

Okaloosa County News Release



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Retrieving the USS Okaloosa Bell Scheduled on Jan. 4, 2012

On January 4, 2012, a county delegation will travel to Foley, Alabama to retrieve the original bell from the **USS Okaloosa- APA-219 Attack Transport Ship**. The delegation will depart for Foley, Alabama, at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday. The 10:30 a.m. ceremony will include the exchange of the USS Peterson Bell and the USS Okaloosa Bell, by U.S. **Congressman Jeff Miller** of Florida and U.S. **Congressman Jo Bonner** of Alabama. The current location of the USS Okaloosa Bell at the courthouse and a list of attendees follows:

Location/Address:

201 East Section Avenue
Foley, Alabama 36535

Okaloosa County Attendees

Congressman Jeff Miller
Commissioner Wayne Harris
Judge Patt Maney
Cpl. Helmstadter "Wally", 5th FMF, USS Okaloosa
Mr. Tracy Stage, NWF Regional Airport

Baldwin County Attendees

Congressman Jo Bonner
Commissioner Charles F. Gruber
Commissioner Frank Burt, Jr.
County Administrator David Brewer
Mrs. Betty Morris – American Legion Auxiliary, Baldwin County Unit 99

"This journey began with an email Judge Patt Maney sent to me late one evening," Miller said. "Now, thanks to the help of Rep. Jo Bonner and the cooperation of leaders in Baldwin and Okaloosa counties, it's going to be a reality and this important relic of Naval history is coming back home."

USS Okaloosa shuttled troops and cargo and earned one battle star for WWII service. The ships bell will be prominently displayed in the Northwest Florida Regional Airport, and dedicated on **April 26, 2012**.

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