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SMITHDEMMET, LLC, OF BUFFALO CLAIMS \$12 MILLION LOTTO TEXAS® JACKPOT

(Austin) – SMITHDEMMET, LLC, Billy J. Smith, President, of Buffalo today claimed the \$12 million *Lotto Texas*® jackpot offered for the drawing on Wednesday, December 1. Purchased with the Cash Value Option, the ticket is worth \$8,000,256, before taxes.

Smith is the father of Ann Demmet, the other name in the legal entity claiming this prize. Father and daughter have maintained a longtime agreement to split their lottery winnings, in case either of them ever won a Texas Lottery® jackpot. They divide their ticket-buying duties by week.

“I checked my numbers that night on the lottery website and started calling her right after I realized the numbers on my ticket matched the ones on the computer screen,” Smith said. “She didn’t answer, and I called her all night long. Finally, she answered at 7 a.m., but I didn’t tell her why I called so many times, just that I needed to see her in person.”

“I immediately thought there was a medical problem,” Demmet said. “I rushed over there in my car, and called my husband to do the same. He flew out of the house and drove over with his head sticking out of the car window because of the frost on the windshield, all the while holding the dog. When I saw the ticket, I started yelling, ‘we won, we won.’”

Demmet called the Texas Lottery in Austin at exactly 8 a.m. to make an inquiry on the ticket. She told lottery officials that the tears started rolling down her cheeks when agency personnel gave her the go-ahead to come to headquarters with her father and their ticket.

(more)

(Texas Lottery Commission News Release, continued)

“I feel as if I hit the lottery twice, once when I married my husband, Les, and now with this,” she said. “Since that day when I got hoarse from yelling ‘we won’ so much, I’ve been so excited that I’ve gotten nauseated and started hyperventilating just by thinking about this.”

Smith has been more calm about it. He has worked all his life in concrete and doesn’t get too excited about things. He plans to buy a new pick-up with his winnings and go to the gaming tables in Shreveport and Las Vegas when the weather is warmer.

Demmet will help her daughter finish paying for the last two years of her college education. Next spring, they’ll take a “girls-only” Caribbean cruise with two friends and their daughters. After Demmet refinishes her kitchen and bathroom, she and her father will buy matching four-wheelers to roam their property. They also plan to help family members and save the rest.

“*Lotto Texas* has a loyal following of players who continue to play the game, no matter the jackpot level, just like our winner today,” said Texas Lottery Commission Executive Director Gary Grief. “We’ve had 529 *Lotto Texas* tickets that matched the winning number combinations since the first drawing in November of 1992. Since the Cash Value Option became available in February of 1997, there have been 265 *Lotto Texas* jackpot-winning tickets sold. Nearly three-quarters of those have been purchased with the Cash Value Option.”

Smith purchased \$5 worth of *Lotto Texas* Quick Pick tickets at the Discount Center, 1303 North Main Street, in Jewett. The retailer is eligible to receive a bonus of \$120,000, which is 1 percent of the advertised jackpot for selling this ticket.

Tonight’s *Mega Millions*® jackpot is an estimated \$88 million. Tomorrow’s *Lotto Texas* jackpot is an estimated \$5 million, and the *Powerball*® jackpot is an estimated \$37 million. More information about the Texas Lottery is on the official website, www.txlottery.org.

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