

## **1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Membership Bulletin**

**February 2019**

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I came across the following piece and wanted to share it while the topic is on my mind. It was included in a packet of information which I received from our National 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Dee Baggett. There is no author listed:

### ***The Positive Membership Pledge***

*I pledge to be a positive member and positive influence on my family, friends, co-workers, community and AMVETS family.*

*I promise to be positively contagious and share more smiles, laughter, encouragement and joy with those around me.*

*I vow to stay positive in the face of negativity.*

*When I am surrounded by pessimism, I will choose optimism.*

*When I feel fear, I will choose faith.*

*When I want to hate, I will choose Love.*

*When I want to be bitter, I will choose to get better.*

*When I experience a challenge, I will look for an opportunity to learn and grow.*

*When faced with adversity, I will find strength.*

*When I experience a set-back, I will be resilient.*

*When I meet failure, I will fail forward toward future success.*

*With vision, hope, and faith, I will never give up and will always move forward towards my destiny.*

*I believe my best days are ahead of me, not behind me.*

*I believe I'm here for a reason and my purpose is greater than my challenges.*

*I believe that being positive not only makes me better, it makes everyone around me better.*

*So today and every day I will be a positive member and strive to make a positive impact on the world and my AMVETS family.*

I urge you all to carefully read the Pledge and take a good, hard look at yourself. Are you that positive person who encourages new ideas, urges members to work on a new project, or reaches out to potential Auxiliary leaders and offers to mentor them to take on officer positions? Or, are you that member who discourages new ideas, focuses on what was done

in the past, and thinks that if it isn't broken why try to fix it? A recent study by psychology professor Barbara Frederickson at the University of Michigan found that a positive mindset increases our capacity to explore new ideas while negative thinking impacts our perspectives and can cause long-term damage to ourselves and those around us.

I bring up this topic now because I wonder why we seem to lose members every year. Some members lose interest or decide that they simply don't have time to invest in the organization so don't want to keep paying dues. That is understandable and expected. But what about those who feel that their membership isn't valued? Or, they decide to transfer because of the way they were treated (reality or perception) by their former Auxiliary? What about newer Auxiliary members who initially seem enthusiastic to be a part of our organization and then never come to meetings or events? Are we doing all that we can as an individual member to keep these newbies interested and engaged?

To remain a viable, vibrant organization going into the future, we need to find ways to not only swear in new members but retain the members we have. As of December 31st, we had 194 new members! That's great work by our local auxiliaries. Yet, as of the same date, we lost 251 members who didn't bother renewing! Some of these ladies were even officers at their local auxiliaries.

Why are we losing members? What are you doing locally to retain members? How do you engage your newer members? What do we need to do to grow and get our Auxiliary ready to take on future challenges? I would really appreciate your thoughts and observations on the topic. Either call me or email me your ideas so that I can share them with everyone.

Remember:

*Believing in negative thoughts is the single greatest obstruction to success.* Charles F. Glassman

*In Service to Veterans and their Families.*

*Bert*

You are always encouraged to contact me to share information and/or ask any membership-related questions. If you are holding a local membership project or event, let me know. Your ideas could benefit others! If you have a membership topic that you would like me to discuss, pass it along! I can be reached by email at [lema81@wowway.com](mailto:lema81@wowway.com) or by phone at 586.214.1019.