

Texas Lottery Commission Press Release - May 3, 2002

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Gun Barrel City *Lotto Texas* Winner Ready To "Drown Some Worms"

(Austin, May 3) - - Bonnie J. Foster won the \$34 million *Lotto Texas* jackpot on April 6, and her short-term plans for herself include going to the creek bed in Gun Barrel City to "go drown some worms."

"I won't be changing my life much," Foster said. "About the most I'll do is find myself another place to live, but I definitely plan to get some fishing in, maybe even get a massage."

Foster is a 64-year-old mother of one son and one daughter. She says her very first step after collecting today's prize will be to help her son, Virgil Hutchins, 38, get to M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. Hutchins has been diagnosed with a pancreatic cancer.

"He's getting a referral from the doctor and he'll be on his way by next week," she said. "He won't have to worry about his medical bills."

Her daughter, Debbie Lemon, 42, had the pleasure of informing her mother that one of her five *Quick Pick* tickets had all the numbers.

"Of course, I didn't believe her and I asked her on how many different rows of numbers my numbers could be found," she said.

Her daughter pointed out to her that they were all together, "like little peas in a pod."

Like other *Lotto Texas* players, Foster says she doesn't play until the jackpot gets "interesting," which to her means that it reaches \$10 million or above.

"And like every other time, nothing came to me about buying tickets," she said. "I didn't feel anything out of the ordinary, nothing slapped me upside head. I gave my daughter the five dollars and told her to buy and them. That was it."

Once she realized she had the big winner, Foster put the ticket in a Texas Lottery playslip wallet that she happened to have with her and hid it inside her grandfather clock at home. The next day she put the ticket in a safety deposit box.

Gun Barrel City is not a large place; the population is less than 10,000. But its luck makes up for its size. It didn't take long for the news to get out that Foster was the winner. Add to that the fact that the store that sold the winning ticket had sold a \$24 million jackpot winner in March of 2001, and Gun Barrel City had a buzz going to rival a bee colony.

The Food Fast #63 at 2209 West Main is eligible to receive \$340,000 for duplicating its feat of the previous year.

Foster chose the Cash Value Option and received \$18.6 million from the Lottery today. The winning numbers were 3 - 41 - 25 - 50 - 52 - 27.

She and her family said they plan to celebrate quietly, including plans to go to Disneyland later this year.

"I've always wanted to go and now I've got the chance to take all of us," Foster said. "I've got six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and one on the way, and I'm sure some of them will be going with me."

The new *Lotto* millionaire said her grandchildren and great-grandchildren will never have to worry about paying for college

either. "That's been taken care of," she said.

Until eight years ago, Foster was employed by Merry Maids. She said she hurt her back and was unable to return to work.

Foster also noted that as a child during the Depression she worked in the fields with her parents, who were sharecroppers.

The *Lotto Texas* jackpot for Saturday night is an estimated \$10 million.