

## **Marketing Department Quarterly Report**

**October, November and December 2021**

### **Visitor Stats**

- Welcome Center visits totaled 749 for the quarter, which is up 192% over the same period in 2021.
- The Holmes Medical Museum had a total of 2,153 guests this quarter. There were no guests during this time period last year because it was closed due to damage from Hurricane Sally.
- The Depot Museum greeted 4,827 visitors, up 331% from the same period in 2021.
- The Model Train Exhibit greeted 4,364 guests, up 353% from 2020, when there were 1,278 guests. The exhibit was only open on Saturdays in 2020 because of COVID-19, so part of the increase can be attributed to being open for three days a week instead of one. Foley welcomes more visitors overall on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays when the model trains are open. Caboose Club members logged 618 volunteer hours during this quarter.
- Getting a free ride around Heritage Park on the park train is one of the most popular things to do on Saturdays in Foley. During this quarter, the park train gave 2,761 rides. This is an increase of 350% over the same period in 2020, when 789 rides were given.
- The Welcome Center mailed a total of 688 visitor packets to those who requested to receive tourism information during this quarter. We also distributed a total of 377 visitor packets to organizations who requested them and picked them up.

### **Events**

- Hometown Halloween. With COVID-19 rates rising in September, a decision was made to present another drive-in movie for Halloween 2021. On the day of the event bad weather that included high winds forced us to cancel the event.
- Christmas is the Park was a huge success. After a scaled back event in 2020, in 2021, Mayor Hellmich presided over a well-attended lighting of the tree in the beautifully decorated Heritage Park. Hot chocolate and snacks were distributed by high school ambassadors and Santa spoke with hundreds of children.
- The Marketing Department arranged for a travel writer to cover Foley's Christmas events. The writer wrote articles and blogs and made social media posts throughout the first weekend in December. Articles that include stories about historic downtown Foley and OWA continue to be published as a result of bringing this writer to Foley.

### **General information**

- Event train drivers include five husband-and-wife teams plus three gentlemen who volunteer to drive the train on Saturdays.
- The Caboose Club is going strong. This past summer we helped celebrate two 90-year birthdays and two 80-year birthdays. This may indicate that folks who operate model trains live longer! There are about 18 names on the volunteer roster and about ten regulars who can be counted upon to be here several times a week.  
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- Last summer the department applied for an Alabama Humanities Recovery Grant. In September, The Foley Railroad Museum was awarded \$7,500 to be used at the Foley Railroad Museum to improve lighting in the exhibit hall.
- On behalf of the Railroad Museum, the Marketing Department also applied for and received a grant from the Alabama Historical Commission in the amount of \$6,200. This grant will be used to improve the storage and handling of city archives.