

**Texas Lottery Commission Press Release - February 8, 2005**

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**With \$30 Prize From One Texas Lottery®  
Scratch-Off, El Pasoan Buys Another And Wins  
\$2 Million**



*Executive Director Reagan E. Greer of the Texas Lottery Commission presents Rafael Higareda with a ceremonial check for \$2,000,000 at Lottery Headquarters in Austin.*

(Austin, February 8) - For Rafael Higareda of El Paso, the reinvestment of \$30 brought him millions, \$2 million, to be exact. He won \$30 playing *Big Money Bonus Spectacular*, turned right around and bought one *Holiday Millions Wishes* ticket, and that made him a millionaire. Both are Texas Lottery® scratch-off tickets.

He couldn't believe that he had won the top prize of \$2 million.

"I was outside the El Pasito Meat Market and Grocery where I bought the ticket with my brother and my uncle, when my brother saw that my ticket had won the \$2 million prize," Higareda said. "I didn't believe it, so I didn't get excited about it until much later when I was at home. My wife didn't believe it either."

"Mr. Higareda is a textbook case that proves what we always say, it takes only one ticket to win," said Texas Lottery Commission Executive Director Reagan E. Greer. "From the smaller prizes on our \$1 tickets to the million-dollar-plus prizes of our \$10, \$20 and \$30 tickets, players are winning all the time and every day. The real winner, however, is public education because it receives through the Foundation School Fund approximately 30 cents out of every dollar spent of a Texas Lottery ticket. That is money directly administered by the Texas Education Agency for the school children of our state. The total sent to the Foundation School Fund is now at \$7 billion and growing."

Higareda went to the Texas Lottery Claim Center in El Paso to confirm that his ticket really had won the \$2 million prize. Once Lottery staff gave him the high sign, he started making plans to come to Austin to claim his winnings. All prizes of \$1 million or more must be claimed at Texas Lottery headquarters in Austin.

In the meantime, however, he hid the ticket in a safe place; his daughter's book about the history of England.

"Who's going to steal a seventh grader's book," he asked rhetorically. "I was willing to bet that nobody would, and I was right. Nobody except my daughter would have looked in her book. I returned it to her yesterday."

Higareda has managed to remain cool, calm and collected, at least through most of last week. It wasn't until this past Sunday that things the excitement caught up with him.

"I got about three hours of sleep Sunday," he said. "I couldn't stop thinking about all the things I had to do and the things I want to do."

Higareda said his prize is spoken for already.

"I'm going to pay off my bills, first," he said. "Second, I'm going to save the rest for my children's college education and share this prize with my family. I'll also be able to give my daughter a trip to Europe when she turns 15. That's why she's been reading up on the history of England. I've won lots of prizes of \$30, \$40, \$100 and more, but nothing like today."

In fact, Higareda won another \$500 playing another Texas Lottery scratch ticket, *Money*

*Money Money* last night.

The store, located at 4080 Desert Meadows Road #A in El Paso, is eligible to receive a bonus of \$10,000 for selling Higareda the ticket that won him the \$2 million prize.

Tonight's *Mega Millions*<sup>™</sup> jackpot is worth an estimated \$40 million. Tomorrow's *Lotto Texas*<sup>®</sup> jackpot is worth an estimated \$7 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 Commission supports public education by contributing to the Foundation School Fund.