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USS Basilone Association

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January 4, 2020

Mr. Thomas B. Modly
Secretary of the Navy
Office of the Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon, Room 4D652
Washington, DC 20350

Dear Mr. Secretary Modly,

Let me introduce myself to you. I am Frank J. Stepka Sr. and I proudly served in the United States Navy on board the USS Basilone DD 824. On November 1, 1977, the USS Basilone was formally decommissioned. The USS Basilone Association was formed to honor John Basilone and our great ship.

On August 16, 2016 it was announced the building of an Arleigh Burke Class Guided Missile Destroyer, the USS John Basilone DDG-122. It was stated, "It is a great honor to name this ship in recognition of John Basilone, I have no doubt that all who serve aboard her will carry on the legacy of service and commitment exemplified by this Marine Corps hero."

"LEGACY OF SERVICE"... Those are truly powerful words. The three words often associated with the United States Navy are Honor, Courage and Commitment. As sailors from the USS Basilone, we hold those words dear to us. It would mean the world to us to be witness to the commissioning of this ship. This is where we need your help!

Among the association's memorabilia is the LAST United States Flag that was flown from the mast of our ship. During our September 2019 Reunion in Atlanta, Georgia we committed ourselves to present that Flag to the Captain and crew of the USS John Basilone DDG-122 so that they may carry on the Naval traditions of the USS Basilone DD-824.

Scheduled for commissioning in 2022, we seek your assistance (in any manner you may be able to provide) to allow the members of the USS Basilone Association to attend and complete our mission.

I encourage you to learn more about John Basilone and our ship's history at our website <https://ussbasilone.org/>

Sincerely

Frank J. Stepka Sr.
Chaplin/Historian - USS Basilone Association
537 East Bethany Drive
Allen, Texas 75002-4040