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Cashing in: Tim's Toyota Center pays dividends to town

By Jason Soifer

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The Daily Courier/Jo. L. Keener The Prescott Valley Tim's Toyota Center rises to a height of 85 feet, as high rise growth continues. The events center is currently the tallest building in Prescott Valley.

PRESCOTT VALLEY - It is the newly turned dirt at the intersection of Pav Way and Glassford Hill Road.

That corner is the future home to the town's newest hotel in years and the success at Tim's Toyota Center is a big reason for it.

The center opened less than a year ago and its contribution to the town's economic engine is rippling through the county and all the way to Phoenix.

A little over a week ago, representatives with the town, Fain Signature Group and Global Entertainment attended a conference in Oro Valley and came away with the Governor's Excellence in Rural Development Award for Innovative Economic Development.

Rick Kozuback, president and chief executive officer of Phoenix-based Global Entertainment, said the recognition

validates the \$35 million building that continues to serve as one of the tri-city's biggest attractions.

"It's really a great accomplishment I think for everybody that was involved in this project," he said. "I think this solidifies what we've been talking about all along."

The center was one of eight recipients of the award at the 2007 Governor's Rural Development Conference.

The award honors community and tribal projects that show partnership, leadership and innovation.

Steve Conrad, executive director of the center, said in a prepared statement that he is excited to win the award, as the center is a major piece of the town's economy.

"Our venue is the only one of its kind between Phoenix and Las Vegas and has filled a much needed entertainment niche in northern Arizona," wrote Conrad. "Our success is a total team effort and we couldn't have done it without all of our partners."

The \$35 million building opened its doors in November 2006 and more than 240,000 people have attended ice hockey, trade shows, concerts and other events at the center.

A chunk of those people attended 42 regular season and playoff games of the [Arizona Sundogs](#) Hockey Club.

The club is hitting the ice for its second season in October.

Center staff has served more than 50,000 sodas and 20,000 hamburgers.

Greg Fister, manager of economic development for the town, drafted the nomination.

Fister said that the fact that the center is in the community without increasing sales, property tax rates and public bond measures makes it an anomaly in the arena-world.

"I don't think it's a coincidence that we've broken ground on one hotel downtown and have plans for two others and the fact that there has been an increased interest in the downtown from developers and retailers," he said.

Downtown restaurant owners reported sales increased 32 percent since the 6,000-seat center opened.

And that reflects some of the trickle-down effect the center is having on businesses and boosting town coffers.

"It's going to take time, but we're very, very optimistic about the downtown development over the next five years," he said.

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