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Dear Friend:

2007 has slipped beneath the horizon and 2008 promises even more change. The United States will have a very important Presidential election, New England will own the crown of at least one national professional sport championship, and despite global warming, the temperatures outside can still be frightful.

But the challenges of succeeding as nonprofit organizations remain are never-ending. Traditional sources of funding are drying up, the complexity of fields such as health care staggering, and the needs of the people we serve are deepening and expanding. And we are not alone in facing these unprecedented circumstances – the public sector is facing taxpayer revolts and the private global sector market turbulence that defies prediction.

The good news is that it is our sector – the independent sector (nonprofits) – where optimism thrives. Nonprofit organizations among us are leading the way – being entrepreneurial, acting strategically, nimbly responding to emerging needs, and creating alliances with business and government to break through with better, less costly solutions.

Our job at LeFevre & Associates is to help you achieve your mission. And we don't think it's going to happen with the "same old, same old." The nonprofit community has the people with the smarts, the passion, and the commitment. But often, we find ourselves caught in the business of daily operations and unable to invest time to create business models and strategies that increase the financial resources to fuel our critical programs. LeFevre & Associates provides common sense assistance at affordable prices, which allows nonprofits to focus both on the long-term critical issues, as well as the urgent activities of daily operations.

LeFevre & Associates occupies a unique niche in the consulting world and our approaches allow for distinct choices and depart radically from a one-size-fits-all toolkit. How about:

Strategic planning done differently

- ❖ Ever thought about a strategic planning process in which the plan is crafted in one day in real time, with all the leaders at the table?
- ❖ Or planning that doesn't so much try to plot the future for the organization's next five years as to focus on the single crucial dilemma or top-priority opportunity that the organization faces --- and does this at an annual full day strategic retreat.
- ❖ Or strategic planning driven as much by competitive analysis and original market research as the aspirations of the organization's staff and board.

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Board governance brought into the 21st century

- ❖ How about reinventing how your board spends its time and energy and contributes to mission results?
- ❖ How about a governance renewal initiative that evaluates structure, agendas, committees, every aspect of trustee life – without jeopardizing fiduciary oversight and community trust?
- ❖ How about boards that deliver leadership – not as an adversary overseer of staff, but with a distinct role in the value-added proposition?

Mergers, partnerships, acquisitions: collaborate smarter and faster to achieve better results

- ❖ Is the historical pattern of establishing small mission-driven organizations for seemingly every problem, in every community still the best way to go? Why not explore alliances, partnerships and merger? Our experience tells us that, while new structures are not always the right answer, facilitated discussions that go to the heart of analyzing scale, size, and necessary specialization almost always lead to a better way going forward.

In 2008, LeFevre & Associates has added two new consulting services – providing teambuilding and training to senior management groups and assistance to organizations going through transitions in their CEO leadership.

We also provide many other types of consulting assistance for organizations who work for us. For example, last year we helped one client recruit a key top management position to be better poised for the future. In another case, we did an intense financial diagnostic so that management and board could figure out their short-term strategies. We also designed an organizational process to engage the staff and board in crafting a new mission statement to capture their new directions and priorities. Check out our website www.LeFevreAssociates.com for a more complete list of our services.

This spring, I am also very happy to join the faculty of the Woodbury and Marlboro College brand new nonprofit certificate program and will be teaching board governance and strategic planning in both Montpelier and Brattleboro, Vermont.

Sincerely,

Jim LeFevre

P.S. We will mail to you separately our new revised organizational brochure.