



Texas Lottery  
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# NEWS

*from the Texas Lottery Commission*

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## **AFTER PROMISING NOT TO BUY ANY MORE SCRATCH-OFF TICKETS, HE BOUGHT THE ONE THAT WON BIG**

(AUSTIN) –John W. Cope had promised his wife he was going to quit buying scratch-off tickets. In fact, the night before he purchased the one *Set For Life* ticket that won him the top prize of \$5,000 per week for 20 years, he had told her he was done.

“I’d told her I wasn’t winning, so I was going to buy only the tickets from the terminal from now on,” Cope said. “But when I was in the store that next morning buying coffee, I decided to give it one last try.”

Cope sat in his cab of his truck scratching the ticket and called his wife after his friend who also looked at the ticket told him he had hit “the big one.”

Then he asked his wife the \$5 million question: “How much do you love me?”

She responded with another question: “Did you have an accident?”

Finally, he fessed up.

“I told her what I thought I’d won,” he said. “Of course, she didn’t believe me.”

A claimant is not considered a winner until a ticket is presented and validated either at Lottery Headquarters in Austin or at a Texas Lottery claim center.

The Clarksville pipe-liner went to the Texas Lottery Claim Center in Fort Worth, where he was instructed to come to Austin to claim his prize.

(more)

**(Texas Lottery Commission news release, continued)**

In between Fort Worth and his trip to Austin, Cope managed to inform his entire family of his good fortune. He also stashed his ticket in a safe deposit box at his bank.

The new winner says he's not sure what he will do with his entire prize.

"My wife wants a new car, so when she decides which kind she really likes, that's what I'll get her," Cope said. "I'm also going to buy myself a new welding truck so I can keep welding, pay my bills and just enjoy life."

"This is not an unusual story," said Texas Lottery Commission Media Relations Director Robert Heith. "We've had numerous other winners who told us they gave up playing and were later inexplicably moved to buy just one ticket, which turned out to be big prize-winner for them. It just goes to show that you never know when you're going to win a major prize. He did the right thing, too, safeguarding his ticket at the bank."

Cope purchased the ticket at the C. S. Fastrac Food Mart, located at 6665 Randol Mill Road, Fort Worth.

The retailer is eligible to receive a bonus of \$10,000 for selling the top-prize-winning ticket.

Tonight's *Mega Millions*<sup>™</sup> jackpot is worth an estimated \$23 million. Wednesday's *Lotto Texas*<sup>®</sup> jackpot is worth an estimated \$50 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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*The Texas Lottery supports Texas education.*