

Okaloosa County News Release

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Okaloosa County Courthouse Grand Opening is Sept. 22 *Public is Invited*

The long-awaited Okaloosa County Courthouse Annex Extension (OCCA) will open to the public at its **Grand Opening on September 22, 2011, at 5:00 p.m.** “This is an opportunity to tour the facility, which won’t be as accessible after the October move-in date,” stated Chairman James Campbell, Okaloosa County Commissioners. “What you will see is a more efficient, secure facility for the public and employees, as well as a facility in which we can all be proud.”

In addition to a more secure facility, many considerations went into the design of the OCCA such as energy efficiency, handicap accessibility throughout, modern technology, needed additional space, costs and overall future growth. “The Task Force that worked on the creation of the new judicial facility did a great job, and we went “back to the drawing board” several times over the years,” said County Administrator Jim Curry. “Another welcome aspect just came along this year, when **Okaloosa Public Arts** decided to assist us by displaying artists’ works, adding aesthetic elements to the facility.

The OCCA is impressive, beginning with the sculpture outside called “Illuminate,” by local artist Richard Bauer. Just inside is a mural by Elia Saxer, depicting local landscape and wildlife. A total of 75 art pieces were selected from 150 submissions for the Okaloosa County Courthouse Annex Extension.

Also symbolic of any judicial facility, will be a larger-than-life-size statue of “**Blind Justice**,” elegantly depicting truth & fairness with her scales, a sword for power of reason & justice, and the blindfold, representing objectivity. There are many other memorials and acknowledgments throughout the building.

The Grand Opening will feature the **Niceville High School Opus One** chorus performance, a flag ceremony and a tour of the facility. The tour will include the Clerk of Courts, courtrooms, jury assembly, a judges’ chamber and the inmate booking area. The public is encouraged to attend. For more information, call 850-651-7515.

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