



Representative Michelle Fischbach, left, consoles Elaine Johnson during the Earl Halvorson memorial service on Friday at the Hemnes Lutheran Cemetery. Johnson is Earl's sister. Mascot photo by Scott Thoma

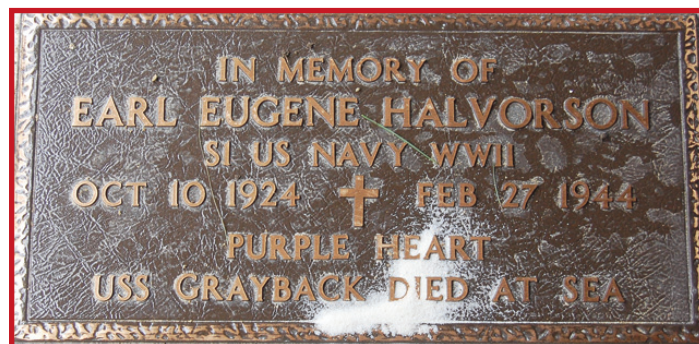
CLOSURE

After 77-year wait, family finally able to give Earl Halvorson proper memorial

By Scott Thoma
scott@thomabooks.com

Near the conclusion of the long-awaited memorial service for Earl Halvorson on Friday, retired U.S. Navy Lt. Mike Dulas saluted and spoke, "Earl Eugene Halvorson, you are relieved of your watch. You may stand down."

With that, tears streamed down the cheeks of Earl's sister, Elaine Johnson, who did not know her older brother's fate aboard the USS Grayback during World War II until two years ago when the submarine was located in 1,400 feet of wa-



ter off the coast of Japan.

Over 200 people attended the memorial service on a cold and gusty morning. Among those in attendance were family, friends, military personnel, politicians, television and print media, and others paying respect.

Because of the Grayback's disappearance in 1944, the date on Earl's grave marker issued by the U.S. War Department had listed his official date of death as 1946, which is what was indicated on the grave marker in the Hemnes Lutheran Cemetery.

But when Tim Taylor of

Lost 52 Project discovered the sunken submarine two years ago, it was also learned that the Grayback had been bombed by a Japanese aircraft on Feb. 27, 1944, according to Japanese military records.

For the past two years, Johnson and her children have been trying to get a new grave marker with the correct date of death issued. They had to go through a lengthy process with numerous calls and emails due to the military's reluctance to issue more than one grave marker.

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Chasing our Tails pet treat plant has left town

No reason given for sudden exit

By Scott Thoma
scott@thomabooks.com

Chasing our Tails Inc., which operated a packaging and distribution pet treat warehouse in the former Schott Building in Minneota for the past two years has pulled up stakes and left town quietly.

"I have no comment," said Chasing our Tails owner/CEO Steve Trachtenberg.

When asked again where he will now ship products from, Trachtenberg became agitated before announcing, "I said I will not discuss it."

An anonymous source from Tracy where Chasing our Tails' production plant is located told the Mascot that Trachtenberg had become dissatisfied with the lack of support from Minneota, although he would not elaborate.

Chasing our Tails did not sell products in Minneota and the door to the building remained locked during business hours. An 8 x 11 sheet of paper taped the door explained that the door's entrance was locked and included a phone number to reach someone inside.

The building here was used as a packaging and distribution warehouse and was run by Trachtenberg's fiancée, Elena Kalogeropoulos.

Chasing our Tails

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SMSU hosts trick-or-treat event Oct. 30

The Southwest Minnesota State University Residence Hall Association (RHA) will host ResHALLOWeen on Saturday, Oct. 30 from 4-7 p.m.

This event will be held outdoors this year in the Central Field as the university continue to take COVID-19 precautions.

ResHALLOWeen allows children from the community that are grades PreK-6 a chance to trick-or-treat on the SMSU campus. There will be a wide variety of activities and games set up at different tables and stations for children in Central Field, with lots of candy and fun for all! All children must be accompanied by an adult.

Children are asked to wear their Halloween costumes and provide their own bag or container for candy.

Admission for the event is one non-perishable food item, or \$1 per child. Food donations will go to the Mustang Market food shelf.

Non-ticketed parking will be available around campus, and on the south side of Birch St. Please do not park in the Foundation Apartment lot or other reserved parking spots.

Check-in for the event will be held in Commons Central. Follow the signs, and please social distance. Commons Central is where children will get their event wristband.



Photo above: Thomas Johnson, Earl Halvorson's nephew, plays "Taps" during the memorial service. Photo right: U.S. Navy personnel fold the flag that was presented to Earl's sister, Elaine Johnson. Mascot photos by Scott Thoma



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