Through a series of elimination rounds, five semi-finalists in the Happy Holidays Cash Giveaway made their way January 15 toward cash prizes ranging from $250 to $10,000. The promotion’s Grand Prize game show was held at the Hastings Home Show at the Adams County Fairgrounds in Hastings.

In the first elimination round, Thomas Shires of Lincoln won $250. In the second elimination round, Marvin Leapaldt of Lincoln won $500. In the third round, Paula Bishop of Omaha won $750. The two remaining contestants, Willis Dawkins of Grand Island and Nancy Johnson of Lincoln (represented by a proxy) took turns drawing keys and attempted to unlock a clear cube containing $10,000 in simulated prize money.

On the second pair of keys, the $10,000 top prize went to Nancy Johnson of Lincoln. Willis Dawkins of Grand Island won the second prize of $1,000.

Public hearings are held on all proposed legislation, and bills can be amended throughout the legislative session. The Nebraska Lottery will provide information to policy makers and interested parties throughout the process, and we will endeavor to keep you informed of developments as they transpire.

Since the Nebraska Lottery began operations in September of 1993, more than $214 million has been raised for our beneficiary funds, and all 93 counties in Nebraska have benefited from projects funded with Lottery proceeds. We can all endeavor to keep you informed of developments as they transpire.

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The holidays are traditionally a good time for Nebraska Lottery ticket sales, and here are two pieces of evidence to that effect.

Recently, an informal poll on nelottery.com asked, “Did you give or receive Lottery tickets as holiday gifts?” For the majority of the respondents who completed the poll between January 7 and January 16, the answer was “Yes.”

Those who gave tickets numbered 22 percent of the sample. Those who received tickets accounted for 15 percent of respondents. Those who both gave and received tickets as gifts totaled 20 percent of the respondents. In all, 57 percent of those in the poll said Nebraska Lottery tickets were part of their holiday gifts.

A first-hand perspective on the popularity of tickets as gifts came from Mike Dunn, field manager for Anderson AMOCO Food Shops. While working at their store at 167th and Q Street in Omaha, he said that Lottery tickets and free gift envelopes “were flying” during the holidays. Dunn noted that the store sold more than $2,700 in Scratch and Lotto tickets on Christmas Eve alone.

The annual effort to encourage Nebraska Lottery tickets as gifts, this year included television and radio advertising and free gift envelopes. Free, printable, gift cards were available on the Nebraska Lottery website and will be added for other holidays as well. More than 50,000 free gift envelopes were consumed at Nebraska Lottery retailers during the holiday season.

Local retailers continue to enjoy a $50,000 selling bonus. Here are the retailers who received High Prize Seller Bonuses for selling major winning tickets between mid-December and mid-January.

- Buck’s, Omaha, $1,000
- Sun Mart #768, North Platte, $1,000
- Holiday #115, Norfolk, $1,000
- Sizzling Slots, $1,000
- Omaha, Powerball, $100,000
- Pump & Pantry #18, Doniphan, $1,000
- Dale’s Food Pride, $1,000
- Gas ’n Shop #39, Lincoln, $1,000
- The Fuel Mart, Omaha, $1,000
- The Vineyard, Columbus, $1,000
- Burlington Express, Hastings, $1,000
- DJ’s, Omaha, $500
- Pump & Pantry #22, Burwell, $500
- J & J Pit Stop, Alliance, $500
- Gas ’N Shop #7, Holdrege, $200
- No Frills Supermarket, Omaha, $100
- Anderson Food Shop, Omaha, $50
- Sun Mart, Lincoln, $1,000
- Kwik Stop #9, Central City, $1,000
- Coastal Mart, Omaha, $1,000

Please Note: High Prize Seller Bonuses for Scratch games are credited to retailer accounts when the prize is claimed. High Prize Seller Bonuses for Lotto games are credited to retailer accounts after the drawing for which the ticket was sold.

The Nebraska Lottery has a reward for retailers who sell tickets to the Happy Holidays Cash Giveaway second chance contest. The winners are selected each month. Be sure your store is entered. See the entry form on the next page.

Each month, readers of Ticket Talk have a chance to win prizes through the Loyal Readers Trivia Contest. Here are the winners from the December edition of the contest.

- Pump & Pantry #33, Sandy Tarnick, Genoa
- Pamida, Barb Sailors, Falls City
- Corner Stop, Karen Meyer, Taylor
- Jet-Ex, Cathy Artrip, Omaha
- Food Basket, Maxine Watkins, Byron
- BP #20, Donnie Davis, Bellevue
- Skagway, Peggy Voeder, Grand Island
- Fast Break, Ginger Lippold, Lincoln
- Bosselman Travel Center, Marylyn Ehlers, Grand Island
- Quick D’s, Tori Jackson, South Sioux City

The answer to the question, “How many semi-finalists will there be in the Happy Holidays Cash Giveaway second chance contest?” was 5.

The prize will be $10 in Scratch ticket coupons for every employee who sells lottery tickets at the winners’ location. LSRs will have premium prizes for those employees under the age of 19.

Ten winners are selected each month. Be sure your store is entered. See the entry form on the next page.

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Each month, we will draw 10 entries from among retailer entries received by the designated deadline. Those entries that correctly answer a conversion trivia question will win.

The prize will be $10 in Scratch ticket coupons for every employee who sells lottery tickets at the winners’ location. LSRs will have premium prizes for those employees under the age of 19.

Enter your store by completing and mailing this entry coupon today to: Nebraska Lottery, P.O. Box 98905, Lincoln, NE 68509.

Be sure your store is entered for the drawing scheduled for February 21.

For their part, the Kwik Shop where the winning ticket was sold, received quite a bit of media attention, as well as a banner from the Nebraska Lottery proclaiming their status as a jackpot location, and a $50,000 selling bonus.

Pictured here with the banner are: (l-r) Donald Smith, district advisor; Kathy Miller, store manager; Jimmy Lewis, regional operations manager; and John Austin, LSR.