



Scientific Games Shares Behind-the-Scenes Look at Zozobra Scratchers, 2025 Best New Instant Game in North America

North America State and Provincial Lotteries' Annual Buddy Roogow Award Celebrates Innovation

ATLANTA – October 28, 2025 – [Scientific Games](#) is offering a behind-the-scenes look at how the [New Mexico Lottery's](#) Zozobra Scratchers came to life — a game recently honored as the 2025 Best New Game by the [North American Association of State and Provincial Lotteries](#).

The world's largest lottery games company and the New Mexico Lottery collaborated to design and produce this innovative series inspired by the colorful effigy burned at Santa Fe's [Burning of Zozobra Festival](#), a cherished New Mexico tradition now in its 101st year.

"The New Mexico Lottery is honored by this award because it truly reflects our community's culture," said **David Barden, CEO for the New Mexico Lottery**. "Our goal was to capture the spirit of the Zozobra in these new games—and what better way than by featuring artwork from talented local artists."

To bring that vision to life, the Lottery held a statewide art competition that drew nearly 200 submissions. Three winners were selected to have their work featured across the Zozobra Scratchers series, each capturing a unique interpretation of the iconic figure known as "Old Man Gloom."

Scientific Games, the New Mexico Lottery's primary Scratchers game provider, worked closely with the Lottery to develop the game's exciting prize package and playstyle. The company added a bold finishing touch on the three-scene series with its *Dimension Flame* pattern—a *Strategic Product Enhancement* designed to elevate visual appeal and engagement. Launched in March 2025, the Zozobra Scratchers are performing 27% higher than all other \$5 games in market.

Originating in 1924, the Burning of Zozobra Festival celebrates the symbolic burning of a towering 50-foot effigy filled with written regrets, worries and misdeeds from the community. As the effigy roars and waves his arms before being set ablaze by his archenemy, the Fire Spirit, the ritual represents casting off the previous year's sorrows and embracing renewal. This year's event drew an estimated 50,000 attendees, underscoring the enduring cultural significance of Zozobra in New Mexico life.

"Scientific Games embarked on this project with creativity and performance in mind," said **Charlie Scannella, Vice President of Commercial Sales and Client Relations for Scientific Games**. "We're thrilled that our collaboration has been recognized by the North American lottery industry with this prestigious innovation award, and even more so for all the funding the game has generated for education in the state of New Mexico."

This marks the fourth consecutive year and the fifth time in the past decade that the New Mexico Lottery won the Buddy Roogow Innovation Award for Best New Instant Game. Named for Buddy Roogow, the late director of the D.C. Lottery and Maryland Lottery, the award recognizes exceptional creativity and success in new instant game launches across lotteries in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. Entries are judged on innovation, cost/benefit analysis, strategic analysis and insight, and visual appeal.

Scientific Games has designed and produced the New Mexico Lottery scratchers since the Lottery began in 1996. Earlier this year, the company was awarded a 10-year contract for the Lottery's gaming systems and retail technology, and expanding its work with scratch games to the *Scientific Games Enhanced Partnership*. Through the partnership, the company will provide the New Mexico Lottery with Scratchers portfolio management and game planning services, data analytics, advanced logistics, licensed brand services, and retail sales and marketing support from a Scientific Games facility in Albuquerque.

Since 1996, the New Mexico Lottery has contributed more than \$1 billion to higher education for students across New Mexico.

Currently serving 150 government-regulated lotteries in 50 countries, Scientific Games is the world's largest lottery games creator, producer and manager and the fastest growing lottery systems provider.

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