

Marketing Department Quarterly Report

January, February and March 2014

Statistics

Visitor Information Center and Museum Counts – Report attached

- Visitor traffic overall was down for the first three months of 2014, with the exception of the Holmes Medical Museum, which was up by 73 percent over the same period last year. Possible reasons for the drop include the unusually cold weather this winter, which closed all venues for three days during January.
- The Visitor Center North greeted 1,420 visitors, down 2 percent from the 1,449 visitors welcomed during the same period in 2013.
- At the Downtown Welcome Center, staff greeted 1,248 visitors, down 32 percent from the 1,831 who stopped in during the same period in 2013.
- The Depot Museum numbers, at 1,680 for the quarter, show a drop of 11 percent, and the Model Train Exhibit numbers, at 2,556, show a decrease of 20 percent.
- The Holmes Medical Museum, reporting 1,348 visitors, bucked the trend with a 73 percent increase over the same period last year. This museum has experienced an increase of large groups, which include families, and also groups that include elementary schools, trade schools and organizations that travel together, including snowbirds. We are also opening the museum on Saturdays when there is an event downtown. Examples are Mardi Gras parade day and BBQ and Blues.

Winter schedule:

- Visitor Center North: Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Welcome Center Downtown: Monday - Friday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Railroad Station Depot Museum: Monday - Friday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- Holmes Medical Museum: Monday - Friday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Spring/summer schedule:

- Visitor Center North: Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- Welcome Center Downtown: same as winter hours
- Railroad Station Depot Museum: same as winter hours
- Holmes Medical Museum: Monday – Saturday 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Activities and Events

Jan. 14, 2014

Welcomed snowbirds to Foley with a coffee held at the Foley Civic Center, organized by the South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce and this department. An estimated 600 visitors attended and received welcome kits with coupons for area businesses, as well as coffee and donuts. Exhibit displays for the following were included in the event: the Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermens Market, the Foley Model Train Exhibit, the Wilbourne Rose Trail, Graham Creek Nature Preserve, South Baldwin Chamber

of Commerce, South Baldwin Regional Medical Center, Foley Public Library, Foley Senior Center and the Foley Art Center.

January 2014

Partnered with the Foley Recreation Department for a second year to produce a Welcome to Foley coupon sheet to distribute in sports team packets and also at the welcome centers.

Provided marketing support to Blue Collar Destinations for logos, copy and design for the sports tourism conference.

Partnered with the library director to create a rack card to list library hours and promote library services. Also assisted by listing events, such as the Friends of the Library Book Sale, on Facebook and also on the VisitFoley.org website.

Provided marketing support for the Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermens Market for design and production of signs, printing cards to advertise market hours, support on Facebook, Instagram and the VisitFoley.org website and creating magazine ads to promote the market. Also worked with the manager to create a survey instrument to determine vendors' preferences regarding location for the spring market.

February 2014

Provided support for Centennial Plaza Committee brick sales on the radio, in the mayor's newsletter and with Facebook posts, and also by contacting local churches regarding group purchases of bricks.

Provided marketing support for the Model Train Show sponsored by the Foley Caboose Club and the South West Alabama Railroad Modelers. Assisted by creating and distributing a rack card and also by promoting the event on Facebook and the VisitFoley.org website.

Feb. 6, 2014

Participated in the Alabama Lifestyles Expo, sponsored by the Alabama Department of Community Affairs. Organizers estimate approximately 3,000 attendees participated in this event. Foley Visitor Center staff distributed materials on things to see and do in Foley, including the Downtown Walking Map, Foley Restaurant Guide and information on the Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermens Market.

Feb. 7, 2014

Participated in the Foley Performing Arts Association's reception to welcome snowbirds. Organizers estimate 130 attendees. Visitor Center staff distributed materials on things to see and do in Foley.

March 20, 2014

Attended a Digital Marketing Summit sponsored by Gulf Shores Tourism. The event included a full day of training with presentations from national industry experts regarding best practices for digital marketing in tourism related venues.

New Marketing Tools

City of Foley Mayor's Newsletter, Winter 2014 - printed 9,000 and mailed 8,552 (attached)
Arrived in homes March 10, 2014.

Welcome to Foley coupon sheet

Updated the Downtown Foley Walking Map

Foley Mardi Gras Parade map

Model Train Show rack card for Caboose Club

Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermens Market hand-out cards

Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermens Market – updated sign at road

Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermens Market – ads for Mobile Bay Monthly magazine and Natural Awakenings magazine