

Aug 21, 2018

This is Railey Kerrigan for Community Comment.

The other day, while I was on vacation, I was sitting at a mall in Southern California waiting for my mom, and I noticed the man sitting next to me had a "Veteran of Foreign War" hat on. I wondered if anyone had stopped to thank him. For the next 20 minutes I sat there and watched hundreds of people walk by, some even looking his way, but not one stopped to thank him for his service. As I got up to leave, I thanked him and told him how much it meant to me. He was very shocked and caught off guard that someone noticed him.

That's when I thought, we need to bring back patriotism to our country. Especially in youth my age.

There are several people in my family who have served or are serving. And it has been important to my parents to teach their kids to appreciate the freedom we have, because of all of the men and women who serve. As I go to "Memorial Day and Veteran's Day" services I notice that not many youth attend. And that's what I hope to change.

It's never embarrassing, or a waste of time for me, as a 15 year old teenager, to remember those who have given everything they have for this country or to thank the Veteran's and the ones who still serve.

One day we will be the adults in government and running this country. Can you imagine a country with leaders who don't respect or appreciate the men and women who work and sacrifice to keep our country free.

These men and women make hard sacrifices everyday. While we gather to celebrate the birth of a new baby, they miss the birth of their own child. While we celebrate Christmas together with the ones we love, they are far from home. And while we sit in our comfortable air-conditioned homes, they are often in a miserable, hot, foreign country.

Sometimes life changing injuries happen to these heros, that can be seen or not seen.

All of this happens while we live without fear as free Americans.

I believe they deserve our thanks and appreciation, and everyday we have a chance to show this.

Do we take the 30 seconds to shake their hand and say "Thank You", the 10 dollars to buy them a lunch, or maybe just the time to sit down and talk with them about their life?

These are things that we all can do and there are many more that we can think of.

So this week take the time to do something to brighten their day. Not only will they feel

appreciated, but I guarantee it will brighten your day too.

Thank you to all of the men and women who are currently serving in the United States Military and thank you to all of our Veterans.

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