

YOUR ROOMS ARE (ALMOST) READY TRI-STATE CASINO HOTEL NEARS COMPLETION

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Byline: RUSTY MARKS STAFF WRITER

Owners of Tri-State Casino & Resort in **Nitro** are almost ready to open a new hotel at the complex.

The hotel should open in mid-July, said hotel director Jerry Anderson.

"This is very exciting to me," Anderson said Tuesday during a tour of the new facility. "I think it's one of the best hotels we're going to have in the Tri-State area."

When Kanawha County voters approved the expansion of gambling at Tri-State in August 2007 to include table games like poker and blackjack, one of the promises made was the construction of hotel with up to 250 rooms, a performance hall and a conference center.

Construction of the hotel on site was written into the law allowing table games at the casino. Casino owners Hartman & Tyner Inc. have until August to get the hotel open or face a \$2.5 million penalty.

Company vice president Dan Adkins said the expansion would bring employment at Tri-State to about 1,000. Anderson said the new hotel will employ 72, and bring the total number of jobs at the casino complex to about 850. Construction also brought about 400 local jobs, he said.

"For the economic situation we're in today, we're growing in this area," Anderson said.

Anderson, 48, grew up in Beckley and went to Marshall University before leaving the state for Atlanta and Charlotte, N.C., where he has spent 24 years in the hotel business. Tri-State Casino owners Hartman & Tyner Inc. recently hired Anderson to run the four-story, 86,000 square-foot hotel.

When he saw an ad looking for a hotel director, Anderson said he jumped at the chance to return to his home state. "I've been trying to find a job back here for the last couple of years," he said.

"I'm very happy to be home," said Anderson. After coming back from the fast-paced, high-stress life in the big cities, he said, "All that weight just lifts off of you."

The finished hotel has 150 rooms, not the 250 originally envisioned. But, Anderson said, they're really nice rooms.

Rooms feature brass appointments, ample room and comfortable furnishings, he said. The hotel includes 21 luxury suites, top floor concierge service and nine rooms with jacuzzis inside.

There's also a hot tub and saltwater swimming pool for hotel guests. Anderson said the saline pool means less odor for patrons, a quick start-up time for managers and easier maintenance for staff.

Other amenities include a skywalk connecting the hotel to the casino next door, a meeting room, two-station business office, 24-hour room service and a complimentary cooked-to-order breakfast for guests.

Anderson said room rates should start at around \$169 a night. He said rates at the new hotel will be about the same or lower than other area hotels, while offering more.

"I've toured all the hotels in the area and looked at their services," he said. "For the amenities we're going to offer, [\$169] is a really good number to go in."

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Construction crews are nearly finished building a 150-room hotel at Tri-State Casino & Resort in **Nitro**. Hotel director Jerry Anderson said the hotel is expected to open in mid-July.

Anderson shows off the 5,100-square-foot lobby, where guests will be greeted by two fireplaces and a fully stocked bar (on right).

Reach Rusty Marks at

rustymarks@wvgazette.com or 304-348-1215.