

The murmur of friends socializing and poker chips being shuffled fills my heart with bliss while I enjoy one of the loveliest social clubs in Oregon. Friendships are forged and business networking commences while we play Texas Hold'em with friends, acquaintances and new friends in public places. My favorite social club with Texas Hold'em is One Good Hand at SE Hawthorne & 30th in Portland.

I sharpen the saw, to borrow from Covey's 7th Habit, mathematically, statistically, socially, memory and recall, and stoically. Social gaming presents me with opportunities to develop and exercise these skills while I calculate bet sizing, pot odds, hand and draw statistics, etc. The social aspect is wonderful. We get to interact with a broad range of folks and sharpen our social skills. We practice sincere humility when we bust someone out of the game or win a big pot. We practice respect and stoicism when we take a beat, we stand up, smile, shake their hand and let them know it was fun playing with them.

Social gaming clubs are in public places that share the safety that already exists in those places. I'm aware of the existence of underground poker games in states that don't have Oregon's social gaming laws. I hear stories of crimes that occur and go unreported do to the underground nature that is brought on, in part, by restrictive or oppressive laws.

The best [eggs benedict](#) I've ever had! A beautiful and well organized [open water swim](#) in Hagg Lake! The tax professional I grew to trust and respect. A deeper relationship forged with two of my best friends, William and Sergio, through our shared enjoyment of our favorite hobby, Texas Hold'em. These are a few of the wonderful social and business networking opportunities provided, to me, by Oregon's Social Gaming community.

The casinos are a significantly further drive. They aren't managed as friendly or progressively as the social clubs. And they are more expensive. Oregon's motive for changing the existing laws and definitions doesn't seem to align with our progressive state. It seems oppressive and controlling.

As a constituent, I don't want any changes that further restrict or eliminate the social gaming community.

Sincerely,
Michael Travis Volker