



**NOME CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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***NOME CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU***

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cc: Paul G. Kosto, Nome Chamber of Commerce Executive Director

TO: Glenn Steckman, City Manager      DATE: July, 2021

City Council Members  
Mayor John Handeland

FROM: Drew McCann, Director      SUBJECT: 4<sup>nd</sup> Quarter  
Nome Convention & Visitors Bureau      FY 2020/21

## **INTRODUCTION**

The following lists the highlights of the goals and accomplishments for the Nome Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) during The City of Nome 4<sup>nd</sup> Quarter FY 2020-21 April, May, June 2021. The purpose of this memo is to inform the City of Nome on the progress of the CVB operations and to provide a historical record of activities for CVB staff as reference for future planning. The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to have major impacts on CVB operations. Since re-opening in the first of the year, some of the popular summer attractions such as birding has rebounded significantly. We have also had an increase in Alaska residents visiting Nome for a few hours to several days. Some of these activities have been for biking the roads, camping, and exploring the town and cultural history.

## **STAFFING**

The Visitor Center (VC) did not hire seasonal staff this year due to the shortened tourist season and cancellation of all planned cruise vessels. The current staff of 2 has maintained open VC hours of operations 7 days a week since May 31<sup>st</sup>.

## INQUIRIES AND TRAFFIC COUNT

Our webcam continues to be the focal point for information request. Further information on the webcam is covered later in this report.

During this period, we had the following traffic:

Visitors in the VC: **460 (average 5-10/day birding days over 40)**

Phone Inquiries: **250 (above average)**

Email Requests: **180 (average)**

Website Visitors: **39,032 (above average)**

Webpage views: **74438 (above average)**

Visitor Countries: **104 (above average)**

Although this information is difficult to compare to previous years, the traffic in the VC and also through phone calls has steadily increased. The VC has answered a high volume of calls regarding travel and covid requirements into Nome, and has maintained PSAs on hand to provide to interested parties. Spring birding was a hit, with several groups bringing in 20+ birders at a time to the visitor center for sighting information and to expand their knowledge on things to do and see in Nome. The peak days of the birding season we greeted over 60 visitors a day, mainly in the early morning and evenings.

## COMPLETED VISITOR PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

The VC has worked to updated technology in the visitor center with the keynote being an addition of a 70" TV to showcase photos, videos, maps and more to more visitors at a time. It has been extremely useful in helping visitors get to certain areas of town and also showing highlights of things to do while in Nome. We have maintained a smaller tv for the "No Place Like Nome Video" and continue to play it daily as well. We have created a community calendar on our website and have continually updated it with key community events. We have updated the restaurants list and added on a "local favorite" to each listing, this is currently being updated to the website too. The Midnight Sun Festival turnout was better than expected, with several vendors, groups, and participants enjoying the week-long string of events. The craft fair was one of the only poorly attended portions of the festival, however with hesitation still on regional travel, many carvers and artists did not come to town to sell crafts. Nome CVB in partnership with Kawerak, Inc planned and obtained a tourism grant, and completed the first advertising that will be coming out in the first part of July. This will be two (2) 30 second commercials, one (1) 15 second commercial, and a multitude of digital advertising hitting many different streams of audiences in and outside of Alaska. We have continued to be a part of the community wide dialogue on

homelessness and alcoholism in Nome and specifically have organized multiple cleanups of Front Street, middle beach, and the rock wall while getting to know and engage in meaningful discussion with the populations that frequently stay around the visitor center.

## **PLANNED VISITOR PROMOTION ACTIVITIES**

We are currently in the planning stages for the 2022 Nome Visitor Guide and will be completing the draft by September to be printed by January 1 2022. We are also working to update the maps of Nome, accommodations and lodging lists, and create more assets to be used in advertising and marketing in the future. More copies of the “No Place Like Nome” video is being ordered and converted over to Blu-ray and sent around to visitor centers and tour agencies around Alaska and also in the NW part of the country. We will continue to improve our website and use it as a resource for visitors and residents for community events and resources. Travel will resume for the visitor center staff to promote and network with tourism industry representatives and vendors in the coming months. Inquires on Iditarod 2022 has begun and we are currently working to update our website for Iditarod 2022 information.