

RITUALS

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**FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION NATIONAL
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ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314-2754**

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Rituals

Foreword: Individual branches may modify these “Rituals” to conform with local conditions.

Article 1

Section 101. Duties of Officers and Committees. The duties of branch officers and committees shall be defined in the branch bylaws consistent with the duties of comparable national officers and committees. Further guidance for officers and committees is contained in the following:

- a) Presidents and vice presidents, *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, Chapter XV.
- b) Secretary, *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, Chapter XV.
- c) Treasurer, *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, Chapter XV.
- d) Directors, *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, Chapter XV.
- e) Committees, special and standing, *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, Chapter XVI.

Section 102. Selection of Committees. The president is delegated authority to select members and chairmen of committees, special and standing. (See *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, also C&BL, Section 812 through 822 and Section 1221(b). Prior to being installed the president-elect should contact shipmates to serve as chairmen of committees. The chairman’s judgment should be given consideration in the choice of members of the committee. The president should announce the names of all chairmen and members of the committees as soon as practicable and not later than the next regular meeting.

Section 103. President’s Arrival at Meeting. The president should arrive at the meeting hall at least thirty minutes prior to the time meeting convenes. The president, assisted by the vice president and the master-at-arms should greet all shipmates extending a warm welcome, especially to visiting shipmates, or to those shipmates who have been absent for some time.

Section 104. Meeting Hall Arrangement. Meeting halls vary in size, shape, ceiling height and seating arrangements, therefore, it is not practical to define a detailed floor plan. Under most circumstances, however, it is believed that the following can be carried out.

- a) Rostrum: The presiding officer’s station should be located so that the presiding officer will face the assembly.
- b) If flags are to be placed on the rostrum (elevated or floor level) the ensign of the United States shall be placed about five feet to the right of the presiding officer, with the branch colors similarly placed about five feet to the left of the presiding officer. (Authority Public Law 94-344: The flag of the United States of America should hold the position of superior prominence, in advance of the audience, and in the position of honor at the clergyman’s or speaker’s right as he/she faces the audience.” This means that the flag will always be stationed at the right of the speaker, regardless of whether it is on a platform or at the floor level.)
- c) The altar shall be placed about ten feet directly in front of the rostrum. This arrangement forms a triangle, symbolic of the emblem of the Fleet Reserve Association.
- d) The secretary’s station shall be placed on or near the rostrum so that the secretary faces the assembly.
- e) Branch officer’s stations shall be placed in the hall according to the judgment of the presiding officer. These officer should assist the presiding officer in maintaining order during the meetings.

Section 105. Requirements for Regular Meeting. No regular business (stated) meeting of a branch of the Fleet Reserve Association shall be in order unless the following requirements have been met:

- a) A quorum present. (Each branch shall define its own quorum.)
- b) The Holy Bible on the altar.
- c) The Ensign of the United States in the meeting room.
- d) The Branch Charter displayed.

Section 106. Gavel Signals.

- a) One tap of the gavel signifies the following:
 - 1. Meeting to come to order.
 - 2. Assembly to be seated.
 - 3. Assembly to be silent.
 - 4. Used to emphasize the completion of business and the decision of the chair.
- b) Two taps of the gavel signify that officers only, shall stand.
- c) Three taps of the gavel signify that the entire assembly shall stand.

(Note: Force should never be used when wielding the gavel).

Section 107. Entering or Leaving the Meeting Hall. The master-at-arms should not permit anyone to enter or leave the meeting hall during the opening, two-bell, initiation or closing ceremonies.

Section 108. Introduction of National Officers and Distinguished Guests.

- a) When a visiting national officer is present, the distinguished guest should be requested to remain in the anteroom or lobby until escorted into the meeting hall. At the proper time the master-at-arms announces, **“Shipmate President, the National President of the Fleet Reserve Association desires admission.”** The president then appoints a guard of honor and says, **“Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will retire the guard of honor and re-enter, presenting the National President of the Fleet Reserve Association at the rostrum.”** The president gives three taps of the gavel as the guard of honor, with the distinguished guest, enters the room. The distinguished guest is received at the rostrum, welcomed in the name of the branch, introduced to the assembly and then seated at the right of the president’s station.

(Note: If room permits, it will add to the ceremony to have the distinguished guest paraded with the colors. Same procedure should be used for other national officers and very distinguished guests.)

- b) (1) When several guests are to be seated on the rostrum, the junior guests are introduced first and called upon to speak a few words; then the senior or principal speaker is called upon last. Introductions are made either by the branch president or the master of ceremonies.
(2) When two or more distinguished guests are present the following order of protocol should be observed:

Guests other than those listed below.

Government officials in order of rank, i.e., city, county, state, federal. Members of the armed forces in order of rank, i.e., lower grade first and senior grade last. (Note: Among the armed forces the following precedence should be observed: Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy.)

Past unit officers in order of rank, i.e., junior officers first and senior officers last. Past

Branch officers in order of rank, i.e., junior officers first and senior officers last. Unit

officers in order of rank, i.e., junior officers first and senior officers last.

Branch officers in order of rank, i.e., junior officers first and senior officers last.

Past regional officers of the Auxiliary in order of rank, i.e., junior officers first and senior officers last.

Past regional officers of the FRA in order of rank, i.e., junior officers first and senior officers last.

Regional officers of the Auxiliary in order of rank, i.e., junior officers first and senior officers last.

Regional officers of the FRA in order of rank, i.e., junior officers first and senior officers last.

Past national officers of the Auxiliary in order of rank, i.e., junior officers first and senior officers last. Past

national officers of the FRA in order of rank, i.e., junior officers first and senior officers last.

National officers of the Auxiliary in order of rank, i.e., junior officers first and senior officers last.

National officers of the FRA in order of rank, i.e., junior officers first and senior officers last.

- a) Visiting branch presidents should be introduced from the assembly by the master-at-arms and if room permits, they are invited to have a seat on the rostrum.
- b) Visiting shipmates or shipmates who have been unable to attend a meeting for some length of time should be introduced to the assembly by the master-at-arms. The president should make a note of such shipmates, at the time they are introduced to the assembly, and if time permits, under the Good of the Order, the president should call upon these shipmates for a few remarks.

Section 109. Minutes, Board of Directors' Meeting. (See Section 2601, items (o) and (v). Attention is invited to Section 1219 and 1220 C&BL. Section 1220 allows the Branch Board of Directors to act in emergencies. It is advisedly suggested that such board of directors guard carefully the meaning of the word emergencies because any act of the board of directors which is an accomplished fact, cannot be rescinded.

- a) The Branch Board of Directors should carefully study and anticipate all branch business, and make detailed recommendations to the branch. When writing the minutes of their meetings, each recommendation should be drawn up separately; example: Board of Directors' Recommendation No. 1. It is recommended that the branch purchase a new typewriter for use by the Branch Secretary, cost to be approximately \$185.00. President puts the motion to the branch "You have listened to the recommendation of the Board of Directors, what is the pleasure of the assembly?" Recommendations require a second, as follows: "I move that Recommendation No. 1 be accepted." The motion is then on the floor for debate and vote of the assembly. (Note: Some branch bylaws require a two-thirds vote for any expenditure not budgeted, or those which exceed a certain sum; normally such motions only require a majority vote. If a two-thirds vote is required, the chair should announce this, prior to voting. Never allow a motion to stand which would accept the minutes of the Board of Directors in too.)
- b) Each recommendation is acted upon as an individual motion on the floor. The board of directors is never authorized to set aside any section of the bylaws. Some branches, in their bylaws, delegate authority to their board of directors, to conduct the business affairs of the branch.

Article 2 – Branch Meeting

Section 201. Opening. At the appointed time the president takes the presiding officer's station at the rostrum, taps the gavel once, saying, **"This assembly will now come to order."**

- a) **PRESIDENT: "Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will invite the shipmates to enter the meeting hall and close the doors."**
- b) **MASTER-AT-ARMS:** (Reports that all shipmates are in the hall and the doors have been closed.)
- c) **PRESIDENT: "Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will introduce the non-member guests and visiting shipmates."** (See Section 2508)
- d) **PRESIDENT: "Shipmate Master-at Arms, you will have the colors presented at the altar."** If space does not permit the parading of the colors, prior to the opening of the meeting they should be placed in their proper place, (See Section 2504), and the president says, **"Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will attend to the unfurling of the colors."** (Note: As the colors are either paraded or unfurled, the president gives three taps of the gavel, for the entire assembly to arise and stand at attention and has the colors saluted by the assembly.)
- e) **PRESIDENT:** (When colors are in place at the altar, or unfurled): **"Shipmate Chaplain, you will invoke the blessing of God."**
- f) **CHAPLAIN:** (See "Opening Prayer," Section 2701.)
- g) **PRESIDENT:** (Note: if colors are at the altar) **"Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will have the colors posted."**
- h) **PRESIDENT: "You will say with me the 'Pledge of Allegiance' to our flag. Hand Salute. 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. Two."**
- i) **PRESIDENT:** If the Preamble to the Constitution of the Fleet Reserve Association is to be repeated by the assembly, the president should proceed as follows: **"You will recite with me, the Preamble to the Constitution of the Fleet Reserve Association:**

With reverence for God and country,

**and being ever mindful
of the glorious traditions
of the United States Navy
Marine Corps and Coast Guard;**

***Our Duty* to uphold and defend
the Constitution
of the United States of America;**

***Our Responsibility* to aid in maintaining
adequate defense
for our beloved country;**

***Our Desire* to assist in obtaining
the best type of personnel
for our Sea Services;**

***Our Interest in the welfare
of those who served
and are now serving;***

***Our Devotion to our shipmates
in good fortune or distress;
Our Reverence for the memory
of our departed shipmates;***

***we associate ourselves together
and declare this to be
the Preamble to the Constitution
of the Fleet Reserve Association.”***

- j) PRESIDENT: **“I now declare Branch No., Fleet Reserve Association, regularly convened.”** Gives one tap of the gavel to seat assembly.
 - k) PRESIDENT: **“Shipmate Secretary, are there any applicants for membership to be initiated?”** (Note: See “Initiation Ceremony,” Section 2704).
 - l) PRESIDENT: **“The secretary will now read the minutes of the preceding meeting.”**
 - m) SECRETARY: Reads minutes.
 - n) PRESIDENT: **“Shipmates, you have listened to the minutes, are there any corrections? If not, the minutes will stand approved as read.”** (If there is a correction, ask the secretary to correct). **The minutes will stand approved as corrected.** Note: President and secretary sign minutes as approved.
 - o) PRESIDENT: If the minutes of the board of directors meeting contain no recommendations requiring action by the assembly, these minutes should be read at this time and a motion made to accept the minutes, as, **“I move the minutes of the board of directors’ meeting stand as read.”** (Note: Never allow this motion when there are recommendations in the minutes. See Section 2509.)
 - 1. When the minutes of the board of directors’ meeting do contain recommendations requiring action by the assembly, the president announces, **“Shipmates, the minutes of the Board of Directors’ meeting will be read and acted upon under New Business.”**
- (See item (v) below, and Section 109).
- p) PRESIDENT: Calls for reports of standing committees. If any action is required by the assembly on any of these reports, action is taken immediately following discussion on same. Special committee reports are heard under Unfinished Business. (See item (u) below.)
 - q) PRESIDENT: **“Shipmate Secretary, are there any communications to be read?”** Secretary reads communications. (Note: Read only the communications which may be of general interest.)
 - r) PRESIDENT: **“We will now have the report of the treasurer.”** (This is read by the treasurer.)
 - s) PRESIDENT: **“Shipmate Treasurer, are there any bills to be paid?”** (Motion for the payment of bills should be made at this time.)
 - t) PRESIDENT: A ten-minute recess may be declared by the president at this time. When a recess is called, the chaplain should close the Holy Bible, and reopen same, when the meeting is called to order.

- u) PRESIDENT: **“We are now on Unfinished and Deferred Business.”** (Note: The president and secretary should have scheduled notes on all unfinished or deferred business, or any business which has been deferred or postponed.)
- v) PRESIDENT: **“We are now on New Business. Is there any new business to be brought before the assembly?”** (Note: Take care of all new business, including recommendations of the board of directors, and when completed state, **“If there be no further business to come to the attention of the assembly, we will proceed to the Good of the Order.”**)
- w) PRESIDENT: **“We are now under the Good of the Order.”** (Note: The president should, if time permits, call upon visiting and long absent shipmates to say a few words – (See item (d) Section 2508). Upon completion of messages for the good of the order, the president should entertain a motion to adjourn.)
- x) PRESIDENT: **“We will proceed to adjourn this meeting.”**
- y) PRESIDENT: Taps the gavel three times and says, **“We will now give the salutation to the dead, you will stand with bowed head, for one minute.”** (Note: If “Two-Bell Ceremony” (Section 2703) has been used, omit this salutation.)
- z) PRESIDENT: **“Shipmate Chaplain, you will now give the closing prayer.”** (Note: See Section 2702.)
- aa) PRESIDENT: **“Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will now attend to the colors.”** (Master-at-Arms retires or furls the colors.)
- bb) PRESIDENT: Has the colors saluted by the assembly.
- cc) PRESIDENT: **“Let us leave this meeting place fully aware of the obligation that we owe to our country, our Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and the Fleet Reserve Association, and till we meet again let nothing swerve us from our three cardinal principles, Loyalty, Protection, and Service. I now declare this meeting of Branch No., Fleet Reserve Association, regularly adjourned.”**

Article 3 – Rituals

Section 301. Opening Prayer. Chaplain opens Bible, and says,

“Almighty God, the creator of all things we humbly beseech Thee to accept our devotions. Have mercy on the souls of our departed shipmates. Guide us in all our undertakings that we may truly please Thee. Amen.”

Section 302. Closing Prayer.

“Almighty God, who has given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto Thee, and dost promise that when two or more are gathered together in Thy name, Thou will grant their requests; fulfill now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of Thy servants, as may be most expedient for them; grant us in this world knowledge of Thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. Amen.”

Chaplain closes the Bible.

Section 303. The Two Bell Ceremony. When executed properly, the Fleet Reserve Association’s “Two-Bell Ceremony” is dramatic testimony to humility, dignity, reverence and honor. It fulfills the promise of our preamble – “our reverence for the memory of our departed shipmates.”

Unfortunately, there is no written documentation or knowledge that clearly identifies the origin of this beloved ritual except that it is unique and ours alone. In researching naval history back to the time of Britain's Lord Nelson we can find no record of a memorial ceremony using the ship's bell. Our current elder statesmen credit several deceased shipmates as being largely responsible for the originating and refinement of the ritual. But it is clear the sounding of two bells is the "time," or the "moment," to pause and reflect on our shipmates who are now serving on the staff of the Supreme Commander.

In days past, "two bells" marked the end of the routine day aboard ship. It was time for "Tattoo" and soon "Taps" would sound throughout the ship. Certainly, this is a most appropriate time to honor our departed shipmates.

Those familiar with one of the greatest stories of the sea, "The Ancient Mariner," will remember that he/she found safe passage in narrow waters by listening to the bell on the marking buoy. That bobbing marking buoy sounds much like the tolling of a bell for a funeral dirge, solemn, reverent and mournful.

Since the beginning of recorded time, men of the sea have been guided and impressed by the sounding of the ship's bell. In our "Two Bell Ceremony," the tolling of the bell and the spoken word can and should be combined to execute a ritual that contributes to and strengthens the bond that exists amongst all shipmates of the Fleet Reserve Association.

- a) The following steps should be followed closely in performing the "Two Bell Ceremony" to achieve the full effect of this impressive ritual uniformly throughout the Association. The shipmates selected to conduct the ritual should be chosen for their talent and willingness to rehearse the ceremony until perfection in performance is achieved. Rehearsal will not only achieve uniformity and perfection, but familiarity with the words enabling the ritual to be memorized.
- b) This ritual should be performed by a minimum of three persons. The master-at-arms to tend to the lights, a shipmate to serve as bell toller and a third shipmate to recite the ritual. This shipmate may be the Branch Chaplain or the script may be divided between another shipmate and the chaplain, with the chaplain conducting the prayer portion. If a shipmate in addition to the chaplain participates, he/she should be selected on the basis of the quality of his/her speaking voice.
- c) The ceremony may be conducted at anytime during the meeting. However, the custom of conducting it as close to 2100 as is possible at a regular stated meeting is adhered to by many branches. This custom is associated with the fact that "Tattoo" was sounded at 2100 aboard naval vessels. It also signifies that important business notwithstanding, we take time to pause and remember our departed shipmates.
- d) A ship's bell should be used in the tolling process. The size of the bell, meeting hall and the acoustics dictate how firmly the bell should be struck. But the bell should be struck firmly obtaining a sharp, clear, reverberant sound like that of a rocking bell buoy. The cadence of the tolling should be measured so that the reverberation of the toll (a single stroke) is allowed to slowly fade before striking the bell again.
- e) At the appropriate time, the bell toller strikes the bell twice sharply signifying the ritual is commencing.
- f) MASTER-AT-ARMS: Stations himself at the light switch in preparation to "darken ship."
- g) CHAPLAIN: Moves to the altar and lights the candles.
- h) If another shipmate is participating in the oral part, he/she should position himself to the left of the altar facing the audience.
- i) PRESIDING OFFICER: Gives three taps of the gavel and all shipmates stand and lay their FRA caps on their left shoulder and bow their heads.

- j) BELL TOLLER: Strikes the bell for the first toll, allowing the sound to slowly fade as the ceremony is recited, then continues to toll the bell at the end of the lines where the indicates:

**“The toll of the ship’s bell*
reminds us of the reverence
we owe to our departed shipmates*
and to those who guard the honor
of our country*
upon the sea,
under the sea,*
in the air
and upon foreign soil.*
Let it be a reminder
of the faith they
confide in us.*
Let us who gather here
not forget our obligations*
and in silence
breathe a prayer
for our absent shipmates.”***

(Pause and slowly count to five and toll again.*)

- k) CHAPLAIN: **“Each in his/her own words, and each in his/her own way, bow your heads and let us pray,* offering a silent prayer for our departed shipmates* who are now serving on the staff of the Supreme Commander.”***
- l) (Note: If any member of the branch has passed away during the month, the chaplain continues.)
- m) CHAPLAIN: **“This moment of reverence we dedicate to the memory of shipmate**
..... (giving his/her full name.)”*
- n) BELL TOLLER: Should toll the bell after each name is stated.
- o) BELL TOLLER: Pause and slowly count to 30 to allow the moment of prayer and then strike two bells sharply to signify the end of the ceremony.
- p) The chaplain extinguishes the candles. The master-at-arms turns on the lights. The presiding officer seats the audience with one tap of the gavel and resumes the regular order of business.

Section 304. Initiation Ceremony.

- a) PRESIDENT: **“Shipmate Secretary, with the assistance of the master-at-arms, you will have presented at the altar, applicants for membership in Branch No., Fleet Reserve Association.”**
- b) SECRETARY: **“Shipmate President, the applicants for membership await your pleasure.”**
- c) PRESIDENT: **“Shipmate Secretary, are the applications for membership in this organization in proper order and does each of the applicants meet the membership requirements of the Fleet Reserve Association and the bylaws of this branch?”**
- d) SECRETARY: **“Shipmate President, all requirements for membership in the Fleet Reserve Association and this Branch have been met.”**

- e) **PRESIDENT: “Shipmate Vice President, you will instruct the applicants present for membership, in Loyalty, Protection and Service.”**

1. Vice president takes station in front of altar, facing the applicants and says, “Shipmates, the motto of this organization is Loyalty, Protection and Service. “Loyalty: The loyalty one owes to God and country, loyalty to the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard, to their glorious traditions, and the loyalty one owes their shipmates. “Protection: Protection of one’s country by advocating an adequate Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard to ensure peace; to provide protection to our shipmates who have served or are now serving, by furthering or sponsoring measures beneficial to all. “Service: The rendering of service in every possible way to our members and their families.” (Vice president resumes station.)

2. **PRESIDENT: “As you stand before this altar of Branch No., Fleet Reserve Association, upon which rests the Holy Bible, do you accept the principles of the Fleet Reserve Association as expressed in the Preamble to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Fleet Reserve Association?”**

(Candidate says – “I do.”)

“I now declare you to be a member of the Fleet Reserve Association.”

- f) **PRESIDENT: “Shipmate Secretary, you will present to the new members, the emblem of the Fleet Reserve Association.”**
- g) **SECRETARY:** Approaches the altar and presents each shipmate with a membership pin and a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws, and says, **“Shipmates, you have been presented with the emblem of the Fleet Reserve Association. This button is worn on civilian attire and it is requested that you wear it with pride.”** (Secretary resumes station.)
- h) **PRESIDENT:** Gives three taps of the gavel, leaves station and stands in front of the altar and greets each shipmate with a warm hand shake. He/she welcomes them to membership in the Fleet Reserve Association, Branch No., (using own words). **“You are urged to attend meetings of this branch and to take an active part in all branch affairs.”** President resumes station and seats the assembly with one tap of the gavel.
- i) **PRESIDENT: “Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will introduce the new members to the assembly and instruct them to take their seats.”**
- j) **MASTER-AT-ARMS: “Shipmates, please hold your applause until the last shipmate has been introduced.”** Introduces each new member and then resumes station.

Section 305. Installation of Branch Officers.

- a) Installation should take place under New Business.
- b) The branch designates who shall be the installing officer. Said officer should be invited by letter bearing the signatures of the Branch President and Secretary.
- c) **PRESIDENT: “Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will escort the Installing Officer, Shipmate, to the rostrum.”**
- d) **INSTALLING OFFICER:** Reads authority to install.

- e) INSTALLING OFFICER: **“Shipmate President, the term for which you and your subordinate officers were elected has now expired. I am present to install your newly elected officers. Have the officers for the ensuing year been duly elected?”**
- f) PRESIDENT: **“They have.”**
- g) INSTALLING OFFICER: **“Have the books of the secretary and treasurer been examined and approved by the auditing committee?”**
- h) PRESIDENT: **“They have.”**
- i) INSTALLING OFFICER: **“Has the Branch Officers Report for the ensuing year been filed with the Regional President and the National Headquarters as required in the bylaws of the Fleet Reserve Association.”**
- j) PRESIDENT: **“It has.”**
- k) INSTALLING OFFICER: **“Have you the Charter in your possession?”**
- l) PRESIDENT: **“I have.”**
- m) INSTALLING OFFICER: **“You will now surrender it to me.”**
- n) PRESIDENT: (Relinquishes the gavel to the installing officer.)
- o) INSTALLING OFFICER: **“Shipmate President, your duties as presiding officer of this branch have now terminated. It is proper to remind you that, in assuming the chair of the Junior Past President, it will be your duty to assist your successor with that counsel and experience which you have gained during your term of office.”**
- p) INSTALLING OFFICER: **“Shipmate Secretary, you will please call the roll of officers-elect.”**
- q) SECRETARY: Calls roll of officers-elect. Shipmate President, Vice-President, (or 1st Vice-President and then 2nd Vice-President, if branch elects) Secretary, Treasurer and Directors. As the roll is called the Master-at-Arms will escort the officers-elect to the altar, forming a triangle with the president-elect, forward, then to the left and right, the other officers.
- r) SECRETARY: Faces the installing officer and announces, **“The officers-elect are in position at the altar and await your pleasure.”** (The secretary, if succeeding, now takes place at the altar.)
- s) INSTALLING OFFICER: Gives three taps of the gavel and proceeds to the altar, and says, **“I have the honor of now installing you who have been chosen by the members of Branch No., Fleet Reserve Association, to administer its affairs for the ensuing year. Shipmates, I congratulate you. Shipmate President-elect, place your left hand on the holy bible before you. Officers-elect to the rear, place your left hand on the shoulder of the shipmate in front of you. Now each raise your right hand and answer the following questions in the affirmative in taking the oath of office.**

“Will you conscientiously perform all the duties of your office as prescribed by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Fleet Reserve Association and the bylaws of this branch?

“Will you at all times protect the interests of the Fleet Reserve Association and its branches and members to the best of your ability?

“Will you bring to the prompt attention of the board of directors, or the assembly, any knowledge that may come to you of any irregularities on the part of any officer or member in the conduct of the duties of that office?”

“Will you keep an accurate and true account of all funds of the branch entrusted to you, submit them to audit when required and at anytime you are requested to do so by competent authority?”

“Then say after me, using your name as I do mine: “I, do hereby solemnly promise that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office to which I have been elected (or appointed), according to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Fleet Reserve Association and the bylaws of this branch, to the best of my ability, and that I will, at the close of the term to which I have been elected (or appointed), or sooner if so directed by proper authority, deliver all books, papers, money and other property belonging to the Fleet Reserve Association, Branch No. in my possession, or under my control, to the proper person or persons, officer or officers, entitled to receive the same. This I freely pledge on my honor as a citizen of our United States of America, so help me God. You may now lower your hands.” (Note: Installing officer returns to the rostrum and gives one tap of the gavel.)

- t) **INSTALLING OFFICER: “Officers, you now occupy a position of honor, trust and responsibility, to which your shipmates have elected you. The Constitution and Bylaws, Rituals and Standing Rules, and the bylaws of this branch prescribe your duties. Study them well, so that you may intelligently discharge the obligation you have assumed. I congratulate you.”**
- u) **INSTALLING OFFICER: “Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will request the officers of this branch to report to their stations, excepting the Jr. Past President; and President, these two officers you will escort to the rostrum.”**
- v) **INSTALLING OFFICER: Welcomes the president and invites the junior past president to have a seat at the right. “Shipmate President, this branch is about to be placed in your charge. The harmony and progress of its affairs will depend to a large extent upon your leadership. Your shipmates honored you by electing you to the highest office in this branch; they have placed their faith in you, and you owe them a solemn obligation to do your utmost to perform the duties of your high office, as its most obedient servant, never its master. Know the principles of this organization well; study its Constitution and Bylaws and the bylaws of your branch; become familiar with parliamentary procedure, because it is your duty to enforce the laws, rules, rituals and to pass on rules governing debates. Your duty is, in reality, a privilege – that of serving your shipmates.**

“I now place in your hands this gavel; it is the emblem of authority, you are admonished to always use it wisely in fairness and justice to all.

“You will now occupy the station which I vacate. (Note: Hands gavel to president.) I now declare that the officers of Branch No., Fleet Reserve Association, are duly installed, and this branch in working order for the ensuing year. Congratulations, Shipmate President.” Installing officer takes seat. Branch President resumes business under heading of New Business. (Note: President at this time should announce the names of the chairmen of the committees.)

Section 306. Instituting New Branch. (Note to instituting officer: See Sections 1201(a) and 1201(g) C&BL. Upon receipt of an approved charter, bearing the proper signatures, the charter with credentials for instituting will be delivered to the instituting officer, who shall contact and make arrangements with the organizing chairman, for a definite date and time, for the institution of the branch and the installation of its officers.)

- a) **INSTITUTING OFFICER: (Takes position on the rostrum and taps the gavel once.) “Shipmates, by authority of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Fleet Reserve Association and its Articles of Incorporation under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the National Board of**

Directors has approved of your application to establish a branch of the Fleet Reserve Association and has issued a charter bearing the signatures of the National President, the National Executive Secretary and the Regional President of this region.” (Reads authority to act for the Regional President.)

- b) INSTITUTING OFFICER: **“Every shipmate applying for membership in our distinctive organization is required to publicly proclaim acceptance of the principles of the Fleet Reserve Association. These are propounded here and at the conclusion of these ceremonies you will be asked if you will accept these principles without any reservations whatsoever.”**
- c) INSTITUTING OFFICER: **“Shipmate Chairman, you will have the Holy Bible placed upon the altar.”**
(Note: Chairman places closed Bible on the altar.)
- d) INSTITUTING OFFICER: (Note: If room permits and the colors can be paraded – proceed.) **“Shipmate Chairman, you will have the colors presented at the altar.”** (Chairman parades colors.) Whenever there is any movement of the colors the assembly is brought to attention.
- e) INSTITUTING OFFICER: **“Shipmate Chaplain, you will now ask the blessing of God.”** (Chaplain’s opening prayer, Section 2701. Chaplain opens bible as he/she commences prayer.)
- f) INSTITUTING OFFICER: (If the colors are at the altar.) **“Shipmate Chairman, you will have the ensign of our country posted.”** (Chair posts colors.) As colors are posted, instituting officer has the colors saluted. **“You will join me in the Pledge of Allegiance: 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.”** (If it is not possible to parade colors, have them posted prior to the convening of the meeting, then, after the chaplain’s prayer, have them saluted.)
- g) INSTITUTING OFFICER: **“You will recite with me, the Preamble to the Constitution of the Fleet Reserve Association.”** (See Section 2601(i). Upon completion of recitation of the preamble, seat the assembly with one tap of the gavel.)
- h) INSTITUTING OFFICER: **“The motto of this organization is Loyalty, Protection and Service.”**

“Loyalty: The loyalty one owes to God and country, loyalty to the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard, to their glorious traditions, and the loyalty one owes his/her shipmates.

“Protection: Protection of one’s country by advocating an adequate Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard to insure peace; to provide protection to our shipmates – active, reserve and retired – by furthering or sponsoring measures beneficial to all; and

“Service: The rendering of service in every possible way to our members and their families.”
- i) INSTITUTING OFFICER: **“Shipmate Chairman, are the applications for membership in this organization in proper order, and does each of the applicants meet the membership requirements of the Fleet Reserve Association?”**
- j) CHAIRMAN: **“To the best of my knowledge, each applicant meets all of the requirements for membership in the Fleet Reserve Association.”**
- k) INSTITUTING OFFICER: **“The applicants will please stand. You have listened to the principles of this organization as expressed in the Preamble to the Constitution and in its motto: Loyalty, Protection and Service. As you stand before the altar upon which rests the Holy Bible, will you raise your right hand and state that you subscribe to these principles?”** (Applicants say, “I do.”)

- l) INSTITUTING OFFICER: **“Shipmates, I now declare you to be members in good standing in the Fleet Reserve Association and urge you to be active in the affairs of our Association. I congratulate you.”**
(Seats the shipmates with one tap of the gavel.)
- m) INSTITUTING OFFICER: **“By authority of the National Board of Directors of the Fleet Reserve Association, I do now declare this to be a regular branch of the Fleet Reserve Association, henceforth to be known as Branch No., Fleet Reserve Association.”** (Example: “South Shore, Branch No. 947, Fleet Reserve Association, or Branch No. 947, Fleet Reserve Association.”)
- n) INSTITUTING OFFICER: **“Shipmate Chairman, have the shipmates of this branch chosen the officers who are to serve during the ensuing Association year?”** (Shipmate Chairman answers for the assembly. If the answer is “no,” the instituting officer will hold an election.)
- o) INSTITUTING OFFICER: (If an election has been held, proceed.) **“Shipmate Chairman, you will call the roll of officers-elect, and as the names are called, the officers will stand.”** (After all officers are standing the instituting officer inquires,) **“Shipmates, have these officers-elect been elected in the proper manner and are they the choice of the majority?”** (If there is any objection it must be satisfactorily settled before proceeding. Seat officers-elect with one tap of the gavel.)
- p) INSTITUTING OFFICER: **“It now becomes my duty and honor to install the officers in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Fleet Reserve Association.”** (The instituting officer is also the installing officer, unless, it is wished to delegate this honor to some distinguished member.)
- q) INSTALLING OFFICER: (After requesting the organizing chairman to escort the officers-elect to the altar and arranging them in the form of a triangle, proceeds to install the officers-elect.)
- r) INSTALLING OFFICER: (Gives three taps of the gavel and proceeds to the altar.) **“I have the honor of now installing you who have been chosen by the members of Branch No., Fleet Reserve Association, to administer its affairs for the ensuing year. Shipmates, I congratulate you. Shipmate President-elect, place your left hand on the Holy Bible before you. Officers-elect to the rear, place your left hand on the shoulder of the shipmate in front of you. Now each raise your right hand and answer the following questions in the affirmative in taking the oath of office.**

“Will you conscientiously perform all the duties of your office as prescribed by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Fleet Reserve Association? And the bylaws of this branch?

“Will you at all times protect the interest of the Fleet Reserve Association and its branches and members, to the best of your ability?

“Will you bring to the prompt attention of the board of directors or the assembly, any knowledge that may come to you of any irregularities on the part of any officer, or member, in the conduct of the duties of that office?

“Will you keep an accurate and true account of all funds of the branch entrusted to you, submit them to audit when required and at any time you are requested to do so by competent authority?

“Then say after me, using your name as I do mine: ‘I, do hereby solemnly promise that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office to which I have been elected (or appointed), according to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Fleet Reserve Association and the bylaws of this branch to the best of my ability, and that I will, at the close of the term to which I have been elected (or appointed) or sooner if so directed by proper authority, deliver all books, papers, money and other property belonging to the Fleet Reserve Association, Branch No. in my possession, or under my control, to the proper person or persons, officer or officers, entitled to receive the same.

This I freely pledge on my honor as a citizen of our United States of America, so help me God.' You may now lower your hands." (Installing officer returns to the rostrum and gives one tap of the gavel.)

- s) **INSTALLING OFFICER: "Officers, you now occupy a position of honor, trust and responsibility, to which your shipmates have elected you. The Constitution and Bylaws of this branch prescribe your duties. Study them well, so that you may intelligently discharge the obligation you have assumed. I congratulate you."**
- t) **INSTALLING OFFICER: "Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will request the officers of this branch to report to their stations, excepting the President, whom you will escort to the rostrum."**
- u) **INSTALLING OFFICER: Welcomes the President. "Shipmate President, this branch is about to be placed in your charge. The harmony and progress of its affairs will depend to a large extent upon your leadership. Your shipmates honored you by electing you to the highest office in this branch; they have placed their faith in you, and you owe them a solemn obligation to do your utmost to perform the duties of your high office as its most obedient servant, never its master. Know the principles of this organization well; study its Constitution and Bylaws, and the bylaws of your branch; become familiar with parliamentary procedure, because it is your duty to enforce the laws, rules, rituals and to pass on the rules governing debates. Your duty is, in reality, a privilege – that of serving your shipmates."**
- v) **INSTALLING OFFICER: "Shipmate President, I now deliver the Charter of this branch to you. As president, you are personally responsible for not only its safety, but also it is your duty to see that it is prominently displayed at all branch meetings. I also place in your keeping a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws, and Rituals and Standing Rules of the Fleet Reserve Association. These are to be delivered, together with the Charter, to your successor in office."**
- w) **INSTALLING OFFICER: "I now declare Branch No., Fleet Reserve Association, regularly instituted. I place in your hands this gavel; it is the emblem of authority. You are admonished to always use it wisely and impartially, in fairness and justice to all."**
- x) **INSTALLING OFFICER: "You will now occupy the station which I vacate."** (Hands gavel to president.) **"I now declare the officers of Branch No., Fleet Reserve Association, duly installed and this branch in working order."**
- y) **INSTALLING OFFICER: "Shipmate President, you are now under New Business."** (Installing officer takes seat. Under the Good of the Order the installing officer may make a few personal remarks. The president takes over and continues the meeting as set forth under Section 2601 to the conclusion.)

Section 307. Draping of Colors and Charter.

- a)
 1. The draping of branch colors and charter and the Two Bell Ceremony (see Section 2703) may be combined into one ceremony if desired. This ceremony can be very effective in small branches, but in large branches it might cause their colors to be in perpetual mourning. For this reason, it is suggested that this service be reserved for commemoration of national and branch officers, and for branch memorial services held in the month of May.
 2. Prior to the meeting, the Branch President should inform the Master-at-Arms, the Chaplain, and other members or officers participating in these ceremonies, that the Two Bell and Draping of Charter ceremonies, will be held.
 3. The proper time for holding this ceremony is at two bells or, just prior to the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting.

- (4) The Master-at-Arms and the Chaplain should each have a piece of black crepe about three or four feet in length and from twelve to eighteen inches wide.
- b) PRESIDENT: (At the sounding of two bells – time pre-arranged with bell ringer) **“Shipmates you will take your stations for the draping of the branch colors and Two Bell Ceremony.”**
- c) PRESIDENT: **“Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will have color guards stand by colors. Chaplain, you will take your station at the altar. Members participating in the Two Bell Ceremony, take your stations.”**
- d) PRESIDENT: (After all officers are at their correct stations.) **“Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will have the branch colors presented at the altar.”** (Give three taps of the gavel.)
- e) MASTER-AT-ARMS: (Has colors unstepped – ensign and branch colors. Color guards about face; ensign stands at attention; the branch colors are dipped so the spear-head comes within reach of the chaplain.)
- f) CHAPLAIN: (Ties crepe to spear-head of branch colors, using bowknot.)
- g) MASTER-AT-ARMS: (Drapes Branch Charter and has ensign and branch colors dipped at about a 45 degree angle. Charter should be on an easel, in front and slightly to one side of the rostrum.)
- h) PRESIDENT: (Gives pre-arranged signal for the tolling of the bell and reading of the Two Bell Ceremony. When completed, continue.) **“Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will have the colors posted.”** (After colors are posted, seat the assembly with one tap of the gavel, and proceed with the regular order of business.)

(Note: This ceremony may also be used as a Memorial Day service in the branch meeting in the month of May. The ensign of the United States is only draped when the Nation mourns.)

Section 308. Memorial Day Services.

- a) The last Monday in May is Memorial Day, a day of reverent memory for those who have gone beyond. In conformity with the Preamble to the Constitution of the Fleet Reserve Association, and the three cardinal principles; Loyalty, Protection and Service, it is proper that each branch conduct a suitable ceremony on this day.

Suggestions:

- (1) Decorate graves annually with American and/or Association flags, either one week before, or on Memorial Day.
- (2) Association markers should be on graves, unless cemetery regulations prohibit their use.
- (3) A central ceremony, preferably over water or at a local shrine, or monument, or cemetery, should be conducted.
- (4) Parade, music, speakers, honored guests, and the locale of the ceremony shall be according to local arrangements.
- (5) Colors should be posted.
- (6) All members in uniform if possible.
- (7) If ceremony is in cooperation with other veteran’s organizations, use the Association ceremony in the proper place as directed, or adapt it if necessary.

- (8) If local branch customarily uses a different ceremony, the Association Memorial Day service may be adapted to the local ceremony.
- (9) Branches should keep an accurate record of all graves in their section, and location by lot number, and necessary directions, for the convenience of members placing grave markers and flags.
- (10) Wreaths cast on water may be kept afloat with the use of cork.
- (11) During stated branch meeting in May follow procedure outlined in Section 2707.

b) Memorial Day Services in Cemetery or on Water.

- (1) **PRESIDENT: “Shipmates and friends, as we pay tribute to our departed shipmates, we first invoke the blessing of God.”**
- (2) **CHAPLAIN: “Our heavenly Father, we humbly beseech Thee to accept our devotions. With Thy hand at the helm, may we navigate a true course of service and loyalty to Thee, our country, and our shipmates. Amen.”**
- (3) **BELL RINGER: (Tolls bell softly and continuously during the entire ceremony. Tolls at about five second intervals.)**
- (4) **PRESIDENT: “Shipmate Secretary, for whom does the bell toll?”**
- (5) **SECRETARY: “Shipmate President, the bell tolls for shipmates who are serving on the staff of our Supreme Commander and for those who have joined them during the past year.” (Give names of departed Shipmates during the past year.)**
- (6) **PRESIDENT: “We, who remain to carry on, should not think of our shipmates as departed from us, but rather as having been transferred to a celestial ship or station, where we hope all of us may be shipmates again.**

“Shipmates, we have gathered here in tribute and respect to the earthly memories of those heroes, on the sea, under the seas, in the air and upon the land, who are now serving on the staff of the Supreme Commander. They sailed through life’s cruise, meeting their share of calms and storms, adverse tides and favoring winds, their ship coming to its final anchorage in a harbor still unknown to mortal man. We do not know the waters there, but we know the course to steer. We believe that our shipmates set their course by the beacons given us, and have reached that harbor safely, and are now on the muster roll of the Supreme Commander. Many gave their lives in battle that they might leave behind a land still free. Many spent years building a strong defense of the shores of this country, ready and willing to give their lives in defense of the country for which our forefathers shed their life’s blood in making the United States of America.)

“As the years roll on, one by one, we end our cruise. The anchor is dropped, to rise from the waters no more.

“Though our heads are bowed in sorrow for the loss of our shipmates, there is pride in our hearts for the many things they did to keep the record of our country untarnished and undefeated.

“We, who remain, awaiting our orders, feel inspired to do our utmost, to live up to the ideals set by them and to leave behind a free country, and the Stars and Stripes, still the standard of liberty.”

- (7) SECRETARY: **“On behalf of the Fleet Reserve Association, Branch No., I cast this wreath on the water, (or) I place this wreath as a symbol of love and devotion to our departed shipmates.”**
- (8) PRESIDENT: **“This tribute reminds us of the reverence we owe to our departed shipmates, and to those who guard the honor of our country. Let it be a reminder of the faith they confide in us. Let us, who gather here, not forget our obligations, and now bow our heads in prayer for our absent shipmates.”**
- (9) CHAPLAIN: **“Our Heavenly Father, Thou Supreme Commander of all our souls, in whose infinite wisdom, justice and mercy, our shipmates have ended their earthly voyage, grant them, we beseech Thee, everlasting peace. In Thy eternal mercy, temper the winds and the waves, and receive those who have reached that uncharted harbor. Grant, also that we who still continue our voyage, amid earthly joys and friendships, dangers, temptations and troubles, will have Thy hand at the helm. May we evermore be protected by Thee, and finally come, without shipwreck, to the haven of eternal salvation. Amen.”**
- (10) (Optional: Firing squad fires salute, after which bugler sounds taps, with echo, followed by National Anthem.)

Section 309. Flag Dedication Ceremony.

- a) (Meeting hall arrangements same as are provided for in Section 2504.)
- b) PRESIDENT, or CHAIRMAN, or MASTER OF CEREMONIES: (Have distinguished guests seated on rostrum, excepting dedicating officer who is waiting in anteroom or hall until called for.)
- c) PRESIDENT: **“Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will escort, the dedicating officer, to the rostrum.”** (Dedicating officer is greeted by president with appropriate remarks and is then introduced to the assembly. Dedicating officer takes over the meeting, and introduces dedicating staff.)
- d) DEDICATING OFFICER: **“Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will retire with the color guard, re-enter and present the ensign of the United States and the branch colors to the altar.”** (Chaplain falls in behind the colors. Colors are halted at the altar, in a dipped position with spear-head towards the rostrum. Chaplain stands at altar, with the ensign of the United States to the right and the branch colors to the left.)
- e) DEDICATING OFFICER: **“Shipmate Chaplain will offer a prayer.”** (Three taps of the gavel for assembly to arise.)
- f) CHAPLAIN: **“Almighty God, we are mindful that without Thee and Thy blessings, these colors are empty of meaning. We ask Thy blessings upon our great republic; may America ever remain free, mighty and true to the ideals of our founding fathers. We pray Thy blessings upon our flag, teach us Thy will and Thy way, so that this emblem may always and forever float over a land dedicated to the principles of Thy will and to man’s will to be free.”**
- g) DEDICATING OFFICER: **“Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will have the colors posted.”** (If the colors are to be posted on the rostrum, the master-at-arms will have the branch color guard take two steps to the rear and the ensign color guard cross over, then branch color guard crosses to the rear of ensign and both color guards advance to stands. Otherwise, both color guards move directly forward to stands. Color guards remain at attention and when colors have been stepped, and after colors have been saluted, the guards retire.)
- h) DEDICATING OFFICER: **“We will now pledge allegiance to the flag.”** (Right hand over heart) **“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.” (Seats assembly with one tap of gavel.)

- i) DEDICATING OFFICER: (Pointing to the ensign.) **“Here stands the emblem of a free people, the flag of our nation. Safe within its folds are found the most precious of all things: your right and my right to worship God in our own way. Freedom of speech and a free press; freedom from the fear of undue search and seizure; and freedom to select our officials by a free ballot. All of these have been won, only after eons of time in man’s struggle upwards.”**
- j) DEDICATING OFFICER: (Pointing to the branch colors.) **“Here stands the emblem of this Association – an organization of personnel who have served and are serving in the United States Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, and who know the true meaning of service and have dedicated this organization to Loyalty, Protection and Service.”**
- k) DEDICATING OFFICER: (With right hand in position of taking oath.) **“I hereby dedicate these colors in Loyalty, Protection and Service, to Branch No., Fleet Reserve Association.”** (Lowers hand.)
- l) (Dedicating officer now turns the gavel over to the presiding officer who introduces the invited guests and speaker of the evening.)

Section 310. Funeral Ceremony.

(Each branch should have a permanent funeral committee and this committee should rehearse the services. Never try to conduct this service with less than five members assisting. Refer to Section 2712(c), (d) and (e) for proper wearing of FRA cap during funeral ceremony.)

- a) Colors at head and Association flag at foot of casket; floral wreath to be provided by the branch. Association flag to be draped in black from the spear-head.
- b) Shipmates will form a “V” shaped body with the apex at or near the head of casket.
- c) Branch officers to be on inside and facing casket.
- d) Bugler to be stationed in room or hall adjoining room containing the remains.
- e) When all have formed, the president, or the president’s representative, will endeavor to position himself so that he/she is at approximate right angles facing the mourners to the remainder of the shipmates who are in a “V” shaped formation at or near the head of the casket.
- f) The boatswain will pass the word: **“All hands to muster.”**
- g) The secretary will call the roll. Among the names called will be that of the departed shipmate. No one answering, the vice president will say: **“The shipmate is present, but unable to answer.”**
- h) The chaplain will then say: **“Let us pray for our shipmate.”** All hands uncover, bow heads and remain in silent prayer for one minute.
- i) PRESIDING OFFICER: **“Attention. Shipmates, we have assembled here to pay our tribute to Shipmate (Name), who has received orders to serve on the staff of the Supreme Commander. Shipmate (Name) sailed through life’s cruise, meeting (his/her) share of calms and storms, adverse tides and favoring winds. (His/her) ship of life has come to its final anchorage in a harbor still uncharted by mortal men. We who remain do not know the waters there, but we do know the course to steer and we believe that our shipmate, setting (his/her) course by those beacons that have been given us, has found that harbor safely. To those loved ones whom our departed shipmate has left**

behind, awaiting their own day of departure and voyage to that same harbor of eternal mercy, we can only offer our sympathy in this time of separation and loneliness. There are many words that could be used at this time to describe the good and outstanding qualities of the one who has gone before, but we of the Fleet Reserve Association, of which (he, she) was a member, sum it up in one word: SHIPMATE. That word, when spoken by Naval, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard personnel, embodies all that can be said of any person. (Name) was a SHIPMATE.”

- j) The secretary will then place an appropriate symbol on top of the casket over the heart, saying: **“On behalf of the Shipmates of Branch No., Fleet Reserve Association, I present this tribute as a symbol of love and devotion to our shipmate.”**
- k) PRESIDING OFFICER: **“We who remain to carry on should not think of (Name) as gone from us, but rather that our shipmate has been transferred to another ship or station where we all hope to be shipmates again.”**
- l) PRESIDING OFFICER: **“Let us pray.”** (All hands uncover and bow heads.)
- m) CHAPLAIN: **“Our Heavenly Father, Thou Great Commander of all souls, in whose infinite wisdom, justice and mercy, our shipmate has ended this earthly voyage, grant we beseech Thee, that we who are still to continue our course amid earthly joys and friendships, dangers, temptations and troubles, may evermore be protected by Thee, and finally come without shipwreck to the haven of eternal salvation. Amen.”**
- n) The shipmates will then cover and march past the casket and as each member passes will say, **“Goodbye, Shipmate.”**

Section 311. Burial Service. (Grave side)

- a) If a firing squad is present it should be placed about fifty feet below the foot of the grave or as cemetery regulations prescribe.
- b) If the color guards from the branch are present they should take a station about fifteen feet from the head of the grave.
- c) If bugler is present he/she takes station about three feet in front of colors.
- d) Chaplain takes station about five feet from head of grave.
- e) Branch officers and shipmates take position, forming a “V”, president at head, vice president at foot of casket, secretary at bottom of “V” with other shipmates on each side of casket.
- f) CHAPLAIN: **“In the presence of Almighty God we offer in his/her name, rest, contentment, and everlasting peace. Across the sparkling seas, heads held high to a setting sun, youth has cruised on, a glorious end to a glorious work well done. Oh Lord, we beseech Thee in Thy eternal mercy, temper the winds and waves, and receive home those who have entered that undiscovered land, with Loyalty, to God, Protection to country, Service to Home, we entrust in Thy keeping forever and ever our beloved shipmate. Amen.”**
- g) PRESIDENT: **“It having pleased Almighty God to take from our midst the soul of our beloved shipmate, we commit (his/her) body to the earth from which it came: Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. (Strewing floral petals while so stating, and then saying the Lord’s Prayer.) Our Father Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass**

against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, forever and ever. Amen.”

- h) If there is a firing squad present, fire three volleys, the bugler sounds Taps.
- i) The six pall bearers, Branch President and Vice President, shall lift the flag from the casket and hold it as a canopy over the grave until the conclusion of Taps. The flag will then be properly folded and presented to the next of kin, by the president, who shall approach (him/her) and say,
- j) **PRESIDENT: “(Mrs./Mr.), the flag of our country is presented to you by the government of the United States, as a token of appreciation and memory for the valuable service your (husband, wife, son, daughter, etc.) rendered in the United States Navy (Marine Corps), (Coast Guard). Branch No., Fleet Reserve Association, extends our most heartfelt sympathy in the loss of your (husband, wife, son, daughter, etc.) and our loss of a true shipmate.”**

Section 312. Wearing the Fleet Reserve Association Cap.

- a) The Fleet Reserve Association cap shall not be worn except when in attendance at official Fleet Reserve Association meetings or ceremonies, or as an official guest at patriotic or other civil functions, or by individuals when officially representing the Fleet Reserve Association on public occasions.
- b) Keeping in mind the principle of individual freedom and belief it is recommended that the cap should be worn in Fleet Reserve Association meetings at all times except during moments of prayer, when standing in silent reverence in memory of departed shipmates, during the Two Bell Ceremony, when the cap should be held in the right hand at the left shoulder.
- c) Except as outlined in subsection (d), Fleet Reserve Association members marching in formation into a church or mortuary chapel should uncover at the door and hold the cap in the right hand at the left shoulder until arriving in the pews and commanded to take seats. At the close of the service, upon command the members shall arise and holding the cap in the right hand at the left shoulder, will march out of the church or mortuary chapel and re-cover after marching through the door.
- d) The Fleet Reserve Association cap should be held over the heart, with the right hand as one approaches the casket; it is not worn at anytime in a church or mortuary chapel, except by the color guard and the guard of honor who should remain covered while in marching order or standing guard, and by the officers and members conducting the funeral ceremony (except for periods of prayer), but should uncover upon being seated at the conclusion of the Fleet Reserve Association funeral ceremony.
- e) Fleet Reserve Association members not in formation will uncover upon entering a church or mortuary chapel and remain uncovered during the entire service and will re-cover after leaving.
- f) At the graveside or during Memorial Day services (in the cemetery or on the water) the cap should be held in the right hand at the left shoulder during the entire service, except by the color guard and the guard of honor who should remain covered while in marching order or standing guard, and by the officers and members conducting the burial service or the Memorial Day services who should be covered (except for periods of prayer) but should uncover at the conclusion of the Fleet Reserve Association services. In cold or inclement weather the cap should not be doffed.
- g) Fleet Reserve Association members wearing the Fleet Reserve Association cap should conduct themselves the same as they would if they were wearing the military uniform. Otherwise, the ordinary rules of etiquette for civilian dress should be observed.

Section 313. Installation Ceremony of National Officers.

- a) The following installation ceremony is prescribed for the installation of all elected or appointed national officers. Until the officers-elect (or appointed) have assumed the obligation and oath of office they shall not be national officers.
- b) The incoming National President shall designate a member in good standing of the Fleet Reserve Association to act as installing officer. In the event that the retiring National President is designated installing officer, a proxy shall be designated to take the oath of office for the new Junior Past National President. The installing officer shall act as president protem for the duration of the installing ceremony.
- c) **INSTALLING OFFICER: “Shipmate Master-at-Arms, close the door and allow no one to enter or leave during the installation ceremony. Shipmate Secretary, please call the roll of the officers-elect. Shipmate Master-at-Arms, as the roll of the officers-elect is called you will escort them to the altar, forming a triangle, with the president-elect forward, then to the left and right, the other officers-elect.”**
- d) When the officers-elect are in position, the secretary will face the installing officer and say, **“The officers-elect are in position at the altar and await your pleasure.”** (Secretary is now escorted to position at the altar if succeeding to the office.)
- e) **INSTALLING OFFICER:** Gives three taps of the gavel and proceeds to the altar, and says, **“I have the honor of now installing you, who have been chosen by the members of the Fleet Reserve Association to administer its affairs for the ensuing year. Shipmates, I congratulate you. Shipmate National President-Elect, place your left hand on the Holy Bible before you. Officers-elect to the rear, place your left hand on the shoulder of the shipmate in front of you. Now each raise your right hand and answer the following questions in the affirmative in taking the oath of office.**

“Will you conscientiously perform all the duties of your office as prescribed by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Fleet Reserve Association?

“Will you at all times protect the interest of the Fleet Reserve Association and its branches and members to the best of your ability?

“Will you bring to the prompt attention of the National Board of Directors, or the assembly, any knowledge that may come to you of any irregularities on the part of any officer, or member, in the conduct of the duties of that office?

“Will you keep an accurate and true account of all funds of the Fleet Reserve Association entrusted to you, submit them to audit when required and at any time you are requested to do so by competent authority?

“Then say after me, using your name as I do mine: I, do hereby solemnly promise that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office to which I have been elected (or appointed), according to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Fleet Reserve Association, to the best of my ability, and that I will, at the close of the term to which I have been elected (or appointed), or sooner, if so directed by proper authority, deliver all books, papers, money and other property belonging to the Fleet Reserve Association, in my possession, or under my control, to the proper person or persons, officer or officers, entitled to receive the same. This I freely pledge on my honor as a citizen of our United States of America, so help me God.”

“You may now lower your hands.” Installing officer returns to the rostrum and gives one tap of the gavel.

- f) **INSTALLING OFFICER: “Officers you now occupy a position of honor, trust and responsibility to which your shipmates have elected you. The Constitution and Bylaws of the Fleet Reserve Association prescribe your duties. Study them well so that you may intelligently discharge the obligation you have assumed. I congratulate you and I wish all a very successful term of office.”**
- g) **INSTALLING OFFICER: “Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will request the officers to report to their stations, except the National President, whom you will escort to the rostrum.”**
- h) **INSTALLING OFFICER: Welcomes the National President and says: “I now place in your hand this gavel, it is your emblem of authority, you are admonished to always use it wisely, in fairness and justice to all.”**
- i) **INSTALLING OFFICER: Presents the gavel to the National President and then turns to the assembly and says, “I now declare that the national officers of the Fleet Reserve Association are duly installed and that the Association is in working order for the ensuing year. Congratulations Shipmate National President.”**

The installing officer takes a seat and the National President resumes business under the heading of New Business. At this time the National President should announce the names of the committee chairmen.

Section 314. Ceremony to Dispose of Unserviceable United States of America Flags.

A proper disposition method for unserviceable United States of America Flags is by incineration. The disposal ceremony shall be carried out with honor, dignity, and reverence to the flag.

- a) The disposition ceremony is conducted where there is sufficient space for the placement of an incinerator and space for the branch officers and participants to assemble. Normally conducted out-of-doors, the ceremony may be staged in an area with ample ventilation and where proper fire precautions are taken.
- b) The Branch President and Chaplain take their station in front of the incinerator facing the other branch members and participants who assemble forming a triangle behind the incinerator. The National Ensign and branch banner are properly displayed.
- c) **MASTER-AT-ARMS: “Shipmate President, I have the honor to present these revered flags of our country for proper disposal. They have been retired from service and inspected to determine their disposition.”**
- d) **PRESIDENT: “What are the results of your inspection and what are your recommendations?”**
- e) **MASTER-AT-ARMS: “Shipmate President, it is determined that these flags have become unserviceable. I recommend that they be honorably retired from further service and that they be fittingly disposed of.”**
- f) **PRESIDENT: “Shipmates, we have presented here these flags of our country which have been inspected and pronounced unserviceable. They have reached their present state in a service of tribute, memory and love. These flags, we proudly call the Star Spangled Banner, were conceived in 1777 out of the love America bore for liberty and honor. They are the memorial of countless heroes who shed their blood to preserve this sacred heritage. They have inspired generations of gallant men who fought against tyranny. They are the spirit of Valley Forge, of sacrifice and of courage. They have guarded every rampart from the shores of Tripoli, to the jungles of Vietnam, where freedom defended its glorious cause. They fly wherever Americans gave their lives to preserve the sanctity of life. Their home is in the hearts of all who feel a thrill of pride, when they salute this flag and what it symbolizes: God, country, freedom and valor. Let these faded flags of our country be retired and**

disposed of with all the respect and honor in which we hold them. Shipmate Chaplain, you will offer a prayer.”

- g) CHAPLAIN: “Almighty God, bless and consecrate this present hour. We thank Thee for our country and its flag and for the liberty for which it stands. To a clean and purging flame we commit these flags. As they yield their substance to the fire, may Thy holy light spread over us and bring to our hearts renewed devotion to God and country. Amen.”
- h) PRESIDENT: “Shipmate Master-at-Arms, assemble the detail bearing flags and proceed to dispose of these flags by burning. All Hands, attention! (Flags are dipped in kerosene or other flammable liquid and placed in the incinerator. The MAA lights the fire.) **Hand salute.**” (All hands remain at attention, hand salute for one minute.)
- i) PRESIDENT: “Two. Detail dismissed.”

Section 315. Presentation of the Widows/Widowers Medallion.

- a) After a shipmate has been called to the Staff of the Supreme Commander the branch may wish to present the “Widows/Widowers Medallion” to the widow/widower at a branch meeting.
- b) The President calls the meeting to order with the Unit members in attendance. After the opening ceremonies the following ritual is performed.
- c) PRESIDENT: (Three raps of the gavel.) “Shipmate Master-at-Arms, with the assistance of the Unit President you will escort (Widow’s/Widower’s name) to the altar and remain with her/him during the presentation.”
- d) “(Widow’s/Widower’s name) on behalf of Branch _____, Fleet Reserve Association, I extend our most heartfelt sympathy in the loss of your husband/wife (Name of deceased), and our loss of a true shipmate.”
- e) “Branch _____, Fleet Reserve Association would like to present you with the Widows/Widowers Medallion. We all share in your sadness at the loss of (Name of deceased) and will always have a reverent memory of him/her, knowing he/she has joined the Staff of the Supreme Commander.”
- f) “Shipmates and Ladies please bow your heads and let us pray.”
- g) CHAPLAIN: “Though our heads are bowed in sorrow for the loss of our Shipmate (Name of deceased), there is pride in our hearts for the many things he/she did while here on earth and while serving his/her country and his/her community. We who remain to carry on should not think of (Name of deceased) as gone from us, but rather that our Shipmate has been transferred to another ship or station where we all hope to be shipmates again. Amen.”
- h) PRESIDENT: “(Widow’s/Widower’s name), Would you care to address the Assembly?”
(The Widow/Widower at this time may address the Assembly).
- i) PRESIDENT: “Shipmate Master-at-Arms, would you and the Unit President escort (Widow’s/Widower’s name) to her/his seat.”
- j) PRESIDENT: “Shipmate Chaplain you will close the Bible.”
- k) CHAPLAIN: (Closes the Bible). “Shipmate President the Bible is closed.”

- l) PRESIDENT: **“I now declare a ten minute recess.”**

Section 316. Presentation of FRA Continuous Membership Pendant or Pin.

The presentation of a FRA Continuous Membership Pendant or Pin should be conducted at a regular branch meeting or a joint FRA/LA FRA meeting by the highest ranking FRA officer present. This should be a very special occasion where branch members recognize a shipmate for continuous service, regardless of the number of years. The Forty (40), Fifty (50), or Sixty (60) year mark is significant to warrant the participation of a national officer as the presenting officer. The Branch Secretary should endeavor in advance to find out as much as possible about the recipient, when and where he/she joined, FRA branches to which he/she belonged, offices held, awards and other achievements, committees he/she has served on, etc.

- a) PRESENTING OFFICER: **“Shipmates, ladies and guests. I have the distinct honor of now recognizing a shipmate of ours that has been a loyal and continuous member of the Fleet Reserve Association for years. The members of (Name) Branch # , Fleet Reserve Association wish to pay tribute to this shipmate for long and diligent service.”**
- b) PRESENTING OFFICER: **“Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will escort Shipmate_____, to the altar.” (Three Raps of Gavel.)**
- c) PRESENTING OFFICER: **“Shipmate_____, I am here representing your shipmates and the Fleet Reserve Association to recognize you for your many years of dedicated service to the Fleet Reserve Association.”**
- d) PRESENTING OFFICER: (When a brief history of the S/M to be honored is available) **“Shipmate Secretary, you will read the Fleet Reserve Association Record of our distinguished Shipmate.”**
- (Secretary should present recipient a copy of record)
- e) PRESENTING OFFICER: **“We have listened to the record of our honored shipmate. A record keeping with the three cardinal principles of Loyalty, Protection and Service of which we would all be proud. I hope it will stand to inspire us all as we continue our own service to our country, Association and shipmates.”**
- f) PRESENTING OFFICER: **“On behalf of the Fleet Reserve Association and Branch # , I present you with this emblem of distinguished and honorable service, the (number of years service pendant, pin or jewel) of the Fleet Reserve Association. Please wear it with pride in your achievements and as a symbol of honor and devotion to the Fleet Reserve Association.”**

(The recipient should be queried beforehand as to any personal preference he/she might have as to who pins the award. As well, the shipmate should be encouraged in advance if he/she will address the assembly.)

- g) PRESENTING OFFICER: **Shipmates, I would like to present Shipmate_____.**
- h) AWARD RECIPIENT: (Addresses the assembly.)
- i) PRESENTING OFFICER: **Shipmates this concludes the awards presentation. Shipmate Master-at-Arms, you will escort Shipmate_____to his/her seat in the assembly.**

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