



President's Column

W. Bede Mitchell

In my first column I alluded to LAMA's strategic plan for 2006-2010, in which we set our vision of making LAMA the foremost organization developing present and future leaders in library and information services. In order to

achieve this ambitious aim, the strategic plan is intended to be a blueprint for making annual incremental steps leading to a stronger association.

There are four goal areas in the plan. First is *Value to Members*, in which we commit to making division decisions based on what will provide the most value to LAMA members. The second goal area is *Leadership and Management*, which drives LAMA to advocate on behalf of libraries and library workers, and to enhance member access to leadership and management development tools and resources. In the third goal area, *Education*, LAMA seeks to facilitate professional development opportunities for members to enhance their leadership and management skills. The fourth goal area is *Organizational Excellence*, which states LAMA must be as efficient and effective as possible in order to provide members the support and services they desire. The full plan may be found on the LAMA Web page (www.ala.org/lama).

As I stated in my last column, to fulfill our plan we must:

- align our annual budgeting, services, programming (in the broadest sense), and marketing with our strategic priorities;
- involve our members in identifying the steps that will lead to accomplishing our strategic goals; and
- communicate and coordinate the activities of our sections, committees, task forces, and discussion groups to make the most effective use of our resources.

W. Bede Mitchell (wbm@gsu.edu) is Director of the Library, Georgia Southern University.

The fiscal year 2008 strategic action plans, or annual objectives, which the LAMA Board adopted this past September, implement the foregoing steps. The action plans are also posted on the LAMA Web site, and I invite you to review the plans and consider how you, as a committee participant or as an individual LAMA member, can contribute to accomplishing the objectives.

An additional means of involving LAMA members in strategic planning is soliciting their suggestions for future LAMA initiatives and activities. My presidential theme "Fifty Ways to Lead Your LAMA" encourages that involvement, and toward that objective I am offering a \$500 prize to the LAMA member who proposes what the LAMA Executive Committee judges to be the best strategic initiative selected for inclusion in our fiscal year 2009 (FY09) action plans. Proposals will be judged on their feasibility and likelihood of advancing LAMA's strategic vision and goals. To see full contest details and to make a proposal, go to the LAMA Web site and click on the invitation to submit a suggestion. But do so no later than April 1, 2008. The award will be announced at the LAMA President's Program in Anaheim, California, as part of the ALA Annual Conference. You do not need to be present to win.

LAMA will be successful in achieving its vision only if we tap into the vast talents and knowledge base of our members. While there will only be one \$500 prize awarded, I would love to see fifty or more practical and valuable suggestions for us to consider for the FY09 action plans. Is it feasible we could adopt and carry out so many ideas? We won't know until we see them, but let us not shrink from the challenge. No organization ever achieved greatness without envisioning greatness. We have come far in our first fifty years, and we have far to go. Yet in my more than twenty-five years as a LAMA member I have never doubted our ability to do what needs to be done, and as I hear about the work our sections and committees are carrying out I see every indication that my confidence is not misplaced. Together we can make LAMA even greater than it is.