

Profile of 2011 Lady Slipper Celebration Attendees

Prepared for: The Committee of the Lady Slipper Scenic Byway

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Lady Slipper Celebration was a first-time event organized by a committee of the Lady Slipper Scenic Byway. Visitor profile research was sponsored by the Central Region Sustainable Development Partnership and the Northwest Sustainable Development Partnership. The Celebration organizers were interested in visitor profile information to document baseline visitors and impact, support sponsorships, and improve the event.

The Celebration sought to educate the public about Minnesota's state flower, the Showy Lady Slipper, as well as provide economic opportunities, showcase the communities, and promote Native Culture. Longer-term goals include a revenue positive event and utilizing the event to establish working relationships among four communities and different cultures.

Methods

An on-site questionnaire was administered to Celebration attendees Saturday, June 25th. Given the uncertainty regarding event attendance, attempts were made to contact every party encountered as they left the event. Survey administrators asked one adult member (over 18) of each household to complete the survey. Throughout the event, a total of 54 households were contacted and 48 questionnaires were completed, which resulted in an 89% completion rate. Completed questionnaires were entered and checked for accurate entry and plausible values in SPSS version 18.0.

Results

Demographics

Most often, respondents were female, early boomers and middle income. Specifically 80% were female and the average age was 56 years. The most frequently cited income was between \$50,000-74,999 (34%).

2011 Celebration experience

On average, respondents spent about three hours at the Celebration, but visits ranged from 1 to 9 hours. Most respondents attended with family and a majority of respondents reported spending money on food and beverages. Respondents indicated they enjoyed many aspects of the Celebration, but most frequently cited aspects the bus tour and live music (46% each).

A majority of respondents had previously visited the Lady Slipper Scenic Byway and were at least aware of it (60% and 64%, respectively). However, 40% were first time visitors to the byway. Among these new visitors, the majority stated an intention to return to the area (82%). Most Celebration attendees heard about the event through either the newspaper (46%) or through word of mouth (44%).

The survey results reveal 8 of 10 participants had a knowledge increase about Lady Slippers (49% learned something and 38% learned a great deal about Lady Slippers). About half of participants learned something about Native Culture (47%), but nearly the same (43%) learned nothing at all about Native Culture.

Overall, as a first time event, the Lady Slipper Celebration appeared to satisfy its guests as 83% reported satisfaction at some level (50% very satisfied and 33.3% satisfied) and first time visitors intend to return to the area. The Celebration appeared to meet its goal in educating the attendees about Lady Slippers, but fell short in education about Native Culture, possibly due to scheduling and surveying times. To increase attendance, economic and educational impacts, greater and targeted marketing is encouraged coupled with community information as well as consideration of additional, but related, programming opportunities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	ii
Executive Summary.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	v
Introduction.....	2
Methods.....	2
Study Setting.....	2
Questionnaire.....	3
Approach.....	3
Response Rate.....	3
Analysis.....	3
Results.....	4
Respondents.....	4
Demographics.....	4
Primary Residence.....	4
Lady Slipper Celebration Experience.....	4
Sources Informing about the Lady Slipper Celebration.....	4
Attributes of Enjoyable Experience.....	5
Group Composition.....	5
Expenditures.....	5
Impact of Lady Slipper Celebration on Attendees.....	5
Discussion.....	6
References.....	8

Appendices.....	9
A. Questionnaire	10
B. Festival Map.....	12
C. Tables and Figures	13
a. Table 1. Response rate among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration.....	13
b. Figure 1. Response rate among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration.....	13
c. Table 2. Day of attendance among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration....	13
d. Table 3. Demographic characteristics among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration.....	14
e. Figure 2. Gender of respondents at Lady Slipper Celebration.....	14
f. Figure 3. Age of respondents at Lady Slipper Celebration.....	15
g. Figure 4. Primary residence by zip code.....	15
h. Table 4. Annual household income of questionnaire respondents.....	16
i. Figure 5. Percent of respondents in annual household income categories. ...	16
j. Table 5. Awareness and previous visitation by questionnaire respondents to the Lady Slipper Scenic Byway.....	17
k. Figure 6. Awareness of Lady Slipper Scenic Byway.....	17
l. Figure 7. Previously visited Lady Slipper Scenic Byway.....	18
m. Table 6. Hours spent by visitors at Lady Slipper Celebration.....	18
n. Figure 8. Hours spent by visitors at Lady Slipper Celebration.....	19
o. Table 7. Percent of respondents that used the given information sources among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration.....	19
p. Figure 9. Information sources among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration...20	

q. Table 8. Celebration attributes role in motivation and enjoyment among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration.....	21
r. Figure 10. Celebration attributes role in motivation and enjoyment among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration.....	22
s. Table 9. Group composition among attendees to Lady Slipper Celebration...	22
t. Figure 11. Group composition among Lady Slipper Celebration attendees...	23
u. Table 10. Overall guest satisfaction among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration.....	23
v. Figure 12. Overall guest satisfaction among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration.....	24
w. Figure 13. Guest response to whether they would recommend Lady Slipper Celebration to others.....	24
x. Table 11. Percent of respondents that gained knowledge at the Lady Slipper Celebration.....	25
y. Figure 14. Knowledge gained by questionnaire respondents at Lady Slipper Celebration.....	25
z. Figure 15. Percent of traveller's that intend to return to the area	26

Profile of 2011 Lady Slipper Celebration Attendees

INTRODUCTION

Community events and celebrations impact both residents and visitors. Residents find an increased awareness of and pride about local culture and place whereas visitors enjoy the event and similarly increase their awareness about the place. Festivals also enhance exposure, awareness, profitability and image of the host community and can serve as a vehicle for other types of development (Felsenstein & Fleischer, 2003; Getz, 1991; Hall, 1992; Nicholson & Pearce, 2001).

A local event can increase the tourism demand in the area and provide clear identity for the community. One such event is the new Lady Slipper Celebration in Minnesota. The Celebration sought to educate the public about Minnesota's state flower, the Showy Lady Slipper, as well as provide economic opportunities, showcase area communities, and promote Native Culture. Longer-term goals include a revenue positive event and event expansion to establish working relationships among four communities. As events are also tourism attractions, a visitor profile can assist in marketing and managerial decision making (Tkaczynski, & Rundle-Thiele, 2010). To maximize benefit and enhance events, organizers need to assess and evaluate their event and its market.

In 2011, the University of Minnesota Tourism Center (UMTC) was contracted to profile visitors to the first Lady Slipper Celebration in Blackduck, Minnesota and the surrounding area. The research was sponsored by the Central Regional Sustainable Development Partnership and the Northwest Sustainable Development Partnership. Visitor demographics, motivations and expenditures related to the Celebration were of key interest. The study methods and results are presented below, followed by a discussion and implications.

METHODS

An on-site questionnaire was administered to visitors during the 2011 Lady Slipper Celebration. The methods for the questionnaire administration are presented in the following sections: study setting, questionnaire, approach, response rate, and analysis.

Study Setting

The 2011 Lady Slipper Celebration was held on June 25th in Blackduck, Minnesota. This was the first annual Celebration to celebrate the rare Showy Lady Slipper flower in the area. Events were held at the wayside rest, in and around town and on the Lady Slipper Scenic Byway. The celebration included live music, food and beverage vendors, art and craft vendors, children's activity area, a bus tour on the byway to see Lady Slippers, nature walks and an education tent at a Pow Wow the first weekend in July.

Questionnaire

An on-site questionnaire was developed to profile the visitors at the Celebration on Saturday (Appendix A). Questionnaire sections included Celebration participation, what attracted visitors to attend the celebration, enjoyable Celebration attributes, information sources about the Celebration, expenditures, group composition, Lady Slipper Scenic Byway familiarity, knowledge gained, and demographics.

Approach

Because this was a first time event, it was difficult to estimate participation to determine a sampling plan. Therefore, the goal was to survey all households attending the event. Contact with each party was attempted by trained volunteers as they left the Celebration. One adult in each group, alternating male and female, was asked to complete the survey.

In an attempt to get the most participants, survey administrators were located at the two most common exit points at the wayside park. However, others left the main Celebration area to visit art located in businesses. As such, an accurate number on the number of people who left from businesses without returning to the park and completing the questionnaires are unavailable.

Response Rate

Throughout the event, a total of 54 households were contacted and 48 questionnaires were completed: an 89% compliance rate (Appendix C; Table 1). All questionnaires were usable, using the definition of at least 60% of the questionnaire completed. As indicated earlier, all respondents were contacted on Saturday when the majority of events took place (Appendix C, Table 2).

Analysis

Completed questionnaires were entered, cleaned and checked in SPSS version 18.0. Descriptive analysis provided means, standard deviations, and frequencies to describe the sample and provide information on variables of interest.

RESULTS

Respondents

Demographics

A majority (80%) of respondents was female and reported an average age of 56 years (Appendix C, Table 3). The highest percentage (34%) of respondent's annual household was between \$50,000-74,999 (Appendix C, Table 4). In comparison to Beltrami County, 50.9% of the population is female, 25% are under the age of 18 and 13% are above 65 years old, and the average annual household income is \$30,976.

Primary Residence

Respondents' predominately resided in the Blackduck and Bemidji area, as indicated by their zip code (Appendix C, Figure 4). In fact, 69% indicated their primary residence was zero to thirty miles from the Lady Slipper Celebration. However, about a third (31%) of respondents came from 75 miles or further (Figure 4).

Lady Slipper Celebration Experience

A majority of respondents had previously been to the Lady Slipper Scenic Byway (60%; Appendix C, Table 5). Not surprisingly, due to our sampling, respondents indicated they most frequently attended the 2011 Celebration on Saturday only (94% Appendix C, Table 2). Fewer than 10% indicated they attended the Celebration both Friday and Saturday. On average, respondents spent about three hours (\bar{M} = average =3.3) at the festival, with a range of one to nine hours (Appendix C, Figure 8).

Sources Informing about the Lady Slipper Celebration

Respondents heard about the Celebration most frequently through the newspaper (46%; Appendix C, Table 7) and word of mouth (44%). About a quarter (27%) indicated they knew of the Celebration from something "other" than the options listed, while slightly less than a quarter (23%) indicated that they heard from the radio. Fewer respondents indicated they heard about the event through the Chamber of Commerce (13%), Lady Slipper Scenic Byway Webpage (10%), a store in town (10%), Facebook (6%), E-mail (4%), or TV (2%).

Reason for Attendance

More than half of respondents indicated that they attended the Celebration for the live music (54%; Appendix C, Table 8). Arts/crafts and the bus tour were the next most frequently cited reasons for attendance (48% each). A quarter of respondents (25% each) stated that food and beverage and the history tour drew them to the event. Fewer

respondents indicated other reasons to attend such as the nature walk (17%), wine tasting (17%), 'other' reasons (17%), children's activities (8%), education tent (4%), or Pow Wow (4%).

Attributes of Enjoyable Experience

The most enjoyable attributes of the Lady Slipper Celebration were the bus tour and live music (46% each, Appendix C, Table 8). Respondents cited arts/crafts (27%) as the third most enjoyable attribute. Food and beverages (15%) and the history tour (13%) were the fourth and fifth most enjoyable attributes. The least frequently cited attributes were children's activities (8%), nature walk (8%), education tent (6%), wine tasting (6%), Pow Wow (2%) and 'other' (2%).

Group Composition

A majority of respondents attended the Lady Slipper Celebration with family (67% Appendix C, Table 9). Some (15% each) indicated they were with both family and friends or alone. Very few respondents attended the Celebration with friends or an organized group (2% each).

Celebration Expenditures

The majority of people (n=34) spent money on food, spending \$12.97 on average. Other spending occurred, but the number of respondents reporting expenditures was fewer than 20 and, therefore, not representative for any impact analysis. While respondents reported spending the most on lodging ($M=\$208.50$) it should be noted that this was only two respondents.

Impact of Lady Slipper Celebration on Attendees

The vast majority of Celebration attendees were satisfied with their experience as indicated by actual satisfaction measures and intentions to return. Half were very satisfied and a third (33%) were satisfied (50%; Appendix C, Table 10). Fewer than 10% of respondents were dissatisfied or unsure about their satisfaction (8%). Almost all of respondents said they would recommend the Celebration to others while fewer than ten percent said they would not (94%; Appendix C, Figure 13).

Celebration attendees most often indicated that they learned something about Lady Slippers (49%; Appendix C, Table 11) with the next most frequently cited response that they learned a great deal about Lady Slippers (38%). More than a tenth (13%) indicated that they learned nothing at all. However, a tenth (10%) said they learned a great deal about Native Culture, and a majority of the respondents reported that they learned something (47%), with learning nothing at all as the next most frequently selected choice (43%).

Fewer than half of respondents were first time visitors to the byway (40%, Appendix C, Figure 15). Among these new visitors, the majority stated an intention to return to the area (82%).

DISCUSSION

The first Lady Slipper Celebration 2011 sought to educate the public about Minnesota's state flower, as well as provide economic opportunities, showcase the communities, and promote Native Culture. Results from an onsite questionnaire indicated the majority learned something about the Showy Lady Slipper, were satisfied with the festival and would recommend it to others. Though the majority of attendees were local residents, about one third were tourists, using a mileage definition.

The Celebration increased knowledge about the Lady Slipper. Therefore, Celebration organizers can take pride in accomplishing this goal. To increase knowledge acquisition and ensure repeat visitors, considering a breadth of educational knowledge levels in the events is suggested. For example, the bus tours may be segmented and/or progressive in the knowledge provided, depending on attendee self-identified knowledge. Celebration attendees did not learn as much about Native Culture as about Lady Slippers, but given the programming and time of questionnaire administration, this result is not surprising. If Native Culture remains a forefront for the Celebration, additional programming and/or integration into current programming is suggested.

Word of mouth was an important vehicle for event marketing and mirrors previous state and national findings (Getz, 1991; Salk, Schneider, & Monson, 2005). Obviously early planning is useful to maximize the effects of word of mouth. However, as time frames for tourist decision making continue to shrink, event information up until and during the event is also important. Related to this, ensuring locals have detailed information about the festival is important. Informal conversations with hoteliers and fuel station attendants indicated a lack of awareness about the festival.

With regard to visitor spending, respondents reported spending in all of the categories listed on the questionnaire, but the most spent in food and beverage. To maximize visitor spending, efforts to increase visitor length of stay and product offerings are suggested. Providing for enhanced visitor comfort and more activity offerings would potentially extend their stay. This could be achieved through programming opportunities such as

- Expanding the Friday night activities beyond wine tasting. Additional but pertinent activities on Friday could induce visitors to stay the night and spend more money in the area and at the festival.
- Depending on audience focus and preference, adding more children's and adult activities within the park.
- Offering products for sale in the park (for example, jams made from wild berries).

Also, onsite facility considerations such as expanded seating opportunities by making all picnic tables usable (for example, there were picnic tables under the shelter where the

musicians were performing, but they were behind the performers. These could be moved to be in front of the performers).

The impact of the art co-located in existing businesses is unknown. Post-event research could identify if and what impact the art had on local businesses. If the artists continue to be located in local businesses, additional signage could enhance signage to the businesses hosting artists including directional signage (i.e. arrows). To enhance participation in the art tour, consider the following suggestions:

- Create an “Arts Tour Passport” where visitors would receive a stamp for each artist visited. Those who have filled their passport by visiting all the artists could be entered in a drawing. The drawing could be for a certain dollar amount of art from any of the participating artists. (This was a suggestion made by one of the participating artists).
- Link the websites of the artists to the Lady Slipper Byway website for pre and post Celebration sales.
- Have artists doing demonstrations of how they make their work at scheduled times throughout the day. For example, the weavers at the drug store had hands-on activities that participants could do to learn about weaving.
- To enhance retail sales by businesses, consider having businesses distribute coupons for purchases after the event (to encourage return visitors).
- Review the experience of the “Art Meander” in West Central Minnesota.

As event organizers consider revising or adding to the current slate of Celebration opportunities, it is important to provide products and services unique to the festival and of high quality and appeal to the consumer and increase event profits (Kim, Choi, Agrusa, Wang, & Kim, 2009). As more people attend the event, segmenting them by preferred activities may prove insightful (Tkaczynski & Rundle-Thiele, 2010). In 2011, two events, the bus tour and live music, were highly sought after and proved to be the most enjoyable events to the visitors.

The Lady Slipper Celebration played a role in increased awareness and exposure of the Lady Slipper Scenic Byway. More than a third of respondents were not aware of the byway before their visit and 40% had never been there before, but the majority of visitors said they intended to return to the area. To enhance the likelihood of return visitation, on-site promotion of community amenities and offerings after the Celebration is advised. This could be accomplished by offering even more information about the byway at the event.

Future research to enhance knowledge about the Celebration and its impact include actual visitation, the overall economic impact of the Lady Slipper Celebration and how the Celebration compares to other festivals in the region in terms of both visitation and economic impact. Further, comparing first time and previous visitors will be insightful to see how they compare to other research in this area (Tkaczynski & Rundle-Thiele, 2010; Wooten & Norman, 2008). Future research to capture this useful information is advised.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

2011 Lady Slipper Celebration Questionnaire

Which day(s) did you attend the Celebration? (Circle all that apply)

Friday, June 24th Saturday, June 25th Friday, July 1st Saturday, July 2nd

About how long were you at the Celebration today? ____ Hours

Where did you hear about this event? (Circle all that apply)

Newspaper Word of mouth E-mail Radio TV Event schedule
Facebook Twitter Lady Slipper Scenic Byway Webpage Chamber of Commerce
Store in town Other (explain)_____

Why did you attend the Celebration? (Circle all that apply)

Arts/crafts Bus tour Children’s activities Education tent Food &
beverages History tour Live music Nature walk Pow Wow Wine
tasting Other_____

Of the activities you attended, which did you enjoy most? (Circle up to three)

Arts/crafts Bus tour Children’s activities Education tent Food &
beverages History tour Live music Nature walk Pow Wow Wine
tasting Other_____

Overall, how satisfied are you with the Lady Slipper Celebration? (Circle one)

Very dissatisfied Dissatisfied Unsure Satisfied Very Satisfied

Would you recommend this Celebration to others? Yes No Unsure (why? _____)

Overall, during the Celebration how much did your knowledge increase about

...Lady Slippers? Not at all Some A great deal
...Native Culture? Not at all Some A great deal

Were you aware of the Lady Slipper Scenic Byway before this festival? Yes No

Have you visited the Lady Slipper Scenic Byway before the Lady Slipper Celebration? Yes No

Unsure

Who are you with? (Circle one)

Alone Friends Family Family & friends Organized group Other_____

How many are in your group (specify # in each group)?

____ Children (0-12) ____ Teens (13-18) ____ Adults (19+)

How much did YOU spend related to the Celebration?

Food/beverage at Celebration: \$_____ Art at Celebration/in community: \$_____
Souvenirs: \$_____ Lodging: \$_____ (what community?)

Gasoline: \$_____ Restaurants: \$_____ Other: \$_____

What year were you born? 19____ **Are you..?** Female Male **What is your zip code?** ____

Visitors only (travelling 50 miles or more to attend Celebration): Do you intend to return to the area?

Yes No Unsure

What is your annual household income (before taxes)? (Circle one)

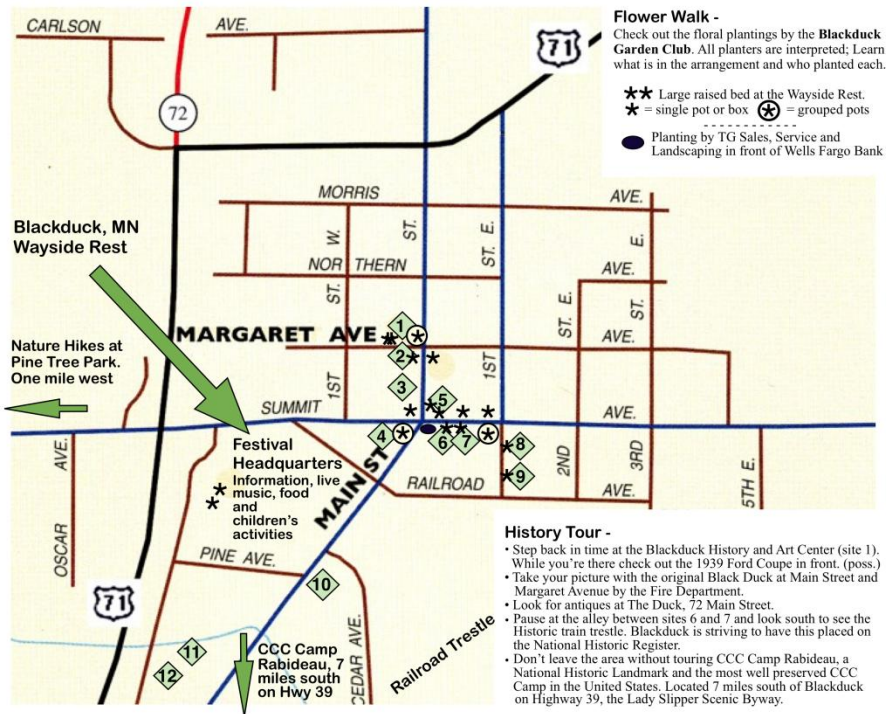
less than \$5,000 \$5,000-9,999 \$10,000-14,999 \$15,000-24,999 \$25,000-
34,999 \$35,000-49,999 \$50,000-74,999 \$75,000-99,999 \$100,000-
124,999
\$125,000-149,999 \$150,000 or more

Thank you!

For internal use only: **Date:** ____/____ **Day:** Fri Sat **Time:** ____:____
AM PM

APPENDIX B

Festival Map



◆ Art Around Town Sites

- 1) History Art Center** - Asfour, watercolor / Gilmore, photography, Gorman, stained glass / Juelson, brazilian embroidery / Schlieff, mosaic. Sales. Some artists may be on site.
- 2) Barbwire** - Cindy Burger, jewelry. Sales. Artist on site.
- 3) Insurance Services North** - private collection (L. Zea) of wood carvings by Rob Stomberg. Display only, view from sidewalk or deck. Artist can be found at site 7.
- 4) Moon Drug** - North Woods Tapestry Weavers group. Sales and display. Some artists will be on site. Spinning wheel demonstrations.
- 5) Anderson Fabric Outlet** - name, quilts / name, fiber art / name, fiber art. Display only (through Jul??) Artists not on site.
- 6) Blackduck Dental Clinic** - Joe Rossi, photography. Sales. Artist on site.
- 7) Northlander Gift Shop** - Featuring the art of Maureen O'Brien. Sales. Artist ?????
- 8) Blackduck Senior Center** - Kory Greiner, Ceramics / Dixie Smith, leaf and feather paintings / Deb Krueger, photography. Sales. Artists on site. Gift shop open. *Take time for a "make your own" ice cream sundae at this site!*
- (9) Blackduck Library** - To be determined
- 10) Expressions Automotive** - To be determined
- 11) Blackduck Floral** - Missy Padgett, jewelry. Sales. Artist on site.
- 12) Blackduck Family Foods** - Ursula Anderson, photography. Sales. Artist on site.

APPENDIX C

Tables and Figures

Table 1. Response rate among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011 (n=54).

Total parties contacted	54
Respondents	48
Refusals	5
Compliance rate	88.9
Unusable Questionnaires	0
Usable Questionnaires	48

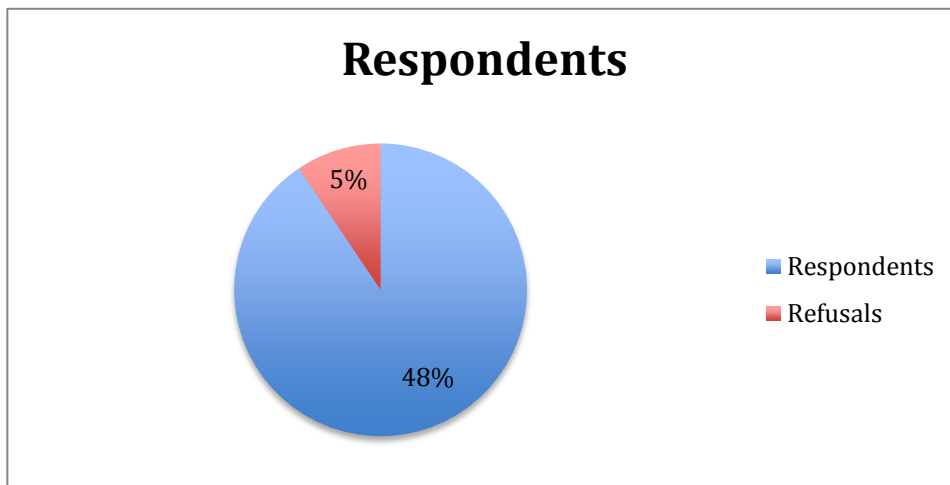


Figure 1. Response rate among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011 (n=54).

Table 2. Day of attendance among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011 (n=48).

	Frequency	Percent
Friday, June 24th	3	6.3
Saturday, June 25th	48	100
Both days	3	6.3
Saturday only	45	93.8

Table 3. Demographic characteristics among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011.

	Frequency	Percent
Gender (n=44)		
Female	35	79.5
Male	9	20.5
Total	44	100
Age (n=45; M (mean)=55.6; S.D.= standard deviation=15.7)		
18-30	4	8.9
31-40	5	11.1
41-50	7	15.6
51-60	10	22.2
61-70	11	24.4
71-80	6	13.3
81-90	2	4.4
Total	45	100

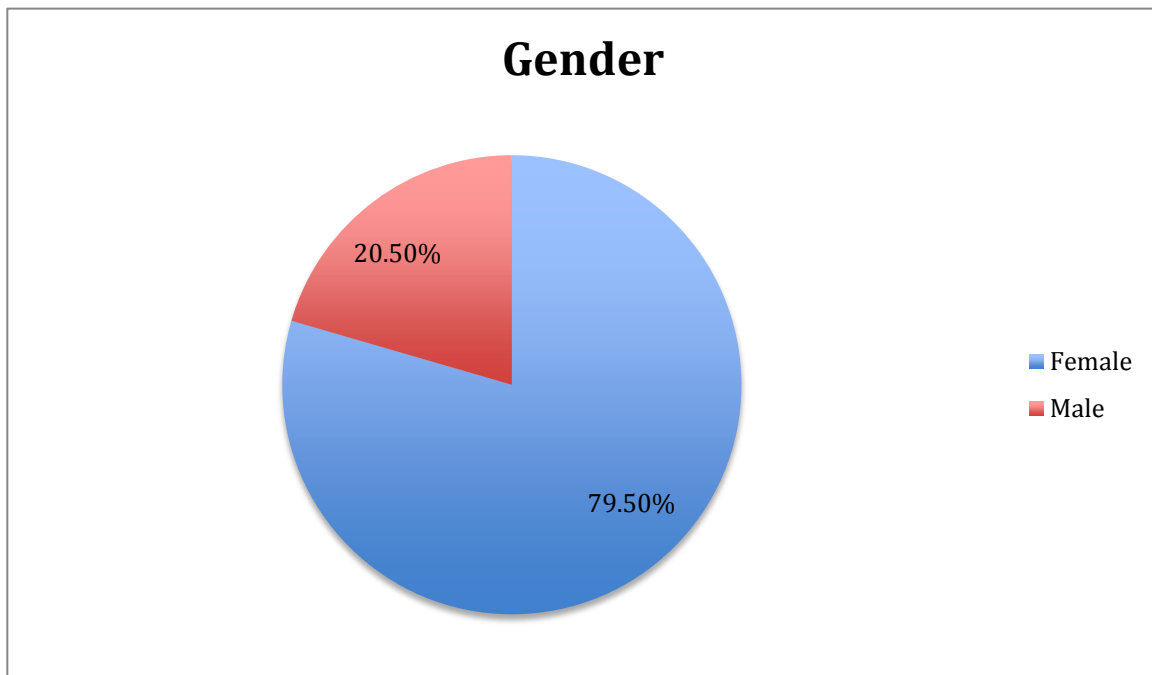


Figure 2. Gender of respondents at Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011 (n=44).

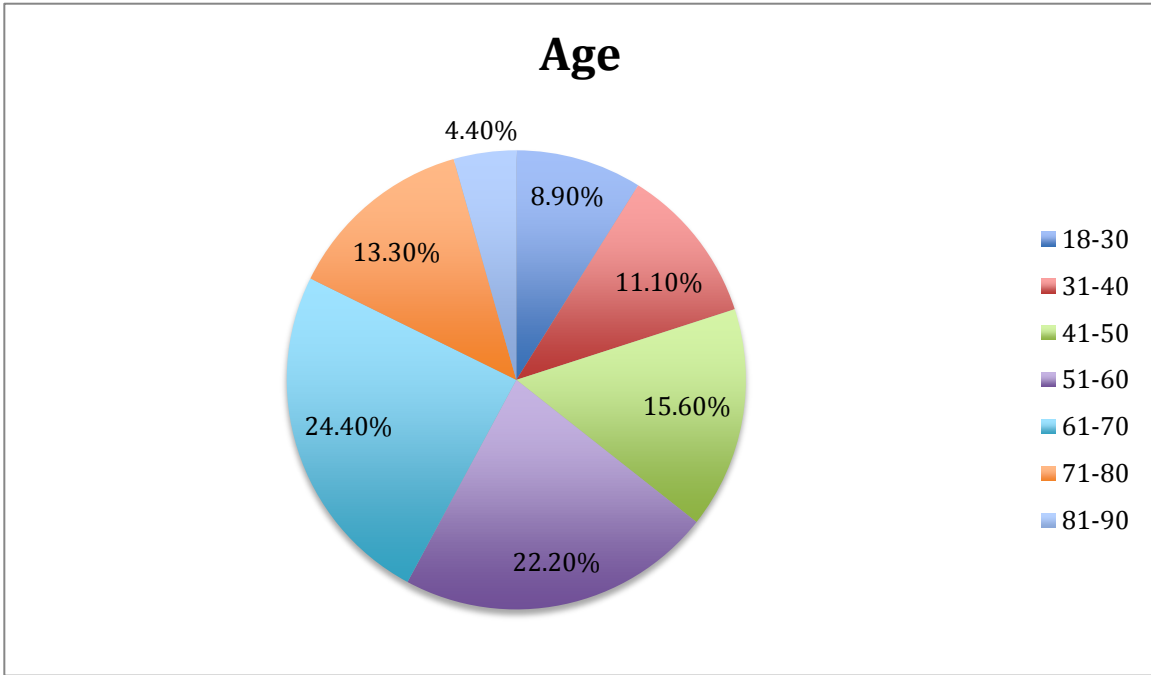


Figure 3. Age of respondents at Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011 (n=45).

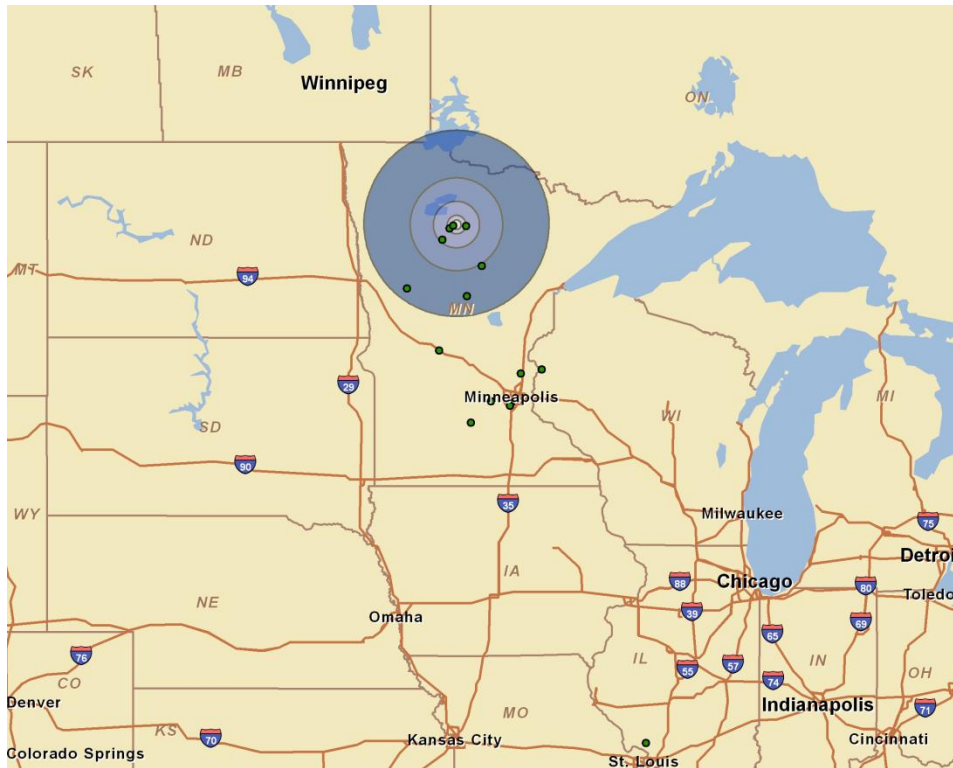


Figure 4. Primary residence by zipcode.

Table 4. Annual household income of questionnaire respondents (n=36).

	Frequency	Percent
\$10,000-14,999	2	5.6
\$15,000-24,999	3	8.3
\$25,000-34,999	6	16.7
\$35,000-49,999	5	13.9
\$50,000-74,999	12	33.6
\$75,000-99,999	5	13.9
\$100,000-124,999	2	5.6
\$125,000-149,999	0	0
\$150,000 or more	1	2.8
Total	36	100

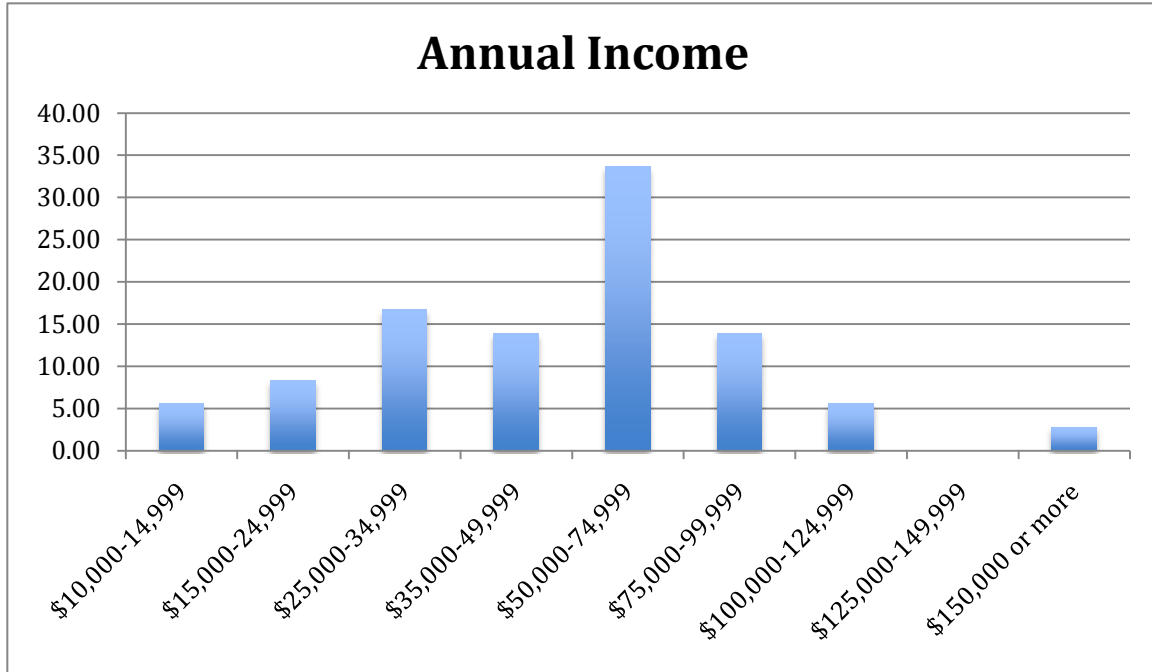


Figure 5. Percent of respondents in annual household income categories.

Table 5. Awareness and previous visitation by questionnaire respondents to the Lady Slipper Scenic Byway.

	Frequency	Percent
Aware of Lady Slipper Scenic Byway		
Yes	27	64.3
No	15	35.7
Total	42	100
Visited the Byway before		
Yes	27	60
No	18	40
Unsure	0	0
Total	45	100

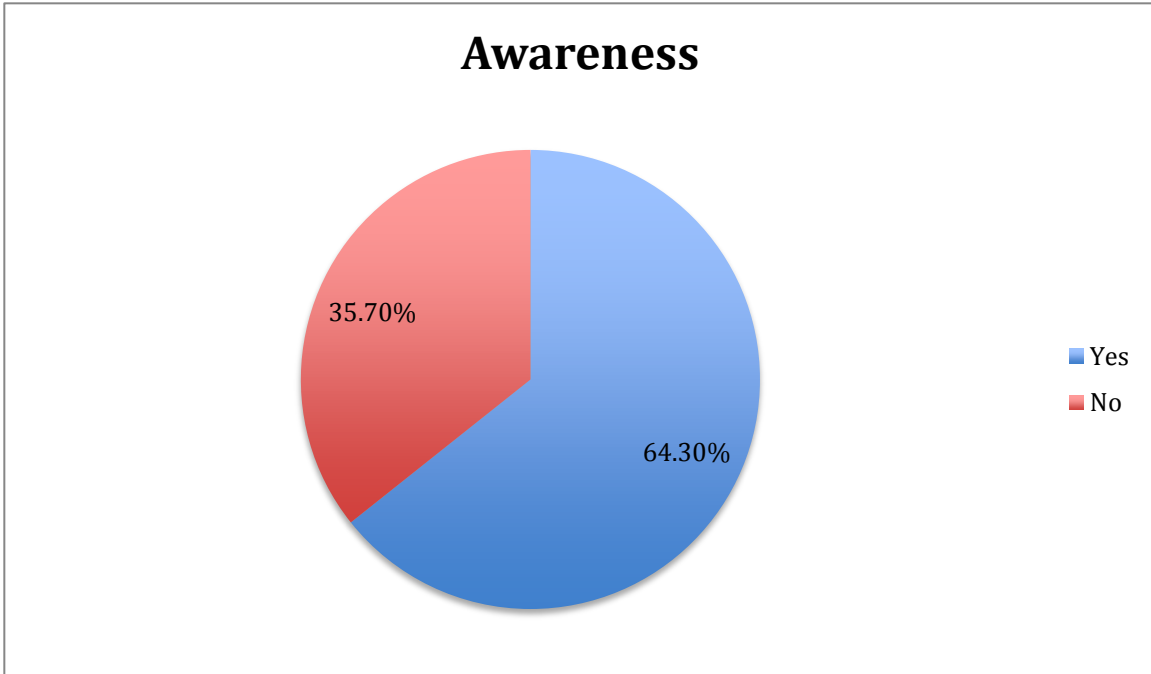


Figure 6. Awareness of Lady Slipper Scenic Byway (n=42).

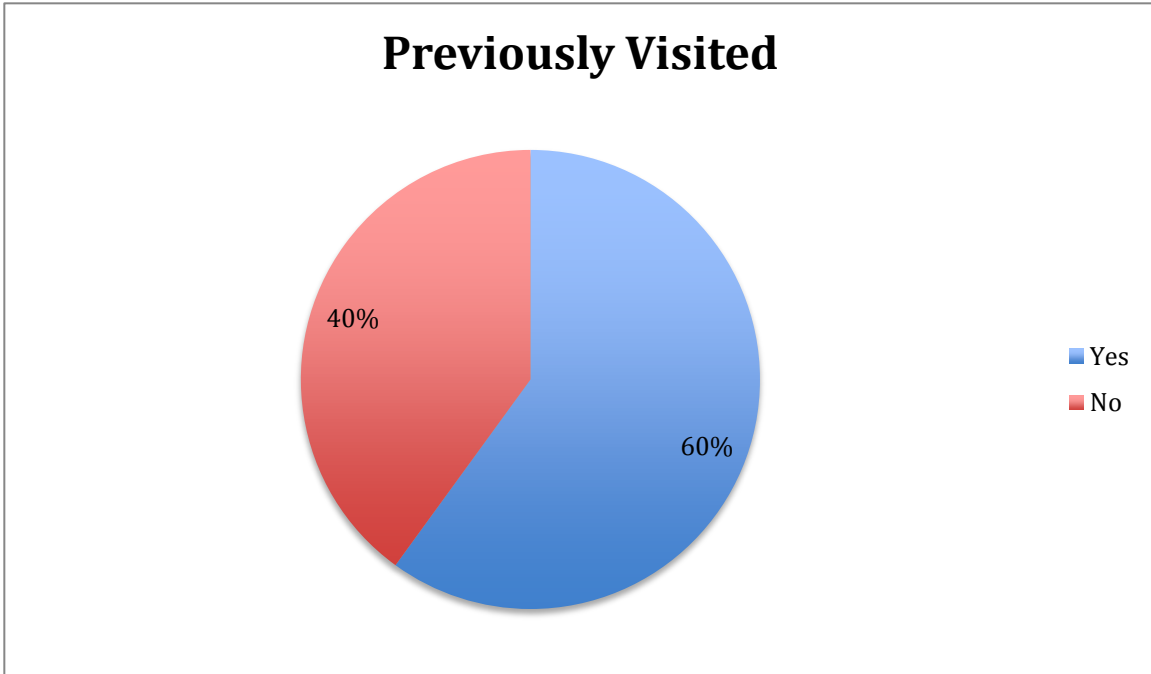


Figure 7. Previously visited Lady Slipper Scenic Byway (n=45).

Table 6. Hours spent by visitors at Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011 (n=44).

	Frequency	Percent
Hours (\underline{M} =3.3, S.D.=1.9)		
1	9	20.5
2	8	18.2
3-4	17	38.6
5-6	7	15.9
7-9	3	6.8
Total	44	100

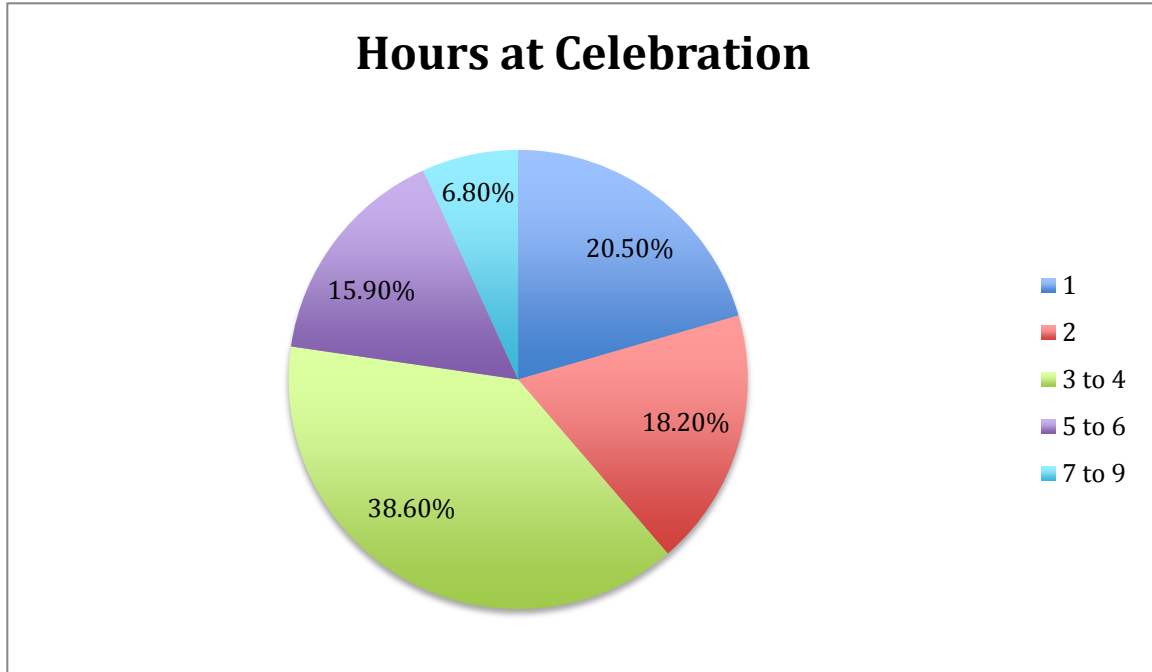


Figure 8. Hours spent by visitors at Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011.

Table 7. Information sources among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011 (n=48).

	Frequency	Percent
Newspaper	22	45.8
Word of Mouth	21	43.8
Other	13	27.1
Radio	11	22.9
Chamber of Commerce	6	12.5
Lady Slipper Scenic Byway Webpage	5	10.4
Store in town	5	10.4
Facebook	3	6.3
E-mail	2	4.2
TV	1	2.1
Twitter	0	0
Total	48	100

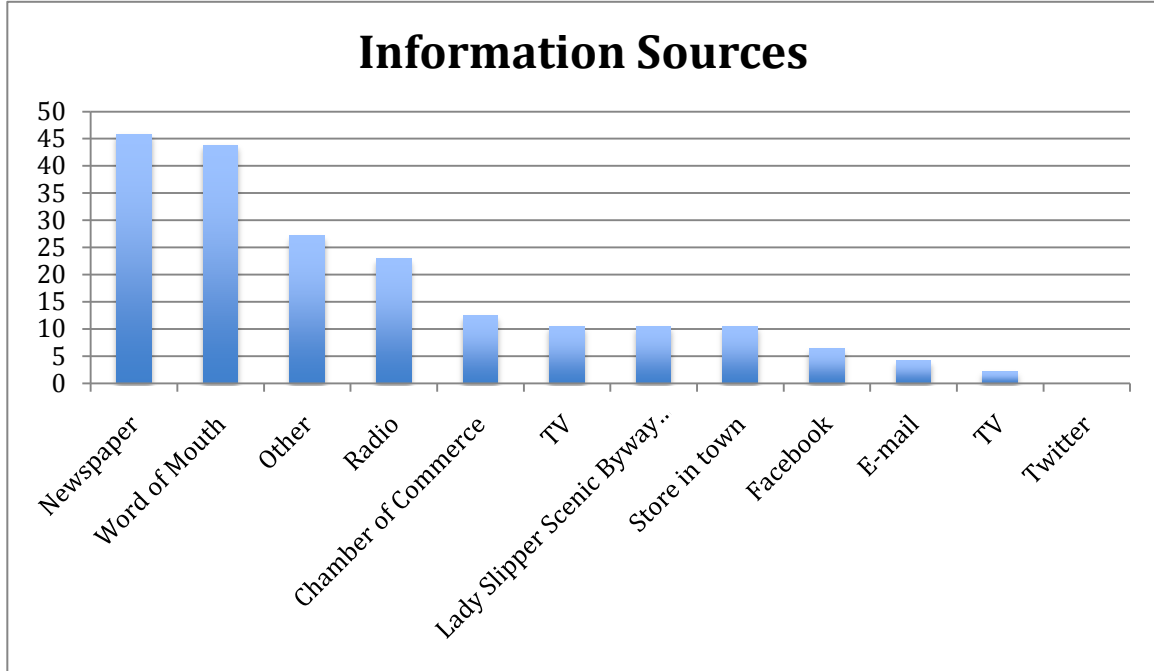


Figure 9. Percent of respondents that used the given information sources among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011 (n=48).

Table 8. Celebration attributes role in motivation and enjoyment among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011 (n=48).

	Reason to attend		Most enjoyed	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Live Music	26	54.2	22	45.8
Arts/Crafts	23	47.9	13	27.1
Bus Tour	23	47.9	22	45.8
Food and Beverage	12	25	7	14.6
History Tours	12	25	6	12.5
Nature Walk	8	16.7	4	8.3
Wine Tasting	8	16.7	3	6.3
Other	8	16.7	1	2.1
Children's Activities	4	8.3	4	8.3
Education Tent	2	4.2	3	6.3
Pow Wow	2	4.2	1	2.1
Total	48	100	48	100

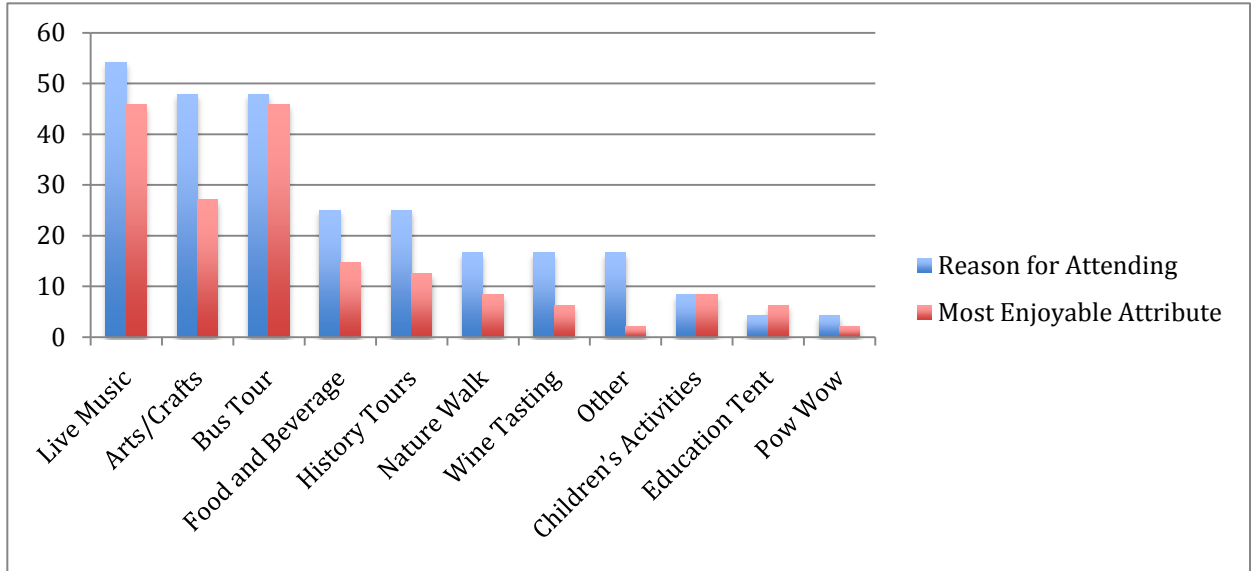


Figure 10. Celebration attributes role in motivation and enjoyment among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011 (n=48). Percent of respondents that attended for a certain attribute and enjoyed.

Table 9. Group composition among attendees to Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011 (n=48).

	Frequency	Percent
Family	32	66.7
Alone	7	14.6
Family and Friends	7	14.6
Friends	1	2.1
Organized Group	1	2.1
Other	0	0
Total	48	100

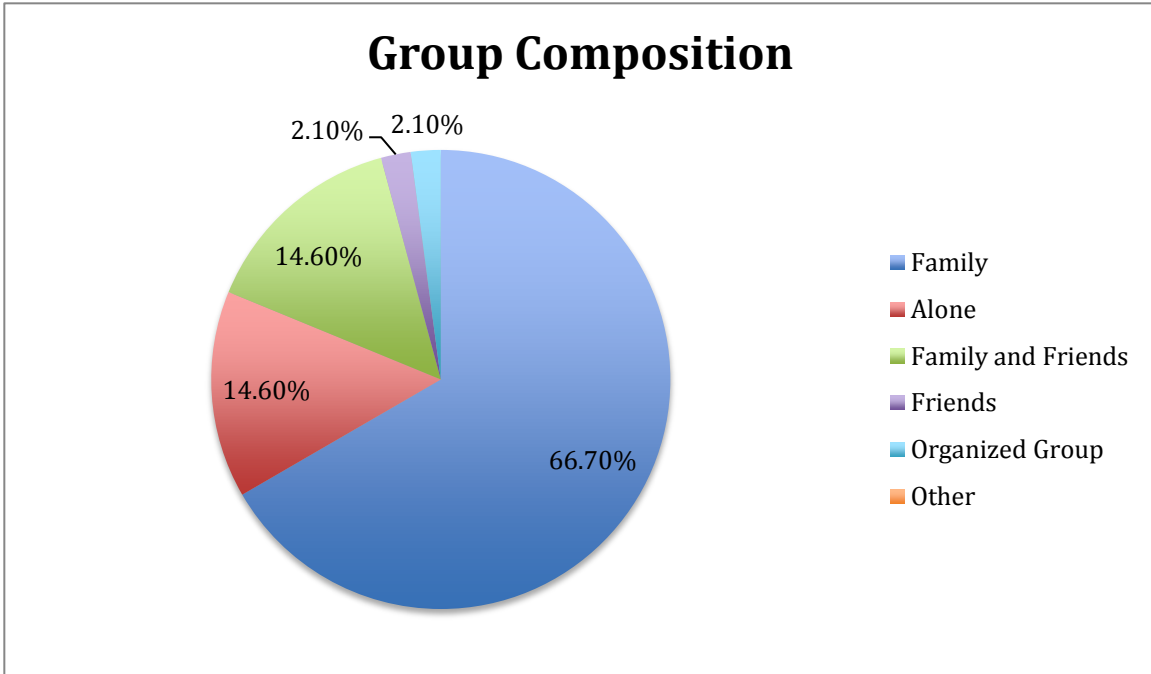


Figure 11. Group composition among Lady Slipper Celebration attendees, 2011 (n=48).

Table 10. Overall guest satisfaction among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011 (n=48).

	Frequency	Percent
Very Satisfied	24	50
Satisfied	16	33.3
Unsure	4	8.3
Very Dissatisfied	3	6.3
Dissatisfied	1	2.1
Total	48	100

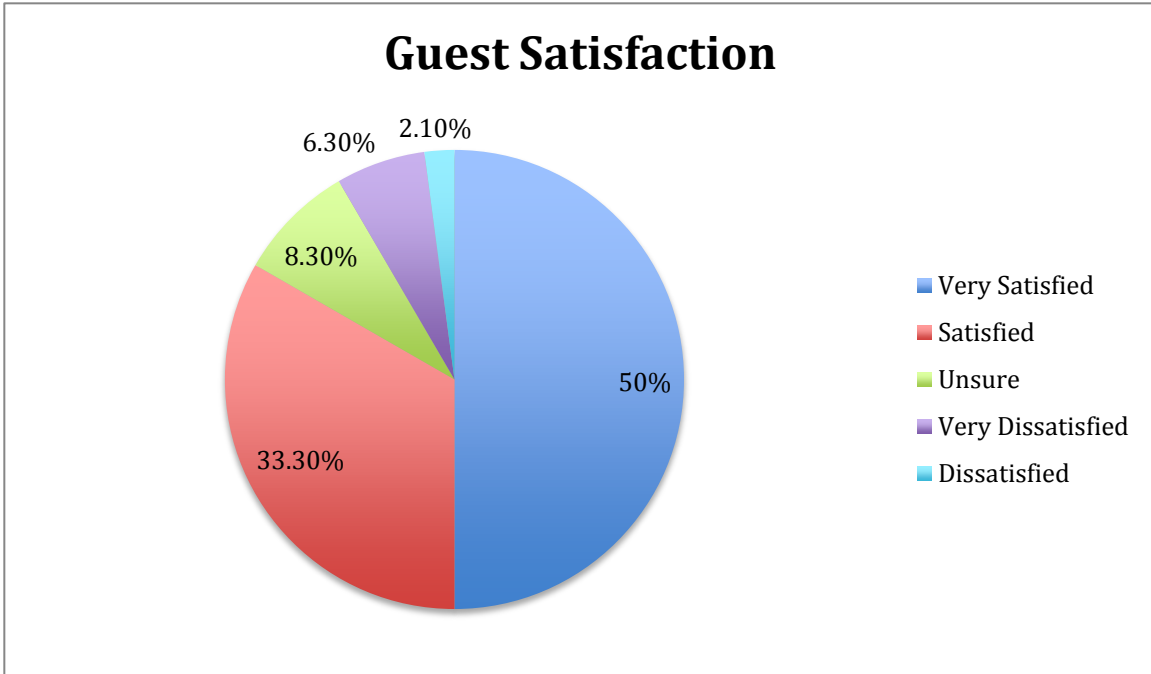


Figure 12. Overall guest satisfaction among visitors to Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011 (n=48).

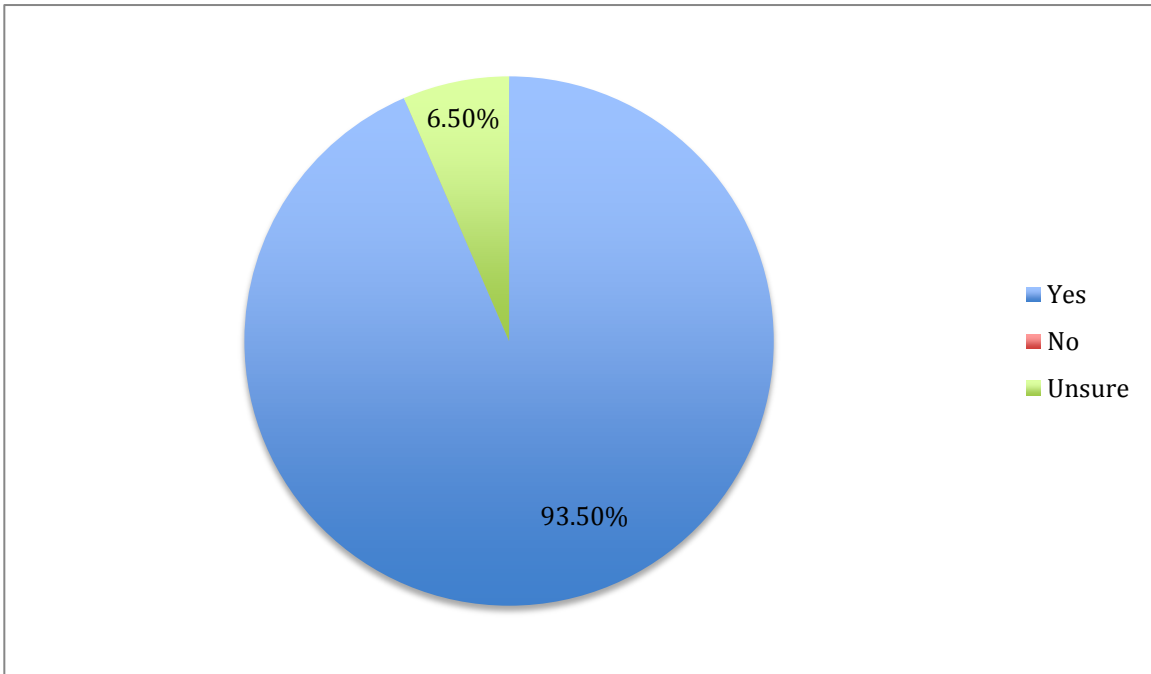


Figure 13. Guest response to whether they would recommend Lady Slipper Celebration to others (n=46).

Table 11. Knowledge gained by questionnaire respondents at Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011.

	Frequency	Percent
Amount of Knowledge gained about Lady Slippers (n=45)		
Not at all	6	13.3
Some	22	48.9
A great deal	17	37.8
Total	45	100
Amount of Knowledge gained about Native Culture (n=30)		
Not at all	13	43.3
Some	14	46.7
A great deal	3	10
Total	30	100

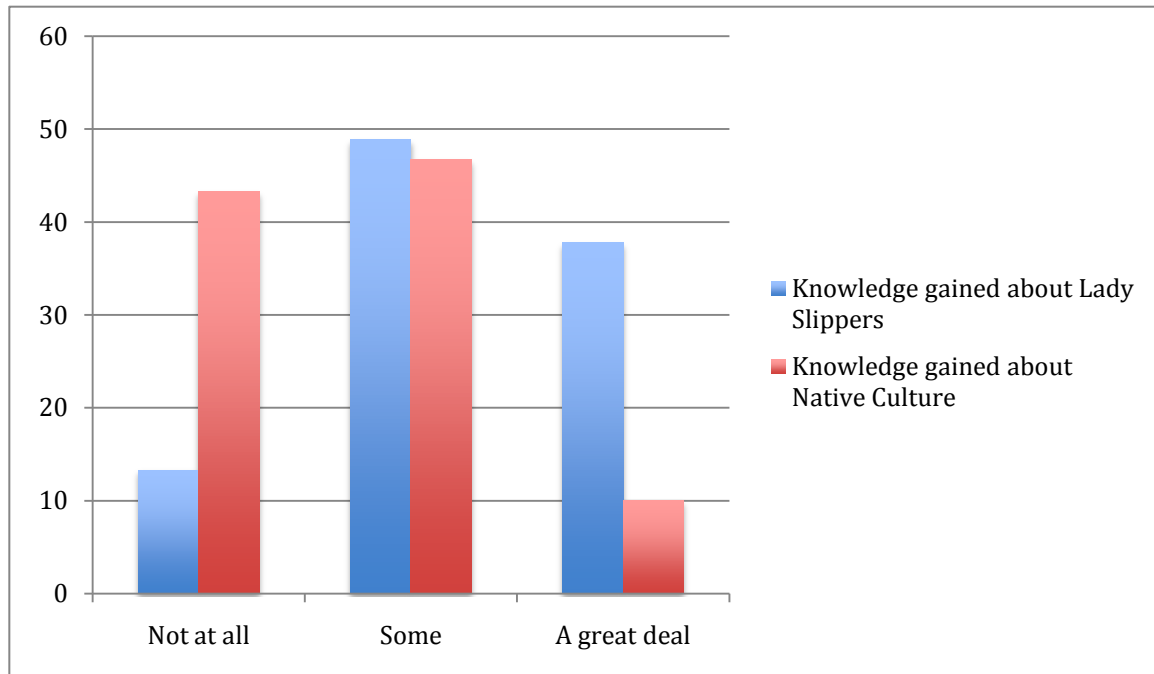


Figure 14. Percent of respondents that gained knowledge at the Lady Slipper Celebration, 2011.

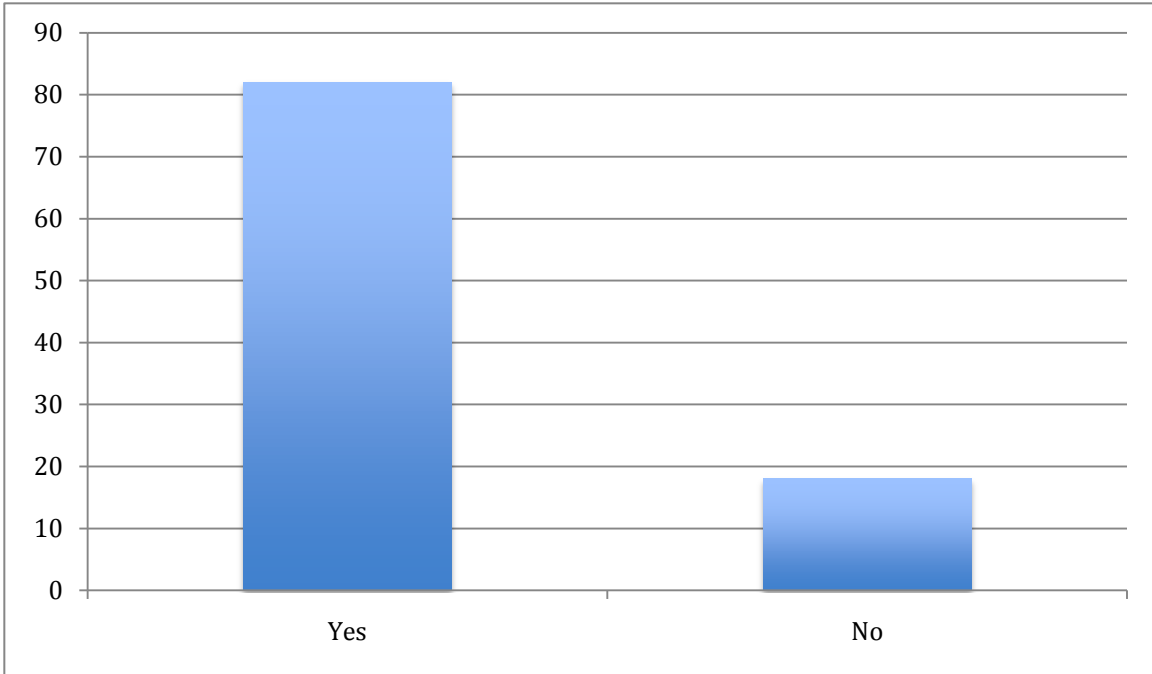


Figure 15. Percent of traveller's that intend to return to the area (n=17).