

## Zainab to get three days of training

And yes, she's aware of just how lucky she is.

"I feel very lucky," she said, noting she's been interested in space ever since she was old enough to read.

"I read a book on space and then I started to get interested," she said, noting she was fascinated by Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin's moon walk.

Later, she learned of Roberta Bondar's career as the first female Canadian astronaut in space and that "got me very interested, and I've had a passion for it since then."

Add to the mix Milton's own and Canada's first astronaut to walk in space, Chris Hadfield, and her boundless enthusiasm over space was set in stone at a young age.

Fear or anxiety over a trip to space isn't one of her emotions, but her mom Rabiya admitted she's a little on edge.

"Her father bought it for her and I'm scared... she's my only daughter," she quipped, noting she has two other sons, Ali and Yousuf.

Still, she said it's an opportunity for her daughter to have a life experience like no other.

"She never played with Barbies... it was always reading," she said. "She did a couple of projects on space and always wanted books as gifts.

The boys wanted toys; she wanted books." So it's no surprise that when Zainab's father, Azim, told her to "go play" as he explained some of the finer details of the space flight to *the Champion*, Zainab groaned and exclaimed, "Daddy, I don't play."

Azim replied, "well go read then," a smile creeping onto his face.

"This is a gift," he said. "It provides her with a lifelong experience she'll never forget."

Prior to the launch, training for the flight will take place over three days at Spaceport America, the New Mexico headquarters of Virgin Galactic. There, Zainab, who does vol-

unteer work with Milton Transitional Housing, will experience zero gravity, space blackness and other preparations for her flight. The next day she'll experience a four-hour (five-minute suborbital) trip at an altitude of 15,000 metres — not as high as the International Space Station, which is 370 km above the earth. The spaceship will take one pilot, a co-pilot and six passengers, and will likely take off from the New Mexico location. She'll be 13, assuming she takes off in 2015, and the youngest person in space, according to Azim.

She's already had the chance to visit Virgin Galactic during a convention in the Mojave Desert last September. Her family attended and saw firsthand the SpaceShipTwo and listened to Virgin Galactic's Branson speak to some 300 people who have purchased tickets.

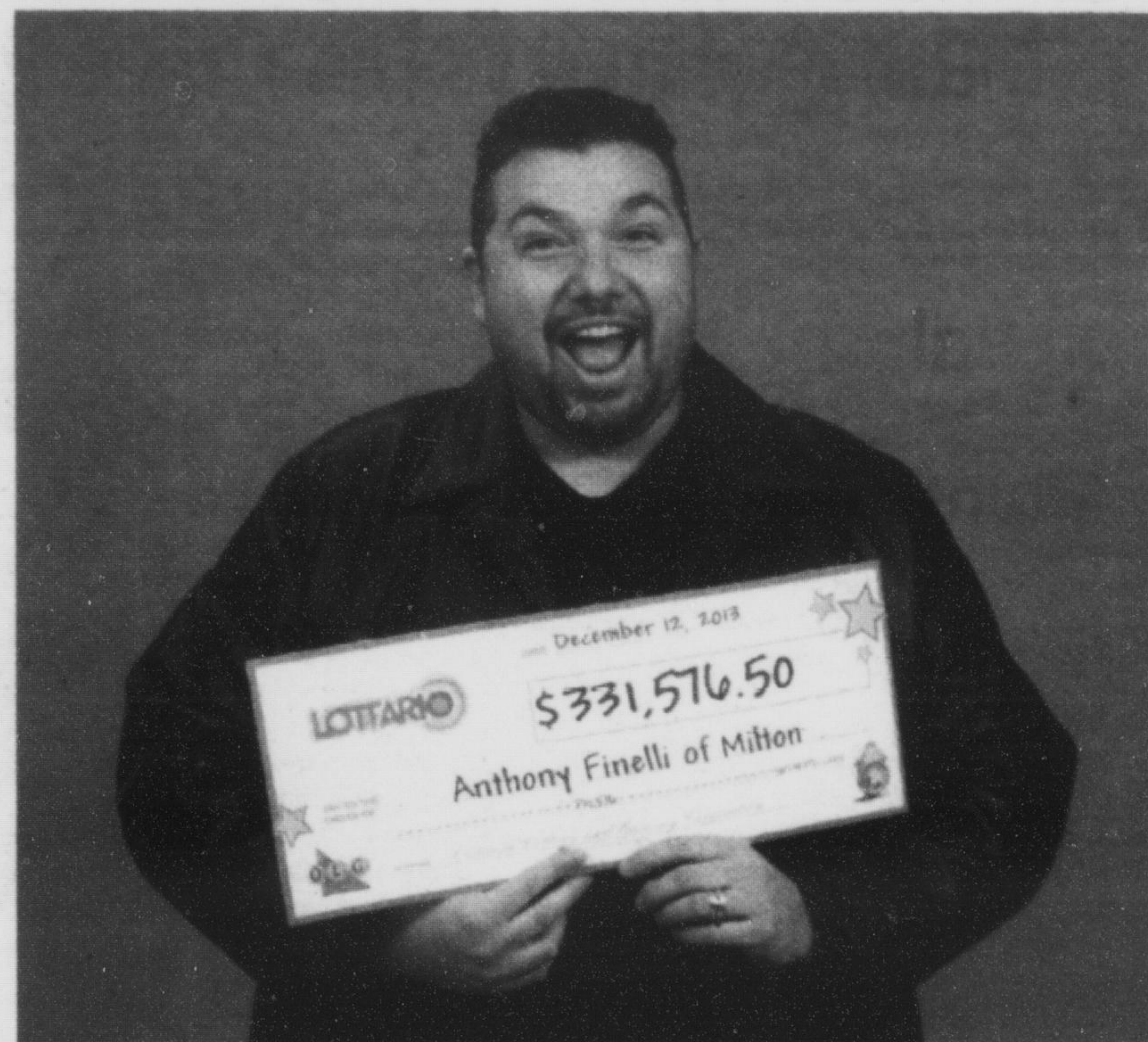
Rabiya said the spaceship has huge, pod-like windows to give passengers a phenomenal view.

And, with her ticket in place, she knew there was no one better to talk to about what to expect from space than Hadfield himself.

Last month when Hadfield launched his first novel, she was fortunate enough to meet him during a special Milton Indigo book-signing event.

There, she had the opportunity to ask him questions about what to expect and his suggestions for what she could do to make the most of her experience.

He advised her to "play with weightlessness" — unbuckle her seatbelt, take in the view, keep looking out the window and try somersaults, cartwheels and other stunts to absorb what zero gravity feels like. Until then, Zainab will just have to deal with the somersaults she feels in her stomach anticipating the big day. *Julie Slack can be reached at [jslack@miltoncanadianchampion.com](mailto:jslack@miltoncanadianchampion.com) or on Twitter @miltonmusing.*



### Jackpot!

Miltonian Anthony Finelli hit it big in a recent Lottario draw, winning \$331,576.50. His winning ticket was purchased on Ontario Street's Petro Canada. *Photo courtesy of OLG*

### + Added Talent.

Miller Thomson is proud to welcome Kristina Tesser (Derksen) to the family law team in our Guelph office.

When Kristina isn't providing practical and compassionate legal advice to clients in the area of family law, she can often be found supporting or starring in community musical theatre productions around the region.

We welcome you to contact Kristina or any other member of the Miller Thomson team for the advice you need to make sure your voice is heard.

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