Your Role as Department President
President, GREAT TRUST has been placed in you…..

• Your responsibilities:
  – Supervision of the duties of all officers
  – Responsibility for the success of this year’s program
  – Upholding the four great principles expressed in the Preamble of our Constitution: Justice, Freedom, Democracy, and Loyalty.
ISSUES many departments are facing:

1. Lack of civility and goodwill
2. Lack of communication, continuity, accountability
3. Decreasing membership
The solution:

1. Practice Servant Leadership

2. Provide “selfless” guidance

3. If you do #1 and #2, an increase in membership will follow.
“We must be the change we wish to see in the world.” --Gandhi
On being a Servant Leader....

• We are all leaders

• We all have the ability to influence others to be their best selves

• Take the opportunity to get to know people

• Hold yourself accountable

• Be your best self and at the same time give value to those around you
Develop Yourself as a Leader:

• **Strengthen your leadership skills**
  – Observe good leaders and analyze why you feel they are “good”
  – Read leadership articles and books
  – Be organized
  – Be a servant leader

• **Be helpful to the Department Secretary, officers, chairmen, members**

• **Be prepared to mentor and pass information on to your successor**
Develop a positive attitude:

Speak positively about

• The organization
• The committees
• Staff and volunteers

Leadership
Strategic Plan
You are the face of the American Legion Auxiliary

• What image should you portray?
The success of each Chairman is the responsibility of the President

- Observe, listen to, evaluate potential chairman
- Appoint a chairman because of the leadership she brings to the department, not because she is your friend
- Help to develop chairmen into successful leaders
Within the Department
- Officers
- Chairmen
- District Presidents
- Counties
- Units

With National
- Mid-year reporting
- End-of-year report
- Narrative report
Communication and Accountability

• National president and national chairmen expect that department chairmen will:
  – communicate with national chairmen on a regular basis
  – reply to emails and phone calls
  – report on activity in the department
  – submit mid-year and end-of-year reports
Accountability

• Chairmen and officers have a job description
• Hold chairmen and officers accountable
• Hold yourself accountable
• Help underperforming leaders succeed
Continuity

• **Units need continuity**
  – Unit members need time to catch up with changes
  – Make changes in small increments

• **The Department needs continuity**
  – The Department Secretary provides continuity in the office

• **The National Organization will provide continuity**
  – 5-Year plan for Action Plan
  – 5-Year plan for Awards
The BEST part of working with our Department Secretary is...
You and the Executive Committee

DEC

- The Department’s governing body
- Their duty is to make decisions for the good of the Department

Department President

- Chairman or presiding officer of the committee
Being a problem-solver:

- Take the high road
- Protect relationships
- Do not make public
- Handle issues with a phone call (NOT an email)
Being a problem-solver:

- Be calm
- Stick to the facts
- Discuss the issue, not the person
- Plan what to say
- Listen

Note to self:
Just because it pops into my head does NOT mean it should come out of my mouth!
And what about emails?

• What is your best email wisdom?
More about emails….

- Recheck the email address

- Emails are not private. Some information should not be shared or forwarded.

- Use a courteous greeting and a complimentary closing

- Golden Rule
What is our consistent message?

• In the spirit of service not self, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary is to support The American Legion and to honor the sacrifice of those who serve by enhancing the lives of our veterans, military, and their families, both at home and abroad. For God and Country, we advocate for veterans, educate our citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.
When you speak publicly, you represent the ALA Organization

- Mission
- Special Project
- Strategic Plan

- To enhance the lives of veterans, military, and their families
- ALAF Endowment
- Enhance the Member Experience
- Model Civility and Servant Leadership
Using the Action Plan

- What is it?
- Why do we have it?
- Where do you find it?
- How should you use it?
- ALAforVeterans.org
The Centennial Plan

• Is the department working on a Strategic Plan?

• Is there an understanding in the department about how the Centennial Plan works?

• Use the How-To information
  – The Strategic Plan brochure
How can you impact Membership?

- Model Servant Leadership
- Work the Mission
- Ask a friend to work the Mission with you
- Ask women who would like to honor the service of a family member to join the American Legion Auxiliary
The Legion Family

• How does your department support the mission?
Sources of Guidance:

Department and National documents:
- C&B
- Standing Rules
- Operations Guide (Ops Guide)
- Policies & Procedures

People:
- the department secretary
- past department presidents and officers

Other resources:
www.ALAforVeterans.org
Be responsible

• Practice Servant Leadership

• Hold committee members accountable

• Help others succeed

• Do your best
WILL IT BE EASY?
NOPE.
WORTH IT?
ABSOLUTELY.