



June 23, 2008

Oversight Committee Message 1

STRATEGIC PLANNING: MOVING FORWARD

The “A New Day is Dawning” event in Washington, D.C. was a great success. It met our goal of providing members at all levels of the American Legion Auxiliary with an opportunity to understand the three new identified goals presented to our board, the National Executive Committee, for approval. Through a variety of activities and presentations, participants had an opportunity to express their concerns, their ideas, their interest and their recognition of the need for change if we are to remain a relevant and viable organization through the accomplishment of our mission.

Three Additional Goals Approved Under Strategic Plan

After the “A New Day is Dawning” event, the National Executive Committee considered the updated strategic plan for the ALA and enthusiastically embraced it by their overwhelming approval on March 30, 2008. The three new goals identified by the 2007 Strategic Planning Retreat group which were added to the strategic plan are as follows:

- Goal 1 - Develop Unit and Department Operational Standards and Training
- Goal 2 - Leverage Technology to Improve Operations and Communications
- Goal 3 - Become the Clearinghouse for Information, Programs and Services

A brief description of each is provided in the attached document

The Next Step:

An Oversight Committee consisting of national leaders has been charged with overseeing the implementation phase of the strategic plan. They recognize the need to move forward as quickly as possible to maintain the momentum of excitement and commitment to the plan. They also are charged with developing a communication plan that will keep all the different levels of the organization informed of what is happening. This update is part of that plan.

One of the Oversight Committee’s first responsibilities is ensuring that the right steps and processes are in place for implementation to ensure successful end results. This requires reviewing not only the goals, but the strategies and tactics and the required and available resources for moving forward.

Toward this end the committee has scheduled a meeting in Indianapolis for July 26-27, 2008. Prior to this meeting, the Clearing House Team has been asked to gather some information for the Oversight Committee’s review. Work on other goals will not begin until after this July meeting.

Department and Unit Implementation

What does the national plan mean to our departments and units? The goals of the national strategic plan should in no way adversely affect departments and units establishing their own goals and objectives. In fact, as the national plan moves forward it is hoped that by accomplishing the national goals, the departments and units will have a more solid foundation and resources from which to accomplish the mission and work of the organization at large. A plan as large as the one adopted by the national organization is not a one-year plan. It will, indeed, take many years to accomplish, ongoing evaluation and dedication of available resources. Most of all, it will require a dedication to communication and collaboration between all levels of the organization. We are not only aware of this, but commit to you that this will be part of our mode of operation as we move forward.

We are aware that we are an huge organization and that messages do not always get clearly communicated to everyone. In fact, sometimes things just start flowing through the communication lines that are entirely false. When this happens, we have to work extra hard to ensure these false rumors are put to rest. National President Jan Pulvermacher Ryan addressed just such a rumor at the “A New Day is Dawning” event by saying the following.

“...IF ANYONE THINKS THE UNIT AND DEPARTMENT OPERATIONAL STANDARDS AND TRAINING TEAM IS GOING TO ELIMINATE DISTRICTS AND DEPARTMENTS THAT IS A FALSE ASSUMPTION....I WOULD LIKE EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU TO GO BACK TO YOUR UNITS AND ASSURE EVERYONE THAT THIS TOPIC WAS NEVER A POINT OF DISCUSSION AT THE RETREAT, LET ALONE ANYWHERE ELSE DURING THIS ENTIRE PROCESS. END OF STORY...”

Maintain a Balance

In any organization there are always two competing priorities: working to achieve your vision for the future and the realities of the present. These competing priorities require diligent and respectful attention to the pace of change and its impact upon such things as members, staff, financial resources, reputation, and programs for those we serve within our mission and purposes.

As we begin implementation, there will be times of slowing down and times that will demand rapidity in decision-making and action. Actions must be thoughtful, deliberate and **bold**. Foremost, we will establish ourselves as an organization that will retain and attract new members.

Stay Informed – Everyone’s Responsibility

Members are encouraged to review the American Legion Auxiliary website for updates on the strategic planning work and to continue their inquiries to the Oversight Committee by utilizing the assigned email: strategicplan@legion-aux.org.

Attachments: Goal descriptions; Adopted Strategic Plan