

# Suspected discovery of lost WWII sub brings relief at last

**By SCOTT WILLIAMS**

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At age 18, Joyce Sinkula married a handsome sailor and watched him ship out for battle in World War II aboard a submarine built in her native Wisconsin.

It was a time of innocence and romance, but it ended in heartbreak a few months later when Sinkula learned that her husband was missing in action, along with the rest of the crew aboard the USS Lagarto.

During the war against Japan, the U.S. government was so secretive about its submarines patrolling the Pacific Ocean that family members got little information whenever a crew was lost.

Sinkula visited fortune-tellers and used Ouija

boards in a futile attempt to learn the fate of her beloved husband, Thomas Hardegree, who was just 19 years old.

But after 60 years of lingering uncertainty, those who lost loved ones aboard the USS Lagarto have received unexpected news: The wreckage of the submarine built and commissioned in Wisconsin apparently has been found.

"I thought, 'My God, after all these years,' " Sinkula, 79, said from her home in Kewaunee. "This was a jolt."

Divers contacted by a Wisconsin submarine veterans group have reported finding the sunken vessel under more than 200 feet of water in the South China

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