

[The Pointer Sisters'
"Yes We Can Can" plays]
>> ...get together with one
another.
We got to iron out our
problems and iron out our
quarrels and try to live as
brothers.
>> And try to find peace within
without stepping on one another.
>> And do respect
the women of the world.
Remember, you all had mothers.
>> We got to make this land
a better land
than the world in which we live.
>> And we got to help each man
be a better man
with the kindness that we give.
>> Good morning.
Welcome to "Ability Radio --
You and Your Life."
We have a very special morning
this morning.
First of all, let me introduce
myself.
I am cohost
Amelia Headley LaMont,
and I am joined this morning
by Iris Bermudez.
Iris, good morning.
>> Good morning.
Good morning, Virgin Islands.
>> We are very privileged
this morning.
First of all, I should tell you
that this show, over the period
of many, many, many sessions,
has been brought to you by
VI Lottery,
the Making A Difference Program,
and today we have very special
guests, one of whom is
Commissioner Juan Figueroa,
or I should say
the Executive Director
of VI Lottery, Juan Figueroa,
who is also joined by...
>> Mr. Dennis Howell.
>> And so we will be getting

a lot of information, a lot of things that we've just learned about the lottery system and taxes and who can purchase and what's appropriate and ways -- why we should buy lottery tickets, first of all.

I'm not one to do so.

This will be a wonderful opportunity for me to learn what the program involves and how the VI Lottery system contributes quite vitally to the community, and we are fortunate to be a beneficiary of that.

So, Mr. Figueroa, good morning.

>> Good morning to you, Amelia, Miss Bermudez, and the listening audience, and I also want to thank the Da Vybe 109.7 for having us here today.

With me is --

Well, my name is Juan Figueroa.

I am the Executive Director for the Virgin Islands Lottery, and with me is

Mr. Dennis Howell, Director of Operations.

>> Excellent.

First of all, let me just interject this before I forget. If you've missed any portion of this broadcast, it will be posted on our website, which is at drcvi.org.

It will be posted by audio file, and we will also have it available in transcript form, and if anyone in our audience has any questions, you can certainly call in if you're so inclined at 713-1079.

>> Yes.

So let's start with talking about the history of the lottery in the Virgin Islands.

I found the information amazing when I went there to get some information on what you guys do,

and I think it's just interesting that I didn't know how long the Lottery of the Virgin Islands has been in existence.

>> Well, the Virgin Islands Lottery was created by the legislature in 1937.

>> Wow.

>> It is the oldest in the nation.

It's been in existence for 81 years, and we celebrated our 80th anniversary last year. Of course that's when it was enacted in 1937, and the first drawing took place in 1938. So we are actually celebrating 81 years in existence.

The Virgin Islands Lottery is the oldest in the nation, the oldest traditional lottery in the nation.

>> And when you say "traditional," what does that mean?

>> "Traditional" means everything is done manually.

>> Manually?

>> Yes.

>> We have two huge globes -- one with the numbers, which is 34,000 numbers, and then another one with the prizes. So the way this works is you have these two rotating globes, and they both -- the prize and number comes out simultaneously, and we have members of the Board of Drawings that -- one calls the number, and the other one calls the prize.

>> So there's no funny business going on?

[Laughs]

>> No, no.

Mr. Howell can give us some more information on that.

>> Good morning, listening

audience.

I must say, without a doubt -- and we invite everyone in the community to come by during our regular drawings, and the next one, by the way, is going to be next Thursday. We hope that you will pass by, but, yes, it is as fair as can be.

Everything is videotaped. We have lots of observers, and we have checks and balance that you would not even imagine. Once the drawing has been completed, that's not the end. There are two other independent audit that is completed before the first game ever hits the street.

>> Wow.

So how often are the drawings done, and is it a routine time, routine schedule?

>> Yes.

We have a schedule.

It's every other week -- every other week, and have a yearly schedule, so...

>> And just to add, we normally -- in a normal year -- last year was not that normal, but in a normal year, we will have a total of 24 drawings, 22 Ordinary Drawings, and two Extraordinary Drawings.

Just to clarify the difference between the Ordinary and Extraordinary -- the Ordinary Drawing, the grand prize is \$175,000, and the Extraordinary is \$500,000.

Between the Ordinary and the Extraordinary, there will be a normal timeframe of one month so that everyone could climatize themself, their mind, and to purchase as many tickets as possible.

>> And how much is a ticket?

>> For the Ordinary Drawing,
and that's a figure.

Do you want me to go ahead?

>> Yes.

>> Okay.

>> For the Ordinary Drawing,
the customer will pay \$30 per
sheet.

For the Extraordinary Drawing,
the customer will pay \$50
a sheet, and this might be
a good time to introduce
that we're looking for new
dealers, because, as an example,
and last week, I sat down with
one of the dealers, and she said
to me, she said, "I'm going to
sell 700 tickets for this
Extraordinary Drawing."

Well, 700 tickets equate to
\$7,000 in profit for her
because she's going to purchase
the tickets from us for \$40,
and she sells them for \$50.

Now, no dealer could sell them
beyond \$50 because that's
the agreement in our
Dealership Agreement.

>> Mm-hmm.

>> Could you repeat that,
please?

[Laughs]

>> Okay.

We have two sets of drawings.
We have the Ordinary Drawing
and the Extraordinary Drawing.

It's a total of 24 per year.

The Extraordinary Drawing,
the grand prize is \$500,000.

If you were a dealer at that
point, you will purchase one
sheet of tickets from
the Virgin Islands Lottery
for \$40, and you will sell it
for \$50.

This individual that I sat down
with, she said to me, "I'm going
to sell 700 tickets."

Her profit is going to be
\$7,000.

>> That's really good.
>> And that's in a manner
of one month.
>> One month.
>> Yes, practically.
>> Wow.
That's interesting.
So how do you go about --
If you want to sell lottery
tickets, [Laughs] how do you go
about approaching you or telling
you you want to be a dealer,
and you go through some
processes and whatnot?
>> Yes.
We normally recommend going to
a dealer.
If you go to Sunny Isle,
you see them all along
the strip there.
>> Okay.
>> And you have them in other
locations, but mainly in
Sunny Isle, and you would have
some at the Sion Farm
Shopping Center, which is where
we're located now.
We moved from the Frederiksted
office, the Sunny Isle office,
and now we have merged both
offices in the Sion Farm
Shopping Center.
>> Okay.
>> Additionally, you will come
to our office, you will get an
application, you will need
to get a police-record check.
>> Okay.
>> There are some other forms
that you will have to submit to
us.
The cost to become a dealer
is very inexpensive --
\$25 per year.
That's all.
>> Yeah.
>> And the sheet --
Because, again, I'm a newbie
on this.
The sheet -- does it have

the same number?
>> One sheet of tickets --
yes.
You have 20 pieces or 25 pieces,
depending on the drawing,
and, yes, it's the same number.
>> Okay.
>> Okay.
Because I remember as
a little girl, I remember my
father buying all these sheets
of lottery tickets, and I'm
saying, "Why are you buying
so much?"
[Laughs]
I didn't understand
the dynamics of the lottery.
>> He bought so much to have
a better chance.
>> Yeah, yeah.
Well -- [Laughs]
Unfortunately, [Laughing]
he never won, but still...
And that goes to --
I think before we started,
that was one of the questions
I was talking to Mr. Howell
about.
How addictive are --
How addictive is the lottery?
>> I haven't gotten any
complaints.
>> Okay.
>> You know.
[Laughter]
That's as much as I can say.
>> Okay. Okay.
>> Have you, Mr. Howell?
>> No, sir.
>> Because it's like a chance
you're taking that you're
going to win.
>> Yes.
>> Yeah.
>> It's a game of chance.
>> It's a game of chance.
Okay.
Okay.
>> It's a pretty universal game,
too.

Let's face it.

>> Yeah.

Yeah.

>> Tell us about the activities that the VI Lottery participates in, or sponsors.

>> A whole lot.

In terms of giveaway, the Virgin Islands Lottery gives away almost all its intake at the end of the year.

As a few agencies, especially within the Virgin Islands government, the Lottery gave over \$2 million per year to the Department of Education.

We gave over \$1 million --

>> 1.5.

>> 1.5.

We gave the retirees of the Virgin Islands government over \$1 million, and I believe that is to sub--

>> Subsidize.

>> Subsidize.

>> ...subsidize their actual income, retiree income as a bonus sometime in November through January of the following year.

Now, whether --

>> This is to GERS?

>> Yes.

>> GERS. Yes.

>> Whether or not you receive a bonus, don't blame the Virgin Islands Lottery.

We actually pay on time.

>> Yes.

>> It's someone else who is handling the money that we submit.

We gave over \$300,000 to individual organizations within the community on a yearly basis.

>> Nonprofit.

>> Nonprofit organization, and, believe it or not, I think last year, if I'm not

missing a figure, or you could help me, we actually bust our budget because the Executive Director felt that here were applications he needed to approve, and so monies were moved from one place to the next just to help those nonprofit organizations who really had a need.

>> We also gave \$1.5 million to the Pharmaceutical for the Aged to subsidize them getting their medication. The Virgin Islands Lottery is a philanthropic agency. 70% of the funds that are generated, or the revenues generated goes back to the community.

So I think that's important for the people to know.

The Virgin Islands Lottery is the people's lottery.

>> Another major giveaway will be to our veterans in the community.

We gave \$100,000 in their cause.

>> Excellent.

>> And you were talking about the activities.

Now, for the third quarter, we're going to take part in the St. Thomas Carnival, the 2018 Carnival activities.

The VI Lottery Night in the Village is going to be on April 21st.

Come warm up for the Kes, the band with the VI Lottery.

We will be having drink promotions all night, the money machine where we invite people from the crowd onto the stage, and we give the persons five seconds in the machine to grab as much money as you can.

[Laughter]

So that's is going to be

one of the giveaways.
VI Lottery Artist,
Interview Lounge, which will
include the live streaming
of the Carnival, Committee
Website, and Facebook page.
We're going to be at
the Food Fair on April 25th.
Stop by our VI Lottery tent
with any purchase of a full
sheet of our carnival ticket.
You'll receive a free T-shirt
and bag and addition items
inside -- or additional items
inside.

The EX-73 July 26, 2018 --
the Hottest Ticket In Town
it's going to be called,
with cash prizes --
\$500,000 first prize,
second prize, \$90,000,
the third prize, \$70,000,
\$50,000 for the fourth,
and \$30,000 for the fifth prize.
We're also having bonus prizes
in addition to the regular
prizes, which would be
a 2018 Toyota Highlander,
your dream trip for a \$6,000
value, home-furniture makeover,
\$5,000 value.

You're going to get --
>> A home makeover.
[Chuckling] That's really
important.
>> An iPhone 10...
>> Uh-huh.
>> ...Night Owl Home
Surveillance System.
>> Oh, my goodness.
>> So those are some of
the prizes, and if you want to
see the ticket, you will see
the flames in the ticket.
[Laughter]
>> So, when is this?
What...?
I -- Yeah.
>> That's a lot.
[Laughs]

>> Yes.

This will be on the 26th
of July.

>> So, what I'm hearing, in
addition to all these fabulous
prizes -- I mean, I think
the level of creativity
in generating these prizes
is quite impressive.

But then you also talked about
what sounded like a karaoke kind
of situation?

You go up and sing?

Grab as much as you can out of
something?

[Laughing] I'm trying to
understand.

>> You will come up.

I guess it's on a raffle basis.
You will come up, and you will
be given the opportunity to go
in.

There's going to be some cash
to grab in and grab as much
cash as you can.

>> [Laughs]

>> And -- Okay.

With that in mind, we're going
to take a brief break while
I exhale and calm myself down.

You're listening to

"Ability Radio --

You and Your Life."

We'll be back in a little bit.

>> I know that we can.

I know darn well we can work it
out.

Oh, yes, we can.

I know we can can.

Yes, we can can.

Why can't we?

If we wanna, yes, we can can.

I know we can make it work.

I know we can make it.

[The Pointer Sisters'

"Yes We Can Can" plays]

>> Now's the time for all
good men to get together
with one another.

We got to iron out our problems...

>> We're back.

You're listening to "Ability Radio -- You and Your Life."

I'm Amelia Headley LaMont, and I'm joined by my cohost, Iris Bermudez, and our special guests today are Juan Figueroa, Executive Director of VI Lottery, and Mr. Howell, who is head of Operations? Is that correct?

>> Director of Operations.

>> Director of Operations.

Okay.

Thank you.

>> A lot of people may not know, but Mr. Howell here, he's a son of the soil.

He comes to us from the Pentagon.

>> Oh, my goodness.

>> He was serving there for quite a few years.

Mr. Howell is the first African-American to get the new rank of Chief Warrant Officer in the military.

>> Oh, wow.

Congratulations.

>> Nice.

>> Excellent.

>> So we're very lucky to have him with us.

>> Okay.

When was that?

Because my dad was a Chief Warrant Officer, too.

[Laughs]

>> Well, I -- Believe it or not, like our Executive Director, Mr. Figueroa, stated, I was, indeed, the very first African-American to receive the rank of CW5 for the Virgin Islands.

>> Excellent.

>> In fact, I actually got promoted -- It's been such a long time -- in 1999, and so the rank was very new at that point.

>> Absolutely.

Well, congrats.

This is very nice to hear.

>> Congratulations.

>> And we served together in the National Guard for over 14 years.

>> Oh, my goodness.

>> I spent a few years in the military -- 42.

>> Oh, my goodness.

>> "A few years."

>> Just a few.

"A few years" -- just a few.

Yes, yes.

Well, we have another question to ask you so that we can understand the goings on of the lottery, but when we were, again, looking up information about the Virgin Islands Lottery, we came across the Multi-State Lottery Association.

What does that mean?

>> The Multi-State Lottery is the what we call MUSL for short.

It's a consortium of the lotteries within the United States.

There are approximately 43 in all, and the Virgin Islands is a member of the Multi-State Lotteries.

In other words, they're the ones that runs all the lotteries in the nation.

>> Oh, okay.

>> Yeah.

>> So this is a U.S. entity, so to speak, right?

It doesn't involve the Caribbean or does it?

>> The United States and
Puerto Rico and
the Virgin Islands.
>> Okay.
>> Oh. Okay.
>> And, of course, they're
the ones that regulate
the games.
>> Right.
>> Okay.
>> For example, right now
we are not offering --
the Caribbean Lottery Services
is not offering
the Powerball and Mega Million
because after the two storms,
as you know, everything was --
and we suffered considerable
damages, so they came last
month, and they did an
inspection, and everything
turns out to be okay, and they
also inspected Caribbean Lottery
Services to make sure that all
the components are in place,
so we're hoping that within
a week or two, the Powerball
and Mega Million will be
reinstated.
However, Caribbean Lottery
Services still sells
the scratch games.
>> Could you talk a little bit
about the Caribbean Lottery
Services compared to
the Virgin Islands Lottery?
>> Well, the Caribbean Lottery
Services is the contractor,
our contractor.
So, in essence, we regulate
Caribbean Lottery Services.
>> And who's involved
with the Caribbean Lottery
Services?
>> Well, Mr. Brian Gardine
runs the Caribbean Lottery
Services here in
the Virgin Islands.
>> Hmm.
Okay.

>> All right, so...
>> So when you go to Sunny Isle, you see in the office Caribbean Lottery Services.
You can go there and buy any scratch ticket that people play on a daily basis.
>> Oh. Okay.
>> So we, in return, get a percentage of their sales.
>> And the Powerball, and what's the other...?
>> Mega Million.
>> That falls under the VI Lottery umbrella?
>> Yes, it does.
It falls under the VI Lottery umbrella, but it's ran by or operated by Caribbean Lottery Services.
>> Okay.
Do you share the same office space?
>> No, we don't.
>> I'm still trying to figure out what...
>> Mm-hmm.
>> Caribbean Lottery is just specifically for the Virgin Islands, or...?
>> The Virgin Islands.
Yes.
>> Oh. Hmm.
Okay.
>> It's all three islands.
Yes.
>> Oh, okay.
Okay.
>> And solely the Virgin Islands -- no affiliation with any other Caribbean Island?
>> No, no -- just us.
>> Okay. Okay.
All right.
>> So, why was the Caribbean Lottery implemented versus

Virgin Islands Lottery?

I'm still trying to get the connection here.

>> Right.

Well, that's the way I found it when I came in, but it's because they have the expertise in running those types of games. So the Virgin Islands Lottery contracted them to do it on behalf of the Virgin Islands Lottery.

>> Hmm.

>> So it's a different kind of game, essentially?

>> Yes, it is.

>> Okay.

>> Okay.

>> So, how would you distinguish VI Lottery games versus the Caribbean Lottery games? You said scratch cards, for example.

>> The scratch tickets, yes, and when it's up and running, of course the Powerball and Mega Million.

>> Ohh.

>> And all we sell right now, the Virgin Islands Lottery, is the tickets -- so the traditional ticket. So that's how we differentiate it.

>> And would I be remiss in suggesting -- I could be wrong -- that VI Lottery makes a greater contribution to the local community as opposed to the Caribbean lottery?

I don't know.

Does the Caribbean Lottery contribute to education, retirement, nonprofits?

>> Well, in essence, they do. You know, they do their own contributions, but --

>> You don't hear about it -- at least I don't.

>> No.

>> No. No.
>> Now, one of the things is that we also regulate Southland Gaming on St. Thomas. So, now most of the revenues that are coming in, and most of the contributions made are made through Southland Gaming, which is the video lottery terminals on St. Thomas.
>> Right.
Do we have any terminals here on St. Croix?
>> No, we don't.
>> Okay.
>> There's two different entities.
You have the Casino Control Commission...
>> Right.
>> ...which they regulate casinos, and then you have the Virgin Islands Lottery, which regulates Caribbean Lottery Services and the Southland Gaming of the Virgin Islands.
>> Oh.
That's interesting.
>> Mm.
>> That goes back to my question about the gambling and the lottery, because I remember my father -- again, going back to my father's example. He used to buy tickets on a weekly basis, and my mother used to say, "You're addicted. You're addicted. You need to stop buying all these tickets."
But then he told her --
He would tell her,
"It's a chance I'm taking to improve our lot," so...
>> Yes. Mm-hmm.
>> But, anyway, is there a minimum age to play the lottery, or can anyone

purchase the tickets?

>> The minimum age, as we state earlier, is 18 years.

However, you could purchase any ticket and give it to a child as a gift.

That child will not be able to redeem the ticket.

An adult will be able to redeem the ticket.

However, it will be placed, I guess, in a trust or some sort of instrument for that individual as they grow and come to the age of adulthood.

>> You know, just something came to my mind.

Is there a timeframe for you to change -- to go and say, "Well, I have a winning ticket. I want my money"?, or is there -- it's open, and it --

>> No, ma'am.

There is a timeframe.

>> There is a timeframe.

>> If you count six months from the actual drawing...

>> Uh-huh.

>> ...and six months --

According to the law, it's six months.

Sometimes, internally, we count 180 days, and we're not going to quibble over a day or two because it was done on the 15th of February, and so in August 16, someone is saying, "Well, it is beyond the six months."

Well, think about it for a second.

Most three years of the four, February has 28 days.

So if you start counting that quibble -- so it if was purchased on whatever day in February, go six months, and that's what we consider six months later, and so, yes.

It's six months from the actual date of the drawing.

>> Okay.

Okay, that's interesting.

Thank you.

What about the Puerto Rico Lottery?

I remember years ago, it used to be illegal to sell Puerto Rico Lottery tickets in the Virgin Islands.

Does that still hold true?

>> That is still the case.

Yes.

I've known about the Puerto Rico Lottery since I was a child, so...

>> [Laughs]

>> You know, it's something that is going to be difficult to eradicate.

We may control it, but as far as the eradication of it, I'm not too sure, but it is a misdemeanor if you're caught selling the Puerto Rico Lottery, and we are in the process of getting that raised to being a felony.

So we're going through the legislature to see if we can get that amendment into legislature.

So, of course, we have Enforcement Officers within our agency, and they go around checking dealers to ensure that they're not selling Puerto Rico Lottery.

>> Yeah.

I'd like to add something here, and it's a little off the subject, but when you really think about your chances winning the Puerto Rico Lottery versus winning the Virgin Islands Lottery or any other lottery, for that matter, you have a much better chance.

The Virgin Islands Lottery

Ordinary Drawing, like our Executive Director, Mr. Figueroa, stated earlier, there are 34,000 individual number of balls, and you have one chance in winning \$175,000 with 34,000, or Extraordinary Drawing -- there are now 40,000 balls, and you have a chance of winning \$500,000.

I'm saying we can't tell anyone what to do and how to spend their money, but if you support the Virgin Islands Lottery, just imagine that possibility of winning versus another lottery.

>> I think the odds are better.

>> Much, much better.

>> Just, really, the numbers speaks for itself.

>> Yes.

>> Okay.

>> Wow, that's amazing.

>> And, again, not being privy to the Puerto Rico Lottery and the history, am I correct in understanding that this applies to persons selling Puerto Rico Lottery tickets? What about if somebody bought it?

I guess they have to buy it from somebody, right?

>> Right.

If you're caught buying it, the purchaser will not get in trouble, but, yes, the seller will.

>> Okay.

>> Oh. Okay.

Because I know that in Puerto Rico, even at the airport, you see people selling the tickets.

>> Yeah, yeah.

>> So you're going to the Virgin Islands, and you're stopped by a dealer at the airport, it's okay because

they're selling it in
Puerto Rico, yes?

>> I would say yes because
that's legal to purchase
wherever.

It's just like a continental
that came off of the ship
and purchased our --

>> Virgin Islands.

Yeah.

>> He will not get his full
amount because he must pay
the taxes, but if you purchase
that ticket in Puerto Rico,
and you're a winner, then you
should go back to Puerto Rico
to change it, also.

[Laughter]

It just makes sense.

>> And you probably have to pay
Puerto Rico taxes.

>> Yeah.

>> Precisely.

>> Okay, good.

>> However, we're not supposed
to sell...

>> Mm-hmm.

>> ...or purchase within --

>> The Virgin Islands.

>> Yes, or outside of
the Virgin Islands.

>> So, typically, how is notice
given about a winning?

Okay, we have a procedure
every other week.

How does the public know
that, oh, gee, I won?

>> We have a scheme.

>> Okay.

We have a sheet.

All right.

>> Yeah, but we call that
a scheme.

At the end of every drawing,
probably within after our last
final audit, then these schemes
will now be distributed
do the general public.

There's also a telephone number
that you could call --

772 -- I think it's 8563.
Right after the drawing,
you dial that number,
and you could get the five
top-winning numbers, and then we
also have the scheme or
the winning numbers you could
punch in on our website,
and you will know right away
if you're a winner or you're
not.

>> Now, does this 772 number
work?

>> Yes, it does.

>> Okay.

[Laughs]

>> It actually does.

>> And, by the way, it comes
on the television -- I believe
Channel 2 -- the same day
of the drawing -- that evening
of the drawing.

So you can always go to
the website win --

winusvilottery.com --

winusvilottery.com.

>> Excellent, excellent.

We're going to take a little
break, and we'll be back.

If you have any questions,
feel free to call us
at 713-1079.

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"Ability Radio."

>> Now's the time for all
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with the kindness that we give.
We can work it out.
Yes, we can can.
Yes, we can can.
Why can't we?
If we wanna get together, we can
work it out.
>> I know that we can make it.
>> I know that we can.
>> I know darn well we can work
it out.
>> We can work it out.
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>> We're back.
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I'm Amelia Headley LaMont,
and I'm joined this morning
by my cohost, Iris Bermudez,
and our special guests this
morning is Executive Director
of the VI Lottery,
Juan Figueroa, and Director
of Operations -- I say
Mr. Howell, because I don't
remember your first name.
[Chuckles]
Chief Warrant Officer Howell.
I remember that!
[Laughter]
>> Dennis.
>> Dennis -- Dennis Howell.
We've learned a lot this morning
about the role of
the VI Lottery, and during
the break, there were some
discussion stories, which we
always like to hear stories,
but Director Figueroa, if you
can tell us about what's on

the horizon for the entity?
>> The Virgin Islands Lottery is going through a transformation right now. We just had an over \$500,000 of I.T. upgrades because our system, our technology was in a near-death status. So we did an overhaul as far as the I.T. system is concerned, so we're doing pretty good as far as that's concerned, but in addition to that -- and it's the first time I'm saying it publicly in your show or in any other show -- that we are in the process of modernizing the Virgin Islands Lottery. In other words, instead of going with the traditional method of the globes and the balls coming out, that will be done, but it will be done digitally. In other words, electronically. So instead of doing a drawing that takes an hour and a half or an hour and three-quarters, we're going to be able to do that in 30 to 40 minutes maximum time, and it will be done RNG, which is a Random Number Generator.

>> And I would imagine the system will have a series of checks and balance to make sure that there's no, you know --

>> Definitely.

>> Yeah.

>> They will have checks and balances to include an audit trail -- so we can go back and audit those numbers that the computer spit out.

>> Mm-hmm.

>> Now that you mentioned this, because I remember us having the same conversation related to voting -- [Laughs]

having a trail, a paper trail,
a record to, indeed, verify
that the ballots were correctly
entered and counted and that
type of thing.

Mr. Howell, yes?

>> I'd just like to add to what
our Executive Director just
stated.

With this new technology,
it's going to be a key system.
The independent Board of Drawing
and a member of
the Virgin Islands Lottery
would have to work together.
There is no independence.

So the independent Board of
Drawing cannot do a drawing
or the Virgin Islands Lottery
member cannot do a drawing.
You have to have that key system
where both of them are there
at the same time.

They all put in their key,
and then the drawing will begin.

>> Oh, wow.

>> Yeah.

That's how -- And then, not only
us.

We have a Big Brother someplace
beyond the Virgin Islands.

It's ensuring that we have done
what we're supposed to do,
or else the drawing will not
officially take place.

So this is so much more
security.

>> Mm-hmm.

>> That's wonderful.

Have you, in the past, ever had
someone who tried to scheme off
the lottery?

>> I have no idea, ma'am.

>> Okay, okay.

>> [Laughing] And would we
even...

>> Right, right.

>> Yeah.

I mean, you did have an
interesting story during

the break about a person
who's been selling tickets
for -- ooh.

>> A long time

>> Long, long time --
since the '60s.

>> Yes, I have two stories.

One, I will invite any member
out there, customer or dealer.
Some people will say, "My ball
is never placed in there --
cylinder or the globe," and
I could say to you with
confidence that your ball is
actually there, and this one
lady who is a dealer, she came,
and I said, "Give me a number.
Give me a number."

And she came into the room,
and we gave her the string.

I said, "Find your number."

She found her number.

She started kissing the ball
and stuff like that.

[Laughter]

Of course, she didn't win,
but, you know --

>> She knew it was there?

>> But, yes, it's there.

>> It is validated.

>> Mm-hmm.

>> Right.

>> Another individual who's been
selling tickets from the '60s
or '70s out of St. John never
seen a real drawing before,
and we were over there.

I said, "Why don't you come?
The VI Lottery will pay your
way.

We will feed you and
everything."

He came, and we showed him
from the beginning to the end
of the drawing.

This guy, he was so impressed.
He did not understand even
though he was selling tickets
for all those years, so...

>> The process.

>> I have a story about that same individual.
[Laughter]
Because the first time I had my dealers' meeting in St. John, he said, "Mr. Figueroa, we never win anything here -- never."
I said, "But you understand this is a game of chance, and St. John purchases 'X' amount of tickets versus St. Thomas and St. Croix, so the chances of St. Thomas and St. Croix winning are much greater than St. John."
He said, "Yeah, but we've been in this business for so long," and what have you.
And I said, "Well, just keep the faith."
I said, "Keep the faith."
If you don't play, you can't win, right?
So the first drawing after that, St. John got the first prize of \$175,000.
>> Gee!
>> And it wasn't fixed.
[Laughter]
It just so happened that they got it.
Yeah.
>> Wow.
>> He was a happy camper.
>> I guess so.
[Laughter]
>> And I don't know if it was a good omen, but the first drawing I attended, the first ball that came out was the grand prize -- \$175,000.
>> Oh, wow.
>> They said that has never happened in the history of the Virgin Islands Lottery.
>> And this last drawing, the second-to-last ball that actually came out was a grand prize.

So you never know where it's going to come out.

>> Going to come out.

Wow.

It's a chance of -- Yeah.

A game of chance.

>> Wow.

So, are the drawings televised?

>> It's not televised, but we have video of it -- two different videos, one internally, and we contract an independent videographer, I guess you call them, to actually do the drawing.

>> To tape it. Yes.

>> As a teenager, I lived in Panama for a year, and I remember it was set.

Whatever period of time -- maybe it was noon -- they would have the drawing, and maybe the President of the country -- I don't remember -- would hold up the number, so it became that kind of -- You know, it was a ritual of -- you know.

So that's why I was curious as to whether you could see. Maybe that was another issue that if folks didn't see it, they questioned whether it even happened.

You know what I mean?

>> In fact, Mr. Figueroa didn't get deep into this, but he will let you know that once we get in line with that new initiative, it will definitely be broadcast, hopefully, on a government channel, and so everyone will be there to see.

Not only that, you will have big screens outside of all of the lottery establishments. So you could actually sit down and see the drawing taking place.

>> Wow.
>> That's a great idea.
[Laughs]
That's a great idea.
Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.
>> Wow.
I'm just amazed by all
the sponsorship that
the lottery does, and it's good
to hear what you're doing with
the revenue that you're
generating because it's really
important that we give back
to the community --
really, really important, so...
>> And that's what we're all
about.
Yeah.
>> I like to say just some
prizes that -- You know, we talk
a whole lot about the \$500,000
prize, the \$175,000 prize.
However, for a regular drawing
-- and I will read them out real
fast.
The top prize is \$175,000.
Second, third, fourth, and fifth
in this order -- \$65,000,
\$40,000, \$30,000, and \$20,000.
We have multiple prizes
that is \$1,600, multiple prizes,
\$1,200.
I think we have four \$5,000
prizes, lots of \$600, \$300.
You go on and on.
>> Yeah.
>> As long as you have the last
number of the grand prize,
your ticket will then redeem
itself to the price that you
paid for.
So we call that a terminal,
and for the Extra, which is
the Extraordinary Drawing,
of course, the top price
is \$500,000, and the second,
third, fourth, and fifth
in this order -- \$90,000,
\$70,000, \$50,000, and \$30,000.
In this, once again, we have

a whole lot of high prizes --
Your \$1,000, your \$2,000,
your \$2,500, et cetera.
So, if you don't win the actual
top prize or one of the five
top prizes, you stand a chance
of winning lots of money.
>> Yeah.
>> So you, over time, I could
assure you, if you stick with
the Virgin Islands Lottery,
you're not going to come out
losing.
You're not going to.
It's like the stock market.
When it's down, don't sell,
because it's going to rise up
again, and you're going to
recover.
>> That's a good point.
>> Historically, which island --
Okay, go ahead.
>> I would like to add to that
that the Virgin Islands Lottery
has the largest payout rate
in the nation.
Our payout rate is 90%.
>> Wow.
>> You want to repeat that?
[Laughter]
>> Yes.
Our payout rate is 90%.
It's the largest, the highest
payout rate in the nation.
>> Plus, the odds are smaller.
>> Mm-hmm.
>> Yeah. Great.
>> Buy me a ticket.
[Laughter]
>> You were going to say?
>> Now I forgot.
I'm having a moment here.
[Laughter]
I guess -- Yes.
My question is, historically,
is there a notable --
Okay, you mentioned St. John.
You know, because of population,
between St. Croix
and St. Thomas, which of the two

participates more historically,
or -- I don't know if it's
a population-density issue,
or...

How would you compare the two
historically?

>> Well, based on sales,
total sales per drawing,
St. Thomas sells the most
tickets.

However, St. Croix is not far
behind, and we would like
St. Croix to catch up just
a little bit, but, again, it has
no bearing on which island is
going to win.

>> Right.

>> In fact, equally -- and, yes,
our Executive Director,
Mr. Figueroa, gave us that
story.

I like it, but they also win
other prizes -- lots of other
prizes, too.

So, not the case they only sell
"X" amount, but they win their
share.

They definitely win their share.

>> And I'm challenging St. Croix
to top St. Thomas in sales.

>> Ooh. [Laughs]

>> You hear that, St. Croix?

[Laughter]

Speaking of which, we do have
an Agricultural Fair coming up
next month during
Memorial Day Weekend.

Will the VI Lottery be there?

>> Yes, we will.

>> Mm.

>> And I know in previous years,
you've had some wonderful
offerings, one of which is
a tote bag that I still have.

[Laughter]

Do you --

Can you even sell tickets there
at that site?

I'm not sure.

>> Yes. Yes, we can,

but we must be contained
within our booth.
We cannot walk around and sell
tickets.

>> Okay.

>> It has to be right there
at the booth.

>> And that's a real important
question, because
the VI Lottery, we try not
to act as our own dealer.
In fact, if you ever come
to the Virgin Islands Lottery
Office, and you request
a ticket -- say, ticket number
one, two, three, four, five --
and there is an actual dealer
there, we will ask you can you
ask the dealer to purchase
so that that dealer could make
either \$10 or \$7.

We try not to sell it to you
from our perspective, and that's
just to show you how we are.

We're not there to try to
increase our individual sale.

We would like the dealers
who participate in
and who's supporting
the Virgin Islands Lottery
and our customers to get that
sale.

>> How many dealers do you have
in total now?

>> I can't remember, but we have
hundreds -- hundreds.

>> I would say close to 400
dealers.

>> Really?

>> Yes.

>> Wow.

That's pretty good.

>> Now, if you were purchasing
a ticket, I'm assuming, or --
correct me if I'm wrong.

I'm assuming that you'll just go
to a dealer, and you just get
a random sheet.

Do people come to a dealer
and say, I want a sheet with

precisely these numbers?

They can do that?

>> Yes.

In fact, that's one of the beauty of the Virgin Islands Lottery you're not going to find in any other place.

Each dealer do have their own batch of tickets, and, like I said, according to policy and procedure, that you have to purchase at least 35 tickets per individual drawing to be consistent and to continue as a dealer.

However, as an independent dealer -- and they all are -- you could request any number as a special number.

So every single drawing, that number or those number will be a part of your package.

No one could purchase them with the exception, the Monday or Tuesday of the day of the drawing, if you did not come and purchase those special numbers, then any other dealer could request those numbers as long as they're there for sale and purchase them.

>> Hmm.

>> But you pick the numbers that you want for your customers, and it's a consistency whereby those numbers will be in your package every drawing.

>> Okay.

So we're assuming, then, that the purchaser has a relationship with the dealer, and it's the dealer who will give you the numbers that you want.

Right?

>> You request from --
The purchaser will request it from the dealer, and the dealer will submit their

request to
the Virgin Islands Lottery,
and then we will batch it out.
>> Oh, wow.
That's amazing.
>> So, you could get the same
number forever.
>> Yeah.
>> You could get the same number
forever.
But be careful.
There's just a caution here.
After 20 years, you won't
want to give it up.
You know why?
Because you feel that number
is going to win the next
drawing.
>> Right.
>> [Laughs]
Yeah.
>> I could see that happening.
I could see that happening.
Again, this program was brought
to you by VI Lottery --
Making a Difference Program.
And, again, if you've missed
anything, any portion of this
broadcast this morning, it will
be posted on our website,
which is at drcvi.org.
It's available in an audio file
and on transcript.
Okay, with the few minutes
remaining, I'd like for you
to reiterate that July 26th
event.
It just sounded so fantastic,
and if you could tell us
a little bit more before we
leave, that would be great.
>> Okay.
As far as the July 26th event,
it is going to be called
the Hot Ticket In Town.
I'm sorry -- the Hottest Ticket
In Town, and we're going to have
cash prizes -- \$500,000, which
is the first prize, the second
prize, \$90,000, the third prize,

\$70,000, the fifth prize --
the fourth prize, \$50,000,
and the fifth prize, \$30,000,
and like Mr. Howell mentioned,
there are many, many other
cash prizes.

Now, we're also having bonus
prizes.

The bonus prize is going to be
a 2018 Toyota Highlander,
your dream trip valued at
\$6,000, home-furniture makeover,
\$5,000 value, an iPhone 10 --
I have a 9.

[Laughter]

...Night Owl Home Surveillance
System.

So we encourage everyone
to come out.

It's going to be a hot ticket
like we say.

If you look at the ticket
itself, you'll see the flames
in it.

[Laughter]

So we're encouraging everyone
to come out and get their
ticket.

>> Now, where is this going to
be?

>> It's going to be on sale
starting 11 May.

>> Okay.

>> May 11.

>> And where's the event
going to be --

the Hottest Ticket In Town?

>> Well, it's going to be sold
all over the Virgin Islands,
and, of course, the drawing
takes place on St. Thomas.

>> Okay.

>> Excellent, excellent.

And, again, we'd like to thank
you both, really, for an
incredibly informative morning.

>> Yes.

>> Iris, did you have any
parting shots?

>> Well, honestly, you helped

change my mind about the Virgin Islands Lottery because I always used to think that, eh, you really don't have a chance of winning, but based on the information you provided, yeah, there is an opportunity. But what I love the most is your contribution to the community programs.

Being a social worker, I'm always looking out for things like that, so I really appreciate what you do for the community.

>> And the sheet that you brought, Mr. Howell, it contains a lot of numbers, which suggests all winnings -- two pages of winnings.

So even though we may look at situations where you don't get the grand prize, it's still an investment in the community, and I've come away with that knowledge, and this has been very, very enlightening for both of us.

>> Yes.

>> And the Virgin Islands Lottery is being operated with a high level of integrity.

>> Yes.

>> And that's something that we have brought, and there was a dealer -- not a dealer, a gentleman that told me, "Mr. Figueroa, I have not bought the VI Lottery in over 20 years, but because you are the head of the lottery now, I'm once again buying the lottery," so...

>> That's very high praise.

>> Bravo.

>> That's very high praise.

>> Very good, very good.

>> Thanks to both of you, really, for joining us this morning.

And next week, we will be

bringing another broadcast
of "Ability Radio --
You and Your Life."
Have a great Saturday.
>> Thank you very much for
having us.
>> Thank you.
>> I know we can make it if we
try.
>> Oh, yes, we can.
I know we can can.
Yes, we can.
>> Great gosh almighty.
>> Yes, we can.
I know we can can.
[Instrumental music plays]