

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Board of County Commissioners

October 30, 2025



Okaloosa County to Observe Veterans Day with Unveiling of New Women Veteran Statues

Okaloosa County, Florida – Okaloosa County will pay tribute to our service members this Veterans Day with a veteran appreciation event and unveiling ceremony for two new life-sized women veteran statues that will be added to Women Veterans Monuments at Veterans Park. The event will take place on Nov. 11, 2025, at 1 p.m. at the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Convention Center on Okaloosa Island.

This patriotic gathering will feature veteran speakers, followed by the unveiling of the statues that will recognize women veterans Nicole L. Gee of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit and an Iroquois Warrior Woman who served in the War of 1812.

“We love our veterans in Okaloosa County and we want to make sure they feel our appreciation with this event,” said Okaloosa County Vice Chairman Carolyn Ketchel. “We are also very proud to unveil two magnificent statues of women veterans that will be added to the Women Veterans Park.”

Commissioner Drew Palmer (District 5), who served four years in the U.S. Air Force and has worked alongside the military in the defense industry for more than two decades, supports this initiative to honor our service members.

“Recognizing the sacrifices made by our veterans and their families is not only meaningful, it’s essential,” said Palmer. “This event is a powerful tribute that reflects Okaloosa County’s deep appreciation for their service and the enduring value they bring to our community.”

The statues will be added to the park at a later date along with two others that were unveiled in June, bringing the total number of women veteran statues at the park to 12.

Additionally, the following groups will have benches unveiled at the park the week of November 11: The Center for Lifelong Learning, Republican Women of Okaloosa Federated and Women Veterans Group Air Force Enlisted Village.

Bios:

Sgt. Nicole L. Gee, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, a maintenance technician by specialty, also served a vital role in the evacuation of Kabul by communicating with and facilitating support for Afghan women and children. On August 27, 2021, Sgt. Gee was assisting with the evacuation of Kabul when a suicide bomber killed 18 U.S. service members, including Sgt. Gee.

Iroquois Warrior – War of 1812: At least five native women received military pensions for officially serving as “cooks”: Polly Cooper, Susan Jacob, Dinah John, Julia John and Dolly Schenandoah. These women enlisted in regiments of Indian volunteers and served honorably. Though officially labeled as “cooks” in pension records, many served in combat alongside their husbands as a matter of necessity. The sculpted image of the Iroquois Warrior is representative rather than individually specific, as there are no paintings or photographs of these women during their time of service.

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