

Texas Lottery Commission Press Release - January 23, 2002

Contact:

Kristina Tirloni, 512.344.5144,

Abilene *Weekly Grand* Winner Focuses on Future and Job

(Austin, January 23) - - According to David Simoes of Abilene, today could be just like any other. The big difference is Simoes just became the Texas Lottery's 53rd *Weekly Grand* winner, and will collect \$1,000 a week for the next 20 years, with a total payout of \$1,040,000. He says he is concentrating on two things right now, "The future, and his job at Lockheed Martin."

"We've decided that things aren't going to change that much; we're going to live in the same house and drive the same cars," said Simoes. "I know it sounds weird, but I have a pretty important job to focus on right now."

Simoes' job, a site supervisor for Lockheed Martin, requires him to oversee the repair of B-1B bomber jet engines for the United States Air Force. It's a job that he has dedicated himself to for more than 20 years. Simoes served in the Air Force for 23 1/2 years, and upon retirement went to work for Lockheed in June of 2000.

"This win makes our future look a little brighter," said Simoes. "But it still keeps a person in check."

Simoes purchased his winning *Weekly Grand* ticket at Skinny's #24 in Abilene. In accordance with lottery procedures, the retailer is eligible to receive a bonus of \$10,000 for selling the top-prize winning ticket. The store is located at 1450 South Clack.

"I scratched the ticket off at the store," said Simoes. "I won on the first line - my number was a six and the other number was a five - but it didn't register with me at first. In fact, I scratched the next line too before I fully realized I had won."

Simoes explained that after signing the back of the winning ticket, he drove to the Abilene Lottery Claim Center, where he found out that he could not collect his winnings because the prize level was too high. However, as he put it, "They got me in touch with Abbie Piña (Texas Lottery Winners Liaison) in Austin real quick."

While it has been awhile, Simoes admits he has won a couple of times with various Texas Lottery games. He told officials that right after moving to the Abilene area in 1993, he won \$1,000 on a different scratch-off game (Aces High), and has matched 4-of-5 numbers on the lottery's Cash 5 game. He netted \$632 in May of 2001 for matching the four winning numbers.

Simoes makes the first *Weekly Grand* winner from the Abilene area since the game was first issued in 1995. The popular lottery scratch-off has been reissued a total of eight times.

-30-

. . . .

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>