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Stolen urn returned to family

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An urn that was found by paramedics two weeks ago on Arkadelphia Road has been returned to its owner. Dora Wensel said the ashes inside the small blue urn belong to her mother, Sara Whitaker, who passed away on Mother's Day at age 81. Wensel has the large urn that contains most of her mother's ashes. Smaller urns were distributed among Wensel's three children and three nieces. One of the urns was recently stolen from the home of Wensel's son, Enrique Flores, several days before Thanksgiving. Wensel said some electronics and a small refrigerator were also taken. However, she said Flores was most upset about the loss of his grandmother's ashes. "That broke his heart. He said everything else could be replaced," Wensel said. The urn was recovered approximately 1,000 feet from Flores' home by Tracey Pilkington and Ralph Glover of Regional Paramedical Services on Nov. 21. Pilkington placed a lost and found advertisement about the urn. She also contacted local law enforcement but was told that none had been reported stolen. Flores was out of town and did not file a police report until Sunday. The detective on the case called Flores on Thursday, the day that an article about the stolen urn appeared in the Daily Mountain Eagle. The urn was returned to Flores Thursday afternoon. Wensel said she and the rest of her family are grateful to Pilkington for keeping the urn. "She (Pilkington) told my son and daughter that she spent Thanksgiving with her. We thought that was so special," Wensel said.

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