

# Okaloosa County News Release



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## Quality Photos of the USS Okaloosa Presented to USO & Commissioners

Mr. Tony Gaffney of South Carolina presented photos of the USS Okaloosa on Wednesday, November 12, in honor of his father Seaman Marvin T. Gaffney, who served as a radio operator on the ship during WWII. Gaffney presented one photo to the USO and one to Okaloosa County Commissioners at the NWF Regional Airport, where the USS Okaloosa ship bell is located. "This photo, discovered after his father had passed away, is one of the best photos available of this ship named after our county," said Chairman Kelly Windes, Okaloosa County commissioner.

One of the 30 by 20 inch photos will hang in the USO at NWF Regional Airport, and the other will hang in a county building yet to be selected. They will be designated in honor of Marvin T. Gaffney. The USS Okaloosa – APA-219 Attack Transport Ship was named after Okaloosa County, Florida, and was commissioned on November 28, 1944. The USS Okaloosa shuttled troops and cargo and earned one battle star for its service in World War II.

The USS Okaloosa ship **bell was dedicated at the NWF Regional Airport on April 26, 2012, the same day she arrived offshore in Okinawa in 1945.** The Okaloosa Bell was originally displayed at the memorial in front of the Baldwin County Foley Satellite Courthouse, with the assistance of local Baldwin County residents, the Louis Ray Eiland family, in the 1980's. U.S. **Congressman Jeff Miller** of Florida and U.S. **Congressman Jo Bonner** of Alabama were instrumental in facilitating its move to Okaloosa. Judge Patt Maney and Supervisor of Elections Paul Lux are credited with finding and retrieving the ship's bell, as well.

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