

2018 Iowa Area Inventory Results

PARTICIPATION AT THE IOWA AREA ASSEMBLY: TOTAL SUBMITTED 55 AS OF 7/9

1. What is your current service position? 27- Group Reps; 3 Alt Group Reps; 8 District Reps; 1 Alt District Rep; 6 District Chairs; 2 Area Officer; 3 Area Coordinator; 1 WSO; 5 Members
2. How many Assemblies have you attended? 1ST time= 7; 2-5 years=23; 6-10 years= 6; 11-15 years=6; 16-20 years = 3; 20 and over =10
3. What barriers limit my participation in attending the Assembly? Family commitments; Time it takes; Distance; Cost of hotel/travel; Not in a service position that pays me for attending; Other events/schedule; New to program; Work conflict; Using my PTO on Fridays; Child care; Dog care; Boring workshops; Do not want to share at the microphone; Sick; Not having handicapped set-up for people with disabilities; going alone.
 - a. How do I overcome these barriers? Plan ahead; Carpool to cut cost of travel; Let my group know about finances; Try to not over-commit; Budget for going; Mark calendar so avoid interference; Try to get off from work; Setting as a priority; say not to other activities;
 - b. What do I gain from my attendance? Learn; Pick up lots of ideas; Appreciation for the institution of Al-Anon; Insight; Fellowship; Ideas; Learn about Area and how Al-Anon works; Unity; Feeling a part of a larger purpose; See my friends; Be a part of decision making; participate in service; Learn what other Districts do; Information; reminders of old information; Involvement; Meet new members; Learn about WSO issues; Hope that Al-Anon is alive; fun; self-esteem by being involved.
4. How do I educate other members in my district on the valuable ideas I've gained from Assembly?
 - a. Discuss at my home group meeting;
 - b. Let members know what a great time I had;
 - c. Send out email to my group along with information I receive;
 - d. share my personal experience;
 - e. Take good notes to share;
 - f. Share what I learned from the speakers
 - g. Share with my group before and after Assembly;
 - h. Prepare a report for group; Sharing at District Meeting;
 - i. Tell them my experience and what I learned; Share ideas;
 - j. Share positive insights with District;
 - k. Share with my sponsees the importance of it and how it can fit into their program
 - l. Have educational meetings at District Mts for GRs
 - m. Offer rides, shared hotel rooms and emphasize FUN!
 - n. Make copies of what I receive so I can pass it on
 - o. Share enthusiasm after returning

- p. Get them involved in a project and events; give ideas for participation
 - q. Buy CD's
 - r. Workshop with ideas from Assembly
5. I attend the following meetings outside of the business meeting (check all that apply):
- a. Friday Night Open Meeting..... YES = 38 NO = 17
 - b. Action Committee..... YES = 45 NO= 10
 - c. Luncheon YES= 40 NO= 15
 - d. AFG Speaker YES = 48 NO= 7
 - e. Friday Night Candlelight..... YES = 17 NO = 38
 - f. Banquet YES = 30 NO = 25
 - g. AA Speaker YES = 43 NO = 12
 - h. Saturday Night Candlelight..... YES = 14 NO = 41
 - i. Sunday Workshop YES = 34 NO= 21
 - j. Sunday Spiritual Speaker YES = 37 NO = 18
6. I would like a workshop on:
- a. Finances: how a GR can help the Treasurer set up a budget
 - b. Using Service Manual (3)
 - c. Service Positions(similar to tier of officers?/)
 - d. Area and WSO Websites and how they interact with Public Outreach
 - e. What will I be doing if I am a DR, Coordinator, Officer and resources
 - f. Traditions (2)
 - g. Getting members more involved in service and activities/ Inspire/ Encourage
 - h. Welcoming the Newcomer
 - i. Expectations of the Group Representative (GR/DR training) (3)
 - j. Help for GR for dealing with obstacles of non-CAL at meetings (2)
 - k. Anything that is needed
 - l. Communicating to each other what a blessing we all are
 - m. Humor In Recovery
 - n. Creative writing for those 35 and younger- language and word choices to attract
 - o. Welcoming Dual members to Al-Anon but keeping the focus on Al-Anon: how?
 - p. Repeating the Basics: Remind, Remind, Remind
 - q. Coordinator each to give a workshop
 - r. Technology Workshop: Ideas for the Future
 - s. New Topics: WSC/WSO workshops
 - t. Tier of Officers (2)
 - u. Acronyms
 - v. Importance and use of CAL
 - w. Importance of knowing my service responsibilities and duties
 - x. Links of service
 - y. Starting new meetings
 - z. Transitioning new comer to service
 - aa. Concepts and Warranties

- bb. Writing
- cc. Other opportunities outside District and Area
- dd. Blending Senior members with new members- how to sponsor
- ee. Spirituality
- ff. Being assertive without hurting others
- gg. Public Outreach- how to cooperate with professionals/counselors (2)
- hh. No comment (31)

PARTICIPATION OF THE ASSEMBLY:

1. Do you feel welcomed at Area Assemblies? Yes = 51; Sometimes/Not Always/Mostly= 3; It's okay= 1
2. If not, how can we improve?
 - a. Have Assemblies at more central location
 - b. A simple ice-breaker at the start of Friday or Saturday could help
 - c. If newbies can meet just a couple of new people, could help
 - d. Make sure we can easily find the Al-Anon program and not the AA
 - e. GRs to have an assigned person who can shepherd them and answer questions
 - f. Improve presence of Greeters at the door to general meeting
 - g. GRs to get information to follow along and feel in the know (business meeting)
 - h. Perhaps badges with ribbons of some sort that recognize: AFG Area Officers (red), Area Coordinators (white), DRs (blue), GRs (green) for example. *We would need to be careful not to have the same color ribbons as the Speakers and Conference Committee.* These ribbons could be provided and added to the badge at the AFG Area registration table and returned to the AFG table when leaving. It may help folks recognize who people are when walking around. That may encourage people get to know each other or introduce themselves. Those that do not have a ribbon would be easily identified as folks that need inclusiveness or engagement. Ask who they are, what they think of the event, welcome them. The ribbons may inspire them to "get one" one day ☺ For those that have the ribbons, it may also inspire us to reach out during the event because we have some clue about who each other is. I often feel bad that I do not know who everyone is that attends. This may be a neat way to do it in at a glance as the badges can be hard to read.
3. When attending an Area Assembly, do you feel you have been as informed as possible on issues that require discussion and vote? YES= 45 NO= 6
 - a. Why: because I attend AWSC; as DR I get a packet; I get information from Area website and Newsletter; Technology has helped improve and quicken the links of communication; I have email and I read it! It get information about voting.
 - b. Why not? No Agenda for Business Meeting-I feel left out as a voting member; DR doesn't know the issues to be voted on; I don't really understand the policies; Not all information is passed on; Need information prior to Assembly; All who attend should have a Business Agenda- we know the max is 150 for attendance per Assembly guidelines; sometimes computer will not open attachments; feel hardly

any info on International Convention has been shared; sometimes info from WSO is limited in what can be shared.

4. Do you feel your area officers and coordinators are approachable, accessible and respond to members' needs? YES = 55 I hear Officers/Coordinators say "contact me directly" it empowers members to seek out solutions. If not, how can we improve? Educate on what you do; some seem very unsure of their positions; if I were new I wouldn't know who they are; as a GR – not really- not sure, I didn't seek it out.
5. Could participation by all members be increased in the Action Committees?
 - a. Always the same
 - b. Need more appealing subjects
 - c. Action Committees have run their course; substitute in workshops
 - d. YES, always
 - e. Yes if GR's come back to be a part of;
 - f. Need more members to come to Assembly first
 - g. AWSC needs to rethink AC. It feels like a disconnect, we have discussions and then what?
 - h. Stop with the Action Committees
 - i. Action Committees- too much turn over to carry initiatives through; use them to take suggested projects and info back to Districts to implement; they seem to be improving with more of workshop & Q/A session rather than group projects
 - j. Progress and improvements are always needed and welcomed
 - k. More education for new comers along with business conducted
 - l. Have information before Assembly so to get thinking and excited
 - m. Make them welcoming and inviting
 - n. Only if they are action and not boring committees
 - o. They are only time fillers
 - p. I used to think they were supposed to entertain me but now I realize we are here to give out best thinking to these issues/tasks. If my District is paying, I should serve them best I can.
 - q. I think they have run their course. Currently Public Outreach is communicating nationwide about this topic. So many states are handling this in different ways. Some do not have them anymore and use the time for requested workshops. The variances are wide.
 - r. No I think AC no longer really involve more than a handful of people due to limitation of communication between Assemblies and also limitations of action that have been done in the past. Workshops/presentations would give members more pertinent info to share and bring back to the groups.
 - s. Attendance seems fine
 - t. Activities to bring back to the group are helpful
 - u. Some chairs do a good job including all participants, others have room to grow
 - v. Public outreach, we had a lot of ideas and time to comment
 - w. No comment (22)
 - x. I enjoyed our action committee meetings this year. Good ideas to take back to the group and brought back next year.

- y. PO had lots of ideas and time for comments
 - z. They are open to participate for anyone.
- aa. No (2)
 - bb. Participation is good (2)
 - cc. If willing
 - dd. Allow others to share if you have shared
 - ee. Always
6. In what ways, if any, could we utilize technology to help you feel more informed?
- a. DRs can send info to GRs and Chairs
 - b. Reminder email about the AWSC meetings with Agenda a couple of weeks ahead
 - c. Email Al-Anon schedule for Assembly a few days in advance so we have it
 - d. An app like the WSO is using for the World Conference this July
 - e. Use Area Update database that members have signed up for – email Mail Chimp for reminders and sending information/links to the Area website for Assembly Agendas, Business Meeting Agenda, Meeting Minutes, etc! Great way to stay in touch, encourage, inspire, and stay in front of the membership.
 - f. Laptop at registration for members to sign up for In the Loop@WSO and Updates from the Iowa website
 - g. Email reports out prior to Assembly; love getting agenda early!
 - h. Extend email lists
 - i. Keep website up to date and informed
 - j. I like Al-Anon podcasts
 - k. Group messages, personal invites
 - l. Better instructions on how to use the technology
 - m. Technology makes some people feel not welcomed or wanted
 - n. Conference calls between Assemblies & AWSC; electronic newsletter; group emails; website great for sharing info and keeping members in the know and current.
 - o. Try virtual meeting
7. What do you like most/least about the Assembly?
- a. Most:**
- i. Speakers
 - ii. Meeting new people, Fellowship; connecting with members, seeing folks I only get to see 2x a year; I get to see members I wouldn't see with the Assemblies; networking;
 - iii. Meeting people w/similar interests and problems
 - iv. Assemblies all over the State
 - v. Business Meeting- very informative (DR)
 - vi. Hearing from DRs and Coordinators
 - vii. Getting informed about what is happening in other groups, Area and WSO
 - viii. 1st timers/new comers, learning/working/growing together
 - ix. Attending committees
 - x. Delegates report, meetings

- xi. Getting together with other Districts
- xii. Workshops and Action Committee11
- xiii. It is positive and comfortable experience would like to collaborate with AA and Alateen more if possible
- xiv. Get see the bigger picture
- xv. Learn about business that relates to Al-Anon as a whole
- xvi. Introducing Al-Anon ideas to new GRs; growing awareness
- xvii. The love
- xviii. No Comment (12)

b. **Least:**

- i. Lack of transparency- no agenda
- ii. Dread going to Action Committees
- iii. Delegate and Business Meeting in the afternoon when people are most tired after lunch. It is a hard time to think and absorb the great information. Make a switch somehow
- iv. Business meeting and it's too long
- v. Candlelight meeting are too late in the evening
- vi. DO NOT READ ALL THE PREVIOUS MINUTES- please do a summary, no one is listening and it wastes a lot of precious time. Links of service should be taking care of getting the full minutes out and the minutes are also on the Area website- send a Website Update via Mail Chimp
- vii. Not everyone has a Business Meeting agenda- GRs especially need it.
- viii. Action Committees; replace with workshops
- ix. Three-day event- can it be Friday/Saturday or Saturday/Sunday? If we utilize time better we could reduce cost for hotel stays and maybe more would attend.
- x. Don't like Sundays for Assembly- need the day to prepare for work week
- xi. Being pushed to speak
- xii. Constant sitting so much all weekend; uncomfortable chairs
- xiii. Business can be repetitive; a little boring
- xiv. Sometime hard to hear Speakers
- xv. Money report
- xvi. Geared towards Officers instead of new comers
- xvii. Not knowing people
- xviii. Distance to travel
- xix. AA speaker
- xx. Non-nature location- tough to get a good walk in
- xxi. Limited involvement
- xxii. Members talking when trying to get information during assembly
- xxiii. No comment (14)

Please use the space below to share any other suggestions you may have for improving our Iowa Assembly or expanding on your answers from above:

- i. Make the less boring. Use fun skits and presentations.

- ii. GR's don't get an Assembly Schedule (Business Meeting Agenda) just have to sit there and listen with no schedule HATE THIS!!!!!!! I want the same schedule the DRs get, it will help learn who people are such as DRs and Coordinators –PLEASE PROVIDE FOR GR's!
- iii. Having the Delegate or Business Meeting in the morning would be great. I think it would be inspiring to hear from our Delegate right out the gate! Switching the Action Committees to Hot Topics and Buzz Session in the afternoon and making them more engaging, physical, informing, and fun! Viewing tools and video etc that the AWSC and WSO has done and thinks would be great for members to engage in too. Then people are moving and getting involved in the afternoon. The current Saturday set-up seems backwards and least effective.
- iv. How to get more members involved in service
- v. How to help see that donations are important
- vi. I wonder if AA would ever consider a 2-day conference/assembly i.e. Saturday and Sunday
- vii. Suggestions for Revised Assembly set up attached: 3-day Assembly; Saturday/Sunday Assembly; Friday/Saturday Assembly
- viii. Starting as a GR I had no idea what an "action committee" was... I'm trying to promote it to my group but so far, it's just been me
- ix. Assembly is too expensive to go alone; need to share expenses; if other members would go I could go more often
- x. Better use of Friday Night AWSC time altogether- short workshop or informal roundtable?; discussion to strengthen unity and fellowship of AWSC
- xi. Maybe an open mic time after Business Meeting or any ideas or input on the topics that members have thought about after the discussion is done. Kind of like we started at AWSC. Could use 2 minute 1 X at mic per topic for etiquette form
- xii. After "bugs" are out of AWSC agenda, would to look at possible face lift of Assembly
- xiii. Expand Delegate report
- xiv. Move AMIAS training to Marshalltown during January service workshop