

Texas Lottery Commission Press Release - July 8, 2002

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Lubbock Truck Driver Finds Financial Freedom On Independence Day

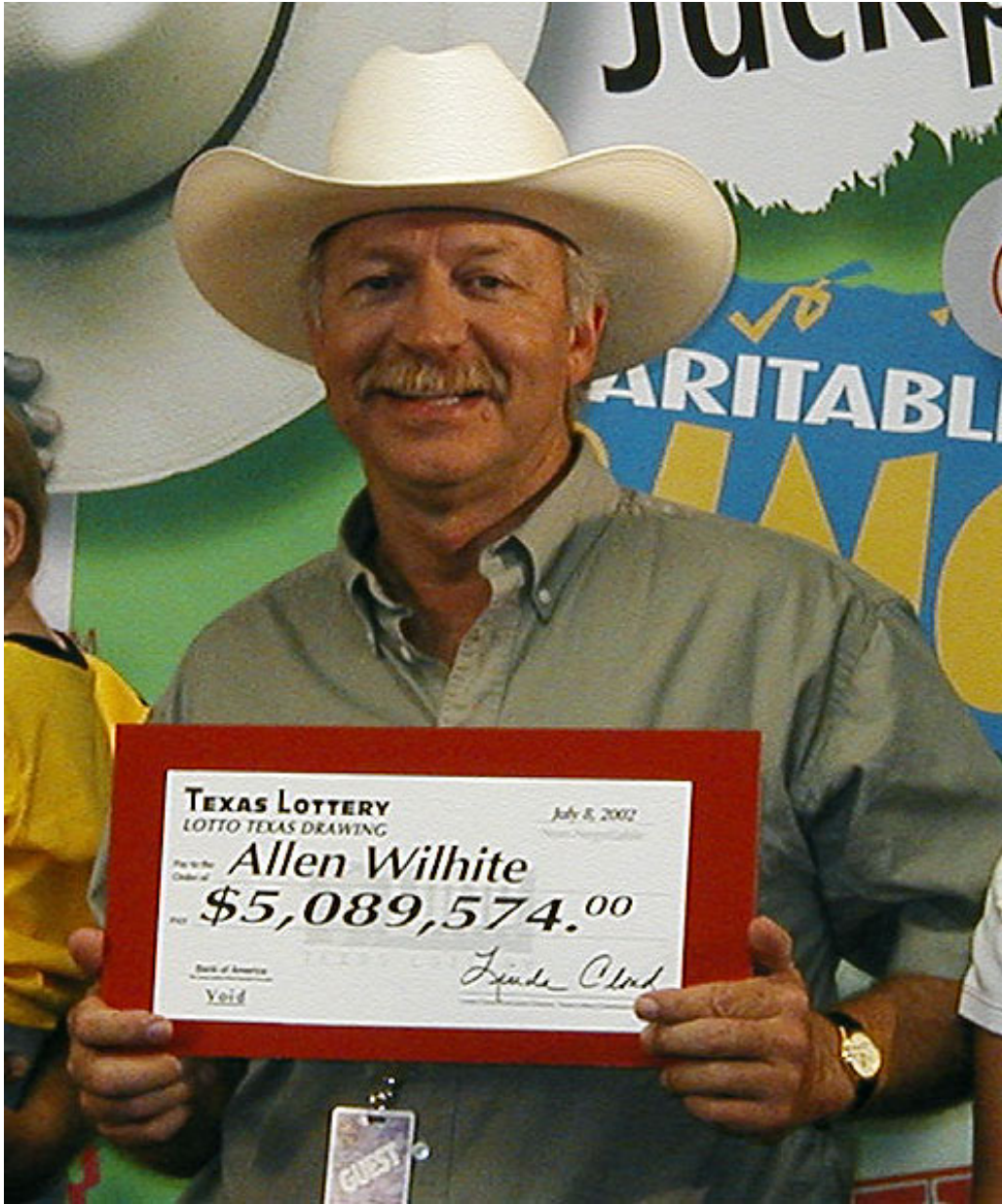


Image of truck driver Allen Wilhite of Lubbock, who won his financial freedom on Independence Day.

(Austin, July 8) - Allen Wilhite of Lubbock found out on July 4th that he would soon have the financial freedom everyone longs for. That was the day the 53-year-old truck driver stopped at an Allsup's in Paducah to get a printout of the winning numbers for the Lotto Texas drawing from the night before. On July 3, he purchased tickets at an Allsup's in Merkel, while driving to Plainview from Dallas.

"I bought five dollars worth of tickets, one with the ages of my children, grandchildren and myself," said Wilhite. "The rest

were Quick Picks."

The winning ticket's numbers were 32 - 17 - 5 - 53 - 24 - 2.

"The next day, I stopped in Paducah at another Allsup's to check my tickets, and I'll tell you, I couldn't believe what I was seeing," he said. "Now I know what people mean when they say they have to pinch themselves to make sure they're awake or really experiencing whatever it is that's making them not believe what's happening. Once I pulled myself together, I got back to the road."

Once he realized that his ticket was the winner, he hid it in the place that has an alarm, his truck.

"I put it inside the seat cushion of my Tahoe," Wilhite said. "I figured if anybody tried getting in my truck, I'd hear it right away."

The winner's family didn't know until Friday that their father was a winner. In fact, his son, Adam, was surprised to see his father on a weekday.

"Dad arrived at the house and sat on the couch without saying very much for a while," the younger Wilhite said. "Then he asked me, 'Have you ever been totally freaked out?' and I knew something was going on. He showed me his ticket, and I understood immediately why he asked me that."

The winning Wilhite has been driving for Walmart for 12 ½ years. During that time, he's logged nearly 2 million miles, accident-free. He's been a truck driver since he was 23.

"They're a wonderful company," he said. "I have thoroughly enjoyed working for them, but I'm getting a little tired of the road, of not being home as much as I would like."

While he knows he's probably not going to be on the road much longer, Wilhite isn't exactly sure what he's going to do with his jackpot prize.

"I haven't absorbed all of this yet," Wilhite said. "I'm sure I'll pay off my house and my vehicle, but I'm not going to make any other big decisions real fast. I'm still pinching myself."

Wilhite came to the Lottery during scheduled vacation time.

The store that sold the winning ticket is the Allsup's #86, located on Route 1, Interstate 20, in Merkel. The store is eligible to receive a prize that is one-percent of the advertised jackpot, not to exceed \$500,000, for selling the jackpot winning ticket. The bonus is \$90,000.

Wilhite bought a Cash Value Option ticket, which gives him a total prize today of \$5,089,574, before taxes are withheld.

Wednesday's Lotto Texas jackpot is an estimated \$6 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>