

Three Year Strategic Plan

Approved by the DEC Feb 1, 2013

The American Legion Department of North Dakota Mission Statement

We serve our country, veterans and their families, we support our current military, and we inspire patriotism in our youth and communities.



**Updated July 12, 2015
NDARNG Camp Grafton
Devils Lake, ND**

Strategic Plan Review

July 11-12, 2015

NDARNG - Camp Grafton

Devils Lake, ND

The plan at this time is to review the current document, identify those goals that may not be attainable, discuss the current position of the department and modify our previous goals or the addition of others not previously identified.

Although we are technically entering the third year of our first three year plan, it was determined that a timely review of our Strategic Plan was in order. The review was necessitated by the completion of a few goals but more importantly the need to review and address the items that have fallen through the cracks of committee, appointments of responsibility and an honest review of what is attainable or logical after having experienced the Strategic Planning Process and it's intrinsic issues with implementation, funding and guidance.

This committee combined the incoming leadership with members of the original planning session. This provided a backdrop for what had been accomplished and the opportunity to keep the plan on track and not need to start the plan over from scratch.

What has essentially been accomplished is the restarting of the three year plan. Issues previously identified have discussed, modified, carried forward or even eliminated whether they were completed or completely discounted as an unattainable goal. The areas that have been changed have been highlighted in **Green**.

Strategic Planning Session

There are 4 main areas of concern identified and one area for immediate action.

- 1) Membership Recruiting & Retention
- 2) Finance
- 2) Public Relations
- 4) Programs Activities

A) Dept. Veteran Service Officer (position Vacant, interviews pending)

During our discussion, the elements of the three year plan were reviewed. The goals that were identified have been blocked into areas of concern, versus listing the individual goals by their individual priority. The group did prioritize them within each group. I have sub-divided the goals into three groups, representing the first, second and third year time period for each goal.

When assigning tasks to committees and individuals assigned to specific areas, the following time frames have been developed to create and define the expectations for completion of the objectives. The following specific dates for each year's period have been updated and are defined as follows:

First Year; July 1, 2015 through June 30th, 2016

Second Year; July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017

Third Year; July 1, 2017 through June 30th, 2018

Who was the Committee and Why

The Strategic Planning Review Committee members were selected based on several factors. In essence the process was quite simply, the incoming and possible projected leadership were selected for the review as well as individuals whom had served the first planning session. The review session was held as a follow on meeting of the current/new Commanders organizational meeting. This allowed for a current upgrade on background information that would assist the review committee in their establishing the updated goals and objectives.

Previous Planning Members:

Bob Krause; ND NEC, Past Dept. Commander, Strategic Planning Committee Chair, Post #191 Gwinner, ND - East

Don Weible; Past Dept. Commander & Dept. Membership Chair, Post #163, Wilton, ND - Central

Arlon Falcon; District 3 Vice Commander, Local Post Adjutant, Native American Veteran, Post #262, Belcourt, ND - Central

New Planning Members:

Harold “Bud” Goldsmith; 2015-2016 ND Dept. Cdr, Dist. Cdr. and Central Region VCdr. Post # 265, Streeter, ND - Central

Orletta Kilen; ND Dept. Cdr-Elect. Past Dist. Cdr. and West Region VCdr. Post #261, Almont, ND – West

Mike Weyrauch; West Region Vice-Commander, Past Dist. Cdr. Post #9, Ray, ND – West

Glenn Wahus; Dist. 9 Cdr. (twice through), Post #29, Watford City, ND – West

Ron Matthews; ND Dept. Membership Chair; (3rd Year) Post#2, Fargo, ND - East

Staff Present

David Johnson; NDAL Dept. Adjutant & Facilitator

Sarah Kim; NDAL Administrative Assistant

A Three year NDAL Strategic Plan

This plan is being presented by priority of goal year, and not by the activity, or area of interest having a higher level priority over another within each perspective year. This allows for simultaneous activity and accomplishments to each program. The first year's goals are followed by the objective expected; and then followed by the goals for year's two and three. It was not the intent of this committee to determine the solutions of each objective. Each task has been assigned to a committee or group whom will be responsible for creating the solutions and completing the task of each project and reporting the results and status of the Goals and Objectives for each task to the DEC.

FIRST YEAR GOALS – July. 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016

Membership

1. Establish the reasons for the a Veteran to belong to NDAL
 - A. Develop a marketing program that explains the benefit/value associated with a members dues identifying the issues and items that makes the NDAL unique.
 - B. Answer the Question: “What is in it for the Member Prospect?”
 - C. **Continue to use Ironclad Marketing as a method to reach out to Generation X, Y and Z.**
 - 1) **Target younger vets and their families.**
 - 2) **Develop multiple medias messages to reach our target veterans.**

Membership - cont.

D. New Members

1. Reach out to the new “Oil Patch” resident veterans.
2. **Recruit and Target all types of characteristics of the Veteran population and demographics; i.e. Female Veterans, Veterans aged 30 – 50 years old. Iraq/Afghanistan Vets.**

Objective #1: Create a Marketing Plan to target various Veteran populations.

Objective #2: Stop the bleeding of membership. Keep our 15,945 membership goal and increase the membership by 3% for 2015-2016. Seek a target goal of 50% of eligible veterans in ND as determined by the VA statistics.

Objective #3: Develop 3 new Campus Posts; Current Campus Posts – NDSU & University of ND, Evaluate the evolution of NDSU & UND, determine what has worked and what hasn't. Improve assist these Post to be more established before pursuing other campus posts in either Minot State or Bismarck State.

2. Improve Membership Retention.

Objective #1: **Create a plan to revitalize three current Posts.**
Bismarck/Mandan – Combined Revitalizations of Dist. 5 & 7
with TAL support. - Central
Williston – West Region
Minot – Central Region
Grafton & Fordville Combined – East Region

Membership - cont.

Objective #2: **Review and rewrite awards program, create better membership incentive programs, review the “Go-Getter” program in the Department. “Make it mean something, versus a free Lunch”. Assist local Posts in developing a benefit/value message to improve retention rates.**

3. Develop Post Enthusiasm & Participation

Objective #1: **Develop participation; promote local Posts activities to increase Post-to-Posts events, thereby increasing relationship between local Posts, which could transfer to increased participation at District and Department events.**

4. Improve Relations within the NDAL Family.

Objective #1: **Review NDAL communication processes with NDAL Family group. Integrate the family members onto the NDAL committees to improve communication and expand the relationship to improve our identity within the community and state.**

Objective #2: Consider the combining of all Districts meeting with the NDAL Auxiliary for the opening protocols and shared information.

Financial

1. Expand non-dues revenue sources.

Objective#1: Increase Programs Revenue Enhancements by utilizing multiple methods and proven successful programs from outside organizations. i.e. Gun Raffles.

2. Develop a grant writing and fundraising committee.

Objective#1: Have a committee in place and train individuals in the “Art” of Grant Writing by the end of 2013. (THIS OBJECTIVE WILL BE REFERRED TO THE NDAL FOUNDATION).

3. Support the benefit/value for donating to the NDAL programs and the NDAL Foundation.

Objective #1: Identify projects that would allow the NDAL to create fundraising activities which will function in parallel with, and support the NDAL Foundation fundraising activities while not conflicting with either’s programs. Recognize we compete for the same dollars as the local post and nationals fundraising as well.

Public Relations

1. Embrace Change – We are at **the** Fork in the Road.

Objective #1: Realizing that discussing and embracing change is the only way to evolve and survive for the future.

Public Relations - Cont.

2. Promote NDAL and Programs.

Objective #1: Continue to develop Press Release Kits and templates for use by local Posts.

Objective #2: Replace or Update Dept. Display; creating multiple messages, based on the target customer market, i.e. NDEA, Estate Planners, Veteran Prospect, Veteran Rehabilitation Stand-downs. Research possible convention and meetings where the Dept. can be a vendor and have a membership/purpose and presence.

Objective #3: Reinvent or restructure the Public Relations Committee. Discuss options and take action.

Objective #4: Create a baseline of participation in Department programs for comparison to future activity.

3. Department to promote to the membership and Posts to become more electronic interactive & friendly.

Objective #1: Dept. to expand its presence on the Web for recruiting, fundraising and self-promotion.

Objective #2: Develop methods to demonstrate to the membership how to interact with the Web, Facebook, and Twitter.

Public Relations - Cont.

4. Create a combined Boys State & Girls State Public Service Announcement

Objective #1: Create a Public Service Announcement utilizing former participants Senator Hoeven, Senator Heitkamp, Mayor Katie Andersen of Jamestown and Kirsten Baesler.

5. **Promote Post-to-Post interactions, exchanges and District Meetings Challenges.**

Objective #1: Develop and implement a plan to increase district meeting attendance by 25% per District.

Programs

1. Improve awareness and communication of existing programs.

Objective #1: To help current and prospective members, supporters realize and appreciate the value of Legion activities in the community.

Objective #2: Grow Boys State by 35% for 2016. Develop the “Educate the Educator” Continuing Ed credits for Counselors, Civic & Government and Social Studies teachers.

Objective #3: Grow the 2016 Oratorical program to 40 participants.

Objective #4: To grow the programs and gain Public awareness.

Objective #5: Develop a “Ghost Writer” program for Press Releases or Promotion’s to be used by local Post activities.

Department Service Officer (In Process)

1. Fill the Department Service Officer position ASAP.

Objective #1: Have the position filled allowing for adequate time for training, completed no later than October 1, 2015.

2. Solicit Post funding assistance of the Dept. VSO position if the ND Legislature's decision does not provide grants to Patriotic Organizations for their respective Department Service Officers.

Objective #1: Is to provide an alternate source of revenue to participate directly in funding the Dept. VSO position versus a direct expense to Dues.

3) Build Awareness of and provide training to Post Service Officers.

Objective #1: To ensure the Post Service Officer understands they are a referral service to Dept. VSO or CVSO's. Provide contact information and literature, and ensure members are able to access VA Assistance.

Objective #2: Provide local Posts a Job Descriptions for the Post Service Officer position allowing them to seek a positive candidate to fill a vacancy.

SECOND YEAR GOALS – July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017

Membership

1. Improve Membership Retention.

Objective #1: Seek a “Net” retention rate of 98% every year.

Objective #2: Revitalize three Districts 2,3, 6, (Grand Forks - NE, Langdon, Belcourt - NC, and Minot -NCW

2. Increase methods to disseminate the American Legion message.

Objective #1: Track the Public Relations program for consumer awareness of the NDAL.

Financial

1. Support and encourage contributions and the purpose of the NDAL Foundation.

2. **Research internship opportunities.**

Objective #1: Create a plan of action for utilizing University Internship Programs effectively and for meaningful purposes. (Not realistic, Training time, turnaround of interns equals lost staff time on other projects) Need to develop a long term Internship program utilizing the Mass Communications Majors.

Public Relations

1. Promote NDAL and Programs

Objective #1: Develop a plan to improve or expand NDAL relations with the ND Education Association (NDEA) and ND School Board Association (SBA)

Objective #2: Research and Identify Four Conventions to actively promote as a vendor NDAL Programs, i.e. Boys State, Oratorical Programs

2. Discuss and develop methods to bridge the generation gap of our veterans.

Objective #1: Create a plan of action for the Dept. to utilize and assist local Posts in transitioning leadership through a “Mentor-a-Legionnaire & TRAIN YOUR REPLACEMENT” development program.

3. Develop an advertising/information campaign which shows ND AMERICAN Legion as a growing, inclusive Veteran focused organization.

Objective #1: Create a NDAL Marketing/Public Relations Plan.

4. Encourage District Meeting Participation, Attend County Fairs, or other Community events.

Programs

1. Promote Oratorical program.

Objective #1: Increase 2015 participation at District levels by 5 entries. (50 State wide)

2. Increase awareness of NDAL Boys State and Girls State.

Objective #1: Increase participation by at least 10% per year.

3. Reconnect with American Legion baseball program.

Objective #1: Review and create communications which promotes Legionnaire attendance and visibility to the community and local Post. Promote the renewal of the Legionnaires leadership and management of NDAL Baseball teams is returned to Legion Posts versus Park Districts or Parents.

THIRD YEAR GOALS – July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

Membership

1. **Seek to achieve The American Legions “100 Year Anniversary” membership goal in 2018.**

Objective #1: Develop a plan to participate in the TAL Anniversary program and seek to increase membership to 50% of the eligible veterans in the state.

Financial

1. Develop corporate and private support of the NDAL mission.

Objective #1: Increase Corporate Sponsorship by 50 %.

Public Relations

1. Develop and disseminate names of deployed troops and their families.

Objective #1: Obtain lists of ND deployed troops for local Legion Posts to use and for dissemination to local Family Support Groups.

2. Promote NDAL and Programs to ND State Officials.

Objective #1: Connect with the ND Forensics Program for the Oratorical program.

3. Increase and expand promotions of NDAL Programs and Activities.

Objective #1: Review and compare current, third year activities against baseline data.

Programs

1. Promote Oratorical program.

Objective #1: Increase 2018 participation at District levels by 6 entries. (60 State wide)

2. Increase participation of all programs.

Objective: #1: Review and compare current, third year activities against baseline data.

Other Thoughts

On Sunday morning after breakfast, members of the committee whom stayed continued with an informal discussion of items and thoughts that they had missed. Here is a list of those after thoughts.

1. The DEC should promote their meeting as being an open forum to the Blue Cap members.
 - a. Past Department Commanders are assets of the organization and provide a wealth of knowledge and experience, and could be better utilized.
 - b. Require committee Chairman to report directly to the DEC at the Conferences and Conventions.
2. **Send the Membership Bulletin to all Post Commanders, Adjutants and Membership Chairs and make the Membership Shirts available include all Post Officer and include them in the team, shirts would be at the individual personal cost and not the Dept.**
3. **Revamp the webpage and make it more interactive with the members. (In Process, FACEBOOK w/ Ironclad Marketing has had a significant level of interaction with membership. Website could use a face lift to make it more user friendly and not text heavy.)**