

## **\$337 MILLION POWERBALL WINNER CLAIMS PRIZE IN MICHIGAN; RR WORKER ORIGINALLY FROM FORT SMITH, ARKANSAS**

LINK FOR PHOTO:

[http://www.michigan.gov/images/lottery/Donald\\_Lawson\\_high\\_res\\_396806\\_7.JPG](http://www.michigan.gov/images/lottery/Donald_Lawson_high_res_396806_7.JPG)

LITTLE ROCK—AUGUST 31,2012-- Today's \$337 Million Powerball winner has an Arkansas connection! On August 15, 2012, we reported that the \$337 Million Powerball jackpot was won by a player who purchased the ticket in Michigan. Specifically, the ticket was bought at a Lapeer, Michigan, Sunoco station. Today, the big winner came forward. He is Donald Lawson, a railroad worker who now lives in Lapeer, Michigan, located about 50 miles northwest of Detroit, near the southern shore of Lake Huron.

Lawson, who said his entire immediate family has retired based on his good fortune, told the crowd gathered for the announcement that he moved to Michigan from Fort Smith, Arkansas, where he grew up. He said he had lived in Michigan for 10 years.

Video: <http://abcnews.go.com/Business/michigan-337-million-powerball-winner-told-family-retire/story?id=17126274>

Longer Video: <http://usnews.nbcnews.com/news/2012/08/31/13591150-winner-of-337-million-powerball-jackpot-revealed-in-michigan?lite>

**This is the report from ABC News:**

The Michigan winner of the \$337 million Powerball

<<http://abcnews.go.com/US/winning-powerball-ticket-sold-in-michigan/story?id=17016649#.UEDT5pHhfhw>>

claimed his prize today, joking about taxes, early retirement and his first purchase after becoming a mega-millionaire.

When Donald Lawson, 44, approached the podium to accept his giant check, he jokingly pointed to the blank line on the check and told the lottery commissioner, "My name goes here."

He then asked whether the amount was tax-free, and Michigan lottery Commissioner Scott Bowen laughed and replied, "I'm afraid not, brother."

Lawson of Lapeer, Mich., chose to take the cash lump sum of \$224.6 million.

The railroad engineer quit his job Aug. 15 and told his whole family to do the same.

"Everybody that's related to me, as far as my whole [immediate] family, was told to retire and they had no problem with that," Lawson said.

Lawson, a frequent lottery player, recalled buying his ticket at a Sunoco gas station. He said he usually buys the Quick Pick tickets with automatic numbers, but when he saw a line of five or six people, he decided to hand-pick his numbers.

"I didn't really pick them, my hand just went," he said. "I don't know how the numbers came about."

He credited his number choices to, "something from above."

The morning after the numbers were drawn, Lawson went online to check the winning numbers.

"I started looking at the numbers, and checking backwards, and then I kind of lost my breath," he said.

"I sat there, said a prayer and calmed myself down a little bit," Lawson said.

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ABC News

Donald Lawson, 44, of Lapeer, Mich., came... [View Full Size](#) <javascript:void(0);>

ABC News

Donald Lawson, 44, of Lapeer, Mich., came forward on Aug. 30, 2012 to claim his \$337 million Powerball win.

He called his sister and told her to come home right away. He then called his mother and said, "I've got a surprise for you. I won \$200,000 in the Powerball."

As his mother cheered and congratulated him, he said, "The truth is, I won \$337 million."

At first, his shocked mother did not believe him.

But, now, Mama Warbucks, as she was jokingly called at the prize-claiming, fully believes her son.

"We come from poor people so he knows the value of a dollar all his life," Lawson's mother said. "I don't think it'll change him. ...He's a jokester. It's not going to change." What was Lawson's first purchase after becoming a millionaire? "A pack of bubble gum," he said with a laugh.

When asked what he plans to do with his newfound riches, Lawson said, "I'm going to escape for now and go somewhere safe and think about it and then go from there."

The father of two said he will be putting his daughters through college, taking care of his family and then taking care of himself.

"I wanted to travel a lot and now I can," he said. "I can go anywhere in the world I want and that's what I'm going to do."

The \$337 million jackpot was the largest jackpot win in the history of the Michigan lottery, the third largest in Powerball history and the seventh largest U.S. jackpot ever.

The winning numbers were 6, 27, 46, 51, 56 and the Powerball was 21. The national drawing is held in 42 states, plus the District of Columbia. No one had won the big Powerball prize since June 23, when a couple from Connecticut won \$60 million.

Lapeer Mayor Bill Sprague called the fact that the winning ticket was purchased in his town "money from heaven."

Sprague said income tax for Lapeer residents is 1 percent, which would go a long way in this blue collar city. Even if the winner only works in Lapeer, Sprague believes the city is entitled to one half percent of the haul -- still at least a million dollars.

<http://www.freep.com/article/20120831/NEWS06/120831007/Michigan-Lottery-to-introduce-337M-jackpot-winner>

<http://www.battlecreekenquirer.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2012308310008>