

## Wrapping Up a Successful 2023

February 2024

By Paul Beachnau



It is hard to believe we are well into 2024 and beginning our golf show season. I am excited to let you know that we are coming into 2024 with great momentum from 2023. Our room sales and golf rounds, two of our largest barometers for travel and tourism in Gaylord, achieved record numbers.

Our twenty lodging properties, who report room statistics and collect the room assessment that funds our marketing programs, have reported total room sales of just under \$25 million for the year. This is an increase of over 14% from the \$20.7 million in room sales generated in 2023. The room sales increase is a combination of an increase in room nights sold (up 9.3%) and an increase in our average daily rates (up 5%).

Not only is this healthy for our lodging members and the community but the growth in sales provides a larger marketing budget for the Gaylord Area Convention and Tourism Bureau. Room assessment revenues in 2023 reached a record of \$1,350,000. Due to excellent budget control by our Board of Directors and staff, we are in a very healthy financial position going into 2024.

Our 17 golf courses that comprised the Gaylord Golf Mecca in 2023 also experienced an outstanding year. Total golf rounds increased by 28,000, which represented an 11% increase. Total revenues at our member courses for green fees and cart, pro-shop sales, food and beverage and driving range exceeded \$23 million, an increase in sales of 25%. We experienced a healthy increase in each of those categories to achieve our total increase.

While our winter season thus far has been sluggish due to warmer conditions and lower snowfall, we continue to aggressively promote Gaylord as a top visitor destination in Michigan. There are still many excellent outdoor adventures to be had.

The substantial success of 2023 and our strong financial condition is allowing us to embrace some new opportunities and staff positions. The real success, however, is that progress and prosperity has been made by continuing to work together for 37 years.