

Massachusetts family returns \$1 million lottery ticket after customer threw it away

I can't be the only one that will double-check a friend or family member's losing lottery or scratch ticket. I've actually caught a couple of winning tickets that were thrown away accidentally. Whether it was misread or scanned too quickly the person threw away the ticket mistakenly thinking it was a losing ticket.

This is exactly what happened to Springfield native Lea Rose Fiega who had a \$30 Diamond Millions scratch ticket that hit for \$1 million. Fiega was a regular to the aptly named "Lucky Spot" store in Southwick owned by the Shah family. Fiega like many regulars bought a ticket and scratched it there at the store.

Those who scratch their tickets at the convenience stores they purchase them at often leave them on the counter for staff to toss out or for the second-chance drawing, especially when that person is a regular who is chatting with the clerk while in the process of scratching the tickets. That is exactly what Fiega did.

The matriarch of the Shah family, Aruna Shah, was the clerk the day the ticket was sold to Fiega, and the "losing" ticket sat in the second-chance drawing pile for 10 days.

One day Aruna was going through the discarded tickets and noticed that one ticket hadn't been fully scratched so she finished the job only to find out the "losing" ticket was actually a winning ticket for \$1 million.

Unsure what to do, Aruna did not sleep for two nights and discussed the matter with family back in India. The family

overwhelmingly told her that the right thing to do is return the ticket to its rightful owner. "Give it back. We don't want that money," they said.

Aruna's husband Maunish knew that Lea worked near the store so stopped in and without giving away too much, simply asked her to stop by the store later. When she arrived, they handed over the winning ticket and "Lea freaked out and cried like a baby. She sat down on the floor right here." said Maunish.

The Lucky Stop will receive a \$10,000 bonus for selling the ticket. Not a bad day for the Shah's who will not only be winners to the tune of \$10,000 but winners in life for doing the right thing.