Months after winning $1M in lottery, man wins $2M

*By JIM SALTER, Associated Press Writer Jim Salter, Associated Press Writer* Tue Sep 28, 6:27 pm ET

ST. LOUIS – The odds against winning $1 million in the Lottery: Astronomical. How about doing it twice?

It happened to a man from Bonne Terre, Mo., Missouri Lottery officials said Tuesday. Ernest Pullen, 57, won $1 million with a "100 Million Dollar Blockbuster" Scratchers ticket in June. And this month, he won $2 million with a "Mega MONOPOLY" Scratchers ticket.

Pullen, a retired military man who was working at the help desk for a telecommunications company before retiring after the first lottery win, said he considers himself to be a "lucky guy." You think?

John Wells of the Missouri Lottery said the chances of winning $1 million in the "$100 Million Dollar Blockbuster" game are 1 in 2.28 million. The odds of winning $2 million in "Mega MONOPOLY" are about the same.

The chances of winning both? Because they're independent games, it is impossible to calculate the odds, Wells said.

"But it's a pretty amazing coincidence," he said. "We've had players win big multiple prizes before, but this is the first person to ever win a second million-dollar prize in the history of the Missouri Lottery."

Pullen bought the most recent winning ticket on Sept. 17 at Miller's Quick Shop in Bonne Terre, a community in the Old Lead Belt region of eastern Missouri, about 60 miles southwest of St. Louis. He opted to take the cash payment instead of the annuity for both wins. He received $700,000 for the June winner and will get about $1.3 million for the September winner - both before taxes.

Pullen recalled a dream six years ago in which he won a lot of money. Even after the $1 million win in June, he didn't feel like the dream was complete.

He does now.

"All the numbers I dreamed about, and all my lucky numbers, were on the card," Pullen said. Pullen plans to use the money to fix up his new house, which needs a new lakeside wall. As for the Lottery, he figures he's about used up his luck, though he still might play the big jackpots on Powerball and Mega Millions. "My wife said she's winning the next time," Pullen said.