

# Bingo hall

## H63-17 said feasible

A new bingo hall in Regina will "absolutely not" cut into the profits of the seven existing halls, said the chairman of the new Highway East Bingo Association.

"If you look at it from a business perspective, the competition is going to stimulate the industry," said Virgil Cairns. He's hoping a "commitment to service quality" will attract new bingo players to the hall.

If there are 2,500 bingo players in the city right now, the association is looking at ways to increase that number to 4,000, said Cairns. That way, everyone can make money.

They're hoping to attract rural players to the hall, located on Highway #1 East, and people who like the idea of playing in a new, 1,000-seat hall.

At an emergency meeting of the Regina Bingo Association last week, spokesman Peter Morin said there could be as much as a 20-per-cent drop in bingo revenues to charities if the new hall opens.

There will also be obvious economic spinoffs with the new hall, said Cairns. About 16 full-time and 14 part-time employees will be hired and more than \$500,000 worth of renovations was done to the old Hunter's Trailer and Marine building.

## Won't cut profit of existing halls

So far, there are six chartered members of the Highway East Bingo Association: the Canadian Mental Health Association, Special Olympics, AIDS Regina, Riel Local Inc., Regina Dive Development and the Saskatchewan Recreation Facility Association.

The bingo association is looking to expand the number of associated charities to 32. Each charity would be guaranteed one night a month for the bingos.

"We are looking at charities who are the most needy. . . . You'd be hard-pressed to show us that they (the charities already signed up) don't touch or impact on the whole community," said Cairns.

"There are so many charities out there and we're all fighting for the same dollar. There's a lot of money to be made with bingos," said Joan Kilbride, the assistant executive director of the Canadian Mental Health Association.

The projected earnings for each of the charities is \$50,000 annually.

The new hall is slated to open March 4.