

Texas Lottery Commission Press Release - January 9, 2003

Contact:

Sylvia Womble-Saenz, 512-344-5216

Loyal Brownsville *Lotto Texas* Player Claims \$12 Million Jackpot

(Austin, January 9) - While the "eyes of Texas" are watching for the person who bought a *Lotto Texas*™ ticket for the July 13, 2002 drawing to come forward before the ticket expires tonight at midnight, a Brownsville man wasted no time in claiming his \$12 million jackpot from a drawing just last month.

Today, Jose Luis Betancourt claimed the jackpot for the December 11, 2002 *Lotto Texas* drawing. He chose the Cash Value Option, and will receive \$7,508,809 before taxes. He said he plans to seek advice from financial professionals before making any firm decisions on what to do with his good fortune.

Betancourt credits his win to being a regular *Lotto Texas* player and playing the same numbers in 15 different sequences for more than a year now.

"I know that matching five numbers is difficult, so when I matched six numbers, I knew it was truly a miracle," said Betancourt.

Betancourt said he routinely checks his ticket numbers in the El Nuevo Herald, which is the Spanish edition of The Brownsville Herald newspaper. That's how he found out his numbers matched all six numbers drawn: 5-16-28-35-46-51.

"When I checked the El Nuevo Herald and realized I had won, I thought it was a wonderful experience, and then I felt very tranquil," he explained.

So wonderful that Betancourt says he will continue to play *Lotto Texas*, and his message for other players is, "S?, se puede - it can be done."

And he made this observation about the person who may have let a jackpot slip away.

"Too bad, this is why we play," said Betancourt. "If you don't buy the tickets, you can't win. When you win, you've got to claim it!"

Betancourt purchased his ticket from Tejano Mart #408 at 834 North Expressway 77/83 in Brownsville. The retailer is eligible to receive a 1 percent bonus - \$120,000 - for selling the prize-winning ticket.

Saturday's *Lotto Texas* jackpot is an estimated \$25 million.

. . . .

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>