

## National Conference Welcomes 300+ to Louisville; Receives Positive Evaluations for Program

The National Conference on Problem Gambling was held in Louisville, Ky., June 19-21, 2003. The Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling served as the local host to more than 300 attendees representing the leading clinical practitioners, researchers and academics in North America on problem and compulsive/pathological gambling. More than 19 hours of continuing education credits were available from five plenary sessions and 45 workshops. National Council on Problem Gambling Executive Director Keith Whyte reported in a June 25 e-mail that 95 percent of 125 evaluations indicated the Conference met, was above or exceeded their expectations. Those evaluators indicated 97 percent satisfaction with the plenary session speakers.

KYCPG expresses its thanks to those who contributed to the success of the Conference, particularly Kentucky-based counselors who accepted working scholarships and helped with registration and facilitated workshops: Stephanie Al-Uqdah, Louisville, RonSonLyn Colston, Owensboro, Linda M. Gasbarre, Louisville, Roberta Rhodes, Louisville, Jacquelen Salyer, Shepherdsville, Penny Smith, Warsaw, and George Scott Walker, Prestonsburg.

The National Council on Problem Gambling held its organizational meetings on June 18 in Louisville. KYCPG was represented by Tangerine-Ann Holt, Ph.D. KYCPG Executive Director Michael R. Stone was elected to the NCPG Board.

## KYCPG Presents Annual Awards at June 19 Derby Museum Event

KYCPG President **Caleb Cooley** was surprised by the KYCPG Awards Committee when he received the organization's highest honor, the **Jim Cooke Leadership Award**, at the Kentucky Awards Experience held at the Kentucky Derby Museum on June 19. The event, open to the attendees of the National Conference of Problem Gambling, also served as a KYCPG fund raiser. KYCPG Professional Adviser Curtis L. Barrett, Ph.D., presented the award, and Paula Cooke, widow of founding KYCPG Board member Jim Cooke for whom the award is named, was present to congratulate the honoree.

Cooley, a Pikeville accountant, is a founding member of the Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling who has served the past three years as president. During his tenure, KYCPG's budget has doubled, awareness programs and resource publications have been added, and KYCPG has helped increase the number of certified gambler counselors in the state from two to eight.

**Grace Schneider**, a reporter with the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, received the **KYCPG Media Award** in recognition of the series published Dec. 22-24, 2002. The series, co-written by Lesley Steadman, consisted of 17 articles, with photographs and graphics, documented compulsive and problem gambling in the Louisville

area and raised awareness of the issues among the public.

The *Louisville Courier-Journal* also received the **NCPG Media-Print Award** for the series. The nomination noted that following the series Indiana adopted a statewide self-exclusion policy and Kentucky passed a bill to study gambling in the state.

The **Kentucky Lottery Corp.** received the **KYCPG Industry Award** for the second time. Its efforts in 2002 included production of eight problem-gambling or underage-warning public service videos and the leadership of Nichelle Anthony in planning, organizing and conducting Kentucky's first Responsible Gaming Education Week.

The **Kentucky Lottery Corp.** also received the **NCPG Industry Award** for these efforts.

## Responsible Gaming Education Week Set for Aug. 4-8

The focus of Kentucky's second Responsible Gaming Education Week, Aug. 4-8, will be on awareness of youth gambling activity. The RGEW Planning Committee is considering several events aimed at increasing awareness among the state's youth of the potential problems that can result from uncontrolled gambling behavior.

Participating on the 2003 Planning Committee are representatives of Churchill Downs, Inc., Turfway Park, the Kentucky Lottery Corp., the Kentucky Department of Charitable Gaming, the Kentucky Division of Substance Abuse, Argosy Casino and Hotel, Caesars of Indiana, KYCPG, and the state's certified compulsive gambler counselors. Trish Candler, Churchill Downs, Inc., chairs the 2003 Planning Committee. Among the activities being developed:

- A pilot program from the Kentucky Lottery to educate in-school youth,
- A brochure and a poster aimed at youth to raise awareness of problem gambling warning signs,
- Distribution of materials through Family Resource Centers established at Kentucky's public schools,
- Presentations before groups that promote or sponsor youth activities, such as the Kentucky High School Athletic Association,
- A counselors' workshop sponsored by the Division of Substance Abuse in the Southeast/South Central area, and
- A kickoff event to emphasize the potential dangers of youth gambling.

Studies in the U.S. and other nations report that as many as 85 percent of all adolescents have gambled. The rate of compulsive gambling among youth is about three-times the adult rate. Attendees at Gamblers Anonymous meetings often relate that they began gambling in their teen years or younger. There are several warning signs of teen gambling, such as preoccupation with gambling activities, money problems, frequent use of gambling terms in language, and change in previous behavior.

If an individual chooses to gamble, it can be pursued by adults in a healthful manner. Youth need to be aware of what constitutes problem gambling and its warning signs.

# Baby Steps and Next Steps

By Curtis L. Barrett, Ph.D., ABPP, CCGC, NCGC  
KYCPG Professional Adviser

## Baby Steps and Next Steps: Evolving Provisions of Responsible Gaming Programs

It is clear even to the gaming industry's severest critics that the baby steps of responsible gambling programs have been taken. Whether called "responsible gaming" as the commercial casino industry has it, "responsible wagering" as horse racing (including account wagering) says, or "play responsibly" as we hear from the nation's lotteries; such programs receive considerable industry attention and funding. What has been done to date, in fairness, can be called "the baby steps."

We use the term "baby steps" as doting parents and grandparents would use it. Baby steps are exciting. They represent the first time that a child strikes out on his or her own, taking the risk of letting go of old ways and exploring a new and powerful way of being: walking. The child does not know, as we do, that everything else in his or her life will be based on those baby steps. A champion marathon runner starts with baby steps. In retrospect, baby steps look so obvious! It's easy to ask why it took so long. Yet we know that many things had to happen, many aspects of maturity had to be realized, and there had to come a time when, as the saying goes, "the game was worth the candle."

In taking its baby steps, with regard to gambling disorders, the gambling industry had to go through all of the processes that a baby goes through. Perhaps most of all it had to decide, as a baby does, that it was worth taking the risks of stepping forward. Frequently, the questions of whether responsible gambling programs would reduce profits, cost legislative support, or play into the hands

of anti-gaming advocates were asked. Nevertheless, we have here in Kentucky members of the gambling industry who were at the very forefront of responsible gaming efforts: the Kentucky Lottery, Churchill Downs, TVG, and Harrah's Casinos. We have others who were right on the heels of these leaders.

There is a great deal of evidence of progress. Today, in gambling venues, we see signage warning that "Gambling Can Be Addictive," that patrons should "Bet With Your Head Not Over It," and that help is in reach at helpline 1-800-GAMBLER. Lottery retailers say "Not 18, No Way!" The Kentucky Council on Problem Gambling's requests for sponsorship of training events and special projects receive positive responses from Argosy Casino and Hotel, Casino Aztar, Caesars of Indiana, Grand Victoria Casino and Hotel, Churchill Downs, Inc., Keeneland Race Course, Turfway Park, the Kentucky Lottery Corp., and the Kentucky Department of Charitable Gaming.

Even administrators of government agencies not specifically charged with dealing with gambling disorders (particularly the Kentucky Division of Substance Abuse) have become invaluable sponsors of training and other events. Staffs of gambling businesses are receiving training. Brochures and newsletters are out there now, giving the message that "when gambling is no longer fun there is help" and "It's a Great Game But It's Only A Game." In very recent years, some gambling businesses have gone public by using a responsible gambling logo on all company printing, e.g., programs, tickets and gifts. This implies recognition and at least partially taking ownership of gambling problems. Yes, these very important, even critical "baby steps" are being taken.

**Next Issue: Dr. Barrett suggests the Next Steps.**

## Upcoming Events

- July 23, Workshop, *Trends in Gambling Counseling*, Northern Kentucky University (during Kentucky School on Alcohol and Other Drug Studies)
- August 4-8, Responsible Gaming Education Week
- September 17, Mental Health Association of Northern Kentucky, St. Elizabeth Medical Center, Edgewood, 6:15 p.m., Curtis L. Barrett, Ph.D., on problem gambling
- September 30, Kentucky Mental Health Institute, Executive West Hotel, Louisville, Gambling Workshop, 2-5 p.m.

## Gamblers Anonymous Meetings

The following is a list of the current G.A. (Gamblers Anonymous) meetings in or serving Kentucky. For exact times, locations and a phone number for contact person, **please call 1-800-GAMBLER.**

### Monday

- The Living Stone, 7 p.m., Louisville
- Southeast Christian Church, 6 p.m., Louisville (Gam-Anon meeting)
- Lakeside Christian Church, 7:30 p.m., Florence
- St. Paul Lutheran Church, 8 p.m., Huntington, WV
- Steppingstone Counseling, 7 p.m., Evansville, IN

### Tuesday

- Beargrass Christian Church, 3:30 p.m., Louisville

- CARE Center, 9 p.m., Louisville
- First Presbyterian Church, 6:30 p.m., Lexington
- First Baptist Church, 6:30 p.m., Pikeville (Also separate Gam-Anon meeting)
- Florence Christian Church, 7:30 p.m., Florence
- Lincoln Trail Behavioral Center, 7:30 p.m., Radcliff

### Wednesday

- Pigeon Roost 12-step Club, 7:30 p.m., Louisville

### Thursday

- Southland Christian Church, 6:30 p.m., Lexington
- Caritas Peace Ctr., 1st Fl. Cafeteria, 7:30 p.m., Louisville
- St. Mary's Church, 6 p.m., Evansville, IN (Also separate Gam-Anon

- meeting)
- Friday**
- Generations Center (downtown), 6:30 p.m., Hazard
- Living Stone, 7:30 p.m., Louisville (Also separate Gam-Anon meeting)
- Saturday**
- St. Michael's Catholic Church, 9 a.m., Louisville
- Token Club III, 6 p.m., Louisville
- Sunday**
- Hazelwood United Methodist Church, 1 p.m., Louisville (Open meeting, family welcome)
- KET Building, 4:30 p.m., Lexington (Also separate Gam-Anon meeting)
- Methodist Temple, 5 p.m. Evansville, IN (Also separate Gam-Anon meet.)
- Unity Trinity Methodist Church, 7 p.m., New Albany, IN