

## **31<sup>st</sup> INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION MISSION**

This Association of former and active duty 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment soldiers (known as “Polar Bears”) and their families and friends adopts as its mission the provision of fraternal, social, educational, and patriotic services, and the promotion of military service as an essential pursuit in the defense of the Constitution and our Unalienable Rights to Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.

## **ARTICLE I: DESIGNATION**

The name of this organization is the 31st Infantry Regiment Association, Inc., “The Polar Bears”. Incorporated in the State of Arkansas, it is a non-profit fraternal, social, educational, patriotic, military service organization, which shall always remain nonpartisan and non-political. The Association shall exist permanently as a national parent organization with subordinate branches known as Regions. Insignia: Polar Bear. Motto: Pro Patria. Headquarters of the Association shall be the address of the current Commander of the active-duty unit of the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment.

## **ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES**

The Association provides opportunities uniting past, present and future members of the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment in a national program dedicated to the preservation and maintenance of the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment's history, customs and traditions. Specific objectives are:

- 2.1 To foster patriotism, esprit de corps, and loyalty of its members to the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment.
- 2.2 To foster and strengthen associations and friendships formed during service with the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment.
- 2.3 To honor the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment War Dead.
- 2.4 To encourage a close and cooperative alliance with the active-duty unit of the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment.
- 2.5 To preserve the history of the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment for future generations through the written, pictorial, or recorded recollections of Association members.
- 2.6 To support the Constitution of the United States and its Armed Forces; and to give to them, in peace and war, the devotion and service expected of us as members of its armed forces.

## **ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

- 3.1 There shall be three classes of membership: Regular, Associate and Honorary.
- 3.2 Eligibility for Regular Membership: Veterans and active-duty members with honorable service in units of the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment or units attached to the Regiment in peace and war.
- 3.3 Associate Members: Family members of any person eligible for Regular Membership; any person with a special interest in the Regiment; and other organizations that supported or support the Regiment, such as Red Cross, Philippine Army personnel, artillery units, etc.
- 3.4 Eligibility for Honorary Membership: Gold Star Wives and Parents. The Commander of the active-duty component of the Regiment shall be designated as “Honorary Commander of

the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment Association”. Others as granted by the Executive Board. Honorary members pay no dues.

- 3.5 Members will pay dues and comply with the Constitution and Bylaws.
- 3.6 Associate and Honorary Members shall enjoy the rights and privileges of a member but shall be restricted from participating in the Association’s official business and are invited to attend, but are not entitled to vote in General Membership Meetings.
- 3.7 Friends of the Regiment: This category includes non-veterans who support the objectives of the Regiment but are not formal members of the Association as defined in Article 3.1. They may be authorized to subscribe to the Association Newsletter, contribute to the Association and attend reunions, but are not authorized to vote in the General Membership Meetings of the Association.

#### **ARTICLE IV: DUES**

- 4. The Association’s members will support the Association by a one-time payment of dues in exchange for a lifetime membership in the Association. The amount due is set forth in the Bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE V: LEADERSHIP**

- 5.1 Governance. The Membership is the governing body of the Association. It meets once a year in the Annual Reunion/Convention at which time officers are elected to carry out the day-to-day operations of the Association. Each Regular Member in good standing has one vote in these elections, expressed in person.
- 5.2 Officers Defined. Voting officers of the Association comprise elected *Executives* and appointed *Regional Directors*. The Executives comprise President, Vice President, and Senior Director. The Regional Directors are appointed by the Executives and confirmed by the Membership at the General Membership Meeting at the Annual Reunion. The collection of Executives and Regional Directors comprise the *Executive Board*.  
(The honorific and historical title for the President of the Association is “Commander”.)
- 5.3 Appointed Officers. The *Executive Board* shall appoint the following additional non-voting officers: Adjutant and Assistant, Treasurer and Assistant, Secretary and Assistant, General Counsel and Assistant, Chaplain and Assistant, Historian and Assistant, Quartermaster and Assistant, Membership Chair and Assistant, Sergeant-at-Arms and Assistant, Editor of the Newsletter and Assistant, and the Reunion Coordinator and Assistant.
- 5.4 Advisors. Non-voting Advisors to the Executive Board comprise the Honorary Colonel of the Regiment, a retired senior officer, and the Honorary Command Sergeant Major of the Regiment, a retired senior non-commissioned officer, who are appointed by the Department of the Army and serve as consultants and advisors to the Association’s Executive Board.
- 5.5 Elections, Nominations, Terms of Office, Appointments.
  - 5.5.1 Elections. Elections are held at the annual reunion of the Association’s members. The Regular Members attending shall constitute a quorum for purposes of these elections. Each Regular Member in attendance and in good standing has one vote in these elections. Officers will be selected from the nominees by majority vote of the Regular Members at the General Membership Meeting.
  - 5.5.2 Nominations. Nominations for Elective Officers can be made by any Regular Member of the Association in good standing, including incumbent elected officers; Regular

Members can self-nominate. Nominees for Regional Directors must reside within their respective regions.

- 5.5.3 Executives' and Appointed Officers' Terms of Office. The Executives and the Appointed Officers shall take office on January 1 of the year following the election for a period of two years. The time from election/appointment at the Annual Reunion/Convention until January 1 will be used to prepare for the transfer of duties from the incumbent officer to his/her successor.
- 5.5.4 Regional Directors' Terms of Office. All Regional Directors shall take office on January 1 of the year following their appointment for a period of three years. The time from appointment at the Annual Reunion/Convention until January 1 will be used to prepare for the transfer of duties from the incumbent officer to his/her successor.
- 5.5.5 Reelection. Any Officer may succeed himself/herself, provided he/she is properly nominated and reelected or reappointed.
- 5.5.6 Appointments. Candidates for appointed office may be nominated by any Regular Member in good standing including elected officers. Regular Members may self-nominate. Incumbents may be reappointed.
- 5.6 Regions. For purposes of administration the United States is divided into Regions. The Executive Board shall determine the boundaries included in each Region and publish them in the Association Newsletter. The boundaries and number of Regions may change from time-to-time depending on the Membership.
- 5.7 Officers Authorities and Duties. The authority and duty of each officer and director shall be as defined in the Bylaws.
- 5.8 Succession of Executives. In the event of death, resignation or other incapacity, the line of succession of the Executives will be President, Vice President, and Senior Director, subject to approval by the Executive Board.
- 5.9 Refilling Vacated Offices. Excepting vacancies filled subject to the directive of Article 5.8, other vacancies occurring in any elective or appointed office during an administrative year shall be filled for the remainder of the term by a Regular Member selected and approved by the Executive Board.
- 5.10 Compensation of Officers and Directors. All officers shall serve without monetary compensation.
- 5.11 Spending Authority of Officers. Any elected or appointed Officer wishing to make a purchase from personal funds for the Association's benefit must receive written permission from the Executive Board; reimbursement from the Association's treasury will be authorized by the Executive Board upon the Officer's submission of receipts.
- 5.12 The fiscal year shall be July 1 through 30 June.

## **ARTICLE VI: PUBLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Association's Newsletter is designated as the official publication of the Association and serves as the Association's focal point for those members unable to attend annual reunions. It will be published at least three times per fiscal year under the supervision of the Executive Board.
- 6.2 The Executive Board shall appoint the Editor and Assistant Editor.



- 6.3 The Executive Board shall have full control of all questions of policy in the official publication.
- 6.4 The Editor shall have complete charge and responsibility for the composition, coordinating and publishing the Newsletter, subject to the direction and control of the Executive Board. The Newsletter's content shall be coordinated with the President/Commander and Adjutant prior to publication. The Editor may select, as determined by the Executive Board, such additional assistants as he may require from time-to-time and deemed necessary to assist in the work of the official publication.
- 6.5 The Newsletter shall be sent to all members in good standing, associate members and honorary members of the Association and others as the Executive Board shall direct.
- 6.6 A national roster is published annually and distributed to all Officers and Directors. The roster, for membership use only, shall list the following information for each member in good standing when known: name, address, unit, rank, telephone, fax and email as well as the type of membership held.

In an effort to ensure the privacy of the members, the roster is not to be distributed to any person other than an officer or director of the Association without express permission for distribution by the Executive Board.

## **ARTICLE VII: BYLAWS**

- 7.1 The Association shall have full power to adopt Bylaws, which are not in conflict with this Constitution. Bylaws may be adopted, modified or repealed at the Association's Annual Reunion/Convention, or any Special Meeting called for that specific purpose under the provisions of Section VII of the Bylaws.
- 7.2 The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, 1893 edition, revised, shall govern the Association in all cases which are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent or conflicting with the Constitution or Bylaws of the Association.

## **ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS**

- 8.1 This Constitution may be amended, altered or repealed by two-thirds vote of all members. The amended document shall be distributed to the membership for approval with a cover letter specifying that "silence is consent". Notice thereof shall be given by publication in one issue of the Association Newsletter.

Danial R. Woods, President

J. Ronald Colson, Senior Director

2022-2023 Revision Committee: *W. David Kennedy, W. Clark Washington*