

Texas Lottery Commission Press Release - September 5, 2003

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Persistence Pays Off For Hebbronville Brothers Who Win \$8.7 Million *Lotto Texas* Prize



The Morales family celebrates *Lotto Texas* win - takes Cash Value Option from August 20 *Lotto Texas* drawing worth \$15 million.

(Austin, September 5) - A long-standing agreement between five brothers from Hebbronville finally reached the much-desired and fruitful conclusion. The five South Texas Morales siblings - Benjamin, Noe, David, Eduardo (Chacho) and Eddie--won a *Lotto Texas* Cash Value Option prize of \$8.7 million on August 20 after faithfully buying tickets since 1997. The advertised jackpot was \$15 million. They claimed their prize as Five Morales Brothers, Ltd., Benjamin Morales, General Partner.

"The family that plays together, wins together, you could say, about the Morales brothers," said Texas Lottery Commission Executive Director Reagan E. Greer. "These gentlemen stuck to their agreement, pooled their money every week, designated a no-fail ticket buyer, and it got them the ultimate prize that they plan to share. This, of course, is a big deal for them, but it's also big for the town of Hebbronville because this is the first *Lotto Texas* winner from there. The Morales brothers won a great prize and put Hebbronville on the *Lotto Texas* map."

Hebbronville, with a population of approximately 4,500, is located 56 miles east of Laredo.

Benjamin Morales purchased five Quick Pick tickets at Fandangos Food Store from a long-time employee of the store, Aminta Arredondo. He found out the next evening when he returned from work that the ticket that matched the numbers drawn was sold in his town. He called his brothers to meet at his house that same night.

Benjamin has been a truck driver more than 20 years. David, Eduardo (Chacho) and Eddie are all carpenters. Noe works for a refinery in Corpus Christi. They were accompanied by Noe's three daughters, Rita, Lina and Noela, as well as their wives: Sylvia (Benjamin); Benilde (David); Hope (Eddie); Esperanza (Eduardo/Chacho); and Aurora (Noe).

While none of the brothers wanted to speak individually, the five issued a brief statement saying they had all "worked hard all

their lives and are appreciative of the miracle that has been bestowed upon them." They also expressed their gratitude to the citizens of Hebbronville for their appreciation and kindness.

The winning numbers were 4, 11, 14, 36, 41, and the Bonus Ball number was 25.

Fandangos Food Store is located at 313 S. Smith in Hebbronville. The retailer is eligible to receive a prize that equals one percent of the advertised jackpot of \$15 million as a bonus for selling the ticket that matched the winning numbers.

Benjamin Morales, Jr. one of Benjamin Morales' sons, contributed to this news release.

Up to now, the highest Texas Lottery prize won in Hebbronville was \$10,000. That occurred 10 years ago. The winner was an uncle of the Morales brothers.

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