

Q.U.I.L.T.S. Survey Results

Two surveys were conducted last spring in order to get feedback on various subjects and for the board to be able to plan for the future in an informed manner. Participation was very high with over 63% of guild members responding, more than double the typically expected survey response. The answers to the survey questions, the first set on the guild in general and the second on programs, helped us learn about who we are, how we communicate and participate, and what our meeting and workshop preferences are.

Who are we? 84% of the 95 ladies who chose to answer this question are aged 60 or over. Almost 40% of us have been members of the guild for over 10 years. However, there is a “bubble” of 26% of respondents who have been members for 2 to 5 years, perhaps an indication of growth.

Why are we members? For over 57% of us it is to learn more about quilting. Another 31% are interested in meeting others interested in this craft.

How do we communicate? Asked for their PRIMARY source of information about guild events, 98% of the 90 respondents selected either emails (53%), the newsletter (35%) or guild meetings (10%). We were curious about the effectiveness of using Facebook to communicate with members. We learned that 76% of us are on Facebook, but 13% of us don't look at it much.

Zoom played a big part in the guild's effort to continue to offer education and socialization. We asked how comfortable members were using Zoom. The answers to this question were probably much different than they would have been a year before. Almost 77% of the respondents felt comfortable or very comfortable with Zoom, leaving about a quarter of the respondents not being particularly comfortable. All but 5 respondents saw the value of using Zoom in 2021 - 2022 in some capacity, such as for the first several months of the fall, in the winter when the weather is bad or to avoid driving in the dark, or even when we are able to meet again in person. Many comments on the Programs survey praised the Zoom format. Survey takers were asked to respond on a scale of 1 – 5, with 5 being extremely positive, how they would feel about workshops being held exclusively on Zoom next year. Over 80% chose 3, 4 or 5.

How do we participate? Before the pandemic, 87% of respondents attended meetings most or every month and 4% were members but didn't attend meetings. During the period of meeting virtually, 73% attended regularly and 13% were members who didn't attend. We learned that our members are extremely engaged. Participation in workshops, Quilts For Kids, tie-ins, dog beds, goodie basket raffles and Veterans Quilts ranged from 62 – 76% of those responding.

Based on actual attendance we know that 32% of the guild attended at least one workshop last year and numerous people commented on how beneficial they had been during that stressful time. If people didn't attend a workshop, they said lack of interest in the topic or scheduling were the reasons rather than cost. Saturdays were preferred over Fridays, 2 to 1, and 48% of respondents were interested in attending summer workshops. Although a number of people commented on missing getting together in person for workshops, the use of Zoom was overwhelmingly positive and many people felt that they preferred to have them on Zoom for a whole number of reasons that have already been shared in Programs emails.

Meeting structure and content was touched upon. Asked what best describes their opinion about having lecturers speak at meetings, 57% thought they are a great value and 27% find lecturers interesting. 52% prefer having lecturers speak after the business meeting and Show and Tell and 31% would like to see them placed between those two components. A number of respondents suggested giving speakers a time limit.

The last question in each survey asked for additional feedback. There were dozens of positive comments about how the guild was able to continue despite the challenges of the last year. They mentioned their unexpected appreciation of using Zoom, how having workshops kept them going, how appreciative they felt for the work the leadership had done, and on and on. Unfortunately, there were comments from a number of people about not feeling welcome or sitting alone. Several suggestions were made, including being more intentional about inviting people to sit with you, Zoom friendship groups, tables at tie ins being numbered and people drawing a number when they arrive to make mingling easier, establishing a “group of buddies” to welcome single or solo members and so on. When the survey results were presented to the board, a number of ideas were suggested for reaching out to guests or new members and going beyond one's friendship group.

Overall, the results of the surveys were very positive, reflecting well on the efforts of the guild leadership during this crazy time - almost 93% of respondents would recommend Q.U.I.L.T.S. to a friend! Thank you to everyone who participated!