

February 22, 1996

Morris Spencer, 74

Groton has lost a longtime businessman, a good volunteer and a smiling face. He served his nation, his community and God during his life of 74 years.

Morris Edward Spencer suffered a major heart attack on February 4, 1996. Morris died at St. Vincent Hospital in Sante Fe, N.M., at 12:30 p.m. on February 11, 1996. His wife, Virginia, and his children, Gary and Kryns, were at his side.

Morris was born December 22, 1921, to Ralph and Ella (Monson) Spencer in Welford, N.D. The family moved to International Falls, Minn. When Morris was in the first grade. In 1930, they moved to Groton where he graduated in 1940.

Beginning at age 15, while in high school, Morris worked as an apprentice at "The Groton Independent." After graduating from high school, he had a job lined up in Sturgis, but when then co-publisher of "The Groton Independent," Sandy Chilton, died suddenly, he remained in Groton to help on the paper.

Morris joined the 82nd Airborne Infantry where he was a section leader of the heavy machine gun squad. He served 19 months in the European Theater, serving in battles in Normandy, Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe. He was awarded four Campaign Stars and the Bronze Arrowhead. He was decorated with the Bronze Star Medal for heroic action in Holland and received the Distinguished Unit Badge, Belgian Fourragere and Order of William Military.



December 22, 1921
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with being an usher for many years. He was a member of the Groton Kiwanis Club with perfect attendance for 35 years. He was a member of the Groton American Legion Post No. 39.

He enjoyed outdoor activities including camping, fishing, hunting and gardening.

Survivors include his wife, Virginia, Groton; a son, Gary Spencer, Eden Prairie, Minn.; a daughter, Mrs. Ken (Kristine) Ferrington, Elk River, Minn.; a brother, Leonard Spencer, San Rafael, Calif.; a sister, Mrs. Curtis (Elaine) Rossow, Buffalo Lake, Minn.; two grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, two brothers and two sisters.

After his honorable discharge in December 1945, he returned to Groton and bought half interest in "The Groton Independent," on January 1, 1946.

Morris married Virginia Anderson on September 25, 1949. They lived in Groton and she helped with the day-to-day operations of the newspaper.

After his partner, John Thoeny, retired on March 1, 1957, Morris became sole owner, publisher and editor.

On October 1, 1986, Morris and Virginia sold "The Groton Independent" to Paul Kosel and the Spencers retired. However, Morris remained on staff to operate the linotype for the first few months. He then helped by proofing the paper each week up to his death, marking over 55 years of being involved with "The Groton Independent."

Morris was a member of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Groton, serving in various offices along

The funeral was held Friday, Feb. 16, 1996, at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Groton, with the Rev. Anne Maldoon officiating. Burial was in Sunset Memorial Gardens, Aberdeen, under the direction of Faetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton. Military graveside rites were conducted by the Groton American Legion Post No. 39.

Honorary casketbearers were Charles Berg, Leonard Broman, Helmer Foss, Maurice Olson, Eldon Rehfuess and Lester Sippel. Casketbearers were Eugene Abein, Robert Ball, Clinton Hanson, Paul Kosel, Roy Olson and Charles Raap.

Arlis Doeden was the organist. Gene Brolin sang a solo entitled, "How Great Thou Art." The church choir sang, "In The Garden." Congregational hymns were "Beautiful Savior," "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," and "Lift High the Cross."

Leonard Eikamp, Homer Mydland and Don Waage were the ushers.