



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Friday, October 23, 2009

**CONTACT:** Robyn Smith, 512-344-5477  
Media Relations, 512-344-5131

### **ARLINGTON TEACHER GETS A HEAD START ON THE HOLIDAYS WITH *MERRY MILLIONAIRE* TOP PRIZE**

(AUSTIN) – Winter is a special time for Patrick Holcomb of Arlington, and he looks for the first Texas Lottery® holiday scratch-off tickets to herald the start of the season.

“I always play the Christmas games. That’s my favorite holiday, and I always look forward to those games coming out,” said Holcomb. “When I bought this one, it was almost like second nature. I didn’t buy it expecting to win.”



Expected or not, the ticket revealed a \$1 million prize. This is the first top prize to be awarded in the *Merry Millionaire* game. The game features more than \$30 million in prizes and three top prizes of \$1 million each. Odds of winning any prize are one in 3.04, including break-even prizes.

As a middle-school teacher, Holcomb says he has an appreciation for the revenue the Texas Lottery generates for the Foundation School Fund, administered by the Texas Education Agency.

“Whenever I buy a ticket, my parents tease me that I’m paying my own salary,” he said. “I feel like I am doing something for the schools when I buy a ticket, putting a little something back.”

Texas Lottery Commission Deputy Executive Director Gary Grief said, “Each year, we look forward to our suite of holiday games, and it’s nice to know our players do, too. It is especially gratifying that this year’s first holiday millionaire is a school teacher because it echoes our mission to support education in Texas.”

**(more)**

**(Texas Lottery Commission, News Release, continued)**

A new car and a trip or two may be in Holcomb's future as a result of this win.

"I want to pay off my debt. I'll buy a new car because mine is on its last legs," he explained. "I'll probably take a few trips eventually – possibly Disney World because I haven't been there since I was nine and probably New York. I love it there."

Holcomb purchased his winning ticket at the RaceTrac #493, located at 4010 S. Beltline Road in Grand Prairie, making the store eligible for a \$10,000 retailer bonus.

Tonight's *Mega Millions*<sup>®</sup> jackpot is worth an estimated \$18 million. Saturday's *Lotto Texas*<sup>®</sup> jackpot is worth an estimated \$4 million.

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

###

**Note to Editors:** A photograph in jpg format is available by contacting Robyn Smith at 512-344-5477 or [robyn.smith@lottery.state.tx.us](mailto:robyn.smith@lottery.state.tx.us).