

NPW Winner Plans to Test Winning Streak on Fast Cars, Fun in Vegas

BY AMY LOGAN

When Kathy Dziekan called her husband Jeff on the phone and told him she'd won the American Payroll Association's National Payroll Week 2005 survey contest, his response was, "Did you win a pair of Jeff Gordon socks or something?"

"Or something," was all the Academy Sports and Outdoors Payroll Manager decided to reply. Little did her husband know, the couple's plans to visit Las Vegas, NV, for their anniversary were about to be realized.

Kathy is the first APA member to win the NPW survey grand prize, which awarded her a "paycheck" for \$1,624 (based on the national average biweekly salary, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics) and a trip for two to Las Vegas, including roundtrip airfare and four nights' hotel accommodations.

Kathy said she was "thrown into" her payroll management position and has relied upon her membership connections and APA to help her do the best job she can for Academy.

"I love it," she said, referring to her APA membership. "There is so much going on out there and it helps a lot to have this network and support with the APA."

In fact, she said it was while she was looking at APA's Web site, www.americanpayroll.org, that she discovered the link to the NPW survey and first read about the opportunity to win the trip to Vegas and a "paycheck."

Kathy and Jeff are big race fans—NASCAR, drag racing, and really "any kind of race involving cars." That's why Kathy said she laughed when Jeff asked her about the Jeff Gordon socks—she already owned a pair.

"We're a couple of NASCAR junkies," she said. "I've been into racing for about seven to eight years. I'm really looking forward to going to Vegas. I was really excited when I realized I'd



Photo by John Smallwood

NPW survey contest winner Kathy Dziekan was awarded a very big paycheck, presented by APA's PR Coordinator Mark Coindreau.

won the contest—more so than my husband."

But her son Jason, 23, who works in her office as a file clerk in the benefits department, had a much more enthusiastic response than his dad when he learned his mom had won the contest.

"He said, 'Wow, cool!' and was really excited I'd won," Kathy said. "But my daughter (Laura, 18) asked the question I was really expecting: 'Are you going to take me?'"

But Kathy said this trip is just for her, Jeff, and their very large check. The prize, after all, is a trip for two—not four—to Las Vegas, and the couple does have a belated anniversary to celebrate.

"We spend so much money on the kids that we really don't get out much," she said. "At this point we're not planning on taking them, but it might change."

That's because Kathy says she "got really lucky with my kids" and dotes

on them. But whether this Sugar Land, TX, mom of two decides to take her whole family or just her husband of 26 years, she already has her mind made up on how she's going to spend her big paycheck.

"I'm going to the race track (Las Vegas Motor Speedway) and I'm going to either drive a race car or ride along," she said. "I haven't decided. I can go faster if I just ride along ..."

Kathy said she has every intention of getting the "rookie" Richard Petty Driving Experience while visiting the speedway. With prices ranging from \$99 to nearly \$3,000, her experience will "hopefully not (cost) more than \$1,600" but will be worth every penny invested in the priceless memory.

Once the ride is over, Kathy said she and Jeff will hit the gaming tables in an effort to double their paycheck and ride the winning streak for all it's worth.