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**FW: Flying L Ranch - yet another "Raffle"**


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**From** Hipsz, Ed GPEB:EX <Ed.Hipsz@gov.bc.ca>

**Date** Fri 8/2/2024 5:24 PM

**To** Bohanan, Chad GPEB:EX <Chad.Bohanan@gov.bc.ca>; Horodyski, Brian GPEB:EX <Brian.Horodyski@gov.bc.ca>

**Cc** Parks, Tony GPEB:EX <Tony.Parks@gov.bc.ca>; Skrine, Cary J GPEB:EX <Cary.Skrine@gov.bc.ca>

 3 attachments (4 MB)

20240704 Initial request to Gaming Branch.pdf; 20240801 Michael Lares Illegal Raffle Images for Enforcement.pdf; 20240216 - McQuarrie Instagram Defamation Letter.pdf;

Chad/ Brian,

Not sure who this may be assigned to but the attached is a second complaint from [s. 22](#) The original is still in the Northern queue, File 138869/ Occurrence 141687.

The complainant phoned me today as he contacted Cary who is AOL and was referred to myself. I told him that I was going to be on the road for the better part of the day but that I would find the most appropriate person (s) to forward this message. He said he would encapsulate everything in an email.

At any rate, not sure who is next on the list for a file but please let me know if you need assistance with same.

Ed

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**From** [s. 22](#)

**Sent:** Friday, August 2, 2024 9:49 AM

**To:** Hipsz, Ed GPEB:EX <Ed.Hipsz@gov.bc.ca>

**Subject:** Fw: Flying L Ranch - yet another "Raffle"

You don't often get email from [s. 22](#)

[Learn why this is important](#)

**[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.**

Hi Mr. Hipsz,

Thank you for the brief phone call of this morning. I called you because an automatic reply came from Cary Skine suggesting you be contacted.

Below is the email I sent to Debra Gagnon with a cc to Cary Skine. You'll see why I elected to cc Cary, but in doing so please know it is not a criticism of Debra, but simply due to the immediacy of timing because Mr. Lares is presently operating yet another gaming event.

Now that I understand you are in the Intelligence side (which I admit I know little about) I would like to bring the general fundraising activities and campaigns by Michael Lares, of Flying "L" Ranch, to

solicit donations from the public. (see "flyinglranh.ca" as well as his Flying "L" Ranch Instagram account under the name "michael\_lares").

What concerns me is that there is no transparency or accountability whatsoever. The public never knows how the monies raised were used, if in fact they were used for the intended purpose, or other purposes, or how much money was raised. In addition to what is documented below, Mr. Lares solicits donations by PayPal, GoFundMe, Patreon, by appeals to eTransfer funds directly to him (via his personal email address), and also by appeals for donors to purchase gift cards at Beaver Valley Feeds in Williams Lake and possible at other retailers. Should anyone ask Mr. Lares for details he "blocks" their accounts (i.e. Instagram, etc), labels them "haters" and "trolls" and goes so far as to issue lawyer's letters threatening legal action "to the fullest extent possible". One of these generic legal letters is posted on his Instagram account for all to see, a copy of which attached (20240216 - McQuarrie Instagram Defamation Letter.pdf).

Mr. Lares claims Flying "L" Ranch is an equine rescue operation, but all indications are that it is simply a breeding operation. For all we know, any funds Mr. Lares receives in response to his fundraising appeals and campaigns is simply pocketed by Mr. Lares himself. In other words, under the guise of soliciting donations for equine rescue Mr. Lares may simply be conducting a donations "scam" and pocketing the funds himself.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email particularly in respect to the investigation of violations of BC's gaming regulations and possible illegal/unlicensed activities. But also secondarily, in your Investigations capacity, with respect to what I think is generally a "scam" to solicit donations under false pretenses absent any transparency or accountability.

Thanks again.

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**From** s. 22  
**Sent:** Friday, August 2, 2024 11:08 AM  
**To:** Gagnon, Debra GPEB:EX <[Debra.Gagnon@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Debra.Gagnon@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Cc:** [Cary.Skrine@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cary.Skrine@gov.bc.ca) <[Cary.Skrine@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Cary.Skrine@gov.bc.ca)>  
**Subject:** Re: Flying L Ranch - yet another "Raffle"

Hello Debra,

I hope you don't mind I have cc'd Cary Skrine who, I gather, is the Executive Director in the Enforcement Division overseeing Investigations. I've done so because I believe the matter to be of significant importance and urgency requiring immediate action because Michael Lares of Flying "L" Ranch is currently operating yet another unlicensed "raffle" for which there are no controls, transparency, or accountability. Additionally, I discovered Mr. Lares held a "guessing game" type of gambling event in April of this year, prior to the the one I reported on July 2, 2024, in which Mr. Lares solicited \$15 bets (entries) on when 5 horses would give birth in order to allegedly win \$1,000 and all expenses paid at the ranch.

If these activities of Mr. Lares are in violation of BC Gaming regulations and were held without license, which I suspect is the case, then Mr. Lares must be stopped and not just warned to cease and desist but also be fined for repeated violations and as a disincentive because otherwise he will continue to repeatedly violate the regulations with the impunity he clearly feels he has.

Let me explain and provide some documentation.

For reference I have attached a PDF of my July 2, 2024 email that led to a file being opened (which I understand is at least the 2<sup>nd</sup> complaint regarding that activity of Flying L Ranch).

**Current "Win a Trip Raffle":**

On or about August 1, 2024 Mr. Lares posted a "Win a Trip" raffle on Instagram. The URLs are: [https://www.instagram.com/stories/michale\\_lares/3424670841601353748/](https://www.instagram.com/stories/michale_lares/3424670841601353748/), as well as [https://www.instagram.com/stories/michael\\_lares/3424763866062847773/](https://www.instagram.com/stories/michael_lares/3424763866062847773/) .

One needs an Instagram account that has not been "blocked" by Mr. Lares in order to view these Instagram "stories". Further, I understand Instagram "stories" like these disappear after 24 hours. I have preserved these Instagram "story" videos should you require.

Three (3) screenshots from those Instagram video "stories" are found in the attached PDF "20240801 Michael Lares Illegal Raffle Images for Enforcement.pdf". The first and second screenshots show the invitations to "Win a trip for two at the ranch" and to "Win a trip for two" respectively. Clicking on either of those invitations reveals a "Visit link" pop-up which, when selected, opens a new browser window to the same PayPal page as depicted in the third image.

Please note the text on the PayPal page clearly states "**Donate to Flying L Ranch LTD**" and allows for payments of any amount and additionally, if selected, turning that into recurring monthly donations in the amount specified. As with the July 2, 2024 complaint I submitted the same is true here:

- entry tickets are NOT issued to payees on purchase
- there is no way for a payee to know if purchases in increments of \$25 will result in multiple entries (\$25/each) or just one entry with anything over \$25 considered a "donation", or whether the purchase will result in any entry at all
- there is no tracking, transparency, accountability, no statement on chances of winning, or any information at all to know what happens with payments
- there is no way for the public, including participants, to know anything about the operation or results of the "raffle"

In his appeal for participant to purchase "entries" Mr. Lares has provided nothing to assure the "raffle" is handled fairly and honourably and in accordance with regulations, or how the funds received are used. Given the complete lack of information or accountability, it is likely, and not unreasonable to conclude, Mr. Lares and Flying L Ranch simply pockets the money thus received.

### **Betting Game on Foal Birthing Dates:**

On or about April 4, 2024 Michael Lares held a betting game to "*Guess our five expecting mares [sic] foal birthdates*" and offering a prize of "*\$1,000 cash for travel and all expenses at the ranch covered*". Three weeks later, on or about April 25, 2024, Mr. Lares closed the guessing game.

The Instagram video posting is found at <https://www.instagram.com/reel/C5J7br0SrmC/> . I have preserved this as well should it be required.

As with the two aforementioned "raffles" there are no controls whatsoever. The only differences are:

- payment of \$15 per "entry" rather than \$25
- payments are solicited via eTransfer directly to Mr. Lares himself, in addition to the use of PayPal.

The initial post by Mr. Lares reads as follows (the references to the number of weeks at the end of each post are relative to August 1, 2024):

*Let's have some fun and support the horses!*

The GUESS OUR FIVE EXPECTING MARES FOALS BIRTHDAYS Contest starts now.

WIN: An all expenses paid trip for two to the Flying L Ranch. That comes in the form of \$1000 cash for travel and all expenses at the ranch covered. 🙌

CONTEST RULES: Simply follow the PayPal link in our bio, our stories or if in Canada eTransfer to [michael@flyinglranh.ca](mailto:michael@flyinglranh.ca) and purchase as many \$15 entries as you like. No limits to entries.

Once received we will email you the online entry form where you will choose from the automated calendar 5 dates, one for each expecting Mare of when you think they may give birth and electronically submit the form. It's super easy and again you can enter as many times as you like. Choose different dates at \$15 per submission to increase your chance to come see us and the horses! 😊

Lots of fun and all proceeds go to the benefit of the horses and our new foals coming this spring. Which seems to be coming early as some of our mares look ready to drop!

Have fun going back in our content and on our Patreon page to see when we bred our Mares to get the most information of when they may foal.

Good luck to all our contestants and thank you in advance for all the support! 🙌❤️

#flyinglranh #flying\_l\_ran  
#portaltothemajesticandwild  
17W

And the final post from Mr. Lares closing the contest reads as follows:

Contest closed as of this morning as we had three babies born in the wee hours! Squeegee-filly, Sienna-filly and Duchess-stud colt! Stay tuned for details on the outcome for a winner!  
14w

Here are some screenshots from the **Betting Game on Foal Birthdates** video:



michael\_jares • Follow

Sneha • So This Is Love (feat. ConTejas)



michael\_jares 17w

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2,824 likes

March 30



Add a comment...





**michael\_jares** • Follow

Sneha • So This Is Love (feat. ConTejas)

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March 30



Add a comment...





**michael\_jares** • Follow

Sneha • So This Is Love (feat. ConTejas)

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#flyingl ranch #flying\_l\_ranch



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March 30



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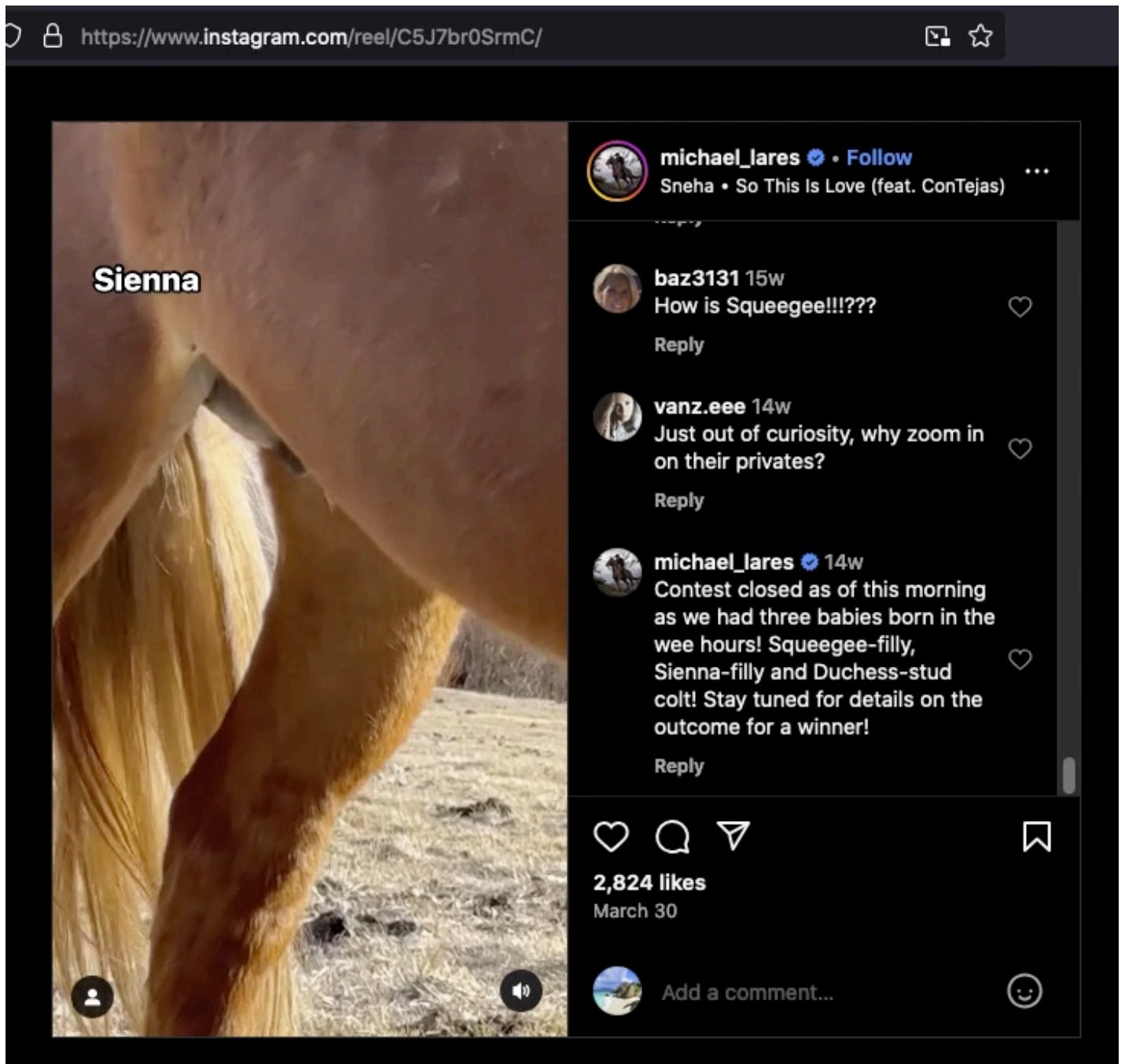
**2,824 likes**

March 30



Add a comment...





### Summary:

I have provided the Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch with reasonable evidence that Mr. Lares and Flying "L" Ranch has, on at least 3 occasions in 2024, operated some form of gaming/gambling requiring licenses which have not been applied for or issued (betting game, "raffles"). One of these is currently in progress.

I believe there is some urgency to investigate as it is clear Mr. Lares will continue to operate various forms of gaming/gambling absent investigation and sufficient fines.

Should investigations confirm Mr. Lares has been operating in violation of regulations, it will require fines to stop Mr. Lares from future repeat offences as a "warning" will be perceived as no more than the irritation of a slap on the wrists.

I have preserved the videos referenced above and will make these available to you at your request.

Finally, I thank you for your time, interest, and actions in this matter.

Best regards,

s. 22

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**From:** Gagnon, Debra GPEB:EX <[Debra.Gagnon@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Debra.Gagnon@gov.bc.ca)>

**Sent:** Thursday, July 4, 2024 6:45 PM

**To** s. 22

**Subject:** Flying L Ranch

Hello s. 22

A file was opened with respect to your concerns about the Flying L Ranch, this is the second complaint filed today with respect to the activities on the Flying L Ranch. We confirm these files will be assigned to an investigator who will look into this matter.

We thank you for bringing this matter to our attention.

Regards,

Enforcement Intake Clerk

Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch