

# **2015 Southern Leisure Management & Trends Institute**

**Newberry Firehouse  
Conference Center:  
Staff Perspective**

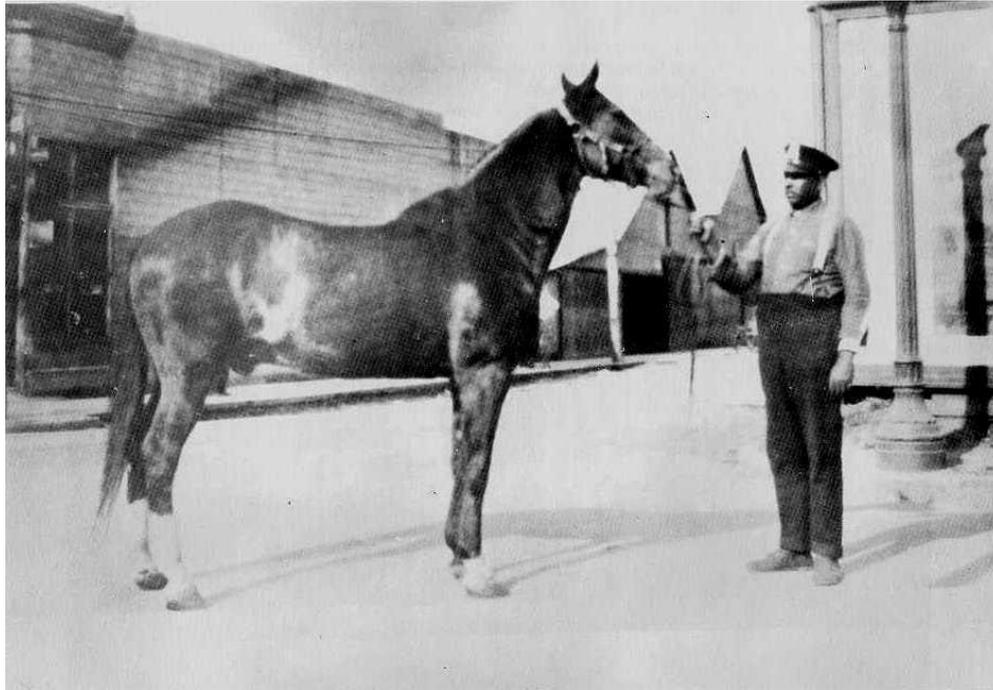
**Suzanne Elston, Facility Manager**  
Newberry Firehouse Conference Center  
City of Newberry Parks, Recreation & Tourism

# The Uncoupling of the Fire Hose



“Ribbon  
Cutting”  
Grand  
Opening  
September 6, 2007

# The Uniqueness of the Fire House



Old Joe and Malcolm Lessene

The Newberry Fire Department was formed in 1873 after Newberry experienced a devastating fire. The fire department was originally located in the lower level of the Newberry Opera House. Joe the fire horse held many titles and won many races. He was at one time the fifth fastest fire horse in the nation and first in the state. The Fire Department is able to boast many firsts for the fire service, one of which is one of the first black firefighters in the state, Malcolm Lessene.

# Facility Promotion/Marketing

## Web

[www.newberryfirehouse.com](http://www.newberryfirehouse.com)  
Pay Per Click  
The Knot  
Facebook

## Print Materials

Tri-Fold Brochure  
Facility Information Flyer  
Wedding Brochure

## Print/Web Media

Newberry Magazine  
Newberry Observer  
Greenwood Magazine  
Columbia Business Monthly  
Greenville Business Magazine  
SCIWay

## On-Air Media

WKDK Radio  
WIS-TV



### South Carolina – Conference Centers & Meeting Facilities



[South Carolina](#) > [SC Tourism](#) > SC Conference Centers

#### SC Conference, Meeting, and Event Sponsors

##### [The Sea Pines Resort Event Facilities](#)

Hilton Head | 866-561-8802 (Toll Free)

Stage your next corporate event in a setting designed to inspire. Discover The Sea Pines Resort – where state-of-the-art Hilton Head Island meeting facilities meet exhilarating recreation, team-building, and bonding with professional associates. Here, creative ideas are born naturally – with a variety of indoor and outdoor settings designed to make the most of our stunning, 5,000-acre oceanfront estate.

##### [University of South Carolina Aiken Conference Center](#)

Aiken | 803-641-3587

471 University Parkway, Aiken, SC 29801

The Conference Center at the University of South Carolina Aiken offers services and facilities to accommodate your meeting and event needs. Our goal is to ensure that your meeting, seminar or conference is a successful experience that meets your goals and expectations.

##### [Newberry Firehouse Conference Center](#)

Newberry | 803-276-1800

1227 McKibben Street, Newberry, SC 29108

The Newberry Firehouse Conference Center is a renovated 1890s firehouse located in historic downtown Newberry adjacent to the nationally acclaimed Newberry Opera House just 4 miles off I-26 between Columbia and Greenville.

★ [Feature Your SC Conference Center Here](#)

FY 14-15 Ad Budget  
\$9,225

# Determining Success – Occupancy Rate

In determining a goal to set for the number of events that take place in a calendar year it is first helpful to determine how many possible days the building could reasonably be expected to host an event. Therefore, in setting a goal a reasonable occupancy percentage should first be established.

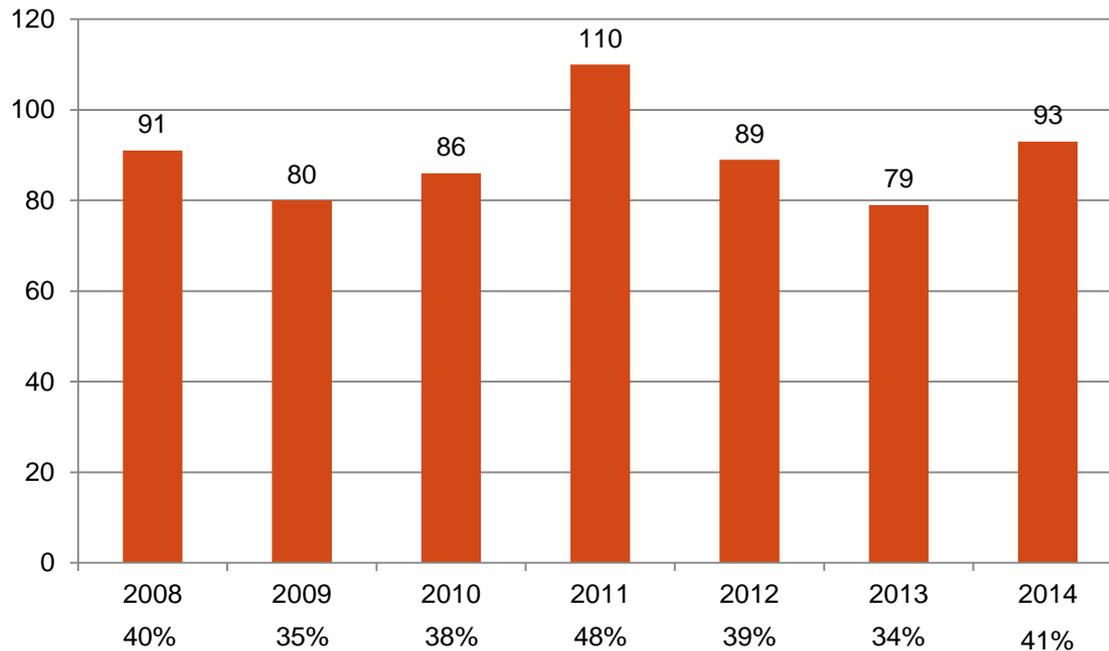
Pre-Construction research found the following occupancy rates characterize the major **conference-ready** hotels in the Columbia Metropolitan-Area:

- |                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| 1. Holiday Inn    | <b>50%</b> |
| 2. Sheraton Hotel | <b>60%</b> |
| 3. Embassy Suites | <b>65%</b> |
| 4. Ramada Inn     | <b>70%</b> |

This research also determined that there were 219 days realistically available as booking dates/basis for determining viability of the project. However, staff determined that a more accurate number of available booking days was 229.

# Determining Success – Occupancy Rate

## Days Rented/Occupancy Rate



While it is not a hard percentage, staff feels that occupancy of 50% is close to a maximum realistic goal at the current staffing level.

# Determining Success – Occupancy Rate

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Event	Trends	Trends	Trends				1 Social 1 Business
Staff Schedule	4:00pm- 9:00pm	7:30am- 5:00pm	7:30am- 4:00pm	8:00am- 5:00pm	8:00am- 4:00pm	8:00am- 5:00pm	9:00am- 8:00pm
Staff Hours	10	18	17	16	15	10	14
46 (6 OT)	5	9.5	8.5	8	7	8	8
40	5	8.5	8.5	8	8	2	6

NFCC Staffing – 1 Full-Time Facility Manager, 1 Full-Time Facility Coordinator, 1 Part-Time Maintenance Worker

# Determining Success – Occupancy Rate

Occupancy greater than 50% greatly affects our ability to:

- Show the building to a client
- Clean the outside areas
- Vacuum, shampoo the carpet
- Strip/wax the floors
- Perform equipment maintenance
- Perform routine office functions
- Perform routine maintenance and sanitation functions
- Sell or seek new renters
- Host comped/free city functions
- Prepare mock wedding set-ups

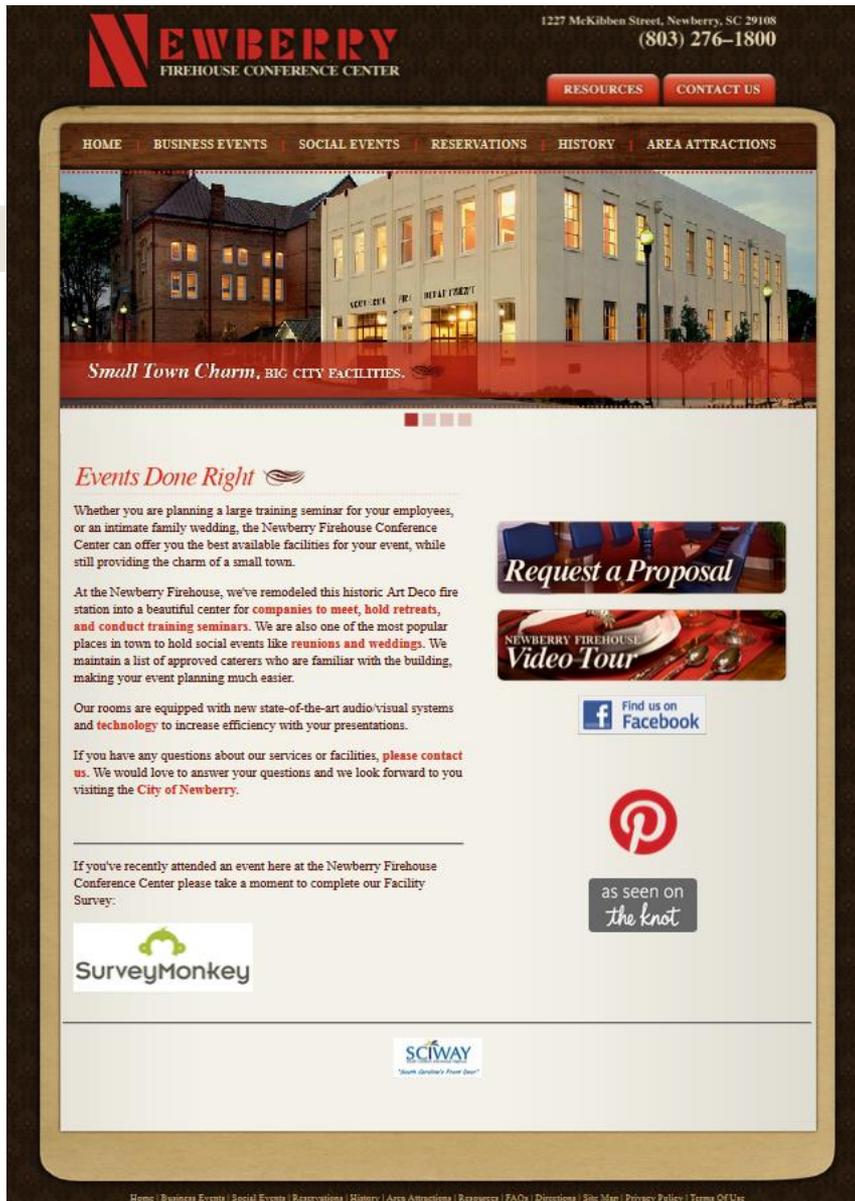
# Determining Success – Group Use



Social Use 60% Business Use 40%

- Associations
- Business
- Christmas
- Education
- Financial
- Government
- Hospitality (No Charge)
- Industry
- Medical
- Military
- Non-Profit
- Religion
- Social Banquet
- Social HS/College
- Social Wedding

# Website – One of Our Best Tools



On the website customers can find:

- Policy Information
- Video Tour
- Proposal Request Forms
- Rental Fees
- Facility Layouts
- Uniqueness (History)
- Photo Gallery
- Caterer/Menu Information
- Business Package Information
- Social Event Package Information
- Area Attractions
- Calendar with Availability
- Select links

# Questions?



**2008  
SC Municipal  
Association  
Award of  
Excellence**

**2008  
SC  
Community  
Development  
Association  
Award of  
Excellence**