

Texas Lottery Commission Press Release - February 13, 2002

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## Winner of \$27 Million Lotto Texas Jackpot from January 19th Drawing Collects Prize

(Austin, February 13) - - Debbie Couch recently acquired a fire-proof safe. Her son, Andy, is a volunteer fireman in LaPorte and gave it to her the night the ticket she bought won the \$27 million *Lotto Texas* jackpot.

"He got real excited about me winning, so he ran out to Wal-Mart and bought me a new safe," she said. "We only used it the weekend we won, because we put that ticket in the bank first thing Monday."

Couch was watching Houston's Channel 13 (KTRK-TV) when she learned that one of her 10 tickets held the six winning numbers (4—8—19—22—25—53) for the drawing that night, January 19.

"At first, I thought the '25' was a '52'" she said. "I got my numbers kind of turned around, I was so excited. In fact, my knees were shaking."

The excitement quotient at the Couch residence was already elevated that night. The family was watching the New England Patriots battle it out with the Oakland Raiders for the AFC championship in a near-blinding snowstorm.

"That was a great game, but I had to change channels to find out what the numbers were," she said. "When I saw the numbers come across the screen, I could hardly believe it."

The numbers on the TV screen made Couch jump. "Then I just started screaming," she said.

Her husband, David, had told her he would memorize the last three winning numbers. She was in charge of the first three. They each knew they had won at least \$5.

"Then I told him, 'Don't touch the ticket,' " she said. "Andy saw the numbers on the ticket and decided it was time to have a fire-proof safe in the house. That's when he ran out to the store, just as the game went into overtime.

"My parents are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary in May," Couch said. "I'm planning to do something very special for them."

Couch is an office manager for a Deer Park-area business. She has worked at the same place for 30 years.

The Texas Lottery today paid the C.A.D.D. Limited Partnership \$15.1 million, the amount of the Cash Value Option jackpot prize. Debra A. and David L. Couch are the general partners. They are from LaPorte.

The Quick Pick ticket was purchased at the Handi Stop #74, 612 Center Street, in Deer Park. The retailer is eligible to receive a bonus of \$270,000.

Tonight's *Lotto Texas* jackpot is an estimated \$9 million.

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The Texas Lottery, the 4th largest selling lottery in North America, is "Focusing on the Future of Education, One Ticket At A Time." By providing the 'Games of Texas' for more than 10 years, the Texas Lottery Commission (TLC) has generated more than \$10 billion for the state and paid nearly \$17 billion to players in prizes. For more information about the TLC, please visit the official website at <http://www.txlottery.org>