

Ball State librarian wins more than \$80,000 on Jeopardy!

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(Photo: Photo provided)

MUNCIE, Ind. — After winning by a dollar in his first game and continuing to dominate the competition in the two games that followed, Scott McFadden's [Jeopardy!](https://www.jeopardy.com/) journey is over.

His three-day winning streak ended with Monday night's episode.

"Well, it was kind of sad at the time. Certainly, looking back on it now, the fourth game wasn't — I didn't play as badly as I thought I had. I made a couple of mistakes and Suzanne was able to capitalize on those, but I had been remembering it as being much worse than it really was," he said.

"I mean, I'm a three-day Jeopardy! champion and not a lot of people can say that, so I don't really feel too upset or too sorry for myself because I've been able to do something that a lot of people don't get the opportunity to do, and I'm very lucky."

During his four games, McFadden answered 96 questions total, missing 12, according to [The Jeopardy! Fan](https://thejeopardyfan.com/), a website run by Andy Saunders, who posts daily recaps of each game.

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However, the decades-long game show fan didn't expect to make it this far. McFadden, who is head of serials cataloging at University Libraries, tried out for the show three times before he landed a spot.

Third time's the charm

McFadden started taking the online tests in the early 2000s. He kept applying over the years, taking it every time it was available, he recalled. He auditioned three times and in February McFadden got his lucky break.

McFadden said he always has been "pretty good" at trivia.

"I enjoy trivia. I enjoy learning things and you need a good breadth of knowledge to do well on the show," he said. "If I say so myself, I know at least a little something about a lot of different things."

After winning the first game, McFadden said he had about an hour to process the win. However, as he recorded the second, third and fourth games, he had about 15-20 minutes to process his winning streak.

“In the moment, it was kind of hard to think about it. As I’ve been looking back on it, I’m very grateful that I was able to do as well as I did,” he said. “I think that I’m very lucky that I was picked to be on the show in the first place.”

Winning big

Over the course of four games, McFadden won \$80,401.

Although he technically won the games in February, he won’t receive the check for at least four months after the episode’s air date.

“My wife and I will probably take a trip somewhere. We’ve talked about going to see England, so we may go over there,” he said. “Then our house needs some repairs, too that we may spend some of it on, but I think the trip will be one of the big things we try to do with it.”

McFadden said it would be nice to do a tour of the country, but there are a few places he and Donna, his wife, are interested in seeing.

“My wife and I are big fans of a show called “[Midsomer Murders \(https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0118401/\)](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0118401/)” ... it’s set in sort of the central part of England and the country. We’d kind of like to see that part of things,” McFadden said. “Also, I’d love to see London. See ... [Buckingham Palace \(https://www.royal.uk/royal-residences-buckingham-palace\)](https://www.royal.uk/royal-residences-buckingham-palace) and all the historic things that are in London, too.”

Although the couple’s corgi-lab mix likes car rides McFadden said he doesn’t think Peanut will accompany them for the trip.

Returning as a champion

For now, McFadden’s Jeopardy! journey is finished. However, there is a possibility he could compete on the show’s Tournament of Champions.

Generally, the show hosts the tournament every year, according to its online champions archive. However, there are a few instances where the show has skipped a season, with the latest installment airing in November 2017.

“It just depends on how things shake out. I may have made enough money to qualify for that, but that will depend,” he said. “It’s possible, but I’m not counting on it at this point. If it happens, great, but if it doesn’t, then I’ve had my time.”

Mary Freda is an intern at the Star Press. Follow her on Twitter @Mary_Freda1, and email her story ideas: mfreda@muncie.gannett.com.

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