

Ancient remains found. Digging off limits

Written by By Kimberly Gaona
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Land owners of private property just to the west of Gallup have become accustomed to finding artifacts on their land, especially after a nice rainfall. This recent find was a little more than they had bargained for when they discovered the skull of a child on a hill on their property.

The homeowner requested that we not release their identity or their address in hopes that the remains will be left undisturbed and respected.

“We’ve lived out here for quite some time and seen all kinds of artifacts,” the owner said. “Often times when we have a rain, we see new items.”

The owner said his wife discovered the skull.

“Hundreds of years had finally swept off the dirt that this skull had been buried under,” said the owner.

The property owners called the McKinley County Sheriff’s Office, who in turn called out the Office of the Medical Investigator. The area around the skull was also full of broken pottery. MCSO Investigator Anthony Ashley said he had never seen so much pottery in one area.

The owner said that upon further investigation, the Sheriff’s office and the OMI discovered another adult skull underneath the skull of the child. Even more investigating led to the fact that the remains and the pottery were hundreds of years old.

“They basically identified it to not be recent, they deemed it to be very old, maybe 800 years,” the owner said.

Ashley said that they believe the remains to be Anasazi and that the remains were “obviously” of a child and an adult.

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“The adult skull had female characteristics to it,” Ashley said. “The pottery that surrounded the remains dated back to 800 years ago.”

After it was decided that the remains were not recent, other remains had also been found in the area due to recent road excavations. The decision was made to leave the area as peaceful as possible.

“I feel strongly that you need to respect these things, I think we need to leave this undisturbed,” the owner said.

Out of respect for the culture and the history, all further investigating and excavating has been ceased.

“Everything is going to be left alone,” Ashley said.