

Naegely, Lawrence R.

Local Pilot Fights Off Jap Cross Fire In 5-Mile Course To Attack Cruiser; Gets DFC

The Distinguished Flying Cross has been awarded to Lieut. Laurence Ray Naegely, son of Mr. and Mrs. Laurence Naegely, 434 East Laurel Street, for heroism and extraordinary achievement while participating in an aerial attack in the South Pacific area.

The award was made by Admiral W. F. Halsey, Commander in the South Pacific Area, in the name of the President of the United States.

The citation accompanying the

medal said the award was earned while Lieut. Naegely was leading a dive bombing section during a raid on Japanese warships in the strongly fortified harbor of Rabaul.



LT. L. R. NAEGELY
... cited by President, gets D.F.C.

Lieut. Naegely led his section through terrific anti-aircraft fire from a large number of major enemy warships and shore batteries and with quick decision and with disregard for personal safety, pressed home a successful attack against a heavy Japanese cruiser.

Harassed by enemy fighters and anti-aircraft fire, he chose a direction of dive which would produce the most hits even though it forced him and his wingmen to retire at low altitude close to and between enemy warships and directly through their concentrated cross-fire for a distance of three to five miles.

At the end of his race between the enemy ships and their cross-fire, Lieut. Naegely fought off Japanese fighter planes and he and his fliers returned safely to their base.

In the citation, Admiral Halsey concluded:

"His courageous conduct was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service".

Lieut. Naegely's wife, the former Marian Kilpatrick, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Cleon Kilpatrick, and his daughter, Sandra, reside in Coronado, California.

March 22, 1944