

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 2006

Pittsburgh Edition 50¢
Seven sections ¥ 90 pages

Casino eyes \$1M a day

One proposal plans to bring in that much by the second year.

BY ANDREW CONTE
TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Pittsburgh's slots parlor could rake in more than \$1 million a day by its second year, according to revenue projections by one of four companies seeking the city's casino license.

Detroit businessman Don Barden said Wednesday his Majestic Star Casino would open with 3,000 machines and bring in about \$342 million annually, if it's allowed to operate 365 days a year. It would sit on the North Shore west of the Carnegie Science Center.

In its second year, with 4,000 slot machines, it would bring in \$403 million a year.

And by the fifth year — with a state maximum 5,000 slot machines — Majestic Star could bring in \$516 million, or more than \$1.4 million a day.

"We think we're reasonable," Barden said. "I wouldn't characterize it as conservative, but moderate."

Pennsylvania's slot machines are supposed to raise enough money to cut property taxes, pay off debt owed by Pittsburgh International Airport, help out volunteer fire departments and, maybe, finance a new Penguins arena.

Some have feared there will not be enough money to go around, but others are saying slots could be even more lucrative than anyone guessed.

Gov. Ed Rendell has said slots will raise \$1 billion a year for property tax relief.

But that's based on having 38,000 machines — not the 61,000 allowed in the state law, Revenue Secretary Greg Fajt said yesterday.

It also counts on each machine generating an average income of \$230 a day. That's less than the daily average take from each machine in Illinois (\$408); Delaware (\$252); and

SEE CASINOS ¥A6

People just lost it

Mine community reacts with anger to miscommunication



Friends and family gather Wednesday at Sago Baptist Church for a vigil to honor the 12 coal miners who died.

STEVEN ADAMS/TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Witness describes jubilation turning to rage after bad news was delivered.

BY MIKE WERESCHAGIN
TRIBUNE-REVIEW

SAGO, W.Va. — Jubilant mine workers succumbed to false hope Tuesday night when they relayed "a miscommunication" to the anxious families of 12 trapped miners, saying rescuers had found them alive when in fact all but one of the men had perished, said Ben Hatfield, CEO of International Coal Group Inc.

The initial news sparked an emotional and spiritual celebration at the nearby Sago Baptist Church that endured for three hours until Hatfield and West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin walked in to tell the families the truth — that only one miner, Randal McCloy Jr., 27, was alive.

The celebration — accentuated by ringing church bells and the singing of hymns — ended in screams, curses and violence.

"We sincerely regret the manner in which events un-

SEE COMMUNITY ¥A9

Miner's youth may have saved him

The only survivor, Randal McCloy, 27, has a collapsed lung and carbon monoxide poisoning.

BY ALLISON M. HEINRICHS
TRIBUNE-REVIEW

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. — Across the nation, people prayed for a miracle and Randal McCloy Jr. emerged from the Sago Mine.

As families mourned the deaths of 12 other miners, doctors closely monitored the condition of the tragedy's lone survivor, McCloy, 27, the youngest crew member.

McCloy, of Simpson, W.Va., the father of



McCloy

two young children, was recovering Wednesday from a collapsed lung, dehydration, kidney problems and carbon monoxide poisoning after spending 41 hours trapped below ground after an explosion. He was in critical, but stable, condition at West Virginia University's Ruby Memorial Hospital.

Dr. Larry Roberts said McCloy's age and good health probably helped him survive.

"I think youth always helps you," said Roberts, director of the trauma center.

"Youth always has its advantages."

McCloy's mother, Tandra Flint, of Bridgeport, W.Va., his wife, Anna, 25, and several other family members were keeping vigil in a private waiting room.

"I ask everybody to keep on praying," a distraught Anna McCloy told reporters.

Rescuers carried McCloy to safety from the deepest reaches of the mine, where he and co-workers were resuming coal cutting after a holiday break. After the explosion, the workers barricaded themselves by hanging a curtain to keep out air poisoned with carbon monoxide.

SEE MCCLOY ¥A9

Inside



■ **Time of mourning:** A close-knit West Virginia community grieves, prays and begins to heal together. **A8**

■ **Impact on coal industry:** Analysts say the accident may give some people pause before accepting a mining job, but companies will have to refocus on bolstering safety. **A8**

■ **A risky profession:** Family members shed light on why their loved ones chose to work in the mines. **A9**

Ariel Sharon, the 77-year-old Israeli prime minister, suffered a massive stroke Wednesday less than a month after having a mild stroke. Medical experts in the field said his chances of a full recovery are slim.



GIL COHEN MAGEN/REUTERS FILE PHOTO

Sharon suffers massive stroke

Power is transferred to his deputy as Israel prays.

BY STEVE WEIZMAN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Ariel Sharon suffered a massive, life-threatening stroke Wednesday and underwent lengthy surgery to drain blood from his brain after

falling ill at his ranch. Powers were transferred to his deputy, Ehud Olmert.

Doctors placed Sharon on a respirator and were trying to save his life only hours before the hard-charging, overweight, 77-year-old Israeli leader had been scheduled to undergo a procedure to seal a hole in his heart that contributed to a mild stroke on Dec. 18.

Sharon's cerebral hemorrhage, or bleeding stroke, came at a time of upheaval among Palestinian factions in Gaza and in the midst

of Israeli and Palestinian election campaigns. Sharon's absence would halt momentum toward further peacemaking with the Palestinians and leave a major vacuum at the head of his new Kadima party, which was expected to head a government after the March 28 vote.

In a written statement, President Bush praised Sharon as "a man of courage and

SEE SHARON ¥A6

MORNING BRIEFING

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Cloudy and colder with flurries today and into the evening. **A14**

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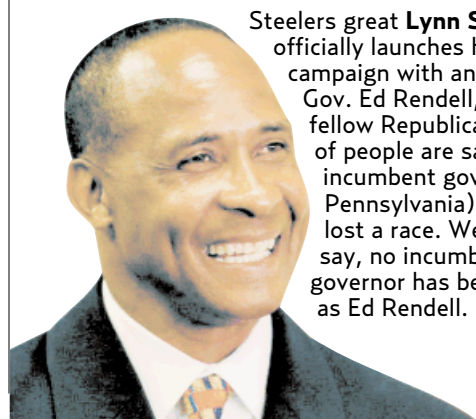
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Swann makes run for governor official in Pittsburgh



Steelers great Lynn Swann officially launches his campaign with an attack on Gov. Ed Rendell, telling fellow Republicans: A lot of people are saying no incumbent governor (in Pennsylvania) has ever lost a race. Well, I dare say, no incumbent governor has been as bad as Ed Rendell. **B1**

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PRINTED IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY
TRIBUNE-REVIEW PUBLISHING CO. 2006