

2024 Area Inventory Results:

Assembly General Comments

- We need to attract younger members. The Joy of Service needs to be seen and be an attraction.
- Be open to change. Encourage studying the Concepts. Consider holding our own Assemblies. Hold one 'in person' only AWSC, just as we are holding one virtual AWSC. So - One virtual, one hybrid, one in person. I feel the level of connection and discussion is greater when we are all on one platform. There is a disconnect when people join hybrid, although I appreciate that some people can attend since there is a hybrid option that may not be able to make it otherwise. I think if we were in person we might be able to connect with new DRs better and help them learn how to navigate conflict and other road blocks to service. I am thankful for the members of the AWSC. I think we are still rebalancing after the pandemic and will be stronger for using all of the means we can to come together for the business of Iowa AI-Anon. Together we can make it.
- Be cautious against dominating or not listening to the opinions of others.
- Use the traditions, be inclusive, don't spend so much time on what the theme will be for an event. Look for ways to be open minded and not be the exclusive club, knowing all the answers, not open to trying a different way.
- rotation of service. It seems to always be the same people in the head positions. Those people rotate, but new blood is rarely seen.
- Inclusive language in the 12 steps and traditions. Using male pronouns aligns us with a sect/denomination.
- I think AI-Anon is too hidden from the public. I didn't know a thing about AI-anon and had never heard the name AI-Anon. I found out about it from the person who turned out to be my sponsor for 19 years.
- I disagree with the Alateen age restrictions for Area events—especially Assembly. I was advised to let the Alateen chair know, and I did
- Public Outreach via social media
- Concerned Iowa's website does not have current information
- I have a great concern we require a lot out of officer positions. Is it necessary? We have had a lesser number stand for positions. Are we making it too much for others to desire to stand?
- I appreciate the opportunities I have had in the past to participate in the Iowa Area and am extremely grateful for everyone who continues to volunteer for Area service!
- don't use it enough to identify what would need to be addressed.
- AI-Anon works extremely well. I have noticed that attendance does seem to have dropped off after the pandemic although the hybrid meetings are available.
- I am a GR District 8. At recent meetings there has been discussion about making donations to WSO. Several members have brought up concerns as to how the WSO utilizes their funds. These members want to keep all donated money local because they believe that is the members intentions.
I learned recently at an Iowa event that it costs the WSO an annual amount of money to keep each group going. I believe groups and GRs should be made more aware of this information and groups should attempt to contribute to WSO annually to be fully self supporting according to our 7th tradition.
- Larger fonts on worksheets etc.

1. **Attracting Younger Members:** Emphasize the joy of service and make it appealing.
2. **Openness to Change:** Encourage studying the Concepts and consider holding more assemblies, including a mix of virtual, hybrid, and in-person meetings to enhance connection and discussion.
3. **Leadership Concerns:** There is a perception of dominance and not listening to the assembly. There's a need for rotation in service positions to bring in new members.
4. **Inclusivity:** Use inclusive language in the 12 steps and traditions. Avoid male pronouns to prevent alignment with any specific sect or denomination.
5. **Public Awareness:** Al-Anon needs better public outreach as many people are unaware of its existence.
6. **Alateen Age Restrictions:** Some members disagree with the current age restrictions for Area events.
7. **Public Outreach:** Utilize social media for outreach and ensure the Iowa website has current information.
8. **Officer Positions:** Concerns about the high demands on officer positions, which may deter people from standing for these roles.
9. **Gratitude:** Appreciation for the opportunities to participate in the Iowa Area and gratitude for those who volunteer.
10. **Hybrid Meetings:** Attendance has dropped post-pandemic despite the availability of hybrid meetings.
11. **Donations to WSO:** Discussion about making donations to WSO and ensuring members are aware of the costs involved in keeping groups running.
12. **Accessibility:** Suggestion to use larger fonts on worksheets and other materials.

These comments reflect a mix of appreciation, concerns, and suggestions for improvement within the organization.

Do you have any comments regarding the usefulness/effectiveness of having an Area Newsletter.

- In my eyes the Area Website has replaced the Newsletter.
- All info should be available on the Iowa website, which could include short reports from GR, DR and AWSC members.
- We would find it by checking the area website.
- I feel as GR I miss sharing do with my group about upcoming events. A newsletter would pull that together.
- It's especially important close to election with resumes. Enjoyed when I was active in service
- I would feel left out
- Posting current information on the Area website would help me utilize it more often and be able to find all the information in one place, not multiple places
- I feel the newsletter (or some sort of communication) needs to be revisited as to how to communicate information to groups and members. Personally, I get the information as needed from the Area, but there are several groups and members that are not getting the needed info. The long-lost question is where do we go from here?
- I would like to get via email
- Need this communication!
- I'm lucky, I live in Des Moines and attend 3 meetings a week. The GR emails the newsletter (when we have one) and I feel I'm part of recovery in Iowa Al-Anon as I'm kept informed by the Delegate's report, what's happening in the other districts, public outreach and literature projects, as well as where our Area Finances stand. I feel we've done a disservice to a great section of Iowa by not having the Area Newsletter. There are members who aren't connected and don't realize their isolation. You don't know, what you don't know.
- I'm not sure.
- I think it is useful even if it only twice a year after assembly
- Miss a lot of information
- The Area has not been emailing a newsletter so hard for a new panel to answer this. Emails come from the Area Chair with current information. Newsletters are great because they can be shared via email or passed at the group. With so many different members in meetings with a variety of experience and knowledge, a newsletter brings ALL of the information to all members who can then pick and choose what they want to read.
- A useful tool

Here's a summary of the comments regarding the usefulness and effectiveness of having an Area Newsletter:

1. **Website vs. Newsletter:** Some believe the Area Website has replaced the need for a newsletter, suggesting all information should be available online, including reports from GR, DR, and AWSC members.
2. **Missed Communication:** There is a sentiment that without a newsletter, important information about upcoming events and elections is missed, especially by those who are not actively checking the website.
3. **Importance of a Newsletter:** A newsletter is seen as a valuable tool for sharing comprehensive information, keeping members informed about various activities, and fostering a sense of connection, particularly for those who may feel isolated.
4. **Email Preference:** Some members prefer receiving information via email, which they find more accessible and easier to share within their groups.
5. **Frequency and Content:** Even if published only twice a year, a newsletter is considered useful. It can consolidate information from different sources, making it easier for members to stay informed.
6. **Current Practices:** Currently, emails from the Area Chair provide updates, but a newsletter could offer a more structured and detailed communication method.

Overall, while the Area Website is a valuable resource, many members feel that a newsletter (or some form of regular communication) is essential for ensuring all members receive the information they need in a timely and organized manner.

Comments on Serenity Weekend

- Love it.
- Enjoyable
- LOVE IT! Love the location, the serenity, the fellowship and spiritual connection
- Great fellowship - I think a 2 day Weekend would be best
- I felt the topic fit all members, whether new or been around.
- Enjoyed when I went. Workshops are informative and creative.
- it is a good time to relax and be with friends
- I usually stay a night/day. Although it is nice to have long free time, for those of us who will not be staying another night find that we might as well drive home during that time. That usually mean unfortunately we either speakers or breakout groups.
- Always enjoyable. Hopefully we can keep up attendance. It is a good place to touch base with members across Iowa.
- Would like less structured time.
- Very clicky and too many dog and pony shows
- Very uplifting. Breakout sessions could have been longer
- I am no longer physically able to attend, Enjoyed it in the past.
- Really enjoyed the ride to and from, liked meeting new friends, was informative and fun.
- It's too far away for me to travel and until recently I worked on Saturdays.
- I always highly enjoy it! It's a great time to get to know other members in my District better as well other's from across the state.
- It is usually a good time
- Great weekend
- Looking forward to this event. It is a fun time for fellowship and growth.
- Love it
- too far away to just attend the day
- I love the weekend, to learn, to love on others, and to walk the lake.
- Love it!
- I attended it one time and I had a great time. Lots of fun!
- Break out sessions were not long enough.
- Love the skits, some meetings & time to connect with others from around the area.
- Busy time of year for me
- It's a great time
- It is a great weekend, but have not been able to attend in the last few years
- Fibromyalgia and digestive issues would have made it very difficult to enjoy. Sitting, Standing, and a bed that works for me.
- Although I understand the free time, the length of free time is the amount of time it takes me to get home so I usually leave at free time since there are not formal workshops or meetings.
- I no longer do any overnight events because my husband has lung disease and is very susceptible to illnesses like COVID. After 4 years we both got COVID for the first time last Feb when I attended my sister's funeral in AZ and he barely survived. I miss the area-wide community available to me through Serenity Weekend and Assemblies but I also accept the reality of my situation.

- I just starting coming to Al Anon in April
- prefer the speakers to the games and activities
- Like them
- My reasons are I have a dog and I don't like sleeping in strange beds in the same room as other people.
- great time of recovery
- love it
- Have not attended
- Can't do community sleeping very well
- I am a newer member and looking forward to upcoming opportunities for Serenity Weekends
- Good

Here's a summary of the comments on Serenity Weekend:

Positive Feedback:

- Many attendees love the event, highlighting the location, serenity, fellowship, and spiritual connection.
- The workshops are seen as informative and creative.
- It's a great time to relax, meet new friends, and connect with members across Iowa.
- The event is enjoyable, uplifting, and a good opportunity for recovery and growth.
- Some appreciate the free time and the chance to walk by the lake.

Suggestions for Improvement:

- Some feel the event could be shorter, suggesting a two-day weekend.
- There are calls for less structured time and longer breakout sessions.
- A few attendees find the event too "clicky" and feel there are too many "dog and pony shows."

Challenges and Concerns:

- Distance and travel time are issues for some, making it hard to attend just for the day.
- Health issues and personal circumstances prevent some from attending overnight events.
- Some prefer more focus on speakers rather than games and activities.
- A few attendees have concerns about community sleeping arrangements.

Overall, Serenity Weekend is well-loved for its fellowship and spiritual benefits, but there are suggestions for making it more accessible and less structured.

Comments on website

- some information is out of date or not present
- needs to be updated frequently
- I do not feel the information stays updated and it needs an updated look to it
- I would like to see the website updated. We have had the same design for multiple years. Attraction helps.
- As familiar as I am with the website, there are times that I need to search for what I am looking for.
- I plan to use more often
- I love the 1st page. I find it difficult if it's not up to date.
- The website is user friendly
- Could use an update. The website is one place that the Area might benefit from hiring a professional to update stylistically. A professional could also keep it current with reports, flyers, etc.
- Works well
- I've only been on it a couple of times so I don't have much to say about it.
- Was looking for district numbers by city- hard to find!
- Easy to navigate
- Information does not get updated in a timely manner
- I see other websites that are much more user friendly, e.g. Georgia, plus I dislike the type and font we use. the gray/silver is hard to read at times.
- Iowa needs to update their website to be more dynamic and welcoming. Still old data on there about COVID.
- I appreciate that it is there and have used it to contact area officers and chairs when needed.
- I had no clue as to what district I was in to answer this survey and it took some time to find that information on the Website.
- I would like to see an assortment of pamphlets available for purchase instead of only individual.
- Hard for me because it's light blue or grey wording on computer and I have macular so a dark black print is better but I know that's probably not feasible for everyone to be able to do but it would help if the print font was larger print

Here's a summary of the **Area Website comments**:

- **Outdated Information:** Several users mentioned that the information on the website is not updated frequently enough, with some data being out of date.
- **Design and Usability:** Many users feel the website needs a design update, as it has had the same look for years. They suggest hiring a professional to improve the design and keep it current.
- **Navigation Issues:** While some users find the website user-friendly and easy to navigate, others have difficulty finding specific information, such as district numbers by city.
- **Font and Readability:** There are complaints about the font and color scheme, with some users finding the gray/silver text hard to read and suggesting darker, larger print for better readability.
- **Positive Feedback:** Despite the criticisms, some users appreciate the website's existence, find it works well, and plan to use it more often.

Overall, the main areas for improvement are updating the information more frequently, redesigning the website for better attraction and usability, and addressing readability issues

January 2025 AWSC

Inventory Committee: Linda A (Alt Delegate & Chair of Committee), Virginia P (Past Delegate), Missy Y (Archives Coordinator), LuAnne T (Literature Coordinator), Laura S (D3 DR),

The summary comments of the most recent Area Inventory were uploaded to the Google drive. Hopefully you have had a chance to review.

The Committee's recommendations to the AWSC are as follows:

- Updating and improving the Iowa **Area Website**.
 - Keeping up-to-date reports & event flyers
 - Salons – these have gone well in the past, possibly provide a Salon on the “intranet” which only Members could access reports, etc.
 - Using the website to attract new members.

Newsletter – This has been discussed already the past two years, but should continue to discuss.

Serenity Weekend – revisit again if we should continue with Serenity Weekend, location and format.