



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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New Millionaires in the New Year

SACRAMENTO – Some lucky California Lottery players are already off to an amazing start in 2022 after winning \$1 million or more on Scratchers®!

Kevin Ghee, a pool company owner, scored his \$1 million prize on a Monopoly Scratchers ticket. He bought that winning ticket at Adobe Beverage & Deli on McDowell Boulevard in **Petaluma (Sonoma County)** where he actually went to buy margaritas.

“My change was one penny and when the clerk handed it to me, he said, ‘Here’s your lucky penny,’ and that’s what I scratched my ticket with,” Ghee told the Lottery. He scratched it in his car, but his phone was dead so he couldn’t scan it on the Lottery mobile app to check whether he won. Once he scanned it at home, he first thought he had won \$1,000, but then he saw more zeroes and rechecked, quickly realizing it was worth \$1 million. Once he convinced his family it was true, his wife and daughter went to buy a safe where they kept the ticket until they could claim the prize the following Monday.

“That safe sat on my lap for a couple of hours,” he said, “while I just sat there and laughed and drank margaritas!” Ghee plans on buying his family a house, starting college funds for his kids, and investing the rest.

Krista Juetten also won \$1 million, playing a Red Hot 10’s Scratchers ticket. She picked hers up at the Safeway on South State Street in **Ukiah (Mendocino County)**. She also scratched hers in the car. Not believing her win at first, she quickly returned to the store to scan her ticket.

“As soon as I knew I was a winner, two things went through my mind. First, I could pay for my kids to go to college and second, my mom could retire,” she explained. She has already come through on one of those promises; her mom who was still working into her 70s, has now retired. She said, “She couldn’t believe it when I offered, but what kind of daughter would I be if I didn’t do that for her?” Juetten’s daughter is already in college so now both she and her younger brother, won’t have to worry about student loans.

There are two more lucky wine country winners, both of whom bought tickets at different places in **Napa**. **Alexander Martinez**, won his \$1 million prize on a Plus the Money Scratchers ticket, which he bought at the aptly named Lucky store at 1312 Trancas Street. He plans to invest his prize. Also in

Napa, **Florita Alvarez** won a \$750,000 prize on a Mystery Crossword Scratchers ticket, which she bought at Browns Valley Chevron on First Street.

The biggest Scratchers winner being unveiled in northern California is **Balbir Kaur**, who won a \$6 million prize on a Set For Life Scratchers ticket! He bought it at L & R Gas & Food, Inc. at 9545 Live Oak Boulevard in **Live Oak (Sutter County)**. In **Santa Clara County**, **Jose Zayala Jr.** won his cool million on a Red Hot 10's Scratchers ticket that he bought at Chevron Extra Mile at 1002 North First Street in **San Jose**.

L & R Gas & Food, Inc. will receive a \$30,000 bonus for selling the winning \$6 million ticket, and each store that sold a ticket worth \$1 million will receive a \$5,000 bonus for selling those.

The sale of Scratchers and other games supports the mission of the California Lottery, which is to raise supplemental funding for the state's public schools, colleges, and universities.

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The California Lottery's mission is to provide supplemental funding to California public schools, including kindergarten and grades 1-12, community colleges, the California State University, the University of California, and other California public educational entities. The funds the Lottery transferred to public education totaled more than \$1.8 billion for fiscal year 2020-21, which amounted to a modest percentage of education's overall budget. However, this funding is largely nondiscretionary, meaning schools can use this for important, yet unfunded instructional programs they would otherwise not afford. During the same period, the Lottery generated almost \$8.4 billion in sales, more than 95% of which went back to the community in the form of prize payments, retailer commissions and bonuses, and contributions to education. As jackpots rise, the California Lottery would like to remind players that gambling should be fun. Borrowing money to play, spending above a person's budget or using money intended for other purposes can ultimately lead to significant problems for players and their families. If a player recognizes that they have a gambling problem or if someone knows of someone who may have a problem, the Lottery recommends calling the California Problem Gambling Help Line at 1-800-GAMBLER.

www.calottery.com