

# A CONVERSATION WITH THE 1ST LOTTERY WINNER

ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE MASS STATE LOTTERY



## ABOUT THE COSENTINOS

Don Cosentino and his wife Aline were married in 1958. Don was in the National Guard for 10 years, then he worked in furniture factories, becoming a foreman and later, a plant manager until he retired in 1998. Aline was a telephone operator until their first child was born in 1959. They bought their house in 1960 in Gardner, MA, where they raised their 5 children and where they still live today.

## Can you tell the story of how you won the lottery?

Back then, I was working for the George B. Bent company and at noon we would have a half hour break. The day of the drawing of the numbers they were giving out the numbers at a gas station near where I worked, so my co-buddy said he wanted to go down and get some tickets for the lottery. I said, "Well here's 50 cents, get me one." So he did and my number was 302424. I'll probably never forget that number. At 12:30pm, he went up to find out the numbers. I was a foreman at the time and I was setting up a boring machine when he came back and said, "Don, I got the numbers." And I said, "Okay," and I kept my back to him. He started reading off the numbers and I said, "You don't have to read them off, I got that number." He asked to see my ticket. I gave it to him and he said, "You have it!" and I said, "I told you, I know what I got." Sure enough, we went down to the office and called city hall to check the number. Boy, when it hit me, it hit hard to have all that money. I went down to the city hall to verify the number was right and then they had me down in Boston the next day to give me the big check for \$50,000.

The very night I won we had already gotten tickets, my buddy and I, to go to Boston and watch the hockey game. At the game, they announced that the winner of the Big Game was pulled, but no one there knew it was me!

“ The lottery helps a lot of people, if they're lucky enough to win. ”

## What did you do with the money from the lottery?

At the time, we had 5 kids and two of them had their bikes stolen, so we bought them new bikes. We had a dirt driveway, so we redid the driveway. A couple months later, I got transferred at my job down to Orange and I didn't have a very good car. Aline and I talked together about buying a car, so I bought a brand-new Volkswagen. When I went to buy it, the guy asked me how I wanted to pay for it and I said I'd pay cash. He looked at me surprised and I said, "I'll pay cash!" and I did. It was \$2400 and I still have the receipt.

As we went along, I fixed the upstairs so we could have the whole family here. We're still in the same house 50 years later. We also bought a camper, and in 1977, we took the kids to Disney so that the youngest was old enough to enjoy it. We put money away for the kids' schooling and on our 20th anniversary, we took a cruise to Bermuda. I think there's still a little bit of money left over!

## Did your life change after you won the lottery and, if so, how?

Our life didn't change, we just went along like always. Of course, I got calls from different people wanting to borrow or take some money. At work they would ask me if I was going to retire. I said no, I'm not going to retire, but I now have a back up.

## Have you bought any lottery tickets since?

Oh yes, but I haven't gotten any winners. I buy every now and then. You don't know what's going to come up.

## Is there anything else you'd like to say about the Massachusetts State Lottery?

It helps a lot of people, if they're lucky enough to win.

### ABOUT THE MASSACHUSETTS STATE LOTTERY

Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2022, the Massachusetts State Lottery has generated over \$143 billion in revenues, awarded over \$100 billion in prizes, returned over \$31 billion in net profit to the Commonwealth for unrestricted local aid provided to cities and towns, and paid over \$8 billion in commissions and bonuses to its statewide network of retailers.

The Mass Lottery was established by the state legislature in 1971 in response to the need for revenues for the 351 cities and towns of the Commonwealth. The Mass Lottery began selling tickets and conducted its first drawing in 1972.

Each year, the Mass Lottery returns net profits to the Commonwealth for distribution of essential unrestricted local aid to every community in the state. Unrestricted local aid is distributed by the Department of Revenue according to a formula established by the State Legislature.

