

Economy shrinking Nev. brothel business

By Alison Vekshin, Bloomberg

In a dim parlor furnished with red velvet couches and a stripper pole, Brooke Taylor is having a sale on herself.

“I offer a lot more specials and discounts and incentives for people to come in to see me,” said Taylor, 32, a brunette prostitute in a short, green dress at the Moonlite Bunny Ranch outside Carson City. “People are looking for deals.”

Nevada’s legal brothels, which took root in the mid-1800s silver-mining boom, are dwindling, down to about 19 from roughly 36 in 1985, according to George Flint, an industry lobbyist. Many have been the highest-profile businesses in their sparsely populated regions, and their decline hurts already-stretched county budgets and marks the end to local institutions – though not the universally beloved sort.

The state’s flagging economy, decreased patronage by truckers squeezed by fuel costs and growing use of the Internet to arrange liaisons are to blame, managers say.

“A lot of our clients don’t have the discretionary income they had six years ago, five years ago,” said Susan Austin, 63, the madam of the Mustang Ranch in Sparks. “The ones that can come in, they aren’t spending quite what they were spending before.”

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