

Bingo gains popularity during recession

by UPI

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. -- The recession has put a damper on Illinois' riverboat casinos, but bingo has become a popular alternative, officials say.

Case in point is the Caritas Hall Bingo parlor in Springfield, Ill., where the parking lot is nearly full every night, the State Journal-Register reported Friday.

Regular Cheryl Jarrett says she's been playing bingo for five or six years and has no intention of stopping even during a recession.

"I gave up the gambling boats for bingo because it's cheaper to come here than it is to go to a boat," Jarrett said. "I come five, six, seven times a week."

Manager Melody Dyer says Caritas Hall Bingo attracts an average of 180 players every evening.

"There are five \$500 games here a night," Dyer said. "It's a very inexpensive night out. You can play 15 games of bingo for three dollars."

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