

One card is worth \$400,000 in Eldred. Will someone get lucky tonight?

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ELDRED – Sixteen sealed cards remain at the Eldred American Legion, and three of them are queens.

One of them in particular – the much-sought-after Queen of Hearts – is worth a whopping sum of \$400,000. This is due to an ongoing drawing from the legion. A deck

of 54 cards (standard deck plus two jokers) had each card individually sealed and given a number. Legion manager, Dave Lehr, said no one knows the location of the queen yet, but said it is fortunate no one has selected her.

Tickets, which are sold for \$1 at the legion, located at 305 Locust Street in Eldred, are drawn and include the name and phone number of the person who purchased it as well as a number pertaining to a card remaining. All cards pay out, however, and currently the lowest payout for a winner is \$250 and a \$20 gift certificate to the Legion.

“Whatever card is on the ticket we draw is the one we cut open,” Lehr said. “Fortunately for us, no one has gotten the Queen of Hearts yet. Someone did get the Queen of Spades in the first two weeks we were doing this, and that got around \$840, because the pot was still small then.”

Lehr said it was “fortunate,” because the Legion retains 20 percent of the ticket sales for this event. In July, when the pot reached the quarter of a million mark, ticket sales for a week were around \$30,000. Lehr said they have increased even more since then.

The Queen of Hearts drawing started in Southern Illinois Legions, including the one in Caseyville. Lehr said the Eldred American Legion applied for licenses and permits through the State of Illinois in April 2017, adding the first ticket sales occurred in late October 2017. The first drawing was at the beginning of November 2017.

Tickets are drawn every Tuesday until the Queen of Hearts is drawn. Tickets are on sale at the legion until 6 p.m. every Tuesday and the drawing takes place at 7 p.m.