



## Local woman wins sweepstakes

*by Jason Smith*  
The Facts

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LAKE JACKSON — Hazel West had just returned home from running errands Wednesday, put dinner in the oven and was sitting down to enjoy a Dr. Pepper and watch some television when her doorbell rang.

When her door flew open, so did her mouth as she saw three people standing at her doorstep with a bouquet of red roses, balloons and a video camera.

“Does this mean anything to you?” Dave Sayer, executive director of Publishers Clearing House Prize Patrol, said as he held up a large piece of cardboard with the amount of \$10,000 written on it.

“Yeah, but its unbelievable,” West said. “I can’t believe it, is it real?”

As neighbors watched, the 85-year-old Sayer confirmed it was real and West had just won \$10,000 from Publishers Clearing House.

Still in shock, West said, “I’ve been waiting for you guys to come forever. ... You don’t know how many years I’ve been filling these things out.”

Publishers Clearing House is a direct marketer of magazine subscriptions and merchandise, Sayer said. The sweepstakes, which began in 1967, is completely free and serves to draw consumer attention to the merchandise and magazines offered, he said.

People can enter the sweepstakes by mail or online and can win prizes that including thousands to millions of dollars and luxury cars, Sayer said. Since its inception, more than \$207 million in prizes have been awarded, he said. Next week, the prize patrol will be traveling to an undisclosed location to hand out the grand prize of \$1 million, he said.

“It is a thrill every time we do this,” Sayer said. “It’s not always about the money, but about recognition.”

As Sayer gave West her red roses, she said they were her favorite.

“I’m going to hug all of you,” West said. “I’m a hugger.”

West said the whole year has been a downer for her and winning the prize is a sign of it all turning around.

“You guys really made it for me,” West said.

Originally from Sargent, West plans on using the money to help pay for some of her medical bills that have accumulated from multiple surgeries, she said.

After receiving her prize, West invited the prize patrol in for a soft drink and to make a call to her daughter and son.

As her son-in-law picked up the phone, she said with a huge smile on her face, “I just had the shock of my life. You’ll never guess what happened to me today.”

“I have someone for you to talk to,” West said, then gave the phone to Sayer.