

Texas Lottery Commission Press Release - October 29, 2004

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Birthday Numbers Ace Win For Watauga Partnership



Winners Jean and Paul Bass pose with TLC Executive Director Reagan E. Greer beside their larger-than-life ceremonial check for \$11,219,244.

(Austin, October 29) - As on numerous other occasions in the history of the *Games of Texas*, birthday numbers again proved to be just the ticket. Birthday numbers used by the Jean and Paul Bass Family Limited Partnership, James Paul Bass, general partner, matched the five numbers and the bonus ball drawn in the *Lotto Texas*® drawing on October 16.

"Birthday numbers continue to rank at the top of the list of self-selected numbers our players use," said Texas Lottery Commission Executive Director Reagan E. Greer said. "Watauga has proven to be a true winning town, too. It's no wonder the winners were so surprised. The Bass Family Limited Partnership is the fourth from this North Texas city to match their ticket to our *Lotto* drawing numbers. In a town the size of Watauga, with more than 22,000 in population, scoring a jackpot isn't just big news; it's unbelievable."

That's how Jean Bass felt when she realized her ticket matched the numbers she was reading on the newspaper.

"I was doing my normal Monday morning routine, drinking coffee and reading the newspaper when I saw them," Bass said. "I couldn't believe it, and then I started yelling. My husband had a vacation day so he was home. He ran to the kitchen, he thought the house was on fire."

Jean says Paul is a pragmatic man. He quickly put the ticket in a safe place, the identity of which they wouldn't reveal until they came to Lottery headquarters in Austin.

"My husband put it in a tin in the gun safe, that's built with cement in it, so it's really secure," she said. "Even though it was in a safe place, Paul's been staying up nights worrying about what could happen to the ticket. He even thought a rat could get in the safe and eat it."

To ensure that they knew what their ticket looked like, the Basses took photos of it, but didn't develop them right away.

"The Walgreen's is just blocks away, but I didn't want to have the photos developed just yet," Jean said. "Then everybody there would know we had what we thought might be a winning ticket."

Jean and Paul have been faithful Lottery players since the *Games of Texas* began.

"We play every Wednesday and Saturday, without fail, when we get our to-go dinners," she said. "My husband's real practical about buying tickets, but I tell him, 'You can't win it if you're not in it.'"

The Basses are planning for retirement already. She has been a waitress at the Marriott Courtyard for the last 10 years. Paul is a supervisor in a repair shop.

"I know I will miss my job, I've met people from all around the world," she said. "I used to tell everybody that I was going to win, and it happened."

While the Basses contemplate retirement, they've already decided what to do with their prize.

We want to leave our children and grandchildren in a good situation," she said. "Paul and I are each going to buy a new car because we need them, and we're thinking that we might also buy a new home. We're going to take it easy first, though, because it's all been happening too fast since we figured out that our ticket had the matching numbers.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime moment for us," she said. "We want to try to make it fun and enjoy it as much as we can."

The Cash Value Option prize value of this jackpot is \$11,219,244, before taxes. The numbers drawn on October 16 were 8-21-25-28-18, and the Bonus Ball was 21.

Jean Bass bought her tickets at the 7-Eleven #1631-27374, 7001 Rufe Snow, in Watauga. The store is eligible to receive a bonus of one percent of the advertised jackpot, \$180,000.

"Before the October 16 drawing, there were three other jackpot-winning tickets sold in Watauga," Greer said. "The first and second were in July of 1996, when one ticket, purchased at Albertson's #4267 and a second ticket purchased at another 7-Eleven, each took a quarter share of what coincidentally also was an \$18 million jackpot. In December of 2002, another ticket sold at the Albertson's #4193 matched the numbers drawn for a *Lotto* jackpot of \$4 million."

Tonight's *Mega Millions*™ jackpot is worth an estimated \$57 million. Saturday's *Lotto Texas*™ jackpot is an estimated \$6 million.

For more information about the Texas Lottery®, please visit the official Texas Lottery Commission web site at <http://www.txlottery.org>

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