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# NOPD recovers missing woman Jean Stokes' SUV, which also had been missing

BY RAMON ANTONIO VARGAS | [RVARGAS@THEADVOCATE.COM](mailto:RVARGAS@THEADVOCATE.COM) OCT 24, 2017 - 3:03 PM



New Orleans Police Department investigators look around the scene of silver Toyota Rav4 in some brush by a levee mound near Dwyer Blvd. and A Street in New Orleans, La. Tuesday, Oct. 24, 2017.

Advocate staff photo by MATTHEW HINTON

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Ramon Antonio Vargas

(504) 636-7433

New Orleans police on Tuesday recovered the silver Toyota RAV 4 belonging to Jean Stokes, a 76-year-old woman who was reported missing nearly two weeks earlier and hasn't been found.

The sport-utility vehicle was discovered about 2 p.m. in woods at the foot of a grass levee near Dwyer Boulevard and A Street in eastern New Orleans, said officials, who suspect foul play was involved in Stokes' disappearance.

Police said the RAV 4's license plate had been removed. But authorities said they planned to check the car's vehicle identification number, and they told reporters the car was Stokes' as a tow truck hauled the RAV 4 away about 5:30 p.m.

*Story Continued Below*

Police said they couldn't comment on whether a body was found inside the car, which appeared to be abandoned. A body wasn't visible from a distance as the vehicle was towed away.

Police didn't say whether they believed some skeletal human remains found Monday in woods in the 15200 block of Chef Menteur Highway might be involved in Stokes' case.

A man who was fishing nearby found the unidentified remains under a tree that had a rope hanging from it less than two miles from where Stokes' car was spotted.

Authorities on Tuesday did not release a cause of death for the unidentified person whose remains were found a day earlier.

Stokes' daughter told the police on Oct. 13 that she spoke with her mother two days earlier by phone but then lost touch with her, officials have said.

The daughter flew in from Arlington, Texas, and couldn't find either her mother or her mother's car at Stokes' home in the 4900 block of Good Drive. The daughter then reported Stokes as missing.

Supporters of Stokes' family held a candlelight vigil Monday night on Good Drive.

Stokes' SUV was found toward the back of a subdivision that is largely under construction. The spot was about a 10-minute drive from her home.

A couple identifying themselves as members of Stokes' family declined to comment as they watched the scene unfold Tuesday.



Jean Stokes