

NEW TALENT SHOWS

Not long ago, local officers in The American Legion in Arizona realized that some Active Duty warriors are waiting until they are discharged before starting their memberships in the American Legion. At least one of them said, "I'm not a veteran yet." The reality is, that one (1), day and a "wake up," of war-time service, enrolls us in the long ranks of those warriors who have gone before us. As long as the service is honorable, we have earned our place among all veterans. A veteran is a veteran, is a veteran.

Today, as more of our younger generations are returning from around the world, with no intention of slowing their service to our community, more talented help is coming to each American Legion Post here in Arizona. They are also beginning to join their Post Home as groups. When a few of them find themselves back home near the same Post, they are joining together in groups; they still feel like the "teams" that they were "down range."

While they begin to settle back in to civilian life, there's no shortage of those who simply can't sit around. The Posts that they join might find it a challenge to respond for them with a program that fits what they can contribute. Sometimes, a couple dozen veterans see a need to form an entirely new Post of their own.

There are no ready answers for what to do about the challenges ahead. Each of our Arizona Posts is unique and therefore, we're all stronger. However, just as the military culture that sticks to us reminds us, we should shift our resources around the "tried and true," and get our arms around our younger warriors with their new concepts and talents.

It's not about building something new. It's about updating, or reinforcing what we already have. It will look new because new people are going to be joining the work. The "tried and true" is still there, it's just reaching more people where they are now. This is a challenge, but possible, as we take on change in our Posts. That is the key. We work at this from the inside outward.

As the new members come into our Posts, we need to be able to look for how to build up with that new "talent" they bring with them. When we might steadfastly say, "you can keep your internet," it's okay; we should hopefully add, "Will you bring us in with you?"

We want them to join their American Legion Post. Their post should want to join them as well. The reinforcements are here. Let's get them on "point: and trust them with our "six." If we're one of the reinforcements, we look around our post and find someone without a buddy and connect with a mission. The more seasoned our buddy is, the sooner the work gets done and sooner we need a rest. Worry not, rest when it is time to rest because one emergency will need everything we have when that time comes.

Posts in Arizona are collecting the new supply of talent and there's lots of new work around for us to tackle together. We all remember that there are still plenty who aren't home yet. They join online from those far-away places and trust us to speak for them when we go to our Nation's Leaders to hold them to their promises. Even with no free time on their hands, near or far, they

reinforce our American Legion strength. Finally, remember that a pat on the back is a one handed round of applause for appreciated talent.