

# DEADWOOD

by James **Campiglia**



Deadwood.

Photo courtesy Johnny Sundby Photography/dakotaskies.com

## Deadwood Gaming 2006 update

Modern gaming began November 1<sup>st</sup> 1989 when made legal by a vote of the people. Since this time much revenue has been brought in for the state. The limit to just 30 gaming devices, slots and tables in each building, helps keep each casino equal. The betting limited was raised from \$5 to \$100 in 2000.

The first twenty casino's to open were:

B.B. Cody's  
Bella Union  
Bullock Hotel  
Calamity Janes  
D.T. Saloon also called Dakota Territory  
Deadwood Dicks  
Deadwood Livery  
First Gold  
Franklin Hotel  
Gold Street

Jackpot Charley's  
Lucky Wrangler  
Mineral Palace (no chips until 2003)  
Peacock Club  
Pink Palace  
Poker Alice  
Saloon No. 10  
Wild Bill Bar  
Wilderness Edge  
Windflower

In 1990 27 more casinos opened with live gaming. Of the 47 casinos at the inauguration of modern gaming in 1989 to 90 a few only lasted a year then closed up never to reopen. Many of the others have now become slots only. It is very hard for the small operations to make it through the slow winter season. After the yearly gaming taxes are paid July 1<sup>st</sup> a casino really has to generate a good income in the summer before the snow season starts in October and business and events really slow down. The machines have mostly gone to the ticket in ticket out, coinless, machines. There's only a few banks of poker machines in town. The once very popular poker machines are hard to find scattered among thousands of modern slots starting at a penny.

Deadwood has had 58 different casinos with live gaming to date. Not many new ones open these days. The casinos mostly have expanded to take over the buildings next to them. When Deadwoods modern gaming started it was a town of old, mostly closed down, business buildings that became small casinos in each building. The Wild Wild West now takes up most of one block- filled with bad paying machines and nothing much of interest. Wild Bill Bar was in this block but the live gaming has been taken out.

The newest casino to come along in a long time is Lucky Nugget, opened July 1st. A real nice poker room with 15 tables located at the end of the block and leased from the Wild Wild West. They have the first .50 cent chip! Their set of Chipco's is a must have. Some of the best artwork I have seen in a long time. The blue .50, the \$1, the orange \$2, the \$5, \$25, and \$100 make a real nice set. Don't miss their poker tournaments. The Lucky Nugget is one of just 4 poker rooms still going in Deadwood.



Mineral Palace has expanded and now holds 12 gaming licenses in their large building. With a new adjoining building called the Gem Theatre they added many brand new machines. On the second floor a restaurant, a steak house, and meeting rooms and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, suites. Also 5 or 6 blackjack tables are in use in the original casino area. The new area is called the Gem Theatre and Chipco chips were issued advertising this in the \$5 and \$25 only. They are regular table chips, not limited editions.



Under Mineral Palace ownership they opened a new Union Palace with 30 gaming machines on December 15<sup>th</sup>. I was not able to find out if they have tokens or not. Previously this building was Poker Alice and sat empty for a long time.

The Franklin Hotel was bought for big bucks then renovated, I hear 7 million, by the Silverado, one of Deadwoods largest casinos which is across the street. Three million more spent on renovation. They now have a \$100 chip in use on the 5 blackjack, two 3 card, and one 4 card tables in the beautifully redone casino. A newer \$25 was issued about 2004, before the casino was remodeled.



The Gold Dust is the only casino I could find which issued a \$500 chip. I'm not sure how often this nice lavender Chipco is put into play. Released around July is a new \$1 with a blue ring instead of the maroon that was in use. They are still keeping up with Black Hills Motor Classic biker \$5 chips that have been issued since 1998. Their \$5 coin inlay is now obsolete as well as the blue \$10 Chipco. This is one of Deadwoods largest casinos and chances are



they are changing hands end of Jan. 07 to a large casino group.



Silverado put in a nice large poker room around 2004 and now using a super nice set of chips. \$1 to \$100 and it's nice to see each with a different design.



Gulches of Fun outside of town has not had any tables since 05 and possibly even the last quarter of 04 when the blackjack was taken out. Slots only now.

Miss Kittys live gaming also ended at the end of 05. I was told the chips were destroyed.

I don't recall a table this summer at Buffalo Bodega and the number I called just goes to an answering machine.

Dakota Deuces which was the old Mother Lode/Depot property did not make it for long. No chips were issued just a \$1 token. This has now been changed to office and warehouse space for the local slot operator.



Deadwood Stage/Dakota Frontier opened on the main street the summer of 2003 with a black jack table open on the weekends. Unfortunately by Feb, 04 the one blackjack table was taken out. The \$5 and \$25 chips are very hard to come by now. Slots only and a nice place to play. Located in part of the old Goldberg's.

Celebrity Hotel opened about 2004 and has a \$25 chip. Also for tables is a \$5 and \$1 token. Odd to see no \$5 chip. Lots of neat movie props and even cars from the movies are on display. A great place to gamble. Very relaxing.

