

## *Thoughts from your MEMBERSHIP Chairman*

I am sure you have seen the George Jones' Country music video "Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes".

We, as Legionnaires need to take a moment and ask ourselves that same question.

Who is going to advocate for veterans, just as the dough-boys returning from World War I did - when they formed an organization that pledged to leave no American service member behind and to ensure that their widows and orphans would receive the compassion and assistance of a grateful nation? We are now the largest war-time Veterans organization, however we cannot afford to rest on our laurels.

Who is going to instill the values of great citizenship like American Legion Baseball, Boys State and Nation, Oratoricals, Shooting Sports, Scouting, and so many other activities

Who is going to educate the public about Flag etiquette and champion a Constitutional amendment to protect Old Glory from those who desecrate it?

Membership determines our ability to implement and execute our Four-Pillar programs. It also determines our ability to effectively advocate - since *numbers matter* to Congress, the White House, governors and state legislatures. The numbers in our communities can also make the difference between mayors and city councils supporting American Legion programs or ignoring us.

Look at the number of the folks who have volunteered to serve their country since August 2, 1990. Our current membership window has been open for 27 years! Surely you can find one new member out of that time frame. I ask each Department of Arkansas Legionnaire to recruit just one new member during the 2017 - 2018 Membership year. And, I ask each of the 148 Posts in the Department of Arkansas to make a concerted effort to renew all of their one-year membership card holders!

Post and District Officers, if you would like to have a Membership Revitalization in your area, please contact the Department or myself to get the process started. It takes approximately six weeks to gather all of the information for a revitalization program.

Who's going to fill your shoes and lead your Post?

J.W. Smith  
Membership Chairman  
Department of Arkansas