

# BYLAWS



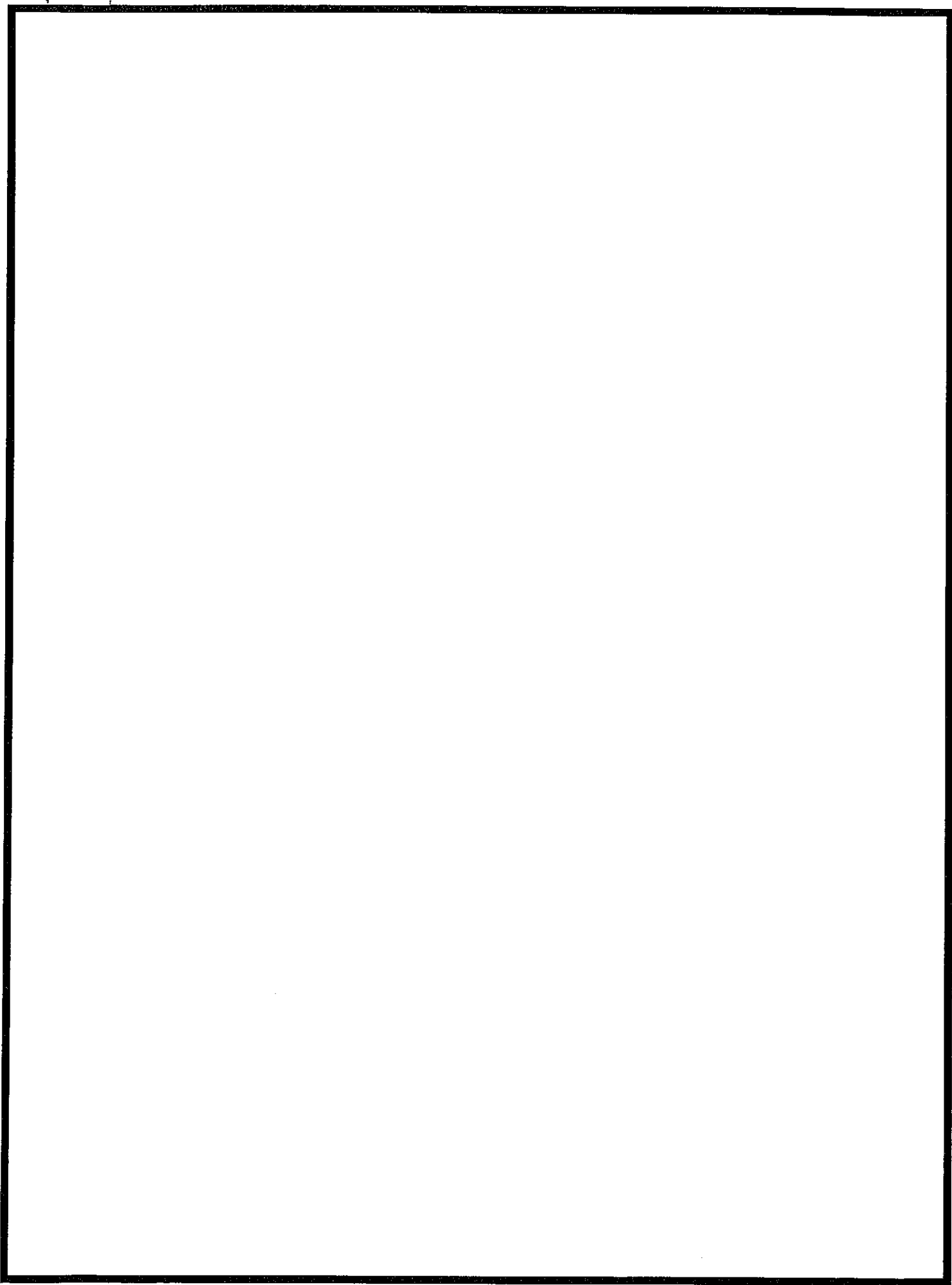
## MILITARY ORDER OF THE COOTIE OF THE UNITED STATES

*"The Honor Degree of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States"*

AS ADOPTED BY THE 100<sup>th</sup> SUPREME SCRATCH

Orlando, FL

July 27, 2019



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## **Preamble**

We, officers and enlisted persons and honorably discharged officers and enlisted persons of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard of the United States of America, who have served in Foreign wars of the United States of America on foreign soil or in hostile waters, and who are in good standing in "The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States" do hereby unite to establish a permanent organization, which shall be known as the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States. Thus, the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States was organized in Washington, D.C., on September 17, 1920.

## **Objects**

The objects of this organization are to be the official Honor Degree of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. To promote social and reunion features among its own members, and to keep alive therein the spirit of optimism and humor so characteristic of the American service man/woman.

## **Organization**

**Section 1.** The several constituted bodies of this organization shall consist of:

- A. Subordinate organizations to be known as \_\_\_\_\_ Pup Tent No. \_\_\_\_\_, Military Order of the Cootie of the United States; provided, however, that no Pup Tent hereafter organized shall adopt the name of any Pup Tent in good standing.
- B. State Organization to be known as: Grand Pup Tent of \_\_\_\_\_ Military Order of the Cootie of the United States.
- C. A National Organization to be known as: Supreme Pup Tent of the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States.

# **BYLAWS**

## **ARTICLE I**

### **Membership**

#### **Section 101. Active Members.**

- A. Persons making application for membership in the Military Order of the Cootie must be of sound character and shall be active members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars; members who have fulfilled their work when appointed upon committees or as officers and who have done much toward promoting a greater VFW
- B. The application of any member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars who is not a member within the jurisdiction of the Pup Tent in which they are making application to join, shall be referred to the Adjutant of the Grand Pup Tent within which they hold membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars for the purpose of investigation. A report shall be returned to the Pup Tent in which the application was filed with an appropriate recommendation of approval or disapproval and in the case of disapproval, a statement giving reasons.
- C. Membership in more than one Pup Tent at a time is prohibited. Any member found in violation of this provision shall elect to remain in the Pup Tent of their choice and shall surrender their membership in the other Pup Tent. There shall be no refund of dues to such member.

#### **Section 102. Active Members-At-Large.**

Any eligible member not within the jurisdiction of any Pup Tent may become a Member-At-Large upon application to the Adjutant of the Grand Pup Tent within which they reside. In the event of their residence outside the jurisdiction of a Grand Pup Tent, upon application to the Supreme Pup Tent after satisfactory proof of their membership and service in the Veterans of Foreign Wars has been submitted and upon payment of NINE (\$9.00) dollars to the Grand or Supreme Adjutant. In case of the payment of admittance fee to the Grand Adjutant they shall be entitled to become a member of any Local Pup Tent they may choose. Provided, they shall pay additional fees over NINE (\$9.00) dollars as may be in force in the Pup Tent, after making application and being approved as therein provided by said Pup Tent. The Grand Quartermaster will thereupon forward to the Local Pup Tent to which they were admitted the sum of two (\$2.00) dollars and to the Supreme Pup Tent the sum of two (\$2.00) dollars. Likewise, upon payment of Admittance Fee to the Supreme Adjutant, the member may become a member of any Local Pup Tent; provided they shall pay such additional initiation fee over NINE (\$9.00) dollars as may be in force in the said Local Pup Tent. The Supreme Quartermaster will thereupon forward two (\$2.00) dollars to the Local Pup Tent and one (\$1.00) dollars to the Grand Pup Tent.

#### **Section 103. Application.**

- A. Every application for membership shall be in writing and shall be filled in in every detail upon blanks to be furnished by the Supreme Pup Tent. Every applicant must be a member in good and regular standing in the Veterans of Foreign Wars and active therein and shall be investigated by a committee of at least two members.
- B. An application for membership in the Military Order of the Cootie must be accompanied by a certificate verifying that the applicant has been a member in good standing in the Post for the preceding six months, and has completed satisfactory service on a major Post committee or has satisfactorily performed Post duties or participated actively as a leader of Post functions; said certificate enumerating such qualifying service and showing approval of application by a majority vote of the members present and voting at a meeting of the Post shall bear the endorsement of the Post Commander attested to by the Post Adjutant.

#### **Section 104. Investigation.**

Investigating Committee shall be responsible for all applicants whom they endorse and shall be subject to such discipline as may be set forth by the Supreme Commander for any violation of requirements for membership as may be set forth from time to time.

#### **Section 105. Balloting on Application.**

Before voting on the application at a regular Pup Tent Scratch, the Seam Squirrel will read the report of the investigating committee, and the members present will be given an opportunity to state their objections, if any, to the admission of the applicant. Unless one (1) member present may request a written ballot, a Viva Voce vote

shall be taken and a majority of the votes cast shall decide acceptance or rejection of the application. In case of a tie vote, the Seam Squirrel shall cast the deciding vote. If the application fails to win a majority of the votes cast, the applicant may resubmit their application after a lapse of one (1) year. Should there be no objection from any member present, several applications of membership may be grouped and accepted by Viva Voce vote. Upon the request of any one member, any individual's application must be voted on separately by written ballot, and upon the request of any three members, all applications must be voted on separately by written ballot.

#### **Section 106. Rejection.**

If an applicant shall be rejected, their admission fee and dues shall be returned and they shall not be proposed again for membership in any Pup Tent for at least one (1) year after such rejection. A second application shall be in the same form and subject to the same conditions as the first. No person shall be proposed for membership more than two (2) times. The name of the rejected applicant shall be forwarded to the Supreme Adjutant.

#### **Section 107. Notification.**

Each applicant upon his or her election shall be notified thereof by the Hungry Cootie in writing, and upon presenting themselves to be properly initiated. Unless they present themselves for initiation within four (4) months from the date of the first notification, their election shall be declared void and the admission fee forfeited.

#### **Section 108. Admission Fees.**

Each local Pup Tent may fix its own initiation fee, but in no case, shall this fee be less than the total of two (\$2.00) dollars. The two (\$2.00) dollars is to be sent to the Grand Quartermaster, together with the Grand and Supreme copies of the membership card. The Grand Quartermaster retains one (\$1.00) dollar and the Grand copy of the card and forwards one (\$1.00) dollar along with the Supreme Record Card to the Supreme Quartermaster. The admission fee shall accompany the application in all cases, and upon obligation, the applicant shall subscribe to a copy of the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations. The Nit shall receive a membership card only when all admission fees and dues have been paid. The official Cootie Hat Style #102, less tassels, shall be issued at the time the Nit degree is conferred or as soon after as possible. One green tassel shall be issued and affixed to the left tip of the Cootie Hat at the time the Grayback Degree is conferred. The second green tassel and official pin will be issued at the time the Cootie Degree is conferred. In case there is no Grand Pup Tent having jurisdiction, the local Pup Tent shall send the Grand Record Card and the Supreme Record Card and one (\$1.00) dollar to the Supreme Quartermaster direct.

#### **Section 109. Application – Expelled Members.**

A member, who has been suspended from any Pup Tent by sentence of a disciplinary action, is not eligible to membership in any Pup Tent other than the one which they were expelled, except in case the Pup Tent ceases to exist, and then only with the approval of the Supreme Commander.

#### **Section 110. Transfer.**

- A. A member in good standing, against whom no charges exist, may transfer to any Pup Tent in the Military Order of the Cootie upon presentation of paid-up (dues) receipt card in both the Military Order of the Cootie and the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, provided they are accepted by the Pup Tent they are requesting their membership be transferred to.
- B. To complete the transfer, the Pup Tent CCDB, shall take up the annual dues card from the Pup Tent and issue a Dues Card for Membership in the Pup Tent the member is transferring to, then complete the transfer in accordance with the administrative directives from Supreme Headquarters.
- C. The member so transferred shall have all the rights and privileges of membership in the Pup Tent they transferred to.
- D. The Pup Tent which paid per capita on the member transferring to another Pup Tent shall be credited with the membership for purposes of selection to accredited Delegates and Alternates to the Grand and Supreme Scratches.

#### **Section 111. Honorable Discharges.**

Any member in good standing upon written application to the Seam Squirrel at a regular meeting of the Pup Tent, shall receive at the next regular meeting of the Pup Tent, an Honorable Discharge signed by the Seam Squirrel and attested to by the Hungry Cootie; provided that at the time of such application, they are not indebted to their Pup Tent. A member thus discharged may be readmitted in the manner prescribed for the selection of new members.

**Section 112. Members in Good Standing.**

A duly elected and obligated member ceases to be in good standing immediately upon the expiration of the period for which their dues are paid or remitted in either the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States or the Military Order of the Cootie.

**Section 113. Members – Suspension – VFW**

An active member, who is a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, who is suspended therefrom and whose connection therewith, for any reason whatsoever ceases or is terminated, shall ipso facto, and thereafter assume, and have the same standing in this organization as they have or may subsequently have in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and no other. This provision, however, in no way interferes with the power or right of this organization to take any and all action not inconsistent with the foregoing that it may see fit.

**Section 114. Members – VFW – Membership Termination.**

Any member, whose membership in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, has been terminated, shall cease to hold membership in the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States.

**Section 115. Reinstatement.**

A member may be reinstated in the Pup tent from which they have been dropped by making a written request therefore and on receiving a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting at any regular meeting and upon payment of an amount not exceeding the current dues.

**Section 116. Reinstatement in Different Pup Tent.**

A member who has been dropped from the rolls of their Pup Tent for one year or more because of nonpayment of dues may become a member of another Pup Tent by application and election, including payment of the current dues.

**Section 117. Right of Appeal.**

All members shall have the right of appealing through proper channels, from the acts of the Pup Tent Seam Squirrels or Pup Tents, Grand Commanders or Grand Scratches, to the next higher authority and to the Supreme Commander, whose decision shall be final, unless reversed by the Supreme Council of Administration or the Supreme Scratch; but all decisions appealed shall have full force and effect until reversed by competent authority.

**Section 118. Time Limit of Appeal.**

Appeals from the decisions of Seam Squirrels of Pup Tents shall be taken within thirty (30) days and all other appeals within sixty (60) days from the rendering of such decision.

**Section 119. Dues.**

The dues in the Military Order of the Cootie shall never be less than the Current Supreme per Capita Tax per year and shall be paid annually in advance in accordance with the calendar year.

**Section 120. Life Memberships.**

- A. Life Membership Plan A.** Any person who is a valid Life Member in good standing in the Military Order of the Cootie as of January 1, 2001, will be honored and shall retain the same privileges and rights as an annual dues paying member. The Life Membership Plan "A" is forever closed, and no new applications will be accepted in the Plan "A" Life Membership Fund.
- B. Life Membership Plan B.** Any member who is a Life Member in good standing in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, and is in good standing with the Military Order of the Cootie as of January 1, 2001 or thereafter, may become a Life Member by payment of the proper Life Membership fee to the CCDB or Quartermaster. A member at large in good standing may become a Life Member by paying the proper fee to the appropriate Grand Quartermaster or Supreme Quartermaster if they hold a valid VFW Life Membership.
- C. Life Membership Fee Plan C.** A Life Membership Plan "C" shall be established using the current \$9.00 Per Capita Tax and the following fee schedule:
  - 1) Plan "B" shall be closed and no new members will be accepted after October 31, 2006.
  - 2) The applicable fee from the Life Membership fee schedule set forth herein will be determined by using the applicant's attained age as of December 31st of the calendar year in which the application is submitted regardless of the actual date of birth.

<b>B. Through age 30</b>	<b>C. \$340.00</b>
<b>D. 31 – 40</b>	<b>E. \$325.00</b>
<b>F. 41 – 50</b>	<b>G. \$305.00</b>
<b>H. 51 – 60</b>	<b>I. \$275.00</b>
<b>J. 61 – 70</b>	<b>K. \$245.00</b>
<b>L. 71 – 80</b>	<b>M. \$190.00</b>
<b>N. 81 and up</b>	<b>O. \$150.00</b>

**D. General.** A Life Member shall not be subject to any further membership dues, levies or life membership dues of any kind. A Life Member shall have all the benefits and privileges of the Pup Tent, Grand Pup Tent, and Supreme Pup Tent membership as long as the member shall live. A Life Member subsequently found ineligible for Life Membership in either organization shall forfeit such Life Membership and fees paid. A Life Member who shall be discharged from either organization due to a disciplinary action shall forfeit such Life Membership, and in any event, no refund of fees will be made.

**E. Life Membership Committee (LMC).**

- 1) The Life Membership committee shall be comprised of the Supreme Commander, Supreme Quartermaster, Supreme Life Membership Chairperson, and three elected Supreme Trustees.
- 2) The Supreme Quartermaster is Treasurer and the Supreme Life Membership Chairperson is Secretary of the LMC. The Treasurer shall invest the Life Membership Fund (LMF) in investment-grade securities in the best interest of the Military Order of the Cootie. The LMC shall present a financial report at the end of each year and will submit it to the Supreme Council of Administration and the Supreme Scratch annually. The LMC shall make recommendations to the Supreme Council of Administration as to the amount of the proposed annual rebate for the Pup Tents, Grands and Supreme Headquarters.

**F. Per Capita Tax (PCT).**

- 1) **Life Membership Fund Plan A.** The funds from this "LMF frozen account" will remain in Plan A with no rebate, at any level, until the LMF frozen account reaches \$150,000.00.
- 2) **Life Membership Funds Plan B and C.** The Life Membership Funds will work similar to an annuity. The Supreme Quartermaster will pay the annual PCT for each Plan "B" and Plan "C" Life Member from the Life Membership Funds no later than September 30th of the new membership year. The LMC will submit a proposed distribution schedule to the New Supreme Council of Administration at the Supreme Scratch. The Council of Administration will not change or modify the Life Membership Committee recommendation. They will approve, deny, or table the recommendation. No rebate will be paid to the Pup Tents, Grands, or Supreme Headquarters without prior approval of the Supreme Council of Administration. No rebate will be made to any contingent of the Military Order of the Cootie, which is in arrears to the Supreme Organization. If the Supreme Council of Administration does not act on the rebate by a 2/3 vote by November 15th of the current year, the Supreme Quartermaster will pay rebates using the total annual interest earned as of June 30th at a distribution rate of 30% to the Pup Tent, 30% to the Grands, 30% to the Supreme Headquarters, and the remaining 10% retained in the LMF. The subsequent rebate, when earned, is to be paid based on the number of Plan "B" and Plan "C" Life Members on the rolls of the Organization as of June 30th of the current year. No rebate will be paid to the Pup Tents or Grands or Supreme, if the calculated amount to be paid to the Pup Tents, Grands, and Supreme is less than \$1.00 per Plan "B" or Plan "C" Life Member or the annual earned interest for the current year drops below 6%.

**G. Deceased.** Death of a Life Member will be reported to Supreme Headquarters immediately. Death of a Life Member following issuance of checks paying the members per capita tax for the next year to Supreme Headquarters, Grand Pup Tent and local Pup Tent, shall not be cause for a refund of such per capita tax for that year.

**H. Credit.** All Life Members will be credited to the Pup Tents Membership Standing on September 1st. All Life Members that transfer or are deceased will remain credited to the old Pup Tent and will remain in their quota until quotas are established for the new fiscal year. The new Pup Tent receiving a Life Member transfer will not be credited with the Life Member until September 1st.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **Pup Tents**

#### **Section 201. Formation of.**

A Pup Tent maybe formed by charter from the Supreme Pup Tent on application of not less than fifteen (15) members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. These members can be new members, reinstated or transfers from another Pup Tent in accordance with section 101 of the MOC Bylaws; provided, however, the number of Pup Tents in any Grand shall be governed by a majority vote of the Grand Council and where no Grand Pup Tent exists, it shall be a decision of the Supreme Pup Tent. Such application shall be made in accordance with the Bylaws of the Military Order of the Cootie.

#### **Section 202. Charter.**

- A. Application for Charter for a Pup Tent shall be made in writing to the Supreme Headquarters on a blank form to be furnished for that purpose, accompanied by a Charter Fee of twenty-five (\$25.00) dollars.
- B. For every name appearing on the Charter, the additional current admission fee shall accompany said Charter. No other fee shall be collected except current per capita tax.
- C. Admission fees and per capita tax provided in **Section 433 and 533** must be paid before the time of institution of said Pup Tent.
- D. The Charter application shall contain the name of the proposed Pup Tent and its location and in states where a Grand Pup Tent exists, the recommendations of the Grand Commander for approval or disapproval and reasons therefore.
- E. All Pup Tent Charters shall be signed by the Supreme Commander and counter-signed by the Supreme Adjutant and bear the seal of the Military Order of the Cootie.
- F. The Charter shall remain open not more than ninety (90) days from the date of institution of the Pup Tent, at the end of which time the names to appear upon the Charter shall be furnished to the Supreme Adjutant.

#### **Section 203. Institution.**

- A. Upon issuance of a Charter to the Pup Tent, the Grand Commander of the Grand Pup Tent having jurisdiction, and in case there is no Grand Pup Tent, the Supreme Commander shall appoint an Aide-de-Camp, or authorize and Supreme or Grand Officer to institute said Pup Tent in accordance with the rules and usages of this order and install its officers.
- B. The Bylaws, Rituals, Hats, Insignia, etc., shall be given to the Instituting Officer, and they shall, in turn, deliver them into the keeping of the Pup Tent Seam Squirrel. After they have been installed, and shall instruct the Shavetails of the Pup Tent in their duties, and shall perform such other duties as the laws and rituals prescribe.
- C. Each new Pup Tent shall be instituted within sixty (60) days of the date the Charter has been authorized. The Shavetails and members of a new Pup Tent present and receive the work and instructions at the institution ceremonies shall be considered as having all three (3) Degrees conferred on them and the Shavetails will be empowered to confer all three (3) Degrees on any new applicants to the Pup Tent.

#### **Section 204. Instituting Officer – Report of.**

- A. The Instituting Officer shall inspect the applications of all prospective members of the Pup Tent before it is instituted, and shall countersign the report of muster, testifying that all applications for membership in the new Pup Tent are eligible according to the Bylaws of this order.
- B. After such Institution and Installation of Shavetails, the Instituting Officer shall immediately make a report, in writing, to the office from which the warrant was issued, giving the number, the name of said Pup Tent, the number of members obligated and the names and addresses of the Shavetails for the ensuing term.

#### **Section 205. Seniority.**

The rank of the local Pup Tent shall be determined by the date of the Charter under which they are acting in their (State) Grand.

**Section 206. Re-organization.**

Fifteen (15) members of any inactive Pup Tent, prior to the time of being declared defunct, may have the Charter revised by making application to the Supreme Headquarters in writing, provided ten (10) of said members were in good standing at the time of disbandment of the Pup Tent and provided that current per capita tax be paid in advance of the time of reorganizing.

**Section 207. Re-organization – Defunct Pup Tents.**

The Supreme Commander may order the re-organization of a defunct Pup Tent with its original name and number, provided these have not been reassigned. In such re-organization, an application shall be submitted as provided for the formation of a new Pup Tent bearing the old and new names petitioning therefore, and a new Charter issued.

**Section 208. Defunct Pup Tents.**

Any Pup Tent becoming defunct shall return the Charter of said Pup Tent with Rituals, paraphernalia and all monies and property of said Pup Tent to the Supreme Quartermaster.

**Section 209. Defunct Pup Tents – How Declared.**

- A. The Supreme Commander may declare a Pup Tent defunct and its Charter forfeited after May 1st for failure or refusal to pay Supreme and Grand per capita tax on all its members in good standing as prescribed in these Bylaws or for failure to pay per capita tax on a minimum of nine (9) members.
- B. The Supreme Commander may order the cancellation of any Pup Tent Charter upon direction of the Commander-in-Chief.

**Section 210. Defunct Pup Tents – Members of.**

- A. Any member of a defunct Pup Tent who was in good standing at the time the Pup Tent was declared defunct, may transfer their membership to another Pup Tent, by application to the Supreme Pup Tent, provided the transferee has been accepted by said Pup Tent.
- B. Transfer – Supreme Jurisdiction: Any member of a disbanded or defunct Pup Tent, not within jurisdiction of a Grand, who was in good standing at the time such Pup Tent disbanded or declared defunct and who does not reside within the jurisdiction of a Pup Tent, may be accepted as a member-at-large, in the same manner as otherwise prescribed for acceptance of a member-at-large, and thereafter pay annual dues as a member-at-large.

**Section 211. Suspension and Revocation of Pup Tent Charter.**

- A. Actions by the Supreme Commander – Suspension. The Supreme Commander may, upon their own initiative or upon the recommendations of the Grand Commander, suspend the Charter of a Pup Tent for a period of sixty (60) days for violation of the laws and usages of the organization or failure to comply with lawful orders of the Supreme Scratch, Supreme Commander, Supreme Council, Grand Commander, or Grand Council, or for such other conduct by the Pup Tent or its officers acting on behalf of the Pup Tent, as the Supreme Commander believes harmful to the best interests of the Military Order of the Cootie. If no appeal is taken within the period of suspension, the Charter of the Pup Tent may be cancelled or revoked; provided, however, that before the Charter is cancelled or revoked, the Pup Tent shall have been notified in writing of the charges against it, and upon request, shall have a suitable opportunity to appear before the Supreme Commander or Supreme Council to show cause why its Charter should not be cancelled or revoked.
- B. Actions by the Grand Commander – Suspension. The Grand Commander may suspend the Charter of a Pup Tent for a period of up to sixty (60) days for violation of the laws and usages of the organization or failure to comply with lawful orders of the Supreme Scratch, Supreme Commander, Supreme Council, Grand Commander, or Grand Council, or for such other conduct by the Pup Tent or its officers acting on behalf of the Pup Tent, as the Grand Commander believes harmful to the best interests of the Military Order of the Cootie. The Grand Commander taking such action shall notify the Supreme Commander in writing of such action within forty-eight (48) hours thereof giving reasons therefore. During or at the close of the suspension period, the Grand Commander may remove the suspension or recommend to the Supreme Commander that the Pup tent Charter be cancelled or revoked.
- C. Establishment of Trusteeship. Upon the imposition of any suspension under this section, the Grand Commander shall appoint a Trusteeship to consist of from three to five Trustees chosen by the Grand Commander, at least one of whom shall reside sufficiently near the Pup Tent to effectively carry out the

business and affairs of the Trusteeship and who shall be willing and able to perform such duties. Pursuant to a written grant of powers and limitations, such Trustees shall carry on the business and affairs of the Pup Tent during the period of suspension. The business and affairs of the Pup Tent shall be limited to current MOC activities. The actions of the Trustees shall be subject to the approval of the Grand Commander who shall submit to the Supreme Commander a written report of the situation and the activities of the pup Tent under suspension. While under suspension, no meetings (Scratches) shall be held in the name of the Pup Tent except for the sole purpose of the discussion of the cause, affect and removal of the penalty, and no funds of the Pup tent shall be expended or obligations incurred during and while the order of suspension is in force except as may be expended or obligated by the Trustees appointed under this subsection. Any Trusteeship appointed under these provisions shall remain in office until the suspension is lifted or the charter has been cancelled and the Charter with monies and property of the Pup Tent have been recovered and forwarded through the Grand Quartermaster to the Supreme Quartermaster, or otherwise relieved by the Grand Commander.

- D. In the event of cancellation or revocation of a Pup Tent charter under the provisions of this Section, the appointed Trustees shall recover the Charter of said Pup Tent along with the Rituals, paraphernalia, and all monies and property of said Pup Tent and forward the same to the Supreme Quartermaster through the Grand Quartermaster.

#### **Section 212. Surrender or Forfeiture of Charter.**

- A. No Charter shall be surrendered by any Pup Tent so long as nine (9) members thereof demand its continuance, nor unless a proposition to surrender the Charter shall have been made at a regular meeting of the Pup Tent at least four (4) weeks before the time of action, and due notice of said proposition in writing given to every member of the Pup Tent.
- B. In case of a surrender or forfeiture of a Charter, the property of a Pup tent, including books of record and papers with all monies shall be immediately turned over to the Supreme Quartermaster.
- C. The Charter of a Pup Tent having less than nine (9) members in good standing on its rolls shall be cancelled, providing that Pup Tent be notified thirty (30) days prior to cancellation by certified mail.

#### **Section 213. Regular Scratches (Meetings).**

The regular scratches of each Pup Tent shall be held at least once a month at the location designated on the Charter, unless otherwise authorized by special dispensation, and will be called a local scratch. The Pup Tent Charter must be displayed during all scratches.

#### **Section 214. Special Meetings.**

The Pup Tent Seam Squirrel may call a special scratch whenever, in their opinion, the same may be necessary for the welfare of the Pup Tent. The Pup Tent Seam Squirrel, upon request, in writing signed by seven (7) members in good standing, shall call a special scratch. The Pup Tent Hungry Cootie shall notify all members in writing, delivered by email or postal service to the current address provided by the member, of the time and place of any special scratch and of the business to be transacted, such notice to be delivered to each member at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the time set for the meeting. No business shall be transacted at any special scratch except that for which the meeting was called.

#### **Section 215. Quorum.**

The Pup Tent Bylaws may specify the minimum number of members required to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, in no case to be less than Five (5) members in good standing.

#### **Section 216. Pup Tent Bylaws.**

- A. The Local Pup Tent may adopt Bylaws for the government of the Military Order of the Cootie or orders of the Supreme Pup Tent.
- B. That all proposed Local or Grand Pup Tent Bylaws be submitted in triplicate copies to the Supreme Judge Advocate to be scrutinized as to their adherence with the Supreme Bylaws, signed and forwarded to the Supreme Commander for their signature, to the Supreme Adjutant to be attested, sealed and distributed: one (1) copy to the Pup Tent of origination, one (1) copy to the Supreme Headquarters and one (1) copy for the Grand Pup Tent.

**Section 217. Change of Name.**

- A. Any Pup Tent may change its name by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership present and voting at a regular or special meeting called for the purpose, of which meeting and proposed action at least thirty (30) days notice in writing has been given to all members, and provided that such change shall be approved by the Grand Commander and the Supreme Commander.
- B. When the Supreme Commander has granted permission for change of name, such Pup tent shall be issued a new Charter at the expense of the Pup Tent.

**Section 218. Change of Location.**

See VFW Manual of Procedure Section 1201 (b) paragraph (4).

**Section 219. Consolidation of Pup Tents.**

When two or more Pup Tents in good standing desire to consolidate, written or printed notice of such proposed action shall be given to all members in good standing at least two (2) weeks prior to date of meeting for consideration of such proposition in each of said Pup Tents. If such proposition shall then be adopted by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting at such scratch, the vote being recorded by ayes and nays; the fact shall through channels, be certified by resolution of each Pup Tent to the Grand Commander, or if no Grand Pup Tent exists, then to the Supreme Commander. When the resolutions are so approved by two (2) or more Pup Tents, the Grand Commander shall forward said approved resolutions to the Supreme Commander (where no Grand Pup Tent exists, the two Pup Tents shall send them directly to the Supreme Commander) who shall approve or disapprove, depending, and he or she will issue without charge a new Charter reciting the facts of such consolidation and bearing the names of such Pup Tents. The new Charter shall rank from the date of the senior numbered Pup Tent but the number shall be either number of the consolidating units agreed upon by the consolidating Pup Tents, and the new name shall be one agreed on by the consolidating Pup Tents, both of the foregoing having been agreed on by vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting of any and all Pup Tents consolidating at a Scratch for the specific purpose of consolidation, due notice of at least two (2) weeks having been mailed all members of said Pup Tent concerned. The property of the consolidated Pup Tent shall be conveyed to the new Pup Tent and become the property thereof. All past officers in each shall be entitled to ranks as of date of service in their respective Pup Tent. Upon the consolidation of Two (2) or more Pup Tents, new officers shall be elected and installed. In the event two (2) or more Pup Tents consolidate, all officers of the consolidated Pup Tents having fulfilled their obligations shall be recognized as past officers, provided, however, the past Seam Squirrels of the consolidated Pup Tents for the purpose of representing either the Pup Tents consolidated, or for the new Pup tent formed by such consolidation at any District or Grand Scratch.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **Officers and Duties**

#### **Section 301. Pup Tent – Eligibility.**

All active members in good standing who have taken the three (3) Degrees, shall be eligible to any Office in the Pup Tent, provided, however, no member shall hold two (2) elected offices in the Pup Tent at the same time. An Officer elected or appointed shall retain the office only while they remain in good standing in the Pup Tent or until their successor has been elected or appointed.

#### **Section 302. Roster, Elected Officers.**

The officers of each Pup Tent shall consist of a Seam Squirrel, Blanket Bum, Hide Gimlet, Custodian of the Crummy Duffel Bag and three (3) Tightwads.

#### **Section 303. Roster, Appointed Officers.**

The Seam Squirrel shall appoint the Sky Pilot, Provost Marshal, Jimmy Legs, Keeper of the Lousy Records, Shyster, Pill Pusher, Hungry Cootie, Shirt Reader and may appoint any of the following positions as needed: Hospital Chairperson, Newshound (Public Relations), Wind-Jammer (Bugler), National Home Chairperson and Life Membership Chairperson, and if deemed necessary an assistant CCDB. They shall enter upon their duties immediately upon the installation of the Grand Commander at the annual Grand Scratch and may be removed at the pleasure of the Seam Squirrel.

#### **Section 304. Election & Installation of Officers.**

- A. The Pup Tent Officers (except those designated in **Section 303** of this Article) shall be nominated, elected, and installed in office for a period of one year. The installation shall be conducted by a member in good standing who holds, or has held, a rank at least as high as that of Pup Tent Seam Squirrel.
- B. Shavetails shall be elected and installed between the fifteenth (15th) day of January and the last day of March, unless otherwise provided for by special dispensation granted by the Grand Commander concerned. The Shavetails thus elected or appointed, and subsequently installed, shall assume the duties of their respective offices immediately upon the installation of the Grand Commander at the conclusion of the Grand Scratch. Pup Tent Officers not within a Grand shall assume the duties of their respective offices July 1.
- C. Before conducting any installation, the installing officer shall publicly verify proof of Quartermaster bonding, inspection report and remittance of Per Capita Tax for the current term.

#### **Section 305. Term of Office.**

All officers shall be elected for one year except Trustees (Tight Wads). Tight Wads shall be elected when the Pup Tent is first instituted: one (1) to serve one (1) year, one (1) to serve two (2) years and one (1) to serve three (3) years. As each term of office expires, an election for a term of three (3) years shall be held. In the event a vacancy occurs in any one of the Trustee positions, an election to fill the vacancy will be for the position vacated (i.e., 1 year, 2 year, 3 year).

#### **Section 306. Officers – Balloting For.**

When balloting for Officers, a majority of all votes cast, except where otherwise designated, shall be necessary for a choice. If there is no election on the first two ballots, the name of the candidate receiving the lowest number of ballots shall be dropped and so on in successive ballots until an election is made.

#### **Section 307. Vacancies and Inactive Officers.**

- A. Pup Tents may fill any vacancy in their offices at any regular meeting, notice of such contemplated action having been given at a previous meeting. In event of a vacant in the office of Seam Squirrel, or Seam Squirrel-elect, the Blanket Bum or Blanket Bum-elect, shall at once succeed to the title and duties of such office; and the Hide Gimlet, or Hide-Gimlet elect, shall at once succeed to the duties and titles of said office.
- B. A Pup Tent at a regular scratch, if notice of intent to do so has been given at a prior scratch, may by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting, declare vacant the position of any elected officer who has absented themselves from two (2) consecutive scratches or has failed to fulfill the duties of that office. No Pup Tent member may bring a motion before any Pup Tent meeting to vacate any elected office unless written notice of the proposed action has been given to the officer holding such office, the

Seam Squirrel, the Hungry Cootie and the Grand Commander at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. The notice shall state the reasons for the proposed action. At the meeting, the officer shall be advised of the facts underlying the proposed action and afforded the opportunity to present evidence on their own behalf.

- C. The Grand Commander may, with respect to any Pup Tent within the Grand, declare vacant the position of any Pup Tent Officer who fails to fulfill the duties of their office as specified by these Bylaws.
- D. Any elected officer whose office is vacated under the provisions of this Section may appeal such decision under the provisions of **Article I, Section 117** of these Bylaws.

#### **Section 308. Installation Officer.**

- A. The installation shall be conducted by a member in good standing who holds or has held the office of at least that of a Pup Tent Seam Squirrel. Where a Grand Pup Tent exists, the Grand Commander shall have the authority to designate the Installing Officer upon recommendation of the Pup Tent, made in sufficient time to allow the Grand Commander to issue the necessary warrants.
- B. The Installing Officer shall forward immediately after installation, a report, properly signed to the Supreme Adjutant and to the Grand Adjutant where a Grand Pup Tent exists.

#### **Section 309. Past Pup Tent Officers.**

- A. A Past Pup Tent Officer shall be one who, having been elected or appointed, and installed, has ceased to hold office by completion of their term, consolidation of Pup Tents, or death before the expiration of their term of office.
- B. Members of the Armed Forces on active duty who, having been duly elected or appointed, installed and served six (6) months of their tour in office, who relinquish their office by reason of re-assignment by the Armed Forces, shall be past officers.

#### **Section 310. Duties of the Seam Squirrel.**

- A. It shall be the duty of the Seam Squirrel to preside at all meetings of the Pup Tent, to enforce the laws and usages of the organization, and all orders from proper authority, to appoint all officers and committees not otherwise provided for, to approve all warrants drawn upon the Custodian of the Crummy Duffel Bag for appropriations of money, perform such other duties as the laws of this association may require.
- B. The Seam Squirrel of the Pup Tent shall, through the Adjutant, furnish the Commanders of the Posts to which the members belong with a list of the members of the Pup Tent. The report shall be made as of 31 May and be provided to the Post Commander annually, NLT 30 June

#### **Section 311. Duties of the Blanket Bum.**

It shall be the duty of the Blanket Bum to assist the Seam Squirrel in conducting the affairs of the Pup Tent and to preside in his/her absence.

#### **Section 312. Duties of the Hide Gimlet.**

The Hide Gimlet shall assist the Seam Squirrel and the Blanket Bum in conducting the affairs of the Pup Tent. If the Seam Squirrel and the Blanket Bum are absent, the Hide Gimlet shall preside.

#### **Section 313. Duties of Seam Squirrel Pro Tempore.**

In case the Seam Squirrel, Blanket Bum or Hide Gimlet is not present, the Pup Tent shall elect a Seam Squirrel Pro Tempore, who shall preside at that meeting of the Pup Tent.

#### **Section 314. Duty of the Custodian of the Crummy Duffel Bag.**

- A. The Custodian of the Crummy Duffel Bag (CCDB) shall receive and hold all monies, securities, vouchers and such other property of the Pup Tent as may pertain to their office using acceptable banking practices. They shall pay out monies only after the Pup Tent has authorized payment and then upon proper voucher drawn by the Hungry Cootie and approved by the Seam Squirrel. They shall collect all monies due the Pup Tent, giving receipt therefore. They shall keep an account with each member and notify all members in arrears.
- B. The Custodian of the Crummy Duffel Bag will be responsible for prompt payment of per capita tax when due the proper authorities. They shall, before issuing a membership report for dues, collect from each new member not less than the prescribed admission fee for their own Pup Tent as determined by Pup Tent action and in accordance with **Section 108** of the Bylaws. Forwarding instructions are also found

in **Section 108**.

- C. In case there is no Grand Pup Tent having jurisdiction, the Custodian of the Crummy Duffel Bag shall send the Grand Record Card and Supreme Record Card as instructed in **Section 108**.
- D. They shall collect the annual membership dues and shall credit the per capita tax fund with the sum equal to the Annual Supreme and Grand Per Capita Tax. They shall forward to the Grand Quartermaster on the first day of each month the Grand and Supreme per capita tax payable from the annual dues collected from each member during the preceding month. Such payments shall be accompanied by transmittal forms provided by the Supreme Headquarters upon which shall be listed the numbers and categories of the members whose payment is being made and other data as the form may require. Any and all per capita tax paid by the Pup Tent on members whose dues have been remitted must be expended from the appropriate fund of the Pup Tent. The Custodian of the Crummy Duffel Bag in states where no Grand Pup Tent exists, shall forward to the Supreme Quartermaster, on the first day of each month, the current Supreme per capita tax in accordance with the administrative directives from Supreme Headquarters.
- E. The books and records of the Custodian of the Crummy Duffel Bag shall be uniform and shall be those as prescribed by Supreme Headquarters. They shall at all times be kept in a neat and efficient manner. The Pup Tent Custodian of the Crummy Duffel Bag shall be the treasurer of all Pup Tent Committees handling funds.
- F. They shall deliver to their successor in office, or to anyone designated by the Pup Tent, all monies, securities, vouchers, books, records, or other property in their possession or under their control.
- G. Before entering upon the duties, they shall qualify by giving good and sufficient bond in a sum equal to the amount of the liquid assets for which so far as can be anticipated they may be accountable.

**Section 315. Duties of the Shyster.**

The Shyster shall give the Seam Squirrel and the Scratch such legal assistance incident to the office, as they may request and perform such other duties as the Bylaws may require.

**Section 316. Duty of the Hungry Cootie.**

The Hungry Cootie shall maintain the following books, records and files:

- A. The Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of the Order.
- B. The original application of every member admitted to the Pup Tent.
- C. A record of all proceedings of each meeting.
- D. An order file in which they shall keep all orders or circulars issued by the Supreme Commander, the Grand Commander or the Local Seam Squirrel of the Pup Tent.
- E. A letter file.
- F. A roll of deceased members.
- G. A black book in which shall be kept the names of all rejected candidates.
- H. They shall attest their signature to all actions of the Pup Tent and shall prepare such reports and returns as may be required by the Seam Squirrel of the Local Pup Tent, the Grand or Supreme Headquarters.
- I. The Supreme Quartermaster shall furnish the articles required in this section when the Pup Tent is instituted.

**Section 317. Duty of the Pill Pusher.**

The Pill Pusher shall perform such duties, incident to the office, as the Seam Squirrel may require and shall be present at all Scratches to pass on the fitness of candidates to undergo initiation.

**Section 318. Duties of the Shirt Reader.**

The Shirt Reader shall have complete charge of the initiation work of the Pup Tent and shall have access to all paraphernalia used in the degree work. They shall recommend to the Seam Squirrel, the Provost Marshall, and the Jimmy Legs and shall select the remaining members of the Degree Staff as they see fit.

**Section 319. Duty of the Sky Pilot.**

The Sky Pilot shall perform such duties incident to their office as the occasion may require or as the Seam Squirrel may direct.

**Section 320. Duty of the Keeper of the Lousy Records.**

It shall be the duty of the Keeper of the Lousy Records to keep a record of all important dates and happenings and act as the publicity officer for the Pup Tent.

**Section 321. Duty of the VFW Booster Chairperson. (Optional)**

It shall be the duty of the Pup Tent Booster Chairperson to maintain accurate records of the VFW membership recruiting as performed by those Pup Tent members and to promptly report said activity as directed by Grand and Supreme Programs.

**Section 322. Duty of the Provost Marshal.**

The Provost Marshal shall keep decorum at all Scratches of the Pup Tent. They shall properly present and introduce all distinguished guests. They shall, to the best of their ability, carry out the orders of the Seam Squirrel and Pup Tent and perform such other duties incident to their office as the laws and Ritual provide and always conduct themselves in a dignified and military manner.

**Section 323. Duties of the Office of the Jimmy Legs.**

It shall be the duty of the Jimmy Legs to guard the entrance to the Pup Tent and to allow none to enter without the proper signs and passwords. They shall report to the Seam Squirrel the presence of any distinguished guests or visitors so the Provost Marshal may properly escort them into the confines of the Pup Tent. They shall also perform such other duties as may be required from time according to the Ritual and Bylaws.

**Section 324. Duties of the Hospital Chairperson.**

- A. To assure the Pup Tent is active in hospital work and visitations.
- B. To forward to the Grand Hospital Chairman the completed Pup Tent hospital report form as soon as possible after the close of the month covering all hospital visits made by the Pup Tent during the previous month. The Pup Tent Hospital Chairperson may mail, email, or fax the report. (Blank forms will be provided by the Grand Hospital Chairperson.)

**Section 325. Duties of the Tight Wads.**

- A. It shall be the duty of the Tight Wads not later than the end of the month following the last day of each quarterly period, to properly audit the books and records of the CCDB and Hungry Cootie and submit on the prescribed form, supplied by Supreme Headquarters, a detailed report of audit. *Except for Pup Tents with less than \$1000.00 in total assets, who may submit an annual report at the end of the calendar year rather than four quarterly reports.* One copy retained by the Pup Tent, and one (1) copy sent to the Grand Quartermaster.

**Section 326. Delegates – Grand Scratch.**

- A. Each Pup Tent shall elect its delegates to the Grand Scratch on the strength of its monthly report for the period prior to the Grand Scratch, based upon the provisions of the Grand Bylaws of each Grand Pup Tent, provided the members elected hold a paid-up dues card and the Pup Tent has paid per capita tax in the month preceding the month in which the Grand Scratch is held. (Where no Grand Bylaws exist, Pup Tents shall be entitled to one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate or fraction thereof for each ten (10) members in good standing.
- B. Pup Tents instituted within forty-five (45) days of the date of convening of the Annual Grand Scratch shall, on the night of installation or as soon as possible, elect delegates and alternates as hereinbefore provided in the above paragraph.
- C. To qualify for delegate and alternate representation at a Grand Scratch, the per capita tax must be paid by no later than the month preceding the Grand Scratch.
- D. Each Pup Tent in a District shall be entitled to the same representation at a District Scratch as provided for the Supreme Scratch.

**Section 327. Delegates – Supreme Scratch.**

- A. Each Local Pup Tent shall elect its delegates to the Supreme Scratch on the strength of its monthly report prior to the quarter that the Supreme Scratch is held, and shall be entitled to one (1) delegate and one (1) alternate for each fifteen (15) members or fractions thereof at the time of such report, provided the members elected hold a paid-up dues card and the Pup Tent has paid per capita tax in the month preceding the month the Supreme Scratch is held.
- B. To qualify for delegate and alternate representation at a Supreme Scratch, all per capita tax must be paid at least thirty (30) days prior to the Supreme Scratch.

**Section 328. Delegates – Balloting For.**

By the passage of a resolution before balloting, so ordering, delegates and alternates may be voted for on the same ballot. The nominees receiving the highest number of votes shall be the delegates and the next highest number of votes received will determine the alternates.

**Section 329. Arrearages – Pup Tents.**

Any Pup Tent in arrears for membership reports, CCDB returns, per capita tax payments and inspection reports shall be excluded from all representation in Grand Scratches and the Supreme Scratch, until the same are received by proper authority.

**Section 330. Inspections.**

Any Pup Tent that has not been properly inspected shall be excluded from all representation in the Grand and Supreme Scratches. The inspection report must be received by the Grand and Supreme Inspectors thirty (30) days prior to the said Scratch. Pup Tents instituted/installed during the current fiscal year shall be exempt from inspection until the following fiscal year.

**Section 331. Password – Communication of.**

The Pup Tent Seam Squirrel will communicate the password only to members in good standing. Members are strictly enjoined not to communicate the password to any member, nor is it to be discussed at any time. No member shall be permitted to remain during any session of the Pup Tent unless they are entitled to and in possession of the proper password of the degree of that session.

**Section 332. Arrearages – VFW Member.**

Any member who shall become in arrears in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States shall cease automatically to hold membership in the Military Order of the Cootie.

**Section 333. Reinstatement.**

Any former member of the Military Order of the Cootie may become reinstated in the Pup Tent to which they formerly belonged upon their re-instatement in the Veterans of Foreign Wars providing such member shall have paid their dues in the Veterans of Foreign Wars. This reinstatement is subject to two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting of the Pup Tent at any regular meeting.

**Section 334. Supplies – How Ordered.**

All Pup Tents ordering supplies or equipment shall make an order, sending it directly to the Supreme Quartermaster, accompanied by remittance to cover all costs and shipping.

**Section 335. Title of Address.**

In meetings of the Local Pup Tent, the title of address shall be by membership number only. Members of the Local Pup Tents shall be as COOTIE ONE, COOTIE TWO, etc., excepting in case of officers. Grand Pup tent officers' titles shall be preceded by the word GRAND, Supreme Pup Tent Officers' titles shall be preceded by the word SUPREME.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Grand Pup Tents**

#### **Section 401. Formation.**

- A. Whenever three (3) or more Pup Tents with a total membership of at least one hundred twenty-five (125) members have been organized in any Department, a Grand Pup Tent may be organized.
- B. Charters of Grand Pup Tents shall be signed by the Supreme Commander and countersigned by the Supreme Adjutant and shall be issued to each Grand Pup Tent immediately upon the permanent organization thereof.
- C. When the strength of a Grand Pup Tent falls below the required three (3) Pup Tents and/or the one hundred twenty-five (125) members, the Supreme Commander may withdraw the Grand Pup Tent Charter and may establish a Provisional Grand Pup Tent in such Department.
- D. Application for Charter of a Grand Pup Tent shall be forwarded to Supreme Headquarters accompanied by a charter fee of twenty-five (\$25.00) dollars, to the Supreme Pup Tent.
- E. Any Grand Pup Tent must conform to the provisions of Paragraph A to retain status as a Grand Pup Tent.

#### **Section 402. Provisional.**

Where the necessary number of Pup Tents with the required minimum membership has not been organized in any Department, the Supreme Commander may establish a Provisional Grand Pup Tent, or may assign such state to the Grand Pup Tent of a contiguous state.

#### **Section 403. Governing Body.**

A Grand Scratch subordinate to the Supreme Scratch shall govern each Grand Pup Tent.

#### **Section 404. Composition of Grand Scratch.** The Grand Scratch shall consist of:

- A. The Supreme Commander provided he or she is a resident of the Grand Pup Tent and in good standing in their Pup Tent.
- B. The Grand Commander, all Past Grand Commanders who have served a full term of one year or who have been elected to fill a vacancy shall have served to the end of the term, so long as they remain in good standing in their respective Pup Tents, except in such Grand Pup Tents as shall have provided for a lesser number of Past Grand Commanders by a provision in the Grand Bylaws of the Grand Pup Tent. All elected officers (Shavetails) of the Grand Pup Tent, and the Grand Adjutant (Hungry Cootie), Chief of Staff, Inspector, Shirt Reader, Provost Marshal, Jimmy Legs, and Hospital Chairperson shall be entitled to a vote in the Grand Council of Administration.
- C. All Seam Squirrels throughout its jurisdiction. In the absence of the Seam Squirrel, the Blanket Bum or Hide Gimlet or Past Seam Squirrel may represent the Pup Tent. Any Grand Pup Tent may, if it so desires, provide in its Bylaws that all Past Seam Squirrels in good standing in their respective Pup Tents shall be members of the Grand Scratch.
- D. Delegates to be elected by the Pup Tents.
- E. Grand Pup Tents where Districts or Areas have been established, the District or Area Commanders shall be members of the Grand Scratch by virtue of their office and the election of five (5) Council Members hereinafter provided shall not apply.

#### **Section 405. Meetings – Grand Scratch.**

- A. There shall be a meeting of the Grand Pup Tent held at the same time and place as that of the Department Convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars within whose jurisdiction the Grand Pup Tent exists but the Grand Council may call additional meetings if it so desires.
- B. Or, as an alternative that the Mandatory Grand Scratch be eliminated entirely and that election of Grand Officers, business and other public carnival be held at a time and date other than the Department of the VFW on a date or dates prior to or after the regular Department Convention of the VFW as may be selected by the Grand Council of Administration, M.O.C., and such dates be approved by the Department Commander.
- C. The Grand Pup Tent may hold an entertainment feature in connection with its stated meeting in the nature of a public Carnival or Mardi Gras to be known as the "Grand Finis la Guerre" parade.

#### **Section 406. Eligibility.**

Any Cootie in good standing within a PT in the Grand is eligible to hold Grand office.

#### **Section 407. Officers.**

- A. The officers of the Grand Pup Tent shall consist of the same officer as compose the Local Pup Tent with the addition of a Chief of Staff, Deputy Chiefs of Staff, Inspector, Deputy Inspectors, VAVSR and Aides-de-Camp. All officers shall prefix the word "Grand" to their title.
- B. **Elected:** Elected officers of each Grand Pup Tent shall be a Commander, Senior Vice-Commander, Junior Vice-Commander, Quartermaster, Judge Advocate, Surgeon, Chaplain, Historian and Council Members as provided in **Paragraph D** of this Section.
- C. **Appointed:** The Grand Commander shall appoint the Adjutant, Chief of Staff, Inspector, Shirt Reader, Provost Marshal, Jimmy Legs, Hospital Chairperson, Deputy Chiefs of Staff, Deputy Inspectors, VAVSR, Aides-de-Camp, National Home Chairperson and Life Membership Chairperson. The Grand Commander, if deemed necessary to, may select an Assistant Quartermaster. They shall enter upon their duties upon the installation of the Grand Commander at the Annual Grand Scratch and may be removed at the pleasure of Grand Commander during that term.
- D. **Council of Administration:** The Grand Council of Administration shall consist of the Commander, all Past Grand Commanders in good standing (unless otherwise provided for by Grand Pup Tent Bylaws), Senior Vice-Commander, Junior Vice-Commander, Adjutant, Quartermaster, Judge Advocate, Chief of Staff, Inspector, Shirt Reader, Provost Marshal, Surgeon, Jimmy Legs, Hospital Chairperson, Chaplain, Historian, VAVSR, and will have five (5) additional members; the additional members elected annually by the members of the Grand Scratch present and voting.
- E. That paragraph D concerning five (5) Council members will apply only to Grand Pup Tents not having Districts.

#### **Section 408. Election of Officers.**

- A. The Commander, Senior Vice Commander, Junior Vice Commander, Quartermaster, Judge Advocate, Surgeon, Chaplain and such other members of the Grand Council of Administration necessary to fill vacancies shall be elected by roll call or ballot at the annual Grand Scratch of the Pup Tent each year.
- B. In case of ballot for Officers, a majority of all votes cast shall be necessary to ratify a choice. If there is no election on the first two ballots, the name of the Cootie receiving the lowest number of votes shall be dropped, and so on in successive ballots until an election is made.
- C. The installation shall be conducted by a member in good standing who holds or has held the office of at least that of a Grand Commander. The installing Officer shall forward immediately after installation, a report, properly signed, to the Supreme Adjutant.

#### **Section 409. Term of Office.**

Grand Officers thus elected shall be installed before the adjournment of the Grand Scratch and shall assume the duties of their respective offices immediately upon the installation of the Grand Commander at the conclusion of the Annual Grand Scratch.

#### **Section 410. Duty of the Grand Commander.**

- A. The Commander shall immediately after entering office appoint an Adjutant, Chief of Staff, Inspector, Shirt Reader, and any other officers and committees not otherwise provided for and remove these officers at his/her pleasure. They shall preside at all meetings of the Grand Pup Tent and Grand Council of Administration and shall enforce strict observance of its rules and usage's and shall see that all orders from Supreme Headquarters are properly published and obeyed. They shall approve all warrants drawn upon the Quartermaster before same be paid, and perform such other duties as the office may require of the Grand Commander.
- B. They shall decide all questions of law and usage in their Grand Pup Tent subject to an appeal to the Supreme Commander.
- C. They shall see that all per capita tax and other monies due the Supreme Pup Tent and received by the Grand Pup Tent are forwarded promptly, together with reports or returns pertaining thereto.
- D. They shall perform all other duties required of them by the Grand Scratch, Grand Council of Administration, Grand Pup Tent Bylaws, Supreme Scratch, Supreme Bylaws, Supreme Council of

Administration, or the Supreme Commander.

**Section 411. Duty of the Vice-Commanders.**

The Grand Vice-Commanders shall assist the Grand Commander by advice and otherwise in the Grand Commander's absence or disability, shall discharge the duties of the office according to the seniority.

**Section 412. Duty of the Adjutant.**

- A. Correspondence:** They shall be the official correspondence officer for the Grand Pup Tent and shall attest all official communications and reports with their signature and the Seal of the Grand Pup Tent.
- B. General Orders and Memoranda:** By order and direction of the Grand Commander, Grand Council of Administration or Grand Scratch, they shall issue all general orders and memoranda and forward same as directed.
- C. Expenditure Vouchers:** They shall prepare on forms as prescribed by Supreme Headquarters in duplicate, all vouchers authorizing the expenditure of Grand Pup Tent monies. Such vouchers shall be numbered in sequence and plainly set forth the name and address to whom the money is to be paid, shall be itemized in detail, what the expenditure is for, shall be approved by the Grand Commander, and the original forwarded to the Grand Quartermaster for payment.
- D. Records:** They shall maintain, on forms prescribed by the Supreme Pup Tent, a roster of all Grand Pup Tent Officers, Seam Squirrels, Hungry Cooties, CCDB's, meeting time and place and membership data as taken from the triplicate copy of the consolidated per capita tax reports of other information forwarded them by the Grand Quartermaster.
- E. Files:** They shall maintain complete files for the following:

Supreme General Orders	Triplicate copies of consolidated per capita
Supreme Memoranda	tax reports
Grand Pup Tent General Orders	Budgets
Grand Pup Tent Memoranda	Correspondence
- F. Minutes:** They shall take a complete record of the minutes of all meetings of the Grand Council of Administration and Grand Scratch, preserve and distribute copies as directed. They shall call the roll, or under their supervision, cause the same to be called at all official meetings, and shall read to the body assembled, or cause to be read under their supervision, all official communications, resolutions, or other information pertinent to the meeting and consistent with the records of the office.
- G. Reports:** They shall, as directed by the Grand Commander, Grand Council of Administration or Grand Scratch, compile and render such reports and data as is consistent with the general duties of their office, and in so far as their records will permit.
- H. Transfer of Records:** They shall transfer without delay to their successor in office all books, papers, records, money and other property of the Grand Pup Tent in their possession or under their control.
- I. Compensation:** They shall receive as compensation for their service such sum as the Grand Council of Administration may, from time to time, determine.

**Section 413. Duty of the Grand Quartermaster.**

- A. Funds, Receipt and Custodian of:** They shall receive and properly account for all monies due and payable to the Grand or Supreme Pup Tent, as the laws provide, and shall give an official receipt, as prescribed by Supreme, for all monies received by them. They shall be the official accountable officer of the Grand Pup Tent and in their care, shall be placed all securities, funds, and accountable property of the Grand Pup Tent. They shall be treasurer of all Grand Committees.
- B. Funds, Disbursements of:** They shall expend Grand Pup Tent funds only upon presentation of a proper expenditure voucher which must be numbered in sequence, designate clearly to whom payment is to be made, itemized in detail as to what the expenditure is for, and approved by the Grand Commander.
- C. Reports and Remittance – Per Capita Tax:** They shall upon receipt of the transmittal forms and per capita tax payments, properly audit same and observe the necessary and correct data be shown thereon. In every instance, the correct amount of Supreme Pup Tent per capita tax must be credited to the Supreme Pup Tent per capita tax fund, remitted at least monthly to Supreme Headquarters. The Supreme per capita tax and all monies belonging to the Supreme Pup Tent shall, as received by the Grand Quartermaster, be placed in a separate fund and in no instance, shall it be expended or used for any other purposes than its proper remittance to the Supreme Quartermaster.

- D. Reports – Annual and Miscellaneous:** The Grand Quartermaster shall, as of the last day of the month preceding each annual Grand Scratch, prepare a complete financial report in detail of the Grand Pup Tent since the preceding annual report, a membership report, and such other reports as the Grand Commander, Council of Administration or Grand Scratch may direct. They shall prepare for the Grand Scratch a list showing the Pup Tents in good standing and the number of delegates to which each Pup Tent is entitled.
- E. Records and Files:** The Grand Quartermaster shall maintain in an efficient manner and in detail, such records and files as prescribed by the Supreme Pup Tent in the Grand uniform system of records and accounts and such other records and files as they may be required to maintain. They shall acquire and maintain an accurate roster of the membership of the Grand Pup Tent.
- F. Bond:** They shall give good and sufficient security, to be approved by the Grand Council of Administration, for the faithful discharge of their duties, the cost of which shall be paid from Grand Pup Tent funds.
- G. Compensation:** They shall receive as compensation for their services such sum as the Grand Council of Administration may, from time to time, determine.
- H. Transfer of Records and Funds:** They shall transfer to their successor in office, without delay, all books, papers, monies, and other property of the Grand Pup Tent in their possession or under their control.

#### **Section 414. Duty of the Grand Chief of Staff.**

- A.** The Grand Chief of Staff shall have charge of the organization work within the jurisdiction of the Grand Pup Tent. Deputy Chiefs of Staff shall be nominated by him/her to the Grand Commander to assist in this work.
- B.** The Deputy Chiefs of Staff shall assist the Grand Chief of Staff to carry out the duties of the office and provisions of Supreme Bylaws and instructions to orders from Supreme or Grand Headquarters.

#### **Section 415. Duty of the Grand Inspector.**

- A.** The Grand Inspector shall have charge of and supervise the work of instruction and inspection in the Grand Pup Tent and shall require the inspection in the Grand Pup Tent and shall require the inspection of all Pup Tents and Districts or Areas within the Grand Pup Tent.
- B.** They shall require that all books and records of each Pup Tent be inspected at least once during their term.
- C.** They shall require that the Supreme, Grand and Pup Tent Bylaws be enforced.
- D.** They shall require that the opening and closing of Scratches, the order of business and rules of order be followed, and that the initiation of Atoms and other ceremonies are conducted as prescribed by the Ritual.
- E.** They shall report on the decorum of the Pup Tent meetings.
- F.** They shall make a report in detail as to the Pup Tent finances, records and property at the time of inspection.
- G.** They shall appoint, with the approval of the Grand Commander, Deputy Inspectors. Deputy Inspectors shall be qualified for the work that their office requires.
- H.** They shall perform such other duties incident to their office as may be required of them by the Supreme Inspector, Grand Commander and Bylaws.
- I.** Deputy Grand Inspectors shall assist the Grand Inspector to carry out the duties of their office and the provisions of the Bylaws and instructions or orders from Supreme or Grand Headquarters.

#### **Section 416. Duty of the Grand Judge Advocate.**

The Grand Judge Advocate shall give the Grand Commander, the Grand Council of Administration and Grand Scratch such legal assistance, incident to their office, as they may request and perform such other duties as the Bylaws may require.

#### **Section 417. Duty of the Grand Surgeon.**

The Grand Surgeon shall perform similar duties as those laid down for the Local Pup Tent Surgeon.

#### **Section 418. Duty of the Grand Chaplain.**

The Grand Chaplain shall perform such duties incident to the office as the occasion may require or as the Grand Commander may direct.

**Section 419. Duty of the Grand Shirt Reader.**

The Grand Master of Ceremonies shall have charge of the entertainment features of the Grand Pup Tent and shall make nominations for assignment as they may deem necessary to the Grand Commander. They shall nominate the Grand Jimmy Legs to the Grand Commander for appointment.

**Section 420. Duty of the Grand Historian.**

It shall be the duty of the Grand Historian to keep a record of all important dates and happenings and act as the publicity officer for the Grand Pup Tent.

**Section 421. Duty of the Grand VFW Booster Chairperson. (Optional)**

It shall be the duty of the Grand VFW Booster Chairperson to supervise and tabulate activity of VFW recruiting as reported by Pup Tents within the Grand Pup Tent and to promptly report said activity as directed by the Supreme Program.

**Section 422. Duty of the Grand Provost Marshal.**

The Provost Marshal shall keep decorum at all Grand Scratches and Grand Council meetings. They shall properly present and introduce all distinguished guests. They shall at the close of the meeting, see that all Grand Pup Tent property under their control is properly and safely taken care of. They shall to the best of their ability carry out the orders of the Grand Commander and Grand Pup Tent and perform such other duties incident to their office as the Bylaws and Ritual provide and always conduct themselves in a dignified and military manner.

**Section 423. Duty of the Grand Jimmy Legs.**

The Grand Jimmy Legs shall perform such duties as may be required of him/her by the Grand Commander.

**Section 424. Duties of the Grand Hospital Chairperson.**

- A. Supplies all Pup Tents with proper blank Pup Tent reporting forms as designated by the Supreme District Hospital Commissioner.
- B. Mails, emails or faxes monthly, directly to the Supreme District Commissioner, copies of hospital reports submitted by the Pup Tent Hospital chairpersons.
- C. Once a month compiles a complete report of hospital activity of the Grand Pup Tent and submits it to the Grand Pup Tent for distribution with Grand General Orders. A copy of this monthly report is mailed, emailed, or faxed to the Supreme District Hospital Commissioner.
- D. To promote hospital activity within the Grand Pup Tent.
- E. The Grand Hospital Chairperson shall have the authority and duty to investigate all hospital reports submitted to them for approval and submission to the Supreme District Commissioner. Their duty to investigate shall include, if necessary, the right to request a verbal or written verification from the Special Service Officer or duly authorized representative of any hospital or institution where the reported visitations were alleged to have been made.

**Section 425. Duty of the Grand Council of Administration.**

- A. **Working Interests:** The Grand Council of Administration shall have charge of the working interests of the Grand Pup Tent between sessions of the Grand Scratch.
- B. **Audits and Accounts:** The Grand Council of Administration shall have the power to audit the books of the various Grand Officers and shall require that the records and accounts of the Adjutant and Quartermaster be audited quarterly. It shall be the duty of the Grand Council of Administration to see that the books and records of the Grand Quartermaster and Grand Adjutant are audited four times a year prior to the Grand Scratch, either by an auditing committee appointed by proper persons or by a qualified accountant.
- C. **Salaries:** The Grand Council of Administration shall have the power to fix all salaries.
- D. **Meetings, Time and Place:** The Grand Council of Administration shall meet in session not less than twice a year and such other times as directed by the Grand Commander or Council Bylaws provide. The place of meeting shall be at the direction of the Grand Commander unless otherwise specified by the Council.
- E. **Proceedings:** The Grand Council of Administration shall keep a full and detailed record of its proceedings and present it for consideration at its Grand Scratch.
- F. **Voting:** Each member of the Grand Council of Administration present at a meeting shall be entitled to one vote and voting by proxy shall not be allowed.

**G. Quorum:** A majority of the Grand Council of Administration present shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business; provided, however, that there shall be at least seven (7) members present.

**Section 426. Duty of the Grand Aides-de-Camp.**

The Aides-de-Camp shall perform such duties as may be required of them by the Grand Commander and Chief of Staff.

**Section 427. Vacancies.**

All vacancies in elected offices shall be filled by the Grand Council of Administration, provided, however, that in case of the vacancy of the Commander, Senior Vice-Commander shall assume the duties of that office and the Junior Vice-Commander shall assume the duties of the office of the Senior Vice-Commander. The Grand Council shall convene to elect a Junior Vice-Commander.

**Section 428. Voting.**

Each delegate present at a meeting of the Grand Scratch shall be entitled to one vote. The vote of any delegate absent and not represented by an alternate may be cast by the delegates of the Pup Tent or in the absence of a delegate by the Commander (Seam Squirrel), or in the absence the Vice-Commander, of such Pup Tent. No individual, however, shall have more than one (1) vote. A roll call vote is required by any three (3) delegates representing three (3) different Pup Tents.

**Section 429. Bylaws.**

Same as **Section 216** as applicable.

**Section 430. Revocation of Charter.**

The Supreme Council of Administration at its annual session or the Supreme Commander, with the consent of the Supreme Council of Administration, may at any time revoke the Charter of a Grand Pup Tent that for nine (9) months of a year has failed to forward its reports or dues or monies properly payable to the Supreme Pup Tent.

**Section 431. Suspension of Charter.**

The Supreme Commander may suspend the Charter of a Grand Pup Tent for a period of sixty (60) days. The Charter of the Grand Pup Tent may be cancelled; provided, however, that before the Charter is cancelled, the Grand Commander in question shall be duly notified of the charges against it and upon written request have a suitable opportunity to appear before the Supreme Council of Administration to show cause, if any it may have, why its Charter should not be cancelled.

**Section 432. Inspection.**

Any Grand Pup Tent that has **not** filed with the Supreme Inspector a minimum of eighty percent (80%) of Pup Tent Inspection Reports shall be excluded from **all** representation at the Supreme Scratch. The Supreme Inspector must receive all inspection reports at least thirty (30) days prior to the Supreme Scratch.

**Section 433. Tax.**

Each Grand Pup Tent shall determine the Grand per capita tax on each member in good standing under its jurisdiction unless otherwise provided for by the Grand Pup Tent Bylaws.

**Section 434. Calendar Quarters.**

The word quarter as used in these Bylaws shall designate the following periods of each fiscal year; First Quarter: January 1st to March 31st inclusive, Second Quarter: April 1st to June 30th inclusive, Third Quarter: July 1st to September 30th inclusive, and Fourth Quarter: October 1st to December 31st inclusive.

**Section 435. Arrearages.**

A Grand Pup Tent in arrears, for returns, reports, per capita tax payments, supply money, or financial obligations shall be deprived of all representation at the Supreme Scratch until same are paid to the proper authority.

**Section 436. Supplies – How Ordered.**

All Grand Pup Tents ordering supplies or equipment shall make an order, sending it directly to the Supreme Quartermaster, accompanied by remittance to cover all costs and shipping.

**Section 437. Establishment of Districts or Areas within the Grand Pup Tent.**

Districts or Areas may be established within the Grand Pup Tents. Each District or Area shall be presided over by District or Area Officers, who shall be selected from and elected by ballot of the Pup Tents of the District or Area over which they will officiate when elected. Said District or Area Officers shall be balloted upon annually and shall serve for a period of one (1) year unless re-elected. Their authority and duties will correspond to those of VFW District Officers as far as applicable to the M.O.C.

**Section 438. Title of Address.**

Same as **Section 335** as applicable.

## ARTICLE V

### Supreme Pup Tent

#### Section 501. Supreme Body.

The Supreme power of this Association shall be lodged in the Supreme Scratch.

#### Section 502. Composition.

The Supreme Scratch shall be composed of:

- A. The Supreme Commander, Past Supreme Commanders so long as they remain in good standing in their respective Local Pup Tents, and the other elected and appointed officers.
- B. All Supreme Council of Administration members.
- C. All Grand Pup Tent Commanders and all Provisional Grand Pup Tent Commanders. The Senior Vice-Commander may function as a member of the Supreme Scratch in case the Grand Commander of such Grand Pup Tent is absent.
- D. Delegates to be elected by the Local Pup Tents.

#### Section 503. Meetings.

The stated meetings of the Supreme Pup Tent shall be held annually at the same time and place as that of the National Encampment of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

#### Section 504. Eligibility to Office.

All active third degree members in good standing shall be eligible to any Supreme office in the Military Order of the Cootie; provided, however, that said members have been active members of the Military Order of the Cootie for at least three (3) years and that no member shall hold more than one (1) elected office at any one time.

#### Section 505. Supreme Officers.

- A. **Elected:** The Elected officers of the Supreme Pup Tent shall be a Supreme Commander, Supreme Senior Vice-Commander, Supreme Junior Vice-Commander, Supreme Quartermaster, Supreme Surgeon, Supreme Judge Advocate, Supreme Chaplain, Supreme Historian, three (3) Supreme Trustees.
- B. **Appointed:** The appointed officers of the Supreme Pup Tent shall be a Supreme Chief of Staff, Supreme Adjutant, Supreme Inspector, Supreme Hospital Commissioner, Supreme Shirt Reader, Supreme Provost Marshal, Supreme Jimmy Legs, Supreme Editor, Supreme Director of Public Relations, Supreme Aides-de-Camp, Supreme Deputy Inspectors, Supreme Deputy Chiefs of Staff (one of each for every ten Pup Tents within any one State), Supreme Life Membership Chairperson and such other Supreme appointments as circumstances from time to time require.
- C. **Supreme Council of Administration:** The Supreme Council of Administration shall consist of the following officers: All elected officers (see paragraph A.), the immediate Past Supreme Commander (as long as he/she is in good standing), Supreme Adjutant, Chief of Staff, Inspector, Hospital Commissioner, Shirt Reader, Provost Marshal, Jimmy Legs, and fifteen (15) additional members, one each to be elected for two (2) years (even numbered Districts in even numbered years, odd numbered Districts in odd numbered years), by the members present and representing the following Districts:
  - District No. 1: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts and Rhode Island
  - District No. 2: Connecticut, New York, New Jersey
  - District No. 4: Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Delaware
  - District No. 5: North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida
  - District No. 6: Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee and Canal Zone
  - District No. 7: Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky
  - District No. 8: Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin
  - District No. 9: Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas and South Dakota
  - District No. 10: Minnesota, North Dakota
  - District No. 11: New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming
  - District No. 12: California, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii
  - District No. 13: Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Montana
  - District No. 14: Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas
  - District No. 15: Grand Pup Tent of the Pacific Area
  - District No. 16: Grand Pup Tent of Europe

- D. Each District will develop a rotational schedule to determine which Grand or Black Division Pup Tent is next in line to have the councilmember. The Supreme Council Member will appoint a Deputy Council of Administration member from their State to be their replacement in the event of the death or resignation of the Supreme Council Member. The Senior Vice Council Member does not become the Council Member.
- E. Each District shall elect a Senior Vice Council of Administration Member, and a Junior Vice Council of Administration Member for terms to run concurrent with the Supreme Council of Administration Member, the Senior Vice Member will be from the State next in line for a Supreme Council of Administration Member.
- F. Each District shall hold an annual District Scratch, at a central point, at least thirty (30) days prior to the National VFW Convention and annual Supreme Scratch. The Supreme Council of Administration Member for the District shall preside and the regular form of VFW business procedures shall be used. The District Scratch shall transact all business relative to the District; elect their Supreme Councilmember, Senior Vice and Junior Vice Members, with due respect to the States and in accordance with the approved rotational schedule. Each Pup Tent in the Supreme District Scratch shall be entitled to the same number of delegates as provided for at the Supreme Scratch.
- G. If the Supreme Council Member is unable to attend the Supreme Scratch or Supreme Meetings, the Senior Vice Council Member will take the place of the Council Member. In their absence or disability, the Junior Vice Council Member shall discharge the duties the Council Member.

**Section 506. Travel Allowances.**

Travel allowance, based upon the rates prescribed by the current Supreme Policy, shall be paid only for travel as directed by the Supreme Commander.

**Section 507. Election of Officers.**

The Supreme Officers of the Military Order of the Cootie except those designated in **Section 505B** of this article, shall be elected annually by roll call or ballot at the stated meeting of the Supreme Scratch. In case of a ballot for officers, a majority of all votes cast shall be necessary to ratify a choice. If there is no election on the first two ballots, the name of the Cootie receiving the lowest number of votes shall be dropped, and so on in successive ballots until an election is made.

**Section 508. Term of Office.**

The officers thus elected shall be installed before adjournment of the Supreme Scratch at which they were elected and immediately enter upon their duties, and shall hold office until their successors are duly installed.

**Section 509. Duty of the Supreme Commander.**

- A. The Supreme Commander shall enforce the Bylaws, Rules and Regulations of the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States, and the orders of the Supreme Scratch and the Supreme Council of Administration and for this purpose, he/she may issue such orders as may be necessary. He/She shall preside in the Supreme Scratch and the Supreme Council of Administration, decide all questions of law or usage subject to an appeal to the Supreme Scratch, approve all warrants properly drawn on the Supreme Quartermaster and shall hold all securities given by the Supreme Officers as Trustees of the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States. He/She shall appoint immediately after entering upon his/her office, the Supreme Adjutant, Supreme Chief of Staff, Supreme Inspector, Supreme Hospital Commissioner, Supreme Shirt Reader, Supreme Provost Marshal, Supreme Jimmy Legs, Supreme VFW Booster Chairperson, and all other Supreme officers and Committees not otherwise provided for, and may remove these officers at his/her pleasure; provided, however, if any such officers are salaried, the appointment shall be subject to the approval of the majority of elected and non-salaried members of the Supreme Council of Administration and such officers may be removed by a majority vote thereof; and shall receive such compensation as the Supreme Scratch may determine from time to time.
- B. The Supreme Commander shall present to the first Council of Administration Meeting a proposed Policy for adoption and use throughout his/her term of office.

- C. The Supreme Commander may order disciplinary action on any person or persons against whom charges have been brought with the exception of a Supreme Officer. When charges have been preferred against any member holding office in the Military Order of the Cootie, the Supreme Commander may suspend the accused from office. The Supreme Commander may suspend from office any officer of the Grand or Local Pup Tent who has failed to function or for the Good of the Order.

**Section 510. Duty of the Supreme Senior and Junior Vice-Commander.**

The Supreme Vice-Commanders shall, when called upon, assist the Supreme Commander by counsel and otherwise in his/her absence or disability, they shall discharge the duties of the office according to seniority.

**Section 511. Duty of the Supreme Adjutant.**

- A. The Supreme Adjutant shall keep a correct record of the proceedings of the Supreme Scratch and the Supreme Council of Administration. He/She shall conduct its correspondence and shall issue the necessary orders under the direction of the Supreme Commander. He/She shall prepare all books and blanks required for the use of the organization under the direction of the Supreme Commander. He/She shall keep in proper files all correspondence and copies of all General Orders issued. He/She shall keep a correct account of all monies due and receivable from all sources and the vouchers and warrants drawn on the Supreme Quartermaster. He/She shall prepare before each Supreme Scratch a list of all Pup Tents, Local and Grand, in good standing.
- B. He/She shall take a receipt from the Supreme Quartermaster for all money turned over to him/her from whatsoever source and shall transfer to his/her successor in office, without delay, all books, papers, and property in his/her possession. He/She shall give security for the faithful discharge of his/her duties to be approved by the Supreme Commander.
- C. When the Adjutant-Quartermaster offices are combined, the Supreme Commander shall serve as the checkpoint, receiving duplicate copies of the bank statement, all vouchers and all receipts.
- D. The Supreme Adjutant shall make reports, quarterly, to the Local and Grand Pup Tents and Supreme Council, showing the membership, both losses and gains of the various units, and the activities of the organization. He/She shall prepare a report of the membership and activities for the year to be presented to the Supreme Scratch at its annual session.

**Section 512. Duty of the Supreme Quartermaster.**

- A. The Supreme Quartermaster shall take charge of the funds, securities, vouchers and all other property of the Military Order of the Cootie, using acceptable banking practices, shall pay all proper vouchers or warrants drawn by the Supreme Adjutant and approved by the Supreme Commander. He/She shall have charge of the Supply Department of the organization.
- B. He/She shall deliver to his/her successor in office all monies, papers, books, or other property under his/her control or in his/her possession. He/She shall receive such compensation as the Supreme Scratch may determine from time to time.
- C. The Supreme Quartermaster shall make detailed quarterly report of finances of the organization to all members of the Supreme Council, and all Grand Commanders where there is a Grand Pup Tent, and shall in addition make a detailed report of all receipts and disbursements of the Supreme Pup Tent, to be submitted as a Semi-Annual Statement, and shall be forwarded to all members of the Supreme Council, all Grand Commanders where there is a Grand Pup Tent, and to all Pup Tents within the Supreme Pup Tent. The Supreme Quartermaster shall maintain records of accounting based on a cash system of accounting and he/she also shall maintain his/her records based on a fiscal year beginning September 1st and ending on August 31st with various quarters thereof.
- D. The Supreme Quartermaster shall submit monthly to the Supreme Commander a Statement of Income and Expense and a Balance Sheet, the former showing net profit and/or expense to date as based on sales, cost of sales and all other items transacted.
- E. He/She shall keep a complete record of all monies due and receivable from all sources. He/She shall keep a record of all liabilities of the Military Order of the Cootie. The Supreme Quartermaster shall be treasurer of all committees of the Supreme Council handling funds.
- F. The office of the Supreme Quartermaster shall be bonded for the amount of finances in our treasury each year. The audit of the finances of the Supreme Pup Tent shall be a certified audit done by a reliable CPA firm. This CPA firm to be designated only by the Supreme Council of the Military Order of the Cootie. Monies shall be paid only on the signature of the Supreme Commander and the Supreme Quartermaster.

**Section 513. Duty of the Supreme Judge Advocate.**

The Supreme Judge Advocate shall be prepared at all times to give such legal counsel and advice as the Supreme Commander or Supreme Scratch may require. After each Supreme Scratch, he/she shall review the changes made in the Bylaws and see to it that all proper changes are made on the revision of the printed Bylaws. In this connection, he/she shall have the power to make necessary corrections to errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation and/or typographical arrangement without the necessity of a formal amendment to effectuate the same. He/She shall perform such other duties incident to his/her office.

**Section 514. Duty of the Supreme Surgeon.**

The Supreme Surgeon shall perform the duties properly appertaining to his or her office and such other duties as the Supreme Commander may direct.

**Section 515. Duty of the Supreme Chief of Staff.**

The Supreme Chief of Staff, under supervision of the Supreme Commander, shall be responsible for the organization of new Pup Tents of the Order. The Director of Extension or other officers charged with the administration of the extension program shall be under the direction of the Supreme Chief of Staff.

**Section 516. Duty of the Supreme Inspector.**

- A. The Supreme Inspector shall perform such duties as are required of him or her and shall have charge of inspection and supervision of Pup Tents under the direction of the Supreme Commander.
- B. The Supreme Inspector shall make a report of those inspections of the Grand Pup Tents and those who are eligible to vote in the Supreme Scratch. Where a Grand Pup Tent does not exist, the Supreme Inspector shall make a report of the Pup Tents inspected and those who are eligible to vote in the Supreme Scratch. Any Grand Pup Tent that has not sent in at least eighty percent (80%) of its inspection reports to the Supreme Inspector shall be excluded from all representation in the Supreme Scratch. The Supreme Inspector must receive all inspection reports thirty (30) days prior to the Supreme Scratch.
- C. Deputy Supreme Inspectors shall assist the Supreme Inspector to carry out the duties of his or her office under the provisions of the Bylaws and instructions or orders from Supreme Headquarters.

**Section 517. Duty of the Supreme Chaplain.**

The Supreme Chaplain shall perform such duties incident to his/her office, as the occasion may require or as the Supreme Commander may direct.

**Section 518. Duty of the Supreme Historian.**

It shall be the duty of the Supreme Historian to keep a record of all important dates and happenings.

**Section 519. Duty of the Supreme VFW Booster Chairperson. (Optional)**

It shall be the duty of the Supreme VFW Booster Chairperson to propose, institute and supervise the VFW Booster Program with the approval of the Supreme Commander. He or she shall prepare annually a report of VFW recruiting as performed by members of the M.O.C.

**Section 520. Duty of the Supreme Director of Public Relations.**

It shall be the duty of the Supreme Director of Public Relations to design and administer the public relations program of the Supreme Commander, and serve in a supervisory capacity to Pup Tents.

**Section 521. Duty of the Shirt Reader.**

The Supreme Shirt Reader shall have charge of the entertainment features of the Supreme Scratch and shall assist and advise the Grand and Local Shirt Readers in their work and perform such other duties as may be required.

**Section 522. Duty of the Hospital Commissioner.**

- A. Supervise activity of Supreme District Hospital Commissioners. Compile report forms and submit completed monthly reports to the Cootie Courier for publication.
- B. Supreme Pup Tent Headquarters shall post hospital report forms on the official MOC website for download and printing by the Hospital Chairmen. All reports from the Supreme Hospital Commissioner will be submitted to the Cootie Courier for publication in each issue.

**Section 523. Duty of the Supreme Provost Marshal.**

The Supreme Provost Marshal shall perform such duties as may be required of him or her by the Supreme Commander.

**Section 524. Duty of the Supreme Jimmy Legs.**

The Supreme Jimmy Legs shall perform such duties as may be required by the Supreme Commander.

**Section 525. Duty of the Supreme Council of Administration.**

- A. The Supreme Council of Administration shall meet (at least three times a year) at such place as determined by the Supreme Scratch and at other such places and times as the Supreme Commander may order, and nine (9) elected members thereof shall constitute a quorum (Supreme Council meetings: Old Council, New Council, Tomb Trek).
- B. It shall audit the accounts of the Supreme Officers and shall represent the Supreme Scratch, in all matters in the interval between its sessions. It shall keep a full and detailed report of its proceedings and present same as its report at the Supreme Scratch for consideration of the body. It may carry out such plans of action as deemed necessary between meetings of the Supreme Pup Tent.
- C. Whenever two-thirds (2/3) of the Pup Tents of any Grand Pup Tent transmit through the Grand Adjutant (Supreme Adjutant where no Grand exists) a written request for a ruling by the Supreme Council of Administration upon any point or question or controversy, which request shall have attached thereto a full statement of facts, point, question or proposition upon which said ruling is asked, it shall be the duty of the Supreme Council of Administration to render a decision upon such point, question or proposition, within thirty (30) days after the receipt by the Supreme Adjutant of said papers. Such decision shall be reached after meeting together, if practicable, and when not so, shall be rendered upon statement transmitted to the individual members of the Supreme Council of Administration, and such ruling shall be binding and shall govern until changed by a vote of a Supreme Scratch.
- D. It shall make disposition of all properties of Pup Tents, Grands returned to, or taken over by the Supreme Adjutant from Pup Tents or Grands which have surrendered or forfeited their Charters or which have been declared defunct, and its actions thereon shall be final. Such property shall be credited to the Grand Pup Tent (where one exists) wherein such Pup Tent has been located. In the event of no Grand Pup Tent, the Supreme Pup Tent shall be credited.

**Section 526. Duty of the Supreme Trustees.**

- A. The Supreme Trustees shall be elected for a three-year term. The first year there will be three Trustees elected: one for a three (3) year term, one for a two (2) year term, and one for a one (1) year term. Each successive year there will be one (1) Trustee elected for a three- (3) year term. Any Cootie in good standing may be elected as a Supreme Trustee (see section 504). Members-at-Large are not eligible to be elected as a Supreme Trustee.
- B. The Supreme Trustees will audit all checking, saving, investments, and all other accounts twice during the fiscal year, once at mid-year, immediately prior to the Council of Administration meeting at Tomb Trek, and once prior to the Supreme Convention. A written report will be given to the Council of Administration after each audit.
- C. The Supreme Trustees will also serve as the Trustees of the Scholarship Fund and Life Membership funds.
- D. In the event the Council of Administration directs or the Supreme Trustees require an additional independent investigative audit it will be the responsibility of the Supreme Trustees to select and recommend an auditing firm to do the independent audit and report the findings to the Council of Administration.
- E. The Supreme Trustees shall conduct a line-by-line audit of the books on a month by month basis at each audit session. It shall be the responsibility of the Supreme Quartermaster to provide the Supreme Trustees with the necessary records of the Supreme Pup Tent to insure that the audit can be conducted in a timely fashion.
- F. Travel allowance will be based on the rates prescribed by the current Supreme Policy, and shall be paid to the Supreme Trustees for each audit.

**Section 527. Staff Officers – Reports of.**

- A. The several Staff Officers shall present to the Supreme Scratch at each annual session full and detailed typewritten reports of their work and shall deliver all papers, records and other property of the organization in their possession or under their control.
- B. All Supreme Officers and Supreme Council Members shall make a quarterly report to the Supreme Adjutant as to activities, the first such report being due November 30th.

#### **Section 528. Vacancies.**

- A. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the Supreme Commander, the Supreme Senior Vice-Commander shall at once succeed to the duties and title of that position and the Supreme Junior Vice-Commander shall become the Supreme Senior Vice-Commander. All other vacancies occurring in any of the elected offices of the Supreme Pup Tent, shall be filled by the Supreme Council of Administration in the following manner: The Supreme Commander shall notify the members of the Supreme Council of Administration that the vacancy exists, and thirty (30) days thereafter shall advise them the names and members presented for the vacancy. Members of the Council may vote to fill each vacancy in a sealed envelope marked "**Ballot**" enclosed in an envelope and forwarded direct to the Supreme Adjutant. These ballots shall be opened at a time specified by the Supreme Commander, by tellers appointed by him/her in the presence of such officers of the Supreme Pup Tent as the Supreme Commander may designate.
- B. The Cootie receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected to the office designated. In the case of the name of only one person is proposed for office, said person shall be duly elected to the vacancy.

#### **Section 529. Past Supreme Officers.**

A Past Officer shall be one who, having been elected or appointed and installed, has ceased to hold office by completion of his/her term or death before the expiration of the term of office.

#### **Section 530. Voting.**

Each delegate present at a meeting of the Supreme Scratch shall be entitled to one vote, providing all provisions as heretofore outlined in these Bylaws has been fulfilled. (**Sec. 328, 428, etc.**) The vote of any delegate absent and not represented by an alternate may be cast by the delegates of the Pup Tent present. No individual, however, shall have more than one vote. The ayes and noes may be required and entered upon record at the call of any three members representing three different Pup Tents.

#### **Section 531. Supreme Headquarters.**

The location of the Supreme Headquarters shall be at the discretion of the Supreme Scratch.

#### **Section 532. Supreme Supply Department.**

The Supreme Supply Department shall be located in Supreme Headquarters.

#### **Section 533. Per Capita Tax.**

- A. The Supreme Per Capita Tax assessed each member shall be \$9.00 per year, payable in advance when dues are paid by the member. This shall become effective January 1, 2004.
- B. Each member shall be entitled to a subscription to the official publication of the Military Order of the Cootie, *The Cootie Courier*, upon payment of the Supreme Per Capita Tax.
- C. The Supreme Quartermaster will withhold \$2.00 of each Per Capita Tax payment as payment in full of an annual subscription to *The Cootie Courier*.

#### **Section 534. Registration Fee at Supreme Scratch.**

- A. Advance registration fee for the Supreme Scratch will be **\$15.00**.
- B. Registration at the Supreme Scratch will be **\$20.00** and shall be required of all members before voice or vote can be heard, if in attendance at the Supreme Scratch.
- C. Each Pup Tent (to include the Grand Pup Tents) is required to register, in advance, at least one delegate to the Supreme Scratch by the payment of the fee.
- D. Each Grand Commander, voting members of Supreme Council and Past Supreme Commanders are required to register as said office in order to cast their individual votes.
- E. Pup Tents failing to comply with this provision shall be considered delinquent and in arrears and will be subjected to a late fee penalty and will be required to pay **\$20.00** to bring the Pup Tent out of arrears and back in good standing with the Supreme organization.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Miscellaneous Provision**

#### **Section 601. Ritual – Distribution of.**

- A.** The Ritual of the Military Order of the Cootie shall be supplied only to the Seam Squirrels of subordinate units, who shall be responsible for the distribution of rituals to the proper persons entitled to receive them.
- B.** Only such officers of Local Pup Tents, or the Supreme Pup Tent who participate in the ceremonies of their respective units, shall be entitled to the possession of the ritual.
- C.** The Ritual of the M.O.C. may be amended or altered by the same procedure identified in Article IX, for amendments to these Bylaws.

#### **Section 602. Annual Password.**

- A. When transmitted:** The Supreme Commander will promulgate the annual password and transmit same to all Grand Pup Tent Commanders. Immediately upon receipt thereof, Grand Pup Tent Commanders shall forward the annual password only to such Pup Tents as are in good standing with both Grand and Supreme Headquarters. Where a Grand Pup Tent does not exist, the Supreme Commander will transmit the annual password directly to the Pup Tent Seam Squirrel. The annual password will be published each year in the Program Manual and will become effective upon receipt of such Manual.
- B.** Pup Tent Seam Squirrels will communicate the password only to members (third degree) in good standing.
- C. By Whom given:** The annual password can only be given by the Supreme Commander, his/her duly authorized aides, so designated, Grand Commanders and Pup Tent Seam Squirrels. Members are strictly enjoined not to communicate the password to any individual, nor will it be discussed at any time.
- D. Entitled to Receive:** Any member in good standing shall be entitled to the annual password. No members shall be permitted to remain during any session of the Pup Tent, when working in the Third (Cootie) Degree, unless he/she is entitled to and in possession of the annual password.

#### **Section 603. Secrecy.**

The ritual and unwritten work of the Military Order of the Cootie, and names or persons causing the rejection of candidates or any part of the initiation ceremonies held within closed doors shall not be communicated to any person not a member of the Military Order of the Cootie.

#### **Section 604. Inspections.**

The Supreme Commander may require the inspection of any Grand or Local Pup Tent when he/she believes that the best interest of the Order requires it. He/She may detail such person as he/she deems qualified and all books, papers, accounts, records and proceedings pertaining to the Pup Tent or the Military Order of the Cootie shall be subject to such inspection.

#### **Section 605. Degrees.**

- A.** There shall be three (3) degrees in the Military Order of the Cootie, known as Nit, Grayback and Cootie.
- B.** The First (Nit) Degree shall be conferred upon a member immediately after initiation. The Second (Grayback) Degree shall be conferred upon a member after a lapse of time in which they have proven that they are ever loyal and hardworking member of the Military Order of the Cootie and of the parent order, the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The Third (Cootie) Degree shall be conferred upon a member after a lapse of time in which they have accomplished some outstanding work bringing honor to the parent order, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Military Order of the Cootie.
- C. Numbering of Members in Pup Tents:** Pup Tents shall assign numbers to their members in order of their seniority in said Pup Tent, i.e., the first member to be issued a card in a Pup Tent shall be given the number one, etc. Once a particular number has been assigned to a member of the Pup Tent, said member should continue to hold such number while he/she is a member of the Pup Tent. Should the member holding such number die, this number shall never be assigned to any other member of the Pup Tent.
- D.** Each Cootie shall have their number inscribed on the left side of their shirt. Numerals to be approximately one and three-fourths (1-3/4) inches in height, with the numerals on the pocket. (1945 Proceedings, Pages 49-50.)

- E. In the case of members whose sons or daughters are also members of the same Pup Tent, the parent shall be eligible to wear on their Cootie Shirt their son's or daughter's Cootie number in smaller numbers directly below their own Cootie number. In the case of the son or daughter whose parent is a member of the Pup Tent, the son or daughter shall be eligible to wear on their Cootie Shirt their parent's Cootie number in small numerals directly below their own Cootie number.
- F. All the above numerals shall be in red with the exception where either the parent or child is deceased, then such numerals shall be in black.

**Section 606. Official Publication.**

- A. The official publication of the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States shall be titled *Cootie Courier*.
- B. Orders and official notices published in the official publication shall be deemed to be sufficient and lawful notice to all members for all purposes whatsoever, when distributed to all members at the current email or postal address furnished by the member.

**Section 607. The Visit to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.**

The time of this event, beginning in the year 1971, shall be selected by the Supreme Commander on a date as close as possible to Veteran's Day as is determined to be appropriate. The Supreme Commander shall appoint the 4<sup>th</sup> Supreme District as the Host for the event commencing with the 75<sup>th</sup> Trek in November 2009. The 4<sup>th</sup> Supreme District shall continue utilizing a Tomb Trek Committee to plan, coordinate and fund all future Tomb Trek events. It shall be the duty of the 4<sup>th</sup> Supreme Council Member to see that all plans are made and carried out, including the proper policing of the affair. An audited summary financial report shall be submitted to the Supreme organization within 60 days after the event. Full advance information of the affair shall be placed in the *Cootie Courier*.

**Section 608. Solicitations & Promotions.**

Solicitations and promotions beyond the ordinary realm of normal fundraising schemes and activities, or outside of regularly accepted geographical or jurisdictional areas of Local, District or Grand Pup Tent, written consent from the Supreme Commander must first be obtained.

**Section 609. Auxiliary.**

- A. There shall be an Auxiliary to the M.O.C. under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Scratch, the Supreme Council of Administration and the Supreme Commander. Subordinate divisions of the MOC may establish and discontinue corresponding units in accordance with the laws of the organization. Membership shall be limited to members in good standing in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary.
- B. On an annual basis, it is mandatory that the Supreme President shall, within thirty (30) days after assuming office; submit an approved budget, an itemized report of the financial records, and the membership status for the Supreme Auxiliary, to the Supreme Commander, MOC.

**Section 610. National Home Fund.**

The Supreme National Home Fund shall continue to function under the direction of the Supreme Commander and Council of Administration and shall operate under the following rules and regulations.

- A. All funds in the Supreme National Home Fund shall be used for the purpose of furthering the goals of the National Home may it be Athletic, or to satisfy a special need of the Home.
- B. Valid projects will be brought before the Council of Administration and the Council will decide whether or not to fund the project.
- C. The Supreme Pup Tent will be allowed to use half of the interest earned from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30 each year for administrative expenses.

**Section 611. Christy Braun Supreme Scholarship Fund.**

- A. Any monies donated to the Scholarship Fund during a management year shall be donated to the National Home at the annual Cootie Christmas Banquet. In the event that there is no banquet the funds shall be donated to the National Home before the end of the calendar year. All funds donated to the National Home shall be designated for ongoing educational requirements.

**Section 612. Bonding of Grand District/Area or Supreme Districts.**

Whenever a Grand District/Area or Supreme District accumulates assets that exceed \$1,000.00, then the individual responsible for receiving and properly accounting for the expenditure of monies in their possession shall obtain a security bond equal to the total amount of assets in their possession. The cost of this bond shall be paid from the Grand District/Area or Supreme District funds.

## ARTICLE VII

### Uniforms, Badges, Salaries, Etc.

#### Section 701. Uniforms.

The only standard parts of the uniforms shall be as follows:

- A. Hats:** Regulation hat with name of state below braid and number of Pup Tent above braid. Name of the Pup Tent can be added at extra cost. Block lettering and block letters; name of state shall not be abbreviated. **Seam Squirrel Hat:** shall have embroidered or felt block lettering as desired on one side only, with state below braid, with Cootie emblem on each side over braid. "SEAM SQUIRREL" above braid with number above that. The year or years of service shall be added between the Pup Tent number and "SEAM SQUIRREL". Semi-metal trimmings around emblem. **Grand Officer Hat:** Name of state below braid. "GRAND" to appear on the hat. The year or years of service shall be added above "GRAND". Cootie emblem on each side over the braid. Metal trimmings and rhinestones in the upper corners. **Supreme Officers' Hats:** the same as Grand only "MOC" on the front. Hat quality must be 100 percent wool, 16 ounce material or better. The **SUPREME COMMANDER** of the organization shall wear a hat symbolic of his/her office, which shall be of gold colored felt; lettered and trimmed with red embroidery work and with rhinestones, lettered to show clearly the years he/she has served. Supreme Commanders who have completed their term of office may continue to wear the gold hat with their dates of service in that position should they choose to.
- For the convenience and affordability of New Atoms seeking to enter the Seams of a Pup Tent and used as a recruiting tool as not to require a new Cootie not holding office in a Pup Tent to be required to purchase a "New Member Hat".
  - Official Hats would be required for Pup Tent Seam Squirrels, Blanket Bums, Hide Gimlets and CCDB's of a Pup Tent and Grand Commanders, Senior Vice, Junior Vice and Quartermasters and Supreme Officers. Hats for all Cooties not covered above would be authorized if desired by the individual Cootie.
- B. Tassels:** According to the highest rank; all must be three and one-half (3-1/2) to five (5) inches. No Cootie shall wear more than one rank. Ranks to be as follows:
- a. **Green:** Cooties
  - b. **Black:** Pup Tent Officers, to revert to **Green with Black Knob** when retiring from office
  - c. **Black and White:** Past Pup Tent Seam Squirrels
  - d. **Green and White Mixed:** All District or Area Pup Tent Officers, to revert to former tassels when retiring from office
  - e. **Green and White Mixed with Black Knob:** Past District or Area Pup Tent Commanders
  - f. **White:** Grand Pup Tent Officers
  - g. **White with Black Knob:** Past Grand Line Officers; other Grand Officers revert to former tassels when retiring from office
  - h. **Purple:** Past Grand Commanders
  - i. **Red-White-Gold Mixed:** Supreme Commander
  - j. **Gold:** Supreme Council of Administration Members
  - k. **Gold with Black Knob:** Supreme appointed officers (other than Supreme Council Members)
  - l. **Red-White-Gold Mixed with Red Knob:** Past Supreme Commanders
  - m. **Red with Gold Knob:** Past Supreme Council Members
  - n. **Red with Black Knob:** Past Supreme Officers (other than Past Supreme Council Members)
  - o. **Black with Gold Knob:** All-Star Pup Tent Seam Squirrels, CCDB's and Hungry Cooties
  - p. **White with Gold Knob:** All-Star Grand Quartermasters and Adjutants
  - q. **Red-White-Blue Mixed:** All-Star Grand Commanders
  - r. All Pup Tent and Grand Appointed Officers, other than "line" class, shall revert to their former tassels. "Line" officers for this purpose shall be: all elected officers, Chief of Staff, Inspector, VFW Booster Chairperson and Adjutant, when applicable. **All tassels for Hospital Officers have been abolished.** Such Hospital Officers shall be designated by patches on hats or shirts and wear the tassel of the class of the office they are holding, as Pup Tent, District or Area Pup Tent, Grand Pup Tent of Supreme Pup Tent.

- C. Cootie Vests:** A good grade of satin of fire red or polyester fire red material; two pockets. Large Cootie emblem on back. Cootie seal on the left side and Cootie emblem No. 3104 on the right side. Edges bound with red binding and decorative embroidery. Front fastened with Cootie Emblem button, having a colored rim to match color of tassels with chain or cord between the buttons.
- D. Shirts:** A good broadcloth or oxford cloth, open weave or sport shirt (short sleeves) of broadcloth material. A large official Cootie on back, four and one-half (4 ½) inches below collar band State and Number of Pup Tent can be added if desired. VFW emblem may be worn on left sleeve, one (1) inch below shoulder seam. "MOC" emblem may be on right shoulder. Word "Cootie" above pocket top, left side, with Cootie number. Cootie seal emblem above pocket on right side. Small Cootie emblem on collars with tail of Cootie pointing to corner of collar tip; same emblem on cuffs. Decorative embroidery on shirt front, collar and sleeves. Name on lower flap front. Sport shirts can be worn with or without tie and come with short sleeves only.
- E. Sashes:** Shall be of good satin or wool flannel on non-wrinkling web belt, red in color, as hat, rosette with streamers dropping to knee, ending in tassels of same color as worn on hat.
- F. Cootie Sleeve Garters:** Made of red silk with bow and streamers fitted with button showing rank, as on vest.
- G. Cootie Ties:** Red, as hat, with Cootie emblem, same as officers' hat. Office may be added above Cootie, if desired, at extra cost.
- H. Cootie Pants and Skirts:** Good quality white duck. With one (1) inch red stripe covering side seams (optional). Male and female Cooties are authorized to wear pants. Female Cooties are authorized to wear a skirt.
- I. Shoes and Socks** shall be optional.
- J.** It is optional for any Pup Tent to add their own insignia to their sash or any other part of the uniform. All Cooties who have been members of the MOC for five (5) consecutive years may be allowed to wear one red stripe on the left sleeve of their shirt or jacket and additional red strips for each additional five-(5) years of active membership. All Past Pup Tent Seam Squirrels are allowed to wear an additional silver stripe. All Past Grand Line Officers, one silver stripe and one star. All Past District (Grand) Commanders are allowed to wear additional service stripe, green and white (mixed) in color. All Past Grand Commanders, one silver stripe and two stars. All Past Supreme Line Officers, one gold stripe and three stars. All Past Supreme Commanders, one gold stripe and four stars. Stripes and stars to be on sleeve and in accordance with military regulations.

#### **Section 702. Insignia.**

No person shall be entitled to wear the badge, insignia or cap of the Military Order of the Cootie unless they are a member in good standing thereof.

#### **Section 703. Annual Budget.**

- A.** A Budget Committee of the Old Council of Administration each year shall submit an annual budget.
- B.** The New Council of Administration shall adopt an annual budget and approve an operating policy.
- C.** The annual budget adopted by the Council of Administration shall fix the allowances of all Supreme Officers.

#### **Section 704. Standard Flags or Banners.**

- A. Pup Tents:** A flag or banner of a Local Pup Tent to be of green material, with the seal of the Cooties in the center, date of institution, name of Pup Tent and the location. The cords, tassels and fringes for all Cootie flags and banners to be a standard gold color.
- B. District or Area Pup Tents:** A flag or banner of green and white material with the seal of the Cooties in the center, date of institution and the state in which it is located. The cords, tassels and fringes for all Cootie Flags to be a standard gold color.
- C. Grand Pup Tents:** A flag or banner of white material with the seal of the Cooties in the center, date of institution of the Grand Pup Tent and state in which it is located. The cord, tassels and fringes for all Cootie flags and banners to be a standard gold color.
- D. Supreme Pup Tent:** A flag of gold material with the seal of the Cooties in the center, date of institution and organization, all lettering to be in red or black lettering. The cords, tassels and fringes for all Cootie flags and banners to be a standard gold color. All Tents at the present time that have a flag or banner of some sort to retain the same and be recognized as pioneers of this movement.

**Section 705. Official Emblem.**

The official emblem of the organization shall be the five pointed cross, radiating from a center circle where a cootie shall be at rest and with words reading "Military Order of the Cootie VFW" around the outer rim. A wreath symbol shall be behind and a tab reading "Honor Degree" shall be across the bottom.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Discipline**

#### **Section 801. Discipline of Members.**

- A. Except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, no member shall have their membership in the Military Order of the Cootie terminated or suspended, nor may any member be relieved of office, unless such member has been advised in writing of the charges against them and afforded the opportunity to request that such charges be heard and determined at a Disciplinary Hearing as hereinafter provided.
- B. The term "Disciplinary Action" is substituted for and replaces the term "Court Martial" wherever that term appears in the Bylaws or any other official documents of this organization.

#### **Section 802. Offenses.**

Members who commit offenses recognized by the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States shall be subject to disciplinary action and may be assessed the penalties provided in this Article. Offenses recognized by the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States are:

- A. Disloyalty to the United States of America.
- B. Failure to fulfill the obligations taken at time of application and admission or the obligations taken upon installation to any office.
- C. False representation or deliberate concealment concerning eligibility to membership or office or knowingly acquiescing in or permitting ineligible persons to become members.
- D. Disobedience or disregard of the provisions of the Congressional Charter, Bylaws (at all levels), Manual of Procedure, Ritual, General Orders or any other laws and usages of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States or any order of the Commander-in-Chief or Military Order of the Cootie of the United States or any order of the Supreme Commander.
- E. Conviction of or entering a guilty or no contest plea to a felony, misdemeanor or ordinance involving moral turpitude in any court in the United States.
- F. Conviction of a misdemeanor or ordinance violating, involving, affecting, damaging or taking place upon the property of the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States, any Pup Tent, Grand or any activity, club room, holding company or unit sponsored by any of them.
- G. Conduct prejudicial to good order and discipline or conduct unbecoming a member in their relations to the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States or Military Order of the Cootie of the United States or other members.
- H. Divulging any of the private business of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States or Military Order of the Cootie of the United States with the intent of embarrassing the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States or the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States or members thereof.
- I. Preparing or signing any false record, return, regulation, order or other official document of or concerning the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States, knowing it to be false, or making any other false official statement with the intent to deceive.
- J. Selling or otherwise disposing of money or property without proper authority or, willfully or negligently damaging, destroying or losing any such money or property belonging to the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, or any Post, County Council, District, Department, or the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States or and Pup Tent or Grand.
- K. Aiding, abetting, counseling, concealing, commanding, conspiring, soliciting, procuring or causing to be done any act which, if done would be punishable under this Article.
- L. Knowingly making or causing to be made a false entry in or false alteration of a Government record. Knowingly conveying or causing to be conveyed in any form false information concerning one's military record.
- M. Knowingly providing false information or statements in connection with the initiation of charges against another member.

### **Section 803. Procedures for Disciplinary Actions and Appeals.**

- A.** The procedures for Disciplinary Action shall be the same as those prescribed in Article IX of the Bylaws and Manual of Procedure of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States except that for interpretation, Pup Tent shall be substituted for Post, Grand shall be substituted for Department, Supreme Commander shall be substituted for Commander-in-Chief and Supreme Council of Administration shall be substituted for National Council of Administration.
- B.** The Procedural Guide for Disciplinary Actions in effect for the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States shall be used as a format for initiating and conducting Disciplinary Actions and for appeals.

### **Section 804. Suspension from Office.**

When charges and specifications have been preferred against a member holding office, the Grand Commander or Supreme Commander may suspend the accused member from office pending a final decision on a disciplinary action. Notifying the member in writing at his/her last known address, the Supreme Commander or Grand Commander is not required to suspend the accused member in every instance but may use their discretion in determining whether or not such suspension is necessary and appropriate.

### **Section 805. Prima Facie Case.**

The term "prima facie" is a legal term to describe something that is legally sufficient to establish a fact or a case unless disproved. Oftentimes, if an accused member has been convicted by a court of law of a felony, misdemeanor or even an ordinance violation, that member will not be available for or amenable to a disciplinary action. Nonetheless, a disciplinary action would be appropriate. Under this section, it would not be necessary for the prosecutor to prove again what the civil authorities have already proven and established in the criminal trial. To establish guilt at the Disciplinary Hearing, all the prosecutor needs to do is present a certified copy of the court record of conviction. The burden then shifts to the accused to show that the record is not a true and correct record.

### **Section 806. Penalties.**

Penalties for offenses recognized by the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States shall be:

- A.** Termination of membership in the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States.
- B.** Suspension from membership for a specified period of time.
- C.** Suspension of certain rights or privileges of membership for a specified period of time.
- D.** Remove from office.
- E.** Reprimand.

If no Disciplinary Hearing is requested, such penalties shall be imposed in the manner prescribed in **Section 803** of these Bylaws. If a Disciplinary Hearing is held, the Disciplinary Hearing Panel shall impose such penalties. Penalties imposed shall be subject to review on appeal.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Amendments**

#### **Section 901.**

These Bylaws may be amended or altered by the Supreme Scratch by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the delegates present and voting at the Supreme Scratch every year provided that such amendments have been approved or are presented by the Supreme Bylaw Committee, a Pup Tent, or a Grand Pup Tent and written notice, thereof, together with a copy of the proposed amendments that has been distributed to each Pup Tent not less than thirty (30) days before the Supreme Scratch. All amendments adopted at any Supreme Scratch according to the provisions of this section, shall take effect and supersede all previous amendments, programs and policies, upon approval by the parent organization, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. In procedural matters not otherwise provided for, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall be the authority.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Hospital Visitation Day**

#### **Section 1001.**

- A. The day set aside for the Annual Cootie Visitation of the Hospitals will be the Sunday nearest St. Valentine's Day, February 14th, of each year. In the event of the Veterans of Foreign Wars "Veterans Appreciation Day" falling on the Sunday nearest St. Valentine's Day, February 14th, each Grand Pup Tent is authorized to change the date of the Annual Cootie Visitation in order that it would not fall on the same day as the visitation of the VFW
- B. On the National Hospital Visitation Day, a gift determined by the Pup Tent or Grand Pup Tent shall be presented to the domiciliary or Hospital. If possible, the gift should be something special.

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REVIEWED **AUG 21 2019**  
FOR THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

  
KIM A. DE SHANO  
ASSISTANT ADJUTANT GENERAL  
BY JOHNATHAN R. DUNCAN, DIRECTOR  
ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS



# RITUAL



## MILITARY ORDER OF THE COOTIE OF THE UNITED STATES

*"The Honor Degree of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States"*

AS ADOPTED BY THE 100<sup>th</sup> SUPREME SCRATCH

Orlando, FL

July 27, 2019

# **RITUAL MILITARY ORDER OF THE COOTIE**

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## **PREFACE**

There is need to increase the membership in the Military Order of the Cootie --

-

There is a hesitancy on the part of many good Veteran of Foreign War members to subject themselves to strenuous initiations carried on by some Pup Tents ---

It is believed that greater emphasis should be placed on the humanitarian principles of the Organization rather than upon the humiliating aspects of the Third Degree work ---

THEREFORE, it is in this spirit that:

- (1) Except for the obligations, signs and passwords portions of this Ritual, its application to individual persons is optional with the Supreme Commander, Grand Commanders, Pup Tent Seam Squirrels, Installing or Instituting Officers concerned, based on the best interest of the individuals and/or the Military Order of the Cootie, and
- (2) Except for the INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS, no portion of this Ritual, including any initiation or degree work, shall be conducted in public.

## **FOREWARD**

The Military Order of the Cootie of the United States was primarily organized as a fun organization, with no valid reason to duplicate the solemn work of our parent organization.

Our objectives --- Clean fun, harmless frolic, good comradeship and a desire to increase our circle of friends in the VFW and the M.O.C., services to the VFW, the widows and orphans in our National Home, the hospital program of "Keep 'Em Smilin' in Beds of White." At all times, neat appearance, conduct becoming a Cootie and gentleperson, while in public and at VFW and M.O.C. activities.

Stay on the beam, heed good advice, keep our organization clean.

To help gain this goal is the purpose of this Ritual. Read and follow it carefully.

**Our motto: "Honor – Loyalty – Perseverance – and Industry."  
"The Honor Degree of the Veterans of Foreign Wars"**

## CODE FOR TRANSMISSION OF UNWRITTEN WORK

<b>51</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>W</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Q</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>U</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>S</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>J</b>

**(2 REPEATER)**

## PUP TENT OFFICERS (SHAVETAILS)

*Equivalent VFW Office in Italics*

SEAM SQUIRREL	S.S.
<i>Commander</i>	
BLANKET BUM	B.B.
<i>Senior Vice Commander</i>	
HIDE GIMLET	H.G.
<i>Junior Vice Commander</i>	
HUNGRY COOTIE	H.C.
<i>Adjutant</i>	
CUSTODIAN OF THE CRUMMY DUFFEL BAG	C.C.D.B.
<i>Quartermaster</i>	
PROVOST MARSHAL	P.M.
<i>Officer of the Day</i>	
SHIRT READER	S.R.
<i>Master of Ceremonies</i>	
JIMMY LEGS	J.L.
<i>Officer of the Guard</i>	
SKY PILOT	S.P.
<i>Chaplain</i>	
SHYSTER	S.
<i>Judge Advocate</i>	
KEEPER OF THE LOUSY RECORDS	K.L.R.
<i>Historian</i>	
PILL PUSHER	P.P.
<i>Surgeon</i>	
TIGHT WADS	T.W.
<i>Trustees</i>	
NEWSHOUND	N.H.
<i>Publicity Chairman</i>	
VFW BOOSTER CHAIRMAN	
HOSPITAL CHAIRMAN	

WINDJAMMER

*Bugler*

DELOUSING CREW

*Degree Team*

W.J.

D.C.

## **INSTRUCTIONS TO SEAM SQUIRRELS FOR CONDUCTING**

### **THE BUSINESS OF OPENING AND CLOSING SCRATCHES**

1. The Ritual should be followed as closely as possible. All Pup Tent Shavetails should familiarize themselves with their parts so they do not have to read it, but commit part to memory.
2. Each Shavetail should be so familiar with the part of the initiation work to not have to read it but simply use the Ritual as a guide.
3. Rules of order for the VFW should be reversed. To vote in the affirmative a Cootie should say "no", to vote in the negative a Cootie should say "yes". Instead of making a motion, they should rise and say, "I second the motion..." A Cootie who intends to second the motion should rise and say, "I make that motion." To grant a member the privilege of the floor, the Seam Squirrel should declare a member out of order, and tell them to shoot. To make a member sit down and take the floor away from them, the Seam Squirrel should declare them in order and tell them to sit down. For a member to receive the privilege of the floor, they should rise, standing upright with their left hand behind their back, right forearm horizontal, the height of their chin, and give the Cootie Salute by scratching their chin while saying, "Cootie No. So and So is speaking." The Seam Squirrel should say, "Cootie No. So and So is out of order. Shoot."
4. On opening the Scratch, after the giving of the sign and password of the First Degree, all dues cards shall be verified by the Hide Gimlet and Blanket Bum. Third Degree members only should be entitled to the Third Degree password.
5. Pup Tent Shavetails shall hold a Scratch once every month and plan the Pup Tent activities for the next month or specified period; and give this information to all members of the Pup Tent. This will build up membership and keep the members active in the Pup Tent.

## **SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR**

### **CUSTODIANS OF THE CRUMMY DUFFEL BAG (C.C.D.B.)**

1. Receive all funds for the Pup Tent and enter the correct amount in the CCDB's ledger, giving a Dues Card to members as a receipt for dues paid. Insist upon seeing a VFW Dues Card paid to date before accepting Cootie dues.
2. Pay all bills approved by the membership and with the signature of the Seam Squirrel.
3. To make monthly report of Per Capita Tax on all members who have paid dues for the full year.
4. Immediately after an Atom receives their First Degree, the CCDB shall forward the initiation fee in accordance with the provisions of **Article I, Section 108**, Supreme

By-Laws. The CCDBs shall discharge their duties in accordance with the provisions of **Article III, Section 314**, Supreme By-Laws. Pup Tents under the jurisdiction of a Grand Pup Tent will forward an additional fifty (50) cents to the Grand Pup Tent as the Grand Pup Tent initiation fee. Upon receipt of the initiation fee, the Supreme Quartermaster will forward one Cootie hat with the State name only on it, one pair of Tassels and one Lapel Insignia, to the Pup Tent CCDB, to be delivered to each new member, only when they have received their Cootie Degree (or the Third Degree). The Pup Tent CCDB shall issue only a Dues Card to the new members on the date of their initiation.

5. Any time when any questions pertaining to the CCDB's work or duties are not thoroughly clear, Pup Tent CCDBs are admonished to get the information by writing directly to the Supreme Quartermaster.

## **SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE HUNGRY COOTIE**

1. The Hungry Cootie of the Pup Tent shall keep the books and files properly prepared.
2. The Hungry Cootie should have at all times:
  - a. The By-Laws and Ritual, and all Rules and Regulations of the M.O.C.
  - b. A file of the original applications of every member of the Pup Tent
  - c. The Minutes of all Scratches in a proper manner, noting that same have been approved, corrected, etc.
  - d. A file of all orders of the Pup Tent Seam Squirrel, Bulletins and Special Notices as well as meeting notices. All lawful orders and bulletins as issued by the Grand and Supreme Commanders shall be kept in proper order for reference.
  - e. A letter file for all communications and orders.
  - f. A roll of deceased members of the Pup Tent with the date of death and location of burial plot.
  - g. A book wherein shall be listed the names of those who have been rejected for membership, reason for same and the date.
3. They shall sign all vouchers for expenditures, presenting same to the Seam Squirrel and Tight Wads for signature before turning them over to the CCDB for payment.
4. They shall notify all applications in writing to appear for initiation.
5. They shall prepare all reports and returns as may be required by the Seam Squirrel of the Pup Tent, Grand and Supreme Commander, and seeing that a copy is forwarded to the proper persons. These reports must be made out and properly signed and forwarded with a check for per capita tax from the CCDB on the first day of the quarters beginning January, April, July and October.
6. The Hungry Cootie should, when any questions arise pertaining to the office or the duties, contact the superior officers as to routine to follow.
7. The Hungry Cootie shall keep all bits of news information and see that they are forwarded to the Historians of the Grand and Supreme Pup Tents, thus aiding the Keepers of the Lousy Records to carry out their duties.
8. All records will be turned over to the next appointed Hungry Cootie.

## OPENING OF THE SCRATCH INCUBATION

**S.S.:** Nits will seek their seams and give their attention to the business of the evening. Nits will display the sign of incubation. (Sign of Incubation – One pant leg rolled up.)

**S.S.:** (When Ready) Blanket Bum, what are the first symptoms of an Atom?

**B.B.:** (rising) An Itching to become a Nit.

**S.S.:** Hide Gimlet, what is a Nit?

**H.G.:** (rising) A Comrade who is closer than a Brother.

**S.S.:** Provost Marshal, what steps must be taken by an Atom before one becomes a Nit?

**P.M.:** (rising) Backward steps.

**S.S.:** Jimmy Legs, what is the first great duty of all true Nits?

**J.L.:** (rising) To increase and Multiply.

**S.S.:** Nits, let us all attend to that important duty and cause some Atom to take these backward steps at our next Scratch. Nits will prepare to prove they are entitled to be present at this Scratch.

(Nits will form in double rank, or fours if necessary, in the center of the room, facing away from the S.S., forming on B.B. and H.G., who will station themselves six feet in front of and facing away from S.S. When all are in line...)

**S.S.:** Show me!

(B.B. and H.G. face about and give the Nit sign after which they cause the rest of the column to face about by twos, give the Nit sign and password and showing a current dues card, after which they take their seats. When a have been seated....)

(B.B. and H.G. advance to the front of the S. S station and Salute.)

**B.B.:** We find all Cooties present lousy and therefore entitled to remain.

**S.S.:** That is lousy. Resume your stations.

**S.S. :** Being satisfied that all present are crummy, and that we are all therefore on an equal footing, I, the most crummy of all for the time being, do declare this Scratch open for business, and each and every Nit who has anything to offer for the good of the order or the members thereof shall be duly bound to present it for consideration. We will now proceed with the regular order of business. (Two raps of the gavel – All rise.)

**S.S.:** Provost Marshal, you will retire with the Delousing Crew and advance the Colors.

(Colors are placed.)

### **OPENING PRAYER**

**S.P.:** O Thou Great and Eternal God, We are reminded there are times of sorrow and of joy, times when we should be quiet and times we should be heard. We would pray Thy blessing on our beloved military order.

In these days of great concern, help us to assert ourselves when we should and to accomplish our purposes without offense to our fellow veterans. Give us the insight we pray Thee to have all concern for sick comrades not only by material giving but also showing concern by praying for them and their dependents.

As we look to the days ahead, may we by our faithfulness to the VFW advance its cause and programs and by so doing also advance our cause. May we serve our beloved order and our comrades in such a way that we will receive eternal life as our reward, so help me God.

Amen.

**S.S.:** Cooties, Attention! Salute the Colors----Present Arms (pause)  
Order, Arms!

**S.S.:** Cooties, you will join me in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. Present Arms!

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

**S.S.:** Order Arms! (One rap of the gavel – All but S.S. may be seated.)

**S.S.:** Hungry Cootie, you will call the roll of Shavetails. (H.C. rises, **P.M.** rises, both give the Cootie Salute; H.C. calls the roll; P.M. answers present for those absent and absent for those present; when through the H.C. sits down.)

**P.M.:** Seam Squirrel, the roll has been called, absentees have been noted. (P.M. remains standing.)

**S.S.:** That is lousy. You will now direct to my station visitors of note.

(Visitors are conducted to and seated to right of S.S. station.)

**S.S.:** Hungry Cootie, are there any applications for membership to this Crummy Fraternity?

(Reading of Applications for Membership.)

**(If no Atoms) H.C.:** Seam Squirrel, there are no Atoms waiting at the outer seams; we can proceed with our regular Scratch.

**(If there are Atoms) H.C.:** Seam Squirrel, there are \_\_\_\_\_ Atom(s) waiting at our outer seams, seeking admission and a right to partake of our miseries and pleasures.

**S.S.:** Hungry Cootie, that is lousy, you will read the pleas of those who desire to join our Crummy Fraternity.

(Applications are read, and when through):

**S.S.:** Cooties, you have heard the pleas. Will those who are willing to vouch for these Atoms now report?

(Investigating Committee reports. When through):

**S.S.:** That is lousy. Cooties, you will now express your desires in secret. (Refer to **Balloting, Article I, Section 105**, Supreme By-Laws.)

**S.S.:** Provost Marshal, you will prepare the Crummy Duffel Cage (ballot box) and place it in the proper location. (Ballot box is placed on S.S. station.)

**S.S.:** Cooties, you will now vote on the Atoms' pleas for admission to the crummy seams of this Pup Tent, remembering that the white elects and black rejects. Vote for the best interest of this Pup Tent. Line up and do your duty.

(When the voting is complete):

**S.S.:** Provost Marshal, you will convey this Crummy Cage to the B.B. for inspection. (B.B. glances at the coins. If too many copper, reports the Atoms are innocent and rejected. Voting is then repeated. If silver is the majority, B.B. reports:)

**B.B.:** Seam Squirrel, I find the Atoms lousy. Provost Marshal, you will return the Crummy Cage to the Custodian of the Crummy Duffel Bag for safe keeping.

**S.S.:** Cooties, by your actions you have expressed a desire to have the following Atoms (names) join our ranks.

**S.S.:** Custodian of the Crummy Duffel Bag, have the Atoms parted with enough duffel to your satisfaction? (all fees paid)

**C.C.D.B.:** Seam Squirrel, that has been fully taken care of. They are welcome.

**S.S.:** Hungry Cootie, you will place the names of these Atoms on our Honor Roll (records) and notify them to present themselves at the proper time to receive the applications of Sulphur Ointment of Happiness.

**S.S.:** Before we go into the Degree Work, all members should understand that this Ritual is a combination of the former Long and Short Form Rituals. The Degrees given by the Pup Tents are at the discretion of the Pup Tents.

## **INITIATION – FIRST DEGREE**

### **INCUBATION**

**S.S.:** (Raps for order) Inconsequential Nits, we are about to have the supreme pleasure of conferring the Nit degree on such innocent Atoms as are now wailing at the outer seams of this Pup Tent.

(Note: The P.M. is to remain in the room to preserve the order.)

**S.S.:** Shirt Reader, you will obtain from the Hungry Cootie the names of the Atoms who have been duly qualified by the membership of this Pup Tent for admission to these seams. Retire to the outer seams. Assemble and escort to the Sky Pilot's station the Atoms-in-waiting so that they may receive his wise counsel.

**S.S.:** Prepare the Atoms to receive the Short-Form First Degree initiation.

(Note: The Shirt Reader will blindfold the Atoms and line them up facing away from the door. When ready, knocks loudly.)

**J.L.:** Who knocks there?

**S.R.:** Shirt Reader with innocent Atoms who have been accepted for membership in this Crummy Fraternity.

**J.L.:** Enter Shirt Reader and proceed to our wise counselor, the Sky Pilot.

(Shirt Reader backward marches the Atoms to the Sky Pilot's station and halts.)

**S.R.:** Oh mighty Sky Pilot, I bring before you these innocent Atoms who are on their first journey through the seams of this Pup Tent. They humbly plea for wisdom.

**S.P.:** Most innocent Atoms, the time is rapidly approaching when you will be transformed from an Atom to a Nit. I hope the transformation will be of benefit to you by increasing your circle of friends and teaching you that a smile and pleasant word is always worthwhile. We seek to teach you industry and perserverance, to show you that there are others less fortunate than you, those that lay in beds of white and those that have lost their loved ones and are not in our National Home. We seek to remind you that HONOR and LOYALTY will remove many obstacles from your path in your pursuit of happiness and peace. I urge you to be guided by our namesake, the Cootie. He is never known to start something he did not finish. He is a hound for punishment and never knows when he is licked. He is never alone, but always

surrounded by friends. Misfortune never daunts him and while he may think the world owes him a living, he knows that the surest way to get it is to go out and hustle for himself.

**S.P.:** Shirt Reader, you will guide the Atoms to the Hide Gimlet. They have proven themselves lousy.

(Shirt Reader backward marches them to the H.G., faces them away from the H.G. station, removes blindfolds, and when ready):

**S.R.:** Hide Gimlet, before you stand innocent Atoms who have received instruction from the Sky Pilot. They are here for further instructions.

**H.G.:** Innocent Atoms, you have been blessed with wise counsel from the Sky Pilot. It is now my duty to inform you that we are not going to have a lots of fun with you. We do not intend to heap all sorts of indignities upon you to make you look as ridiculous as we possibly can before all those assembled here,

**H.G.:** Shirt Reader, you will guide these innocent Atoms to the Seam Squirrel for advice as to what is expected of the inhabitants of the seams of this Pup Tent.

(Atoms a backward marched to the S.S. Station.)

**S.R.:** Seam Squirrel, these innocent Atoms have backed into this Scratch according to custom. They have been counseled by the Sky Pilot. They have also been advised by the H.G. They are ready to receive the pledge of secrecy.

**S.S.:** Shirt Reader, that is lousy. You may resume your station.

**S.S.:** Innocent Atoms, before proceeding further along the seams of this Pup Tent it will be necessary for you to take an obligation of secrecy which, I admonish you, is not to be taken frivolously. If you feel you cannot take such an obligation that will bind your tongue in silence forever, let it be known now. Hearing no objections, you will raise your right hand and repeat after me. Pronounce you name when I pronounce mine.

I \_\_\_\_\_(NAME)\_\_\_\_\_in the presence of the officers – and members of this Pup Tent do sincerely promise – upon my honor as a comrade

– and a Veteran of Foreign Wars – that I will forever keep secret – any and all the events – that transpire in any Pup Tent – of the Military Order of the Cootie – that I will not make known – to anyone outside the confines of a Pup Tent of this Order – any secret work oral or written. I furthermore promise – that I will not pollute the seams – of this Pup Tent – by inviting for membership – any Atom whom I know is unworthy. All this I promise to uphold as a comrade – and should my affiliations with this Order – cease at any time – I will keep inviolate this obligation – as though I had remained a member thereof – I hope to be despised – as a loathsome, crawling reptile – among my fellow beings.

(Lower hands)

**S.S.:** Provost Marshal, you will now instruct these Atoms in the full work unwritten and the signs and password of this degree.

(Note: Atoms are given all the signs and password of this degree, also the following):

(1) Sign of Incubation – One pant leg rolled up

(2) Nit Sign – Stand erect, scratch groin with both hands

(3) Nit Password – S.O.L.

(4) Nit at play – Lay on the floor, face down, hands over head, one leg erect

1. Rules of the order for the VFW will be reversed. To vote in the affirmative a Cootie should say “no”, to vote in the negative a Cootie should say “yes”. Instead of making a motion, they should rise and say, “I second the motion...” A Cootie who intends to second the motion should rise and say. “I make that motion.” To grant a member the privilege of the floor, the Seam Squirrel should declare a member out of order, and tell them to shoot. To make a member sit down and take the floor away from them, the Seam Squirrel should declare them in order and tell them to sit down. For a member to receive the privilege of the floor, they should rise, standing upright with their left hand behind their back, right forearm horizontal, the height of their chin, and give the Cootie Salute by scratching their chin while saying, “Cootie No. So and So is

speaking.” The Seam Squirrel should say, “Cootie No. So and So is out of order. Shoot.”

2. On opening the Scratch, after the giving of the sign and password of the First Degree, all dues cards shall be verified by the Hide Gimlet and Blanket Bum. Third Degree members only shall be entitled to the Third Degree password.
3. Pup Tent Shavetails shall hold a Scratch once every month and plan the Pup Tent activities for the next month or specified period; and give this information to all members of the Pup Tent. This will build up membership and keep the members active in the Pup Tent.

4. .

**P.M.:** Seam Squirrel, the Atoms are now ready to be called Nits.

**S.S.:** Provost Marshal, that is lousy. You may resume your station.

**S.S.:** Inconsequential Nits, you have this day been transformed from an Atom to a Nit, which is the first step in your journey to that sublime position enjoyed by a Cootie. There are two more degrees that you must take before becoming a full-fledged Cootie, with it the age of peace and happiness. As soon as you have made suitable progress in conducting yourselves as a Nit, you will be entitled to make application to the next higher section of this Order, the degree of Grayback. You must remember that your membership in this Order depends upon your active membership in our parent organization. Reinstatement in the VFW does not necessarily mean your reinstatement in the M.O.C. You must present a paid-up receipt card in the VFW with a card in the Nit degree before you can gain admission to a Scratch of this Order. It is with my best wishes that you may become a real member of this great fun loving Order, that you will be an asset rather than a liability. I now declare a recess of five minutes to that you may be properly welcomed to the seams of this Pup Tent.

(After Recess)

(Proceed with regular order of business.)

## INITIATION – SECOND DEGREE

### TRANSFORMATION

**S.S.:** (When Ready) We are about to enjoy the supreme pleasure of the evening, the conferring of the second degree, or Transformation, upon such unsuspecting Nits as may be outside our door. Provost Marshal, ascertain if there are any Nits scratching at the seams of this Pup Tent.

(Provost Marshal advances to the center of the floor, salutes the Seam Squirrel and retires to perform their duties.)

**S.S.:** The Blanket Bum will display the proper regalia. Graybacks will display the sign of Transformation.

**P.M.:** Seam Squirrel, I find \_\_\_\_ Nits waiting to be transformed from a Nit to a Grayback. (Retires to P.M. station after saluting the Seam Squirrel.)

**S.S.:** Hungry Cootie, have these pests received the degree of Nit in true form?

**H.C.:** Seam Squirrel, they have.

**S.S.:** Custodian of the Crummy Duffel Bag, have you frisked them for the needful francs and pesos?

**C.C.D.B.:** Seam Squirrel, I have.

**S.S.:** Shirt Reader, you will retire and prepare the Nits in waiting for the degree of Grayback.

(Shirt reader advances to the center of floor, salutes and retires.)

**S.R.:** (In the anteroom) Inconsequential Nits, you seek advancement to our hunting grounds. If you are willing to proceed, okay, but if not, withdraw. The lessons and knowledge that await you **are many. Are you willing to proceed?**

**Nits:** We are.

(Shirt Reader knocks at the door.)

**J.L.:** Who scratches there?

**S.R.:** The Shirt Reader of this Pup Tent with \_\_\_\_\_ inconsequential Nits who wish to learn the information given in this 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree of Transformation.

**J.L.:** (to Shirt Reader) Do they know what awaits them?

**S.R.:** They do not. They will learn as they advance.

**J.L.:** Good, advance them.

(Shirt Reader enters with the Nits, marching around the hall, lights dimmed. Reaching the station of the Provost Marshal, the Provost Marshal will halt them.)

**P.M.:** Nits, halt!

**S.R.:** (to Nits) Nits, halt!

**P.M.:** Shirt Reader, who are these insignificant beings you have in charge?

**S.R.:** They are Nits from the outside who desire admission to our seams, there to be deloused and cleansed so that they may walk upright on bended knees through the fertile hunting grounds that have been prepared for all deserving Species Peduculi.

**P.M.:** Proceed, watch well your charge, that none may fall by the wayside and thereby throw discord in our ranks through their unworthiness. Take these Nits to the station of the Hide Gimlet who will examine them as to their fitness as members of this Pup Tent.

**S.R.:** (to Nits) Forward, March.

(Shirt Reader marches Nits to the station of the Hide Gimlet.)

**S.R.:** Hide Gimlet, I present to you these Nits found loitering in the pastures about our feeding grounds. Their life has been one of pleasure seeking while we are devoting our time to work.

**H.G.:** Inconsequential Nits, you have been found loitering while our Brothers and Sisters are hard at labor. Your life has been filled only with a desire for pleasure while ours is one of sacrifice. You will soon be transformed from a Nit to a Grayback and your lives from one of pleasure seeking to one of labor, and I trust that the Transformation may be complete. Shirt Reader, conduct these Nits to the Blanket Bum for further examination.

**S.R.:** (to Nits) Forward, March.

(Shirt Reader marches Nits to the station of the Blanket Bum.)

**S.R.:** Blanket Bum, by direction of the Hide Gimlet, I present these Nits to you for your examination.

**B.B.:** Inconsequential Nits, the time is rapidly approaching when these pleasures you have been seeking will be no more. It is well that as youths you should spend your time in play that your minds and your bodies might become better fitted for your future work. Just as the Atom by nature's process blossoms forth into a Nit, so will you Nits take another step toward maturity by being transformed into a Grayback. The process is slow, the better to fit you for the succeeding degree and to maintain that only the fittest survive to reach that sublime degree of a Cootie.

**B.B.:** Shirt Reader, guard well these Nits as they enter the portals of our sublime order. You will escort these Nits to the station of the Seam Squirrel.

(Shirt Reader marches Nits to the station of the Seam Squirrel.)

**S.R.:** Seam Squirrel, these Nits who appear before you ask for knowledge as they journey through this life to the happy hunting grounds of all Cooties.

**S.S.:** Inconsequential Nits, the hour of your transformation has come. Your days of pleasure are no more. You are about to reach another milestone of that journey upon which you are all bound. Many times you will be called upon for the last ounce of strength and who knows, but even that may fail as many of our namesakes have failed in the past. It is fitting that I should remind you at this time of some of the things that will be expected of you when you approach the altar of Hi Highness, the Great Blue Louse. Let me caution you that this order has no room for parasites. Every member to enjoy the freedom of our seams must produce something worthwhile, otherwise you will find yourselves wandering alone without friends or hopes. If you are unable to do your bit, we do not want you, and the sooner you make yourself scarce, the better we will like it. But if your purposes are noble, you will find willing hands and hearts ready to assist

you. It will be necessary before you are advised of the secrets of our labors that you will assume an obligation of secrecy. Are you willing to assume such an obligation?

**Nits:** We are.

**S.S.:** Shirt Reader, form the Nits in a semicircle in front of this station.

**S.S.:** (when ready) You will each raise your right hand and repeat after me. I (your name) – in the presence of the members of this Pup Tent – and upon my honor as a comrade – hereby solemnly promise – that I will not make known – any of the secrets of this degree – to any person or persons – whomsoever – who is not a member – in good standing – of a Pup Tent – and not entitled to the same. I furthermore promise – that I will not repeat – any of the vents – that transpire – in a Pup Tent – to any person whomsoever – not entitled to the same – under no less penalty – than that of being degraded – and expelled from this degree – and deprived of the associations – of my loyal comrades.

(Down hands.)

**S.S.:** Shirt Reader, you will conduct these Nits to the station of the Hide Gimlet.

(Shirt Reader marches Nits to the station of the Hide Gimlet.)

**H.G.:** (to Shirt Reader) Listen Grayback.

**S.R.:** Nits, halt!

**H.G.:** Inconsequential Nits, you did good work as Nits and as a result you seek advancement to the rank of Grayback. Shirt Reader, you will conduct these Nits to the station of the Blanket Bum for further instruction.

(Shirt Reader marches Nits to the station of the Blanket Bum.)

**B.B.:** (to Shirt Reader) Listen Grayback.

**S.R.:** Nits, halt!

**B.B.:** What seekest thou?

**One Nit:** A shortcut to more fertile hunting grounds.

**B.B.:** Inconsequential Nits, think not to escape the road from a Nit to that of Grayback. The degree of Grayback is not so easily

attained, nor its hunting grounds so easily found. The Grayback has a mighty work to perform in the world, a task that requires courage, perseverance and strength. A Nit must stick to the hardest seams for a Nit is closer than a Brother. He knows no relaxation for a Nit is busier than a bee. We hope that you will have all these qualities so necessary to attain this degree. Shirt Reader, you will conduct these Nits to the anteroom to await further work of this degree.

(Shirt Reader and Provost Marshal take the Nits to the anteroom.)

\* \* \*

Hall now will be prepared for the Second Section of this Degree. All necessary equipment for this ritualistic degree will be set up at once. Remote control of the microphone will be adjusted to the speakers' voices. Cooties to be stationed in places to avoid and chance of getting wire pulled from outlets. One to be at the amplifier to see that it does not distort and proper tone is assured.

(Shirt Reader and Provost Marshal with Nits in the anteroom.)

- (1) Sign of transformation – Both pant legs rolled up.
- (2) Grayback sign – Stand erect, both hands scratching breasts.
- (3) Grayback password – A.W.O.L.
- (4) Grayback at play – Lie on floor, face down, hands over head, both legs erect.

## **INITIATION – THIRD DEGREE**

### **AGGRAVATION**

**S.S.:** (Raps for order and when ready) We are about to enjoy the Supreme Pleasure of the day, the conferring of the **HONOR DEGREE** of Cootie upon such unsuspecting Graybacks, who attend this scratch.

(Note: No regalia is displayed as all room available is needed for the movement of the Delousing Crew.)

**S.S.:** All Graybacks who have not received the Supreme Ointment of Happiness will now retire to the outer seams of this Pup Tent. Shirt Reader, you will obtain from the Hungry Nit the names of the Graybacks who are qualified to receive the **COOTIE** Degree and retire with the Graybacks and perform the duties of your office.

(Note: The Provost Marshal is to remain in the room to help preserve order.)

**S.S.:** (when ready) All true Graybacks will not display the sign of Aggravation, line up in columns of fours facing the B.B. station, and when called on, prove by this sign and password your right to roam the seams of this Pup Tent as a Cootie. (B.B. and H.G. take of password.)

**S.S.:** (when ready) First four, show me.

(Note: Small fine for those who do not properly execute the sign or fail to give the password properly.)

**S.S.:** (when through) Being satisfied that all are lousy and crummy, we will now proceed with the application of the Supreme Ointment of Happiness.

**S.S.:** Provost Marshal, you will notify the Shirt Reader to conduct the Graybacks, by way of the Hide Gimlet's station, to my station for the Cootie Cuss.

**P.M.:** Shirt Reader, by order of the Seam Squirrel, you are to conduct the Graybacks to his station for the solemn Cootie Cuss.

(Shirt Reader knocks on door.)

**J.L.:** Who knocks there?

**S.R.:** Shirt Reader with Graybacks.

**J.L.:** That is lousy. Proceed.

**S.R.:** Graybacks, forward march.

(Shirt Reader marches Graybacks past the Sky Pilot's and Seam Squirrel stations on their way to the Hide Gimlet and halts. All remain still and quiet in the ranks and sidelines.)

**H.G.:** Graybacks, you are nearing your journey's end.

(Shirt Reader marches Graybacks to the B.B. station, halts and remains quiet.)

**B.B.:** Graybacks, you have traveled another milestone. Before you there lie Fertile Hunting Grounds. Do not despair, industry and perseverance have brought you closer to your goal. Proceed cautiously.

(Shirt Reader marches Graybacks to the Sky Pilot's station, halts and remains quiet.)

**S.P.:** Graybacks, you are another step closer to your goal. Oh, mighty Great Blue Louse, grant that these defenseless vermin be spared for a lousy and useful life, so that they may bring before us more of the Specie Pediculi. Proceed with courage.

(Shirt Reader marches Graybacks to S.S. station and halts.)

**S.R.:** By your instructions I bring before you these Graybacks.

**S.S.:** Shirt Reader, that is lousy. Remain close by.

**S.S.:** Graybacks, you are about to receive the Supreme Sulphur Ointment of Happiness. Before proceeding further, you are required to take a solemn Cootie Cuss. Are you willing to abide by it?

**Graybacks:** I am.

**S.S.:** You will raise your left hand and repeat after me. Having made application for membership – in this Crummy Fraternity – and believing myself to be – dizzy enough to feel at home among these vermin – imbecile enough to be lonesome away from them – and insignificant enough so that no one cares – if I am clean or crummy – I do truthfully – oathfully – absolutely – and outrageously – promise and agree – to love and obey – any and all Specie Pediculi – who may hereafter – from any cause whatsoever – attach themselves to me – or my possessions. I will not use – nor allow others to use – more than two hands – at any time – for the purpose of annoying – irritating – or turning over – said affectionate Pediculi.

I furthermore promise – by the fangs and claws – of the Great Blue Louse – that I will set up a wail – unto high heaven – should I find any person – using hammer – hatchets – ice tongs – crowbars – can

openers – marlin spikes – fish hooks – TNT or gas – upon the inhabitants of any Shirt Seam – unless the person using such toys – shall have been a member – of the Armed Forces of the United States – and of a lower rank – than a General.

And I furthermore promise – agree and bind myself – not to divulge – divest – repeat – shout – or sing – nor allow to leak – evaporate or spill – any of the signs – passwords – grips – creeps – shimmies – shakes or wiggles – of this Order – nor will I allow anyone – not a member of the Military Order of the Cootie – to partake of the Sulphur Ointment of Happiness – except in self defense.

And I do solemnly – and sincerely promise – to extend the hand of fellowship – to any and all comrades – whom I may meet and I will if possible – aid and assist – any such comrade – who may be in need of aid – and I shall regard it – as a privilege – rather than a duty – to be able to aid – Comrades less fortunate than I.

And may the seams of my shirt – be as barren – as the inside of a Shavetail's head – and may the Sulphur Ointment of Happiness – which I am about to receive – shrivel up and disappear – like a month's pay in a crap game – and may the maledictions – of the Great Blue Louse – descend upon me and cover me – as did the 62<sup>nd</sup> Article of War cover the soldier from the Cradle to the Grave – should I ever violate – shatter – bend – or break – this solemn Cuss – of the Cootie.

Hands Down.

**S.R.:** (to S.S.) The Graybacks are now ready to receive the unwritten work of this Order.

**S.S.:** That is lousy. You and your assistant(s) may now resume your station.

**S.S.:** (to P.M.) You will instruct these would-be Cooties in the secret signs of this, the Third Degree.

## **SECRET SIGNS THIRD DEGREE**

- (1) Sign of aggravation – Both pant legs rolled up, halfway to knees.

- (2) Cootie sign – Body erect, head bowed, both hands scratching in the hair of your head.
- (3) Cootie password – Given out annually by the Supreme Commander.
- (4) Cootie at play – Right arm up the back as far as possible and left arm down the back as far as possible, scratching vigorously with both hands.
- (5) Distress Signal – the words “Give me a dollar’s worth of blue ointment.”
- (6) Cootie Salute – Right forearm extended horizontally, the fingers scratching at chin.

(When Through)

**P.M.:** (to S.S.) I am happy to present to you these newly obligated Cooties.

**S.S.:** That is lousy. You may resume your station.

(The new Cooties are given a good cheer.)

## **SECRET WORK OF THE MILITARY ORDER OF THE COOTIE**

**S.S.:** The Military Order of the Cootie is one of the most mysterious organizations ever produced and has many secret signs that mean much to its members but pass entirely unnoticed by the average person. The common salute of Cooties in public may be given in many ways by scratching various parts of the body, but the Cootie Salute as given in the Scratch is given in this manner: The right forearm extended horizontal and the fingertips scratching at the chin. In case you are in doubt as to whether a person is a Cootie or not, walk up to them and do this: Crack the fingernails of the right thumb and the second finger of the right hand in the hair of their head, and if they don’t knock you down, they are a Cootie.

The signal of distress is given by word of mouth only and when you hear it given you may know instant relief is needed. The

words are, “Give me a dollar’s worth of blue ointment”, and when you hear them spoken, you must extend your sympathy. The permanent password of the Cootie is a word with which you are all familiar and was chosen because it is impossible for you to forget it. Suppose you start to attend a Scratch and upon arriving at the door you cannot remember the password. What is the first thing that enters your mind? You say to yourself, “I’m S.O.L.”, and that is the password.

There is one sign that is used only at the opening of the Scratch and is a most important one to remember, because should you attend a strange Pup Tent and not be able to give it you would be promptly thrown out on your ear. At the opening if the Scratch all present are formed in a line in the center of the room, facing the rear in columns of twos, and at the command “**SHOW ME**” , given by the Seam Squirrel, the rear two face about scratching the groin vigorously with both hands. You will approach the Hide Gimlet or Blanket Bum and communicate the password to them after which time you will be seated.

(Note for Seam Squirrel – The groin: where the thighs join the abdomen – the lowest part of the abdominal wall, near its junction with the thigh – NOT the reproductive organs.)

Cooties writing to another Cootie begin with “:Listen Cootie” and sign off “Your in L.O.T.C.S.” meaning “Love of the Crummy Shirt.”

You will now form the openings of the Scratch and show that you are able to give the sign of the Nit.

(B.B. and H.G. take their stations at the rear of the column.)

**S.S.: SHOW ME!**

The password will be changed annually and published in the program manual, in code, to be deciphered from the code of the M.O.C. Caution is urged to compel every Cootie to show their receipt card in the Pup Tent and the Veterans of Foreign Wars before giving them the password and none without a paid-up receipt card shall be admitted to any scratch.

You will be required to show a paid-up dues card in the VFW before the C.C.D.B. can receive your dues in this Pup Tent or the M.O.C.

## **CEREMONIAL**

During the Ceremonial, an Altar shall be placed in the center of the room with the Flag and Bible on same in front of Seam Squirrel station.

First Degree – Display Old Shoe on Chair

Second Degree – Shoe and Shirt on Chair

Third Degree – Shoe, Shirt, and Cap on Chair

(After recess Seam Squirrel shall call meeting to order and conduct the scratch following the regular order of business.)

## **OPTIONAL RITUAL FOR THE SECOND DEGREE**

**P.M.:** Listen, Nits, you are now about to face the ordeals of the second degree. What will take place is serious and to make any break in this section will result in tortures of many forms known only to the Cooties. It will be well to consider all things first and save all laughs for the end.

(Provost marshal knocking on the door.)

**P.M.:** (to Jimmy Legs) The Provost Marshal and the Shirt Reader with Nits who are ready to assume the obligation of this degree and desire admittance.

**J.L.:** Seam Squirrel, the Provost Marshal and Shirt Reader with Nits who are ready to receive the obligation of this degree.

**S.S.:** Jimmy Legs, have they a password?

**J.L.:** They have not, but are vouched for by the Provost Marshal and Shirt reader of this Pup Tent.

**S.S.:** Admit them, but instruct the Provost Marshal and Shirt Reader to admonish them that silence is demanded.

**J.L.:** Provost Marshal, the Seam Squirrel demands that silence be maintained by these Nits. Have they been so instructed?

**P.M.:** They have.

**J.L.:** You may enter with the Nits.

(Masks raised.)

**P.M.:** Forward march to the station of the Sky Pilot. Nits, halt!  
Right/Left face.

**P.M.:** Listen Nits. You will listen to the words as spoken by this former comrade of ours, who has gone before, even as you and I shall go some day. Heed the words and remember that many are called, but few are chosen.

(Skull and crossed bones are resting on top of an amplifier or the station of the Sky Pilot and speaker concealed so as to not be visible. Skull and bones are painted with luminous paint.)

(Voice from Skull – remote control. *The Poem of the Unknown Soldier* is recited and emphasized.)

We are the Unknown Soldiers, Comrades,

And think we've got a right,

To ask some questions, man to man

Are the Comrades taken care of?

Was their victory so sweet?

Is the big reward they promised

Selling pencils on the street?

Did they really win the freedom

The battled to achieve?

Do they still respect the Battle Stars

Above an empty sleeve?

Does the Gold Star in the window

Now mean anything at all?

We wonder how our old girl feels

When they hear a bugle call?

And remember the little kiddies

Whose Dads fell in the fray?

Do they have a helping hand

To guide them on their way?

We wonder if the profiteers

Have satisfied their greed?

We wonder if the soldier's mother

Ever is in need?  
We wonder if the Kings  
Who planned it all are satisfied?  
They played their game of checkers  
And countless millions died.  
Oh, we'd like to see their faces  
When they reach the devil's door,  
But even down in hell,  
There is no torture such as war.  
We are the Unknown Soldiers,  
And maybe we died in vain.  
But if we were alive and our country called,  
We'd do it all over again.

(Silence)

**P.M.:** Nits, left/right face, forward march, slow.

(Reply to the Unknown Soldier's voice by remote control through another hidden speaker in another section of the hall. The poem, *A Comrade Speaks to the Unknown Soldiers*".)

Listen, Buddies.

(At this part the Provost Marshall will halt the Nits): Nits, halt!

Listen, Buddies.

You've been over there a long while on the green slopes of  
Arlington.

What do you think of it all?

I remember the day they carried you, in a pageant of glory,  
to your final resting place.

Just as you came out of the Capitol, down the east steps,

A streak of red light broke through the clouds.

Old Glory covering you became an emblazoned emblem. Soldiers  
stood at attention. Bayonets glistened. Statesmen followed in  
your wake. A military band, forgetting the martial music that  
marched you off to war, now played a dirge.

From the Capitol to the amphitheater throngs lined the way. The  
President, his Cabinet, the Supreme Court, Senators and  
Representatives and Governors came to honor you.

Countrymen of every color and creed at the end of your journey,  
Knelt in the purple hued soil. There were orations, and  
eulogies

for you, Known so well, but still unknown. You dead, but yet  
living. America stood still. Foreign nations bestowed medals  
upon you.

Your mother was there, I saw her weeping. She thought of you as a  
little fellow, running around with a paper hat and wooden  
sword

playing soldier. Your father was proud of the boy Who made  
the supreme sacrifice. Your sister's eyes filled with tears.

Your

brother stood beside me. That day will never be forgotten.

Many years have passed, and some of your Comrades with them –  
Out on the hillside plots – row on row.

Autumn is in the air, your anniversary, we will get to thinking about  
You and what happened since we parted at the portals.

Even though your war was meant to end wars – younger generations  
have since marched forth to battle – and become our comrades  
in arms – on the land – on the sea – in the air.

In your bivouac, you know better than I, a mere mortal stumbling  
around, what it's all about.

I have hope that in the whispering winds coming over the Potomac  
lush lands, there may be the sweet sound of your voices.

My buddies. If there's a message for me boys, send it through.

They

are doing guard duty over you.

(A bugler will sound Taps in a low muffled tone, if possible, in  
an outside room.) I just heard Taps.

(The above is optional and may be used as desired.)

**P.M.:** Nits, forward march to the station of the Seam Squirrel.

(March to station of the S.S. forming the Nits in a semicircle facing  
the Altar with the Provost Marshal on one end and the Shirt Reader  
on the other. The Altar has the Flag and Bible, and is flanked on  
sides by two lighted candle sticks with colors of the Post or Pup

Tent. The National Colors are posted in a stand to the right of the Altar.)

**P.M.:** Seam Squirrel, the Nits are ready.

(Seam Squirrel advances to the Altar.)

**S.S.:** Nits, you have done well so far, but there is one with more power that I who will judge if you are worthy or not. You are required to pledge yourself to the **COOTIE CREED**. Are you willing to accept this creed?

**Nits:** We are.

**S.S.:** It is well.

(S.S. steps to the right of the Altar.)

**S.S.:** Nits, you are in the presence of the Great Blue Louse.

(The **Great Blue Louse** will arise in position in the rear of the Seam Squirrel station and three flash bulbs will be set off one at a time, these to be one at each side and one in the center. The G.B.L. will advance to the Altar facing the Nits.)

**G.B.L.:** Nits, before you are advanced to the Grayback Degree, it is necessary that you pledge yourself to the Cootie Creed. AS a VFW Comrade it is assumed that you will. Are you ready to take this pledge?

**Nits:** We are.

(All present in the hall will rise.)

**G.B.L.:** Nits, behold the Starry Banner, emblem of the Nation you have served so well. Listen to the words as spoken by the Flag.

(This is optional and may be used if desired maintaining strict silence. Voice by remote control speaks the following:)

## **THE FLAG SPEAKS**

Born during the Nation's infancy, I have grown with it, my stars increasing in number as the country has grown in size; the domain over which I wave expanding until the sun on my flying folds now never sets.

Filled with significance are my colors of red, white and blue into which have been woven the strength and courage of American manhood, the love and loyalty of American womanhood.

Stirring are the stories of my Stars and Stripes.

I represent the Declaration of Independence.

I stand for the Constitution of the United States.

I reflect the wealth and grandeur of this great land of opportunity.

I signify the Law of the Land.

I tell the achievements and progress of the American people in arts and science, culture and literature, invention and commerce, transportation and industry.

I stand for peace and goodwill among the nations of the world.

I believe in tolerance.

I am the badge of the nation's greatness and the emblem of its destiny.

**THREATEN ME AND MILLIONS WILL SPRING TO MY DEFENSE.**

**I AM THE AMERICAN FLAG.**

(At these final words, all Cooties will raise their hands and point at the Flag. A pause of a few seconds will be effective.)

**G.B.L.:** You will raise your right hand in a horizontal position, place your left hand over your heart and repeat after me.

### **COOTIE CREED**

I believe in the Flag of the United States of America,  
Emblem of Trust, Equality and Freedom.

Born of loving hands in the Cradle of Liberty,  
Baptized with the blood of our forefathers.

Consecrated to the cause of humanity.

And sustained by the mighty arms of her patriots.

**G.B.L.:** You may lower your hands.

**G.B.L.:** Seam Squirrel, you may proceed.

(G.B.L. retires to the station of the Seam Squirrel. Seam Squirrel takes a position in front of the Altar facing the Nits.)

**S.S.:** Provost Marshal, you will place the Nits in the Proper position to take the great Oath of Comradeship.

**P.M.:** Nits, you will form a V formation with the tip starting at the Altar.

**S.S.:** Nits, you will raise your right hand, the comrade in front will place their left hand on the Flag of Our Country, the rest will place their left hand on the shoulder of the comrade in front of them. Pronounce your name when called upon to do so and repeat after me.

(The VFW Obligation is given now.)

**S.S.:** Nits, you will lower your hands and resume your former position.

(Nits again form a semicircle. The Provost Marshal closes the Bible.)

**S.S.:** Great Blue Louse, do you think that these Nits are worthy to proceed?

**G.B.L.:** They are. Proceed. Provost Marshal, you will retire the colors.

(Provost Marshal takes the American standard to its former position to the right of the Seam Squirrel's station (if elevated) or to the S.S. left. He then resumes his former position.)

**P.M.:** Seam Squirrel, your orders have been obeyed.

**S.S.:** It is well.

**S.S.:** Nits, you will raise your right hands and repeat after me:

Having survived successfully – the ordeals of this crummy scratch – and fearing nothing – I cheerfully swear – that I will faithfully attend scratches – of this order – and that I will constantly seek out – those who can appreciate this degree – and I will invite them – into this crummy fraternity.

I furthermore willfully and oathfully swear – that I will myself – work industriously – busily – laboriously and relentlessly – every seam within sight – sound – touch – taste or smell.

I furthermore promise and swear – standing upright on bended knees – that I will never knowingly – tread upon the pastures – of any Grayback or in any way – unbeknown to him – attempt to deprive him – of his food or pleasures – that I might become fatter than he – thereby forcing him and his associates – to beg of his Brothers.

I furthermore promise – by the sincerity of a dog robber – that I will not borrow – beg – steal – swipe – cop or appropriate – any of the glory rightfully belonging – to a fellow member of this degree – thereby causing my popularity – to be increased – and additional laurels – placed upon my brow.

I furthermore promise and swear – never to reveal – to anyone – not entitled to receive it – any of the work – of this order – secret, written or oral – and may the seams of my shirt – be as barren as a church collection plate – should I ever whisper – elucidate or sound off – any of the work – of this Pup Tent – within or without.

And may my fangs – become as blunt as the back of a silver striped – Brazilian beetle – should I ever allow – any person – not a member of this degree – to obtain any secrets – of this – or any Pup Tent – through my own fault.

All this I promise and swear – as one true Grayback – can swear to another.

As you were.

**S.S.:** I now declare and proclaim each and every one of you a Grayback of this Pup Tent, and we shall have engrossed upon the seams of this Pup Tent your names in crimson hue.

**S.S.:** Shirt Reader, you will now instruct these newly made Graybacks in the secret work of this degree.

**S.R.:** Sign of transformation – Both pant legs rolled up.

Grayback sign – Stand erect, both hands scratching breasts.

Grayback password – A.W.O.L.

Grayback at play – Lie on floor, face down, hands over head, both legs erect.

**S.R.:** Seam Squirrel, your order have been obeyed and the Graybacks instructed.

(Seam Squirrel now resumes his station and declares a recess of five minutes to welcome the newly made Graybacks into the degree. The ritual will now be followed and all paraphernalia removed from the hall.)

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

The equipment to be used is as follows. Some can be eliminated, but if used will be much more effective on the new candidates. Please note that it is possible for the Sky Pilot to take the part of the Unknown Soldier in this. The effect of the remote control has been noticed to produce many favorable comments.

- One amplifier (power optional)

- One microphone

Three speakers (two large, one small) of a magnetic type or that will work with the unit being used. One speaker is to be used at a time. If placed in unexpected locations, the effect is very noticeable.

- Skull and Crossed Bones

- Flag

- Bible

- Altar Cloth (optional)

- Candle sticks for all nations

- Two large candle holders (on the altar)

- Candles for all holders

- One flash bulb outfit of three positions

A pup tent at the station of the Seam Squirrel is very effective too and should have the name of the Pup Tent painted on its sides.

The grave form as used in the VFW Ritual could be used, but it is desirous to get away from any copying of the parent order. The replica of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in plyboard with a speaker unit inside will be effective too.

There are at least seven important parts in this set up. A bugler can be very effective if used. It is up to the degree teams to work this any number of times, and it will prove to be greatly educational

and interesting to all. The remote control is what has proved to be most interesting in this entire degree and can be directed by one person with all maintaining silence; P.M. and Jimmy Legs only speaking at the entry.

## **PROCEED WITH REGULAR ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Reading of Minutes of the Previous Scratch.

Is there a Cootie or a family of a Cootie in distress?

Report of the C.C.D.B. in detail.

Reading of Official and Other Communications.

Reports of Committees – Standing and Special.

Remember our National Home.

**S.S.:** (Raps gavel twice) All present will rise. Uncover. Parade rest. Sky Pilot, you will ask Divine blessings upon our National Home.

**S.P.:** Almighty God, we ask Thy Divine blessing on the residents and children in our National Home. May Thy Divine spirit be within them forever, giving them health and guiding their lives. Trust us always, to honor our departed comrades. Amen.

**S.S.:** Attention. Cover. (Raps Gavel once)

## **VFW National Home - Alternate Prayer**

**S.P.:** At this hour of the evening, the children of our departed comrades at the VFW National Home for Children are kneeling at their bedsides in reverent prayer to Almighty God. Let us turn out thoughts towards Eaton Rapids, Michigan, and with bowed heads join them in their prayers. Repeat after me:

Suffer the little children to come unto me  
And forbid them not  
For of such is the Kingdom of God  
May God bless our National Home.

Amen

Report of the Hungry Cootie in detail.  
Reading of Bills. Actions to be taken.  
Unfinished Business.  
New Business.  
Good of the Scratch.

## **CLOSING THE SCRATCH**

**S.S.:** The newly initiated members of the Pup Tent will proceed to the desk of the Hungry Cootie immediately after this Scratch is closed and receive their membership cards. The cards will be given out alphabetically and you will facilitate matters by not asking and questions when receiving your card. If there are any questions, go to the office of the Pup Tent and there receive the information desired.

**S.S.:** Is there anything further to be brought before this Scratch?  
(If no response – Raps gavel Twice).

**S.S.:** Cooties, attention! Prepare to Salute the colors. Present Arms  
– Order Arms.

**Sky Pilot** – Closing Prayer. Uncover, Parade rest.

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

**S.P.:** O Heavenly Father, the Lord of life eternal, look upon us as we bring to a close this Scratch. Help us as we face the days ahead to do it with joy in our hearts and determination to live according to the precepts of our beloved order, which will enable us to enjoy all eternity.

Amen.

**S.S.:** Attention, Cover. Is there any matter of importance that has been overlooked? Is there any member of the Pup Tent present who has not experienced the good feeling for which this order was created? If not, I now declare this Scratch of the Pup Tent adjourned without formalities to meet again in regular session (special) at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

## **INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS**

**Installing Officer (I.O.):** (Reads the warrant.)

Seam Squirrel or Commander (as appropriate), the term of office for which you and your subordinate officers have been elected or appointed will terminate upon the date of the installation of your Grand (Supreme) Commander. I am present to install your newly elected officers. Have the officers for the coming year been duly elected?

**S.S.:** They have.

**I.O.:** Have the books of the Hungry Cootie (Adjutant) and C.C.D.B. (Quartermaster) been examined and approved by the Tight Wads (Trustees)?

**S.S.:** They have.

**I.O.:** Has the premium on the C.C.D.B.'s (Quartermaster's) bond been paid?

**S.S.:** It has.

**I.O.:** Have you the Charter in your possession?

**S.S.:** I have.

**I.O.:** You will surrender it to me. (Seam Squirrel/Commander hands gavel to the Installing Officer.)

**I.O.:** Seam Squirrel/Commander \_\_\_\_ (name) \_\_\_\_, your duties as Seam Squirrel/Commander of this Pup Tent/Grand/Supreme have now terminated. It is proper to remind you that in assuming the chair of Past Seam Squirrel/Commander, it will be necessary for you to aid your successor with the counsel and experience that you have gained during your term of office. I now invite you to assist me in the installation ceremonies by acting as my Provost Marshal.

**I.O.:** Hungry Cootie/Adjutant, you will call the roll of officers, calling the incoming Seam Squirrel/Commander last. As your name is called, you will rise and the Provost Marshal will place you in the proper position for installation.

**I.O.:** (Takes position in front of officers.) Miserable Shavetails-elect, you are about to learn the duties and the dangers you will experience after assuming control of this Pup Tent/Grand/ Supreme. The duties of the offices to which you have been elected or appointed are manifold. By your own actions and interest this Pup Tent/Grand/Supreme will prosper or fail. Upon you rests the proper preparation and indoctrination of your officers and new members to make this Pup Tent/Grand/Supreme one to be looked upon with honor and prestige. Knowing all this, are you ready to assume the obligation of a Shavetail of this Pup Tent/Grand/Supreme?

**Shavetails – Elect:** We are.

**I.O.:** Shavetails-elect, you will raise your right hands and repeat after me.

(Rap gavel twice for all in attendance to rise.)

I do solemnly promise – on my honor as a comrade – and a Veteran of Foreign Wars – that I will administer – the duties of the office – to which I have been elected or appointed – to the best of my ability – without fear or favor – and will be governed in my official acts – as an officer of this Pup Tent (Grand/Supreme) – by the By-Laws of the Order – and by an earnest desire – to serve this Pup Tent (Grand/Supreme) – the members thereof – and the organization at large.

(Hands down.)

**I.O.:** As you were! Uncover, Parade rest! Sky Pilot (Chaplain), you will lead us in prayer.

**S.P.:** Almighty God, our Guide and Divine Protector, give Thy Blessings upon these our Comrades, who now become fellow Officers. We beseech Thee, O Lord, who art ever present amongst us, grant wisdom unto them, so that in their deliberations they continue to favor Thee, our glorious Country and to better our organization. May The strength sustain them. May Thy power preserve them. May Thy hand protect them in the faithful and fruitful performance of their duties. Amen.

**I.O.:** Attention, Cover! Provost Marshal, you will escort the new officers to their stations. The incoming Seam Squirrel/Commander will be escorted to this station at my right. The outgoing Seam Squirrel/Commander will return to this station on my left.

### **OBLIGATION TO SEAM SQUIRREL**

**I.O.:** Seam Squirrel-elect, the seams of this Pup Tent will be placed in your charge upon the date of the installation of the Grand Commander immediately following the Grand Scratch. Upon you rests the responsibility of picking fertile hunting grounds for those dependent upon you. You will do nothing, nor allow anything to be done if within your power to prevent it, that is not within the precepts of this order and that of our parent organization, the Veterans of Foreign Wars. I present you with this gavel, use it firmly, but with discretion. Seam Squirrel-elect and officers of Pup Tent No.\_\_\_\_\_, Military Order of the Cootie of the United States, I proclaim you installed for the ensuing year.

### **OBLIGATION TO GRAND COMMANDER**

**I.O.:** Grand Commander-elect, the Grand is about to be placed in your charge. Upon you rests the responsibility of picking fertile hunting grounds for those dependent upon you. You will do nothing, nor allow anything to be done if within your power to prevent it, that is not within the precepts of this order and that of our parent organization, the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

I present you with this gavel, the emblem of authority, you will use it firmly, but with discretion. Grand Commander-elect and the officers of this Grand Pup Tent, Military Order of the Cootie of the United States, I proclaim you installed and in working order for the ensuing year.

## **OBLIGATION TO SUPREME COMMANDER**

**I.O.:** Supreme Commander-elect, the Supreme Pup Tent, Military Order of the Cootie, is about to be placed in your charge. Upon you rests the responsibility of picking fertile hunting grounds for those dependent upon you. You will do nothing, nor allow anything to be done if within your power to prevent it, that is not within the precepts of this order and that of our parent organization, the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

I present you with this gavel, the emblem of authority, you will use it firmly, but with discretion. Supreme Commander-elect and the officers of this Supreme Pup Tent, Military Order of the Cootie of the United States, I proclaim you installed and in working order for the ensuing year.

## **INSTITUTING A PUP TENT**

Instituting Officer Calls Meeting to Order.

**I.O.:** Comrades, I have been authorized by the Supreme Commander to institute this Pup Tent in accordance with the By-Laws of this Organization. (Reads the warrant.)

**I.O.:** The Adjutant will call the roll. Comrades will rise as their names are called.

**I.O.:** Adjutant, have you satisfied yourself that all present are eligible according to the laws?

**ADJ:** I have.

**I.O.:** Comrades, you have expressed a desire to be enrolled in our ranks, but to be admitted to membership you will be required to take an obligation – one which will not interfere or conflict with any duty you owe your country, your family, or yourself. Are you willing to assume it?

**COMRADES:** We are.

**I.O.:** Hearing no objections, we will proceed. Comrades, will retire to the anteroom to await the conferring of the First Section of Incubation.

(Comrades are escorted out by the Officer of the Day.)

**I.O.:** Nits will display the sign of Incubation, line up in proper formation, and prove you are entitled to be present by giving the First Degree Password and Sign.

**I.O.:** Shirt Reader, accompanied by your assistants, will retire to the anteroom.

(Shirt Reader and Delousing Crew depart. Shirt Reader prepares and assembles the Atoms. Atoms are blindfolded, placed in double rank if there are more than eight, otherwise form a single rank.)

**S.R.:** Atoms, About Face! Place your hands on the shoulders of the Comrade in front of you and hold fast. (Shirt Reader knocks loudly at door.)

**J.L.:** Who scratches there?

**S.R.:** Shirt Reader with innocent Atoms who have been accepted for membership in this Crummy Fraternity.

**J.L.:** Enter Shirt Reader and proceed to our wise counselor, the Sky Pilot.

(Shirt Reader backward marches the Atoms to the Sky Pilot's station and halts.)

**S.R.:** Oh mighty Sky Pilot, I bring before you these innocent Atoms who are on their first journey through the seams of this Pup Tent. They humbly plea for wisdom.

**S.P.:** Most innocent Atoms, the time is rapidly approaching when you will be transformed from an Atom to a Nit. I hope the transformation will be of benefit to you by increasing your circle of friends and teaching you that a smile and pleasant word is always worthwhile. We seek to teach you industry and perserverance, to show you that there are others less fortunate than you, those that lay in beds of white and those that have lost their loved ones and are not in our National Home. We seek to remind you that HONOR and LOYALTY will remove many obstacles from your path in your pursuit of happiness and peace. I urge you to be guided by our namesake, the Cootie. He is never known to start something he did not finish. He is a hound for punishment and never knows when he is licked. He is never alone, but always

surrounded by friends. Misfortune never daunts him and while he may think the world owes him a living, he knows that the surest way to get it is to go out and hustle for himself.

**S.P.:** Shirt Reader, you will guide the Atoms to the Hide Gimlet. They have proven themselves lousy.

**S.R.:** Atoms, Backwards March! (Shirt Reader backward marches them around the room to the H.G., faces them away from the H.G. station, removes blindfolds, and when ready):

**H.G.:** Innocent Atoms, you have been blessed with wise counsel from the Sky Pilot. It is now my duty to inform you that we are not going to have a lots of fun with you. We do not intend to heap all sorts of indignities upon you to make you look as ridiculous as we possibly can before all those assembled here,

**H.G.:** Shirt Reader, you will guide these innocent Atoms to the Blanket Bum.

**S.R.:** Atoms, Backwards March!. (Atoms are backward marched to the station of the B.B.)

**B.B.:** Most miserable Atoms. As ex-servicemen and women, you are familiar with the old Army game of reading your shirt, and in connection with this indoor sport, you have probably learned that it pays to be thorough in everything we may do.

**B.B.:** Shirt Reader, you will conduct the Atoms to the Instituting Officer.

**S.R.:** Atoms, Backwards March! (Atoms are marched back to the station of the Instituting Officer.)

**I.O.:** Most miserable Atoms! The time is almost at hand when you will be transformed from the Atom to a Nit. I hope the transformation will be of benefit to you by increasing your circle of friends and by teaching you that a smile and pleasant word is always worthwhile. We seek to teach you industry and perseverance, and surely no better example of these virtues may be found anywhere than shown by our universally known and respected namesake, the Cootie. Before proceeding further it will be necessary for you to take

an obligation of secrecy. Are you willing to assume such an obligation? Hearing no objections, you will raise your right hand and repeat after me.

I (pronounce your name) in the presence of the officers --- and members of this organization --- do sincerely promise --- upon my honor as a comrade --- and a Veteran of Foreign Wars --- that I will forever keep secret --- any and all the events --- that transpire in any Pup Tent --- of the Military Order of the Cootie --- that I will not make known --- to anyone outside the confines of a Pup Tent of this Order --- any of the secret work oral or written --- of this organization. All this I promise --- and swear as a comrade --- and should my affiliations with this Order --- cease at any time --- I promise to keep inviolate this obligation --- as though I had remained a member thereof. (Lower hands)

**I.O.:** Miserable Atoms, you are now about to be offered the privilege of hearing and repeating the solemn oath of our creepy organization, the Cootie Cuss.

**I.O.:** Shirt Reader, in view of the excellent showing made by these Atoms, I direct you to place the sign of Incubation upon each and every one of them that they may be recognized wherever they may be.

**S.R.:** (When finished) Instituting Officer, your orders have been obeyed.

**I.O.:** You will repeat after me ----

Having made application for membership – in this Crummy Fraternity – I do hereby truthfully promise and agree – to love and obey – any and all Specie Pediculi – who may hereafter – from any cause whatsoever – attach themselves to me – and I do solemnly – and sincerely promise – to extend the hand of fellowship – to any and all comrades – whom I may meet and I will if possible – aid and assist – any such comrade – who may be in need of aid – and I shall regard it – as a privilege – rather than a duty – to be able to aid – Comrades less fortunate than I.

**I.O.:** Having survived the ordeal of the Cuss of the Cootie, you are now a Nit and entitled to the secret signs and password of our Crummy Order.

**I.O.:** Shirt Reader, you will now instruct the Nits in the signs and password of the First Section.

(Note: Atoms a given all the signs and password of this degree, also the following):

(1) Sign of Incubation – One pant leg rolled up

(2) Nit Sign – Stand erect, scratch groin with both hands

(3) Nit Password – S.O.L.

(4) Nit at play – Lay on the floor, face down, hands over head, one leg erect

**S.R.:** Instituting Officer, your orders have been obeyed

**I.O.:** I now declare a five minute recess.

**I.O.:** (Calls meeting to order.) Nits will retire to the anteroom to await the conferring of the Second Section of Transformation. (P.M. escorts Nits from room and returns.)

**I.O.:** Graybacks will display the sign of Transformation, line up in proper formation and prove they are entitled to be present by giving the Second Degree password and sign.

**I.O.:** Provost Marshal, you will retire to the anteroom, assemble the Nits and escort them to my station.

(When ready, the P.M. knocks loudly on the door.)

**J.L.:** Who scratches there?

**P.M.:** Nits in custody of the Provost Marshal.

**P.M.:** Nits, Backwards March! (Nits are marched to the station of the I.O.)

**I.O.:** Inconsequential Nits, by the signs on your trousers, you show preparedness to travel roads full of pitfalls. That is lousy. By being before me, you also show that you have disregarded all advice. It is truthfully said that he who does not heed advice is a fool, such we expect you to be. Before proceeding any further along the seams of this Pup Tent, it will be necessary to take a solemn oath. Not knowing what you are about to

promise, are you willing to place your confidence in the Vermin of the Crummy Fraternity?

**Nits:** Yes.

**I.O.:** That is lousy. You will raise your right hands and repeat after me.

Having survived successfully – the ordeals of this crummy scratch – and fearing nothing – I cheerfully swear – that I will faithfully attend scratches – of this order – and that I will constantly seek out – those who can appreciate this degree – and I will invite them – into this crummy fraternity.

I furthermore willfully and oathfully swear – that I will myself – work industriously – busily – laboriously and relentlessly – every seam within sight – sound – touch – taste or smell.

I furthermore promise and swear – standing upright on bended knees – that I will never knowingly – tread upon the pastures – of any Grayback or in any way – unbeknown to him – attempt to deprive him – of his food or pleasures – that I might become fatter than he – thereby forcing him and his associates – to beg of his Brothers.

I furthermore promise – by the sincerity of a dog robber – that I will not borrow – beg – steal – swipe – cop or appropriate – any of the glory rightfully belonging – to a fellow member of this degree – thereby causing my popularity – to be increased – and additional laurels – placed upon my brow.

I furthermore promise and swear – never to reveal – to anyone – not entitled to receive it – any of the work – of this order – secret, written or oral – and may the seams of my shirt – be as barren as a church collection plate – should I ever whisper – elucidate or sound off – any of the work – of this Pup Tent – within or without.

And may my fangs – become as blunt as the back of a silver striped – Brazilian beetle – should I ever allow – any person – not a member of this degree – to obtain any secrets – of this – or any Pup Tent – through my own fault.

All this I promise and swear – as one true Grayback – can swear to another.

As you were.

**I.O.:** I now declare and proclaim each and everyone of you a Grayback.

**I.O.:** Provost Marshal, you will now instruct these newly made Graybacks in the secret work of this degree. (See secret instructions for this degree.)

**I.O.:** I now declare a recess of five minutes.

**I.O.:** (Calls meeting to order.) Graybacks will retire to the anteroom to await conferring of the Third Section of Aggravation. (P.M. escorts Graybacks from room and returns.)

**I.O.:** Cooties will display the sign of Aggravation, line up in proper formation and prove you are entitled to be present by giving the Third Degree password and sign.

**I.O.:** Provost Marshal, you will retire to the anteroom, assemble the Graybacks, and escort them to my station.

(At this time the Blanket Bum and Hide Gimlet leave their stations and follow the Provost Marshal. They pick out one or two of the newly made Graybacks who they think will make good subjects and obtain from them the current 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree passwords. After getting them, they return to their stations.)

(When ready, the Provost Marshal knocks loudly at the door.)

**J.L.:** Who scratches there?

**P.M.:** Graybacks in custody of the Provost Marshal.

**J.L.:** Provost Marshal, enter with the Graybacks.

**P.M.:** Graybacks, attention! Forward, march! (Graybacks are marched to the station of the Instituting Officer.)

**P.M.:** Instituting Officer, I present these Graybacks for your counsel and further allegiance to our Order.

**I.O.:** Graybacks, you are in this organization because of the fact that you are members in good standing in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. You have, all of you, come through the successive stages of the Grayback. You have gained admission to the seams of this degree because we believe you to be a real Veteran of Foreign Wars, that you have performed the obligations of your membership in that

order. Your membership in this order will be subject to your continued efforts and promulgation of ideas of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and active interest therein. Your membership in this Order will depend largely upon the fact that you must carry a paid-up receipt card in the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and should your affiliation or membership cease at any time in our parent order, your membership in the Military Order of the Cootie will automatically cease. Before entering further upon this degree, it will be necessary that you take upon yourself an obligation. You will raise your right hands and repeat after me, using your name where I use mine.

I, \_\_\_\_\_(name)\_\_\_\_\_, of my own free will and accord – in the presence of Almighty God – and the members here assembled – sincerely promise and pledge – that I will never reveal any of the secrets – of the Military Order of the Cootie – to any person or persons – except it be a true and lawful Cootie – of this degree – or within a regularly constituted Pup Tenet – until by due examination – I have found them entitled to the same. Should my membership – in the Military Order of the Cootie cease – I shall consider this pledge binding – outside the Order - as though I had remained a member of the same. So help me God – and keep me steadfast. (Hands down.)

**I.O.:** I now declare and proclaim each and every one of you a Cootie and entitled to the secret work of this degree.

**I.O.:** Provost Marshal, you will instruct these newly made Cooties in the secret signs and password of the Third Degree. (See secret instructions for the Third Degree.)

**I.O.:** (When the P.M. has finished.) Now that the degree work has been dispensed with, has anything of importance been overlooked? I shall be glad to answer any questions concerning the Military Order of the Cootie.

**I.O.:** Since you newly made Cooties are no members of our organization, it is only necessary for me to establish your Pup Tent.

By authority of the Supreme Commander, I now declare this to be a Pup Tent of the Military Order of the Cootie of the United States, henceforth known as \_\_\_\_\_ Pup Tent No. \_\_\_\_\_, Fertile Hunting Grounds of \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of state), Military Order of the Cootie, and entitle to all privileges and rights of this organization so long as its members comply with our laws and those of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

**I.O.:** I now declare a recess of five minutes.

(After recess, the Scratch is called to order by the I.O. and the Pup Tent Shavetails are installed.)

### **INSTITUTION OF A GRAND PUP TENT**

**I.O.:** (Calls meeting to Order.) Comrades, I have been authorized by the Supreme Commander to institute this Grand Pup Tent in accordance with the By-Laws of this organization. (Reads the warrant.)

**I.O.:** I invite Cootie \_\_\_\_\_ to be Acting Adjutant; Cootie \_\_\_\_\_ to be Acting Chaplain; and Cootie \_\_\_\_\_ to be Acting Provost Marshal.

**I.O.:** Cooties, I am present to institute the Grand Pup Tent of \_\_\_\_\_ (state) in accordance with the By-Laws of this organization and Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

**I.O.:** Acting Adjutant – you will call the names and numbers of each Pup Tent. As your Pup Tent name is called, the Seam Squirrel and Shavetails please rise, respond “Present”, and remain standing. The Acting Provost Marshal will escort each Seam Squirrel and Shavetails of the proposed Grand of \_\_\_\_\_ to the Altar.

**I.O.:** Acting Adjutant, have you satisfied yourself that all present are eligible according to the By-Laws?

**Acting Adjutant:** I have.

**I.O.:** Seam Squirrels, do you and your Pup Tent Shavetails pledge themselves to comply with all the rules and regulations governing this Grand Pup Tent as prescribed by the By-Laws of the Military Order of the Cootie and the Constitution and By-Laws of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States?

**RESPONSE:** I solemnly pledge.

**I.O.:** (Two raps of the gavel). Attention, Uncover, Parade Rest. The Acting Chaplain will offer the Prayer.

**I.O.:** As you were. (Raps the gavel once.) I declare the Grand of \_\_\_\_\_ duly instituted. There will now be a five minute recess. The Grand Officers will be installed following the recess.

## **MEMORIAL SERVICE**

Set up hall prior to the opening. Place the Flag, Bible and Altar at the station of the Seam Squirrel. Place a candle holder and candle at all officers' stations to be lit during the service. All officers to be in following stations at the call to order:

Pup Tent and sentry in front of Hungry Cootie's station.

Sky Pilot will take station to the left of the Seam Squirrel.

Wreaths set at foot of the Altar in front of the S.S station.

Flags of the Cooties, Post(s) and American Standard in proper places.

(Grave and Cross at Sky Pilot's station.)

**S.S.:** Listen Cooties, Comrades, Sisters and Friends of the VFW and Cooties. We are here to commemorate the memory of our departed Comrades and Cooties.

The Military Order of the Cootie is not solely a fun organization. Serious thoughts are given to our departed, and it is to these that we pay our respect at this time. I respectfully request that there be no smoking and talking during this ceremony. Silence is strictly essential while the service is being held.

**S.S.:** Provost Marshal, is all prepared to proceed with the ceremony?

- P.M.:** (The P.M. advances to the center of the floor and faces the S.S. station.) Seam Squirrel, all has been prepared.
- S.S.:** It is well. You will assume your station and remain standing and answer the roll call of the Pup Tent as called by the Hungry Cootie.
- S.S.:** Hungry Cootie, you will call the roll of the Pup Tent.
- H.C.:** (After the Roll Call) Seam Squirrel, the roll has been called and all accounted for except the following \_\_\_\_\_. (numbers only will be given)
- S.S.:** It is well. You may resume your duties.
- S.S.:** Sky Pilot, you will place the wreaths on the grave in memory of our departed Comrades and Cooties.
- S.P.:** (S.P. takes wreaths or flowers and places them on the grave.) To the memory of our departed. (Returns to their station for prayer.)
- S.P.:** When the call of our Country was heard, these Comrades answered. Self was forgotten in the cause of the greater good. As brave men and women, they marched away with an abiding faith in their God, their Country and their Flag. The red of our Country's Flag was made redder still by their heroism; the white more stainlessly pure by motives which impelled them; and in the starry field of our Nation's Glorious Banner, the blue has been glorified by the service they have given for American ideals. As Comrade after Comrade departs, we march on with ranks growing thinner. God of Battles, Father of all, Amidst this we see Thy hand. We beseech Thee, look in mercy upon all here assembled with Thine own tenderness. Heavenly Father, bless our Country with Freedom, Peace and Righteousness, and through Thy Sovereign and Holy Spirit's favor, may we all meet at last before Thy Throne of Grace in Heaven. And to Thy Great Name shall be praise forever and forever. Amen.

**DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER: (OPTIONAL)**

## **BURIAL RITUAL**

**S.S.:** Attention!

We are here assembled to pay our last tribute of respect to our departed Cootie. When the call of our country was heard, Cootie (name of deceased) answered. Self was forgotten in the cause of the greater good. As a brave man/woman they marched away with an abiding faith in their God, their country and their flag. The red of our Country's Flag was made redder still by their heroism; the white more stainlessly pure by motives which impelled them; and in the starry field of our Nation's Glorious Banner, the blue has been glorified by the service they have given for American ideals.

Uncover. Parade Rest.

The Sky Pilot will invoke the Divine blessing.

## **PRAYER**

**S.P.:** Almighty and merciful God, Father of All, amidst these monuments of the dead we see Thy hand. In the depth of our sorrow we realize the truth of the inspired words: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

As Cootie after Cootie departs, we march on with the ranks growing thinner. Help us to be faithful unto Thee and to one another. We beseech Thee, look in mercy upon all of us here assembled, and with Thine own tenderness, console and comfort those bereaved by the hand of death. Give them the "oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Heavenly Father, bless our country with freedom, peace and righteousness, and through Thy sovereign and Holy Spirit's favor, may we all meet at last before Thy Throne of Grace in Heaven. And to Thy Great Name shall be praise forever and forever. Amen.

(All Cooties repeat Amen and replace their covers. Assume the position of At Ease. If a choir, quartet or soloist is present, an appropriate hymn may be sung, preferably *Sleep Soldier Boy*.)

**S.S.:** (Read the following or extemporize.) One by one, as the years roll on, we are called upon to fulfill these sad duties of respect to our departed Cooties. The present, full of the cares that best all nations, whether engaged in war or peace, fades away as we look back on the day this Cootie left home to defend their country. Imbued by a spirit of devotion and inspired by an undying love of their native land, they gladly went forth and joined with Cooties, both young and old, to preserve our heritage of freedom. We trust that the example set by our Cootie will prove a glorious beacon to the youth of our country, who may be called upon to uphold the honor of our flag.

As the years roll on, we too, shall have finished our flight, shall be laid to rest, and our souls follow the long column to the realms above, as all-enfolding death, hour by hour, shall mark his recruits. Cooties, let us so live that when the Keeper of the Eternal Records shall have called our names for the last time, those we leave behind may say of us, as we now say of this Cootie, "Here lies all that is mortal of a true-hearted Cootie, and a fearless defender of their country and flag."

**S.S.:** Shavertails, you will now perform the last duties of your stations.

**H.G.:** (Places a sprig of evergreen upon the casket.) On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ Pup Tent No. \_\_\_\_\_, Military Order of the Cootie, I present this tribute as a symbol of our undying love for our Cootie.

**B.B.:** (Places white flowers upon the casket.) I place this symbol of purity upon this casket, and may each future generation emulate the unselfish devotion to duty if the lowliest of our Cooties.

**P.M.:** (Places a laurel wreath upon the casket.) We place this last token of affection from the Cooties in arms upon the casket of

our departed Cootie and crown their immortal dust with this symbol of victory.

**S.S.:** (Gently holds up one corner of the regulation flag covering the casket OR places a small American flag on the casket if none there.) On behalf of our glorious republic, for whose integrity our Cootie of the Military Order of the Cootie enlisted and served, we place upon their casket this emblem of our country, a country whose arms are always open to shelter the oppressed.

(If the casket is to be interred, the small flag, if used, will be placed at the head of the grave, never to be covered with earth.)

**S.P.:** (S.P. shall repeat the following or make an address of similar length.)

The march of our Cootie is over and he lieth down in he house appointed for all living. This grave reminds us of the frailty of human life and tenure by which we hold our own. In such an hours as we think not, the final summons may come which no one disobeys.

It seems fitting that we should leave our Cootie to rest under the arching sky, as they did when they pitched their tent or laid down in days gone by, weary and footsore by the roadside, or on the field of battle. Our departed Cooties of the Navy no longer hear the sound of the waves or float upon the bosom of the deep; no longer sail beneath peaceful skies, nor are driven before the angry storm.

May each of us, when our voyage and battles of life are over, find a welcome in that region of the blest where there is no more storm-tossed sea, nor scorching battlefield. Our Cootie is in the hands of our Heavenly Father, and "God giveth His beloved sleep."

They will be laid to rest, but let us cherish their virtues and learn to imitate them, reminded by the place they fill no more, that our ranks are thinning. Let each one be so faithful in the remaining marches, that they will ne ready to fall out take their place in the great review hereafter; not in doubt, but

with faith that the merciful Captain of our Salvation will call them to that fraternity which on earth and in heaven remains unbroken.

### **COMMITTAL**

**S.P.:** (Or Minister) The Master saith, “Thou brother shall rise again.  
I am the resurrection and the life.”

(This paragraph to be used at the discretion of the Pup Tent.)

Dust shall be returned to dust and spirit to God who gave it.  
Earth to earth, ashes to ashes and spirit unto the Great Spirit  
that watcheth over the lives and souls of men. Amen.

**ALL COOTIES:** Amen.

### **BENEDICTION**

**S.P.:** May the blessing and benediction of heaven be upon us and  
our Cooties wherever dispersed the world over. Amen.

(At the grave, the Seam Squirrel gives the signal to the firing squad,  
which fires three volleys.)

**S.S.:** Present Arms!

(The bugle sounds Taps. The Pup Tent colors only, drooping full,  
fly over the grave.)

**S.S.:** Order, Arms!

(War Department regulations governing the conduct of a military  
funeral provide that at the conclusion of Taps, the body bearers shall  
fold the internment flag and present it to the cemetery representative  
or funeral director for transmittal to the next of kin.)

When the grave side services are concluded, the Sky Pilot remains to  
render any assistance required by the family. All others may leave  
at this point.

## **CEREMONY FOR DRAPING THE CHARTER**

**S.S.:** (After motion from floor or as requested) Provost Marshal, you will obtain drape in preparation for draping the charter. (P.M. obtains drape, proceeds to the Altar and salutes S.S.)

**S.S.:** (Raps gavel twice) Members rise and face the charter at attention. Provost Marshal, you will now drape our charter in memory of our beloved Cootie \_\_\_\_\_ who has passed on.

(P.M. proceeds to the charter and drapes it.)

**S.S.:** (While P.M. is draping the charter) By so doing, we as members of \_\_\_\_\_ Pup Tent \_\_\_\_\_ offer solemn tribute to our departed Cootie.

(P.M. returns to the Altar, salutes S.S. and returns to their station.)

**S.S:** Cooties, Present Arms! (Pause) Order Arms!

**S.S.:** Sky Pilot. Cooties, Uncover, Parade Rest.

**S.P.:** (Proceeds to the Altar) Our Heavenly Father, the march of our Cootie is over and they lieth down in the house appointed for all the living. The Master saith, "Thy brother shall rise again, for I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." We beseech Thee to look in mercy on their bereaved family and to Thy name shall be praise forever and ever. Amen.

**S.S:** Attention, Cover. (S.S. raps gavel once to seat member.)

(Charters should be draped for thirty (30) days for all deceased Cooties.)

## **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

1. Opening of Scratch in accordance with M.O.C. Ritual
2. Opening Prayer
3. Roll Call of Shavetails
4. Reading of applications for membership
5. Report of Investigating Committee
6. Balloting
7. Initiation (any degree)
8. Secret work of the Military Order of the Cootie
9. Ceremonial
10. Reading of Minutes of Previous Scratch
11. Reading of Official and Other Communications
12. Report of Custodian of the Crummy Duffel Bag (C.C.D.B.) in detail
13. Reading of Bills - Actions to be taken
14. Is there a Cootie or a family of a Cootie in distress?
15. Reports of Committees – Standing and Special
16. Remember our National Home
17. Report of the Hungry Cootie in detail
18. Unfinished Business
19. New Business
20. Good of the Scratch
21. Closing the Scratch