



Texas Lottery
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NEWS

from the Texas Lottery Commission

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Friday, January 18, 2008

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PORT ARTHUR RESIDENT READY FOR HIS ‘SURPRISE’ PARTY WITH \$1 MILLION *MEGA MILLIONS*® PRIZE

(AUSTIN) – Volney L. Pinder has spent many of his 89 years having a good time, irrespective of the circumstances. Now that he’s won \$1 million playing *Mega Millions*®, he’s really ready to have a good time at the “surprise” party he says his family is giving him next month for his 90th birthday.

Besides a birthday party, Pinder and his wife, Florence, will take a cruise to Alaska, courtesy of their family.

“I’ve been to every state in the Union, except Alaska,” he said. “Now I can say I’ve been to all of them.”

Pinder served in the U.S. Army Air Corps, now the Air Force, during World War II, flying Lockheed P-38 Lightning airplanes. The planes, with their twin fuselages, have been famously depicted in war movies and were flown mostly in the Pacific theatre.

“I tell people I fought the battle of Los Angeles, ferrying P-38s in and out of the area,” he said. “We had a lot of fun dropping bottles on barns.”

Pinder has continued to fly throughout the years, and has performed in numerous air shows around the country.

Back in the 60s, he missed the reunion of the air cadet corps in which he served when they met anew in San Antonio.

(more)

(Texas Lottery Commission, News Release, continued)

“I was at the New York World’s Fair at the same time with my family.”

He and his wife of 58 years celebrated their wedding anniversary on December 23.

All those years ago, he and Florence first had to figure out when to get married.

“We had to work out when our wedding day would be so we could get to California in time for a USC football game, as well as getting her father to the wedding, too, because he did shift work at the plant in Port Arthur. We got it worked out, though.”

A fan of college football, he is particularly fond of the “mortal enemy of Notre Dame,” the Purdue University Boilermakers.

“I taught math there for three years,” he said. “I’ve also taught math at Lamar University in Beaumont.”

The retired couple will take their trip to Alaska soon after his “surprise” party.

Florence will get a pass from her canasta club, as well as her line-dancing group, to go on the cruise.

“I’ve been playing canasta for 15 years with girls I went to high school with, so they’re letting me be excused from playing, and you’re excused only if somebody dies or something like that,” she said. “You can’t make hair appointments or doctor’s appointments for Thursdays, which is when we play, but they’re letting me go to Alaska.”

Florence also line-dances three days every week with another group, and they often perform at nursing homes in the area.

(more)

(Texas Lottery Commission, News Release, continued)

She isn't alone in dancing, however. When the Pinders lived in Washington, D.C., the couple enjoyed ballroom dancing. He was transferred from Houston to Washington during the '70s by his employer, the Internal Revenue Service, for whom he worked as a revenue agent for 10 years.

Pinder saw three of the five matching numbers in the *Port Arthur News*. He then saw the remaining two in the *Houston Chronicle* and coolly turned the page while he sat on the couch with his wife. He didn't tell her for three days that he had matched five of the six winning numbers in Friday night's drawing. He then went to the store where he purchased the ticket. The clerk excitedly told him someone had bought a ticket there that matched five of the numbers drawn. He kept quiet about his ticket then, too.

Asked what their plans are for their prize, Florence answered for the couple, saying, "We're going to spend it. Maybe we'll get a new car."

The Port Arthur resident closed out 2007 by winning \$1 million in the December 28 *Mega Millions* drawing. His Quick Pick ticket matched five of the six numbers drawn, and because he had purchased the Megaplier option for his ticket, he multiplied his \$250,000 prize into \$1 million. He bought the ticket at the Fastlane #29, 5410 West Parkway, in Groves.

He was accompanied to Austin by his wife, daughter, son-in-law and grandson. Waiting for him at home are four grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. The ninth great-grandchild is on the way.

Tonight's *Mega Millions* jackpot is worth an estimated \$42 million. Tomorrow's *Lotto Texas*[®] jackpot is worth \$15 million.

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

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Note to editors: A jpg-format photo of Mr. Pinder is available by contacting Leticia Vásquez at 512-344-5208 or Leticia.vasquez@lottery.state.tx.us