

700 North Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95811
calottery.com

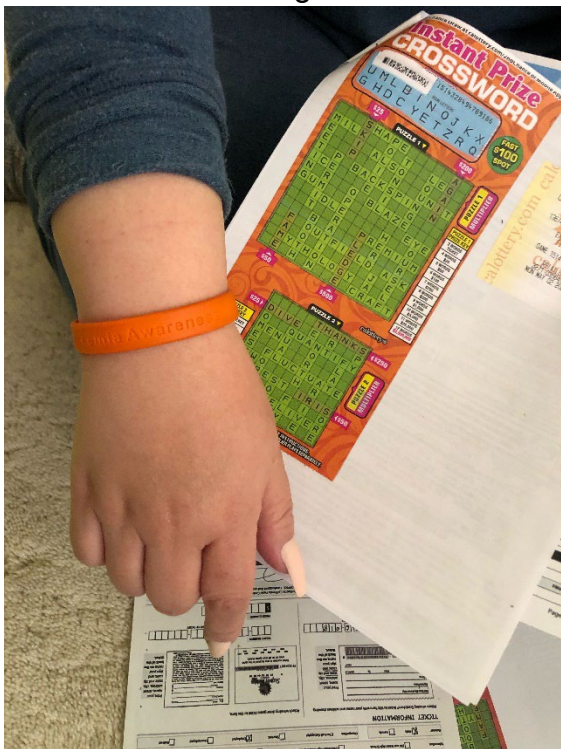


P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Phone: (916) 822-8131
Email: PIO@calottery.com
Twitter: [@calotterypress](https://twitter.com/calotterypress)

‘A Little Extra Change’ and an Orange Leukemia Awareness Bracelet Leads to a Stunning \$2 Million Scratchers® Win!

SACRAMENTO – As Jose Martinez looked at a California Lottery vending machine, searching for his usual favorite Scratchers game, a different game caught his eye. It was a deep orange color. He believes it was calling his name for a very emotional reason.



Picture, courtesy of Jose Martinez, shows his wife's orange, leukemia awareness bracelet next to his winning Scratchers ticket.

“My wife was at home sick from cancer, and the band she wears for leukemia awareness is orange. The colors of the bracelet and Scratchers ticket are almost identical!” Martinez said. “I had a little extra change, so I went for it. It was orange. And thank goodness I did!”

Martinez, who also wears orange tennis shoes in support of his wife Rachel, ended up walking out of a South San Francisco Speedway convenience store with a winning \$2 million [Instant Prize Crossword](#) game!

“I scanned it with the California Lottery app, and my mouth just dropped. I couldn’t talk. I’ve never seen so many zeros before. I texted a screen shot to my wife. She didn’t answer right away, so I called. I could hear her crying,” Martinez recalled. “We’re just overwhelmed!”

Martinez’s win was almost four years to the date from his wife’s cancer diagnosis. Thankfully her leukemia is now in remission, but Rachel says she must take medication for the rest of her life to prevent recurrence.

“This (prize money) is just a blessing because I can’t work,” Rachel said. “The pain from the medication is too much, so we’ve had to rely on Jose’s income.”

Now the couple hopes to use some of their winnings to install something special inside their two-story home.

“Going up the stairs is killing us,” said Rachel. “Now we’re thinking we can put in a little elevator to help

us because our kitchen is upstairs.”

Jose, who amazingly won \$10,000 on a Scratchers game only three months prior, said he had a “gut feeling” he was eventually going to hit it big. “This couldn’t have come at a better time. It’s going to help us catch up on our credit cards and remodel our house. When you think it into existence, it comes true!”

Image of Martinez’s Winning Ticket:



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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 \$1.88 billion for fiscal year 2020-21, which amounted to a modest percentage of education’s overall budget. However, this funding is largely discretionary, 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.

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