elliot, Toby Perkins, Mary Jo Green, Dean McManus, and Rees Architecture Vice President Jay Tullis, and project manager Rachel Bundy. Photo by Mike McKee.

FireKeepers Casino Hotel Officially Opens to the Public



FireKeepers Casino Hotel in Battle Creek, Mich., owned and operated by the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the

Potawatomi (NHBP), is pleased to announce that Michigan's newest resort-style hotel has officially opened to the public.

"Our future burns bright," stated Homer A. Mandoka, NHBP Tribal Council Chairman. "This journey started with a spark and the opening of our resort-style hotel is a significant moment for our tribal elders and our tribal membership. As Potawatomi we are 'Keepers of the Fire' and we are proud to keep the fire burning strong with FireKeepers Casino Hotel."

Located in Battle Creek, Michigan, the resort-style hotel is conveniently located along Interstate 94 at exit 104. The expanded facility increases local employment to approximately 1,800 full and part-time employees.

The opening of FireKeepers Casino Hotel on Dec. 12, 2012 marked the completion of a well-managed and executed

expansion project that officially began on May 2, 2011.

The newly expanded areas of the Hotel and Smoke 'n Fire restaurant are accessible to guests under the age of 21; however, access to the casino floor remains restricted to guests

21 years of age and older. Smoke 'n Fire, FireKeepers Casino Hotel's newest restaurant is located inside the resort-style hotel and includes seating for up to 150 guests and features classic American fare accented with BBQ undertones.

Downstream Casino Resort Opens Second Hotel, Spa and New Amenities

Downstream Casino Resort has opened its second hotel, the 152-room Kappa Tower, which includes the elegant Neé Spa and other new upscale amenities. The resort has added about 100 new permanent jobs, and the hotel/spa expansion project created 400 construction jobs this year, giving a boost to the Tri-State Region's economy.

The new Kappa Tower sits side-by-side with Downstream's original 222-room hotel tower, now named Osotouy, bringing the total room count to 374. "It's even more beautiful than I thought it would be. We are very excited, and we are hopeful that our guests will love it," said Downstream Chairman John Berrey. "We are also excited about how this will help strengthen the local economy with the jobs it has created and with a stronger destination tourist attraction."

Kappa Tower is a showcase of luxury and high-end amenities designed to enhance the overall attraction of Downstream and expand its primary market reach beyond the current 100-mile radius. Highlights of the new addition include: twelve single-room luxury suites; four dual-room luxury suites; two 1,500 sq. ft. Hospitality Suites, each featuring two oversized bedrooms with king beds, a large dining area and living room, meeting space and bar; another 134 standard deluxe rooms; the Neé Spa with five treatment rooms, salon, saunas, steam rooms and whirlpools; indoor swimming pool with indoor/outdoor patio and lounge area; Lover's Leap Bar & Lounge in the Kappa Lobby; Ma-Ko-Sha` coffee shop and bakery, and a new, larger location for the Buffalo Grille including private and outdoor dining.

"We already had a first-class hotel with first-class service.



So with the addition of Kappa Tower and the Neé Spa we are now offering a more well rounded resort with a greater choice of rooms and fine amenities," said Downstream General Manager Steven Drewes. "Our guests definitely have something special to look forward to."

Meanwhile, the previous location of Buffalo Grille, just off of the gaming floor, was redesigned and opened this week as a new high-limit gaming area for both table games and electronic machines.

Design and architecture for the Phase II development was provided by JCY Architecture of Hartford, CT, and the construction contractor was Manhattan Construction Group of Tulsa, OK.

Seneca Niagara Casino & Hotel Opens Fabulous All-New Thunder Falls Buffet

Seneca Gaming Corporation upped the ante on casino dining today with the unveiling of the new Thunder Falls Buffet at Seneca Niagara Casino & Hotel in Niagara Falls USA. The casino's original restaurant has been transformed through an \$8.5 million investment into an open-market style eatery with stunning architectural designs, high-tech lighting and video screens, and a completely revamped menu of more than 100 food items. Thunder Falls Buffet officially opened to the public on December 21, just 10 days before Seneca Niagara Casino reached its milestone 10-year anniversary.

"Today, a restaurant already regarded as the region's best buffet has become even better," said Barry E. Snyder, Sr., president of the Seneca Nation of Indians, at an unveiling event.

"Our award-winning culinary team has redefined what it means to eat at a buffet, and locals and tourists alike will come to know Thunder Falls Buffet as a must-visit dining location when visiting the Niagara Falls region. More than a million people dine at the buffet every year, and we fully anticipate that number to increase."

Thunder Falls Buffet will now feature more than 100 food items across six food stations – the Central Grille, Mediterranean, Asian, Pizza, Dessert and the Salad Bar – with a focus on healthy and ethnic dishes as well as classic comfort food. The open-market design, created by interior design architectural firm SOSH and built under the leadership of Seneca Construction Management Corporation, has a direct

connection to the nearby gaming floor and brings interactive cooking in front of guests.

“Together with our business partners and more than 200 very skilled local construction workers, we completely reconstructed Thunder Falls Buffet from top to bottom in just a few short months,” said Robert Mele, chairman of the Seneca Gaming Corporation board of directors. “We’ve created an ultra-modern buffet that, in fact, looks and feels like an upscale restaurant with a wide selection of delicacies for everyone to savor.”

With the new design, overall seating at Thunder Falls Buffet will increase from 420 to 500 seats. A unique wine and beer display, large video screens and colored lighting will add to the interactive and exciting feel inside the restaurant. In addition, terrazzo floors, rich fabrics, intricately-lit buffet stations and a sound system with music are just some of the new features that await guests.

The restaurant also promises guests an uncomplicated dining experience. Servers and chefs will be trained to accommodate dietary needs such as sugar-free, low-sodium and gluten-free options. Different types of comfortable seating – such as booths, tables, and even a chef’s table – are located close to the stations for added convenience and create unique dining experiences for each visit. Kiosks located adjacent to entrances allow for seamless check-in and pre-payment. Altogether, Seneca Niagara Casino’s Food and Beverage Team expects to serve more than 80 people every 15 minutes during peak hours.

The buffet’s dessert station will have its items made daily by students at Niagara County Community College’s new



VP David Kopasz and Executive Chef Gary McHale

Niagara Falls Culinary Institute nearby on Old Falls Street downtown. Seneca Gaming Corporation is a proud sponsor of the Institute, having donated \$1.275 million to ensure the program’s success and offering students the opportunity to work alongside the Seneca Niagara Casino’s professionally-trained chefs and culinary professionals.

“The world’s best casinos have superior buffets, and Seneca Niagara Casino & Hotel is no exception,” said Cathy Walker, president and CEO, Seneca Gaming Corporation. “There is a world of flavors under one roof at Thunder Falls Buffet, and we invite guests to visit and enjoy every one of them.”

Pawnee Nation Celebrates Opening of the New Entry Road and Bridge



The Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma recently celebrated the opening of the new entry road and bridge that will link the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma Reserve to U.S. 64.

“It’s great to see the new entry way that leads to our new Law Enforcement Center and the health clinic,” said Pawnee Business Council (PBC) President Marshall Gover. “This has been needed for many years due to the traffic flow around the area where the many highways meet coming into Pawnee. We would like to thank those who have supported our efforts.”

The Pawnee Nation had discussed the need over the past decade to build a new entry into the Pawnee Nation Reserve to provide accessibility infrastructure for additional economic development projects, the Pawnee Nation College, the Pawnee Indian Health Service Clinic, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Pawnee Nation headquarters, and public safety services.

A Pawnee Nation Department of Transportation and Safety study determined that more than 3,000 vehicles utilize existing pathways into the Pawnee Nation Reserve daily with the heaviest traffic count located over the green bridge on Harrison Street/Agency Road.

The PBC recognized the need for the New Entry Project and approved its construction under the FY 2010 Department of Transportation and Safety planning process.

“This has been a long-term goal that has had many challenges to overcome during the past few years,” Gover said. “But, the Pawnee Nation has been successful in overcoming these obstacles and in the spirit of our ancestors, the Pawnees will continue to thrive proving that we are the Greatest Nation on earth.” ♣