

## The American Legion of Iowa Strategic Plan

With our Centennial year approaching, The American Legion has developed a nationwide plan to enhance the image and size of the organization. The Iowa plan builds on the national plan using specific tactics in four areas to implement improvements in Department membership, marketing/public relations and leadership development in Iowa.

The current version of the plan was developed by the Strategic Planning Committee and adopted by the Department Executive Committee on July 23, 2017. Posts and members are encouraged to implement the plan on all levels of The American Legion.

*Objective: Enhance the image and promote leadership development and membership growth of The American Legion.*

### MARKETING/PUBLIC RELATIONS

Use the resources of the Marketing Committee to provide marketing education and information at all Department meetings and provide incentive for Districts & Posts to work with the marketing committee on local projects.

Expand the purpose of the Iowa American Legion Press Association and use those resources to enhance the efforts of Posts with local media and to encourage every Post to prepare an annual summary of accomplishments for distribution to their community and members.

Enhance information flow to members and non-members through social media and internet including 1) Upgrading website and ensuring posted information is current, 2) Expanding subscription numbers and readership of electronic newsletter and assisting posts and districts in developing this capability and 3) Initiate Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms for Department information.

### POST REVITALIZATION

Publish a plan for revitalization of troubled and underperforming posts. The plan should include 1) Criteria for selection of candidate posts, 2) Plan and timetable for revitalization process and 3) Methods to assure continuing success of post after revitalization.

Include information on revitalization projects at all Department meetings.

Set expectation that Districts will lead this effort with Department support with a goal of one revitalization project each year in each District.

### MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Develop ability at Department level to recognize excellence in retention by posts. This ability must take into account death loss and transfer loss to obtain an accurate measurement of retention.

Emphasize visits to National Guard and Reserve Armories by 1) Providing list of Armories to District leadership, 2) Creating materials for use during visit and presentation that emphasize services provided by Legion-Service Office & Family Support and 3) Making membership materials available if military member desires.

University/College veteran groups should be contacted for offers of support to veterans and families by service officers and posts, distribution of program materials and offers of membership. Chartering of University/College posts should be explored.

Headquarters Post member lists should continue to be made available at every opportunity for posts to transfer those members.

Membership Rallies should be held at least once each fall and spring to enhance membership transmittal from posts. Past District Commanders and Officers should be included in collection of membership from each post for turn-in at the rally.

### TRAINING

Post level MyLegion.org training should be provided on a regular basis. Testimonials from posts using MyLegion.org should be included in the training.

Post Level training on administrative and program functions should continue to be provided at Midwinter Conference.

LEAD training should be used for appropriate areas of training through bringing National instructors as speakers to Department events including Midwinter. Planning should begin to create events for on-line LEAD training.

Higher level (Graduate-level) training should be continued for District Vice-Commanders and above and Legionnaires interested in higher office. This training should focus on leadership, job expectations for District and Department officers, goal-setting and project planning to achieve goals, motivation and selection of individuals for appointed positions at District level and above.

District leadership schools should be encouraged and supported through materials and instructors on selected subjects. On-line LEAD training should be incorporated as appropriate.

District and Department Liaison committees should become more involved in identifying and training candidates for Department appointments and offices.

An annual orientation meeting should be held in August for all incoming Department chairman.



As we move rapidly towards The American Legion's celebration of 100 years of service to our community, state and nation, the 100th Anniversary Committee has advice for the posts.

Each post needs to find the optimum time and way to have their individual centennial celebration. Each post that chartered in 1919 should plan a public event during 2019 or maybe into 2020 as their needs and events allow. The American Legion will mark its 100th anniversary with a 15-month celebration running from its national convention in August 2018 through Veterans Day 2019. Dates you use could be the date your Post signed your Application for Post of American Legion, when your charter was signed by national, your annual Legion Birthday celebration or a town event, such as Marion's Swamp Fox Festival that brings the biggest crowds into town. It is a decision each post must make for their own optimization of getting our brand out to their community.

What type or size celebration should you make? As large and grand as you can support. The more positive press you can get in your community, the more people are touched and the presence of the post is escalated, more public may participate in your events, and the more veterans we may influence to join. It is a time to publish the good works you do. Scholarships, volunteer hours, children's programs supported - the more you have to tell the better. Your Consolidated Post Report is a good place to start. Make a Centennial website and also use it to tell your story. An idea is to find your first commander's grave and spruce it up, use that as a publicity event and each year do the next commander.

We will only get one chance to celebrate our centennial anniversary. Someone else won't build a template on what works for your community. Each post should seize this opportunity to further The Legion's brand.

The Centennial motto for the Department is,

**"A Century of Serving"**

*Roger Norfolk*

*100th Anniversary Committee Chairman*

## Boys State Reservations & Registration

Dates for the 2018 session are June 10-15, 2018, at Camp Dodge in Johnston. Posts are encouraged to make reservations online at the following link: <http://goo.gl/fy1gyf>. Complete the Reservation Form, and send your check for \$250 per delegate by December 31, to: The American Legion of Iowa, 720 Lyon St., Des Moines, Iowa 50309.

Boys State administration is asking that whether you make reservations online or by the hard copy form, PLEASE provide a good e-mail for someone in the Post that will help distribute critical information to your delegates in a timely manner.

A Post/District Chairman's Guide to Selection of Delegates is available online at [www.ialeion.org](http://www.ialeion.org), or by request from Department. Please take the time to be familiar with the program before talking to your delegates so

that accurate information about the program is relayed.

Boys must be registered by April 1, and are strongly encouraged to attend a District orientation. Orientation dates and locations will be available on the Department website in the spring.

The Samsung Scholarship application is now available only through this link to the national website. Delegates who wish to apply, must go to the link on our website. Boys State delegates will be required to register with a username/password to apply for the scholarship. A hard copy is no longer required.

Graduation Cords are available for 2017 delegates at a cost of \$20 each. Posts are encouraged to contact their delegates to see if they need assistance in obtaining one for their upcoming high school graduation.