

## ***2023 Membership Training And Breakout groups.***

### ***Group #1. Promoting the Legion as a whole, local, state and nation.***

- a. Being involved with other organizations, ie: VFW, Marine Corp League, Lions club, Elks, Knights of Columbus.
- b. Join the Chamber of Commerce in the local community.
- c. Involvement with the local schools, Elementary, Intermediate, High School and colleges.
- d. Develop a post in the local college if possible.
- e. Join Habit for Humanity and other charitable groups.
- f. Support the local JROTC, if in your area.
- g. Support Boys State and Girls State.
- h. Use the Media, when possible, to promote the post and national programs.
- i. Host a post job fairs and blood drives.
- j. Reach out to the local National Guard and Reserve units.
- k. If in your area, support the VA medical clinic or Hospital.

### ***Group #2. New Membership.***

- a. Form a membership team. Teach your post members to engage people that come into the post. Be friendly and inviting. Respect others and understand that women make up almost 40 percent of today's military.
- b. Where are veterans located in your community, (Target Rich Environment).
- c. VA clinic, provide coffee and donuts. Leave Legion Information and a contact number.
- d. Community Events, set up a table with information. Maybe a raffle where allowed.
- e. Job Fairs, attend or host one of your own.
- f. Local Farmer's market. Host an information table.
- g. Gun Shows. Lots of veterans attend these.
- h. Universities and colleges

The old Legion Post with a canteen and smoking is no longer what young veterans want. Younger veterans are looking for a more family friendly environment. If the current post is unwilling to change, start a new post in the community for the younger veterans. Include the entire legion family, Auxiliary, Sons of the Legion, Riders. Each group brings support to the family and new members. Get involved in the community. Show that the Legion is more than what some think. People want to be involved with those that are making a difference in the community. Be that organization that they want to belong to.

Understand the four pillars of the American Legion and work the programs. Have an elevator speech, so when you meet that veteran, you can explain why they should join in just a minute or two. Have

an application in your pocket. Once they have signed up, don't forget them. Reach out in a few days and see how they are doing. Stay in touch.

***Group #3. Retention of membership and recontact of those that have expired.***

- a. Stay in touch with your members during the year. Birthday cards, Holiday greetings, Get well cards when ill.**
- b. The buddy check program. Divide a membership list and have post officers call from time to time and just talk with the member. Make them feel like their membership mean something to the post.**
- c. Have the local school make cards for veterans' day and send them to the members.**
- d. Stay active in the community. Members like to know that the organization they belong to is doing good in the community, even if they can't be a part of that program.**
- e. Learn what your members enjoy doing and try to find ways to bring that into the post.**
- f. Reach out to expired members and try to re-connect. Ask why they left and see if that issue can be resolved. Sometimes it's as simple as inviting them back for a meal or event.**
- g. Is finances an issue? What can the post do to help those members.**
- h. The post should do some kind of revitalization each year. Communicate with those members and work to retain them.**
- i. Stay positive and engage your members. Make them understand what you love about the Legion and how important they are to the mission of serving veterans in our community.**

***Group #4. Community outreach and involvement.***

- a. Make sure your post is a vital part of your community.**
- b. Be involved in all community events and support as many as possible.**
- c. Work as many American Legion Programs as the post can handle. This should be the bread and butter for your post.**
- d. Be involved in the local schools. Sponsor a sports team in the community.**
- e. Work with the local churches.**
- f. What other organizations can you be involved with and stay in touch with them.**
- g. Work with the local city and county government. Attend their meetings and speak in support of veterans' issues.**
- h. Know your local and state representatives by name. Better yet form a relationship so they know your name.**
- i. Develop a veterans' assistance program at the post, to help veterans in need.**
- j. Work with the local media and promote post programs and events.**

***Group #5. Working Programs and how it affects membership.***

- a. Understand what programs and events that are sponsored by the American Legion under the four pillars.**
- b. Work as many of those programs as your post can support.**
- c. Be involved in the local schools. School awards, Boys and Girls state, oratorical contest, Scouts, Junior shooting sports, Legion baseball, scholarships.**

- d. **Veterans' assistance program, under VA & R. Financial assistance, housing, rides to the VA Hospital or clinic, Troop boxes to military serving overseas.**
- e. **What other programs could work in your community? Bingo, Dancing, quilters groups, 42, bridge tournaments.**
- f. **National security, host a radio club, provide meals for the local National Guard or reserve unit.**

**In closing, I'll point out that as you have read through this paper, you may have noticed that all these topics join. They all work hand in hand. Stay involved, always communicate, reach out to the members and the community. By doing so we spread the word about all those things the American Legion has done and continues to do for all veterans. We have over 100 years that proves that we care.**

**Thank you to all those that were involved in this break out session. It is with your support that this training was a success.**

**Tom Marty**

**American Legion Vice Commander, Department of Texas**