



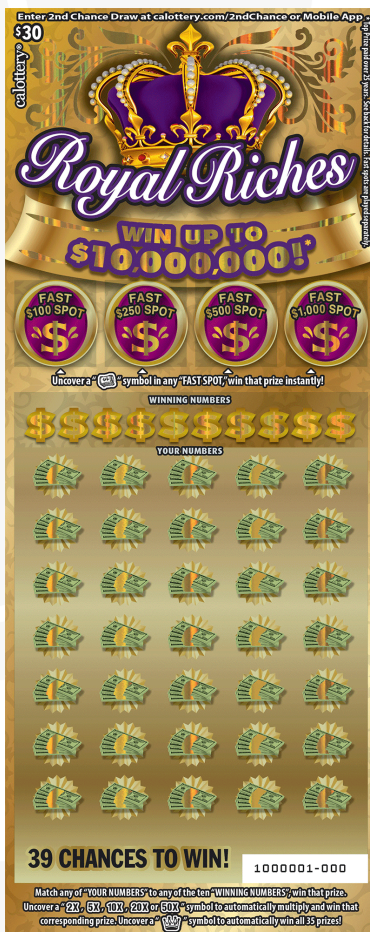
PRESS RELEASE

For IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PIO@calottery.com
[@calotterypress](https://twitter.com/calotterypress)

Good Intuition Leads to Incredible Drive Home for Scratchers® Player Who Surprised Family With a Fortune!

Plus, Four More Winners Join the California Lottery Millionaires Club

SACRAMENTO – It started as a routine drive home from the office for **Nora Hammersteadt** until something inside prompted her to stop at an Orange County liquor store and buy a few California Lottery games. She walked back to her car with ten million reasons why it's lucky she did!



“I’ve won a few thousand dollars playing before, but nothing like this,” Hammersteadt shared with the California Lottery. “It was a shocker.”

That quick stop at Anaheim Liquor earned her \$10 million, the top prize on a *Royal Riches* game.

“I was thinking ‘this can’t be real, I must be dreaming!’ I’m going to pinch myself and wake up one of these days,” Hammersteadt said. She also said she won \$100 on another game she bought.

Instead of being able to head straight to a California Lottery office to claim her prize, she waited a whole week of what she described as “torture” at work before she had the time to turn in her valuable winning ticket.

“It was crazy that week; I was just in a daze. One of the hardest parts was I had to keep it a secret. I couldn’t tell anyone because you know how people talk,” Hammersteadt said with a laugh. Now she can laugh all the way to the bank.



"It really got real when I turned it in at the Lottery office. That's when it was excitement time and realized retirement is coming two years sooner than I had planned," Hammersteadt said.

Anaheim Liquor won as well, earning a \$50,000 bonus for selling the lucky ticket.

Ogonna Onyeje is also in a celebratory mood after turning a \$20 investment into the \$2 million top prize on an *Instant Prize Crossword Scratchers* game from the Shop-N-Go in Fresno.

"I play regularly, and I just stumbled upon a lucky one," Onyeje told the California Lottery. "From time to time, you hear of someone winning big, and I kept believing it would be my time someday. It finally happened!"

The Shop-N-Go ownership earned a \$10,000 bonus for selling Onyeje his seven-figure prize.

Jose Reyes Ayala also hit it rich on a \$10 *Instant Prize Crossword*. His \$2 million-winning game was sold at MD Liquor & Food in Santa Rosa, which is also receiving a \$10,000 bonus.

Marilu Munoz Valazquez has an extra \$2 million after winning the top prize on a *Multiplier Craze Scratchers* from the Marathon gas station in Stanton.

Blandina Carranza wraps up the newest list of California Lottery millionaires after winning the \$1 million top prize on a *Power 10's Scratchers*. This lucky game was sold at Bard Market in Oxnard.

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The mission of the California Lottery is to raise additional funding for public education, helping to supplement school budgets for K-12 as well as colleges and universities. **The California Lottery has raised more than \$46 billion for public schools** through the responsible sale of its games since 1985. Lottery funding for schools is largely discretionary, so administrators and educators can use Lottery money for instructional programs and services they may not otherwise afford. The California Lottery features eight [draw games](#) and dozens of new instant [Scratchers](#) games each year. More than 95% of California Lottery sales revenue goes back to the community in the form of prize payments, [retailer commissions and bonuses](#), and contributions to education. More information about who benefits can be found [here](#). 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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