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WITH A MAJOR DOSE OF BROTHERLY LOVE, SAN ANTONIO
WOMAN WINS TOP PRIZE OF \$1,040,000 IN *WEEKLY GRAND*

(Austin) - One fateful afternoon recently, Melanie V. Zavala of San Antonio got a visit from her brother, Adam Vara, who came bearing Texas Lottery® tickets, as he regularly does. He divvied up the *Weekly Grand* tickets to scratch, and as luck would have it, Melanie found the top prize totaling \$1,040,000 under the one she received.

“I looked at it and thought, ‘no, this isn’t real, this doesn’t happen to me, this doesn’t happen to our family,’” Zavala said. “My brother was looking at his John Wayne ticket with a \$5 prize on it and then looking back at my ticket. He finally said, ‘That’s your prize, you won it, you keep it.’”

With four brothers and three sisters in the family and two parents still showing the way, they all got together for a family conference to determine the best course of action.

“We’re a close family,” Zavala said. “I’ll keep a chunk of the prize, but everybody will also get a share to do with whatever they want. As my brother said, now everybody’s thinking it’s Christmas in August. Well, sure.”

The epitome of cool, Zavala has been asked frequently by family members and co-workers if she is truly excited. “I’m still in shock and in awe. I told my supervisors at work and they got more excited than me, but really, in my mind, I’m thrilled.”

“Mrs. Zavala’s top prize is the first one to be claimed from our latest version of *Weekly Grand*,” said Texas Lottery Commission Executive Director Gary Grief. “This \$2 game was first issued in 1995 and continues to be one of our most popular and most requested games.”

(more)

(Texas Lottery Commission News Release, continued)

Zavala's brother bought the ticket at the Skyway Food Mart, 6226 S. Flores, in San Antonio. The retailer is now eligible to receive a bonus of \$10,000 for selling this ticket.

A new mother of just six weeks, Zavala and her husband, Guillermo, plan to use their chunk of change to pay off their debts and plan for a return trip to Maui. "That's where we spent our honeymoon, and we'd like to go back to spend more time and do more things. It's beautiful."

A small detail revealed in today's proceedings may have been prophetic. Zavala's husband told lottery officials that when he, his father and his wife came to Austin back in the '90s on their way to University of Texas baseball games, they would pass Texas Lottery headquarters. He always made it a point to tell his future bride that one day they were coming to Lottery headquarters to cash in a big prize.

"We're probably going to have another big family barbecue because of this win," Zavala said. "We're always looking for an excuse to have one. This is a good one, I think."

Tonight's *Mega Millions*[®] jackpot is an estimated \$85 million. Wednesday's *Lotto Texas*[®] jackpot is an estimated \$15 million, and the *Powerball*[®] jackpot is an estimated \$160 million. More information about the Texas Lottery is on the official website, www.txlottery.org.

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