

31st Infantry Regiment Association
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1484 Loretta Drive
Penn Hills, PA 15235
Newsletter 100

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Pro Patria Press



#100

August 2021

NEWSLETTER OF THE 31ST US INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

ACTING EDITOR: RON CORSON (JRCORSON@AOL.COM)

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Timothy Hunt Jr.
1401 Clydesdale Ave
Wellington, FL 33414-1027



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 2021 REUNION QUAD CITIES, IL/IA 18-21 SEPTEMBER 2021



Around the Corner - Reunion 2021 - Will You be at Rock Island/Moline?

Reunion 2021 is on track. A good number of our members have already put their hat in the ring. Have you set 18 to 22 September as a priority for you and your family to be there? Time is running out. Pick up you ruck and register now. After the



long delays caused by this guy called COVID-19, let's make Reunion 2021 a time to remember. The Quad Cities located along the Mississippi is the ideal location and September is the right time to reunite as Soldiers along with our families. Make the time, make the

promise: "This Polar Bear will be there", and shout out: "You All Come to Reunion 2021. You Hear?"

HAVE YOU SENT IN YOUR REGISTRATION FORM?

So far not as good as we would like! As of 29 July, 87 members/spouses have registered for Reunion 2021. Reunion 2021 looks like it will be a great event. One that we have been waiting for since North Myrtle Beach. The Association needs to know that you and yours are planning to be there. 4-31 will return by the end of August from its deployments in Afghanistan and Kuwait. The Association will host active-duty Polar Bear Soldiers, leaders, and the Shanghai Bowl. Time is short. It's time to act to be at Reunion 2021. – **Pro Patria!**

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ANOTHER FORMER LEADER OF 4-31 PASSES ON

BENNY HASKEL DOBBS, Jr. CSM (Ret.) US ARMY On May 13, 2021, Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Benny Dobbs a former CSM of 4-31 Infantry passed away in Benson, NC. Benny, a native of Monticello, KY, entered the U.S. Army on March 11, 1986 and proudly served his country for over 30 years. He earned the respect of his troops and leaders alike. Benny had numerous combat deployments to include Operation Just Cause, Desert Shield/Storm, and twice each to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Over the course of his career, he earned the highest of awards such as the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and two awards of the Combat Infantryman Badge. CSM Dobbs retired from active-duty service on July 31, 2016, where he spent time with his family which were the center of his world. With all the accolades that Benny had earned while serving his country, he would tell you “It’s all about taking care of your Soldiers!” He would take care of his troops as his family and with the same resilience and perseverance that gained him the respect from all that knew him. Not only was he a Soldier’s soldier, but he was a man of God and a devoted husband to his wife of 35 years, Carol Sue (Roberts) Dobbs.



KOREAN WAR – 1953 – THE BLOODIEST YEAR

(edited and extracted from the book “The 31st Infantry Regiment” Chapter 16, pages 227-229)

In 1953, as the Korean War was slowly moving toward an end of active combat and a cease fire was being slowly negotiated in Panmunjum. Because of the difficult and slow negotiating process each side of the conflict (Chinese and North Korean Army and the United Nations Forces), used the battlefield and battlefield actions as a way of enhancing or influencing their bargaining position at the table. This was especially true for the Chinese Forces facing the 7th US Infantry Division and the 31st US Infantry Regiment. In early 1953, the 31st Infantry was online in defensive positions on and around Pork Chop Hill, Old Baldy, and a series of observations points (OPs) and north and south of these two key pieces of terrain. The fierce fighting in this area of the war went on for over six months with constant attacks by Chinese units to take control of the terrain and the 7th Division counterattacking with companies and platoons of the 31st and 17th Infantry regiments to retake all or portions of these battle areas.

The last action of the war for the Polar Bears came on 26-27 July 1953 at OPs Westview and Dale overlooking the Chorwon Valley. The OPs were held respectively by K and I Companies of the 31st Infantry. Westview was a low, bald knob connected to Old Baldy by a saddle ridge. It was only large enough to accommodate a platoon, but the Chinese were determined to take it. They came charging up the hill three nights before the ceasefire was to take effect, lugging huge boxes of ammo and rations, giving every indication that they intended to take the hill and keep it. Pouring wave after wave up the hill, they took half of the hill, but L Company counterattacked, driving them back down the trench line in close quarters combat with grenades, small arms, and occasional rifle butts. When their grip on the last section of trench was broken, the survivors scurried across the barren 200-yards long saddle back to the safety of Chinese lines on Old Baldy. There the remnants of the Chinese forces that were still exposed were chopped to pieces by artillery. For the next two nights, Chinese units probed Westview again and again, losing more men in the process. On Monday night, the defenders, some of whom had hardly slept for four days, felt sure the Chinese would come again to try to retrieve bodies of their dead. At 9:45 p.m., the “Order” came to cease all firing. A minute later, an outguard warned, “They’re coming, the Chinks are coming down.” No one fired. Weapons that would have been used without hesitation any night before were silent. There was no shouting, no jubilation, only a few muttered prayers and handshakes between men who had seen too many others carried from the battlefield. Suddenly there was peace.

Membership Application–31st US Infantry Regiment Association



First Name	Nickname	Middle Initial	Last Name	
Street Address		City	State	Zip Code
		Phone Number		
E-mailladdress		Alternate E-mail Address		
Please fill in as much information about your service/connection with the 31st Infantry Regiment as possible:				
Platoon_____Company____Battalion_____				
Highest Award Earned				
Rank & Duty Position when serving with the 31st Regiment			Rank When Retired/Separated	

Where did you serve with the 31st?	When?
Philippine	
Japan	
Korea	
Vietnam	
Iraq	
Afghanistan	
Other Overseas	
USA	

Membership Desired

Life Membership

Active Duty __\$25

Age 49 & under __\$60

Age 50 – 59 __\$45

Age 60 & over __\$35

Associate Life __\$25

Member (family)

Make your check out to **31st Inf Regt Assn** and mail it to the Membership Chairman:
Jim Tierney, 1484 Loretta Drive, Penn Hills, PA 15235.

Association Officers

Honorary Colonel of the Regiment

1425 Dartmouth Rd, Columbus, GA 31904

Commander:

215 Waterford Drive, Inman, SC 29349

Vice Commander:

1484 McGill Road, Vass, NC28394

Adjutant:

9676 159th Ct N, Jupiter, FL 33478

Treasurer:

3035 South El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Membership:

1484 Loretta Dr., Penn Hills, PA 15235

Quartermaster:

337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210

Sergeant at Arms:

5638 Camellia Ave, Sacramento, CA 95819

Historian:

2321 S. Queen St, Arlington, VA 22202

Senior Director:

108 Mershon Way, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Northeast Region: (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, NY)

3127 Cataract St, Copenhagen, NY 13626

Mid-Atlantic Region: (NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, VA, WV)

104 Cumberland Dr., Carlisle, PA 17013

Southeast Region: (NC,SC,GA,FL,AL,MS,TN,AR,LA, PR,VI)

1116 Dundee Ct ,Murfreesboro, TN 37129.

Great Lakes Region: (KY, OH, MI, IN, IL, WI)

788 Eagledale Circle, Kettering, OH 45429

Midwest Region: (MN,ND,SD,NE,IA,MO,KS, OK,TX,NM,CO)

3100 Chambers St, Sioux City, IA 51104

Western Region: (HI,AK,WA,OR,CA,NV,AZ,UT,ID, MT,WY)

1250 American Pacific Dr, Apt 214, Henderson, NV 89074

Robert “Sam” Wetzel LTG Ret (LTC, Cdr, 4th Bn, VN 1968)

706-576-4204

Charlie Tapp

H 864-473-1999

C 864 680-9165

Dan Wood

910-633-8397

Vin Zike

914-850-0095

Joe DeAngelis

208-362-9468

Jim Tierney

412-793-7214

Dale Mills

478-787-2679

Jim Jaggars

H 916-455-7879

C 916 802-7750

Grady Smith

C 703 927-6261

Ron Corson

757-253-1311

C 757-810-4135

Ivan Barker III

315-286-7696

Jim Simms

717-243-5570

Noah Halfacre

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John Howdeshelt

937-435-0669

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712-277-4498

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(SGT, D 6th Bn,VN, 1969)

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(LT, C 6thBn, VN, 1967-68)

ronbob22631@gmail.com



Reunion 2021- QUAD CITIES – SEPTEMBER 18-22

REUNION 2021 – DAY ONE - (Saturday: September 18, 2021)

1200 - 1700 **Arrival** — Registration Desk/Welcome – Holiday Inn Rock Island 2nd Floor

1200 - 1700 The Association Hospitality Room – **Salon 3**

Evening: Company Dinners - On your own/Unit Dinners.

REUNION 2021 – DAY TWO - (Sunday: September 19, 2021)

0700 - 0930 Breakfast Served in Bennigan’s

0800 – 1100 Quartermaster Store Open

0900 - 1600 Registration Desk & Welcome Table open

1000 - 2100 The Association Hospitality Room – Open

1000 - 1200 Board Meeting

1130 - 1330 Lunch – You are on your own.

1600 - 2000 Visit Quad City info booth Hallway 2nd Floor

1730 - 1830 **Welcome Cocktail Reception– Hotel Ballroom** (Local Mayors to attend) (Cash Bar)

1830 - 2030 Arrival Dinner - **BBQ local Flavor Dinner** – Hotel Ballroom (Cash Bar in the Buffet Location)

REUNION 2021 - DAY THREE- (Monday: September 20, 2021)

0700 – 0930 Breakfast Served in Bennigan’s

0900 - 2100 The Association Hospitality Room Open

0900 - 1200 Registration Desk & Welcome Table - Open.

0900 - 1000 **31st Infantry Memorial Service – Salon 1&2**

1000 - 1130 General business Meeting

1130 - 1300 Lunch – Once again - You are on your own.

1200 - 1600 Quartermaster Open

1230 – 1630 Rock Island Arsenal Tour Meet in Lobby first floor

1500 - 1530 **Raffle Drawing & Silent Auction** (Last chance to bid in Silent Auction).

1700 - 2100 Celebration Belle Caption & Dance Cruise, Cruise the mighty Mississippi

REUNION 2021 - DAY FOUR - (Tuesday: September 21, 2021)

0900 - 1100 John Deere Factory and Pavilion & Store

1830 - 1835 Reunion Dinner Posting of the Colors & Invocation

1835 - 2030 Dinner – After Dinner: Announcements. Introduction, and Guest Speaker

2030 - 2200 Shanghai Bowl Ceremony and Formal Toasts to the 31st US Infantry Regiment

DEPARTURE DAY - (Wednesday: September 22, 2021) - Goodbyes and Check out



At Various Times:

Channel Cat Water
Taxi Various Sites:
\$8.00 Hop on Hop Off

At the Dinner: Salads
will be on each table –
Multiple Buffet lines
will be in service

NEWSLETTER CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Cut along dotted line. Fill in requested information and mail to The Membership Chairman, address below.

or **email** Jim Tierney with this information at jtier64999@aol.com **SUBJECT: CHANGE OF ADDRESS.**

Name: _____	Phone number if new: _____
Old Address _____	New Address _____
Street or P.O. Box _____	Street or P.O. Box _____
City/State/Zip _____	City/State/Zip _____
	Mail To: Jim Tierney, Membership Chairman 1484 Loretta Drive Penn Hills, PA 15235

Registration Form Reunion 2021 - Rock Island, IL
31st US Infantry Regiment Association
September 18-22, 2021

Name: _____

Guest(s): _____

Home Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Company & Battalion of the 31st Infantry: _____ When: _____

If active duty, Current Rank: _____ Post stationed at: _____

Served in Combat Zone: Yes / No (Circle) If Yes, where: _____

Will you be staying at Holiday Inn Rock Island Yes / No (Circle)?

Have a car at the reunion? Yes / No If needed, are you willing to assist in local driving? Yes / No

<u>Reunion Activity</u>	<u>Cost per Person</u>	<u>X # Participating</u>	=	<u>Event Cost</u>
Reunion Registration	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Arrival Dinner	\$27	x _____		\$ _____
Rock Island Arsenal Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Celebration Dinner Cruise	\$60	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Banquet	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
John Deere Factory Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Grand Total				\$ _____

Make checks payable to: **31st US Infantry Regiment Association**
ATTN: Joe DeAngelis 3035 S. El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Hotel and Travel Information: Total Cost is \$85.00/night incls tax and a Hot Breakfast every morning
Holiday Inn & Conference Center Quad City International Airport (MOL)
226 17th Street Free airport / Hotel Shuttle
Rock Island, IL 61201 Moline Airport serviced by all major carriers. www.holidayinn.com/rockisland
Reserve Room at (309-794-1212)

Suspense date for Hotel and Reunion 2021 Reservations is September 1, 2021

31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION QUARTERMASTER STORE ORDER FORM

Visit 31stinfantry.org and click on 31st Infantry Store to see a full color catalogue of these and many more items

Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

<u>Cat #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Total</u>
B 102	Book, 31st Infantry Regiment “America’s Foreign Legion” In peace and war (Includes shipping)			\$ 40.00 X__ = _____
Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form				
C 100	Coin, Commemorative, 100th Anniversary (if you order 10 or more the price is \$8.00 each).			\$ 10.00 X__ = _____
C100A	Airtight capsule for 100th Anniversary Commemorative coin	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, black <i>both the black and clear easels are for Airtight capsule with 100th</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, clear <i>Anniversary Commemorative coin or the Commemorative coin alone</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C RB 02	Cap, Royal Blue, 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT, POLAR BEARS, and crest embroidered directly	\$ 15.00	X__ = _____	
	directly on cap and US ARMY embroidered on back.			
C RB	Cap same as C RB 02 above with the addition of a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division; 10th Mountain Div) on the right side. Circle the patch you want.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
C K	<i>NEW CAP!</i> same as C RB above but in Khaki with a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division. 10th Mountain Division) on the right side. Circle the patch you want). All embroidery is subdued.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
SP	Shirt, Polo/golf w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size: S, M, L, XL White, Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 29.00 X__ = _____
SP100	Same as above with 100th Anniversary logo in <u>White only</u> Size: S, M(Sold out), L, XL			\$ 31.00 X__ = _____
	Size: 2XL \$ 33.00 X__ = _____ Size: 3XL			\$ 35.00 X__ = _____
ST	Shirt, Tee, w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size S, M, L, XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 16.00 X__ = _____
	Size 2XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 19.00 X__ = _____
	Size 3XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 21.00 X__ = _____
SLSVC	Shirt, Long Sleeve, Dress in various colors w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest above pocket. Please circle color and size Size: S, M, L, XL			\$ 30.00 X__ = _____
	Colors: Black, Navy Blue, Light Blue, Red, White, Texas Orange, Burgundy, Size 2XL			\$ 32.00 X__ = _____
	or Denim Size 3XL			\$ 36.00 X__ = _____
MS 01	Shanghai Bowl Cup, silver, 2007 reproduction of original. (Includes shipping)			
	Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form			\$165.00X__ = _____
DCL 01	Bumper sticker, 31st Infantry crest (Polar Bear), 4-3/8” tall, 4-1/4 wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 01	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), regulation size, facing set.			\$ 8.00 X__ = _____
PN 02	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), lapel/hat pin. 7/8” tall, ¾” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 73	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, lapel/hat pin. 3/8” tall, 1-1/4” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 74	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, regulation size, 1-1/4” tall, 3” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 82	Pin, Purple Heart, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 85	Pin, Silver Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 71	Pin, Bronze Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
Shipping Charges – add to your order: Orders under \$10.00 add \$2.50; For orders \$10.01 - \$25.00 add \$6.00; For orders \$25.01 - \$50.00, add \$7.00; For orders over \$50.00, add \$9.00.				SUBTOTAL \$ _____
				SHIPPING \$ _____
				Grand TOTAL \$ _____

MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO: **31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION**

For Credit Cards (American Express, Discover, Master Card, or Visa) or Debit card (with Master Card or Visa logo) please include
NAME (on card): _____ CARD #: _____ EXP DATE: ____/____

SECURITY CODE (on back of card): _____ ZIP CODE (where credit card bill is mailed to): _____

Mail the order form and payment to: Dale Mills 337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210-9711

TAPS



Deceased members identified since Newsletter # 99, May 2021

KOREA WAR

Edward R. Bolton, SSG, Crawfordville, FL, died May 16, 2021, HQ, 3rd Bn, 1950
Carson E. Bunch, SGT, Goodman, MO, died Jan 12, 2021, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1952-1953
Stuard M. Hartman, SFC, Camarillo, CA, died May 25, 2021, Co B, 1st Bn, 1952-1953
John A. Hemphill, MG ret, Steilacoom, WA, died May 21, 2021, Cos I & K, 3rd Bn, 1952-1953
Bernard H. Hoffman, PFC, Merrick, NY, died Nov 6, 2020, Co H, 2nd Bn, 1953-1954
Rudy R. Reyes, CPL, La Puente, CA, died Oct 2, 2020, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1949-1951
Robert C. Whisenhunt, CPL, Grand Junction, CO, died May 21, 2021, HQ, Rgt, 1952

Correction in date died in NL 92:

Melvin L. “Mel” Pierce, PFC, Hollister, MO, died **Aug 3, 2017**, Co I, 3rd Bn, 1950

VIETNAM

Alfred “Al” Harner, SFC, Ashland, PA, died May 24, 2021, Co C, 4th Bn, 1965-1967
Herbert F. Tipton, SP4, Deland, FL, died May 19, 2021, Co B, 4th Bn, 1965-1967

UNITED STATES

Benny H. Dodds, Jr, CSM ret, Angier, NC, died May 13, 2021, HHC, 4th Bn, Bn CSM, 2010-2012

ASSOCIATE

Robert A. Houghtby, Sr., Lively, CA, died Apr 22, 2009, Grandfather 1st SGT Arthur C. Houghtby, POW, died May 20, 1942, in CP O'Donnell
Helen F. Mucerino, Phoenix, AZ, died Jan 6, 2014, Widow of CPL Ralph Mucerino, Co A, Korea

NEW MEMBERS

William H. “Bill” Breeton, Littlefork, MN, HHC and C Co, 4th Bn, 1967-1968

NOTE: No deceased members reported from the World War II, Pre-Korean War and Post Korean War eras.

LEADERSHIP NOTICE: The Association has leadership positions that need to be filled at the 2021 Reunion. The Board is developing a slate of officers and volunteers who have the time and the desire to join the Board of Directors are needed. Election of officers will occur at the General Membership meeting. Potential positions include Regional Director, Quartermaster, Treasurer, Adjutant, and Committee Slots. If you are willing and able to be part of the Association leadership team, please contact Charlie Tapp or Ron Corson. (Contact # - See Page 10)

VIETNAM VETS WERE NEVER PROPERLY RECOGNIZED

Richard never really talked about his time in Viet Nam, other than he had been shot by a sniper. However, he had a rather grainy, 8 x 10 black and white photo he had taken at a USO show of Ann Margret



Ann Margret in a USO Show in Vietnam

with Bob Hope in the background that was one of his treasures. A few years ago, Ann Margret was doing a book signing at a local bookstore. Richard wanted to see if he could get her to sign the treasured photo, so he arrived at the bookstore at 12 o'clock for the 7:30 signing. When I got there after work, the line went all the way around the bookstore, circled the parking lot, and disappeared behind a parking garage. Before her appearance, bookstore employees announced that she would sign only her book and no memorabilia would be permitted. Richard was disappointed but wanted to show her the photo and let her know how much those shows meant to lonely GI's so far from home.

Ann Margret came out looking as beautiful as ever

and, as second in line, it was soon Richard's turn. He presented the book for her signature and then took out the photo. When he did, there were many shouts from the employees that she would not sign it. Richard said, "I understand. I just wanted her to see it." She took one look at the photo, tears welled up in her eyes and she said, "This is one of my gentlemen from Viet Nam and I most certainly will sign his photo. I know what these men did for their country and I always have time for 'my gentlemen.'" With that, she pulled Richard across the table and planted a big kiss on him. She then made quite a to-do about the bravery of the young men she met over the years, how much she admired them, and how much she appreciated them. There weren't too many dry eyes among those close enough to hear. She then posed for pictures and acted as if he were the only one there.

That night was a turning point for him. He walked a little straighter and, for the first time in years, was proud to be a Vet. I'll never forget Ann Margret for her graciousness and how much that small act of kindness meant to my husband. Later at dinner, Richard was very quiet. When I asked if he'd like to talk about it, my big, strong husband broke down in tears. "That's the first time anyone ever thanked me for my time in the Army," he said.

POLAR BEAR DEPLOYMENTS SINCE 9/11

In July 2021, 4-31 Infantry redeployed home from its latest post-9/11 mission which was once again in Afghanistan. A look at the overseas deployments of 4-31 Infantry since the terrorist attacks is in order.

AFGHANISTAN 2001-2002. After the multiple attacks to our nation on September 11, 2001 elements of the 4-31 before the end of the month were on the ground in Kuwait and Qatar. The Heavy Mortar Platoon was deployed in Uzbekistan and later in Afghanistan. C Company was moved to Afghanistan from Uzbekistan and A Company from Kuwait. However, A Company was the first to draw enemy blood for the 31st Infantry for the first time since Vietnam. Before Operation Anaconda was over, the 4-31 command group deployed, and organized Operation Polar Harpoon. This resulted in firefights, the collection of many enemy documents, and the destruction of warfighting materiel. Then all elements of 4-31 headed home.

AFGHANISTAN-DJIBOUTI-IRAQ 2003-2004.

After thirteen months back at Fort Drum, 4-31 deployed again. Its elements were scattered to South Asia and Africa. Battalion Headquarters and A Company went to Afghanistan, B Company to Iraq, and C Company and the Mortar Platoon to Djibouti on the horn of Africa. Neighboring Ethiopia formed an anti-terrorism battalion and hosted a detachment of Polar Bears as trainers for the new unit. All 4-31 elements were back at Fort Drum in December 2003 except B Company. The tactical situation in Iraq required them to stay until April 2004.



IRAQ - May 2004-June 2005. 4-31 deployed to Iraq less B Company, which had just returned from an extended overseas tour a few weeks before. B Company, 1-509th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Fort Polk, joined 4-31 until B Company 4-31 could rejoin the unit in the Kadhimiya District of Baghdad. 1LT Adam Malson of A Company was the only KIA during this deployment. As he attempted to rescue a woman from a burning car, a suicide bomber detonated an explosives vest, killing Malson. In Iraq, Polar Bears manned checkpoints and ran patrols in the district. Later 4-31 soldiers secured Abu Graib Prison from potential terrorist attacks. In addition, they conducted air assaults and raids on enemy strongholds south of Baghdad. After returning to Fort Drum, 4-31 received a Meritorious Unit Commendation for its actions.

IRAQ - August 2006-November 2007. After two weeks on the ground in Kuwait, 4-31 moved through Baghdad to Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah in the heart of the Iraqi combat zone called by the press “The Triangle of Death.” As part of Operation Polar Rock Blizzard, 4-31 searched villages and along canals, recovering weapons and IED components from 125 different locations. The unit’s intense raids and road patrols received a violent response from the terrorists with IEDs wounding several Polar Bears. To control the area, 4-31 had to own Route Malibu, pocked by numerous IED craters and vehicle wreckage. A key to that was seizing and holding terrain. EOD personnel worked hard to clear the road, but the 4-31 commander, LTC Michael Infanti was medivacked when his Humvee was hit by an IED. Terrorists gradually lost the initiative in the give and take of combat, but with increasing desperation terrorists hit a night overwatch position along Route Malibu manned by D Company. Of the eight men at the site, five were KIA and three were kidnapped; their remains were eventually recovered. In response, U.S. strength in the area ramped up from 1,000 to 4,000 in less than a week after the kidnappings. The kidnapping strategy of the terrorists ended, but during the 15-month tour, the Polar Bears lost 18 soldiers. The battalion also earned a Valorous Unit Award “for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy.”

IRAQ - October 2009- June 2010. The 4-31 mission on this tour was both security and the training of Iraqi Federal Police, to prepare them to take over public order and safety. In addition, the battalion provided security for small details of American civilian teams training local Iraqi leaders. There was occasional small arms harassment but no casualties. The successful eight-month tour garnered the battalion another Meritorious Unit Citation.

AFGHANISTAN - 2015-2016. The 4-31 mission on this tour was installation security, a mission which fragmented the battalion. Elements were scattered across the real estate that 4-31 was charged to secure. C Company was broken up into eight elements of different sizes. During this complex deployment, the 4-31 Commander, LTC Chris Landers didn’t have control of many of these elements, even though he was tasked with battalion-level contingency plans. The largest combat action 4-31 became involved in was the Battle of Kunduz, when Islamist terrorists seized control of that city. The C Company detachment helping to secure an installation of a Special Forces A team became involved along with the SF soldiers in the Kunduz battle which lasted four intense days, during which the terrorists suffered more than 200 fatalities.

AFGHANISTAN - Autumn 2018. Based at Bagram Airfield, the battalion was the Theater Response Force for NATO’s Resolute Support operation as well as trainers for Afghan defense forces. The Battalion put together two Expeditionary Task Forces, each built around a rifle company with indirect fire and heavy communications capability. Over eighty Polar Bears earned the Combat Infantryman Badge, and all hands who served in this tour can now wear the 10th Mountain patch on their right shoulders.

AFGANISTAN - February 2021- August 2021. To support Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 4-31 was deployed to Camp Dwyer in Helmand Province and elements of the battalion were also deployed to Kuwait. The Polar Bears have been operating as the only conventional infantry unit in Afghanistan, spread out between nine different geographical locations in theater. In addition to training missions the units of the battalion were employed as a quick reaction combat forces to aid Afgan forces where needed. During the deployment, HQ and C Companies completed a 26.2-mile ruck march to show solidarity and respect for the lives the Regiment lost during the Bataan Death March.

If there’s one recurring theme in all these deployments, it’s the fragmentation of the battalion to fulfill numerous diverse missions and consequent dependence on small unit leadership from the fire team on up. Time and again this shows up in engagements with the enemy. The Polar Bears stand ready to meet the challenge of the next mission they receive and go wherever that requires.

A TOAST TO THE POLAR BEARS

Paul Kerchum is registered to attend Reunion 2021 and the “Good Lord Willing and the Creeks Don’t Rise” Paul will once again make a short presentation of his experience as a survivor of the Bataan Death March and his time as a Japanese prisoner of war during WWII.

SPECIAL REUNION NOTE: The banquet Guest Speaker at Reunion 2021 will be LTC Christopher Rowe, commander of 4-31. The unit will return from Afghanistan and Kuwait by the end of August. 4-31 is one of the last combat units deployed in Afghanistan and will be the last major unit to redeploy. LTC Rowe’s presentation on 4-31’s last deployments promises to be very interesting and a great tribute to our returning Polar Bears.



31st Infantry Regiment Association
Jim Tierney
1484 Loretta Drive
Penn Hills, PA 15235
Newsletter 100

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Pro Patria Press



#100

August 2021

NEWSLETTER OF THE 31ST US INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

ACTING EDITOR: RON CORSON (JRCORSON@AOL.COM)

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John A Bisbee
501 W Branch St
Lantana, FL 33462-4520



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 2021 REUNION QUAD CITIES, IL/IA 18-21 SEPTEMBER 2021



Around the Corner - Reunion 2021 - Will You be at Rock Island/Moline?

Reunion 2021 is on track. A good number of our members have already put their hat in the ring. Have you set 18 to 22 September as a priority for you and your family to be there? Time is running out. Pick up you ruck and register now. After the



long delays caused by this guy called COVID-19, let's make Reunion 2021 a time to remember. The Quad Cities located along the Mississippi is the ideal location and September is the right time to reunite as Soldiers along with our families. Make the time, make the

promise: "This Polar Bear will be there", and shout out: "You All Come to Reunion 2021. You Hear?"

HAVE YOU SENT IN YOUR REGISTRATION FORM?

So far not as good as we would like! As of 29 July, 87 members/spouses have registered for Reunion 2021. Reunion 2021 looks like it will be a great event. One that we have been waiting for since North Myrtle Beach. The Association needs to know that you and yours are planning to be there. 4-31 will return by the end of August from its deployments in Afghanistan and Kuwait. The Association will host active-duty Polar Bear Soldiers, leaders, and the Shanghai Bowl. Time is short. It's time to act to be at Reunion 2021. – **Pro Patria!**

Highlights in this Edition.

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ANOTHER FORMER LEADER OF 4-31 PASSES ON

BENNY HASKEL DOBBS, Jr. CSM (Ret.) US ARMY On May 13, 2021, Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Benny Dobbs a former CSM of 4-31 Infantry passed away in Benson, NC. Benny, a native of Monticello, KY, entered the U.S. Army on March 11, 1986 and proudly served his country for over 30 years. He earned the respect of his troops and leaders alike. Benny had numerous combat deployments to include Operation Just Cause, Desert Shield/Storm, and twice each to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Over the course of his career, he earned the highest of awards such as the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and two awards of the Combat Infantryman Badge. CSM Dobbs retired from active-duty service on July 31, 2016, where he spent time with his family which were the center of his world. With all the accolades that Benny had earned while serving his country, he would tell you “It’s all about taking care of your Soldiers!” He would take care of his troops as his family and with the same resilience and perseverance that gained him the respect from all that knew him. Not only was he a Soldier’s soldier, but he was a man of God and a devoted husband to his wife of 35 years, Carol Sue (Roberts) Dobbs.



KOREAN WAR – 1953 – THE BLOODIEST YEAR

(edited and extracted from the book “The 31st Infantry Regiment” Chapter 16, pages 227-229)

In 1953, as the Korean War was slowly moving toward an end of active combat and a cease fire was being slowly negotiated in Panmunjum. Because of the difficult and slow negotiating process each side of the conflict (Chinese and North Korean Army and the United Nations Forces), used the battlefield and battlefield actions as a way of enhancing or influencing their bargaining position at the table. This was especially true for the Chinese Forces facing the 7th US Infantry Division and the 31st US Infantry Regiment. In early 1953, the 31st Infantry was online in defensive positions on and around Pork Chop Hill, Old Baldy, and a series of observations points (OPs) and north and south of these two key pieces of terrain. The fierce fighting in this area of the war went on for over six months with constant attacks by Chinese units to take control of the terrain and the 7th Division counterattacking with companies and platoons of the 31st and 17th Infantry regiments to retake all or portions of these battle areas.

The last action of the war for the Polar Bears came on 26-27 July 1953 at OPs Westview and Dale overlooking the Chorwon Valley. The OPs were held respectively by K and I Companies of the 31st Infantry. Westview was a low, bald knob connected to Old Baldy by a saddle ridge. It was only large enough to accommodate a platoon, but the Chinese were determined to take it. They came charging up the hill three nights before the ceasefire was to take effect, lugging huge boxes of ammo and rations, giving every indication that they intended to take the hill and keep it. Pouring wave after wave up the hill, they took half of the hill, but L Company counterattacked, driving them back down the trench line in close quarters combat with grenades, small arms, and occasional rifle butts. When their grip on the last section of trench was broken, the survivors scurried across the barren 200-yards long saddle back to the safety of Chinese lines on Old Baldy. There the remnants of the Chinese forces that were still exposed were chopped to pieces by artillery. For the next two nights, Chinese units probed Westview again and again, losing more men in the process. On Monday night, the defenders, some of whom had hardly slept for four days, felt sure the Chinese would come again to try to retrieve bodies of their dead. At 9:45 p.m., the “Order” came to cease all firing. A minute later, an outguard warned, “They’re coming, the Chinks are coming down.” No one fired. Weapons that would have been used without hesitation any night before were silent. There was no shouting, no jubilation, only a few muttered prayers and handshakes between men who had seen too many others carried from the battlefield. Suddenly there was peace.

Membership Application–31st US Infantry Regiment Association



First Name	Nickname	Middle Initial	Last Name	
Street Address		City	State	Zip Code
E-mailladdress		Alternate E-mail Address		
Please fill in as much information about your service/connection with the 31st Infantry Regiment as possible:				
Platoon_____Company____Battalion_____				
Highest Award Earned				
Rank & Duty Position when serving with the 31st Regiment			Rank When Retired/Separated	

Where did you serve with the 31st?	When?
Philippine	
Japan	
Korea	
Vietnam	
Iraq	
Afghanistan	
Other Overseas	
USA	

Membership Desired

Life Membership

Active Duty __\$25

Age 49 & under __\$60

Age 50 – 59 __\$45

Age 60 & over __\$35

Associate Life __\$25

Member (family)

Make your check out to **31st Inf Regt Assn** and mail it to the Membership Chairman:
Jim Tierney, 1484 Loretta Drive, Penn Hills, PA 15235.

Association Officers

Honorary Colonel of the Regiment

1425 Dartmouth Rd, Columbus, GA 31904

Commander:

215 Waterford Drive, Inman, SC 29349

Vice Commander:

1484 McGill Road, Vass, NC28394

Adjutant:

9676 159th Ct N, Jupiter, FL 33478

Treasurer:

3035 South El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Membership:

1484 Loretta Dr., Penn Hills, PA 15235

Quartermaster:

337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210

Sergeant at Arms:

5638 Camellia Ave, Sacramento, CA 95819

Historian:

2321 S. Queen St, Arlington, VA 22202

Senior Director:

108 Mershon Way, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Northeast Region: (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, NY)

3127 Cataract St, Copenhagen, NY 13626

Mid-Atlantic Region: (NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, VA, WV)

104 Cumberland Dr., Carlisle, PA 17013

Southeast Region: (NC,SC,GA,FL,AL,MS,TN,AR,LA, PR,VI)

1116 Dundee Ct ,Murfreesboro, TN 37129.

Great Lakes Region: (KY, OH, MI, IN, IL, WI)

788 Eagledale Circle, Kettering, OH 45429

Midwest Region: (MN,ND,SD,NE,IA,MO,KS, OK,TX,NM,CO)

3100 Chambers St, Sioux City, IA 51104

Western Region: (HI,AK,WA,OR,CA,NV,AZ,UT,ID, MT,WY)

1250 American Pacific Dr, Apt 214, Henderson, NV 89074

Robert “Sam” Wetzel LTG Ret (LTC, Cdr, 4th Bn, VN 1968)

706-576-4204

Charlie Tapp

H 864-473-1999

C 864 680-9165

Dan Wood

910-633-8397

Vin Zike

914-850-0095

Joe DeAngelis

208-362-9468

Jim Tierney

412-793-7214

Dale Mills

478-787-2679

Jim Jaggars

H 916-455-7879

C 916 802-7750

Grady Smith

C 703 927-6261

Ron Corson

757-253-1311

C 757-810-4135

Ivan Barker III

315-286-7696

Jim Simms

717-243-5570

Noah Halfacre

615-892-9246

John Howdeshelt

937-435-0669

John Mansfield

712-277-4498

Ron Belloli

928-380-9577

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(LT,E 6thBn,VN, 1970)

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(SGT, D 6th Bn,VN, 1969)

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(LT, A&B 4th Bn, VN 1967-68)

arctic6@aol.com

(LT, C 6thBn, VN, 1967-68)

ronbob22631@gmail.com



Reunion 2021- QUAD CITIES – SEPTEMBER 18-22

REUNION 2021 – DAY ONE - (Saturday: September 18, 2021)

1200 - 1700 **Arrival** — Registration Desk/Welcome – Holiday Inn Rock Island 2nd Floor

1200 - 1700 The Association Hospitality Room – **Salon 3**

Evening: Company Dinners - On your own/Unit Dinners.

REUNION 2021 – DAY TWO - (Sunday: September 19, 2021)

0700 - 0930 Breakfast Served in Bennigan’s

0800 – 1100 Quartermaster Store Open

0900 - 1600 Registration Desk & Welcome Table open

1000 - 2100 The Association Hospitality Room – Open

1000 - 1200 Board Meeting

1130 - 1330 Lunch – You are on your own.

1600 - 2000 Visit Quad City info booth Hallway 2nd Floor

1730 - 1830 **Welcome Cocktail Reception– Hotel Ballroom** (Local Mayors to attend) (Cash Bar)

1830 - 2030 Arrival Dinner - **BBQ local Flavor Dinner** – Hotel Ballroom (Cash Bar in the Buffet Location)

REUNION 2021 - DAY THREE- (Monday: September 20, 2021)

0700 – 0930 Breakfast Served in Bennigan’s

0900 - 2100 The Association Hospitality Room Open

0900 - 1200 Registration Desk & Welcome Table - Open.

0900 - 1000 **31st Infantry Memorial Service – Salon 1&2**

1000 - 1130 General business Meeting

1130 - 1300 Lunch – Once again - You are on your own.

1200 - 1600 Quartermaster Open

1230 – 1630 Rock Island Arsenal Tour Meet in Lobby first floor

1500 - 1530 **Raffle Drawing & Silent Auction** (Last chance to bid in Silent Auction).

1700 - 2100 Celebration Belle Caption & Dance Cruise, Cruise the mighty Mississippi

REUNION 2021 - DAY FOUR - (Tuesday: September 21, 2021)

0900 - 1100 John Deere Factory and Pavilion & Store

1830 - 1835 Reunion Dinner Posting of the Colors & Invocation

1835 - 2030 Dinner – After Dinner: Announcements. Introduction, and Guest Speaker

2030 - 2200 Shanghai Bowl Ceremony and Formal Toasts to the 31st US Infantry Regiment

DEPARTURE DAY - (Wednesday: September 22, 2021) - Goodbyes and Check out



At Various Times:

Channel Cat Water
Taxi Various Sites:
\$8.00 Hop on Hop Off

At the Dinner: Salads
will be on each table –
Multiple Buffet lines
will be in service

NEWSLETTER CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Cut along dotted line. Fill in requested information and mail to The Membership Chairman, address below.

or **email** Jim Tierney with this information at jtier64999@aol.com **SUBJECT: CHANGE OF ADDRESS.**

Name: _____ Phone number if new: _____

Old Address _____ New Address _____ Mail To: _____

Street or P.O. Box _____ Street or P.O. Box _____ Jim Tierney, Membership Chairman

City/State/Zip _____ City/State/Zip _____ 1484 Loretta Drive

_____ Penn Hills, PA 15235

Registration Form Reunion 2021 - Rock Island, IL
31st US Infantry Regiment Association
September 18-22, 2021

Name: _____

Guest(s): _____

Home Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Company & Battalion of the 31st Infantry: _____ When: _____

If active duty, Current Rank: _____ Post stationed at: _____

Served in Combat Zone: Yes / No (Circle) If Yes, where: _____

Will you be staying at Holiday Inn Rock Island Yes / No (Circle)?

Have a car at the reunion? Yes / No If needed, are you willing to assist in local driving? Yes / No

<u>Reunion Activity</u>	<u>Cost per Person</u>	<u>X # Participating</u>	=	<u>Event Cost</u>
Reunion Registration	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Arrival Dinner	\$27	x _____		\$ _____
Rock Island Arsenal Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Celebration Dinner Cruise	\$60	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Banquet	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
John Deere Factory Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Grand Total				\$ _____

Make checks payable to: **31st US Infantry Regiment Association**
ATTN: Joe DeAngelis 3035 S. El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Hotel and Travel Information: Total Cost is \$85.00/night incls tax and a Hot Breakfast every morning
Holiday Inn & Conference Center Quad City International Airport (MOL)
226 17th Street Free airport / Hotel Shuttle
Rock Island, IL 61201 Moline Airport serviced by all major carriers. www.holidayinn.com/rockisland
Reserve Room at (309-794-1212)

Suspense date for Hotel and Reunion 2021 Reservations is September 1, 2021

31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION QUARTERMASTER STORE ORDER FORM

Visit 31stinfantry.org and click on 31st Infantry Store to see a full color catalogue of these and many more items

Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

<u>Cat #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Total</u>
B 102	Book, 31st Infantry Regiment “America’s Foreign Legion” In peace and war (Includes shipping)			\$ 40.00 X__ = _____
Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form				
C 100	Coin, Commemorative, 100th Anniversary (if you order 10 or more the price is \$8.00 each).			\$ 10.00 X__ = _____
C100A	Airtight capsule for 100th Anniversary Commemorative coin	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, black <i>both the black and clear easels are for Airtight capsule with 100th</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, clear <i>Anniversary Commemorative coin or the Commemorative coin alone</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C RB 02	Cap, Royal Blue, 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT, POLAR BEARS, and crest embroidered directly	\$ 15.00	X__ = _____	
	directly on cap and US ARMY embroidered on back.			
C RB	Cap same as C RB 02 above with the addition of a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat			
	patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division;			
	10th Mountain Div) on the right side. Circle the patch you want.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
C K	<i>NEW CAP!</i> same as C RB above but in Khaki with a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch			
	(Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division.			
	10th Mountain Division) on the right side. Circle the patch you want). All embroidery is subdued.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
SP	Shirt, Polo/golf w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size: S, M, L, XL White, Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 29.00 X__ = _____
SP100	Same as above with 100th Anniversary logo in <u>White only</u> Size: S, M(Sold out), L, XL			\$ 31.00 X__ = _____
	Size: 2XL \$ 33.00 X__ = _____ Size: 3XL			\$ 35.00 X__ = _____
ST	Shirt, Tee, w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size S, M, L, XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 16.00 X__ = _____
	Size 2XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 19.00 X__ = _____
	Size 3XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 21.00 X__ = _____
SLSVC	Shirt, Long Sleeve, Dress in various colors w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and			
	polar bear crest on left chest above pocket. Please circle color and size Size: S, M, L, XL			\$ 30.00 X__ = _____
	Colors: Black, Navy Blue, Light Blue, Red, White, Texas Orange, Burgundy, Size 2XL			\$ 32.00 X__ = _____
	or Denim Size 3XL			\$ 36.00 X__ = _____
MS 01	Shanghai Bowl Cup, silver, 2007 reproduction of original. (Includes shipping)			
	Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form			\$165.00X__ = _____
DCL 01	Bumper sticker, 31st Infantry crest (Polar Bear), 4-3/8” tall, 4-1/4 wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 01	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), regulation size, facing set.			\$ 8.00 X__ = _____
PN 02	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), lapel/hat pin. 7/8” tall, ¾” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 73	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, lapel/hat pin. 3/8” tall, 1-1/4” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 74	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, regulation size, 1-1/4” tall, 3” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 82	Pin, Purple Heart, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 85	Pin, Silver Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 71	Pin, Bronze Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
Shipping Charges – add to your order: Orders under \$10.00 add \$2.50; For orders \$10.01 - \$25.00				SUBTOTAL \$ _____
add \$6.00; For orders \$25.01 - \$50.00, add \$7.00; For orders over \$50.00, add \$9.00.				SHIPPING \$ _____
				Grand TOTAL \$ _____

MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO: 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

For Credit Cards (American Express, Discover, Master Card, or Visa) or Debit card (with Master Card or Visa logo) please include
NAME (on card): _____ CARD #: _____ EXP DATE: ____/____

SECURITY CODE (on back of card): _____ ZIP CODE (where credit card bill is mailed to): _____

Mail the order form and payment to: Dale Mills 337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210-9711

TAPS



Deceased members identified since Newsletter # 99, May 2021

KOREA WAR

Edward R. Bolton, SSG, Crawfordville, FL, died May 16, 2021, HQ, 3rd Bn, 1950
Carson E. Bunch, SGT, Goodman, MO, died Jan 12, 2021, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1952-1953
Stuard M. Hartman, SFC, Camarillo, CA, died May 25, 2021, Co B, 1st Bn, 1952-1953
John A. Hemphill, MG ret, Steilacoom, WA, died May 21, 2021, Cos I & K, 3rd Bn, 1952-1953
Bernard H. Hoffman, PFC, Merrick, NY, died Nov 6, 2020, Co H, 2nd Bn, 1953-1954
Rudy R. Reyes, CPL, La Puente, CA, died Oct 2, 2020, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1949-1951
Robert C. Whisenhunt, CPL, Grand Junction, CO, died May 21, 2021, HQ, Rgt, 1952

Correction in date died in NL 92:

Melvin L. “Mel” Pierce, PFC, Hollister, MO, died **Aug 3, 2017**, Co I, 3rd Bn, 1950

VIETNAM

Alfred “Al” Harner, SFC, Ashland, PA, died May 24, 2021, Co C, 4th Bn, 1965-1967
Herbert F. Tipton, SP4, Deland, FL, died May 19, 2021, Co B, 4th Bn, 1965-1967

UNITED STATES

Benny H. Dodds, Jr, CSM ret, Angier, NC, died May 13, 2021, HHC, 4th Bn, Bn CSM, 2010-2012

ASSOCIATE

Robert A. Houghtby, Sr., Lively, CA, died Apr 22, 2009, Grandfather 1st SGT Arthur C. Houghtby,
POW, died May 20, 1942, in CP O'Donnell
Helen F. Mucerino, Phoenix, AZ, died Jan 6, 2014, Widow of CPL Ralph Mucerino, Co A, Korea

NEW MEMBERS

William H. “Bill” Breeton, Littlefork, MN, HHC and C Co, 4th Bn, 1967-1968

NOTE: No deceased members reported from the World War II, Pre-Korean War and Post Korean War eras.

LEADERSHIP NOTICE: The Association has leadership positions that need to be filled at the 2021 Reunion. The Board is developing a slate of officers and volunteers who have the time and the desire to join the Board of Directors are needed. Election of officers will occur at the General Membership meeting. Potential positions include Regional Director, Quartermaster, Treasurer, Adjutant, and Committee Slots. If you are willing and able to be part of the Association leadership team, please contact Charlie Tapp or Ron Corson. (Contact # - See Page 10)

VIETNAM VETS WERE NEVER PROPERLY RECOGNIZED

Richard never really talked about his time in Viet Nam, other than he had been shot by a sniper. However, he had a rather grainy, 8 x 10 black and white photo he had taken at a USO show of Ann Margret



Ann Margret in a USO Show in Vietnam

with Bob Hope in the background that was one of his treasures. A few years ago, Ann Margret was doing a book signing at a local bookstore. Richard wanted to see if he could get her to sign the treasured photo, so he arrived at the bookstore at 12 o'clock for the 7:30 signing. When I got there after work, the line went all the way around the bookstore, circled the parking lot, and disappeared behind a parking garage. Before her appearance, bookstore employees announced that she would sign only her book and no memorabilia would be permitted. Richard was disappointed but wanted to show her the photo and let her know how much those shows meant to lonely GI's so far from home.

Ann Margret came out looking as beautiful as ever

and, as second in line, it was soon Richard's turn. He presented the book for her signature and then took out the photo. When he did, there were many shouts from the employees that she would not sign it. Richard said, "I understand. I just wanted her to see it." She took one look at the photo, tears welled up in her eyes and she said, "This is one of my gentlemen from Viet Nam and I most certainly will sign his photo. I know what these men did for their country and I always have time for 'my gentlemen." With that, she pulled Richard across the table and planted a big kiss on him. She then made quite a to-do about the bravery of the young men she met over the years, how much she admired them, and how much she appreciated them. There weren't too many dry eyes among those close enough to hear. She then posed for pictures and acted as if he were the only one there.

That night was a turning point for him. He walked a little straighter and, for the first time in years, was proud to be a Vet. I'll never forget Ann Margret for her graciousness and how much that small act of kindness meant to my husband. Later at dinner, Richard was very quiet. When I asked if he'd like to talk about it, my big, strong husband broke down in tears. "That's the first time anyone ever thanked me for my time in the Army," he said.

POLAR BEAR DEPLOYMENTS SINCE 9/11

In July 2021, 4-31 Infantry redeployed home from its latest post-9/11 mission which was once again in Afghanistan. A look at the overseas deployments of 4-31 Infantry since the terrorist attacks is in order.

AFGHANISTAN 2001-2002. After the multiple attacks to our nation on September 11, 2001 elements of the 4-31 before the end of the month were on the ground in Kuwait and Qatar. The Heavy Mortar Platoon was deployed in Uzbekistan and later in Afghanistan. C Company was moved to Afghanistan from Uzbekistan and A Company from Kuwait. However, A Company was the first to draw enemy blood for the 31st Infantry for the first time since Vietnam. Before Operation Anaconda was over, the 4-31 command group deployed, and organized Operation Polar Harpoon. This resulted in firefights, the collection of many enemy documents, and the destruction of warfighting materiel. Then all elements of 4-31 headed home.

AFGHANISTAN-DJIBOUTI-IRAQ 2003-2004.

After thirteen months back at Fort Drum, 4-31 deployed again. Its elements were scattered to South Asia and Africa. Battalion Headquarters and A Company went to Afghanistan, B Company to Iraq, and C Company and the Mortar Platoon to Djibouti on the horn of Africa. Neighboring Ethiopia formed an anti-terrorism battalion and hosted a detachment of Polar Bears as trainers for the new unit. All 4-31 elements were back at Fort Drum in December 2003 except B Company. The tactical situation in Iraq required them to stay until April 2004.



IRAQ - May 2004-June 2005. 4-31 deployed to Iraq less B Company, which had just returned from an extended overseas tour a few weeks before. B Company, 1-509th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Fort Polk, joined 4-31 until B Company 4-31 could rejoin the unit in the Kadhimiya District of Baghdad. 1LT Adam Malson of A Company was the only KIA during this deployment. As he attempted to rescue a woman from a burning car, a suicide bomber detonated an explosives vest, killing Malson. In Iraq, Polar Bears manned checkpoints and ran patrols in the district. Later 4-31 soldiers secured Abu Graib Prison from potential terrorist attacks. In addition, they conducted air assaults and raids on enemy strongholds south of Baghdad. After returning to Fort Drum, 4-31 received a Meritorious Unit Commendation for its actions.

IRAQ - August 2006-November 2007. After two weeks on the ground in Kuwait, 4-31 moved through Baghdad to Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah in the heart of the Iraqi combat zone called by the press “The Triangle of Death.” As part of Operation Polar Rock Blizzard, 4-31 searched villages and along canals, recovering weapons and IED components from 125 different locations. The unit’s intense raids and road patrols received a violent response from the terrorists with IEDs wounding several Polar Bears. To control the area, 4-31 had to own Route Malibu, pocked by numerous IED craters and vehicle wreckage. A key to that was seizing and holding terrain. EOD personnel worked hard to clear the road, but the 4-31 commander, LTC Michael Infanti was medivacked when his Humvee was hit by an IED. Terrorists gradually lost the initiative in the give and take of combat, but with increasing desperation terrorists hit a night overwatch position along Route Malibu manned by D Company. Of the eight men at the site, five were KIA and three were kidnapped; their remains were eventually recovered. In response, U.S. strength in the area ramped up from 1,000 to 4,000 in less than a week after the kidnappings. The kidnapping strategy of the terrorists ended, but during the 15-month tour, the Polar Bears lost 18 soldiers. The battalion also earned a Valorous Unit Award “for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy.”

IRAQ - October 2009- June 2010. The 4-31 mission on this tour was both security and the training of Iraqi Federal Police, to prepare them to take over public order and safety. In addition, the battalion provided security for small details of American civilian teams training local Iraqi leaders. There was occasional small arms harassment but no casualties. The successful eight-month tour garnered the battalion another Meritorious Unit Citation.

AFGHANISTAN - 2015-2016. The 4-31 mission on this tour was installation security, a mission which fragmented the battalion. Elements were scattered across the real estate that 4-31 was charged to secure. C Company was broken up into eight elements of different sizes. During this complex deployment, the 4-31 Commander, LTC Chris Landers didn’t have control of many of these elements, even though he was tasked with battalion-level contingency plans. The largest combat action 4-31 became involved in was the Battle of Kunduz, when Islamist terrorists seized control of that city. The C Company detachment helping to secure an installation of a Special Forces A team became involved along with the SF soldiers in the Kunduz battle which lasted four intense days, during which the terrorists suffered more than 200 fatalities.

AFGHANISTAN - Autumn 2018. Based at Bagram Airfield, the battalion was the Theater Response Force for NATO’s Resolute Support operation as well as trainers for Afghan defense forces. The Battalion put together two Expeditionary Task Forces, each built around a rifle company with indirect fire and heavy communications capability. Over eighty Polar Bears earned the Combat Infantryman Badge, and all hands who served in this tour can now wear the 10th Mountain patch on their right shoulders.

AFGANISTAN - February 2021- August 2021. To support Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 4-31 was deployed to Camp Dwyer in Helmand Province and elements of the battalion were also deployed to Kuwait. The Polar Bears have been operating as the only conventional infantry unit in Afghanistan, spread out between nine different geographical locations in theater. In addition to training missions the units of the battalion were employed as a quick reaction combat forces to aid Afgan forces where needed. During the deployment, HQ and C Companies completed a 26.2-mile ruck march to show solidarity and respect for the lives the Regiment lost during the Bataan Death March.

If there’s one recurring theme in all these deployments, it’s the fragmentation of the battalion to fulfill numerous diverse missions and consequent dependence on small unit leadership from the fire team on up. Time and again this shows up in engagements with the enemy. The Polar Bears stand ready to meet the challenge of the next mission they receive and go wherever that requires.

A TOAST TO THE POLAR BEARS

Paul Kerchum is registered to attend Reunion 2021 and the “Good Lord Willing and the Creeks Don’t Rise” Paul will once again make a short presentation of his experience as a survivor of the Bataan Death March and his time as a Japanese prisoner of war during WWII.

SPECIAL REUNION NOTE: The banquet Guest Speaker at Reunion 2021 will be LTC Christopher Rowe, commander of 4-31. The unit will return from Afghanistan and Kuwait by the end of August. 4-31 is one of the last combat units deployed in Afghanistan and will be the last major unit to redeploy. LTC Rowe’s presentation on 4-31’s last deployments promises to be very interesting and a great tribute to our returning Polar Bears.



31st Infantry Regiment Association
 Jim Tierney
 1484 Loretta Drive
 Penn Hills, PA 15235
 Newsletter 100

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**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 2021 REUNION
 QUAD CITIES, IL/IA 18-21 SEPTEMBER 2021**



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Pro Patria Press



#100

August 2021

NEWSLETTER OF THE 31ST US INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

ACTING EDITOR: RON CORSON (JRCORSON@AOL.COM)

Around the Corner - Reunion 2021 - Will You be at Rock Island/Moline?

Reunion 2021 is on track. A good number of our members have already put their hat in the ring. Have you set 18 to 22 September as a priority for you and your family to be there? Time is running out. Pick up you ruck and register now. After the



long delays caused by this guy called COVID-19, let's make Reunion 2021 a time to remember. The Quad Cities located along the Mississippi is the ideal location and September is the right time to reunite as Soldiers along with our families. Make the time, make the

promise: "This Polar Bear will be there", and shout out: "You All Come to Reunion 2021. You Hear?"

HAVE YOU SENT IN YOUR REGISTRATION FORM?

So far not as good as we would like! As of 29 July, 87 members/spouses have registered for Reunion 2021. Reunion 2021 looks like it will be a great event. One that we have been waiting for since North Myrtle Beach. The Association needs to know that you and yours are planning to be there. 4-31 will return by the end of August from its deployments in Afghanistan and Kuwait. The Association will host active-duty Polar Bear Soldiers, leaders, and the Shanghai Bowl. Time is short. It's time to act to be at Reunion 2021. – **Pro Patria!**

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ANOTHER FORMER LEADER OF 4-31 PASSES ON

BENNY HASKEL DOBBS, Jr. CSM (Ret.) US ARMY On May 13, 2021, Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Benny Dobbs a former CSM of 4-31 Infantry passed away in Benson, NC. Benny, a native of Monticello, KY, entered the U.S. Army on March 11, 1986 and proudly served his country for over 30 years. He earned the respect of his troops and leaders alike. Benny had numerous combat deployments to include Operation Just Cause, Desert Shield/Storm, and twice each to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Over the course of his career, he earned the highest of awards such as the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and two awards of the Combat Infantryman Badge. CSM Dobbs retired from active-duty service on July 31, 2016, where he spent time with his family which were the center of his world. With all the accolades that Benny had earned while serving his country, he would tell you “It’s all about taking care of your Soldiers!” He would take care of his troops as his family and with the same resilience and perseverance that gained him the respect from all that knew him. Not only was he a Soldier’s soldier, but he was a man of God and a devoted husband to his wife of 35 years, Carol Sue (Roberts) Dobbs.



KOREAN WAR – 1953 – THE BLOODIEST YEAR

(edited and extracted from the book “The 31st Infantry Regiment” Chapter 16, pages 227-229)

In 1953, as the Korean War was slowly moving toward an end of active combat and a cease fire was being slowly negotiated in Panmunjum. Because of the difficult and slow negotiating process each side of the conflict (Chinese and North Korean Army and the United Nations Forces), used the battlefield and battlefield actions as a way of enhancing or influencing their bargaining position at the table. This was especially true for the Chinese Forces facing the 7th US Infantry Division and the 31st US Infantry Regiment. In early 1953, the 31st Infantry was online in defensive positions on and around Pork Chop Hill, Old Baldy, and a series of observations points (OPs) and north and south of these two key pieces of terrain. The fierce fighting in this area of the war went on for over six months with constant attacks by Chinese units to take control of the terrain and the 7th Division counterattacking with companies and platoons of the 31st and 17th Infantry regiments to retake all or portions of these battle areas.

The last action of the war for the Polar Bears came on 26-27 July 1953 at OPs Westview and Dale overlooking the Chorwon Valley. The OPs were held respectively by K and I Companies of the 31st Infantry. Westview was a low, bald knob connected to Old Baldy by a saddle ridge. It was only large enough to accommodate a platoon, but the Chinese were determined to take it. They came charging up the hill three nights before the ceasefire was to take effect, lugging huge boxes of ammo and rations, giving every indication that they intended to take the hill and keep it. Pouring wave after wave up the hill, they took half of the hill, but L Company counterattacked, driving them back down the trench line in close quarters combat with grenades, small arms, and occasional rifle butts. When their grip on the last section of trench was broken, the survivors scurried across the barren 200-yards long saddle back to the safety of Chinese lines on Old Baldy. There the remnants of the Chinese forces that were still exposed were chopped to pieces by artillery. For the next two nights, Chinese units probed Westview again and again, losing more men in the process. On Monday night, the defenders, some of whom had hardly slept for four days, felt sure the Chinese would come again to try to retrieve bodies of their dead. At 9:45 p.m., the “Order” came to cease all firing. A minute later, an outguard warned, “They’re coming, the Chinks are coming down.” No one fired. Weapons that would have been used without hesitation any night before were silent. There was no shouting, no jubilation, only a few muttered prayers and handshakes between men who had seen too many others carried from the battlefield. Suddenly there was peace.

Membership Application–31st US Infantry Regiment Association



First Name		Nickname		Middle Initial	Last Name
Street Address		City		State	Zip Code
				Phone Number	
E-mailladdress			Alternate E-mail Address		
Please fill in as much information about your service/connection with the 31st Infantry Regiment as possible:					
Platoon_____Company____Battalion_____					
Highest Award Earned					
Rank & Duty Position when serving with the 31st Regiment				Rank When Retired/Separated	

Where did you serve with the 31st?	When?
Philippine	
Japan	
Korea	
Vietnam	
Iraq	
Afghanistan	
Other Overseas	
USA	

Membership Desired

Life Membership

Active Duty __\$25

Age 49 & under __\$60

Age 50 – 59 __\$45

Age 60 & over __\$35

Associate Life __\$25

Member (family)

Make your check out to **31st Inf Regt Assn** and mail it to the Membership Chairman:
Jim Tierney, 1484 Loretta Drive, Penn Hills, PA 15235.

Association Officers

Honorary Colonel of the Regiment

1425 Dartmouth Rd, Columbus, GA 31904

Commander:

215 Waterford Drive, Inman, SC 29349

Vice Commander:

1484 McGill Road, Vass, NC28394

Adjutant:

9676 159th Ct N, Jupiter, FL 33478

Treasurer:

3035 South El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Membership:

1484 Loretta Dr., Penn Hills, PA 15235

Quartermaster:

337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210

Sergeant at Arms:

5638 Camellia Ave, Sacramento, CA 95819

Historian:

2321 S. Queen St, Arlington, VA 22202

Senior Director:

108 Mershon Way, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Northeast Region: (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, NY)

3127 Cataract St, Copenhagen, NY 13626

Mid-Atlantic Region: (NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, VA, WV)

104 Cumberland Dr., Carlisle, PA 17013

Southeast Region: (NC,SC,GA,FL,AL,MS,TN,AR,LA, PR,VI)

1116 Dundee Ct ,Murfreesboro, TN 37129.

Great Lakes Region: (KY, OH, MI, IN, IL, WI)

788 Eagledale Circle, Kettering, OH 45429

Midwest Region: (MN,ND,SD,NE,IA,MO,KS, OK,TX,NM,CO)

3100 Chambers St, Sioux City, IA 51104

Western Region: (HI,AK,WA,OR,CA,NV,AZ,UT,ID, MT,WY)

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C 864 680-9165

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Dale Mills

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Jim Jaggars

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C 916 802-7750

Grady Smith

C 703 927-6261

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315-286-7696

Jim Simms

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John Howdeshelt

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ronbob22631@gmail.com



Reunion 2021- QUAD CITIES – SEPTEMBER 18-22

REUNION 2021 – DAY ONE - (Saturday: September 18, 2021)

1200 - 1700 **Arrival** — Registration Desk/Welcome – Holiday Inn Rock Island 2nd Floor

1200 - 1700 The Association Hospitality Room – **Salon 3**

Evening: Company Dinners - On your own/Unit Dinners.

REUNION 2021 – DAY TWO - (Sunday: September 19, 2021)

0700 - 0930 Breakfast Served in Bennigan’s

0800 – 1100 Quartermaster Store Open

0900 - 1600 Registration Desk & Welcome Table open

1000 - 2100 The Association Hospitality Room – Open

1000 - 1200 Board Meeting

1130 - 1330 Lunch – You are on your own.

1600 - 2000 Visit Quad City info booth Hallway 2nd Floor

1730 - 1830 **Welcome Cocktail Reception– Hotel Ballroom** (Local Mayors to attend) (Cash Bar)

1830 - 2030 Arrival Dinner - **BBQ local Flavor Dinner** – Hotel Ballroom (Cash Bar in the Buffet Location)

REUNION 2021 - DAY THREE- (Monday: September 20, 2021)

0700 – 0930 Breakfast Served in Bennigan’s

0900 - 2100 The Association Hospitality Room Open

0900 - 1200 Registration Desk & Welcome Table - Open.

0900 - 1000 **31st Infantry Memorial Service** – **Salon 1&2**

1000 - 1130 General business Meeting

1130 - 1300 Lunch – Once again - You are on your own.

1200 - 1600 Quartermaster Open

1230 – 1630 Rock Island Arsenal Tour Meet in Lobby first floor

1500 - 1530 **Raffle Drawing & Silent Auction** (Last chance to bid in Silent Auction).

1700 - 2100 Celebration Belle Caption & Dance Cruise, Cruise the mighty Mississippi

REUNION 2021 - DAY FOUR - (Tuesday: September 21, 2021)

0900 - 1100 John Deere Factory and Pavilion & Store

1830 - 1835 Reunion Dinner Posting of the Colors & Invocation

1835 - 2030 Dinner – After Dinner: Announcements. Introduction, and Guest Speaker

2030 - 2200 Shanghai Bowl Ceremony and Formal Toasts to the 31st US Infantry Regiment

DEPARTURE DAY - (Wednesday: September 22, 2021) - Goodbyes and Check out



At Various Times:

Channel Cat Water
Taxi Various Sites:
\$8.00 Hop on Hop Off

At the Dinner: Salads
will be on each table –
Multiple Buffet lines
will be in service

NEWSLETTER CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Cut along dotted line. Fill in requested information and mail to The Membership Chairman, address below.

or **email** Jim Tierney with this information at jtier64999@aol.com **SUBJECT: CHANGE OF ADDRESS.**

Name: _____ Phone number if new: _____

Old Address _____ New Address _____ Mail To: _____

Street or P.O. Box _____ Street or P.O. Box _____ Jim Tierney, Membership Chairman

City/State/Zip _____ City/State/Zip _____ 1484 Loretta Drive

_____ Penn Hills, PA 15235

Registration Form Reunion 2021 - Rock Island, IL
31st US Infantry Regiment Association
September 18-22, 2021

Name: _____

Guest(s): _____

Home Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Company & Battalion of the 31st Infantry: _____ When: _____

If active duty, Current Rank: _____ Post stationed at: _____

Served in Combat Zone: Yes / No (Circle) If Yes, where: _____

Will you be staying at Holiday Inn Rock Island Yes / No (Circle)?

Have a car at the reunion? Yes / No If needed, are you willing to assist in local driving? Yes / No

<u>Reunion Activity</u>	<u>Cost per Person</u>	<u>X # Participating</u>	=	<u>Event Cost</u>
Reunion Registration	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Arrival Dinner	\$27	x _____		\$ _____
Rock Island Arsenal Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Celebration Dinner Cruise	\$60	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Banquet	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
John Deere Factory Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Grand Total				\$ _____

Make checks payable to: **31st US Infantry Regiment Association**
ATTN: Joe DeAngelis 3035 S. El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Hotel and Travel Information: Total Cost is \$85.00/night incls tax and a Hot Breakfast every morning
Holiday Inn & Conference Center Quad City International Airport (MOL)
226 17th Street Free airport / Hotel Shuttle
Rock Island, IL 61201 Moline Airport serviced by all major carriers. www.holidayinn.com/rockisland
Reserve Room at (309-794-1212)

Suspense date for Hotel and Reunion 2021 Reservations is September 1, 2021

31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION QUARTERMASTER STORE ORDER FORM

Visit 31stinfantry.org and click on 31st Infantry Store to see a full color catalogue of these and many more items

Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

<u>Cat #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Total</u>
B 102	Book, 31st Infantry Regiment “America’s Foreign Legion” In peace and war (Includes shipping)			\$ 40.00 X__ = _____
Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form				
C 100	Coin, Commemorative, 100th Anniversary (if you order 10 or more the price is \$8.00 each).			\$ 10.00 X__ = _____
C100A	Airtight capsule for 100th Anniversary Commemorative coin	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, black <i>both the black and clear easels are for Airtight capsule with 100th</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, clear <i>Anniversary Commemorative coin or the Commemorative coin alone</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C RB 02	Cap, Royal Blue, 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT, POLAR BEARS, and crest embroidered directly	\$ 15.00	X__ = _____	
	directly on cap and US ARMY embroidered on back.			
C RB	Cap same as C RB 02 above with the addition of a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat			
	patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division;			
	10th Mountain Div) on the right side. Circle the patch you want.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
C K	<i>NEW CAP!</i> same as C RB above but in Khaki with a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch			
	(Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division.			
	10th Mountain Division) on the right side. Circle the patch you want). All embroidery is subdued.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
SP	Shirt, Polo/golf w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size: S, M, L, XL White, Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 29.00 X__ = _____
SP100	Same as above with 100th Anniversary logo in <u>White only</u> Size: S, M(Sold out), L, XL			\$ 31.00 X__ = _____
	Size: 2XL \$ 33.00 X__ = _____ Size: 3XL			\$ 35.00 X__ = _____
ST	Shirt, Tee, w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size S, M, L, XL Light Blue, Navy Blue \$ 16.00 X__ = _____			
	Size 2XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 19.00 X__ = _____
	Size 3XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 21.00 X__ = _____
SLSVC	Shirt, Long Sleeve, Dress in various colors w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and			
	polar bear crest on left chest above pocket. Please circle color and size Size: S, M, L, XL			\$ 30.00 X__ = _____
	Colors: Black, Navy Blue, Light Blue, Red, White, Texas Orange, Burgundy, Size 2XL			\$ 32.00 X__ = _____
	or Denim Size 3XL			\$ 36.00 X__ = _____
MS 01	Shanghai Bowl Cup, silver, 2007 reproduction of original. (Includes shipping)			
	Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form			\$165.00X__ = _____
DCL 01	Bumper sticker, 31st Infantry crest (Polar Bear), 4-3/8” tall, 4-1/4 wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 01	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), regulation size, facing set.			\$ 8.00 X__ = _____
PN 02	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), lapel/hat pin. 7/8” tall, ¾” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 73	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, lapel/hat pin. 3/8” tall, 1-1/4” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 74	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, regulation size, 1-1/4” tall, 3” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 82	Pin, Purple Heart, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 85	Pin, Silver Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 71	Pin, Bronze Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
Shipping Charges – add to your order: Orders under \$10.00 add \$2.50; For orders \$10.01 - \$25.00				SUBTOTAL \$ _____
add \$6.00; For orders \$25.01 - \$50.00, add \$7.00; For orders over \$50.00, add \$9.00.				SHIPPING \$ _____
				Grand TOTAL \$ _____

MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO: 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

For Credit Cards (American Express, Discover, Master Card, or Visa) or Debit card (with Master Card or Visa logo) please include
NAME (on card): _____ CARD #: _____ EXP DATE: ____/____

SECURITY CODE (on back of card): _____ ZIP CODE (where credit card bill is mailed to): _____

Mail the order form and payment to: Dale Mills 337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210-9711

TAPS



Deceased members identified since Newsletter # 99, May 2021

KOREA WAR

Edward R. Bolton, SSG, Crawfordville, FL, died May 16, 2021, HQ, 3rd Bn, 1950
Carson E. Bunch, SGT, Goodman, MO, died Jan 12, 2021, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1952-1953
Stuard M. Hartman, SFC, Camarillo, CA, died May 25, 2021, Co B, 1st Bn, 1952-1953
John A. Hemphill, MG ret, Steilacoom, WA, died May 21, 2021, Cos I & K, 3rd Bn, 1952-1953
Bernard H. Hoffman, PFC, Merrick, NY, died Nov 6, 2020, Co H, 2nd Bn, 1953-1954
Rudy R. Reyes, CPL, La Puente, CA, died Oct 2, 2020, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1949-1951
Robert C. Whisenhunt, CPL, Grand Junction, CO, died May 21, 2021, HQ, Rgt, 1952

Correction in date died in NL 92:

Melvin L. “Mel” Pierce, PFC, Hollister, MO, died **Aug 3, 2017**, Co I, 3rd Bn, 1950

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NOTE: No deceased members reported from the World War II, Pre-Korean War and Post Korean War eras.

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Ann Margret in a USO Show in Vietnam

with Bob Hope in the background that was one of his treasures. A few years ago, Ann Margret was doing a book signing at a local bookstore. Richard wanted to see if he could get her to sign the treasured photo, so he arrived at the bookstore at 12 o'clock for the 7:30 signing. When I got there after work, the line went all the way around the bookstore, circled the parking lot, and disappeared behind a parking garage. Before her appearance, bookstore employees announced that she would sign only her book and no memorabilia would be permitted. Richard was disappointed but wanted to show her the photo and let her know how much those shows meant to lonely GI's so far from home.

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and, as second in line, it was soon Richard's turn. He presented the book for her signature and then took out the photo. When he did, there were many shouts from the employees that she would not sign it. Richard said, "I understand. I just wanted her to see it." She took one look at the photo, tears welled up in her eyes and she said, "This is one of my gentlemen from Viet Nam and I most certainly will sign his photo. I know what these men did for their country and I always have time for 'my gentlemen.'" With that, she pulled Richard across the table and planted a big kiss on him. She then made quite a to-do about the bravery of the young men she met over the years, how much she admired them, and how much she appreciated them. There weren't too many dry eyes among those close enough to hear. She then posed for pictures and acted as if he were the only one there.

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AFGHANISTAN - 2015-2016. The 4-31 mission on this tour was installation security, a mission which fragmented the battalion. Elements were scattered across the real estate that 4-31 was charged to secure. C Company was broken up into eight elements of different sizes. During this complex deployment, the 4-31 Commander, LTC Chris Landers didn’t have control of many of these elements, even though he was tasked with battalion-level contingency plans. The largest combat action 4-31 became involved in was the Battle of Kunduz, when Islamist terrorists seized control of that city. The C Company detachment helping to secure an installation of a Special Forces A team became involved along with the SF soldiers in the Kunduz battle which lasted four intense days, during which the terrorists suffered more than 200 fatalities.

AFGHANISTAN - Autumn 2018. Based at Bagram Airfield, the battalion was the Theater Response Force for NATO’s Resolute Support operation as well as trainers for Afghan defense forces. The Battalion put together two Expeditionary Task Forces, each built around a rifle company with indirect fire and heavy communications capability. Over eighty Polar Bears earned the Combat Infantryman Badge, and all hands who served in this tour can now wear the 10th Mountain patch on their right shoulders.

AFGANISTAN - February 2021- August 2021. To support Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 4-31 was deployed to Camp Dwyer in Helmand Province and elements of the battalion were also deployed to Kuwait. The Polar Bears have been operating as the only conventional infantry unit in Afghanistan, spread out between nine different geographical locations in theater. In addition to training missions the units of the battalion were employed as a quick reaction combat forces to aid Afgan forces where needed. During the deployment, HQ and C Companies completed a 26.2-mile ruck march to show solidarity and respect for the lives the Regiment lost during the Bataan Death March.

If there’s one recurring theme in all these deployments, it’s the fragmentation of the battalion to fulfill numerous diverse missions and consequent dependence on small unit leadership from the fire team on up. Time and again this shows up in engagements with the enemy. The Polar Bears stand ready to meet the challenge of the next mission they receive and go wherever that requires.

A TOAST TO THE POLAR BEARS

Paul Kerchum is registered to attend Reunion 2021 and the “Good Lord Willing and the Creeks Don’t Rise” Paul will once again make a short presentation of his experience as a survivor of the Bataan Death March and his time as a Japanese prisoner of war during WWII.

SPECIAL REUNION NOTE: The banquet Guest Speaker at Reunion 2021 will be LTC Christopher Rowe, commander of 4-31. The unit will return from Afghanistan and Kuwait by the end of August. 4-31 is one of the last combat units deployed in Afghanistan and will be the last major unit to redeploy. LTC Rowe’s presentation on 4-31’s last deployments promises to be very interesting and a great tribute to our returning Polar Bears.



ANOTHER FORMER LEADER OF 4-31 PASSES ON

BENNY HASKEL DOBBS, Jr. CSM (Ret.) US ARMY On May 13, 2021, Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Benny Dobbs a former CSM of 4-31 Infantry passed away in Benson, NC. Benny, a native of Monticello, KY, entered the U.S. Army on March 11, 1986 and proudly served his country for over 30 years. He earned the respect of his troops and leaders alike. Benny had numerous combat deployments to include Operation Just Cause, Desert Shield/Storm, and twice each to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Over the course of his career, he earned the highest of awards such as the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and two awards of the Combat Infantryman Badge. CSM Dobbs retired from active-duty service on July 31, 2016, where he spent time with his family which were the center of his world. With all the accolades that Benny had earned while serving his country, he would tell you “It’s all about taking care of your Soldiers!” He would take care of his troops as his family and with the same resilience and perseverance that gained him the respect from all that knew him. Not only was he a Soldier’s soldier, but he was a man of God and a devoted husband to his wife of 35 years, Carol Sue (Roberts) Dobbs.



KOREAN WAR – 1953 – THE BLOODIEST YEAR

(edited and extracted from the book “The 31st Infantry Regiment” Chapter 16, pages 227-229)

In 1953, as the Korean War was slowly moving toward an end of active combat and a cease fire was being slowly negotiated in Panmunjum. Because of the difficult and slow negotiating process each side of the conflict (Chinese and North Korean Army and the United Nations Forces), used the battlefield and battlefield actions as a way of enhancing or influencing their bargaining position at the table. This was especially true for the Chinese Forces facing the 7th US Infantry Division and the 31st US Infantry Regiment. In early 1953, the 31st Infantry was online in defensive positions on and around Pork Chop Hill, Old Baldy, and a series of observations points (OPs) and north and south of these two key pieces of terrain. The fierce fighting in this area of the war went on for over six months with constant attacks by Chinese units to take control of the terrain and the 7th Division counterattacking with companies and platoons of the 31st and 17th Infantry regiments to retake all or portions of these battle areas.

The last action of the war for the Polar Bears came on 26-27 July 1953 at OPs Westview and Dale overlooking the Chorwon Valley. The OPs were held respectively by K and I Companies of the 31st Infantry. Westview was a low, bald knob connected to Old Baldy by a saddle ridge. It was only large enough to accommodate a platoon, but the Chinese were determined to take it. They came charging up the hill three nights before the ceasefire was to take effect, lugging huge boxes of ammo and rations, giving every indication that they intended to take the hill and keep it. Pouring wave after wave up the hill, they took half of the hill, but L Company counterattacked, driving them back down the trench line in close quarters combat with grenades, small arms, and occasional rifle butts. When their grip on the last section of trench was broken, the survivors scurried across the barren 200-yards long saddle back to the safety of Chinese lines on Old Baldy. There the remnants of the Chinese forces that were still exposed were chopped to pieces by artillery. For the next two nights, Chinese units probed Westview again and again, losing more men in the process. On Monday night, the defenders, some of whom had hardly slept for four days, felt sure the Chinese would come again to try to retrieve bodies of their dead. At 9:45 p.m., the “Order” came to cease all firing. A minute later, an outguard warned, “They’re coming, the Chinks are coming down.” No one fired. Weapons that would have been used without hesitation any night before were silent. There was no shouting, no jubilation, only a few muttered prayers and handshakes between men who had seen too many others carried from the battlefield. Suddenly there was peace.

Membership Application–31st US Infantry Regiment Association



First Name		Nickname		Middle Initial	Last Name
Street Address		City		State	Zip Code
E-mailladdress		Alternate E-mail Address			
Please fill in as much information about your service/connection with the 31st Infantry Regiment as possible:					
Platoon_____Company____Battalion_____					
Highest Award Earned					
Rank & Duty Position when serving with the 31st Regiment				Rank When Retired/Separated	

Where did you serve with the 31st?	When?
Philippine	
Japan	
Korea	
Vietnam	
Iraq	
Afghanistan	
Other Overseas	
USA	

Membership Desired

Life Membership

Active Duty __\$25

Age 49 & under __\$60

Age 50 – 59 __\$45

Age 60 & over __\$35

Associate Life __\$25

Member (family)

Make your check out to **31st Inf Regt Assn** and mail it to the Membership Chairman:
Jim Tierney, 1484 Loretta Drive, Penn Hills, PA 15235.

Registration Form Reunion 2021 - Rock Island, IL
31st US Infantry Regiment Association
September 18-22, 2021

Name: _____

Guest(s): _____

Home Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Company & Battalion of the 31st Infantry: _____ When: _____

If active duty, Current Rank: _____ Post stationed at: _____

Served in Combat Zone: Yes / No (Circle) If Yes, where: _____

Will you be staying at Holiday Inn Rock Island Yes / No (Circle)?

Have a car at the reunion? Yes / No If needed, are you willing to assist in local driving? Yes / No

<u>Reunion Activity</u>	<u>Cost per Person</u>	<u>X # Participating</u>	<u>=</u>	<u>Event Cost</u>
Reunion Registration	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Arrival Dinner	\$27	x _____		\$ _____
Rock Island Arsenal Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Celebration Dinner Cruise	\$60	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Banquet	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
John Deere Factory Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Grand Total				\$ _____

Make checks payable to: **31st US Infantry Regiment Association**
ATTN: Joe DeAngelis 3035 S. El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Hotel and Travel Information: Total Cost is \$85.00/night incls tax and a Hot Breakfast every morning
Holiday Inn & Conference Center Quad City International Airport (MOL)
226 17th Street Free airport / Hotel Shuttle
Rock Island, IL 61201 Moline Airport serviced by all major carriers. www.holidayinn.com/rockisland
Reserve Room at (309-794-1212)

Suspense date for Hotel and Reunion 2021 Reservations is September 1, 2021

31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION QUARTERMASTER STORE ORDER FORM

Visit 31stinfantry.org and click on 31st Infantry Store to see a full color catalogue of these and many more items

Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

<u>Cat #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Total</u>
B 102	Book, 31st Infantry Regiment “America’s Foreign Legion” In peace and war (Includes shipping)			\$ 40.00 X__ = _____
Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form				
C 100	Coin, Commemorative, 100th Anniversary (if you order 10 or more the price is \$8.00 each).			\$ 10.00 X__ = _____
C100A	Airtight capsule for 100th Anniversary Commemorative coin	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, black <i>both the black and clear easels are for Airtight capsule with 100th</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, clear <i>Anniversary Commemorative coin or the Commemorative coin alone</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C RB 02	Cap, Royal Blue, 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT, POLAR BEARS, and crest embroidered directly	\$ 15.00	X__ = _____	
	directly on cap and US ARMY embroidered on back.			
C RB	Cap same as C RB 02 above with the addition of a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division; 10th Mountain Div) on the right side. Circle the patch you want.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
C K	<i>NEW CAP!</i> same as C RB above but in Khaki with a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division. 10th Mountain Division) on the right side. Circle the patch you want). All embroidery is subdued.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
SP	Shirt, Polo/golf w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size: S, M, L, XL White, Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 29.00 X__ = _____
SP100	Same as above with 100th Anniversary logo in <u>White only</u> Size: S, M(Sold out), L, XL			\$ 31.00 X__ = _____
	Size: 2XL \$ 33.00 X__ = _____ Size: 3XL			\$ 35.00 X__ = _____
ST	Shirt, Tee, w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size S, M, L, XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 16.00 X__ = _____
	Size 2XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 19.00 X__ = _____
	Size 3XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 21.00 X__ = _____
SLSVC	Shirt, Long Sleeve, Dress in various colors w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest above pocket. Please circle color and size Size: S, M, L, XL			\$ 30.00 X__ = _____
	Colors: Black, Navy Blue, Light Blue, Red, White, Texas Orange, Burgundy, Size 2XL			\$ 32.00 X__ = _____
	or Denim Size 3XL			\$ 36.00 X__ = _____
MS 01	Shanghai Bowl Cup, silver, 2007 reproduction of original. (Includes shipping)			
	Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form			\$165.00X__ = _____
DCL 01	Bumper sticker, 31st Infantry crest (Polar Bear), 4-3/8” tall, 4-1/4 wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 01	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), regulation size, facing set.			\$ 8.00 X__ = _____
PN 02	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), lapel/hat pin. 7/8” tall, ¾” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 73	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, lapel/hat pin. 3/8” tall, 1-1/4” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 74	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, regulation size, 1-1/4” tall, 3” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 82	Pin, Purple Heart, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 85	Pin, Silver Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 71	Pin, Bronze Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
Shipping Charges – add to your order: Orders under \$10.00 add \$2.50; For orders \$10.01 - \$25.00 add \$6.00; For orders \$25.01 - \$50.00, add \$7.00; For orders over \$50.00, add \$9.00.				SUBTOTAL \$ _____
				SHIPPING \$ _____
				Grand TOTAL \$ _____

MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO: 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

For Credit Cards (American Express, Discover, Master Card, or Visa) or Debit card (with Master Card or Visa logo) please include
NAME (on card): _____ CARD #: _____ EXP DATE: ____/____

SECURITY CODE (on back of card): _____ ZIP CODE (where credit card bill is mailed to): _____

Mail the order form and payment to: Dale Mills 337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210-9711

TAPS



Deceased members identified since Newsletter # 99, May 2021

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Carson E. Bunch, SGT, Goodman, MO, died Jan 12, 2021, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1952-1953
Stuard M. Hartman, SFC, Camarillo, CA, died May 25, 2021, Co B, 1st Bn, 1952-1953
John A. Hemphill, MG ret, Steilacoom, WA, died May 21, 2021, Cos I & K, 3rd Bn, 1952-1953
Bernard H. Hoffman, PFC, Merrick, NY, died Nov 6, 2020, Co H, 2nd Bn, 1953-1954
Rudy R. Reyes, CPL, La Puente, CA, died Oct 2, 2020, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1949-1951
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AFGHANISTAN - 2015-2016. The 4-31 mission on this tour was installation security, a mission which fragmented the battalion. Elements were scattered across the real estate that 4-31 was charged to secure.

C Company was broken up into eight elements of different sizes. During this complex deployment, the 4-31 Commander, LTC Chris Landers didn’t have control of many of these elements, even though he was tasked with battalion-level contingency plans. The largest combat action 4-31 became involved in was the Battle of Kunduz, when Islamist terrorists seized control of that city. The C Company detachment helping to secure an installation of a Special Forces A team became involved along with the SF soldiers in the Kunduz battle which lasted four intense days, during which the terrorists suffered more than 200 fatalities.

AFGHANISTAN - Autumn 2018. Based at Bagram Airfield, the battalion was the Theater Response Force for NATO’s Resolute Support operation as well as trainers for Afghan defense forces. The Battalion put together two Expeditionary Task Forces, each built around a rifle company with indirect fire and heavy communications capability. Over eighty Polar Bears earned the Combat Infantryman Badge, and all hands who served in this tour can now wear the 10th Mountain patch on their right shoulders.

AFGANISTAN - February 2021- August 2021. To support Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 4-31 was deployed to Camp Dwyer in Helmand Province and elements of the battalion were also deployed to Kuwait. The Polar Bears have been operating as the only conventional infantry unit in Afghanistan, spread out between nine different geographical locations in theater. In addition to training missions the units of the battalion were employed as a quick reaction combat forces to aid Afgan forces where needed. During the deployment, HQ and C Companies completed a 26.2-mile ruck march to show solidarity and respect for the lives the Regiment lost during the Bataan Death March.

If there’s one recurring theme in all these deployments, it’s the fragmentation of the battalion to fulfill numerous diverse missions and consequent dependence on small unit leadership from the fire team on up. Time and again this shows up in engagements with the enemy. The Polar Bears stand ready to meet the challenge of the next mission they receive and go wherever that requires.

A TOAST TO THE POLAR BEARS

Paul Kerchum is registered to attend Reunion 2021 and the “Good Lord Willing and the Creeks Don’t Rise” Paul will once again make a short presentation of his experience as a survivor of the Bataan Death March and his time as a Japanese prisoner of war during WWII.

SPECIAL REUNION NOTE: The banquet Guest Speaker at Reunion 2021 will be LTC Christopher Rowe, commander of 4-31. The unit will return from Afghanistan and Kuwait by the end of August. 4-31 is one of the last combat units deployed in Afghanistan and will be the last major unit to redeploy. LTC Rowe’s presentation on 4-31’s last deployments promises to be very interesting and a great tribute to our returning Polar Bears.



ANOTHER FORMER LEADER OF 4-31 PASSES ON

BENNY HASKEL DOBBS, Jr. CSM (Ret.) US ARMY On May 13, 2021, Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Benny Dobbs a former CSM of 4-31 Infantry passed away in Benson, NC. Benny, a native of Monticello, KY, entered the U.S. Army on March 11, 1986 and proudly served his country for over 30 years. He earned the respect of his troops and leaders alike. Benny had numerous combat deployments to include Operation Just Cause, Desert Shield/Storm, and twice each to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Over the course of his career, he earned the highest of awards such as the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and two awards of the Combat Infantryman Badge. CSM Dobbs retired from active-duty service on July 31, 2016, where he spent time with his family which were the center of his world. With all the accolades that Benny had earned while serving his country, he would tell you “It’s all about taking care of your Soldiers!” He would take care of his troops as his family and with the same resilience and perseverance that gained him the respect from all that knew him. Not only was he a Soldier’s soldier, but he was a man of God and a devoted husband to his wife of 35 years, Carol Sue (Roberts) Dobbs.



KOREAN WAR – 1953 – THE BLOODIEST YEAR

(edited and extracted from the book “The 31st Infantry Regiment” Chapter 16, pages 227-229)

In 1953, as the Korean War was slowly moving toward an end of active combat and a cease fire was being slowly negotiated in Panmunjum. Because of the difficult and slow negotiating process each side of the conflict (Chinese and North Korean Army and the United Nations Forces), used the battlefield and battlefield actions as a way of enhancing or influencing their bargaining position at the table. This was especially true for the Chinese Forces facing the 7th US Infantry Division and the 31st US Infantry Regiment. In early 1953, the 31st Infantry was online in defensive positions on and around Pork Chop Hill, Old Baldy, and a series of observations points (OPs) and north and south of these two key pieces of terrain. The fierce fighting in this area of the war went on for over six months with constant attacks by Chinese units to take control of the terrain and the 7th Division counterattacking with companies and platoons of the 31st and 17th Infantry regiments to retake all or portions of these battle areas.

The last action of the war for the Polar Bears came on 26-27 July 1953 at OPs Westview and Dale overlooking the Chorwon Valley. The OPs were held respectively by K and I Companies of the 31st Infantry. Westview was a low, bald knob connected to Old Baldy by a saddle ridge. It was only large enough to accommodate a platoon, but the Chinese were determined to take it. They came charging up the hill three nights before the ceasefire was to take effect, lugging huge boxes of ammo and rations, giving every indication that they intended to take the hill and keep it. Pouring wave after wave up the hill, they took half of the hill, but L Company counterattacked, driving them back down the trench line in close quarters combat with grenades, small arms, and occasional rifle butts. When their grip on the last section of trench was broken, the survivors scurried across the barren 200-yards long saddle back to the safety of Chinese lines on Old Baldy. There the remnants of the Chinese forces that were still exposed were chopped to pieces by artillery. For the next two nights, Chinese units probed Westview again and again, losing more men in the process. On Monday night, the defenders, some of whom had hardly slept for four days, felt sure the Chinese would come again to try to retrieve bodies of their dead. At 9:45 p.m., the “Order” came to cease all firing. A minute later, an outguard warned, “They’re coming, the Chinks are coming down.” No one fired. Weapons that would have been used without hesitation any night before were silent. There was no shouting, no jubilation, only a few muttered prayers and handshakes between men who had seen too many others carried from the battlefield. Suddenly there was peace.

Membership Application–31st US Infantry Regiment Association



First Name	Nickname	Middle Initial	Last Name	
Street Address		City	State	Zip Code
E-mailladdress		Alternate E-mail Address		
Please fill in as much information about your service/connection with the 31st Infantry Regiment as possible:				
Platoon_____Company____Battalion_____				
Highest Award Earned				
Rank & Duty Position when serving with the 31st Regiment			Rank When Retired/Separated	

Where did you serve with the 31st?	When?
Philippine	
Japan	
Korea	
Vietnam	
Iraq	
Afghanistan	
Other Overseas	
USA	

Membership Desired

Life Membership

Active Duty __\$25

Age 49 & under __\$60

Age 50 – 59 __\$45

Age 60 & over __\$35

Associate Life __\$25

Member (family)

Make your check out to **31st Inf Regt Assn** and mail it to the Membership Chairman:

Jim Tierney, 1484 Loretta Drive, Penn Hills, PA 15235.

Association Officers

Honorary Colonel of the Regiment

1425 Dartmouth Rd, Columbus, GA 31904

Commander:

215 Waterford Drive, Inman, SC 29349

Vice Commander:

1484 McGill Road, Vass, NC28394

Adjutant:

9676 159th Ct N, Jupiter, FL 33478

Treasurer:

3035 South El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Membership:

1484 Loretta Dr., Penn Hills, PA 15235

Quartermaster:

337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210

Sergeant at Arms:

5638 Camellia Ave, Sacramento, CA 95819

Historian:

2321 S. Queen St, Arlington, VA 22202

Senior Director:

108 Mershon Way, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Northeast Region: (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, NY)

3127 Cataract St, Copenhagen, NY 13626

Mid-Atlantic Region: (NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, VA, WV)

104 Cumberland Dr., Carlisle, PA 17013

Southeast Region: (NC,SC,GA,FL,AL,MS,TN,AR,LA, PR,VI)

1116 Dundee Ct ,Murfreesboro, TN 37129.

Great Lakes Region: (KY, OH, MI, IN, IL, WI)

788 Eagledale Circle, Kettering, OH 45429

Midwest Region: (MN,ND,SD,NE,IA,MO,KS, OK,TX,NM,CO)

3100 Chambers St, Sioux City, IA 51104

Western Region: (HI,AK,WA,OR,CA,NV,AZ,UT,ID, MT,WY)

1250 American Pacific Dr, Apt 214, Henderson, NV 89074

Robert “Sam” Wetzel LTG Ret (LTC, Cdr, 4th Bn, VN 1968)

706-576-4204

Charlie Tapp

H 864-473-1999

C 864 680-9165

Dan Wood

910-633-8397

Vin Zike

914-850-0095

Joe DeAngelis

208-362-9468

Jim Tierney

412-793-7214

Dale Mills

478-787-2679

Jim Jaggars

H 916-455-7879

C 916 802-7750

Grady Smith

C 703 927-6261

Ron Corson

757-253-1311

C 757-810-4135

Ivan Barker III

315-286-7696

Jim Simms

717-243-5570

Noah Halfacre

615-892-9246

John Howdeshelt

937-435-0669

John Mansfield

712-277-4498

Ron Belloli

928-380-9577

wiint322@aol.com

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(SGT,B 6th Bn,VN, 1968-69)

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(LT,E 6thBn,VN, 1970)

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(SGT, D 6th Bn,VN, 1969)

mamahowdy@yahoo.com

(LT, A&B 4th Bn, VN 1967-68)

arctic6@aol.com

(LT, C 6thBn, VN, 1967-68)

ronbob22631@gmail.com



Reunion 2021- QUAD CITIES – SEPTEMBER 18-22

REUNION 2021 – DAY ONE - (Saturday: September 18, 2021)

1200 - 1700 **Arrival** — Registration Desk/Welcome – Holiday Inn Rock Island 2nd Floor

1200 - 1700 The Association Hospitality Room – **Salon 3**

Evening: Company Dinners - On your own/Unit Dinners.

REUNION 2021 – DAY TWO - (Sunday: September 19, 2021)

0700 - 0930 Breakfast Served in Bennigan’s

0800 – 1100 Quartermaster Store Open

0900 - 1600 Registration Desk & Welcome Table open

1000 - 2100 The Association Hospitality Room – Open

1000 - 1200 Board Meeting

1130 - 1330 Lunch – You are on your own.

1600 - 2000 Visit Quad City info booth Hallway 2nd Floor

1730 - 1830 **Welcome Cocktail Reception– Hotel Ballroom** (Local Mayors to attend) (Cash Bar)

1830 - 2030 Arrival Dinner - **BBQ local Flavor Dinner** – Hotel Ballroom (Cash Bar in the Buffet Location)

REUNION 2021 - DAY THREE- (Monday: September 20, 2021)

0700 – 0930 Breakfast Served in Bennigan’s

0900 - 2100 The Association Hospitality Room Open

0900 - 1200 Registration Desk & Welcome Table - Open.

0900 - 1000 **31st Infantry Memorial Service – Salon 1&2**

1000 - 1130 General business Meeting

1130 - 1300 Lunch – Once again - You are on your own.

1200 - 1600 Quartermaster Open

1230 – 1630 Rock Island Arsenal Tour Meet in Lobby first floor

1500 - 1530 **Raffle Drawing & Silent Auction** (Last chance to bid in Silent Auction).

1700 - 2100 Celebration Belle Caption & Dance Cruise, Cruise the mighty Mississippi

REUNION 2021 - DAY FOUR - (Tuesday: September 21, 2021)

0900 - 1100 John Deere Factory and Pavilion & Store

1830 - 1835 Reunion Dinner Posting of the Colors & Invocation

1835 - 2030 Dinner – After Dinner: Announcements. Introduction, and Guest Speaker

2030 - 2200 Shanghai Bowl Ceremony and Formal Toasts to the 31st US Infantry Regiment

DEPARTURE DAY - (Wednesday: September 22, 2021) - Goodbyes and Check out



At Various Times:

Channel Cat Water
Taxi Various Sites:
\$8.00 Hop on Hop Off

At the Dinner: Salads
will be on each table –
Multiple Buffet lines
will be in service

NEWSLETTER CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Cut along dotted line. Fill in requested information and mail to The Membership Chairman, address below.

or **email** Jim Tierney with this information at jtier64999@aol.com **SUBJECT: CHANGE OF ADDRESS.**

Name: _____ Phone number if new: _____

Old Address _____ New Address _____ Mail To: _____

Street or P.O. Box _____ Street or P.O. Box _____ Jim Tierney, Membership Chairman

City/State/Zip _____ City/State/Zip _____ 1484 Loretta Drive

_____ Penn Hills, PA 15235

Registration Form Reunion 2021 - Rock Island, IL
31st US Infantry Regiment Association
September 18-22, 2021

Name: _____

Guest(s): _____

Home Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Company & Battalion of the 31st Infantry: _____ When: _____

If active duty, Current Rank: _____ Post stationed at: _____

Served in Combat Zone: Yes / No (Circle) If Yes, where: _____

Will you be staying at Holiday Inn Rock Island Yes / No (Circle)?

Have a car at the reunion? Yes / No If needed, are you willing to assist in local driving? Yes / No

<u>Reunion Activity</u>	<u>Cost per Person</u>	<u>X # Participating</u>	=	<u>Event Cost</u>
Reunion Registration	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Arrival Dinner	\$27	x _____		\$ _____
Rock Island Arsenal Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Celebration Dinner Cruise	\$60	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Banquet	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
John Deere Factory Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Grand Total				\$ _____

Make checks payable to: **31st US Infantry Regiment Association**
ATTN: Joe DeAngelis 3035 S. El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Hotel and Travel Information: Total Cost is \$85.00/night incls tax and a Hot Breakfast every morning
Holiday Inn & Conference Center Quad City International Airport (MOL)
226 17th Street Free airport / Hotel Shuttle
Rock Island, IL 61201 Moline Airport serviced by all major carriers. www.holidayinn.com/rockisland
Reserve Room at (309-794-1212)

Suspense date for Hotel and Reunion 2021 Reservations is September 1, 2021

31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION QUARTERMASTER STORE ORDER FORM

Visit 31stinfantry.org and click on 31st Infantry Store to see a full color catalogue of these and many more items

Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

<u>Cat #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Total</u>
B 102	Book, 31st Infantry Regiment “America’s Foreign Legion” In peace and war (Includes shipping)			\$ 40.00 X__ = _____
Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form				
C 100	Coin, Commemorative, 100th Anniversary (if you order 10 or more the price is \$8.00 each).			\$ 10.00 X__ = _____
C100A	Airtight capsule for 100th Anniversary Commemorative coin	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, black <i>both the black and clear easels are for Airtight capsule with 100th</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, clear <i>Anniversary Commemorative coin or the Commemorative coin alone</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C RB 02	Cap, Royal Blue, 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT, POLAR BEARS, and crest embroidered directly	\$ 15.00	X__ = _____	
	directly on cap and US ARMY embroidered on back.			
C RB	Cap same as C RB 02 above with the addition of a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division; 10th Mountain Div) on the right side. Circle the patch you want.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
C K	<i>NEW CAP!</i> same as C RB above but in Khaki with a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division. 10th Mountain Division) on the right side. Circle the patch you want). All embroidery is subdued.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
SP	Shirt, Polo/golf w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size: S, M, L, XL White, Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 29.00 X__ = _____
SP100	Same as above with 100th Anniversary logo in <u>White only</u> Size: S, M(Sold out), L, XL			\$ 31.00 X__ = _____
	Size: 2XL \$ 33.00 X__ = _____ Size: 3XL			\$ 35.00 X__ = _____
ST	Shirt, Tee, w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size S, M, L, XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 16.00 X__ = _____
	Size 2XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 19.00 X__ = _____
	Size 3XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 21.00 X__ = _____
SLSVC	Shirt, Long Sleeve, Dress in various colors w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest above pocket. Please circle color and size Size: S, M, L, XL			\$ 30.00 X__ = _____
	Colors: Black, Navy Blue, Light Blue, Red, White, Texas Orange, Burgundy, Size 2XL			\$ 32.00 X__ = _____
	or Denim Size 3XL			\$ 36.00 X__ = _____
MS 01	Shanghai Bowl Cup, silver, 2007 reproduction of original. (Includes shipping)			
	Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form			\$165.00X__ = _____
DCL 01	Bumper sticker, 31st Infantry crest (Polar Bear), 4-3/8” tall, 4-1/4 wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 01	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), regulation size, facing set.			\$ 8.00 X__ = _____
PN 02	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), lapel/hat pin. 7/8” tall, ¾” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 73	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, lapel/hat pin. 3/8” tall, 1-1/4” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 74	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, regulation size, 1-1/4” tall, 3” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 82	Pin, Purple Heart, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 85	Pin, Silver Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 71	Pin, Bronze Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
Shipping Charges – add to your order: Orders under \$10.00 add \$2.50; For orders \$10.01 - \$25.00 add \$6.00; For orders \$25.01 - \$50.00, add \$7.00; For orders over \$50.00, add \$9.00.				SUBTOTAL \$ _____
				SHIPPING \$ _____
				Grand TOTAL \$ _____

MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO: 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

For Credit Cards (American Express, Discover, Master Card, or Visa) or Debit card (with Master Card or Visa logo) please include

NAME (on card): _____ CARD #: _____ EXP DATE: ____/____

SECURITY CODE (on back of card): _____ ZIP CODE (where credit card bill is mailed to): _____

Mail the order form and payment to: Dale Mills 337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210-9711

TAPS



Deceased members identified since Newsletter # 99, May 2021

KOREA WAR

Edward R. Bolton, SSG, Crawfordville, FL, died May 16, 2021, HQ, 3rd Bn, 1950
Carson E. Bunch, SGT, Goodman, MO, died Jan 12, 2021, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1952-1953
Stuard M. Hartman, SFC, Camarillo, CA, died May 25, 2021, Co B, 1st Bn, 1952-1953
John A. Hemphill, MG ret, Steilacoom, WA, died May 21, 2021, Cos I & K, 3rd Bn, 1952-1953
Bernard H. Hoffman, PFC, Merrick, NY, died Nov 6, 2020, Co H, 2nd Bn, 1953-1954
Rudy R. Reyes, CPL, La Puente, CA, died Oct 2, 2020, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1949-1951
Robert C. Whisenhunt, CPL, Grand Junction, CO, died May 21, 2021, HQ, Rgt, 1952

Correction in date died in NL 92:

Melvin L. “Mel” Pierce, PFC, Hollister, MO, died **Aug 3, 2017**, Co I, 3rd Bn, 1950

VIETNAM

Alfred “Al” Harner, SFC, Ashland, PA, died May 24, 2021, Co C, 4th Bn, 1965-1967
Herbert F. Tipton, SP4, Deland, FL, died May 19, 2021, Co B, 4th Bn, 1965-1967

UNITED STATES

Benny H. Dodds, Jr, CSM ret, Angier, NC, died May 13, 2021, HHC, 4th Bn, Bn CSM, 2010-2012

ASSOCIATE

Robert A. Houghtby, Sr., Lively, CA, died Apr 22, 2009, Grandfather 1st SGT Arthur C. Houghtby,
POW, died May 20, 1942, in CP O'Donnell
Helen F. Mucerino, Phoenix, AZ, died Jan 6, 2014, Widow of CPL Ralph Mucerino, Co A, Korea

NEW MEMBERS

William H. “Bill” Breeton, Littlefork, MN, HHC and C Co, 4th Bn, 1967-1968

NOTE: No deceased members reported from the World War II, Pre-Korean War and Post Korean War eras.

LEADERSHIP NOTICE: The Association has leadership positions that need to be filled at the 2021 Reunion. The Board is developing a slate of officers and volunteers who have the time and the desire to join the Board of Directors are needed. Election of officers will occur at the General Membership meeting. Potential positions include Regional Director, Quartermaster, Treasurer, Adjutant, and Committee Slots. If you are willing and able to be part of the Association leadership team, please contact Charlie Tapp or Ron Corson. (Contact # - See Page 10)

VIETNAM VETS WERE NEVER PROPERLY RECOGNIZED

Richard never really talked about his time in Viet Nam, other than he had been shot by a sniper. However, he had a rather grainy, 8 x 10 black and white photo he had taken at a USO show of Ann Margret



Ann Margret in a USO Show in Vietnam

with Bob Hope in the background that was one of his treasures. A few years ago, Ann Margret was doing a book signing at a local bookstore. Richard wanted to see if he could get her to sign the treasured photo, so he arrived at the bookstore at 12 o'clock for the 7:30 signing. When I got there after work, the line went all the way around the bookstore, circled the parking lot, and disappeared behind a parking garage. Before her appearance, bookstore employees announced that she would sign only her book and no memorabilia would be permitted. Richard was disappointed but wanted to show her the photo and let her know how much those shows meant to lonely GI's so far from home.

Ann Margret came out looking as beautiful as ever

and, as second in line, it was soon Richard's turn. He presented the book for her signature and then took out the photo. When he did, there were many shouts from the employees that she would not sign it. Richard said, "I understand. I just wanted her to see it." She took one look at the photo, tears welled up in her eyes and she said, "This is one of my gentlemen from Viet Nam and I most certainly will sign his photo. I know what these men did for their country and I always have time for 'my gentlemen." With that, she pulled Richard across the table and planted a big kiss on him. She then made quite a to-do about the bravery of the young men she met over the years, how much she admired them, and how much she appreciated them. There weren't too many dry eyes among those close enough to hear. She then posed for pictures and acted as if he were the only one there.

That night was a turning point for him. He walked a little straighter and, for the first time in years, was proud to be a Vet. I'll never forget Ann Margret for her graciousness and how much that small act of kindness meant to my husband. Later at dinner, Richard was very quiet. When I asked if he'd like to talk about it, my big, strong husband broke down in tears. "That's the first time anyone ever thanked me for my time in the Army," he said.

POLAR BEAR DEPLOYMENTS SINCE 9/11

In July 2021, 4-31 Infantry redeployed home from its latest post-9/11 mission which was once again in Afghanistan. A look at the overseas deployments of 4-31 Infantry since the terrorist attacks is in order.

AFGHANISTAN 2001-2002. After the multiple attacks to our nation on September 11, 2001 elements of the 4-31 before the end of the month were on the ground in Kuwait and Qatar. The Heavy Mortar Platoon was deployed in Uzbekistan and later in Afghanistan. C Company was moved to Afghanistan from Uzbekistan and A Company from Kuwait. However, A Company was the first to draw enemy blood for the 31st Infantry for the first time since Vietnam. Before Operation Anaconda was over, the 4-31 command group deployed, and organized Operation Polar Harpoon. This resulted in firefights, the collection of many enemy documents, and the destruction of warfighting materiel. Then all elements of 4-31 headed home.

AFGHANISTAN-DJIBOUTI-IRAQ 2003-2004.

After thirteen months back at Fort Drum, 4-31 deployed again. Its elements were scattered to South Asia and Africa. Battalion Headquarters and A Company went to Afghanistan, B Company to Iraq, and C Company and the Mortar Platoon to Djibouti on the horn of Africa. Neighboring Ethiopia formed an anti-terrorism battalion and hosted a detachment of Polar Bears as trainers for the new unit. All 4-31 elements were back at Fort Drum in December 2003 except B Company. The tactical situation in Iraq required them to stay until April 2004.



IRAQ - May 2004-June 2005. 4-31 deployed to Iraq less B Company, which had just returned from an extended overseas tour a few weeks before. B Company, 1-509th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Fort Polk, joined 4-31 until B Company 4-31 could rejoin the unit in the Kadhimiya District of Baghdad. 1LT Adam Malson of A Company was the only KIA during this deployment. As he attempted to rescue a woman from a burning car, a suicide bomber detonated an explosives vest, killing Malson. In Iraq, Polar Bears manned checkpoints and ran patrols in the district. Later 4-31 soldiers secured Abu Graib Prison from potential terrorist attacks. In addition, they conducted air assaults and raids on enemy strongholds south of Baghdad. After returning to Fort Drum, 4-31 received a Meritorious Unit Commendation for its actions.

IRAQ - August 2006-November 2007. After two weeks on the ground in Kuwait, 4-31 moved through Baghdad to Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah in the heart of the Iraqi combat zone called by the press “The Triangle of Death.” As part of Operation Polar Rock Blizzard, 4-31 searched villages and along canals, recovering weapons and IED components from 125 different locations. The unit’s intense raids and road patrols received a violent response from the terrorists with IEDs wounding several Polar Bears. To control the area, 4-31 had to own Route Malibu, pocked by numerous IED craters and vehicle wreckage. A key to that was seizing and holding terrain. EOD personnel worked hard to clear the road, but the 4-31 commander, LTC Michael Infanti was medivacked when his Humvee was hit by an IED. Terrorists gradually lost the initiative in the give and take of combat, but with increasing desperation terrorists hit a night overwatch position along Route Malibu manned by D Company. Of the eight men at the site, five were KIA and three were kidnapped; their remains were eventually recovered. In response, U.S. strength in the area ramped up from 1,000 to 4,000 in less than a week after the kidnappings. The kidnapping strategy of the terrorists ended, but during the 15-month tour, the Polar Bears lost 18 soldiers. The battalion also earned a Valorous Unit Award “for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy.”

IRAQ - October 2009- June 2010. The 4-31 mission on this tour was both security and the training of Iraqi Federal Police, to prepare them to take over public order and safety. In addition, the battalion provided security for small details of American civilian teams training local Iraqi leaders. There was occasional small arms harassment but no casualties. The successful eight-month tour garnered the battalion another Meritorious Unit Citation.

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If there’s one recurring theme in all these deployments, it’s the fragmentation of the battalion to fulfill numerous diverse missions and consequent dependence on small unit leadership from the fire team on up. Time and again this shows up in engagements with the enemy. The Polar Bears stand ready to meet the challenge of the next mission they receive and go wherever that requires.

A TOAST TO THE POLAR BEARS

Paul Kerchum is registered to attend Reunion 2021 and the “Good Lord Willing and the Creeks Don’t Rise” Paul will once again make a short presentation of his experience as a survivor of the Bataan Death March and his time as a Japanese prisoner of war during WWII.

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31st Infantry Regiment Association
Jim Tierney
1484 Loretta Drive
Penn Hills, PA 15235
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Pro Patria Press



#100

August 2021

NEWSLETTER OF THE 31ST US INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

ACTING EDITOR: RON CORSON (JRCORSON@AOL.COM)

Around the Corner - Reunion 2021 - Will You be at Rock Island/Moline?

Reunion 2021 is on track. A good number of our members have already put their hat in the ring. Have you set 18 to 22 September as a priority for you and your family to be there? Time is running out. Pick up you ruck and register now. After the



long delays caused by this guy called COVID-19, let's make Reunion 2021 a time to remember. The Quad Cities located along the Mississippi is the ideal location and September is the right time to reunite as Soldiers along with our families. Make the time, make the

promise: "This Polar Bear will be there", and shout out: "You All Come to Reunion 2021. You Hear?"

HAVE YOU SENT IN YOUR REGISTRATION FORM?

So far not as good as we would like! As of 29 July, 87 members/spouses have registered for Reunion 2021. Reunion 2021 looks like it will be a great event. One that we have been waiting for since North Myrtle Beach. The Association needs to know that you and yours are planning to be there. 4-31 will return by the end of August from its deployments in Afghanistan and Kuwait. The Association will host active-duty Polar Bear Soldiers, leaders, and the Shanghai Bowl. Time is short. It's time to act to be at Reunion 2021. – **Pro Patria!**

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Vietnam Vets Never Properly Recognized - Page 5	TAPS and New Members - Page 8
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ANOTHER FORMER LEADER OF 4-31 PASSES ON

BENNY HASKEL DOBBS, Jr. CSM (Ret.) US ARMY On May 13, 2021, Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Benny Dobbs a former CSM of 4-31 Infantry passed away in Benson, NC. Benny, a native of Monticello, KY, entered the U.S. Army on March 11, 1986 and proudly served his country for over 30 years. He earned the respect of his troops and leaders alike. Benny had numerous combat deployments to include Operation Just Cause, Desert Shield/Storm, and twice each to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Over the course of his career, he earned the highest of awards such as the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and two awards of the Combat Infantryman Badge. CSM Dobbs retired from active-duty service on July 31, 2016, where he spent time with his family which were the center of his world. With all the accolades that Benny had earned while serving his country, he would tell you “It’s all about taking care of your Soldiers!” He would take care of his troops as his family and with the same resilience and perseverance that gained him the respect from all that knew him. Not only was he a Soldier’s soldier, but he was a man of God and a devoted husband to his wife of 35 years, Carol Sue (Roberts) Dobbs.



KOREAN WAR – 1953 – THE BLOODIEST YEAR

(edited and extracted from the book “The 31st Infantry Regiment” Chapter 16, pages 227-229)

In 1953, as the Korean War was slowly moving toward an end of active combat and a cease fire was being slowly negotiated in Panmunjum. Because of the difficult and slow negotiating process each side of the conflict (Chinese and North Korean Army and the United Nations Forces), used the battlefield and battlefield actions as a way of enhancing or influencing their bargaining position at the table. This was especially true for the Chinese Forces facing the 7th US Infantry Division and the 31st US Infantry Regiment. In early 1953, the 31st Infantry was online in defensive positions on and around Pork Chop Hill, Old Baldy, and a series of observations points (OPs) and north and south of these two key pieces of terrain. The fierce fighting in this area of the war went on for over six months with constant attacks by Chinese units to take control of the terrain and the 7th Division counterattacking with companies and platoons of the 31st and 17th Infantry regiments to retake all or portions of these battle areas.

The last action of the war for the Polar Bears came on 26-27 July 1953 at OPs Westview and Dale overlooking the Chorwon Valley. The OPs were held respectively by K and I Companies of the 31st Infantry. Westview was a low, bald knob connected to Old Baldy by a saddle ridge. It was only large enough to accommodate a platoon, but the Chinese were determined to take it. They came charging up the hill three nights before the ceasefire was to take effect, lugging huge boxes of ammo and rations, giving every indication that they intended to take the hill and keep it. Pouring wave after wave up the hill, they took half of the hill, but L Company counterattacked, driving them back down the trench line in close quarters combat with grenades, small arms, and occasional rifle butts. When their grip on the last section of trench was broken, the survivors scurried across the barren 200-yards long saddle back to the safety of Chinese lines on Old Baldy. There the remnants of the Chinese forces that were still exposed were chopped to pieces by artillery. For the next two nights, Chinese units probed Westview again and again, losing more men in the process. On Monday night, the defenders, some of whom had hardly slept for four days, felt sure the Chinese would come again to try to retrieve bodies of their dead. At 9:45 p.m., the “Order” came to cease all firing. A minute later, an outguard warned, “They’re coming, the Chinks are coming down.” No one fired. Weapons that would have been used without hesitation any night before were silent. There was no shouting, no jubilation, only a few muttered prayers and handshakes between men who had seen too many others carried from the battlefield. Suddenly there was peace.

Membership Application–31st US Infantry Regiment Association



First Name	Nickname	Middle Initial	Last Name	
Street Address		City	State	Zip Code
		Phone Number		
E-mailladdress		Alternate E-mail Address		
Please fill in as much information about your service/connection with the 31st Infantry Regiment as possible:				
Platoon_____Company____Battalion_____				
Highest Award Earned				
Rank & Duty Position when serving with the 31st Regiment			Rank When Retired/Separated	

Where did you serve with the 31st?	When?
Philippine	
Japan	
Korea	
Vietnam	
Iraq	
Afghanistan	
Other Overseas	
USA	

Membership Desired

Life Membership

Active Duty __\$25

Age 49 & under __\$60

Age 50 – 59 __\$45

Age 60 & over __\$35

Associate Life __\$25

Member (family)

Make your check out to **31st Inf Regt Assn** and mail it to the Membership Chairman:
Jim Tierney, 1484 Loretta Drive, Penn Hills, PA 15235.

Registration Form Reunion 2021 - Rock Island, IL
31st US Infantry Regiment Association
September 18-22, 2021

Name: _____

Guest(s): _____

Home Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Company & Battalion of the 31st Infantry: _____ When: _____

If active duty, Current Rank: _____ Post stationed at: _____

Served in Combat Zone: Yes / No (Circle) If Yes, where: _____

Will you be staying at Holiday Inn Rock Island Yes / No (Circle)?

Have a car at the reunion? Yes / No If needed, are you willing to assist in local driving? Yes / No

<u>Reunion Activity</u>	<u>Cost per Person</u>	<u>X # Participating</u>	=	<u>Event Cost</u>
Reunion Registration	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Arrival Dinner	\$27	x _____		\$ _____
Rock Island Arsenal Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Celebration Dinner Cruise	\$60	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Banquet	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
John Deere Factory Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Grand Total				\$ _____

Make checks payable to: **31st US Infantry Regiment Association**
ATTN: Joe DeAngelis 3035 S. El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Hotel and Travel Information: Total Cost is \$85.00/night incls tax and a Hot Breakfast every morning
Holiday Inn & Conference Center Quad City International Airport (MOL)
226 17th Street Free airport / Hotel Shuttle
Rock Island, IL 61201 Moline Airport serviced by all major carriers. www.holidayinn.com/rockisland
Reserve Room at (309-794-1212)

Suspense date for Hotel and Reunion 2021 Reservations is September 1, 2021

31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION QUARTERMASTER STORE ORDER FORM

Visit 31stinfantry.org and click on 31st Infantry Store to see a full color catalogue of these and many more items

Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

<u>Cat #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Total</u>
B 102	Book, 31st Infantry Regiment “America’s Foreign Legion” In peace and war (Includes shipping)			\$ 40.00 X__ = _____
Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form				
C 100	Coin, Commemorative, 100th Anniversary (if you order 10 or more the price is \$8.00 each).			\$ 10.00 X__ = _____
C100A	Airtight capsule for 100th Anniversary Commemorative coin	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, black <i>both the black and clear easels are for Airtight capsule with 100th</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, clear <i>Anniversary Commemorative coin or the Commemorative coin alone</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C RB 02	Cap, Royal Blue, 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT, POLAR BEARS, and crest embroidered directly	\$ 15.00	X__ = _____	
	directly on cap and US ARMY embroidered on back.			
C RB	Cap same as C RB 02 above with the addition of a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division; 10th Mountain Div) on the right side. Circle the patch you want.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
C K	<i>NEW CAP!</i> same as C RB above but in Khaki with a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division. 10th Mountain Division) on the right side. Circle the patch you want). All embroidery is subdued.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
SP	Shirt, Polo/golf w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size: S, M, L, XL White, Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 29.00 X__ = _____
SP100	Same as above with 100th Anniversary logo in <u>White only</u> Size: S, M(Sold out), L, XL			\$ 31.00 X__ = _____
	Size: 2XL \$ 33.00 X__ = _____ Size: 3XL			\$ 35.00 X__ = _____
ST	Shirt, Tee, w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size S, M, L, XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 16.00 X__ = _____
	Size 2XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 19.00 X__ = _____
	Size 3XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 21.00 X__ = _____
SLSVC	Shirt, Long Sleeve, Dress in various colors w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest above pocket. Please circle color and size Size: S, M, L, XL			\$ 30.00 X__ = _____
	Colors: Black, Navy Blue, Light Blue, Red, White, Texas Orange, Burgundy, Size 2XL			\$ 32.00 X__ = _____
	or Denim Size 3XL			\$ 36.00 X__ = _____
MS 01	Shanghai Bowl Cup, silver, 2007 reproduction of original. (Includes shipping)			
	Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form			\$165.00X__ = _____
DCL 01	Bumper sticker, 31st Infantry crest (Polar Bear), 4-3/8” tall, 4-1/4 wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 01	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), regulation size, facing set.			\$ 8.00 X__ = _____
PN 02	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), lapel/hat pin. 7/8” tall, ¾” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 73	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, lapel/hat pin. 3/8” tall, 1-1/4” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 74	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, regulation size, 1-1/4” tall, 3” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 82	Pin, Purple Heart, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 85	Pin, Silver Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 71	Pin, Bronze Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
Shipping Charges – add to your order: Orders under \$10.00 add \$2.50; For orders \$10.01 - \$25.00 add \$6.00; For orders \$25.01 - \$50.00, add \$7.00; For orders over \$50.00, add \$9.00.				SUBTOTAL \$ _____
				SHIPPING \$ _____
				Grand TOTAL \$ _____

MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO: 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

For Credit Cards (American Express, Discover, Master Card, or Visa) or Debit card (with Master Card or Visa logo) please include

NAME (on card): _____ CARD #: _____ EXP DATE: ____/____

SECURITY CODE (on back of card): _____ ZIP CODE (where credit card bill is mailed to): _____

Mail the order form and payment to: Dale Mills 337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210-9711

TAPS



Deceased members identified since Newsletter # 99, May 2021

KOREA WAR

Edward R. Bolton, SSG, Crawfordville, FL, died May 16, 2021, HQ, 3rd Bn, 1950
Carson E. Bunch, SGT, Goodman, MO, died Jan 12, 2021, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1952-1953
Stuard M. Hartman, SFC, Camarillo, CA, died May 25, 2021, Co B, 1st Bn, 1952-1953
John A. Hemphill, MG ret, Steilacoom, WA, died May 21, 2021, Cos I & K, 3rd Bn, 1952-1953
Bernard H. Hoffman, PFC, Merrick, NY, died Nov 6, 2020, Co H, 2nd Bn, 1953-1954
Rudy R. Reyes, CPL, La Puente, CA, died Oct 2, 2020, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1949-1951
Robert C. Whisenhunt, CPL, Grand Junction, CO, died May 21, 2021, HQ, Rgt, 1952

Correction in date died in NL 92:

Melvin L. “Mel” Pierce, PFC, Hollister, MO, died **Aug 3, 2017**, Co I, 3rd Bn, 1950

VIETNAM

Alfred “Al” Harner, SFC, Ashland, PA, died May 24, 2021, Co C, 4th Bn, 1965-1967
Herbert F. Tipton, SP4, Deland, FL, died May 19, 2021, Co B, 4th Bn, 1965-1967

UNITED STATES

Benny H. Dodds, Jr, CSM ret, Angier, NC, died May 13, 2021, HHC, 4th Bn, Bn CSM, 2010-2012

ASSOCIATE

Robert A. Houghtby, Sr., Lively, CA, died Apr 22, 2009, Grandfather 1st SGT Arthur C. Houghtby,
POW, died May 20, 1942, in CP O'Donnell
Helen F. Mucerino, Phoenix, AZ, died Jan 6, 2014, Widow of CPL Ralph Mucerino, Co A, Korea

NEW MEMBERS

William H. “Bill” Breeton, Littlefork, MN, HHC and C Co, 4th Bn, 1967-1968

NOTE: No deceased members reported from the World War II, Pre-Korean War and Post Korean War eras.

LEADERSHIP NOTICE: The Association has leadership positions that need to be filled at the 2021 Reunion. The Board is developing a slate of officers and volunteers who have the time and the desire to join the Board of Directors are needed. Election of officers will occur at the General Membership meeting. Potential positions include Regional Director, Quartermaster, Treasurer, Adjutant, and Committee Slots. If you are willing and able to be part of the Association leadership team, please contact Charlie Tapp or Ron Corson. (Contact # - See Page 10)

VIETNAM VETS WERE NEVER PROPERLY RECOGNIZED

Richard never really talked about his time in Viet Nam, other than he had been shot by a sniper. However, he had a rather grainy, 8 x 10 black and white photo he had taken at a USO show of Ann Margret



Ann Margret in a USO Show in Vietnam

with Bob Hope in the background that was one of his treasures. A few years ago, Ann Margret was doing a book signing at a local bookstore. Richard wanted to see if he could get her to sign the treasured photo, so he arrived at the bookstore at 12 o'clock for the 7:30 signing. When I got there after work, the line went all the way around the bookstore, circled the parking lot, and disappeared behind a parking garage. Before her appearance, bookstore employees announced that she would sign only her book and no memorabilia would be permitted. Richard was disappointed but wanted to show her the photo and let her know how much those shows meant to lonely GI's so far from home.

Ann Margret came out looking as beautiful as ever

and, as second in line, it was soon Richard's turn. He presented the book for her signature and then took out the photo. When he did, there were many shouts from the employees that she would not sign it. Richard said, "I understand. I just wanted her to see it." She took one look at the photo, tears welled up in her eyes and she said, "This is one of my gentlemen from Viet Nam and I most certainly will sign his photo. I know what these men did for their country and I always have time for 'my gentlemen." With that, she pulled Richard across the table and planted a big kiss on him. She then made quite a to-do about the bravery of the young men she met over the years, how much she admired them, and how much she appreciated them. There weren't too many dry eyes among those close enough to hear. She then posed for pictures and acted as if he were the only one there.

That night was a turning point for him. He walked a little straighter and, for the first time in years, was proud to be a Vet. I'll never forget Ann Margret for her graciousness and how much that small act of kindness meant to my husband. Later at dinner, Richard was very quiet. When I asked if he'd like to talk about it, my big, strong husband broke down in tears. "That's the first time anyone ever thanked me for my time in the Army," he said.

POLAR BEAR DEPLOYMENTS SINCE 9/11

In July 2021, 4-31 Infantry redeployed home from its latest post-9/11 mission which was once again in Afghanistan. A look at the overseas deployments of 4-31 Infantry since the terrorist attacks is in order.

AFGHANISTAN 2001-2002. After the multiple attacks to our nation on September 11, 2001 elements of the 4-31 before the end of the month were on the ground in Kuwait and Qatar. The Heavy Mortar Platoon was deployed in Uzbekistan and later in Afghanistan. C Company was moved to Afghanistan from Uzbekistan and A Company from Kuwait. However, A Company was the first to draw enemy blood for the 31st Infantry for the first time since Vietnam. Before Operation Anaconda was over, the 4-31 command group deployed, and organized Operation Polar Harpoon. This resulted in firefights, the collection of many enemy documents, and the destruction of warfighting materiel. Then all elements of 4-31 headed home.

AFGHANISTAN-DJIBOUTI-IRAQ 2003-2004.

After thirteen months back at Fort Drum, 4-31 deployed again. Its elements were scattered to South Asia and Africa. Battalion Headquarters and A Company went to Afghanistan, B Company to Iraq, and C Company and the Mortar Platoon to Djibouti on the horn of Africa. Neighboring Ethiopia formed an anti-terrorism battalion and hosted a detachment of Polar Bears as trainers for the new unit. All 4-31 elements were back at Fort Drum in December 2003 except B Company. The tactical situation in Iraq required them to stay until April 2004.



IRAQ - May 2004-June 2005. 4-31 deployed to Iraq less B Company, which had just returned from an extended overseas tour a few weeks before. B Company, 1-509th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Fort Polk, joined 4-31 until B Company 4-31 could rejoin the unit in the Kadhimiya District of Baghdad. 1LT Adam Malson of A Company was the only KIA during this deployment. As he attempted to rescue a woman from a burning car, a suicide bomber detonated an explosives vest, killing Malson. In Iraq, Polar Bears manned checkpoints and ran patrols in the district. Later 4-31 soldiers secured Abu Graib Prison from potential terrorist attacks. In addition, they conducted air assaults and raids on enemy strongholds south of Baghdad. After returning to Fort Drum, 4-31 received a Meritorious Unit Commendation for its actions.

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ACTING EDITOR: RON CORSON (JRCORSON@AOL.COM)

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Jeremy R. Lavallee
35 NW Main St
Douglas, MA 01516-2208



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 2021 REUNION QUAD CITIES, IL/IA 18-21 SEPTEMBER 2021



Around the Corner - Reunion 2021 - Will You be at Rock Island/Moline?

Reunion 2021 is on track. A good number of our members have already put their hat in the ring. Have you set 18 to 22 September as a priority for you and your family to be there? Time is running out. Pick up you ruck and register now. After the



long delays caused by this guy called COVID-19, let's make Reunion 2021 a time to remember. The Quad Cities located along the Mississippi is the ideal location and September is the right time to reunite as Soldiers along with our families. Make the time, make the

promise: "This Polar Bear will be there", and shout out: "You All Come to Reunion 2021. You Hear?"

HAVE YOU SENT IN YOUR REGISTRATION FORM?

So far not as good as we would like! As of 29 July, 87 members/spouses have registered for Reunion 2021. Reunion 2021 looks like it will be a great event. One that we have been waiting for since North Myrtle Beach. The Association needs to know that you and yours are planning to be there. 4-31 will return by the end of August from its deployments in Afghanistan and Kuwait. The Association will host active-duty Polar Bear Soldiers, leaders, and the Shanghai Bowl. Time is short. It's time to act to be at Reunion 2021. – **Pro Patria!**

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ANOTHER FORMER LEADER OF 4-31 PASSES ON

BENNY HASKEL DOBBS, Jr. CSM (Ret.) US ARMY On May 13, 2021, Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Benny Dobbs a former CSM of 4-31 Infantry passed away in Benson, NC. Benny, a native of Monticello, KY, entered the U.S. Army on March 11, 1986 and proudly served his country for over 30 years. He earned the respect of his troops and leaders alike. Benny had numerous combat deployments to include Operation Just Cause, Desert Shield/Storm, and twice each to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Over the course of his career, he earned the highest of awards such as the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and two awards of the Combat Infantryman Badge. CSM Dobbs retired from active-duty service on July 31, 2016, where he spent time with his family which were the center of his world. With all the accolades that Benny had earned while serving his country, he would tell you “It’s all about taking care of your Soldiers!” He would take care of his troops as his family and with the same resilience and perseverance that gained him the respect from all that knew him. Not only was he a Soldier’s soldier, but he was a man of God and a devoted husband to his wife of 35 years, Carol Sue (Roberts) Dobbs.



KOREAN WAR – 1953 – THE BLOODIEST YEAR

(edited and extracted from the book “The 31st Infantry Regiment” Chapter 16, pages 227-229)

In 1953, as the Korean War was slowly moving toward an end of active combat and a cease fire was being slowly negotiated in Panmunjum. Because of the difficult and slow negotiating process each side of the conflict (Chinese and North Korean Army and the United Nations Forces), used the battlefield and battlefield actions as a way of enhancing or influencing their bargaining position at the table. This was especially true for the Chinese Forces facing the 7th US Infantry Division and the 31st US Infantry Regiment. In early 1953, the 31st Infantry was online in defensive positions on and around Pork Chop Hill, Old Baldy, and a series of observations points (OPs) and north and south of these two key pieces of terrain. The fierce fighting in this area of the war went on for over six months with constant attacks by Chinese units to take control of the terrain and the 7th Division counterattacking with companies and platoons of the 31st and 17th Infantry regiments to retake all or portions of these battle areas.

The last action of the war for the Polar Bears came on 26-27 July 1953 at OPs Westview and Dale overlooking the Chorwon Valley. The OPs were held respectively by K and I Companies of the 31st Infantry. Westview was a low, bald knob connected to Old Baldy by a saddle ridge. It was only large enough to accommodate a platoon, but the Chinese were determined to take it. They came charging up the hill three nights before the ceasefire was to take effect, lugging huge boxes of ammo and rations, giving every indication that they intended to take the hill and keep it. Pouring wave after wave up the hill, they took half of the hill, but L Company counterattacked, driving them back down the trench line in close quarters combat with grenades, small arms, and occasional rifle butts. When their grip on the last section of trench was broken, the survivors scurried across the barren 200-yards long saddle back to the safety of Chinese lines on Old Baldy. There the remnants of the Chinese forces that were still exposed were chopped to pieces by artillery. For the next two nights, Chinese units probed Westview again and again, losing more men in the process. On Monday night, the defenders, some of whom had hardly slept for four days, felt sure the Chinese would come again to try to retrieve bodies of their dead. At 9:45 p.m., the “Order” came to cease all firing. A minute later, an outguard warned, “They’re coming, the Chinks are coming down.” No one fired. Weapons that would have been used without hesitation any night before were silent. There was no shouting, no jubilation, only a few muttered prayers and handshakes between men who had seen too many others carried from the battlefield. Suddenly there was peace.

Membership Application–31st US Infantry Regiment Association



First Name		Nickname		Middle Initial	Last Name
Street Address		City		State	Zip Code
				Phone Number	
E-mailladdress			Alternate E-mail Address		
Please fill in as much information about your service/connection with the 31st Infantry Regiment as possible:					
Platoon_____Company____Battalion_____					
Highest Award Earned					
Rank & Duty Position when serving with the 31st Regiment			Rank When Retired/Separated		

Where did you serve with the 31st?	When?
Philippine	
Japan	
Korea	
Vietnam	
Iraq	
Afghanistan	
Other Overseas	
USA	

Membership Desired

Life Membership

Active Duty __\$25

Age 49 & under __\$60

Age 50 – 59 __\$45

Age 60 & over __\$35

Associate Life __\$25

Member (family)

Make your check out to **31st Inf Regt Assn** and mail it to the Membership Chairman:
Jim Tierney, 1484 Loretta Drive, Penn Hills, PA 15235.

Registration Form Reunion 2021 - Rock Island, IL
31st US Infantry Regiment Association
September 18-22, 2021

Name: _____

Guest(s): _____

Home Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Company & Battalion of the 31st Infantry: _____ When: _____

If active duty, Current Rank: _____ Post stationed at: _____

Served in Combat Zone: Yes / No (Circle) If Yes, where: _____

Will you be staying at Holiday Inn Rock Island Yes / No (Circle)?

Have a car at the reunion? Yes / No If needed, are you willing to assist in local driving? Yes / No

<u>Reunion Activity</u>	<u>Cost per Person</u>	<u>X # Participating</u>	=	<u>Event Cost</u>
Reunion Registration	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Arrival Dinner	\$27	x _____		\$ _____
Rock Island Arsenal Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Celebration Dinner Cruise	\$60	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Banquet	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
John Deere Factory Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Grand Total				\$ _____

Make checks payable to: **31st US Infantry Regiment Association**
ATTN: Joe DeAngelis 3035 S. El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Hotel and Travel Information: Total Cost is \$85.00/night incls tax and a Hot Breakfast every morning
Holiday Inn & Conference Center Quad City International Airport (MOL)
226 17th Street Free airport / Hotel Shuttle
Rock Island, IL 61201 Moline Airport serviced by all major carriers. www.holidayinn.com/rockisland
Reserve Room at (309-794-1212)

Suspense date for Hotel and Reunion 2021 Reservations is September 1, 2021

31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION QUARTERMASTER STORE ORDER FORM

Visit 31stinfantry.org and click on 31st Infantry Store to see a full color catalogue of these and many more items

Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

<u>Cat #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Total</u>
B 102	Book, 31st Infantry Regiment “America’s Foreign Legion” In peace and war (Includes shipping)			\$ 40.00 X__ = _____
Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form				
C 100	Coin, Commemorative, 100th Anniversary (if you order 10 or more the price is \$8.00 each).			\$ 10.00 X__ = _____
C100A	Airtight capsule for 100th Anniversary Commemorative coin	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, black <i>both the black and clear easels are for Airtight capsule with 100th</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, clear <i>Anniversary Commemorative coin or the Commemorative coin alone</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C RB 02	Cap, Royal Blue, 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT, POLAR BEARS, and crest embroidered directly	\$ 15.00	X__ = _____	
	directly on cap and US ARMY embroidered on back.			
C RB	Cap same as C RB 02 above with the addition of a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat			
	patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division;			
	10th Mountain Div) on the right side. Circle the patch you want.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
C K	<i>NEW CAP!</i> same as C RB above but in Khaki with a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch			
	(Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division.			
	10th Mountain Division) on the right side. Circle the patch you want). All embroidery is subdued.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
SP	Shirt, Polo/golf w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size: S, M, L, XL White, Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 29.00 X__ = _____
SP100	Same as above with 100th Anniversary logo in <u>White only</u> Size: S, M(Sold out), L, XL			\$ 31.00 X__ = _____
	Size: 2XL \$ 33.00 X__ = _____ Size: 3XL			\$ 35.00 X__ = _____
ST	Shirt, Tee, w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size S, M, L, XL Light Blue, Navy Blue \$ 16.00 X__ = _____			
	Size 2XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 19.00 X__ = _____
	Size 3XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 21.00 X__ = _____
SLSVC	Shirt, Long Sleeve, Dress in various colors w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and			
	polar bear crest on left chest above pocket. Please circle color and size Size: S, M, L, XL			\$ 30.00 X__ = _____
	Colors: Black, Navy Blue, Light Blue, Red, White, Texas Orange, Burgundy, Size 2XL			\$ 32.00 X__ = _____
	or Denim Size 3XL			\$ 36.00 X__ = _____
MS 01	Shanghai Bowl Cup, silver, 2007 reproduction of original. (Includes shipping)			
	Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form			\$165.00X__ = _____
DCL 01	Bumper sticker, 31st Infantry crest (Polar Bear), 4-3/8” tall, 4-1/4 wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 01	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), regulation size, facing set.			\$ 8.00 X__ = _____
PN 02	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), lapel/hat pin. 7/8” tall, ¾” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 73	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, lapel/hat pin. 3/8” tall, 1-1/4” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 74	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, regulation size, 1-1/4” tall, 3” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 82	Pin, Purple Heart, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 85	Pin, Silver Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 71	Pin, Bronze Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
Shipping Charges – add to your order: Orders under \$10.00 add \$2.50; For orders \$10.01 - \$25.00				SUBTOTAL \$ _____
add \$6.00; For orders \$25.01 - \$50.00, add \$7.00; For orders over \$50.00, add \$9.00.				SHIPPING \$ _____
				Grand TOTAL \$ _____

MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO: **31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION**

For Credit Cards (American Express, Discover, Master Card, or Visa) or Debit card (with Master Card or Visa logo) please include

NAME (on card): _____ CARD #: _____ EXP DATE: ____/____

SECURITY CODE (on back of card): _____ ZIP CODE (where credit card bill is mailed to): _____

Mail the order form and payment to: Dale Mills 337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210-9711

TAPS



Deceased members identified since Newsletter # 99, May 2021

KOREA WAR

Edward R. Bolton, SSG, Crawfordville, FL, died May 16, 2021, HQ, 3rd Bn, 1950
Carson E. Bunch, SGT, Goodman, MO, died Jan 12, 2021, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1952-1953
Stuard M. Hartman, SFC, Camarillo, CA, died May 25, 2021, Co B, 1st Bn, 1952-1953
John A. Hemphill, MG ret, Steilacoom, WA, died May 21, 2021, Cos I & K, 3rd Bn, 1952-1953
Bernard H. Hoffman, PFC, Merrick, NY, died Nov 6, 2020, Co H, 2nd Bn, 1953-1954
Rudy R. Reyes, CPL, La Puente, CA, died Oct 2, 2020, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1949-1951
Robert C. Whisenhunt, CPL, Grand Junction, CO, died May 21, 2021, HQ, Rgt, 1952

Correction in date died in NL 92:

Melvin L. “Mel” Pierce, PFC, Hollister, MO, died **Aug 3, 2017**, Co I, 3rd Bn, 1950

VIETNAM

Alfred “Al” Harner, SFC, Ashland, PA, died May 24, 2021, Co C, 4th Bn, 1965-1967
Herbert F. Tipton, SP4, Deland, FL, died May 19, 2021, Co B, 4th Bn, 1965-1967

UNITED STATES

Benny H. Dodds, Jr, CSM ret, Angier, NC, died May 13, 2021, HHC, 4th Bn, Bn CSM, 2010-2012

ASSOCIATE

Robert A. Houghtby, Sr., Lively, CA, died Apr 22, 2009, Grandfather 1st SGT Arthur C. Houghtby,
POW, died May 20, 1942, in CP O'Donnell
Helen F. Mucerino, Phoenix, AZ, died Jan 6, 2014, Widow of CPL Ralph Mucerino, Co A, Korea

NEW MEMBERS

William H. “Bill” Breeton, Littlefork, MN, HHC and C Co, 4th Bn, 1967-1968

NOTE: No deceased members reported from the World War II, Pre-Korean War and Post Korean War eras.

LEADERSHIP NOTICE: The Association has leadership positions that need to be filled at the 2021 Reunion. The Board is developing a slate of officers and volunteers who have the time and the desire to join the Board of Directors are needed. Election of officers will occur at the General Membership meeting. Potential positions include Regional Director, Quartermaster, Treasurer, Adjutant, and Committee Slots. If you are willing and able to be part of the Association leadership team, please contact Charlie Tapp or Ron Corson. (Contact # - See Page 10)

VIETNAM VETS WERE NEVER PROPERLY RECOGNIZED

Richard never really talked about his time in Viet Nam, other than he had been shot by a sniper. However, he had a rather grainy, 8 x 10 black and white photo he had taken at a USO show of Ann Margret



Ann Margret in a USO Show in Vietnam

with Bob Hope in the background that was one of his treasures. A few years ago, Ann Margret was doing a book signing at a local bookstore. Richard wanted to see if he could get her to sign the treasured photo, so he arrived at the bookstore at 12 o'clock for the 7:30 signing. When I got there after work, the line went all the way around the bookstore, circled the parking lot, and disappeared behind a parking garage. Before her appearance, bookstore employees announced that she would sign only her book and no memorabilia would be permitted. Richard was disappointed but wanted to show her the photo and let her know how much those shows meant to lonely GI's so far from home.

Ann Margret came out looking as beautiful as ever

and, as second in line, it was soon Richard's turn. He presented the book for her signature and then took out the photo. When he did, there were many shouts from the employees that she would not sign it. Richard said, "I understand. I just wanted her to see it." She took one look at the photo, tears welled up in her eyes and she said, "This is one of my gentlemen from Viet Nam and I most certainly will sign his photo. I know what these men did for their country and I always have time for 'my gentlemen.'" With that, she pulled Richard across the table and planted a big kiss on him. She then made quite a to-do about the bravery of the young men she met over the years, how much she admired them, and how much she appreciated them. There weren't too many dry eyes among those close enough to hear. She then posed for pictures and acted as if he were the only one there.

That night was a turning point for him. He walked a little straighter and, for the first time in years, was proud to be a Vet. I'll never forget Ann Margret for her graciousness and how much that small act of kindness meant to my husband. Later at dinner, Richard was very quiet. When I asked if he'd like to talk about it, my big, strong husband broke down in tears. "That's the first time anyone ever thanked me for my time in the Army," he said.

POLAR BEAR DEPLOYMENTS SINCE 9/11

In July 2021, 4-31 Infantry redeployed home from its latest post-9/11 mission which was once again in Afghanistan. A look at the overseas deployments of 4-31 Infantry since the terrorist attacks is in order.

AFGHANISTAN 2001-2002. After the multiple attacks to our nation on September 11, 2001 elements of the 4-31 before the end of the month were on the ground in Kuwait and Qatar. The Heavy Mortar Platoon was deployed in Uzbekistan and later in Afghanistan. C Company was moved to Afghanistan from Uzbekistan and A Company from Kuwait. However, A Company was the first to draw enemy blood for the 31st Infantry for the first time since Vietnam. Before Operation Anaconda was over, the 4-31 command group deployed, and organized Operation Polar Harpoon. This resulted in firefights, the collection of many enemy documents, and the destruction of warfighting materiel. Then all elements of 4-31 headed home.

AFGHANISTAN-DJIBOUTI-IRAQ 2003-2004.

After thirteen months back at Fort Drum, 4-31 deployed again. Its elements were scattered to South Asia and Africa. Battalion Headquarters and A Company went to Afghanistan, B Company to Iraq, and C Company and the Mortar Platoon to Djibouti on the horn of Africa. Neighboring Ethiopia formed an anti-terrorism battalion and hosted a detachment of Polar Bears as trainers for the new unit. All 4-31 elements were back at Fort Drum in December 2003 except B Company. The tactical situation in Iraq required them to stay until April 2004.



IRAQ - May 2004-June 2005. 4-31 deployed to Iraq less B Company, which had just returned from an extended overseas tour a few weeks before. B Company, 1-509th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Fort Polk, joined 4-31 until B Company 4-31 could rejoin the unit in the Kadhimiya District of Baghdad. 1LT Adam Malson of A Company was the only KIA during this deployment. As he attempted to rescue a woman from a burning car, a suicide bomber detonated an explosives vest, killing Malson. In Iraq, Polar Bears manned checkpoints and ran patrols in the district. Later 4-31 soldiers secured Abu Graib Prison from potential terrorist attacks. In addition, they conducted air assaults and raids on enemy strongholds south of Baghdad. After returning to Fort Drum, 4-31 received a Meritorious Unit Commendation for its actions.

IRAQ - August 2006-November 2007. After two weeks on the ground in Kuwait, 4-31 moved through Baghdad to Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah in the heart of the Iraqi combat zone called by the press “The Triangle of Death.” As part of Operation Polar Rock Blizzard, 4-31 searched villages and along canals, recovering weapons and IED components from 125 different locations. The unit’s intense raids and road patrols received a violent response from the terrorists with IEDs wounding several Polar Bears. To control the area, 4-31 had to own Route Malibu, pocked by numerous IED craters and vehicle wreckage. A key to that was seizing and holding terrain. EOD personnel worked hard to clear the road, but the 4-31 commander, LTC Michael Infanti was medivacked when his Humvee was hit by an IED. Terrorists gradually lost the initiative in the give and take of combat, but with increasing desperation terrorists hit a night overwatch position along Route Malibu manned by D Company. Of the eight men at the site, five were KIA and three were kidnapped; their remains were eventually recovered. In response, U.S. strength in the area ramped up from 1,000 to 4,000 in less than a week after the kidnappings. The kidnapping strategy of the terrorists ended, but during the 15-month tour, the Polar Bears lost 18 soldiers. The battalion also earned a Valorous Unit Award “for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy.”

IRAQ - October 2009- June 2010. The 4-31 mission on this tour was both security and the training of Iraqi Federal Police, to prepare them to take over public order and safety. In addition, the battalion provided security for small details of American civilian teams training local Iraqi leaders. There was occasional small arms harassment but no casualties. The successful eight-month tour garnered the battalion another Meritorious Unit Citation.

AFGHANISTAN - 2015-2016. The 4-31 mission on this tour was installation security, a mission which fragmented the battalion. Elements were scattered across the real estate that 4-31 was charged to secure.

C Company was broken up into eight elements of different sizes. During this complex deployment, the 4-31 Commander, LTC Chris Landers didn’t have control of many of these elements, even though he was tasked with battalion-level contingency plans. The largest combat action 4-31 became involved in was the Battle of Kunduz, when Islamist terrorists seized control of that city. The C Company detachment helping to secure an installation of a Special Forces A team became involved along with the SF soldiers in the Kunduz battle which lasted four intense days, during which the terrorists suffered more than 200 fatalities.

AFGHANISTAN - Autumn 2018. Based at Bagram Airfield, the battalion was the Theater Response Force for NATO’s Resolute Support operation as well as trainers for Afghan defense forces. The Battalion put together two Expeditionary Task Forces, each built around a rifle company with indirect fire and heavy communications capability. Over eighty Polar Bears earned the Combat Infantryman Badge, and all hands who served in this tour can now wear the 10th Mountain patch on their right shoulders.

AFGANISTAN - February 2021- August 2021. To support Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 4-31 was deployed to Camp Dwyer in Helmand Province and elements of the battalion were also deployed to Kuwait. The Polar Bears have been operating as the only conventional infantry unit in Afghanistan, spread out between nine different geographical locations in theater. In addition to training missions the units of the battalion were employed as a quick reaction combat forces to aid Afgan forces where needed. During the deployment, HQ and C Companies completed a 26.2-mile ruck march to show solidarity and respect for the lives the Regiment lost during the Bataan Death March.

If there’s one recurring theme in all these deployments, it’s the fragmentation of the battalion to fulfill numerous diverse missions and consequent dependence on small unit leadership from the fire team on up. Time and again this shows up in engagements with the enemy. The Polar Bears stand ready to meet the challenge of the next mission they receive and go wherever that requires.

A TOAST TO THE POLAR BEARS

Paul Kerchum is registered to attend Reunion 2021 and the “Good Lord Willing and the Creeks Don’t Rise” Paul will once again make a short presentation of his experience as a survivor of the Bataan Death March and his time as a Japanese prisoner of war during WWII.

SPECIAL REUNION NOTE: The banquet Guest Speaker at Reunion 2021 will be LTC Christopher Rowe, commander of 4-31. The unit will return from Afghanistan and Kuwait by the end of August. 4-31 is one of the last combat units deployed in Afghanistan and will be the last major unit to redeploy. LTC Rowe’s presentation on 4-31’s last deployments promises to be very interesting and a great tribute to our returning Polar Bears.



31st Infantry Regiment Association
Jim Tierney
1484 Loretta Drive
Penn Hills, PA 15235
Newsletter 100

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Pro Patria Press



#100 August 2021

NEWSLETTER OF THE 31ST US INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

ACTING EDITOR: RON CORSON (JRCORSON@AOL.COM)

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED
If the Addressee no longer
lives at the below address
Please RETURN this to the above

00008*****AUTO**MIXED AADC 320 T2 P1
Rebecca L. Doyan-Lavallee
35 NW Main St
Douglas, MA 01516-2208
|||

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 2021 REUNION QUAD CITIES, IL/IA 18-21 SEPTEMBER 2021



Around the Corner - Reunion 2021 - Will You be at Rock Island/Moline?

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HAVE YOU SENT IN YOUR REGISTRATION FORM?

So far not as good as we would like! As of 29 July, 87 members/spouses have registered for Reunion 2021. Reunion 2021 looks like it will be a great event. One that we have been waiting for since North Myrtle Beach. The Association needs to know that you and yours are planning to be there. 4-31 will return by the end of August from its deployments in Afghanistan and Kuwait. The Association will host active-duty Polar Bear Soldiers, leaders, and the Shanghai Bowl. Time is short. It's time to act to be at Reunion 2021. – **Pro Patria!**

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KOREAN WAR – 1953 – THE BLOODIEST YEAR

(edited and extracted from the book “The 31st Infantry Regiment” Chapter 16, pages 227-229)

In 1953, as the Korean War was slowly moving toward an end of active combat and a cease fire was being slowly negotiated in Panmunjum. Because of the difficult and slow negotiating process each side of the conflict (Chinese and North Korean Army and the United Nations Forces), used the battlefield and battlefield actions as a way of enhancing or influencing their bargaining position at the table. This was especially true for the Chinese Forces facing the 7th US Infantry Division and the 31st US Infantry Regiment. In early 1953, the 31st Infantry was online in defensive positions on and around Pork Chop Hill, Old Baldy, and a series of observations points (OPs) and north and south of these two key pieces of terrain. The fierce fighting in this area of the war went on for over six months with constant attacks by Chinese units to take control of the terrain and the 7th Division counterattacking with companies and platoons of the 31st and 17th Infantry regiments to retake all or portions of these battle areas.

The last action of the war for the Polar Bears came on 26-27 July 1953 at OPs Westview and Dale overlooking the Chorwon Valley. The OPs were held respectively by K and I Companies of the 31st Infantry. Westview was a low, bald knob connected to Old Baldy by a saddle ridge. It was only large enough to accommodate a platoon, but the Chinese were determined to take it. They came charging up the hill three nights before the ceasefire was to take effect, lugging huge boxes of ammo and rations, giving every indication that they intended to take the hill and keep it. Pouring wave after wave up the hill, they took half of the hill, but L Company counterattacked, driving them back down the trench line in close quarters combat with grenades, small arms, and occasional rifle butts. When their grip on the last section of trench was broken, the survivors scurried across the barren 200-yards long saddle back to the safety of Chinese lines on Old Baldy. There the remnants of the Chinese forces that were still exposed were chopped to pieces by artillery. For the next two nights, Chinese units probed Westview again and again, losing more men in the process. On Monday night, the defenders, some of whom had hardly slept for four days, felt sure the Chinese would come again to try to retrieve bodies of their dead. At 9:45 p.m., the “Order” came to cease all firing. A minute later, an outguard warned, “They’re coming, the Chinks are coming down.” No one fired. Weapons that would have been used without hesitation any night before were silent. There was no shouting, no jubilation, only a few muttered prayers and handshakes between men who had seen too many others carried from the battlefield. Suddenly there was peace.

Membership Application–31st US Infantry Regiment Association



First Name	Nickname	Middle Initial	Last Name	
Street Address		City	State	Zip Code
		Phone Number		
E-mailladdress		Alternate E-mail Address		
Please fill in as much information about your service/connection with the 31st Infantry Regiment as possible:				
Platoon_____Company____Battalion_____				
Highest Award Earned				
Rank & Duty Position when serving with the 31st Regiment			Rank When Retired/Separated	

Where did you serve with the 31st?	When?
Philippine	
Japan	
Korea	
Vietnam	
Iraq	
Afghanistan	
Other Overseas	
USA	

Membership Desired

Life Membership

Active Duty __\$25

Age 49 & under __\$60

Age 50 – 59 __\$45

Age 60 & over __\$35

Associate Life __\$25

Member (family)

Make your check out to **31st Inf Regt Assn** and mail it to the Membership Chairman:
Jim Tierney, 1484 Loretta Drive, Penn Hills, PA 15235.

Association Officers

Honorary Colonel of the Regiment

1425 Dartmouth Rd, Columbus, GA 31904

Commander:

215 Waterford Drive, Inman, SC 29349

Vice Commander:

1484 McGill Road, Vass, NC28394

Adjutant:

9676 159th Ct N, Jupiter, FL 33478

Treasurer:

3035 South El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Membership:

1484 Loretta Dr., Penn Hills, PA 15235

Quartermaster:

337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210

Sergeant at Arms:

5638 Camellia Ave, Sacramento, CA 95819

Historian:

2321 S. Queen St, Arlington, VA 22202

Senior Director:

108 Mershon Way, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Northeast Region: (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, NY)

3127 Cataract St, Copenhagen, NY 13626

Mid-Atlantic Region: (NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, VA, WV)

104 Cumberland Dr., Carlisle, PA 17013

Southeast Region: (NC,SC,GA,FL,AL,MS,TN,AR,LA, PR,VI)

1116 Dundee Ct ,Murfreesboro, TN 37129.

Great Lakes Region: (KY, OH, MI, IN, IL, WI)

788 Eagledale Circle, Kettering, OH 45429

Midwest Region: (MN,ND,SD,NE,IA,MO,KS, OK,TX,NM,CO)

3100 Chambers St, Sioux City, IA 51104

Western Region: (HI,AK,WA,OR,CA,NV,AZ,UT,ID, MT,WY)

1250 American Pacific Dr, Apt 214, Henderson, NV 89074

Robert “Sam” Wetzel LTG Ret (LTC, Cdr, 4th Bn, VN 1968)

706-576-4204

Charlie Tapp

H 864-473-1999

C 864 680-9165

Dan Wood

910-633-8397

Vin Zike

914-850-0095

Joe DeAngelis

208-362-9468

Jim Tierney

412-793-7214

Dale Mills

478-787-2679

Jim Jaggars

H 916-455-7879

C 916 802-7750

Grady Smith

C 703 927-6261

Ron Corson

757-253-1311

C 757-810-4135

Ivan Barker III

315-286-7696

Jim Simms

717-243-5570

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John Mansfield

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Ron Belloli

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(LT, C 6thBn, VN, 1967-68)

ronbob22631@gmail.com



Reunion 2021- QUAD CITIES – SEPTEMBER 18-22

REUNION 2021 – DAY ONE - (Saturday: September 18, 2021)

1200 - 1700 **Arrival** — Registration Desk/Welcome – Holiday Inn Rock Island 2nd Floor

1200 - 1700 The Association Hospitality Room – **Salon 3**

Evening: Company Dinners - On your own/Unit Dinners.

REUNION 2021 – DAY TWO - (Sunday: September 19, 2021)

0700 - 0930 Breakfast Served in Bennigan’s

0800 – 1100 Quartermaster Store Open

0900 - 1600 Registration Desk & Welcome Table open

1000 - 2100 The Association Hospitality Room – Open

1000 - 1200 Board Meeting

1130 - 1330 Lunch – You are on your own.

1600 - 2000 Visit Quad City info booth Hallway 2nd Floor

1730 - 1830 **Welcome Cocktail Reception– Hotel Ballroom** (Local Mayors to attend) (Cash Bar)

1830 - 2030 Arrival Dinner - **BBQ local Flavor Dinner** – Hotel Ballroom (Cash Bar in the Buffet Location)

REUNION 2021 - DAY THREE- (Monday: September 20, 2021)

0700 – 0930 Breakfast Served in Bennigan’s

0900 - 2100 The Association Hospitality Room Open

0900 - 1200 Registration Desk & Welcome Table - Open.

0900 - 1000 **31st Infantry Memorial Service – Salon 1&2**

1000 - 1130 General business Meeting

1130 - 1300 Lunch – Once again - You are on your own.

1200 - 1600 Quartermaster Open

1230 – 1630 Rock Island Arsenal Tour Meet in Lobby first floor

1500 - 1530 **Raffle Drawing & Silent Auction** (Last chance to bid in Silent Auction).

1700 - 2100 Celebration Belle Caption & Dance Cruise, Cruise the mighty Mississippi

REUNION 2021 - DAY FOUR - (Tuesday: September 21, 2021)

0900 - 1100 John Deere Factory and Pavilion & Store

1830 - 1835 Reunion Dinner Posting of the Colors & Invocation

1835 - 2030 Dinner – After Dinner: Announcements. Introduction, and Guest Speaker

2030 - 2200 Shanghai Bowl Ceremony and Formal Toasts to the 31st US Infantry Regiment

DEPARTURE DAY - (Wednesday: September 22, 2021) - Goodbyes and Check out



At Various Times:

Channel Cat Water
Taxi Various Sites:
\$8.00 Hop on Hop Off

At the Dinner: Salads
will be on each table –
Multiple Buffet lines
will be in service

NEWSLETTER CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Cut along dotted line. Fill in requested information and mail to The Membership Chairman, address below.

or **email** Jim Tierney with this information at jtier64999@aol.com **SUBJECT: CHANGE OF ADDRESS.**

Name: _____	Phone number if new: _____
Old Address _____	New Address _____
Street or P.O. Box _____	Street or P.O. Box _____
City/State/Zip _____	City/State/Zip _____
	Mail To: Jim Tierney, Membership Chairman 1484 Loretta Drive Penn Hills, PA 15235

Registration Form Reunion 2021 - Rock Island, IL
31st US Infantry Regiment Association
September 18-22, 2021

Name: _____

Guest(s): _____

Home Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Company & Battalion of the 31st Infantry: _____ When: _____

If active duty, Current Rank: _____ Post stationed at: _____

Served in Combat Zone: Yes / No (Circle) If Yes, where: _____

Will you be staying at Holiday Inn Rock Island Yes / No (Circle)?

Have a car at the reunion? Yes / No If needed, are you willing to assist in local driving? Yes / No

<u>Reunion Activity</u>	<u>Cost per Person</u>	<u>X # Participating</u>	=	<u>Event Cost</u>
Reunion Registration	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Arrival Dinner	\$27	x _____		\$ _____
Rock Island Arsenal Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Celebration Dinner Cruise	\$60	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Banquet	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
John Deere Factory Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Grand Total				\$ _____

Make checks payable to: **31st US Infantry Regiment Association**
ATTN: Joe DeAngelis 3035 S. El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Hotel and Travel Information: Total Cost is \$85.00/night incls tax and a Hot Breakfast every morning
Holiday Inn & Conference Center Quad City International Airport (MOL)
226 17th Street Free airport / Hotel Shuttle
Rock Island, IL 61201 Moline Airport serviced by all major carriers. www.holidayinn.com/rockisland
Reserve Room at (309-794-1212)

Suspense date for Hotel and Reunion 2021 Reservations is September 1, 2021

31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION QUARTERMASTER STORE ORDER FORM

Visit 31stinfantry.org and click on 31st Infantry Store to see a full color catalogue of these and many more items

Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

<u>Cat #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Total</u>
B 102	Book, 31st Infantry Regiment “America’s Foreign Legion” In peace and war (Includes shipping)			\$ 40.00 X__ = _____
Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form				
C 100	Coin, Commemorative, 100th Anniversary (if you order 10 or more the price is \$8.00 each).			\$ 10.00 X__ = _____
C100A	Airtight capsule for 100th Anniversary Commemorative coin	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, black <i>both the black and clear easels are for Airtight capsule with 100th</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, clear <i>Anniversary Commemorative coin or the Commemorative coin alone</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C RB 02	Cap, Royal Blue, 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT, POLAR BEARS, and crest embroidered directly	\$ 15.00	X__ = _____	
	directly on cap and US ARMY embroidered on back.			
C RB	Cap same as C RB 02 above with the addition of a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division; 10th Mountain Div) on the right side. Circle the patch you want.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
C K	<i>NEW CAP!</i> same as C RB above but in Khaki with a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division. 10th Mountain Division) on the right side. Circle the patch you want). All embroidery is subdued.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
SP	Shirt, Polo/golf w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size: S, M, L, XL White, Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 29.00 X__ = _____
SP100	Same as above with 100th Anniversary logo in <u>White only</u> Size: S, M(Sold out), L, XL			\$ 31.00 X__ = _____
	Size: 2XL \$ 33.00 X__ = _____ Size: 3XL			\$ 35.00 X__ = _____
ST	Shirt, Tee, w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size S, M, L, XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 16.00 X__ = _____
	Size 2XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 19.00 X__ = _____
	Size 3XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 21.00 X__ = _____
SLSVC	Shirt, Long Sleeve, Dress in various colors w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest above pocket. Please circle color and size Size: S, M, L, XL			\$ 30.00 X__ = _____
	Colors: Black, Navy Blue, Light Blue, Red, White, Texas Orange, Burgundy, Size 2XL			\$ 32.00 X__ = _____
	or Denim Size 3XL			\$ 36.00 X__ = _____
MS 01	Shanghai Bowl Cup, silver, 2007 reproduction of original. (Includes shipping)			
	Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form			\$165.00X__ = _____
DCL 01	Bumper sticker, 31st Infantry crest (Polar Bear), 4-3/8” tall, 4-1/4 wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 01	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), regulation size, facing set.			\$ 8.00 X__ = _____
PN 02	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), lapel/hat pin. 7/8” tall, ¾” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 73	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, lapel/hat pin. 3/8” tall, 1-1/4” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 74	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, regulation size, 1-1/4” tall, 3” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 82	Pin, Purple Heart, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 85	Pin, Silver Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 71	Pin, Bronze Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
Shipping Charges – add to your order: Orders under \$10.00 add \$2.50; For orders \$10.01 - \$25.00 add \$6.00; For orders \$25.01 - \$50.00, add \$7.00; For orders over \$50.00, add \$9.00.				SUBTOTAL \$ _____
				SHIPPING \$ _____
				Grand TOTAL \$ _____

MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO: **31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION**

For Credit Cards (American Express, Discover, Master Card, or Visa) or Debit card (with Master Card or Visa logo) please include
NAME (on card): _____ CARD #: _____ EXP DATE: ____/____

SECURITY CODE (on back of card): _____ ZIP CODE (where credit card bill is mailed to): _____

Mail the order form and payment to: Dale Mills 337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210-9711

TAPS



Deceased members identified since Newsletter # 99, May 2021

KOREA WAR

Edward R. Bolton, SSG, Crawfordville, FL, died May 16, 2021, HQ, 3rd Bn, 1950
Carson E. Bunch, SGT, Goodman, MO, died Jan 12, 2021, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1952-1953
Stuard M. Hartman, SFC, Camarillo, CA, died May 25, 2021, Co B, 1st Bn, 1952-1953
John A. Hemphill, MG ret, Steilacoom, WA, died May 21, 2021, Cos I & K, 3rd Bn, 1952-1953
Bernard H. Hoffman, PFC, Merrick, NY, died Nov 6, 2020, Co H, 2nd Bn, 1953-1954
Rudy R. Reyes, CPL, La Puente, CA, died Oct 2, 2020, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1949-1951
Robert C. Whisenhunt, CPL, Grand Junction, CO, died May 21, 2021, HQ, Rgt, 1952

Correction in date died in NL 92:

Melvin L. “Mel” Pierce, PFC, Hollister, MO, died **Aug 3, 2017**, Co I, 3rd Bn, 1950

VIETNAM

Alfred “Al” Harner, SFC, Ashland, PA, died May 24, 2021, Co C, 4th Bn, 1965-1967
Herbert F. Tipton, SP4, Deland, FL, died May 19, 2021, Co B, 4th Bn, 1965-1967

UNITED STATES

Benny H. Dodds, Jr, CSM ret, Angier, NC, died May 13, 2021, HHC, 4th Bn, Bn CSM, 2010-2012

ASSOCIATE

Robert A. Houghtby, Sr., Lively, CA, died Apr 22, 2009, Grandfather 1st SGT Arthur C. Houghtby, POW, died May 20, 1942, in CP O'Donnell
Helen F. Mucerino, Phoenix, AZ, died Jan 6, 2014, Widow of CPL Ralph Mucerino, Co A, Korea

NEW MEMBERS

William H. “Bill” Breeton, Littlefork, MN, HHC and C Co, 4th Bn, 1967-1968

NOTE: No deceased members reported from the World War II, Pre-Korean War and Post Korean War eras.

LEADERSHIP NOTICE: The Association has leadership positions that need to be filled at the 2021 Reunion. The Board is developing a slate of officers and volunteers who have the time and the desire to join the Board of Directors are needed. Election of officers will occur at the General Membership meeting. Potential positions include Regional Director, Quartermaster, Treasurer, Adjutant, and Committee Slots. If you are willing and able to be part of the Association leadership team, please contact Charlie Tapp or Ron Corson. (Contact # - See Page 10)

VIETNAM VETS WERE NEVER PROPERLY RECOGNIZED

Richard never really talked about his time in Viet Nam, other than he had been shot by a sniper. However, he had a rather grainy, 8 x 10 black and white photo he had taken at a USO show of Ann Margret



Ann Margret in a USO Show in Vietnam

with Bob Hope in the background that was one of his treasures. A few years ago, Ann Margret was doing a book signing at a local bookstore. Richard wanted to see if he could get her to sign the treasured photo, so he arrived at the bookstore at 12 o'clock for the 7:30 signing. When I got there after work, the line went all the way around the bookstore, circled the parking lot, and disappeared behind a parking garage. Before her appearance, bookstore employees announced that she would sign only her book and no memorabilia would be permitted. Richard was disappointed but wanted to show her the photo and let her know how much those shows meant to lonely GI's so far from home.

Ann Margret came out looking as beautiful as ever

and, as second in line, it was soon Richard's turn. He presented the book for her signature and then took out the photo. When he did, there were many shouts from the employees that she would not sign it. Richard said, "I understand. I just wanted her to see it." She took one look at the photo, tears welled up in her eyes and she said, "This is one of my gentlemen from Viet Nam and I most certainly will sign his photo. I know what these men did for their country and I always have time for 'my gentlemen.'" With that, she pulled Richard across the table and planted a big kiss on him. She then made quite a to-do about the bravery of the young men she met over the years, how much she admired them, and how much she appreciated them. There weren't too many dry eyes among those close enough to hear. She then posed for pictures and acted as if he were the only one there.

That night was a turning point for him. He walked a little straighter and, for the first time in years, was proud to be a Vet. I'll never forget Ann Margret for her graciousness and how much that small act of kindness meant to my husband. Later at dinner, Richard was very quiet. When I asked if he'd like to talk about it, my big, strong husband broke down in tears. "That's the first time anyone ever thanked me for my time in the Army," he said.

POLAR BEAR DEPLOYMENTS SINCE 9/11

In July 2021, 4-31 Infantry redeployed home from its latest post-9/11 mission which was once again in Afghanistan. A look at the overseas deployments of 4-31 Infantry since the terrorist attacks is in order.

AFGHANISTAN 2001-2002. After the multiple attacks to our nation on September 11, 2001 elements of the 4-31 before the end of the month were on the ground in Kuwait and Qatar. The Heavy Mortar Platoon was deployed in Uzbekistan and later in Afghanistan. C Company was moved to Afghanistan from Uzbekistan and A Company from Kuwait. However, A Company was the first to draw enemy blood for the 31st Infantry for the first time since Vietnam. Before Operation Anaconda was over, the 4-31 command group deployed, and organized Operation Polar Harpoon. This resulted in firefights, the collection of many enemy documents, and the destruction of warfighting materiel. Then all elements of 4-31 headed home.

AFGHANISTAN-DJIBOUTI-IRAQ 2003-2004.

After thirteen months back at Fort Drum, 4-31 deployed again. Its elements were scattered to South Asia and Africa. Battalion Headquarters and A Company went to Afghanistan, B Company to Iraq, and C Company and the Mortar Platoon to Djibouti on the horn of Africa. Neighboring Ethiopia formed an anti-terrorism battalion and hosted a detachment of Polar Bears as trainers for the new unit. All 4-31 elements were back at Fort Drum in December 2003 except B Company. The tactical situation in Iraq required them to stay until April 2004.



IRAQ - May 2004-June 2005. 4-31 deployed to Iraq less B Company, which had just returned from an extended overseas tour a few weeks before. B Company, 1-509th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Fort Polk, joined 4-31 until B Company 4-31 could rejoin the unit in the Kadhimiya District of Baghdad. 1LT Adam Malson of A Company was the only KIA during this deployment. As he attempted to rescue a woman from a burning car, a suicide bomber detonated an explosives vest, killing Malson. In Iraq, Polar Bears manned checkpoints and ran patrols in the district. Later 4-31 soldiers secured Abu Graib Prison from potential terrorist attacks. In addition, they conducted air assaults and raids on enemy strongholds south of Baghdad. After returning to Fort Drum, 4-31 received a Meritorious Unit Commendation for its actions.

IRAQ - August 2006-November 2007. After two weeks on the ground in Kuwait, 4-31 moved through Baghdad to Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah in the heart of the Iraqi combat zone called by the press “The Triangle of Death.” As part of Operation Polar Rock Blizzard, 4-31 searched villages and along canals, recovering weapons and IED components from 125 different locations. The unit’s intense raids and road patrols received a violent response from the terrorists with IEDs wounding several Polar Bears. To control the area, 4-31 had to own Route Malibu, pocked by numerous IED craters and vehicle wreckage. A key to that was seizing and holding terrain. EOD personnel worked hard to clear the road, but the 4-31 commander, LTC Michael Infanti was medivacked when his Humvee was hit by an IED. Terrorists gradually lost the initiative in the give and take of combat, but with increasing desperation terrorists hit a night overwatch position along Route Malibu manned by D Company. Of the eight men at the site, five were KIA and three were kidnapped; their remains were eventually recovered. In response, U.S. strength in the area ramped up from 1,000 to 4,000 in less than a week after the kidnappings. The kidnapping strategy of the terrorists ended, but during the 15-month tour, the Polar Bears lost 18 soldiers. The battalion also earned a Valorous Unit Award “for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy.”

IRAQ - October 2009- June 2010. The 4-31 mission on this tour was both security and the training of Iraqi Federal Police, to prepare them to take over public order and safety. In addition, the battalion provided security for small details of American civilian teams training local Iraqi leaders. There was occasional small arms harassment but no casualties. The successful eight-month tour garnered the battalion another Meritorious Unit Citation.

AFGHANISTAN - 2015-2016. The 4-31 mission on this tour was installation security, a mission which fragmented the battalion. Elements were scattered across the real estate that 4-31 was charged to secure.

C Company was broken up into eight elements of different sizes. During this complex deployment, the 4-31 Commander, LTC Chris Landers didn’t have control of many of these elements, even though he was tasked with battalion-level contingency plans. The largest combat action 4-31 became involved in was the Battle of Kunduz, when Islamist terrorists seized control of that city. The C Company detachment helping to secure an installation of a Special Forces A team became involved along with the SF soldiers in the Kunduz battle which lasted four intense days, during which the terrorists suffered more than 200 fatalities.

AFGHANISTAN - Autumn 2018. Based at Bagram Airfield, the battalion was the Theater Response Force for NATO’s Resolute Support operation as well as trainers for Afghan defense forces. The Battalion put together two Expeditionary Task Forces, each built around a rifle company with indirect fire and heavy communications capability. Over eighty Polar Bears earned the Combat Infantryman Badge, and all hands who served in this tour can now wear the 10th Mountain patch on their right shoulders.

AFGANISTAN - February 2021- August 2021. To support Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 4-31 was deployed to Camp Dwyer in Helmand Province and elements of the battalion were also deployed to Kuwait. The Polar Bears have been operating as the only conventional infantry unit in Afghanistan, spread out between nine different geographical locations in theater. In addition to training missions the units of the battalion were employed as a quick reaction combat forces to aid Afgan forces where needed. During the deployment, HQ and C Companies completed a 26.2-mile ruck march to show solidarity and respect for the lives the Regiment lost during the Bataan Death March.

If there’s one recurring theme in all these deployments, it’s the fragmentation of the battalion to fulfill numerous diverse missions and consequent dependence on small unit leadership from the fire team on up. Time and again this shows up in engagements with the enemy. The Polar Bears stand ready to meet the challenge of the next mission they receive and go wherever that requires.

A TOAST TO THE POLAR BEARS

Paul Kerchum is registered to attend Reunion 2021 and the “Good Lord Willing and the Creeks Don’t Rise” Paul will once again make a short presentation of his experience as a survivor of the Bataan Death March and his time as a Japanese prisoner of war during WWII.

SPECIAL REUNION NOTE: The banquet Guest Speaker at Reunion 2021 will be LTC Christopher Rowe, commander of 4-31. The unit will return from Afghanistan and Kuwait by the end of August. 4-31 is one of the last combat units deployed in Afghanistan and will be the last major unit to redeploy. LTC Rowe’s presentation on 4-31’s last deployments promises to be very interesting and a great tribute to our returning Polar Bears.



31st Infantry Regiment Association
Jim Tierney
1484 Loretta Drive
Penn Hills, PA 15235
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Pro Patria Press



#100

August 2021

NEWSLETTER OF THE 31ST US INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

ACTING EDITOR: RON CORSON (JRCORSON@AOL.COM)

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Saugus, MA 01906-2110



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 2021 REUNION QUAD CITIES, IL/IA 18-21 SEPTEMBER 2021



Around the Corner - Reunion 2021 - Will You be at Rock Island/Moline?

Reunion 2021 is on track. A good number of our members have already put their hat in the ring. Have you set 18 to 22 September as a priority for you and your family to be there? Time is running out. Pick up you ruck and register now. After the



long delays caused by this guy called COVID-19, let's make Reunion 2021 a time to remember. The Quad Cities located along the Mississippi is the ideal location and September is the right time to reunite as Soldiers along with our families. Make the time, make the

promise: "This Polar Bear will be there", and shout out: "You All Come to Reunion 2021. You Hear?"

HAVE YOU SENT IN YOUR REGISTRATION FORM?

So far not as good as we would like! As of 29 July, 87 members/spouses have registered for Reunion 2021. Reunion 2021 looks like it will be a great event. One that we have been waiting for since North Myrtle Beach. The Association needs to know that you and yours are planning to be there. 4-31 will return by the end of August from its deployments in Afghanistan and Kuwait. The Association will host active-duty Polar Bear Soldiers, leaders, and the Shanghai Bowl. Time is short. It's time to act to be at Reunion 2021. – **Pro Patria!**

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ANOTHER FORMER LEADER OF 4-31 PASSES ON

BENNY HASKEL DOBBS, Jr. CSM (Ret.) US ARMY On May 13, 2021, Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Benny Dobbs a former CSM of 4-31 Infantry passed away in Benson, NC. Benny, a native of Monticello, KY, entered the U.S. Army on March 11, 1986 and proudly served his country for over 30 years. He earned the respect of his troops and leaders alike. Benny had numerous combat deployments to include Operation Just Cause, Desert Shield/Storm, and twice each to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Over the course of his career, he earned the highest of awards such as the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and two awards of the Combat Infantryman Badge. CSM Dobbs retired from active-duty service on July 31, 2016, where he spent time with his family which were the center of his world. With all the accolades that Benny had earned while serving his country, he would tell you “It’s all about taking care of your Soldiers!” He would take care of his troops as his family and with the same resilience and perseverance that gained him the respect from all that knew him. Not only was he a Soldier’s soldier, but he was a man of God and a devoted husband to his wife of 35 years, Carol Sue (Roberts) Dobbs.



KOREAN WAR – 1953 – THE BLOODIEST YEAR

(edited and extracted from the book “The 31st Infantry Regiment” Chapter 16, pages 227-229)

In 1953, as the Korean War was slowly moving toward an end of active combat and a cease fire was being slowly negotiated in Panmunjum. Because of the difficult and slow negotiating process each side of the conflict (Chinese and North Korean Army and the United Nations Forces), used the battlefield and battlefield actions as a way of enhancing or influencing their bargaining position at the table. This was especially true for the Chinese Forces facing the 7th US Infantry Division and the 31st US Infantry Regiment. In early 1953, the 31st Infantry was online in defensive positions on and around Pork Chop Hill, Old Baldy, and a series of observations points (OPs) and north and south of these two key pieces of terrain. The fierce fighting in this area of the war went on for over six months with constant attacks by Chinese units to take control of the terrain and the 7th Division counterattacking with companies and platoons of the 31st and 17th Infantry regiments to retake all or portions of these battle areas.

The last action of the war for the Polar Bears came on 26-27 July 1953 at OPs Westview and Dale overlooking the Chorwon Valley. The OPs were held respectively by K and I Companies of the 31st Infantry. Westview was a low, bald knob connected to Old Baldy by a saddle ridge. It was only large enough to accommodate a platoon, but the Chinese were determined to take it. They came charging up the hill three nights before the ceasefire was to take effect, lugging huge boxes of ammo and rations, giving every indication that they intended to take the hill and keep it. Pouring wave after wave up the hill, they took half of the hill, but L Company counterattacked, driving them back down the trench line in close quarters combat with grenades, small arms, and occasional rifle butts. When their grip on the last section of trench was broken, the survivors scurried across the barren 200-yards long saddle back to the safety of Chinese lines on Old Baldy. There the remnants of the Chinese forces that were still exposed were chopped to pieces by artillery. For the next two nights, Chinese units probed Westview again and again, losing more men in the process. On Monday night, the defenders, some of whom had hardly slept for four days, felt sure the Chinese would come again to try to retrieve bodies of their dead. At 9:45 p.m., the “Order” came to cease all firing. A minute later, an outguard warned, “They’re coming, the Chinks are coming down.” No one fired. Weapons that would have been used without hesitation any night before were silent. There was no shouting, no jubilation, only a few muttered prayers and handshakes between men who had seen too many others carried from the battlefield. Suddenly there was peace.

Membership Application–31st US Infantry Regiment Association



First Name		Nickname		Middle Initial	Last Name
Street Address		City		State	Zip Code
				Phone Number	
E-mailladdress			Alternate E-mail Address		
Please fill in as much information about your service/connection with the 31st Infantry Regiment as possible:					
Platoon_____Company____Battalion_____					
Highest Award Earned					
Rank & Duty Position when serving with the 31st Regiment			Rank When Retired/Separated		

Where did you serve with the 31st?	When?
Philippine	
Japan	
Korea	
Vietnam	
Iraq	
Afghanistan	
Other Overseas	
USA	

Membership Desired

Life Membership

Active Duty __\$25

Age 49 & under __\$60

Age 50 – 59 __\$45

Age 60 & over __\$35

Associate Life __\$25

Member (family)

Make your check out to **31st Inf Regt Assn** and mail it to the Membership Chairman:
Jim Tierney, 1484 Loretta Drive, Penn Hills, PA 15235.

Association Officers

Honorary Colonel of the Regiment

1425 Dartmouth Rd, Columbus, GA 31904

Commander:

215 Waterford Drive, Inman, SC 29349

Vice Commander:

1484 McGill Road, Vass, NC28394

Adjutant:

9676 159th Ct N, Jupiter, FL 33478

Treasurer:

3035 South El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Membership:

1484 Loretta Dr., Penn Hills, PA 15235

Quartermaster:

337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210

Sergeant at Arms:

5638 Camellia Ave, Sacramento, CA 95819

Historian:

2321 S. Queen St, Arlington, VA 22202

Senior Director:

108 Mershon Way, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Northeast Region: (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, NY)

3127 Cataract St, Copenhagen, NY 13626

Mid-Atlantic Region: (NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, VA, WV)

104 Cumberland Dr., Carlisle, PA 17013

Southeast Region: (NC,SC,GA,FL,AL,MS,TN,AR,LA, PR,VI)

1116 Dundee Ct ,Murfreesboro, TN 37129.

Great Lakes Region: (KY, OH, MI, IN, IL, WI)

788 Eagledale Circle, Kettering, OH 45429

Midwest Region: (MN,ND,SD,NE,IA,MO,KS, OK,TX,NM,CO)

3100 Chambers St, Sioux City, IA 51104

Western Region: (HI,AK,WA,OR,CA,NV,AZ,UT,ID, MT,WY)

1250 American Pacific Dr, Apt 214, Henderson, NV 89074

Robert “Sam” Wetzel LTG Ret (LTC, Cdr, 4th Bn, VN 1968)

706-576-4204

Charlie Tapp

H 864-473-1999

C 864 680-9165

Dan Wood

910-633-8397

Vin Zike

914-850-0095

Joe DeAngelis

208-362-9468

Jim Tierney

412-793-7214

Dale Mills

478-787-2679

Jim Jaggars

H 916-455-7879

C 916 802-7750

Grady Smith

C 703 927-6261

Ron Corson

757-253-1311

C 757-810-4135

Ivan Barker III

315-286-7696

Jim Simms

717-243-5570

Noah Halfacre

615-892-9246

John Howdeshelt

937-435-0669

John Mansfield

712-277-4498

Ron Belloli

928-380-9577

wiint322@aol.com

(SSGT, D 6thBn, VN, 1970)

ctapp94@gmail.com

(CSM/4th Bn, Ft. Drum, 2000-02)

wooddr3@gmail.com

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vinzike@gmail.com

(SGT,C/6thBn,FtLewis&VN,1967-69)

jangels10@gmail.com

(SSG, A 6th Bn, VN, 1969-70)

jtier64999@aol.com

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sdalem@bellsouth.net

(SGT,B 6th Bn,VN, 1968-69)

jim@jaggars.me

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smithga@verizon.net

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(1st SGT, F&HHC 4th Bn, Ft Drum, 2012-17)

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(LT, C&HHC 4thBn, VN, 1969-70)

jnpsim@comcast.net

(LT,E 6thBn,VN, 1970)

gimlet3a@gmail.com

(SGT, D 6th Bn,VN, 1969)

mamahowdy@yahoo.com

(LT, A&B 4th Bn, VN 1967-68)

arctic6@aol.com

(LT, C 6thBn, VN, 1967-68)

ronbob22631@gmail.com



Reunion 2021- QUAD CITIES – SEPTEMBER 18-22

REUNION 2021 – DAY ONE - (Saturday: September 18, 2021)

1200 - 1700 **Arrival** — Registration Desk/Welcome – Holiday Inn Rock Island 2nd Floor

1200 - 1700 The Association Hospitality Room – **Salon 3**

Evening: Company Dinners - On your own/Unit Dinners.

REUNION 2021 – DAY TWO - (Sunday: September 19, 2021)

0700 - 0930 Breakfast Served in Bennigan’s

0800 – 1100 Quartermaster Store Open

0900 - 1600 Registration Desk & Welcome Table open

1000 - 2100 The Association Hospitality Room – Open

1000 - 1200 Board Meeting

1130 - 1330 Lunch – You are on your own.

1600 - 2000 Visit Quad City info booth Hallway 2nd Floor

1730 - 1830 **Welcome Cocktail Reception– Hotel Ballroom** (Local Mayors to attend) (Cash Bar)

1830 - 2030 Arrival Dinner - **BBQ local Flavor Dinner** – Hotel Ballroom (Cash Bar in the Buffet Location)

REUNION 2021 - DAY THREE- (Monday: September 20, 2021)

0700 – 0930 Breakfast Served in Bennigan’s

0900 - 2100 The Association Hospitality Room Open

0900 - 1200 Registration Desk & Welcome Table - Open.

0900 - 1000 **31st Infantry Memorial Service – Salon 1&2**

1000 - 1130 General business Meeting

1130 - 1300 Lunch – Once again - You are on your own.

1200 - 1600 Quartermaster Open

1230 – 1630 Rock Island Arsenal Tour Meet in Lobby first floor

1500 - 1530 **Raffle Drawing & Silent Auction** (Last chance to bid in Silent Auction).

1700 - 2100 Celebration Belle Caption & Dance Cruise, Cruise the mighty Mississippi

REUNION 2021 - DAY FOUR - (Tuesday: September 21, 2021)

0900 - 1100 John Deere Factory and Pavilion & Store

1830 - 1835 Reunion Dinner Posting of the Colors & Invocation

1835 - 2030 Dinner – After Dinner: Announcements. Introduction, and Guest Speaker

2030 - 2200 Shanghai Bowl Ceremony and Formal Toasts to the 31st US Infantry Regiment

DEPARTURE DAY - (Wednesday: September 22, 2021) - Goodbyes and Check out



At Various Times:

Channel Cat Water
Taxi Various Sites:
\$8.00 Hop on Hop Off

At the Dinner: Salads
will be on each table –
Multiple Buffet lines
will be in service

NEWSLETTER CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Cut along dotted line. Fill in requested information and mail to The Membership Chairman, address below.

or **email** Jim Tierney with this information at jtier64999@aol.com **SUBJECT: CHANGE OF ADDRESS.**

Name: _____	Phone number if new: _____
Old Address _____	New Address _____
Street or P.O. Box _____	Street or P.O. Box _____
City/State/Zip _____	City/State/Zip _____
	Mail To: Jim Tierney, Membership Chairman 1484 Loretta Drive Penn Hills, PA 15235

Registration Form Reunion 2021 - Rock Island, IL
31st US Infantry Regiment Association
September 18-22, 2021

Name: _____

Guest(s): _____

Home Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Company & Battalion of the 31st Infantry: _____ When: _____

If active duty, Current Rank: _____ Post stationed at: _____

Served in Combat Zone: Yes / No (Circle) If Yes, where: _____

Will you be staying at Holiday Inn Rock Island Yes / No (Circle)?

Have a car at the reunion? Yes / No If needed, are you willing to assist in local driving? Yes / No

<u>Reunion Activity</u>	<u>Cost per Person</u>	<u>X # Participating</u>	=	<u>Event Cost</u>
Reunion Registration	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Arrival Dinner	\$27	x _____		\$ _____
Rock Island Arsenal Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Celebration Dinner Cruise	\$60	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Banquet	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
John Deere Factory Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Grand Total				\$ _____

Make checks payable to: **31st US Infantry Regiment Association**
ATTN: Joe DeAngelis 3035 S. El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Hotel and Travel Information: Total Cost is \$85.00/night incls tax and a Hot Breakfast every morning
Holiday Inn & Conference Center Quad City International Airport (MOL)
226 17th Street Free airport / Hotel Shuttle
Rock Island, IL 61201 Moline Airport serviced by all major carriers. www.holidayinn.com/rockisland
Reserve Room at (309-794-1212)

Suspense date for Hotel and Reunion 2021 Reservations is September 1, 2021

31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION QUARTERMASTER STORE ORDER FORM

Visit 31stinfantry.org and click on 31st Infantry Store to see a full color catalogue of these and many more items

Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

<u>Cat #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Total</u>
B 102	Book, 31st Infantry Regiment “America’s Foreign Legion” In peace and war (Includes shipping)			\$ 40.00 X__ = _____
Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form				
C 100	Coin, Commemorative, 100th Anniversary (if you order 10 or more the price is \$8.00 each).			\$ 10.00 X__ = _____
C100A	Airtight capsule for 100th Anniversary Commemorative coin	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, black <i>both the black and clear easels are for Airtight capsule with 100th</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, clear <i>Anniversary Commemorative coin or the Commemorative coin alone</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C RB 02	Cap, Royal Blue, 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT, POLAR BEARS, and crest embroidered directly	\$ 15.00	X__ = _____	
	directly on cap and US ARMY embroidered on back.			
C RB	Cap same as C RB 02 above with the addition of a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division; 10th Mountain Div) on the right side. Circle the patch you want.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
C K	<i>NEW CAP!</i> same as C RB above but in Khaki with a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division. 10th Mountain Division) on the right side. Circle the patch you want). All embroidery is subdued.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
SP	Shirt, Polo/golf w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size: S, M, L, XL White, Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 29.00 X__ = _____
SP100	Same as above with 100th Anniversary logo in <u>White only</u> Size: S, M(Sold out), L, XL			\$ 31.00 X__ = _____
	Size: 2XL \$ 33.00 X__ = _____ Size: 3XL			\$ 35.00 X__ = _____
ST	Shirt, Tee, w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size S, M, L, XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 16.00 X__ = _____
	Size 2XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 19.00 X__ = _____
	Size 3XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 21.00 X__ = _____
SLSVC	Shirt, Long Sleeve, Dress in various colors w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest above pocket. Please circle color and size Size: S, M, L, XL			\$ 30.00 X__ = _____
	Colors: Black, Navy Blue, Light Blue, Red, White, Texas Orange, Burgundy, Size 2XL			\$ 32.00 X__ = _____
	or Denim Size 3XL			\$ 36.00 X__ = _____
MS 01	Shanghai Bowl Cup, silver, 2007 reproduction of original. (Includes shipping)			
	Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form			\$165.00X__ = _____
DCL 01	Bumper sticker, 31st Infantry crest (Polar Bear), 4-3/8” tall, 4-1/4 wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 01	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), regulation size, facing set.			\$ 8.00 X__ = _____
PN 02	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), lapel/hat pin. 7/8” tall, ¾” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 73	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, lapel/hat pin. 3/8” tall, 1-1/4” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 74	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, regulation size, 1-1/4” tall, 3” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 82	Pin, Purple Heart, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 85	Pin, Silver Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 71	Pin, Bronze Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
Shipping Charges – add to your order: Orders under \$10.00 add \$2.50; For orders \$10.01 - \$25.00 add \$6.00; For orders \$25.01 - \$50.00, add \$7.00; For orders over \$50.00, add \$9.00.				SUBTOTAL \$ _____
				SHIPPING \$ _____
				Grand TOTAL \$ _____

MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO: 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

For Credit Cards (American Express, Discover, Master Card, or Visa) or Debit card (with Master Card or Visa logo) please include

NAME (on card): _____ CARD #: _____ EXP DATE: ____/____

SECURITY CODE (on back of card): _____ ZIP CODE (where credit card bill is mailed to): _____

Mail the order form and payment to: Dale Mills 337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210-9711

TAPS



Deceased members identified since Newsletter # 99, May 2021

KOREA WAR

Edward R. Bolton, SSG, Crawfordville, FL, died May 16, 2021, HQ, 3rd Bn, 1950
Carson E. Bunch, SGT, Goodman, MO, died Jan 12, 2021, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1952-1953
Stuard M. Hartman, SFC, Camarillo, CA, died May 25, 2021, Co B, 1st Bn, 1952-1953
John A. Hemphill, MG ret, Steilacoom, WA, died May 21, 2021, Cos I & K, 3rd Bn, 1952-1953
Bernard H. Hoffman, PFC, Merrick, NY, died Nov 6, 2020, Co H, 2nd Bn, 1953-1954
Rudy R. Reyes, CPL, La Puente, CA, died Oct 2, 2020, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1949-1951
Robert C. Whisenhunt, CPL, Grand Junction, CO, died May 21, 2021, HQ, Rgt, 1952

Correction in date died in NL 92:

Melvin L. “Mel” Pierce, PFC, Hollister, MO, died **Aug 3, 2017**, Co I, 3rd Bn, 1950

VIETNAM

Alfred “Al” Harner, SFC, Ashland, PA, died May 24, 2021, Co C, 4th Bn, 1965-1967
Herbert F. Tipton, SP4, Deland, FL, died May 19, 2021, Co B, 4th Bn, 1965-1967

UNITED STATES

Benny H. Dodds, Jr, CSM ret, Angier, NC, died May 13, 2021, HHC, 4th Bn, Bn CSM, 2010-2012

ASSOCIATE

Robert A. Houghtby, Sr., Lively, CA, died Apr 22, 2009, Grandfather 1st SGT Arthur C. Houghtby,
POW, died May 20, 1942, in CP O'Donnell
Helen F. Mucerino, Phoenix, AZ, died Jan 6, 2014, Widow of CPL Ralph Mucerino, Co A, Korea

NEW MEMBERS

William H. “Bill” Breeton, Littlefork, MN, HHC and C Co, 4th Bn, 1967-1968

NOTE: No deceased members reported from the World War II, Pre-Korean War and Post Korean War eras.

LEADERSHIP NOTICE: The Association has leadership positions that need to be filled at the 2021 Reunion. The Board is developing a slate of officers and volunteers who have the time and the desire to join the Board of Directors are needed. Election of officers will occur at the General Membership meeting. Potential positions include Regional Director, Quartermaster, Treasurer, Adjutant, and Committee Slots. If you are willing and able to be part of the Association leadership team, please contact Charlie Tapp or Ron Corson. (Contact # - See Page 10)

VIETNAM VETS WERE NEVER PROPERLY RECOGNIZED

Richard never really talked about his time in Viet Nam, other than he had been shot by a sniper. However, he had a rather grainy, 8 x 10 black and white photo he had taken at a USO show of Ann Margret



Ann Margret in a USO Show in Vietnam

with Bob Hope in the background that was one of his treasures. A few years ago, Ann Margret was doing a book signing at a local bookstore. Richard wanted to see if he could get her to sign the treasured photo, so he arrived at the bookstore at 12 o'clock for the 7:30 signing. When I got there after work, the line went all the way around the bookstore, circled the parking lot, and disappeared behind a parking garage. Before her appearance, bookstore employees announced that she would sign only her book and no memorabilia would be permitted. Richard was disappointed but wanted to show her the photo and let her know how much those shows meant to lonely GI's so far from home.

Ann Margret came out looking as beautiful as ever

and, as second in line, it was soon Richard's turn. He presented the book for her signature and then took out the photo. When he did, there were many shouts from the employees that she would not sign it. Richard said, "I understand. I just wanted her to see it." She took one look at the photo, tears welled up in her eyes and she said, "This is one of my gentlemen from Viet Nam and I most certainly will sign his photo. I know what these men did for their country and I always have time for 'my gentlemen." With that, she pulled Richard across the table and planted a big kiss on him. She then made quite a to-do about the bravery of the young men she met over the years, how much she admired them, and how much she appreciated them. There weren't too many dry eyes among those close enough to hear. She then posed for pictures and acted as if he were the only one there.

That night was a turning point for him. He walked a little straighter and, for the first time in years, was proud to be a Vet. I'll never forget Ann Margret for her graciousness and how much that small act of kindness meant to my husband. Later at dinner, Richard was very quiet. When I asked if he'd like to talk about it, my big, strong husband broke down in tears. "That's the first time anyone ever thanked me for my time in the Army," he said.

POLAR BEAR DEPLOYMENTS SINCE 9/11

In July 2021, 4-31 Infantry redeployed home from its latest post-9/11 mission which was once again in Afghanistan. A look at the overseas deployments of 4-31 Infantry since the terrorist attacks is in order.

AFGHANISTAN 2001-2002. After the multiple attacks to our nation on September 11, 2001 elements of the 4-31 before the end of the month were on the ground in Kuwait and Qatar. The Heavy Mortar Platoon was deployed in Uzbekistan and later in Afghanistan. C Company was moved to Afghanistan from Uzbekistan and A Company from Kuwait. However, A Company was the first to draw enemy blood for the 31st Infantry for the first time since Vietnam. Before Operation Anaconda was over, the 4-31 command group deployed, and organized Operation Polar Harpoon. This resulted in firefights, the collection of many enemy documents, and the destruction of warfighting materiel. Then all elements of 4-31 headed home.

AFGHANISTAN-DJIBOUTI-IRAQ 2003-2004.

After thirteen months back at Fort Drum, 4-31 deployed again. Its elements were scattered to South Asia and Africa. Battalion Headquarters and A Company went to Afghanistan, B Company to Iraq, and C Company and the Mortar Platoon to Djibouti on the horn of Africa. Neighboring Ethiopia formed an anti-terrorism battalion and hosted a detachment of Polar Bears as trainers for the new unit. All 4-31 elements were back at Fort Drum in December 2003 except B Company. The tactical situation in Iraq required them to stay until April 2004.



IRAQ - May 2004-June 2005. 4-31 deployed to Iraq less B Company, which had just returned from an extended overseas tour a few weeks before. B Company, 1-509th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Fort Polk, joined 4-31 until B Company 4-31 could rejoin the unit in the Kadhimiya District of Baghdad. 1LT Adam Malson of A Company was the only KIA during this deployment. As he attempted to rescue a woman from a burning car, a suicide bomber detonated an explosives vest, killing Malson. In Iraq, Polar Bears manned checkpoints and ran patrols in the district. Later 4-31 soldiers secured Abu Graib Prison from potential terrorist attacks. In addition, they conducted air assaults and raids on enemy strongholds south of Baghdad. After returning to Fort Drum, 4-31 received a Meritorious Unit Commendation for its actions.

IRAQ - August 2006-November 2007. After two weeks on the ground in Kuwait, 4-31 moved through Baghdad to Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah in the heart of the Iraqi combat zone called by the press “The Triangle of Death.” As part of Operation Polar Rock Blizzard, 4-31 searched villages and along canals, recovering weapons and IED components from 125 different locations. The unit’s intense raids and road patrols received a violent response from the terrorists with IEDs wounding several Polar Bears. To control the area, 4-31 had to own Route Malibu, pocked by numerous IED craters and vehicle wreckage. A key to that was seizing and holding terrain. EOD personnel worked hard to clear the road, but the 4-31 commander, LTC Michael Infanti was medivacked when his Humvee was hit by an IED. Terrorists gradually lost the initiative in the give and take of combat, but with increasing desperation terrorists hit a night overwatch position along Route Malibu manned by D Company. Of the eight men at the site, five were KIA and three were kidnapped; their remains were eventually recovered. In response, U.S. strength in the area ramped up from 1,000 to 4,000 in less than a week after the kidnappings. The kidnapping strategy of the terrorists ended, but during the 15-month tour, the Polar Bears lost 18 soldiers. The battalion also earned a Valorous Unit Award “for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy.”

IRAQ - October 2009- June 2010. The 4-31 mission on this tour was both security and the training of Iraqi Federal Police, to prepare them to take over public order and safety. In addition, the battalion provided security for small details of American civilian teams training local Iraqi leaders. There was occasional small arms harassment but no casualties. The successful eight-month tour garnered the battalion another Meritorious Unit Citation.

AFGHANISTAN - 2015-2016. The 4-31 mission on this tour was installation security, a mission which fragmented the battalion. Elements were scattered across the real estate that 4-31 was charged to secure.

C Company was broken up into eight elements of different sizes. During this complex deployment, the 4-31 Commander, LTC Chris Landers didn’t have control of many of these elements, even though he was tasked with battalion-level contingency plans. The largest combat action 4-31 became involved in was the Battle of Kunduz, when Islamist terrorists seized control of that city. The C Company detachment helping to secure an installation of a Special Forces A team became involved along with the SF soldiers in the Kunduz battle which lasted four intense days, during which the terrorists suffered more than 200 fatalities.

AFGHANISTAN - Autumn 2018. Based at Bagram Airfield, the battalion was the Theater Response Force for NATO’s Resolute Support operation as well as trainers for Afghan defense forces. The Battalion put together two Expeditionary Task Forces, each built around a rifle company with indirect fire and heavy communications capability. Over eighty Polar Bears earned the Combat Infantryman Badge, and all hands who served in this tour can now wear the 10th Mountain patch on their right shoulders.

AFGANISTAN - February 2021- August 2021. To support Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 4-31 was deployed to Camp Dwyer in Helmand Province and elements of the battalion were also deployed to Kuwait. The Polar Bears have been operating as the only conventional infantry unit in Afghanistan, spread out between nine different geographical locations in theater. In addition to training missions the units of the battalion were employed as a quick reaction combat forces to aid Afgan forces where needed. During the deployment, HQ and C Companies completed a 26.2-mile ruck march to show solidarity and respect for the lives the Regiment lost during the Bataan Death March.

If there’s one recurring theme in all these deployments, it’s the fragmentation of the battalion to fulfill numerous diverse missions and consequent dependence on small unit leadership from the fire team on up. Time and again this shows up in engagements with the enemy. The Polar Bears stand ready to meet the challenge of the next mission they receive and go wherever that requires.

A TOAST TO THE POLAR BEARS

Paul Kerchum is registered to attend Reunion 2021 and the “Good Lord Willing and the Creeks Don’t Rise” Paul will once again make a short presentation of his experience as a survivor of the Bataan Death March and his time as a Japanese prisoner of war during WWII.

SPECIAL REUNION NOTE: The banquet Guest Speaker at Reunion 2021 will be LTC Christopher Rowe, commander of 4-31. The unit will return from Afghanistan and Kuwait by the end of August. 4-31 is one of the last combat units deployed in Afghanistan and will be the last major unit to redeploy. LTC Rowe’s presentation on 4-31’s last deployments promises to be very interesting and a great tribute to our returning Polar Bears.



31st Infantry Regiment Association
Jim Tierney
1484 Loretta Drive
Penn Hills, PA 15235
Newsletter 100

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Pro Patria Press



#100 August 2021
NEWSLETTER OF THE 31ST US INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION
ACTING EDITOR: RON CORSON (JRCORSON@AOL.COM)

Around the Corner - Reunion 2021 - Will You be at Rock Island/Moline?

Reunion 2021 is on track. A good number of our members have already put their hat in the ring. Have you set 18 to 22 September as a priority for you and your family to be there? Time is running out. Pick up you ruck and register now. After the



long delays caused by this guy called COVID-19, let's make Reunion 2021 a time to remember. The Quad Cities located along the Mississippi is the ideal location and September is the right time to reunite as Soldiers along with our families. Make the time, make the

promise: “This Polar Bear will be there”, and shout out: “You All Come to Reunion 2021. You Hear?”

HAVE YOU SENT IN YOUR REGISTRATION FORM?

So far not as good as we would like! As of 29 July, 87 members/spouses have registered for Reunion 2021. Reunion 2021 looks like it will be a great event. One that we have been waiting for since North Myrtle Beach. The Association needs to know that you and yours are planning to be there. 4-31 will return by the end of August from its deployments in Afghanistan and Kuwait. The Association will host active-duty Polar Bear Soldiers, leaders, and the Shanghai Bowl. Time is short. It's time to act to be at Reunion 2021. – **Pro Patria!**

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If the Addressee no longer
lives at the below address
Please RETURN this to the above

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David L Cote
6 Walker Ave
Amesbury, MA 01913-1620
|||

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 2021 REUNION QUAD CITIES, IL/IA 18-21 SEPTEMBER 2021



ANOTHER FORMER LEADER OF 4-31 PASSES ON

BENNY HASKEL DOBBS, Jr. CSM (Ret.) US ARMY On May 13, 2021, Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Benny Dobbs a former CSM of 4-31 Infantry passed away in Benson, NC. Benny, a native of Monticello, KY, entered the U.S. Army on March 11, 1986 and proudly served his country for over 30 years. He earned the respect of his troops and leaders alike. Benny had numerous combat deployments to include Operation Just Cause, Desert Shield/Storm, and twice each to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Over the course of his career, he earned the highest of awards such as the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and two awards of the Combat Infantryman Badge. CSM Dobbs retired from active-duty service on July 31, 2016, where he spent time with his family which were the center of his world. With all the accolades that Benny had earned while serving his country, he would tell you “It’s all about taking care of your Soldiers!” He would take care of his troops as his family and with the same resilience and perseverance that gained him the respect from all that knew him. Not only was he a Soldier’s soldier, but he was a man of God and a devoted husband to his wife of 35 years, Carol Sue (Roberts) Dobbs.



KOREAN WAR – 1953 – THE BLOODIEST YEAR

(edited and extracted from the book “The 31st Infantry Regiment” Chapter 16, pages 227-229)

In 1953, as the Korean War was slowly moving toward an end of active combat and a cease fire was being slowly negotiated in Panmunjum. Because of the difficult and slow negotiating process each side of the conflict (Chinese and North Korean Army and the United Nations Forces), used the battlefield and battlefield actions as a way of enhancing or influencing their bargaining position at the table. This was especially true for the Chinese Forces facing the 7th US Infantry Division and the 31st US Infantry Regiment. In early 1953, the 31st Infantry was online in defensive positions on and around Pork Chop Hill, Old Baldy, and a series of observations points (OPs) and north and south of these two key pieces of terrain. The fierce fighting in this area of the war went on for over six months with constant attacks by Chinese units to take control of the terrain and the 7th Division counterattacking with companies and platoons of the 31st and 17th Infantry regiments to retake all or portions of these battle areas.

The last action of the war for the Polar Bears came on 26-27 July 1953 at OPs Westview and Dale overlooking the Chorwon Valley. The OPs were held respectively by K and I Companies of the 31st Infantry. Westview was a low, bald knob connected to Old Baldy by a saddle ridge. It was only large enough to accommodate a platoon, but the Chinese were determined to take it. They came charging up the hill three nights before the ceasefire was to take effect, lugging huge boxes of ammo and rations, giving every indication that they intended to take the hill and keep it. Pouring wave after wave up the hill, they took half of the hill, but L Company counterattacked, driving them back down the trench line in close quarters combat with grenades, small arms, and occasional rifle butts. When their grip on the last section of trench was broken, the survivors scurried across the barren 200-yards long saddle back to the safety of Chinese lines on Old Baldy. There the remnants of the Chinese forces that were still exposed were chopped to pieces by artillery. For the next two nights, Chinese units probed Westview again and again, losing more men in the process. On Monday night, the defenders, some of whom had hardly slept for four days, felt sure the Chinese would come again to try to retrieve bodies of their dead. At 9:45 p.m., the “Order” came to cease all firing. A minute later, an outguard warned, “They’re coming, the Chinks are coming down.” No one fired. Weapons that would have been used without hesitation any night before were silent. There was no shouting, no jubilation, only a few muttered prayers and handshakes between men who had seen too many others carried from the battlefield. Suddenly there was peace.

Membership Application–31st US Infantry Regiment Association



First Name	Nickname	Middle Initial	Last Name	
Street Address		City	State	Zip Code
E-mailladdress		Alternate E-mail Address		
Please fill in as much information about your service/connection with the 31st Infantry Regiment as possible:				
Platoon_____Company____Battalion_____				
Highest Award Earned				
Rank & Duty Position when serving with the 31st Regiment			Rank When Retired/Separated	

Where did you serve with the 31st?	When?
Philippine	
Japan	
Korea	
Vietnam	
Iraq	
Afghanistan	
Other Overseas	
USA	

Membership Desired

Life Membership

Active Duty __\$25

Age 49 & under __\$60

Age 50 – 59 __\$45

Age 60 & over __\$35

Associate Life __\$25

Member (family)

Make your check out to **31st Inf Regt Assn** and mail it to the Membership Chairman:

Jim Tierney, 1484 Loretta Drive, Penn Hills, PA 15235.

Association Officers

Honorary Colonel of the Regiment

1425 Dartmouth Rd, Columbus, GA 31904

Commander:

215 Waterford Drive, Inman, SC 29349

Vice Commander:

1484 McGill Road, Vass, NC28394

Adjutant:

9676 159th Ct N, Jupiter, FL 33478

Treasurer:

3035 South El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Membership:

1484 Loretta Dr., Penn Hills, PA 15235

Quartermaster:

337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210

Sergeant at Arms:

5638 Camellia Ave, Sacramento, CA 95819

Historian:

2321 S. Queen St, Arlington, VA 22202

Senior Director:

108 Mershon Way, Williamsburg, VA 23185

Northeast Region: (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, NY)

3127 Cataract St, Copenhagen, NY 13626

Mid-Atlantic Region: (NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, VA, WV)

104 Cumberland Dr., Carlisle, PA 17013

Southeast Region: (NC,SC,GA,FL,AL,MS,TN,AR,LA, PR,VI)

1116 Dundee Ct ,Murfreesboro, TN 37129.

Great Lakes Region: (KY, OH, MI, IN, IL, WI)

788 Eagledale Circle, Kettering, OH 45429

Midwest Region: (MN,ND,SD,NE,IA,MO,KS, OK,TX,NM,CO)

3100 Chambers St, Sioux City, IA 51104

Western Region: (HI,AK,WA,OR,CA,NV,AZ,UT,ID, MT,WY)

1250 American Pacific Dr, Apt 214, Henderson, NV 89074

Robert “Sam” Wetzel LTG Ret (LTC, Cdr, 4th Bn, VN 1968)

706-576-4204

Charlie Tapp

H 864-473-1999

C 864 680-9165

Dan Wood

910-633-8397

Vin Zike

914-850-0095

Joe DeAngelis

208-362-9468

Jim Tierney

412-793-7214

Dale Mills

478-787-2679

Jim Jaggars

H 916-455-7879

C 916 802-7750

Grady Smith

C 703 927-6261

Ron Corson

757-253-1311

C 757-810-4135

Ivan Barker III

315-286-7696

Jim Simms

717-243-5570

Noah Halfacre

615-892-9246

John Howdeshelt

937-435-0669

John Mansfield

712-277-4498

Ron Belloli

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(LT,E 6thBn,VN, 1970)

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(SGT, D 6th Bn,VN, 1969)

mamahowdy@yahoo.com

(LT, A&B 4th Bn, VN 1967-68)

arctic6@aol.com

(LT, C 6thBn, VN, 1967-68)

ronbob22631@gmail.com



Reunion 2021- QUAD CITIES – SEPTEMBER 18-22

REUNION 2021 – DAY ONE - (Saturday: September 18, 2021)

1200 - 1700 **Arrival** — Registration Desk/Welcome – Holiday Inn Rock Island 2nd Floor

1200 - 1700 The Association Hospitality Room – **Salon 3**

Evening: Company Dinners - On your own/Unit Dinners.

REUNION 2021 – DAY TWO - (Sunday: September 19, 2021)

0700 - 0930 Breakfast Served in Bennigan's

0800 – 1100 Quartermaster Store Open

0900 - 1600 Registration Desk & Welcome Table open

1000 - 2100 The Association Hospitality Room – Open

1000 - 1200 Board Meeting

1130 - 1330 Lunch – You are on your own.

1600 - 2000 Visit Quad City info booth Hallway 2nd Floor

1730 - 1830 **Welcome Cocktail Reception– Hotel Ballroom** (Local Mayors to attend) (Cash Bar)

1830 - 2030 Arrival Dinner - **BBQ local Flavor Dinner** – Hotel Ballroom (Cash Bar in the Buffet Location)

REUNION 2021 - DAY THREE- (Monday: September 20, 2021)

0700 – 0930 Breakfast Served in Bennigan's

0900 - 2100 The Association Hospitality Room Open

0900 - 1200 Registration Desk & Welcome Table - Open.

0900 - 1000 **31st Infantry Memorial Service – Salon 1&2**

1000 - 1130 General business Meeting

1130 - 1300 Lunch – Once again - You are on your own.

1200 - 1600 Quartermaster Open

1230 – 1630 Rock Island Arsenal Tour Meet in Lobby first floor

1500 - 1530 **Raffle Drawing & Silent Auction** (Last chance to bid in Silent Auction).

1700 - 2100 Celebration Belle Caption & Dance Cruise, Cruise the mighty Mississippi

REUNION 2021 - DAY FOUR - (Tuesday: September 21, 2021)

0900 - 1100 John Deere Factory and Pavilion & Store

1830 - 1835 Reunion Dinner Posting of the Colors & Invocation

1835 - 2030 Dinner – After Dinner: Announcements. Introduction, and Guest Speaker

2030 - 2200 Shanghai Bowl Ceremony and Formal Toasts to the 31st US Infantry Regiment

DEPARTURE DAY - (Wednesday: September 22, 2021) - Goodbyes and Check out



At Various Times:

Channel Cat Water
Taxi Various Sites:
\$8.00 Hop on Hop Off

At the Dinner: Salads
will be on each table –
Multiple Buffet lines
will be in service

NEWSLETTER CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Cut along dotted line. Fill in requested information and mail to The Membership Chairman, address below.

or **email** Jim Tierney with this information at jtier64999@aol.com **SUBJECT: CHANGE OF ADDRESS.**

Name: _____	Phone number if new: _____
Old Address _____	New Address _____
Street or P.O. Box _____	Street or P.O. Box _____
City/State/Zip _____	City/State/Zip _____
	Mail To: Jim Tierney, Membership Chairman 1484 Loretta Drive Penn Hills, PA 15235

Registration Form Reunion 2021 - Rock Island, IL
31st US Infantry Regiment Association
September 18-22, 2021

Name: _____

Guest(s): _____

Home Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Company & Battalion of the 31st Infantry: _____ When: _____

If active duty, Current Rank: _____ Post stationed at: _____

Served in Combat Zone: Yes / No (Circle) If Yes, where: _____

Will you be staying at Holiday Inn Rock Island Yes / No (Circle)?

Have a car at the reunion? Yes / No If needed, are you willing to assist in local driving? Yes / No

<u>Reunion Activity</u>	<u>Cost per Person</u>	<u>X # Participating</u>	=	<u>Event Cost</u>
Reunion Registration	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Arrival Dinner	\$27	x _____		\$ _____
Rock Island Arsenal Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Celebration Dinner Cruise	\$60	x _____		\$ _____
Reunion Banquet	\$40	x _____		\$ _____
John Deere Factory Tour	\$15	x _____		\$ _____
Grand Total				\$ _____

Make checks payable to: **31st US Infantry Regiment Association**
ATTN: Joe DeAngelis 3035 S. El Rio Dr., Meridian, ID 83642

Hotel and Travel Information: Total Cost is \$85.00/night incls tax and a Hot Breakfast every morning
Holiday Inn & Conference Center Quad City International Airport (MOL)
226 17th Street Free airport / Hotel Shuttle
Rock Island, IL 61201 Moline Airport serviced by all major carriers. www.holidayinn.com/rockisland
Reserve Room at (309-794-1212)

Suspense date for Hotel and Reunion 2021 Reservations is September 1, 2021

31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION QUARTERMASTER STORE ORDER FORM

Visit 31stinfantry.org and click on 31st Infantry Store to see a full color catalogue of these and many more items

Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email: _____

<u>Cat #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Total</u>
B 102	Book, 31st Infantry Regiment “America’s Foreign Legion” In peace and war (Includes shipping)			\$ 40.00 X__ = _____
Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form				
C 100	Coin, Commemorative, 100th Anniversary (if you order 10 or more the price is \$8.00 each).			\$ 10.00 X__ = _____
C100A	Airtight capsule for 100th Anniversary Commemorative coin	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, black <i>both the black and clear easels are for Airtight capsule with 100th</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C100E	Easel, clear <i>Anniversary Commemorative coin or the Commemorative coin alone</i>	\$ 1.50	X__ = _____	
C RB 02	Cap, Royal Blue, 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT, POLAR BEARS, and crest embroidered directly	\$ 15.00	X__ = _____	
	directly on cap and US ARMY embroidered on back.			
C RB	Cap same as C RB 02 above with the addition of a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat			
	patch (Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division;			
	10th Mountain Div) on the right side. Circle the patch you want.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
C K	<i>NEW CAP!</i> same as C RB above but in Khaki with a waving U.S. flag on the left side and a combat patch			
	(Philippines Division; 7th Infantry Division; 196th Light Infantry Brigade; 9th Infantry Division.			
	10th Mountain Division) on the right side. Circle the patch you want). All embroidery is subdued.			\$18.00 X__ = _____
SP	Shirt, Polo/golf w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size: S, M, L, XL White, Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 29.00 X__ = _____
SP100	Same as above with 100th Anniversary logo in <u>White only</u> Size: S, M(Sold out), L, XL			\$ 31.00 X__ = _____
	Size: 2XL \$ 33.00 X__ = _____ Size: 3XL			\$ 35.00 X__ = _____
ST	Shirt, Tee, w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and polar bear crest on left chest, no pocket			
	Please circle color and size. Size S, M, L, XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 16.00 X__ = _____
	Size 2XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 19.00 X__ = _____
	Size 3XL Light Blue, Navy Blue			\$ 21.00 X__ = _____
SLSVC	Shirt, Long Sleeve, Dress in various colors w/31st INFANTRY REGIMENT and			
	polar bear crest on left chest above pocket. Please circle color and size Size: S, M, L, XL			\$ 30.00 X__ = _____
	Colors: Black, Navy Blue, Light Blue, Red, White, Texas Orange, Burgundy, Size 2XL			\$ 32.00 X__ = _____
	or Denim Size 3XL			\$ 36.00 X__ = _____
MS 01	Shanghai Bowl Cup, silver, 2007 reproduction of original. (Includes shipping)			
	Do not include this in shipping cost at bottom of form			\$165.00X__ = _____
DCL 01	Bumper sticker, 31st Infantry crest (Polar Bear), 4-3/8” tall, 4-1/4 wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 01	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), regulation size, facing set.			\$ 8.00 X__ = _____
PN 02	Pin, 31st Infantry Regimental crest (Polar Bear), lapel/hat pin. 7/8” tall, ¾” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 73	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, lapel/hat pin. 3/8” tall, 1-1/4” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 74	Pin, Combat Infantry Badge, regulation size, 1-1/4” tall, 3” wide			\$ 4.00 X__ = _____
PN 82	Pin, Purple Heart, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 85	Pin, Silver Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
PN 71	Pin, Bronze Star, lapel/hat pin. 1-1/8” tall, 5/8” wide			\$ 3.00 X__ = _____
Shipping Charges – add to your order: Orders under \$10.00 add \$2.50; For orders \$10.01 - \$25.00				SUBTOTAL \$ _____
add \$6.00; For orders \$25.01 - \$50.00, add \$7.00; For orders over \$50.00, add \$9.00.				SHIPPING \$ _____
				Grand TOTAL \$ _____

MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO: 31st INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

For Credit Cards (American Express, Discover, Master Card, or Visa) or Debit card (with Master Card or Visa logo) please include
NAME (on card): _____ CARD #: _____ EXP DATE: ____/____

SECURITY CODE (on back of card): _____ ZIP CODE (where credit card bill is mailed to): _____

Mail the order form and payment to: Dale Mills 337 Carillon Lane, Macon, GA 31210-9711

TAPS



Deceased members identified since Newsletter # 99, May 2021

KOREA WAR

Edward R. Bolton, SSG, Crawfordville, FL, died May 16, 2021, HQ, 3rd Bn, 1950
Carson E. Bunch, SGT, Goodman, MO, died Jan 12, 2021, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1952-1953
Stuard M. Hartman, SFC, Camarillo, CA, died May 25, 2021, Co B, 1st Bn, 1952-1953
John A. Hemphill, MG ret, Steilacoom, WA, died May 21, 2021, Cos I & K, 3rd Bn, 1952-1953
Bernard H. Hoffman, PFC, Merrick, NY, died Nov 6, 2020, Co H, 2nd Bn, 1953-1954
Rudy R. Reyes, CPL, La Puente, CA, died Oct 2, 2020, Co F, 2nd Bn, 1949-1951
Robert C. Whisenhunt, CPL, Grand Junction, CO, died May 21, 2021, HQ, Rgt, 1952

Correction in date died in NL 92:

Melvin L. “Mel” Pierce, PFC, Hollister, MO, died **Aug 3, 2017**, Co I, 3rd Bn, 1950

VIETNAM

Alfred “Al” Harner, SFC, Ashland, PA, died May 24, 2021, Co C, 4th Bn, 1965-1967
Herbert F. Tipton, SP4, Deland, FL, died May 19, 2021, Co B, 4th Bn, 1965-1967

UNITED STATES

Benny H. Dodds, Jr, CSM ret, Angier, NC, died May 13, 2021, HHC, 4th Bn, Bn CSM, 2010-2012

ASSOCIATE

Robert A. Houghtby, Sr., Lively, CA, died Apr 22, 2009, Grandfather 1st SGT Arthur C. Houghtby,
POW, died May 20, 1942, in CP O'Donnell
Helen F. Mucerino, Phoenix, AZ, died Jan 6, 2014, Widow of CPL Ralph Mucerino, Co A, Korea

NEW MEMBERS

William H. “Bill” Breeton, Littlefork, MN, HHC and C Co, 4th Bn, 1967-1968

NOTE: No deceased members reported from the World War II, Pre-Korean War and Post Korean War eras.

LEADERSHIP NOTICE: The Association has leadership positions that need to be filled at the 2021 Reunion. The Board is developing a slate of officers and volunteers who have the time and the desire to join the Board of Directors are needed. Election of officers will occur at the General Membership meeting. Potential positions include Regional Director, Quartermaster, Treasurer, Adjutant, and Committee Slots. If you are willing and able to be part of the Association leadership team, please contact Charlie Tapp or Ron Corson. (Contact # - See Page 10)

VIETNAM VETS WERE NEVER PROPERLY RECOGNIZED

Richard never really talked about his time in Viet Nam, other than he had been shot by a sniper. However, he had a rather grainy, 8 x 10 black and white photo he had taken at a USO show of Ann Margret



Ann Margret in a USO Show in Vietnam

with Bob Hope in the background that was one of his treasures. A few years ago, Ann Margret was doing a book signing at a local bookstore. Richard wanted to see if he could get her to sign the treasured photo, so he arrived at the bookstore at 12 o'clock for the 7:30 signing. When I got there after work, the line went all the way around the bookstore, circled the parking lot, and disappeared behind a parking garage. Before her appearance, bookstore employees announced that she would sign only her book and no memorabilia would be permitted. Richard was disappointed but wanted to show her the photo and let her know how much those shows meant to lonely GI's so far from home.

Ann Margret came out looking as beautiful as ever

and, as second in line, it was soon Richard's turn. He presented the book for her signature and then took out the photo. When he did, there were many shouts from the employees that she would not sign it. Richard said, "I understand. I just wanted her to see it." She took one look at the photo, tears welled up in her eyes and she said, "This is one of my gentlemen from Viet Nam and I most certainly will sign his photo. I know what these men did for their country and I always have time for 'my gentlemen.'" With that, she pulled Richard across the table and planted a big kiss on him. She then made quite a to-do about the bravery of the young men she met over the years, how much she admired them, and how much she appreciated them. There weren't too many dry eyes among those close enough to hear. She then posed for pictures and acted as if he were the only one there.

That night was a turning point for him. He walked a little straighter and, for the first time in years, was proud to be a Vet. I'll never forget Ann Margret for her graciousness and how much that small act of kindness meant to my husband. Later at dinner, Richard was very quiet. When I asked if he'd like to talk about it, my big, strong husband broke down in tears. "That's the first time anyone ever thanked me for my time in the Army," he said.

POLAR BEAR DEPLOYMENTS SINCE 9/11

In July 2021, 4-31 Infantry redeployed home from its latest post-9/11 mission which was once again in Afghanistan. A look at the overseas deployments of 4-31 Infantry since the terrorist attacks is in order.

AFGHANISTAN 2001-2002. After the multiple attacks to our nation on September 11, 2001 elements of the 4-31 before the end of the month were on the ground in Kuwait and Qatar. The Heavy Mortar Platoon was deployed in Uzbekistan and later in Afghanistan. C Company was moved to Afghanistan from Uzbekistan and A Company from Kuwait. However, A Company was the first to draw enemy blood for the 31st Infantry for the first time since Vietnam. Before Operation Anaconda was over, the 4-31 command group deployed, and organized Operation Polar Harpoon. This resulted in firefights, the collection of many enemy documents, and the destruction of warfighting materiel. Then all elements of 4-31 headed home.

AFGHANISTAN-DJIBOUTI-IRAQ 2003-2004.

After thirteen months back at Fort Drum, 4-31 deployed again. Its elements were scattered to South Asia and Africa. Battalion Headquarters and A Company went to Afghanistan, B Company to Iraq, and C Company and the Mortar Platoon to Djibouti on the horn of Africa. Neighboring Ethiopia formed an anti-terrorism battalion and hosted a detachment of Polar Bears as trainers for the new unit. All 4-31 elements were back at Fort Drum in December 2003 except B Company. The tactical situation in Iraq required them to stay until April 2004.



IRAQ - May 2004-June 2005. 4-31 deployed to Iraq less B Company, which had just returned from an extended overseas tour a few weeks before. B Company, 1-509th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Fort Polk, joined 4-31 until B Company 4-31 could rejoin the unit in the Kadhimiya District of Baghdad. 1LT Adam Malson of A Company was the only KIA during this deployment. As he attempted to rescue a woman from a burning car, a suicide bomber detonated an explosives vest, killing Malson. In Iraq, Polar Bears manned checkpoints and ran patrols in the district. Later 4-31 soldiers secured Abu Graib Prison from potential terrorist attacks. In addition, they conducted air assaults and raids on enemy strongholds south of Baghdad. After returning to Fort Drum, 4-31 received a Meritorious Unit Commendation for its actions.

IRAQ - August 2006-November 2007. After two weeks on the ground in Kuwait, 4-31 moved through Baghdad to Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah in the heart of the Iraqi combat zone called by the press “The Triangle of Death.” As part of Operation Polar Rock Blizzard, 4-31 searched villages and along canals, recovering weapons and IED components from 125 different locations. The unit’s intense raids and road patrols received a violent response from the terrorists with IEDs wounding several Polar Bears. To control the area, 4-31 had to own Route Malibu, pocked by numerous IED craters and vehicle wreckage. A key to that was seizing and holding terrain. EOD personnel worked hard to clear the road, but the 4-31 commander, LTC Michael Infanti was medivacked when his Humvee was hit by an IED. Terrorists gradually lost the initiative in the give and take of combat, but with increasing desperation terrorists hit a night overwatch position along Route Malibu manned by D Company. Of the eight men at the site, five were KIA and three were kidnapped; their remains were eventually recovered. In response, U.S. strength in the area ramped up from 1,000 to 4,000 in less than a week after the kidnappings. The kidnapping strategy of the terrorists ended, but during the 15-month tour, the Polar Bears lost 18 soldiers. The battalion also earned a Valorous Unit Award “for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy.”

IRAQ - October 2009- June 2010. The 4-31 mission on this tour was both security and the training of Iraqi Federal Police, to prepare them to take over public order and safety. In addition, the battalion provided security for small details of American civilian teams training local Iraqi leaders. There was occasional small arms harassment but no casualties. The successful eight-month tour garnered the battalion another Meritorious Unit Citation.

AFGHANISTAN - 2015-2016. The 4-31 mission on this tour was installation security, a mission which fragmented the battalion. Elements were scattered across the real estate that 4-31 was charged to secure.

C Company was broken up into eight elements of different sizes. During this complex deployment, the 4-31 Commander, LTC Chris Landers didn’t have control of many of these elements, even though he was tasked with battalion-level contingency plans. The largest combat action 4-31 became involved in was the Battle of Kunduz, when Islamist terrorists seized control of that city. The C Company detachment helping to secure an installation of a Special Forces A team became involved along with the SF soldiers in the Kunduz battle which lasted four intense days, during which the terrorists suffered more than 200 fatalities.

AFGHANISTAN - Autumn 2018. Based at Bagram Airfield, the battalion was the Theater Response Force for NATO’s Resolute Support operation as well as trainers for Afghan defense forces. The Battalion put together two Expeditionary Task Forces, each built around a rifle company with indirect fire and heavy communications capability. Over eighty Polar Bears earned the Combat Infantryman Badge, and all hands who served in this tour can now wear the 10th Mountain patch on their right shoulders.

AFGANISTAN - February 2021- August 2021. To support Operation Freedom’s Sentinel, 4-31 was deployed to Camp Dwyer in Helmand Province and elements of the battalion were also deployed to Kuwait. The Polar Bears have been operating as the only conventional infantry unit in Afghanistan, spread out between nine different geographical locations in theater. In addition to training missions the units of the battalion were employed as a quick reaction combat forces to aid Afgan forces where needed. During the deployment, HQ and C Companies completed a 26.2-mile ruck march to show solidarity and respect for the lives the Regiment lost during the Bataan Death March.

If there’s one recurring theme in all these deployments, it’s the fragmentation of the battalion to fulfill numerous diverse missions and consequent dependence on small unit leadership from the fire team on up. Time and again this shows up in engagements with the enemy. The Polar Bears stand ready to meet the challenge of the next mission they receive and go wherever that requires.

A TOAST TO THE POLAR BEARS

Paul Kerchum is registered to attend Reunion 2021 and the “Good Lord Willing and the Creeks Don’t Rise” Paul will once again make a short presentation of his experience as a survivor of the Bataan Death March and his time as a Japanese prisoner of war during WWII.

SPECIAL REUNION NOTE: The banquet Guest Speaker at Reunion 2021 will be LTC Christopher Rowe, commander of 4-31. The unit will return from Afghanistan and Kuwait by the end of August. 4-31 is one of the last combat units deployed in Afghanistan and will be the last major unit to redeploy. LTC Rowe’s presentation on 4-31’s last deployments promises to be very interesting and a great tribute to our returning Polar Bears.

