XIII. International Conventions / Regional Forums

General Service Conference - Conférence des Services généraux - Conferencia de Servicios Generales

2026-04-29 17:30 - 19:30 EDT

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2026 Conference Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums

ITEM A: Review a progress report on the flags of sovereign states being a part of the Flag Ceremony at the International Convention.

Background note:

Committee Consideration from 2025 ICRF Conference Committee:

The committee considered the request that all sovereign states' flags be a part of the Flag Ceremony at the International Convention. The consensus of the committee members is that it is important to explore this option to understand any impacts (e.g., cultural, timing) such inclusion may create. The committee requested that the trustees' IC/RF Committee begin exploration regarding the inclusion of sovereign states to the Flag Ceremony at the International Convention, including reaching out to gather sharing from Indigenous populations. The committee also suggested including a question in any post-Convention surveying of attendees that would help obtain information on how many members in attendance at the 2025 International Convention were from First Nations sovereign states, helping to gain an understanding of the total numbers we might be considering adding to the Flag Ceremony. The committee looks forward to a plan or progress report being brought back to the 2026 Conference Committee on IC/RF.

Background:

1. Update Report
2. Historical Summary of the International Convention Flag Ceremony

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Sovereign Flag Subcommittee
January 2026 Progress Report

At the 75th General Service Conference, the Conference Committee on IC/RF considered the request that all sovereign states' flags be a part of the Flag Ceremony at the International Convention. The consensus of the committee members is that it is important to explore this option to understand any impact such inclusion may create (e.g., cultural, timing).

The committee requested that the trustees' IC/RF Committee begin exploration regarding the inclusion of sovereign states to the Flag Ceremony at the International Convention, including reaching out to gather sharing from Indigenous populations. The committee also suggested including a question in any post-Convention survey of attendees that would help obtain information on how many members in attendance at the 2025 International Convention were from First Nations sovereign states, helping to gain an understanding of the total number we might be considering adding to a Flag Ceremony. The committee requested that a plan or progress report be brought back to the 2026 Conference Committee on IC/RF.

At the 2025 Q3 trustees' International Convention/Regional Forums Committee, the chair appointed a subcommittee to begin exploration regarding the inclusion of sovereign states in the Flag Ceremony at the International Convention.

The Subcommittee on the Inclusion of Sovereign State Flags in the Flag Ceremony at International Conventions met twice, on September 25, 2025, and December 3, 2025.

At the first meeting, the subcommittee reviewed its initial scope of including sovereign state flags in the Flag Ceremony at the 2030 IC. After some initial discussion, the subcommittee decided to expand its scope to include discussing the format of the Flag Ceremony to determine whether there is interest in potential changes.

The rationale to expand the scope is that there have been repeated concerns across past International Conventions that the Flag Ceremony is more about nationalism instead of A.A. unity throughout the world. Over the years, attendees have expressed that it would be more appropriate to have a native from each country carry their respective flag instead of a member of the A.A. community. Another problem is that there is a production cut-off time on that has led to countries being left out of the ceremony which has led to hurt feelings. Another issue is that the criteria for being considered to carry a country's flag is based on the member's physical address. This

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has often led to a member carrying a flag of a country they do not consider to be their home country.

To determine if this was something that the trustees on the General Service Board and the GSO Staff were interested in discussing, the subcommittee asked the Staff secretary to send out a survey.

The survey was sent to the trustees on the GSB, nontrustee directors, current ACMs and GSO Staff to ask if there was a desire to discuss changing the Flag Ceremony's format.

Here are the results of the survey, which was distributed to 53 recipients:

- 44 recipients opened the email (83% open rate)
- 28 individuals completed the survey (64% of recipients who opened the email)
- 25 of the 28 respondents indicated they would like to see changes to the International Convention Flag Ceremony (89%)

The subcommittee noted that the feedback provided strongly suggests a desire to discuss the following:

- Clearer vision of unity
- Focusing on showcasing the A.A. presence throughout the world and getting away from nationalism
- A more uniform approach to attire and/or the possibility of incorporating traditional attire reflective of each participating country

The subcommittee agreed that the charge from the Conference committee — to consider the inclusion of sovereign state flags in the Flag Ceremony at the International Convention — cannot be meaningfully addressed without considering the broader structure and purpose of the entire Flag Ceremony. Based on survey feedback and internal discussion, the subcommittee recognized:

- The ceremony requires comprehensive re-evaluation, not incremental adjustments.
- Any future proposal should include tight, consistent guidelines to ensure clarity and unity in presentation.
- A clear understanding of the intention and historical purpose of the Flag Ceremony is essential before developing recommendations.

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Next Steps

To move forward responsibly, the group identified several areas of necessary inquiry.

1. Gaining clarity on the trustee's perspectives
2. Reviewing the historical background on the creation, evolution, and intended purpose of the Flag Ceremony. This context will help determine what elements may be preserved, revised, or reimagined.
3. Analyzing the poll responses to extract themes, concerns, and actionable insights to inform future options.
4. Given the scope of the charge and the early stage of analysis, the subcommittee agreed that it would be in the best interest of the agenda item for the subcommittee to be reconstituted at the 2026 Q3 trustees' International Conventions/Regional Forums Committee meeting.

The subcommittee reaffirmed that the questions surrounding inclusion of sovereign state flags are inseparable from broader discussion of the Flag Ceremony. The subcommittee will continue to gather information including clarifying the ceremony's intention and building the necessary support for a potential redesign.

Additional research, analysis, and stakeholder engagement will guide the next phase of this work.

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Historical Summary of the International Convention Flag Ceremony

The origins of the A.A. International Convention Flag Ceremony are not clearly documented.

A 1980 *Box 4-5-9* article describes the ceremony as a colorful procession in which representatives carry their national flags to the speaker platform, highlighting the global reach of A.A. and showing where attendees have traveled from. The first Flag Ceremony took place in 1975 at A.A.'s 40th anniversary celebration in Denver, Colorado. It was not a Conference-approved event, and no subsequent Conference approval has occurred.

Country participation is determined by the home locations of registered attendees. There is no formal written policy, request process, or selection form used. Consistent with A.A.'s principle of having no opinion on outside issues, all countries represented by attendees are included without political exceptions. There is no additional cost to participate; the only requirement is that the individual be a registered Convention attendee. The ceremony is coordinated by the Alternate International Convention Coordinator in consultation with staff and attendees, and no formal approval process involving the board, a committee, or the Conference exists.

Documentation of how the ceremony has changed over time is limited. However, since 1990, local Native or Indigenous people have typically opened the ceremony as lead flag bearers.

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2026 Conference Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums

ITEM B: Discuss ways to encourage interest and participation at Regional Forums.

Secretary's note:

There were two virtual Forum events in 2021. In 2022, the Regional Forums returned to on-site events. The summary of suggestions from 2021 to 2025 is provided as an overview for the committee's convenience. The 2025 Evaluation Summaries provide a summary of the feedback from attendees at the four 2025 Regional Forums for review.

Background:

1. Summary of Suggestions 2021 to 2025
2. 2025 East Central Regional Forum Evaluation Summary
3. 2025 West Central Regional Forum Evaluation Summary
4. 2025 Southwest Regional Forum Evaluation Summary
5. 2025 Northeast Regional Forum Evaluation Summary

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Summary of Suggestions on Ways to Encourage Interest in Forums from the Conference Committee on International Conventions/Regional Forums

(2021-2025)

The committee discussed ways to encourage interest in Regional Forums and attract first-time attendees, and suggested:

2025

- That the General Service Office record a GSO Podcast episode showcasing Regional Forums.
- Budget considerations, the live broadcast option pilot and the plan to better serve interpretation needs.

2024

- Continue to announce Regional Forums at all local A.A. events within the region.
- That the Staff coordinator on the Regional Forum assignment communicate with the area contact and volunteer committee earlier in the Regional Forum planning process.
- That the Staff coordinator on the Regional Forum assignment continues to disseminate Regional Forum information early and often using all modes of communication including email, aa.org, Meeting Guide app, *Box 4-5-9,* and *Grapevine* and *La Viña*.
- Consider creating short, current anonymity protected videos about Regional Forums that can be shared on our communication channels.
- That the General Service Board consider adding the use of current technology including streaming and virtual/hybrid components to the Regional Forum, and the possibility of using local A.A. resources.
- Consider adding an additional full virtual forum.

2023

- That the General Service Board add virtual elements to Regional Forums or even add a virtual fifth forum to the annual calendar.
- Disseminate advance information about events using flyers, posters, announcements in *Grapevine* and *La Viña*, podcasts, Instagram messages, invitations in ASL, QR codes, and *Box 4-5-9* articles.

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2022

- Consider options to the title “Regional Forum” utilizing more current language.
- Continue utilizing digital communication options; however, also continue non-digital options to ensure full accessibility and participation by members who may not have access to technology.

2021

- Consider using the Meeting Guide app to further convey Regional Forum information.
- Continue using videoconferencing technology to broadcast portions of future in-person forum programs allowing members who may not have resources or time to travel to participate.
- Ensure future host regions are well informed about dates, locations, programs, and ways the local membership can participate.
- Extend outreach materials to invite the Spanish-speaking and LGBTQ communities to attend Regional Forums.
- Conduct at least one presentation or workshop in Spanish and/or French at each Regional Forum.

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2025 EAST CENTRAL REGIONAL FORUM – (August 22 - 24, 2025)

Feedback on On-Site Experiences

A total of 133 (132 English/1 Spanish) participants responded to the evaluation, from a total of 383 attendees. Below is a summary of the responses.

1. Please indicate whether this was your first Forum:

	English	Spanish
Yes	55 (41.7%)	1
No	77 (58.3%)	0

2. How did you hear about the Forum?

	English	Spanish
Area	60 (46.2%)	1
District	14 (10.8%)	0
GSO Flyer	15 (11.5%)	0
Local Intergroup/Central Office	7 (5.4%)	0
Homegroup	3 (2.3%)	0
www.aa.org	12 (9.2%)	0
Friend	9 (6.9%)	0
Other	10 (7.7%)	0

3. Did you pre-register online at: www.aa.org?

	English	Spanish
Yes	120 (90.2%)	0
No	13 (9.8%)	1

4. Suggestions to Improve Online Pre-Registration

Summary: Many found the registration process smooth and praised the Cvent platform's usability and customer service. Key concerns included:

- Clarify livestream and in-person options such as registering with different emails so attendees have flexibility within their schedules.
- Many attendees who did not stay at the hotel were surprised by hidden costs (e.g., parking at $59/night, paid Wi-Fi).
- Some had difficulty locating the registration page or pre-Forum information on the website.

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Suggestions for improvement:

- Earlier notice of registration opening and a welcome email with practical tips (e.g., parking, meals, agenda).
- Frequent registration reminders.
- Distribute the page for specific region instead of the general information page.

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5. Please indicate your current service position:

	English	Spanish
GSR	23 (17.4%)	0
DCM	10 (7.6%)	0
District Officer	6 (4.5%)	0
Area Officer	18 (13.6%)	0
Delegate	8 (6.1%)	**1**
Past Delegate	24 (18.2%)	0
Past Trustee	2 (1.5%)	0
Friend of A.A.	1 (0.8%)	0
A.A. Member	24 (18.2%)	0
Other	16 (12.1%)	0

Summary: Respondents represented a diverse range of service roles, with the largest groups being:

- A.A. Members and Past Delegates (18.2% each)
- GSRs (17.4%)
- Area Officers (13.6%)
- Delegates (6.1%)
- DCMs (7.6%).
- One Spanish-speaking respondent (Delegate)

6A. Improvements to Presentations

Summary: Attendees praised the presentations for their authenticity, clarity, and being informative. Improvements to address audience fatigue such as shorter sessions, more visual aids, and pre-session materials were suggested. They also emphasized the importance of enhancing connection and trust across all presenter roles. Seeing newer trusted servants navigate their roles was seen as relatable and encouraging.

- Delegates: Value heartfelt sharing over scripted reading; more insights into committee work and how delegates balance service with personal life; visuals were appreciated.
- AAWS Board & GSO: Providing slides or outlines in advance would help attendees absorb dense content. Clarity of Staff roles was especially helpful for

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newcomers. Slower pacing and direct answers to questions were emphasized as trust-building practices.

- AA Grapevine Board & Office: The subscription challenge and summary video were well received. Showing how the app works on a phone could encourage adoption among less tech-savvy members. An interactive session with audience participation was valued; A video introducing Grapevine/La Viña staff would enhance connection to the magazine.
- Trustee-at-large/U.S.: Appreciated hearing about A.A.'s global reach, growth, and challenges, which helped contextualize local service efforts; and suggested trustees continue to contribute their reflections in *Box 4-5-9*.
- Treasurer: Attendees valued the process explanation and financial data. A consistent call for handouts or summaries — either printed or via QR codes — to bring back to home groups. Enhance presentation by inviting additional financial staff. Short breaks for questions would improve comprehension.
- Class A Trustee Presentation: Praised as meaningful and inspiring, with strong emotional resonance. Schedule this earlier to allow for deeper engagement. More stories on how their professional backgrounds inform board decisions.
- Past Trustees: Strong and inspiring. Include an Ask-It-Basket panel instead. A deeper dive into a typical day as a trustee. Limit personal stories and focus on service experience.
- First-Time Attendees: Occasionally misused for airing grievances; Give specific prompts or questions to guide sharing; and split the session across two days.

6B. Improvements to Workshops

Summary: Workshops overall were appreciated for the strong participation, but clearer format expectations would enhance the experience. Suggestions included:

- Tips on helping the discussions transition to solutions.
- Delegates to present on their committees, linking Conference work to local relevance.
- Acknowledge inconsistency in workshop structures due to broad cross section of service areas.
- Attendees wanted more panelist-led discussion, background context, and structured presentations.

6C. Improvements to Sharing Sessions

Summary: Sharing sessions were seen as valuable learning opportunities, especially for understanding trusted servants' humility and clarifying member concerns. Suggestions included:

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- Attendees appreciated time limits and respectful facilitation.
- Add one more session on Saturday, limiting repetitive speakers, and providing guidance on session purpose.
- While many shares were uplifting, some were viewed as off-topic or in poor taste, reinforcing the need for light structure.

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7. Suggested Future Presentation Topics

Summary: Attendees wanted to know more about practical topics.

- Service Understanding: Deep dives into A.A.'s structure, history of GSO/GSC/GSB, and financial transparency.
- Recovery in the Digital Age: Exploring social media's impact, virtual sobriety, and safety.
- Unity and Tradition: Topics like chairing meetings, balancing the Three Legacies, and generational and other dynamics ("Elder Statesman vs. Bleeding Deacon vs. YPAA vs. underrepresented newcomers").
- Practical Tools: How to use pamphlets, Grapevine, and technology in service work to support carrying A.A.'s message.

8. **Suggested Future Workshop Topics**

Summary: Attendees enjoyed workshops and wanted more variety and options to attend more throughout the weekend. There is a clear desire to address how A.A. adapts to the digital age. Attendees want workshops that reflect diversity and practical tools for communication — using history to preserve the core message and methods of the A.A. program. Key ideas included:

- Real-life examples of applying the Traditions in modern service work.
- Crash courses and deeper dives into A.A.'s Twelve Concepts.
- Service Sponsorship: Emphasizing guidance for newcomers.
- Plain Language Service: Making service roles more accessible to new members.
- A.A. and Technology: Navigating digital tools, Fellowship Connection, and aa.org resources.
- Anonymity in the Tech World: Preserving anonymity in social media and how A.A. principles coexist with AI.
- Mental Health and Minority Representation in A.A.: Carrying the message inclusively.
- Supporting spiritual diversity in A.A.
- Safety in A.A.: Covering all aspects of safety in meetings and online.
- Committee and Business Meetings: Using A.A.'s guiding principles or "Roberts Rules."

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- Proposed Agenda Items: How to write and submit them effectively.
- Communication Across Service Levels: What works and what doesn't between areas, districts, and groups.
- Self-Support: Understanding financial responsibility at all levels.

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9. Suggestions to Improve the Overall Forum Experience

Summary: Feedback focused on interactive opportunities, venue and cost considerations, programming, and the importance of open communication, especially when addressing difficult or controversial topics. Key suggestions included:

- Roundtables with GSO staff.
- A "How the Forum Operates" session for newcomers.
- Icebreakers encouraging mingling beyond familiar travel groups.
- Affordability: Strong concern over high hotel, parking, and meal costs. Suggestions for future venues:
    - Choosing venues with free or lower-cost parking.
    - Providing water and coffee stations outside meeting rooms.
    - Offering more food in hospitality rooms to offset expenses.
    - Sharing local restaurant guides with dietary and accessibility info.
- Attendees preferred speakers using notes over scripted remarks.
- Shorter speaking limits (one-minute shares and responses)
- Start earlier or a day sooner to reduce late evening sessions.
- Handouts and printed materials would help attendees follow along and retain information.
- Add a GSO Support Session focused on how GSO can assist with specific service areas (e.g., Corrections, CPC).
- Provide clear details during pre-registration, not just at check-in.

10. Likelihood of Attending Another Regional Forum

Summary: 130 of English-speaking respondents and 1 of Spanish-speaking respondent indicated they would attend another Regional Forum.

Reasons for attending:

- The opportunity to receive direct updates from GSO and the boards.
- A way to stay current with A.A.'s national and international developments.
- A personal commitment to understanding A.A.'s structure and giving back.
- Bringing first-time attendees is a common goal among seasoned members.
- Q&A sessions are valued for ongoing learning and service development.

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Reasons for not attending:

- One attendee expressed discomfort with how a sensitive question was handled during the forum, suggesting that lack of direct answers may impact trust in leadership.

Feedback on Livestream Pilot

A total of 15 respondent (14 English, 1 Spanish) participants responded to the evaluation, from a total of 73 Livestream attendees.

First-Time Attendees – Motivation to Join:

- A growing interest in service, curiosity about A.A.'s structure, and to explore the webinar format.
- A desire to learn the "language" of general service and become more involved.

Returning Attendees – Reasons for Coming Back

- Value of direct communication with GSO Staff and trustees.
- Stay informed about A.A.'s evolving structure.
- Accessibility online due to budget constraints.

How Attendees Heard About the Forum

- Equal amounts hear from their area, GSO flyers, intergroups, friends, and home groups.

Suggestions to Improve Online Pre-Registration

- The process was described as easy and clear.
- One suggestion was to integrate the GSO mobile app to streamline future registrations.

Current Service Positions

- 6 A.A. Members, 2 GSRs, 1 Delegate, and 6 DCMs

Presentation Feedback

- Attendees appreciated the diplomatic tone and responsiveness to questions.
- Highlight digital resources.
- Clarify multiple service offices.
- Praise for its strong emotional connection and relevance.
- Valuable experience and inspiration.

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Workshop Feedback

- The session on Agnostics and Atheists in A.A. was highlighted as informative, especially the pamphlet "The 'God' Word."

Suggested Future Presentation Topics

- Online meetings, digital tools, and safety differences between in-person and online meetings.
- Involving young people at the board and Grapevine levels.
- Promoting AA-Intergroup.org and Grapevine's role in service.

Suggested Future Workshop Topics

- Safety and anonymity guidelines, privacy tools, and social media strategy.
- Effective group conscience practices.

Overall Feedback of the Livestream Experience

- Slides were essential for understanding presentations.
- Livestream format was simple and accessible.

Interpretation Tool Feedback

Rating Usefulness:

- 9 Satisfied, 4 Very Satisfied; No dissatisfaction was reported.

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2025 WEST CENTRAL REGIONAL FORUM – (September 19-21, 2025)

Feedback on On-Site Experiences

A total of 87 (86 English/1 Spanish) participants responded to the evaluation, from a total of 241 on-site attendees. Below is a summary of the responses.

1. Please indicate whether this was your first Forum:

	English	Spanish
Yes	31 (36.0%)	1
No	55 (64.0%)	0

2. How did you hear about the Forum?

	English	Spanish
Area	34 (40.5%)	1
District	11 (13.1%)	0
GSO Flyer	4 (4.8%)	0
Local Intergroup/Central Office	0	0
Homegroup	9 (10.7%)	0
www.aa.org	4 (4.8%)	0
Friend	8 (9.5%)	0
Other	14 (16.7%)	0

3. Did you pre-register online at: www.aa.org?

	English	Spanish
Yes	70 (82.4%)	0
No	15 (17.6%)	1

4. Please list any suggestions to improve the online pre-registration process

- Open pre-registration sooner.
- Clarify when the online option is available.
- Having the actual program embedded as a link in the registration confirmation email would be splendid!
- My confirmation email stated an incorrect location for the Forum.
- Don't use a website that has ads.
- It is not always easy to find registration. Additionally, while I attended in person, I could not find the audio-only option.

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- It was easy but I was a little confused about when to scroll down and when I needed to go to the next page.

5. Please indicate your current service position:

	English	Spanish
G.S.R.	14 (16.3%)	0
D.C.M.	10 (11.6%)	0
District Officer	4 (4.7%)	0
Area Officer	14 (16.3%)	0
Delegate	6 (7.0%)	**1**
Past Delegate	6 (7.0%)	0
Past Trustee	0	0
Friend of A.A.	0	0
A.A. Member	15 (17.4%)	0
Other	17 (19.8%)	0

6. Suggestions to Improve Online Pre-Registration

Summary: Participants expressed a need for clearer communication and easier navigation during the online registration process. Key concerns included:

- Opening registration earlier.
- Clarifying when online registration is available.
- Including the program link in confirmation emails.
- Improving visibility of registration and livestream options.
- Simplifying navigation between pages.

Suggestions for improvement:

- Launch registration earlier and clarify when livestream option will be available
- Embed the program link in confirmation emails.

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7. Current Service Positions of Respondents

Summary: Respondents represented a diverse range of service roles, with the largest groups being:

- A.A. members (17.4%)
- Other roles (19.8%)
- GSR and area officers (each 16.3%)
- DCM (11.6%) Spanish-speaking participation was minimal, with only one delegate responding.

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8A. Improvements to Presentations

Summary: Feedback emphasized the need for more engaging, transparent, and informative presentations across all categories:

- Delegates: Avoid reading scripts; focus on local service topics, background context, and allow more Q&A.
- AAWS Board & GSO: Provide detailed updates and address financial concerns openly.
- Grapevine Board: Reduce sales tone, focus on operational accomplishments, impacts, and challenges. Increase Q&A time.
- Trustee-at-large/U.S.: Share current challenges
- Treasurer: Present clear, easily readable financial data without viewpoint; offer printed reports and define terms clearly.
- Class A Trustee Presentation: Praised for authenticity and engagement.
- Past Trustees: Encourage their involvement in Q&A and emphasize their own experiences as a trustee and with rotation.
- First-Time Attendees: Sharing sessions were appreciated for their fresh perspectives.

8B. Improvements to Workshops

Summary: Workshops were generally well-received, with appreciation for interactive formats and shared experiences. Suggestions included:

- Offering multiple sessions per topic.
- Providing structured agendas and introductory information.
- Reducing simultaneous offerings to avoid choice overload.
- Clarifying expectations (e.g., discussion vs. lecture).
- Moderators include outlines or guidance for deeper learning or participation.

8C. Improvements to Sharing Sessions

Summary: Sharing sessions were valued but seen as insufficient in time and scope. Concerns included:

- Reduced time for sharing, especially after key presentations.
- Unequal treatment of speakers (e.g., unrestricted time for leadership).
- Frustration over unanswered questions and perceived avoidance.
- Desire for more sessions focused on specific topics like finances and Grapevine challenges.

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9. Suggested Future Presentation Topics

Summary: Attendees proposed a wide range of topics that reflect a desire for deeper understanding, transparency, and relevance in presentations. Key themes include:

- Warranties and Service Structure: Concepts, traditions, and flexible leadership.

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- Financial Responsibility: Decision-making, financial future, self-support, and group conscience.
- Broad and Inclusive: Supporting linguistic districts and bridging cultural gaps.
- Safety and Trust: Addressing safety in A.A. to open dialogue to build trust.
- Attraction and Example: Making presentations more engaging by using storytelling and explaining how service events fit into A.A.'s primary purpose.
- Grapevine and Archives: Better utilization of Grapevine services locally and archival history locally.

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10. Suggested Future Workshop Topics

Summary: Workshop suggestions emphasized practical guidance, inclusivity, and relevance to current challenges. Key ideas include:

- Anonymity at the Foundation: The significance of "principles before personalities."
- Modern Challenges: Required attendance at A.A. meetings; integration of online meetings within our local service structure.
- Safety and Inclusion: "Working with Others" to ensure safety for all members and reaching younger generations.
- Archives and Service: Greater focus on local A.A. history can help with involvement in the service structure.
- Format Preferences: Creating clear, interactive, and informative workshops for local A.A. events.

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11. Suggestions to Improve the Overall Forum Experience

Summary: Feedback highlighted both appreciation and areas for improvement in the Forum experience:

- Communication and Trust: Clear answers to questions with context are essential.
- Logistics and Accessibility: Clarify details for parking, meals, and hospitality room.
- Online Experience: Praise for livestreaming and translation services, but some missed out due to lack of knowledge of how to combine in-person with livestream into their schedules. Increase number of follow-up emails about the event.
- Forum Content: Greater focus on communicating that the benefits of reducing time spent on repetitive grievances increases time for questions and sharing.
- Authority and Responsibility: Encourage more involvement from areas to reduce financial strain on first-time attendees and foster greater involvement.
- Scheduling and Participation: Consider offering workshops on Friday to reduce overlap and improve attendees' accessibility to more topics.

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12. Likelihood of Attending Another Regional Forum

Summary: 78 (94%) of English-speaking respondents and 1 (100%) of Spanish-speaking respondents indicated they would attend another Forum.

Reasons for attending:

- Staying informed and connected to A.A. as a whole.
- Learning from GSO Staff, trustees, and delegates.
- Enjoying the fellowship and service structure.
- Personal growth and continued engagement.

Reasons for not attending:

- Cost concerns.
- Location-dependent decisions.
- Stepping away from general service.

Feedback on Livestream Pilot

A total of 18 respondents (17 English, 1 Spanish) responded to the evaluation, from a total of 80 livestream attendees. Below is a summary of the responses.

First-Time Attendees – Motivation to Join

Summary: New attendees were drawn to the Forum by a growing interest in service, curiosity about A.A.'s structure, and the opportunity to deepen their involvement. Many appreciated the chance to learn, connect, and explore A.A.'s broader service language and operations.

Returning Attendees – Reasons for Coming Back

Summary: Returning participants cited a strong desire to stay informed, engage with A.A. leadership, and continue their personal growth in service. Forums were seen as essential to recovery, connection, and understanding A.A.'s evolving processes. Budget constraints and regional relevance also influenced attendance.

How Attendees Heard About the Livestream Option

Summary: Awareness came from a mix of sources, but area (4) was the most common.

- Other sources included GSO flyers, intergroups, friends, and home groups. This suggests a need for broader and more consistent promotion across all service levels.

Suggestions to Improve Online Pre-Registration

Summary: Feedback was minimal but constructive.

- Consider integrating the GSO mobile app for registration.

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- Overall, the process was described as easy and clear.

Current Service Positions

Summary: Respondents represented a mix of service roles: A.A. Members, GSRs, DCMs, delegates (1 Spanish, 6 English); and past delegates.

Presentation Feedback

Summary: Presentations were generally well-received, with appreciation for diplomacy, transparency, and digital resources. Suggestions included:

- Sharing more about the 2024 inventory and linking resources via QR codes.
- Highlighting multiple service offices and Grapevine materials.
- Praise for trustees, treasurer, and Class A presentations, with no major criticisms.

Workshop Feedback

Summary: Workshops were positively received, especially those addressing inclusivity:

- Agnostics and Atheists in A.A. was highlighted as informative.
- No major format suggestions were offered, indicating satisfaction with structure.

Suggested Future Presentation Topics

Summary: Attendees proposed topics that reflect current challenges and opportunities:

- Registration of meetings: Meeting Guide app, GSO, intergroup, and area.
- Final Conference Report
- Online groups and district participation.
- How each area attempts to get a consensus on agenda items from groups.

Suggested Future Workshop Topics

- Technology in A.A. and OIAA
- Developing local public service announcements.

Sharing Sessions Feedback

- Allow interaction from online attendees.
- More time for sharing sessions.

Overall Feedback of the Livestream Experience

Summary: Feedback was largely positive, with appreciation for:

- Clear audio, accurate scheduling, and slide presentations.
- Requests included:
    - Adding a video option with appropriate settings.
    - Continuing to offer live broadcast-only options for flexibility.

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Interpretation Tool Feedback

Rating Usefulness: 0 responses.

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2025 Southwest Regional Forum Evaluation Summary

In-person Feedback

1. **If this is your first Forum what attracted, you to attend?** (Responses: 76)

   Summary: First-time attendees were primarily motivated by a desire to learn and participate in the service structure, including understanding GSO/GSB functions, roles (e.g., GSR/DCM), and how A.A. service operates. A secondary set of motivations included curiosity about the Forum format, opportunities to meet/engage with trusted servants, and practical considerations like location/convenience. A smaller but notable thread referenced accessibility/interpretation tools as an attraction.

2. **If this is NOT your first Forum, what brought you back?** (Responses: 69)

   Summary: Returning attendees most often described the Forum as a way to stay informed and engaged in A.A. service, fulfill service responsibilities (bringing concerns and returning with reports), and maintain connection with the wider Fellowship. Many specifically valued hearing directly from GSO/GSB/trustees and the Q&A opportunities, with a smaller cluster referencing accessibility/translation tools and participation constraints (e.g., budget).

3. **Please list any suggestions to improve the online pre-registration process.**

   (Responses: 53)

   Summary: Most comments indicated registration was easy/smooth, but improvement requests concentrated on logistics and clarity, including making the registration link easier to find, improving information about start/end times, strengthening visibility and instructions for virtual/streaming options, and simplifying steps (e.g., reducing “page jumping”). Several also asked for practical enhancements such as allowing preferred name on badges and reducing duplicate steps when attending in more than one mode.

4. **Forum Presentations**

   Delegates (Responses: 66)

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Summary: Delegate feedback leaned strongly positive — many appreciated the quality of talks, and autonomy in topic choice. The most repeated improvement themes were more time for Q&A, stronger topic alignment/cohesion (clearer connection to stated topics or a unifying theme), and better support materials (e.g., accompanying slides/handouts/recordings).

AAWS Board and Your General Service Office (Responses: 64)

Summary: Attendees valued the session's informational role and cited elements like clear explanations and engaging components (e.g., Staff/office context). The strongest improvement signal was the desire for more Q&A time and more direct, concrete answers, especially on complex or uncomfortable topics. Several asked for more referenceable resources (links/QR codes/handouts), clearer updates about what leadership is focusing on, and more readable/usable materials (slides and takeaways) to help them report back accurately.

AA Grapevine Board and the Grapevine Office (Responses**:** 59)

Summary: Feedback was generally appreciative and engaged, with repeated praise for the presenters and the "freshness" of information. A consistent improvement theme was to acknowledge challenges candidly and pair updates with clearer problem/solution framing, particularly where respondents referenced Grapevine realities and sustainability. Additional recurring requests included more Q&A time, content that emphasizes "why/how it helps recovery" (practical application stories), and strengthened accessibility/communication features (e.g., ensuring translation support works smoothly for all audiences).

Trustee-at-large (Responses: 56)

Summary: This session's feedback clustered heavily around language/translation experience. Many respondents highlighted the interpretation tool (Wordly) as a major enabler, while others found real-time phone-based translation distracting or felt that using a non-dominant language without a fully effective translation experience reduced engagement. Overall, attendees still expressed appreciation for learning about worldwide service impacts.

Treasurer (Responses: 59)

Summary: Treasurer feedback concentrated on three primary issues:

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1. Representation/availability: multiple respondents noted the absence of a treasurer and wanted that role present for credibility and questions.
2. Clarity and usability of financial content: requests for more current numbers, clearer explanations for non-financial audiences, and visuals that are readable (larger fonts, better charts).
3. Interaction: repeated asks for more Q&A time and more direct handling of financial questions. Several explicitly suggested printed or table-available materials to support accurate understanding and reporting back.

It's "A" Class Act (Responses: 60)

Summary: This presentation was overwhelmingly received as a highlight, described repeatedly as inspiring and emotionally resonant.

5. Sharing from Past Trustees (Responses: 60)

Summary: Many respondents found the past trustee sharing impactful, especially for framing the weekend around primary purpose, unity, and perspective. The most common improvement request was structural: more than one past trustee (e.g., a panel) to broaden viewpoints.

6. First-time Attendees (Responses: 48)

Summary: Feedback strongly supported this segment as affirming and future-facing — attendees valued hearing newcomers' enthusiasm and observations.

7. Workshop Topics (Responses: 54)

Summary: Workshop topics were broadly seen as relevant and helpful, with many noting difficulties choosing among simultaneous options. Improvement suggestions focused on making topic titles/descriptions less vague, clarifying whether a workshop is best for newcomers vs. experienced trusted servants, and ensuring the content aligns more clearly with service-structure learning when that is the expectation.

8. Sharing Sessions (Responses: 50)

Summary: Sharing sessions were repeatedly described as central to the Forum's purpose, with the strongest, most consistent request being more time for member questions and sharing. Several respondents also pointed to operational improvements: keeping presenters on time so Q&A isn't cut, ensuring fairness and order at microphones, and keeping shares more on topic. Overall sentiment suggests these

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sessions are viewed as the primary channel for trust-building and clarity, provided adequate time is protected.

9. **Suggested future presentation topics** (Responses: 41)

Summary: Suggested topics emphasized service education and clarity, including deeper understanding of concepts/traditions/warranties, leadership and communication, and how decisions and processes work at higher levels. Several also requested content on trust/transparency, financial realities and planning, and more visibility for archives and outreach (including younger people and linguistic accessibility). Technology and anonymity in modern contexts also appeared as forward-looking areas of interest.

10. Suggested future workshop topics (Responses: 39)

Summary: Workshop topic suggestions leaned practical and skill-building: how to run group conscience effectively, "how-to" understanding of finances/7th Tradition stewardship at a basic level, and applied learning on concepts/traditions tied to current fellowship concerns. Engagement of young people/YPAA, improving communication up/down the service triangle, and creating accessible, targeted sessions for newer trusted servants were recurring priorities.

11. Will you likely return to another Forum? (Responses**:** Y=112; N=7)

"Yes" Summary: The dominant reasons for returning were to stay informed, deepen involvement in service, and remain connected to the broader AA fellowship. Many respondents highlighted the value of hearing directly from GSO/GSB/trustees, being able to ask questions, and bringing learning back to groups/districts/areas. A secondary reason was the community dimension — fellowship, connection, and service motivation.

"No" Summary: The reasons were primarily practical constraints, including travel-related difficulty/cost and personal capacity for continued participation.

12. Any additional feedback below. (Responses: 73)

Summary: Additional feedback most heavily reinforced the importance of accessibility and interpretation/translation tools, which many described as impactful and worth continuing. Beyond that, the most consistent operational improvement request was again more protected time for Q\&A/sharing, along with practical enhancements that help attendees retain and relay information (e.g., clearer materials, scheduling clarity, workshop access). Many comments also expressed broad gratitude for the event and the opportunity to connect across the service structure.

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Livestream Pilot Feedback

1. **If this is your first Forum what attracted you to attend**? (Responses: 15)

Summary: First-time livestream attendees were primarily motivated by access and practicality — being able to participate virtually when travel, cost, or scheduling made in-person attendance difficult. Many also cited a desire to learn more about A A.'s service structure, stay informed, and bring accurate updates back to their groups (including online-only groups).

If this is NOT your first Forum, what brought you back? (Responses: 20)

Summary: Returning livestream participants most often came back to stay connected to General Service and hear direct updates from GSO/GSB/AAWS/Grapevine. Several emphasized that Forums help them "keep a pulse" on A.A. beyond local reporting and appreciate hearing questions and answers raised during the event. A secondary theme was access (choosing audio due to travel cost, health, or obligations).

2. **Please list any suggestions to improve the online pre-registration process:**

(Responses: 19)

Summary: Registration feedback focused less on form mechanics and more on communication clarity — especially knowing how and when livestream access details would be sent and ensuring the agenda/schedule and join instructions arrive earlier. Some also flagged that registration should be easier to find on the site and clearer when switching between in-person vs. live-audio registrations, including edge cases where attendees might need both (e.g., in person but listening online while traveling/resting).

3. **Please list any suggestions to improve the live only broadcast option Forum experience.** (Responses: 20)

Summary: This section delivered the strongest, most consistent feedback. The top improvement themes were:

- Audio reliability and clarity (cutting in/out, choppy feed, clicking noise, mic technique, hotel internet readiness).
- Adding video/visual presence (even podium-only, blurred, or anonymity-preserving options) to reduce disconnection — especially for first timers.

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- Improving interaction (chat monitoring during Q&A, ability to use chat, ways to follow schedule in real time).
- Keeping translation access visible and easy (e.g., QR link displayed consistently; extra time to switch tools).

4. **Would you return to another Forum in the future?** (Responses: Y=31; N=4)

"Yes" Summary: The primary driver for "yes" was practical accessibility: participants would return when travel is too costly, health limits attendance, schedules conflict, or distance is prohibitive (including international). Many also cited the ability to stay informed and bring learning back to their group/district. Several framed audio-only as "better than no Forum," while still expressing a preference for in-person if feasible.

"No" Summary: Reasons for "no" centered on engagement challenges (difficulty maintaining attention in audio-only/Zoom formats), technical failures (audio not working), and a clear preference to attend in person when possible. One response also referenced schedule issues and cost constraints that affect in-person attendance.

5. **Please provide any additional feedback below.** (Responses: 18)

Summary: Additional feedback combined appreciation with actionable improvements. Many expressed gratitude that audio access made participation possible and encouraged continuing the option. Operationally, respondents reinforced the need for reliable audio, correct schedules, and simpler translation access. Some also raised broader service-structure reflections — emphasizing listening, trust, connection between boards/offices and the fellowship, and the value of better engagement tools (more slides, schedule cues, and potentially anonymity-safe visuals).

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2025 Northeast Regional Forum Evaluation Summary

In-person Feedback

1. If this is your first Forum what attracted you to attend? (Responses: 54)

Summary: First-time attendees were mainly motivated by curiosity and service learning — wanting to understand how A.A. functions "beyond the group level," how districts/areas connect to the broader structure, and to hear directly from trustees and GSO. Practical factors also mattered: local/close location, free registration, and service role expectations (GSR/DCM/area roles). A smaller but important thread reflected hybrid/streaming access as an enabler, along with at least one report of a technical barrier that prevented participation despite registration.

2. If this is NOT your first Forum, what brought you back? (Responses: 51)

Summary: Returning attendees most often cited Forums as a unique way to get direct status updates from trustees/Staff and stay current on AAWS/GSO/Grapevine. Many also emphasized responsibility to report back to their area/district, the value of real-time Q&A, and the fellowship/networking aspects. Several described Forums as inspirational and reinforcing commitment to service, while a few referenced accessibility (including internet/streaming) as a practical reason for returning.

3. Please list any suggestions to improve the online pre-registration process.

(Responses: 42)

Summary: Most respondents said registration was smooth/easy, but improvement suggestions clustered around:

- **Findability & navigation**: Registration link/tab was difficult to locate; request for a direct QR code on the flyer and more prominent placement.
- **Clarity & communications**: Earlier availability of the presentations list, better distribution to Areas/groups, and clearer instructions — especially for Spanish-language access.

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- **Mode-switching/virtual access**: Issues such as receiving confirmation for "voice only" but not receiving the link, or difficulty changing registration type without re-registering.
- **Logistics tied to booking**: One respondent described a problematic hotel booking experience and suggested better handling of contracted-rate links.
- **Accessibility & remote experience**: A strong note that ASL access stopped abruptly (impacting an attendee), and that an online option that includes screen-shared slides (audio/visuals without showing people) would improve the remote experience.

4. Presentations

Delegates (Responses: 32)

Summary: Delegate feedback was largely positive, but the most common improvement request was more time per delegate and/or fewer items so talks aren't so brief. Additional suggestions included: providing more context on delegate responsibilities/prior service, improving cohesion and breadth of perspectives, addressing rumors directly, giving presenters more advance notice, and increasing representation/participation (e.g., more seated delegates and/or alternates, and more Class A participation). A small subset expressed dissatisfaction with tone/content balance, particularly around who should be speaking and how.

AAWS Board and Your General Service Office (Responses: 37)

Summary: Feedback showed a mix of appreciation and pointed suggestions. Key themes included:

- **Timing & pacing:** Financial reporting late in the schedule felt hard to absorb ("burned out" timing).
- **Depth & specificity:** Some wanted more "real info," clearer explanations of major operational decisions (e.g., office changes and related expenses), and future-looking planning (multi-year vision).
- **Representation & inclusion:** Multiple comments asked for more gender balance and minority representation at the head table/dais.
- **Tone & equity in participation:** Concerns about "folksy" time use, fairness at microphones, and how Q&A time is allocated.

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- **Content expectations:** Desire to hear about upcoming/anticipated topics (e.g., Big Book edition timing), and concerns about how some issues were characterized.

Overall, many respondents still described the session as informative, accessible, and well-delivered.

AA Grapevine Board and the Grapevine Office (Responses: 35)

Summary: Grapevine feedback ranged from enthusiastic praise (videos, props, energy) to calls for sharper strategy and transparency:

- Several preferred less marketing tone and more mission/work clarity. Multiple respondents wanted clearer numbers and specific guidance on what is needed to become self-supporting, including questions about how costs/income are accounted for across entities. Some urged a stronger move toward digital-first to reduce printing costs.

Trustee-at-large (Responses: 29)

Summary: The defining theme was interpretation reliability and readiness. Some attendees praised the use of Wordly and the value of hearing international perspectives; others found the session difficult to follow due to slow/inconsistent translation, lack of clear guidance (e.g., earbuds/devices), or tool interruptions. Several comments effectively point to the need for clearer instructions and more stable interpretation support throughout the session to avoid audience drop-off.

Finance Talk (Responses: 27)

Summary: Treasurer feedback emphasized clarity, readability, and credibility:

- **Readability:** Repeated requests for larger fonts and more legible graphs.
- **Clarity for non-finance audiences:** Suggestions for a glossary and “lay terms,” plus more direct presentation of numbers.
- **Presence & accountability:** Multiple respondents noted the treasurer didn’t appear to be present and wanted the designated treasurer to deliver the report.
- **Content depth:** Requests for more detail on major expenses (including international convention), reserve/self-support framing, and a list of deferred projects due to budget constraints.

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- **Timing:** Like the AAWS/GSO feedback, some felt the financial segment should not occur when attendees are exhausted.

It's "A" Class Act (Responses: 24)

Summary: This segment was consistently described as a highlight — impactful, inspiring, and helpful for service newcomers to understand the value and role of Class A trustees. A small number of comments focused on accessibility/flow when interpretation was involved (e.g., making it smoother for the presenter to follow Spanish via Wordly), but overall sentiment was strongly positive.

5. Sharing from Past Trustees (Responses: 27)

Summary: Many appreciated the message and tone, but the biggest improvement request was structural: more than one past trustee (panel-style) to broaden perspective. Several comments noted the downside of having only one person, including suggestions to either expand the panel or reconsider the segment if it can't be adequately staffed. A few responses also indicated preference for a less "meeting-share" feel and more time or more varied perspectives.

6. First-time Attendees (Responses: 23)

Summary: Attendees generally valued the enthusiasm and reflection from first-timers and called it a strong closing element. Improvement suggestions included time management (enforcing short limits so more people can share) and ensuring the session is positioned when most attendees can still be present (some noted many had already left by Sunday). One comment expressed concern that first-timers seemed uneasy and needed more overt support or reassurance.

7. General Sharing Sessions (Responses: 21)

Summary: Sharing sessions were seen as important but with competing views on execution. Key improvement themes included:

- **Time and inclusion:** Concern that the same few voices dominate microphones; suggestions to better enable broader participation and enforce time limits.
- **Equity of agenda protection:** Frustration when presenter overtime reduces member sharing time.
- **Closing the loop:** Requests for more visible workshop report-backs and capturing notable themes for discussion, not only in the final report.

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- A specific suggestion asked to allow virtual attendees to comment.

8. Please provide suggested future topics.

Presentations (Responses: 27)

Summary: Suggested future presentation topics emphasized modern relevance and service clarity, including:

- **Outreach & public information**, including misinformation and A.A. accessibility/safety/secular questions.
- **Technology, AI, anonymity, online groups**, and digital communication across service.
- **Youth/YPAA and membership trends**, plus gender and racial experience topics.
- **Finance transparency ("follow the dollar")** and practical process topics (printing process, office tours).
- **Unity, singleness of purpose, media relations**, and what unites/fractures A.A.

Workshops (Responses: 54)

Summary: Workshop suggestions leaned heavily toward practical skill-building and service fundamentals:

- **Home group basics, GSR/DCM roles, reporting back**, and service effectiveness/trust repair.
- **PI/misinformation and accessibility/safety**, plus diversity topics (women/children, "diversity attraction").
- **Understanding finances and self-support**, and how 12th-step work functions across service levels.
- **Online groups' place in service**, navigating information access, and "how-to find" key resources.
- **Writing workshops and local engagement** ideas also appeared.

9. Return to another Forum? If yes, why? (Responses: 77)

Summary: The "yes" reasons strongly emphasized: staying informed, continued learning, fellowship and connection, and gaining direct understanding of the service structure. Many valued the event's ability to humanize trustees/staff, strengthen unity, and provide actionable information to take back to groups and service bodies. Several

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explicitly mentioned the value of live streaming/hybrid options as a reason they would attend again.

If no, why? (Responses: 10)

Summary: Reasons for "no" included perceptions of redundancy after attending once, the event feeling **too long** or **boring**, difficulty understanding content due to health reasons, preference for in-person formats only, and practical barriers such as travel distance/age. One response explicitly cited too little time for member input relative to cost/time invested.

10. Please provide any additional feedback below. Responses: (Responses: 56)

Summary: Additional feedback concentrated on **accessibility + logistics**, along with overall appreciation:

- **Interpretation/Wordly:** widely viewed as helpful, but users reported intermittent failures, difficulty navigating the app, and desire to project transcription/interpretation more consistently on screens so phones aren't required.
- **ASL accommodation:** strong concern that ASL ended early and calls for uninterrupted coverage and contingency planning.
- **Cost/friction:** multiple comments about hotel/parking costs and lack of hospitality/coffee; also requests for better online access timing (late Zoom info delivery) and the ability to save/scroll back or access recordings.
- **Event operations:** suggestions for better host committee displays/booths and more proactive engagement, plus gratitude for presenters and perceived professionalism/humility.

Livestream Pilot

1. If this is your first Forum, what attracted you to attend? (Responses: 15)

Summary: First-time livestream attendees were primarily motivated by **access and practicality** — being able to participate **virtually when travel, cost, or scheduling made in-person attendance difficult**. Many also cited a desire to **learn more about**

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AA's service structure, stay informed, and bring accurate updates back to their groups (including online-only groups).

2. If this is NOT your first Forum, what brought you back? (Responses: 20)

Summary: Returning livestream participants most often came back to **stay connected to General Service** and hear **direct updates** from GSO/GSB/AAWS/Grapevine. Several emphasized that Forums help them "keep a pulse" on AA beyond local reporting and appreciate **hearing questions and answers** raised during the event. A secondary theme was **access** (choosing audio due to travel cost, health, or obligations).

3. Please list any suggestions to improve the online pre-registration process.

(Responses: 19)

Summary: Registration feedback focused less on form mechanics and more on **communication clarity**, especially knowing **how and when livestream access details would be sent**, and ensuring the **agenda/schedule and join instructions** arrive earlier. Some also flagged that registration should be **easier to find** on the site and clearer when switching between **in-person vs. live-audio registrations**, including edge cases where attendees might need both (e.g., in person but listening online while traveling/resting).

4. Please list any suggestions to improve the live only broadcast option Forum experience. (Responses: 20)

Summary: This section delivered the strongest, most consistent feedback. The top improvement themes were:

- **Audio reliability and clarity** (cutting in/out, choppy feed, clicking noise, mic technique, hotel internet readiness).
- Adding **video/visual presence** (even podium-only, blurred, or anonymity-preserving options) to reduce disconnection — especially for first-timers.
- Improving **interaction** (chat monitoring during Q\&A, ability to use chat, ways to follow schedule in real time).
- Keeping **translation access visible and easy** (e.g., QR link displayed consistently; extra time to switch tools).

5. Return to another Forum? If yes, why? (Responses: 31)

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Summary: The primary driver for "yes" was **practical accessibility**: participants would return when **travel is too costly, health limits attendance, schedules conflict, or distance is prohibitive** (including international). Many also cited the ability to **stay informed** and bring learning back to their group/district. Several framed audio-only as "better than no Forum," while still expressing a preference for in-person if feasible.

If no, why? (Responses: 4)

Summary: Reasons for "no" centered on **engagement challenges** (difficulty maintaining attention in audio-only/Zoom formats), **technical failures** (audio not working), and a clear preference to attend **in person** when possible. One response also referenced schedule issues and cost constraints that affect in-person attendance.

6. Please provide any additional feedback below. (Responses: 18)

Summary: Additional feedback combined appreciation with actionable improvements. Many expressed gratitude that audio access made participation possible and encouraged continuing the option. Operationally, respondents reinforced the need for **reliable audio**, **correct schedules**, and **simpler translation access**. Some also raised broader service-structure reflections — emphasizing listening, trust, connection between boards/offices and the fellowship, and the value of better engagement tools (more slides, schedule cues, and potentially anonymity-safe visuals).

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