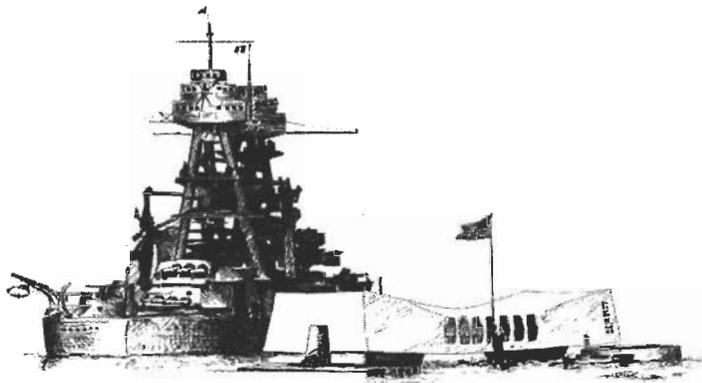


PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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POC: Lt. Barbara Mertz

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Remembrance Service held for USS Lake Erie Sailor

PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII – Today, friends and shipmates of Operations Specialist Third Class Zachary Ryan Johnson gathered at the Naval Station Pearl Harbor base chapel to share remembrances and to honor the Sailor who has been missing since March 11.

Extensive search and rescue efforts by the Honolulu Fire Department, U.S. Coast Guard, and U.S. Navy Search and Rescue teams failed to locate the 21-year-old native of Windsor, Colorado who was lost while swimming at Spitting Rocks near Hanauma Bay, Hawaii, when he was caught by currents and unable to swim to shore.

“The officers and crew of USS Lake Erie have been greatly affected by the loss of our shipmate, Petty Officer Johnson,” said Capt. Joseph A. Horn, Jr., commanding officer of USS Lake Erie (CG 70). “He is remembered as a reliable Sailor, trusted shipmate, and constant companion. We are, one and all, proud to have served with him and rededicated to each other and our profession to honor his memory. Our thoughts are with his family and closest friends during this difficult time.”

Petty Officer Johnson was assigned to the Pearl Harbor-based guided missile cruiser, USS Lake Erie. Johnson joined the Navy in March 2004 and reported to USS Lake Erie in December of that year.

Johnson’s father, Steve, in Colorado expressed, “This has been an extremely difficult time for our family and the outpouring of support has been greatly appreciated. Zach was a wonderful son, a wonderful brother, and a wonderful friend. He was proud to serve his country and the Navy. We appreciate the support and it is comforting to know that the military and civilian community is with us and wishes us well during this difficult time but while we do appreciate the support, we also ask for some privacy. I’m sure everyone can understand the need for personal reflection at a time like this.”