

Marketing Department Annual Report

Overview:

2019 was a strong year for leisure tourism in Foley. Visitors report they enjoy the friendly people, small shops and diverse dining options they find in Foley. The word is out that this is a great place to spend a day while at the beach.

Overall, for the year, visitor numbers were up. Visitor counts at the Welcome Center totaled 5,948, which was down five percent from 2018. Visitor counts at the Holmes Medical Museum totaled 8,920, which was up by 31.4 percent from 2018. Visitor counts at the Depot Museum hit 17,832, which is up 62 percent over fiscal year 2018. The total visitor count at the model trains was 26,356, which is down 4 percent from the previous year. This sounds like mixed results, but the increases were so large that this year's totals equals the most visitors we have seen in the downtown area.

Other significant happenings, by month are detailed below:

October: Due to forecasted bad weather, the city Halloween event was held in Heritage Park. It was very well attended in spite of changing the date and the venue at the last minute.

December: On Dec. 8, Foley's Christmas Parade rolled in spite of scattered rain, but Let it Snow was rescheduled on Dec. 15.

January: Over 600 guests attended the annual snowbird coffee, sponsored jointly by the South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce and the city.

With assistance from the Museum Archives Board, staff began collecting oral histories from older residents with an emphasis on gathering stories about the depot and the trains that once came to Foley.

Sherry Sullivan was named Foley's first Main Street Director.

February – Welcome Center and museum employees attended the Alabama Museum Association conference in Montgomery.

Public Works ordered 100 pink garbage cans and they were all spoken for on the first day they were released to the public.

March: Foley's Mardi Gras Parade brought a lot of visitors to downtown Foley on Saturday, March 2.

April – Foley had 98 total participants during the four Saturday walking tours offered in April. The tours, which last one hour and begin at 10 a.m., were led by local experts that included Judge Tim Russell and his wife Sandy, Deborah Mixon, Zana Price and David Dalton.

May – The Wilbourne Rose Trail was one of eight locations featured on the Baldwin County Master Gardener's spring garden tour, which included gardens in Foley and Magnolia Springs. Perry Wilbourne was available to answer questions about the roses and the trail during the tour.

June – June concluded another year of Music and a Movie in the Park. The popular series is attended by hundreds of people, mostly families, during Fridays in the spring. Prior to that event, goods are available from vendors in the park for the Heritage Park Marketplace. Several hundred people usually attend this event prior to the movie.

July – Public Parking signs were placed in designated spots around the heart of downtown Foley.

August – Attended the Governor's Conference on Tourism in Huntsville, Alabama

September – Alabama Archives Department staff traveled to Foley to provide training to welcome center and museum employees on basics of curating and storing for museums. They gave both of Foley's museums good marks based on overall management for small museums statewide.

FY 2019 VISITORS - ALL LOCATIONS

VISITORS	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-18	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	TOTAL
Welcome Center	381	325	267	903	788	737	509	431	552	506	294	255	5948
Holmes Museum	596	488	478	732	1102	905	709	644	988	922	769	587	8920
Depot Museum	1286	890	799	1223	2010	1867	1355	1109	2030	2590	1693	980	17832
Train Exhibit	1894	1567	1678	1969	2507	2498	1961	2139	3103	2843	2560	1637	26356
Total Visitors	4157	3270	3222	4827	6407	6007	4534	4323	6673	6861	5316	3459	59056
VISITOR INFORMATION PACKETS	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-18	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	TOTAL
Mailed Packets	207	53	253	189	154	232	248	143	240	133	153	238	2243
Welcome Packets	1024	0	0	1000	410	245	200	200	21	30	200	105	3435
Total Information Packets	1231	53	253	1189	564	477	448	343	261	163	353	343	5678
Sources: phone/website, South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce, Alabama Advantage, and the Alabama Vacation Guide													
WEBSITE STATISTICS	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-18	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	
VisitFoley.com - Users	5828	4324	5472	4392	5036	7254	5278	5902	5755	5888	4417	3978	
CityOfFoley.org - Users	7286	5870	6479	7253	7000	7448	7223	7824	7488	8568	7117	7144	
Visit Foley Facebook Fans	8434	5136	5846	3018	3150	8925	4772	4773	4196	1670	2416	3608	
Total Online Activity	21548	15330	17797	14663	15186	23627	17273	18499	17439	16126	13950	3978	
VOLUNTEER HOURS	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-18	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	TOTAL
Welcome Center	47	0	52	25	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	129
Caboose Club	367	346	476	538	529	510	412	457	381	424	328	331	5099
Total Volunteer Hours	414	346	528	563	534	510	412	457	381	424	328	331	5228
E-Newsletters	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-18	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	
Visitors	0	5262	0	0	0	5436	5383	5986	0	5534	0	0	
Local	0	331	0	0	0	357	357	375	0	408	0	0	
Total Newsletters	0	5593	0	0	0	5793	5740	6361	0	5942	0	0	