



Official Release

'A Dream Come True' for Rescue Helicopter Lottery Winner

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The winner of this year's Hawke's Bay Rescue Helicopter Trust 'Drive, Ride, Play' Lottery had a premonition he might win the prize topping Ford Ranger, but had to see it to believe he had won.

37 year old Austin Parina from Akina, Hastings was busy at work as a project technician at Te Whatu Ora when he received the winner's phone call. He says at first he thought the call was a hoax, and his colleagues did too.

"I thought, I won! Really?! We're being trained to spot scams at work at the moment and so I naturally thought I'm getting scammed, my colleagues couldn't believe it either, until they watched me collect the keys. I'm still processing it. I've never won anything in my life, this is the first win, I'm on cloud nine and will probably sleep in it tonight!"

The Ford Ranger Wildtrak 3.0l 4WD was provided by Bay Ford Hastings and is valued at over \$86 thousand. Austin beams he had a funny feeling a Ford Ranger might manifest for him.

"When I bought the ticket we were travelling to Rotorua and I remember I kept seeing Rangers on the road. I said to my wife 'maybe it's a sign', my wife said 'you're dreaming.' This is living proof that it's good to dream!"

Austin plans to take the school holidays off work to take his wife and three children (aged 12, 7 and 5) on a road trip.

“We are looking forward to more sightseeing and exploring some beaches around New Zealand as a family. This ute is incredible, I’ve been dreaming of owning one so I can’t ask for any more. It’s a bit of a step up from our Toyota Prius, my cousins won’t recognise me!

“Whenever there is a charity fundraiser I usually support them, not thinking I’ll ever win. I witness every day how busy the rescue helicopter is and often think ‘you never know, one day that could be me needing it.’”

In its second year, the Hawke’s Bay Rescue Helicopter Trust’s (HBRHT) lottery fundraiser aims to raise awareness and vital funds for its lifesaving service, whilst reconnecting with the community and offering some “pretty cool prizes.”

HBRHT CEO Andy Quayle says the response this time round reaffirms that people do value the region’s lifeline service.

“This year’s lottery has been conducted amid a backdrop of challenging economic times for everyone. The support we have received is amazing. It’s heartwarming to see the support for our lifesaving service continuing, irrespective of the economic climate. It really shows how much so many locals value the service the crew provide.”

The Trust reached out to all those who had purchased a ticket in 2023 to receive feedback on the lottery and prizes. Based on that feedback, Andy Quayle says they decided to change the type and number of prizes.

“The Ranger was at the top of the list for many, as was the concept of multiple prizes, something we hadn’t tried before. Even the pricing at \$45 was obtained from listening to our supporters. We had a lot of feedback on the great value of prize options, which helped lift ticket sales ahead of last year’s lottery.”

Andy Quayle says fundraisers like the lottery are important to keep the HBRHT running. It completes more than 400 rescue missions a year, including inter-hospital transfers, search and rescue missions, and pre-hospital missions from accidents and health emergencies.

“Congratulations to all our winners and thank you again to everyone who purchased a ticket. The community support we continue to receive is humbling and we remain grateful for these contributions that help keep our life saving service free and accessible for everyone across Hawkes Bay.”

2024 'Drive, Ride, Play' Lottery Results:

1st prize winner – Austin Parina, Hastings

- A Ford Ranger Wildtrak 3.0l V6 4WD valued at \$86,500 (inc GST).

2nd prize winner - Marilyn Skyrme, Napier

- A Scott Strike Eride 940 mountain bike – Large frame (Blue),
- A Scott Strike Eride Contessa 930 mountain bike – Medium frame (Bronze) and
- 2 x HBMTBC Adult Membership (2024 / 2025) all valued at \$15,150 (inc GST).

3rd prize winner – Alan Cole, Auckland

- MacBook Air 13", iPhone 15 28gb, iPad 10.2 wifi, Apple watch 45mm and Apple TV 64gb, all valued at \$5175 (inc GST).

ENDS.

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