

Tin Can Sailors is running a two-track photo contest with parallel member and open track categories, shared museum-ship themes, clear technical rules, and modest cash prizes plus membership incentives modeled on other naval and nonprofit contests.

Category structure (members vs. open)

Member-only categories (current TCS members).

- Life Aboard the Tin Can (Service & Daily Life) Photos from time aboard destroyers or escorts: work, watches, mess decks, berthing, drills, and ceremonies that illustrate authentic life at sea.
- Shipmates Portraits and candid images of crews, divisions, and reunion groups that emphasize camaraderie and generations of destroyer veterans.
- Museum Destroyer Volunteers in Action Members working on, touring, or interpreting Tin Can Sailors–supported museum ships (CASSIN YOUNG, EDSON, JOSEPH P. KENNEDY, JR., KIDD, LAFFEY, ORLECK, THE SULLIVANS, TURNER JOY).

Open Track Prize categories (open to all, including prospective members and non-members)

- Destroyers in the Public Eye Photos of destroyers and escorts at fleet weeks, museum piers, air shows, harbor transits, and pier-side community events taken from public vantage points.
- Families, Homecomings, and Supporters Homecomings, farewells, family days, Blue Star/Gold Star events, and community support scenes tied to destroyer / escort service.
- Destroyer Museum Visitors & Experiences Non-members' perspectives aboard supported museum ships—tours, youth groups, scouts, field days, and dockside events that show how these ships educate and inspire.

Contest rules

- Eligibility Member track: Open to current Tin Can Sailors members in good standing as of the entry deadline except board members and employees of Tin Can Sailors.
- Open prize track: Open to members and all non-members, including active duty, reserve, retired, veterans, family members, and the general public.
- Entry limits and format Up to 5 photos per person total, across all categories.

- Digital only; JPG/JPEG files, minimum 300 dpi and at least 100 KB, maximum 15 MB per file.
- Basic editing (cropping, slight color and exposure correction) allowed; no heavy manipulation, composites, or added elements.
- No watermarks, dates, logos, or text on the images.
- Originality and rights Entrant must be the photographer and retain copyright; by entering, they grant Tin Can Sailors a non-exclusive license to use winning and selected images in the magazine, website, social media, and membership materials with credit.
- Historical images taken by the entrant during service are allowed; historical photos taken by someone else are not eligible.
- Timing and submission Contest window: Opens April 30 and closes August 31, with winners announced in a Fall Tin Can Sailor issue and on the website / social channels.
- Online submission form on destroyers.org requiring: name, contact info, category, member vs. non-member designation, ship/location, date, and a short caption.
- Optional field at upload: “Are you interested in learning more about membership?” with a checkbox that allows follow-up.
- Judging Panel of 3–5 judges: mix of destroyer veterans, a museum-ship representative, and one or two photography-savvy volunteers.
- Criteria: relevance to theme, storytelling, composition, technical quality, and emotional impact, similar to criteria used by other maritime contests.
- Blind judging where possible (images viewed without entrant names) for fairness.

Prize levels and membership incentives

Overall awards (each track) 1st Place (Best in Show – Member): \$300 + complimentary 1-year membership extension, with photos featured in Tin Can Sailor magazine and online.

2nd Place (Member): \$150 + complimentary 1-year membership extension and recognition in TCS magazine and online.

3rd Place (Member): \$75 + complimentary 1-year membership extension and recognition in TCS magazine and online.

1st Place (Best in Show – Open): \$200 + complimentary 1-year Tin Can Sailors membership + feature in the magazine and online.

2nd Place (Open): \$100 + complimentary 1-year membership.

3rd Place (Open): \$50 + complimentary first-year membership.

- Category-level recognition

Category winners (both tracks): certificate, web and social media spotlight, listing in Tin Can Sailor, and a small non-cash perk.

Museum Destroyer Feature Award: A note to the featured ship's organization encouraging cross-promotion.