

Marketing Department Quarterly Report

January, February and March 2020

Visitor stats

- The year was off to a great start, with visitor numbers up significantly at the model train exhibit and the two museums prior to March 16, when Foley's welcome center, museums and model train exhibit were closed due to COVID-19.
- For the 2nd quarter, welcome center visitor counts were at 1,854, versus 2,428 for the same period in 2019. Visitor counts ended down 23 percent for the quarter. Welcome Center visitors were highest in January, with 877 visitors.
- YTD, Welcome Center counts totaled 2,694, versus 3,401 during the same period in 2019. Visitor counts ended down at 20 percent YTD.
- At the Holmes Medical Museum, visitor counts totaled 2,713 for the quarter, versus 2,739 for the same quarter in 2019. Visitor counts at this location down less than 1 percent, visitor counts were flat for the quarter. The Holmes Medical Museum saw the highest visitor counts in February, with 1,386 visitors for the month.
- YTD at the HMM, visitor counts totaled 4,360, versus 4,301 in 2019. This is up one percent over last year, in spite of the early close in March.
- In the 2nd quarter, the Depot Museum greeted 4,564 visitors, versus 5,100 during the same period in 2019. Visits were down by 10 percent. During the month of February, the Depot Museum greeted 2,373 visitors, breaking the 2,000 visitor mark in February for two years in a row.
- YTD at the Depot Museum, visitor counts are at 8,065, versus 8,075 last year, which is essentially flat for YTD.
- At the Model Train Exhibit, visitor counts totaled 6,069 for the quarter, versus 6,974 for the same period in 2019. This is down about 12.9 percent. The month with the highest visitor count was February, with 2,909 visitors. This venue is only open three days a week. It was packed each time it opened. Winter visitors love this venue.
- YTD for the Model Train Exhibit, visitor counts totaled 10,608, versus 12,113 the previous year. This is down 12.4 percent, with the early closing in March.

Electronic Media stats

- We saw a marked change in numbers for Facebook and websites during the quarter. As COVID-19 spread, Facebook and website posts for Visit Foley declined, which is to be expected as these are geared for tourism. It was obvious that locals began depending more upon the City of Foley website and City of Foley Municipal Government Facebook page for local information, as these numbers went up.

- For the City of Foley Municipal Government Facebook page, Fans more than doubled, from 833 to 1,978 during the quarter. Worth noting, this page shot up to 6,142 fans in April.
- During the same period, the Visit Foley Facebook page went from 3,990 in January to 3,476 in March. These pages tend to fluctuate, but this shows that visitors searching for restaurant information remained pretty constant.
- The Visit Foley website had a total of 13,161 visits during the quarter, versus 16,682 visitors during the same period last year, for a change of -21 percent. With fewer visits, there were fewer website visits.
- The City of Foley website had a total of 29,435 visits for the quarter, versus 21,701 during the same period the previous year. This is an increase of 35 percent. Locals began using this page as viable source of local information.
- YTD, the City of Foley website has had a total of 53,247 visits, versus 41,336 during the same period in 2019. This is an increase of 28.8 percent.

Activities and Events

January 2020

- The 9th Annual Snowbird coffee, sponsored by the South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce and the city, was attended by over 600 visitors. A walking tour with a scavenger hunt in downtown businesses was incorporated into the event. Downtown businesses reported a marked increase in foot traffic on the two days this event was held.
- Winter guest members of the Caboose Club returned for the season, swelling the number of club members to fourteen. These are valuable members who stay in contact throughout the year. Projects completed by out-of-town members include plastering and repainting weak sections of the layout, building new buildings from scratch, and creating a data base description of layout components.

February 2020

- Welcome Center and museum staff completed work on a \$2,500 grant from the Alabama Bicentennial Committee. The money was spent on archival supplies and creating donation policies to guide collections to be used at all of the museums.

March 20120

- The Welcome Center, Railroad Museum, Model Train Exhibit and Holmes Medical Museums were all closed to the public on March 16. Employees continued to work cataloguing, organizing, cleaning and painting, until March 31, when non-essential workers were directed to stay home. The extra two weeks allowed staff to get several much needed tasks completed.