

COAST GUARD COMBAT VETERANS ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Founded 29 July 1985

PREAMBLE

Being mindful of the traditions, duties and purposes of the United States Coast Guard, our duty to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America and believing that through social association and mutual acquaintance, we may further perpetuate the memory of our fallen comrades, assist, when requested, honorably discharged and retired Coast Guard Combat Veterans, and/or their widows and orphans, promote and enhance the image and posture of the United States Coast Guard. Therefore, we do associate ourselves together and declare the following articles to be the Constitution and By-laws of the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association.

CONSTITUTION

We, past and present Officer and Enlisted members of the United States Coast Guard believing in our right to form an Association consistent with the precepts outlined in the Preamble above, do hereby declare the formation of such an association to be known as the "Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association"

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I – Organization

This Association, formed under the authority of the foregoing Constitution, will be organized as provided hereinafter. A biennial reunion-convention will be convened to elect officers and conduct general business. All meetings will be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these by-laws and any special rules of order the Association may adopt.

1. **Name:** The Association shall be called the "Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association".
2. **Purpose:** The purpose of this Association shall be:

- a. Pay for the electrical power to ensure the continued illumination of the flags displayed at the gravesite of Medal of Honor recipient, Signalman First Class Douglas A. Munro, USCG (deceased).
- b. To promote public awareness of the United States Coast Guard's participation in this nation's armed conflicts since its founding on 4 August 1790.
- c. Foster good fellowship and engage in social activities.
- d. To accomplish the programs as outlined in the Preamble.

3. Association Officers:

- a. The association shall be governed by a National President; National Vice President; National Secretary; National Treasurer and an elected Board of Trustees consisting of four (4) regular members and the fifth member being the immediate past National President. The National Secretary/Treasurer may be one elected position or two, i.e., National Secretary and National Treasurer, as necessitated by circumstance.
- b. An elected Officer or Trustee may not be installed in office unless the supporting documents have been submitted and recorded to substantiate their qualification to be a member of the Association.
- c. The office of the National Secretary/Treasurer, due to the necessity of a consistent continuance of record management for the association, may be succeeded by the members without limitation to the succession rule above.
- d. The offices of the Board Members are covered in Article IV, 5 Below. In the event of a vacancy of any office caused by resignation, illness, death or removal for cause, a replacement shall be selected, by the National President, to serve in the vacated position until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the membership.

4. Term of Office:

- a. Officers shall be nominated and elected for the period between date elected and the next regular scheduled reunion/convention. Candidates for office shall be voting members of the association who shall be nominated and elected by a Show of Hands. The newly elected officers and trustees shall be sworn into office at the ceremonies during the awards banquet held on the final evening of the reunion/convention.
- b. The offices of the National President and National Vice President shall not exceed two consecutive terms. Exceptions will be made in situations where a member is appointed to complete a term in either position caused by the vacation of the office by an Elected Officer.

5. Auxiliary:

- a. Effective 16 July 1988, there shall be an Auxiliary providing for the membership of spouses and other family members in good standing. An Associate Auxiliary membership will be offered to interested parties who will not hold office or be able to vote. Such Auxiliary may provide their own organization and by-laws. Such organization and by-laws shall not conflict with the Constitution and by-laws of the association.

6. Headquarters:

- a. There is no permanent Headquarters site or location. The President shall designate a Headquarters location. The Administration Office(s) shall be designated by the National President and will in most instances, be the residence of the National Secretary or National

Treasurer or both as needs predicate.

Quarterdeck Log upon personal request.

- b. **Election/Reelection to office:** A member in good standing is not required to be present, to be elected/re-elected, at the biennial Business meeting, if they have a valid reason for their absence. Appropriate reasons are a new medical condition preventing them from attending or a family emergency that prevents their attendance. In the case of an officer's absence, the Board of Trustees may determine the reasonableness of an officer's absence, and likewise, the Officers may determine the reasonableness of a Trustee's absence, for election at the Business Meeting.

- c. The Commandant of the United States Coast Guard and the person selected as the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association "Person of the Year", if not otherwise eligible shall be recognized as Honorary Members without voting privilege. The Secretary of Homeland Security, previous Commandants of the United States Coast Guard, including living previous Commandants that served prior to the establishment of the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association, and all persons, previously selected as the CGCVA Person of the Year, if not otherwise eligible, shall be recognized as Honorary Life Members without voting privilege. These Honorary Members may not hold office unless they qualify for regular membership as outlined in paragraph (1) above.
- d. The National President, with the concurrence of the Board of Trustees may authorize additional Honorary Membership without voting privilege to any person who has performed in an "Outstanding" manner for the betterment of either the United States Coast Guard or the Association. Such Honorary membership will be accomplished by issuing of a Certificate of Appreciation and Honorary Membership suitable for framing. Any member in good standing may make an Honorary Membership recommendation to the National President. The recommendation shall be in writing

ARTICLE II – Membership/Affiliation

- 1. Membership in this association shall be limited to:
 - a. Active-duty members, retired members and honorably discharged former members of the United States Coast Guard or the United States Coast Guard Reserve who served in or provided direct support of combat situations recognized by an appropriate military award while serving as a member of the United States Coast Guard.
 - b. The Widow and Widower of members that were in good standing at the time of their demise, shall be considered members and shall be dues free without voting privilege. These members shall not hold office and will continue to receive the

and accompanied with supporting information substantiating the individual's qualifications.

2. Associate Membership: Non-Voting Association Membership is established for:

- a. Those persons in the United States Coast Guard who met the combat criteria while in the service of another Armed Force (United State or foreign).
- b. Members of the United State Public Health Service who served as members of a United State Coast Guard combat command.
- c. A spouse, child, orphan, or descendant of a Coast Guard member, who died in combat, prior to the founding of the Association may be eligible for Associate Membership. Determinations will be made upon receipt of application for membership in each case. Support documents of combat service and relationship must be provided.

3. Friends of the Association: Non-Voting Affiliation is established for:

- a. Any individual appointed or designated by the National President, who has expressed an interest in supporting the CGCVA may be made a "Friend of the Association (FOTA). This may include active duty, retired or veterans of the U. S. Coast Guard who are not eligible for membership in the CGCVA.
- b. Friend of the Association must pay the same biennial dues as Regular

CGCVA Members and will receive the Quarterdeck Log magazine.

- c. The National President can make an unlimited number of appointments at any time while in office, and may remove a FOTA, for cause or failure to pay dues.

ARTICLE III - Dues

1. Dues shall be fixed by the Board of Trustees.

- a. Dues are considered due and payable commencing immediately upon application. The membership expiration date will be affixed to the address label of the quarterly newsletter and will be the notice for the renewal of membership. The National Treasurer will send out "Overdue Notice" to members not responding after approximately thirty (30) days. Members not responding to the "Overdue Notice" after sixty (60) days shall be dropped from the active rolls. A member dropped for Non-Payment of dues may be reinstated by submitting dues, along with contact information or an updated application.
- b. The first two years of membership for eligible active-duty Coast Guard members shall be dues-free.
- c. Life Membership: Persons meeting the requirements for membership, as outlined in Article II, may apply for life membership.

Life Members shall not be subject to further levies. The National Treasurer shall deposit Life Membership monies in an Investment Account, which will be

held in reserve. The National President may use the earnings or principal amounts, held in this account as needed for general fund expenditures, according to the needs of the Association.

ARTICLE IV – Officers

Officers of this Association named in Article I are vested with authority and charged to perform dues as follows:

1. National President:

- a. As the National President and Chief Executive Officer of the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association, call meetings of the Officers and Trustees, as necessary. Preside over all meetings and determine the order of business.
- b. Shall review the recommendation received from the Convention Chairman and with the concurrence of the Board of Trustees, determine the time and place to convene the next reunion/convention.
- c. Is vested with the overall responsibility for conducting the official business of the Association within the constraints of the Constitution and by-laws giving careful attention to the work of the Association as well as carrying into effect the policies determined upon by the majority of the membership.

- d. Represent the CGCVA at business and social functions of various veteran organizations, military & veteran legislative meetings, on the local, state and national levels, or assign officers of the association to attend in his stead.
- e. Approve all expenditures and disbursements of the Association's funds within the limitations of these by-laws and is authorized to sign drafts for these expenditures.
- f. The National President may make appointments, as necessary. They may include, but not limited to: Budget, by-laws, Chaplain, Convention/Reunion, Editor in Chief, Historian, Master at Arms, Membership, Nominating, Parliamentarian and Ways and Means.
- g. Shall issue an annual "State of the Association? To be published in the first issue of the Quarterdeck Log each new calendar year.

2. National Vice President:

- a. Shall be the first assistant to the National President in conducting the official business of the association.
- b. In the absence of the National President, preside in his behalf over official or social activities as outlined in these by-laws.
- c. Furnish an annual written report of activities of the year to the National President in

sufficient time for inclusion in to the “State of the Association” message to members.

- d. Assume the office of National President should the office become vacant for any reason.

3. National Secretary/Treasurer:

- a. Assist the National President by conducting the official administration and financial business of the association.
- b. Maintain files of all official communications of the association. Digitize and maintain membership files of all documents that verify membership eligibility.
- c. Maintain the association mailing lists. The association mailing list will not be given to any “non-member” or member in “Good Standing” for their personal gain. It shall be the responsibility of the National Secretary/Treasurer to ensure that the names of the members not be given out indiscriminately.
- d. Respond to the members questions and/or request within the capabilities of the means available.
- e. Establish and distribute budgets for all officers and appointees of the association.
- f. Furnish notification to the membership of the Time and Place of Reunion/Convention as well as all official meetings

called by the National President.

- g. In conjunction with the National President, or his designees, prepare all agendas for all meetings.
- h. Provide the membership with all official notices through the most rapid and economical means available.
- i. Ensure preparation and distributed the Association’s official publication, The Quarterdeck Log, on a quarterly basis. Provide guidance and support to the Editor of the publication. In cooperation with the Editor, establish “Deadlines” and publication dates and ensure they are in compliance.
- j. Keep a record (minutes) of the biennial Business meeting. Publish and make the minutes and records available to members upon request.
- k. Furnish an annual written report of activities of the year to the National President in sufficient time for inclusion into the “State of the Association” message to members.
- l. Maintain accurate fiscal records of the association. Account for all moneys received from whatever source and deposit them into the association’s authorized account(s) at the earliest reasonable time.
- m. Prepare all drafts against the association’s funds for settling

association financial obligations as authorized by the National President and in accordance with these by-laws. In addition to the National President, the National Secretary/Treasurer is authorized to sign drafts described herein.

- n. Establish annual budgets for the National President, National Vice-President, National Secretary/Treasurer, Board of Trustees, the Quarterdeck Log, National Membership Director, Ways and Means Director, Convention/Reunion Chairman. Prepare the budget to show line items for a minimum of Travel, Supplies, Postage, Equipment, Services, i.e., Printing, etc.
- o. Maintain records of the association property with a description and location of all items.
- p. Provide an annual financial statement, for presentation at the annual business meeting, that has been audited as outlined in 4(q) below.
- q. Furnish an annual written report of activities of the year to the National President in sufficient time for inclusion into the "State of the Association" message to members.
- r. Disseminate approved regular and life dues amounts upon request of the membership.
- s. At the reunion/convention or replacement of the National President or National Treasurer, have prepared a document that authorizes the new NP & NT to

access each financial account maintained by the Association.

4. **Board of Trustees:**

- a. The Board shall consist of not less than five (5) members.
- b. Of the four (4) elected Board Members, two (2) shall be elected at each convention for periods covering the time between the next two regularly scheduled conventions.
- c. The fifth (5th) member of the Board shall be the immediate Past National President, who shall also serve as chairman of the board. Should he decline the position of Chairman, the members of the Board shall elect a Chairman from the four remaining members.
- d. As directed by the National President, review recommendations received from the Convention Chairman as to the time and place of the biennial reunion/convention and advise the President of the Board recommendations.
- e. Approve expenditures of Two-Thousand dollars (\$2,000.01) or more.
- f. Review and approve the annual budget.
- g. When directed by the National President, but no less often than annually, cause an audit of the association Financial Records in the custody of the National Secretary/Treasurer.

- h. Establish the amount of dues required for membership.
- i. Review proposed changes to the by-laws as submitted in accordance with Article IX and forward to the Chairman of the by-laws Committee with recommendations.

association's next scheduled Reunion/Convention. In the years between the Association reunion/convention, the location for the award presentation shall be determined by the National President. The National President or designated alternate member will be present to represent the CGCVA.

ARTICLE V – Committees

- 1. Standing committees shall be appointed by the National President but shall not exceed the tenure of the National President's term of office.
- 2. The Chairpersons of all committees shall be designated by the National President. The Chairperson shall appoint members to serve on the committee.

- b. The candidate for the CGCVA recognition should have been awarded or nominated for a Coast Guard award, or other award when operating under another branch of the U. S. Military. The feat involved should indicate a high degree of risk on the part of the candidate and merits a recommendation for the award of Coast Guard Medal, Coast Guard Gold Lifesaving Medal, Coast Guard Silver Lifesaving Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Distinguished Flying Cross or Air Medal, or equivalent from any other branch of the U. S. military, when assigned to, or operating under the guidance and control of another military branch, for the CGCVA recognition. The individual is to be on Active Duty, Regular or Reserve, Officer or Enlisted personnel.

ARTICLE VI - Voting

- 1. Regular & Life Members, in good standing, in attendance at properly assembled association Reunion/Conventions shall be eligible to vote on matters limited to Association business.

ARTICLE VII Awards

- 1. Awards presented by the association will be based on the following criteria:
 - a. The Association shall award a CGCVA plaque to the person selected as "Coast Guard Person of the Year". The selection will be made from a list of candidates received from Coast Guard Headquarters that had been chosen by the USCG for recognition for outstanding or heroic performance. Presentation shall be made at the

- 2. U. S. Senator/U.S. Congressman: At the regular Association Convention/Reunion a maximum of two (2) awards for members of the U. S. Congress (1 Senate, 1 House, 2 Senate, 2 House) may be awarded to those who have provided exceptional support to the U. S. Coast Guard. Recommendations will be solicited/accepted from the USCG Liaison Officer(s) to Congress.

3. The National President, at his sole discretion and judgement may recognize a member of the Association for outstanding service to the Association and may then present the "Donald Kneip" Award to that member at the reunion banquet, as the highest award a member can receive, and the final award of the evening, or at such a place and time that is convenient to the National President and/or the recipient.

ARTICLE VIII – Quorum

1. In a general meeting, the quorum is the number of members present at the time, since they constitute the entire membership at the time.
2. Officers and Trustees meetings, the quorum is a majority of all the Officers or Trustees or combination of both.
Officers: 3 Trustees: 3 Joint: 5.

ARTICLE IX - Change & Correction.

1. Changes: A request for change in the by-laws may be submitted by any member in good standing to the Chairman, Board of Trustees at least six (6) months prior to the regularly scheduled Reunion/Convention. The Chairman will circulate the change to the Board of Trustees for their comment. The Chairman will collect all input and forward it to the Chairman of the By-Laws Committee. A change is

defined as any alteration that materially affects the intent and/or meaning of the Article being considered.

2. Corrections: A request for correction to the by-laws that change neither the meaning nor the intent of the Article under consideration.
3. Procedures:
 - a. Corrections as defined above shall be considered by the Association Officers. Notice of such corrections will be presented and read to the membership at the next regularly convened reunion/convention for information only.
 - b. Changes as defined above, that have met all requirements, shall be presented to the membership at the regularly convened reunion/convention where they will be read and voted on by a "Show of Hands". (If the changes have been circulated to the membership in no less than thirty (30) days prior to the reunion/convention, reading of the changes may be suspended.
 - c. Proposed changes to the by-laws will be published in the Association's newsletter immediately prior to the scheduled Reunion/Convention.

Originally Adopted: July 1988 at Reno, NV
 Corrected/Amended/Approved July 1990 at Baltimore, MD
 Approved: Board of Directors December 8-9, 1990, at Reno, NV
 Corrected/Amended/Approved October 1992 at Reunion, NV
 Corrected/Amended/Approved October 28, 1994, at Norfolk, VA
 Corrected/Amended/Approved November 2, 1996, at San Diego, CA
 Corrected/Amended/Approved November 6, 1998, at Corpus Christi, TX
 Corrected/Amended/Approved October 24, 2000, at Ft. Mitchell, KY

Corrected/Amended/Approved October 20, 2002, at Reno, NV
Corrected/Amended/Approved April 24, 2004, at Ft. Mitchell, KY
Corrected/Amended/Approved October 22, 2005, at Tampa, FL
Corrected/Amended/Approved April 18, 2007, at Burlingame, CA
Corrected/Amended/Approved April 2009 at Reno, NV
Corrected/Amended/Approved April 2011 at Herndon, VA
Corrected/Amended/Approved April 2013 at Reno, NV
Corrected/Amended/Approved May 20, 2015, at Buffalo, NY
Corrected/Amended/Approved May 10, 2017, at San Diego, CA
Corrected/Amended/Approved April 17, 2019, at Charleston, SC
Corrected/Amended/Approved June 11, 2021, at Virginia Beach, VA
Corrected by the Officers of the Association, July 2021.

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