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## Argosy dealers turn down UAW

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Dealers at Argosy Casino Hotel & Spa in Riverside voted Saturday against joining a union.

The dealers voted 113-68 against the measure, said Rick Klingenberg, vice president of United Auto Workers Local 710. He said that the election turnout was strong, with 181 of 188 eligible voters coming out to vote, but he was disappointed by the results.

"But the people spoke. They made their decision," he said. "I live with it. ... I really thought it was going to be closer, but that's just the way the games go."

The election was conducted by the National Labor Relations Board, a federal agency that oversees organizing drives and labor-management disputes.

Klingenberg said he believed union organizers lost the election because "the company put on a campaign distorting the facts about labor unions, especially the UAW."

"Basically, the people who contacted me felt that they needed a voice in the workplace, and apparently they believe the company is now going to listen to them. Well, we'll see."

Argosy Casino general manager Tom Burke said he was very happy about the results.

"They lost significantly," he said. "We're very, very pleased with the results tonight. Most of all, we are very grateful to our dealers for seeing through the UAW's negative and divisive tactics in an effort to force its way onto our property, attempting to drive a wedge between us and our dealers.

"Most importantly, we believe the vote was a vote of confidence in Argosy Casino, its direction and its service to its many guests."

Argosy is the only area casino with organized employees. About 500 of the casino's 1,000 workers have long been represented by the Seafarers Entertainment & Allied Trades Union, which the dealers are not part of.

The UAW began its organizing drive after it was contacted by Argosy dealers, Klingenberg said.

He said that though the casino employees would like better wages and benefits, other concerns prompted the organizing activity.

“They’re not happy with the way things have changed in the past few years,” he said. “The company is not listening to what their issues are.”

Pamela Adkison, a dealer at Argosy Casino, said she and other pro-union dealers felt that penalties against workers for not following workplace rules were too strict.

She said she was very disappointed in the election results. Pro-union dealers will have to wait a year before they can try again to join a union, but they are not going to give up, she said.

“We’re not stopping. We’re not giving up on this,” she said.