

2020 *Annual Report*



Visit
DICKINSON
THE WESTERN EDGE of ND

Dickinson Convention & Visitors Bureau

701-483-4988 | 72 E. Museum Dr. | Dickinson, ND 58601



VISITDICKINSON.COM

INTRODUCTION

And we sure didn't see that coming! The travel world was turned upside down, a stark contrast to the optimistic outlook that we had predicted for 2020. One month of paid marketing and we shut paid advertising down, relying instead on our organic reach and pulling every email list we have to create our own E-blasts to those addresses through-out the year.

The staff quickly turned to helping the community hospitality businesses by creating a COVID Hospitality Updates photo/page link on our website home page that listed a variety of informational links and other information related to COVID 19. Restaurants were called and information on their delivery options were listed. A Social Distancing Recreation flyer was created to get people out of their isolation safely. Business assistance information was also added, and Event information was posted. As the pandemic continued, the staff also created other types of suggested itinerary activities that were themed for people to do such as History Drives, Viewing Wildlife and Kids Activities.

And while the occupancy rate was down 24.4% from 2019, Stark County held the highest occupancy rate in the state, starting in April 2020, until the end of September 2020. The Theodore Roosevelt National Park was a busy get away place in the summer, especially for our in-state visitors. For those people who did travel, they definitely came to get outdoors, and away from large inner-city chaos this year. However, the overall year comparison was not good for the industry. The 2% lodging tax that our organization is funded with, was down 32% from 2019, again putting many changes into place, and especially halting our paid marketing plans. North Dakota lost 6,200 visitor related jobs and more than \$1 billion in visitor spending.

But the positive! Businesses have improvised their services, have been more creative with their products and their delivery. ND Parks & Recreation reported an increase of 35% in their camping sites, ND Game & Fish reported huge increases in fishing and hunting licenses, and ND Tourism Division's website analytics increased 52% from last year. Who could find a camper or bike to purchase? Our state residents went out to explore, relax and enjoy our own backyard attractions.

And along with that, the message about the importance that travel has never been more understood until it was at a standstill this year.

While it will take some time for major interstate travel again, it's coming, and we will be ready for them when they get here. Stop in our office anytime, we have plenty of ideas and information for you to explore your own area!



Board of Directors

Klayton Oltmanns
President

Elaine Myran
Vice-President

Tom Fath
Secretary/Treasurer

Kristi Schwartz

Ryan Jilek

Jason Fridrich

Jim Bridger

Staff

Terri Thiel
Executive Director

Julie Obrigewitsch
Sales Coordinator/Social Media

Joel Walters
Multi-Media Manager/Visitor Support

Summer Staff

Peggy Rixen-Kuntz

Shirley Gengler

Our Mission

To Promote Events and Activities that Attract
Visitors to Dickinson and Stimulate the Economy

COVID WORLD

As the plans of 2020 suddenly changed, the CVB staff turned to assisting the local community and hospitality businesses with informational links for food closures, food service information, social distancing recreation and business and employer resources that were routinely updated.



EXPLORE. EXPERIENCE. ENJOY. RECREATE.

Social Distancing Recreation

- Theodore Roosevelt National Park
- Little Missouri National Grasslands
- Old Red Trail Scenic Byway
- Killdeer Mountain/4 Bears Scenic Byway
- Enchanted Highway
- Schnell Recreation Area Trails
- Crooked Crane Trail
- Local Geo-Caching
- Custer Trail Auto Tour
- Hiking & Biking
- Nature Watching
- Outdoor Photography

800.279.7391

VisitDickinson.com
Dickinson Convention & Visitors Bureau

Enchanted Highway

Old Red Trail Scenic Byway

Theodore Roosevelt National Park

COVID-19 Information and Updates

We hope you enjoy the seasonal attractions, events and options for dining and lodging in Dickinson. Business is open and encouraging safest practices for everyone's safety.

Local Information

Amid the new social situation that we are facing in the hospitality industry, the Dickinson CVB is continuing to update our website information and [Facebook](#).

- If you have an **Event** that has been canceled or postponed that we are not aware of, please let us know.

Email the Dickinson CVB at info@visitdickinson.com or call 701-483-4988 with updates.

[View updated or cancelled events](#)

Local Food to Go!

[View Dickinson's Food to Go!](#)

SOCIAL DISTANCING RECREATION

EXPLORE. EXPERIENCE. ENJOY. RECREATE.

Unique Shopping
Local Dining
Coffee Shops
Regional Sight Seeing

Theodore Roosevelt National Park
Outdoor Winter Photography
Outdoor Adventure
Hunting

When You're Ready, We'll Be Here!

800.279.7391
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[VIEW MORE Area Social Distancing Recreation](#)

LOCAL DINING OPTIONS

[Click Here & Submit Your Information To Be Included In Our Listing.](#)

VisitDickinson.com

Take-Out, Delivery, Dine-In

With all of the confusion and uncertainty in the pandemic situation, the CVB initiated #SmileDickinson with weekly jokes that were placed on the electronic sign at the corner of Highway 22 and 14th St. W. The uplifting messages helped uplift spirits in the community.

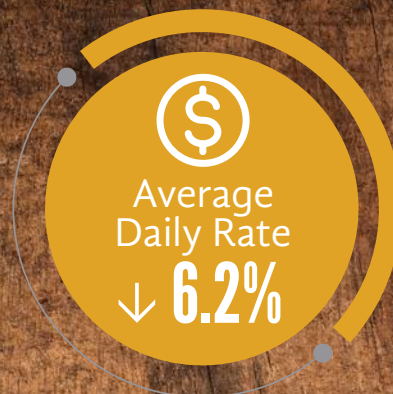
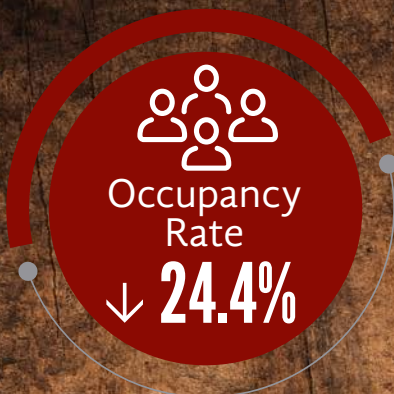
Roger Brooks

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

After developing community information for COVID resources, the Dickinson CVB was featured on a webinar with Roger Brooks, a national tourism and downtown speaker. The CVB also contracted with Roger Brooks to review the CVB branding message and tagline.



YEAR END NUMBERS



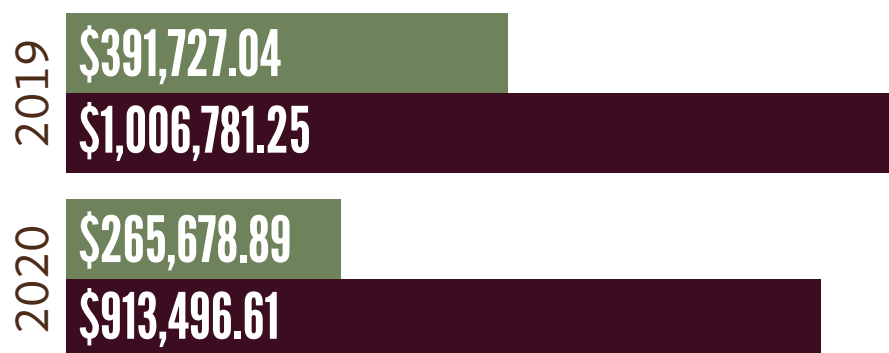
Guest Book

2019
45 STATES
14 COUNTRIES

2020
40 STATES
1 COUNTRY

*It is interesting that while we did not have the amount of foreign country visitors, as expected, that we still had such a high amount of individual different state visitors considering the COVID situation.

Lodging Tax and Hospitality Tax



DIGITAL DATA

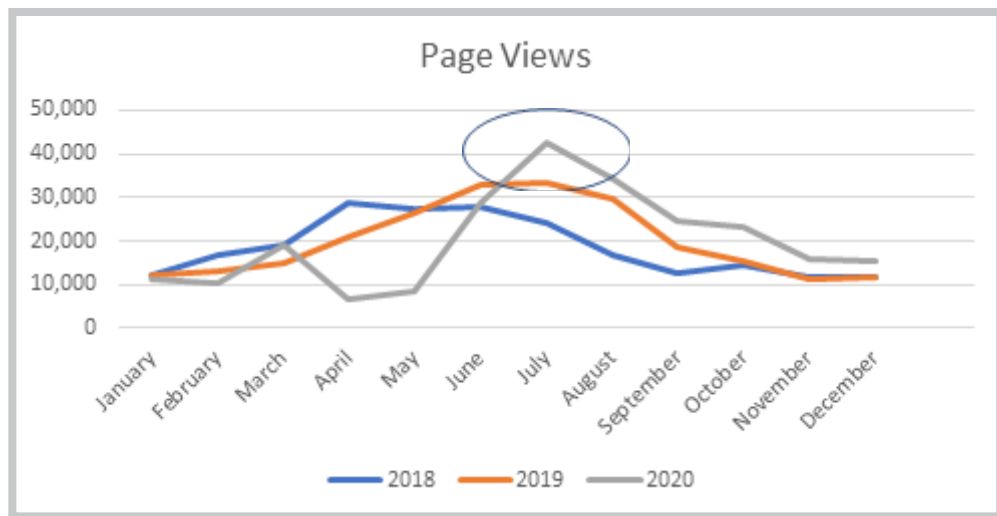
Using Google Analytics provides the information we need to make informed decisions as we create the yearly social media calendar that targets other states.

Where is our traffic coming from?

What device are they using?

What photos or videos has received the most engagements on our paid digital platforms?

Website Visits



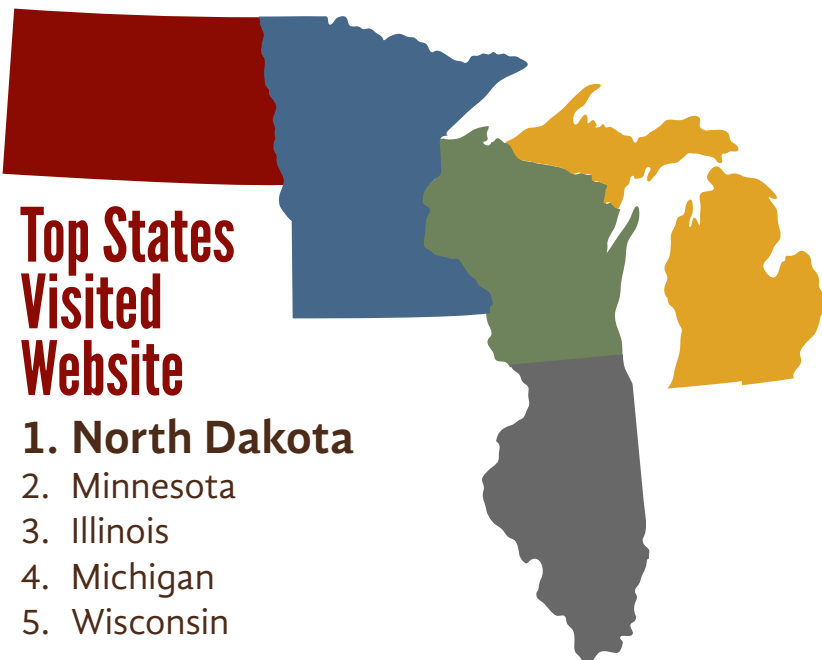
Looking at the Pageviews, the 2020 trend line shows us that the end of May that the web users were engaged with content information on the CVB pages. By mid-June, interest exceeded the prior years.

Top Cities Visited Website

1. Dickinson
2. Minneapolis
3. Chicago
4. Bismarck
5. New York

Top States Visited Website

1. North Dakota
2. Minnesota
3. Illinois
4. Michigan
5. Wisconsin



Top 5 Pages Viewed

1. Events
2. Badlands Dinosaur Museum
3. Things to Do
4. Dining
5. Celebrate Freedom Parade

Destination Analysts

The Dickinson CVB was able to participate in a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) Website Importance Study what was hosted by Destination Analysts, a national research company at no cost this summer. The study provided the key insights of users of VisitDickinson.com throughout the COVID-19 crisis from May through December. Resident and Non-Resident web users were offered to participate in a survey that ask a variety of travel questions.

There were other questions in the survey, below are a few samples in the study.



CVB Website Value 7.7 out of 10

CVB Importance 82.3%

Top Areas of interest

- Outdoor Recreation Activities
- Restaurant/Dining
- Special Events/Festivals

COVID 19 Specific Information Sought

- Hours/restrictions/closures for local businesses
- Hours/restrictions/closures for public areas (parks, trails, etc.)
- Restaurants that are doing takeout/delivery

CrowdRiff

The CVB subscribed to the photo influence platform, CrowdRiff, that inspires new and returning interest to travel brands. It allows the CVB to effectively discover and activate the most engaging visual photos from the social web. Photos can be organized into galleries and placed with the highest value on the CVB's website.



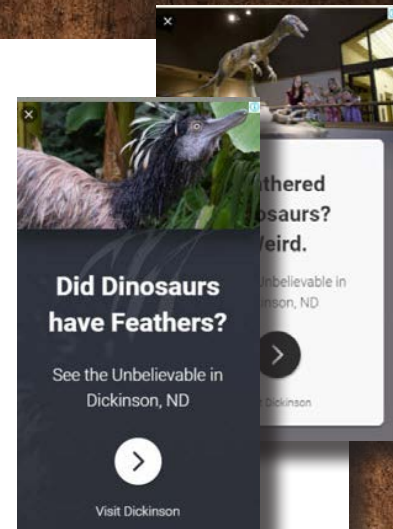
LEISURE & OUTDOOR MARKETING

ONLINE MARKETING – MARCH ONLY 2019 VS 2020

A strategic monthly online editorial calendar was developed for results that were analyzed to ensure the maximum amount of targeted audience was reached with the funds that were dedicated to drive visitors to Dickinson. A strong paid campaign was planned for 2020, however quickly halted after the first marketing month of March after the pandemic took hold of the country. For this report, a comparison of the only option for the paid marketing month of March will be compared to last year's data.

March 2019 - \$1,581

March 2020 - \$8,568



2019
19,182

2020
154,588



2019
5,118

2020
310



2019
626

2020
4,367



2019
77

2020
311



2019
19,546

2020
74,088

PRINT

The following print ads were contracted prior to COVID-19.

ND Travel Guide
AAA Living
National Parks
ND Hunting & Fishing
Guide
On Wisconsin Outdoors
Maah Daah Hey Trail Map



BILLBOARD

Located at Exit 61
Visitor Information Sign



VIDEO

Located at the Hailstone Rest Area just west of New Salem, the CVB produces a video that is changed out seasonally for travelers.



PRINTED MATERIAL

21,250 Guide to the City

15,000 Tear Off Maps

500 Hunting Packets Prepared

ND TOURISM DIVISION RECOVERY COOP PROGRAM

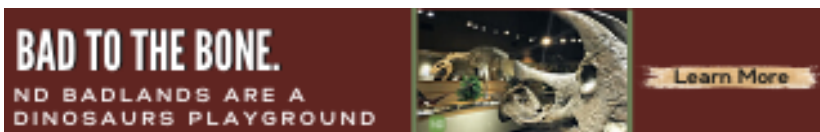
Because of COVID-19, ND Tourism Division was able to offer an advertising opportunity on limited media platforms within the ND audiences. The Dickinson CVB signed up and received a total value of \$9,037.63 in a mix of print and digital advertising.

Print – 1/9 page

- ND Living *July Issue*
- Grand Lifestyle *August Issue*
- Midwest Outdoors *August Issue*
- Area Woman *Aug/Sept Issue*

Digital

- Forum Communications
- ND Tourism Facebook Post
- Cross Device Retargeting



E-BLASTS

Qualified email addresses from 2016 – 2020 were re-entered into a database. Creative photos and videos were placed into an engaging variety of marketing messages to

over 1,400 addresses.

The E-blasts were sent out June, August, and September.



DICKINSON, NORTH DAKOTA

YOUR GATEWAY TO THE HISTORIC WESTERN FRONTIER IN DICKINSON, ND



Featuring: **TERRI THIEL**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, [VISIT DICKINSON](#)

Find your inner cowboy while exploring the open lands of Dickinson, North Dakota.

[READ MORE](#)

Storyline and photos were written by the CVB and published on the Rediscover America blog site. Rediscover America is helping people reignite their passion for the things that make their community unique and discover new places to explore.

Freelance Travel Writers

Working with ND Tourism, Dickinson hosted three freelance travel writer/influencers this summer.

- Kristy Burns – My Town Today
- Ketki Sharangpani – Dotted Globe
- Cassandra Brooklyn – Escaping NY



CVB KNOWLEDGE PANEL

Daily additions of calls to action to the CVB website are posted.

CVB YOUTUBE CHANNEL

108 Total Videos **17,773** Total Views

CITY OF DICKINSON KNOWLEDGE PANEL

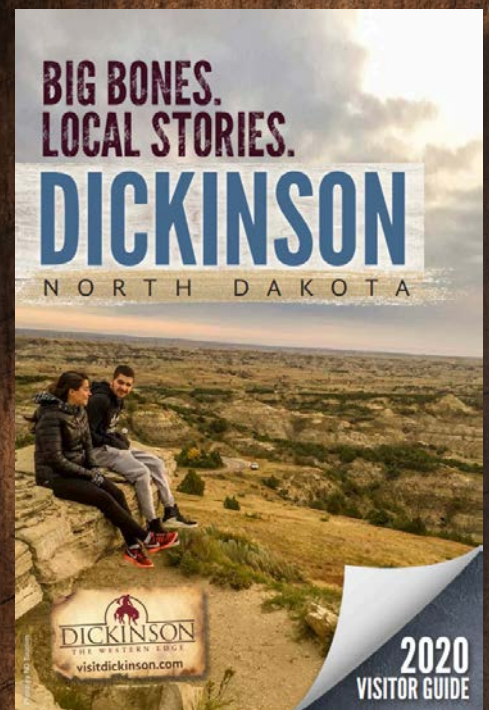
437 Total Posts **1,420,000** Total Views

GOOGLE LOCAL GUIDE PHOTOS

643 Total Photos **8,998,961** Total Views



Outdoor Recreation



2020 GUIDE TO THE CITY

A refresh of the graphic styles and a slightly larger Guide to the City was finished the end of 2019 for the 2020 season.

A new look for design has made the Guide more inviting and interesting with new photos and style brand. It also features a new section for Local Eats and Coffee that people will enjoy.

Hunting

Approximately 500 prepared packets are delivered to the hotel/motels and Dickinson Airport in the fall for upland game hunter to access hunting information, include the PLOTS Guides.

The CVB, the LaQuinta Inn & Suites, and ND Tourism Division again hosted writers with On Wisconsin Outdoors publication for a two-page story on pheasant hunting in Dickinson and southwest North Dakota.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



GROW WITH GOOGLE – DEVELOP DICKINSON CHAMBER EVENT

Julie Obrigewitsch, CVB Social Media Manager, presented Grow with Google for Develop Dickinson, a Chamber of Commerce program. Thirty attendees from Dickinson, Minot and Chicago, IL learned about the importance and free tools for marketing with Google and online presence. The event was in person and virtual.



The CVB facilitated the Downtown Dickinson Association with their Board Retreat the beginning of March for a full day, providing them with a written recap of the day, and draft plan.



LEADERSHIP DICKINSON – DICKINSON CHAMBER

Each year, the CVB hosts the Chamber High School Leadership Team for the Tourism Day trip. This year was a different learning mode, as it was conducted by Zoom for the students. The day included information regarding the area attractions, and how travel is important to our local and state economy.

DICKINSON MUSEUM CENTER

CVB staff assists the Dickinson Museum Center Boards with projects and marketing, attending the monthly meetings of the Stark County Historical Society and SW ND Museum Foundation.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

CITY OF DICKINSON

The CVB filled out a grant application for the City of Dickinson, through the ND Department of Commerce. The City was awarded \$1,500 from the 2020 Main Street Initiative Grant Program which was used for part of the cost of the ten downtown street pots and planters that will be filled to enhance the downtown streetscape.



THEODORE ROOSEVELT PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY

The Theodore Roosevelt Foundation Board has reached the goal of raising \$100 million in private donations, receiving 242 donations. The state of North Dakota has committed \$50 million from interest accumulation through the investments of the ND Board of University and School lands. Estimated completion of the project is 2025 in Medora.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS MEETINGS

Monthly Community Relations meetings at the Chamber office via Zoom meetings in 2020. The meetings are informal discussions and updates for local community leaders.

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HEARTRIVERVOICE.COM

Heart River VOICE

SUPPORT OUR AREA BUSINESSES THE BEST YOU CAN DURING THIS TIME OF CRISIS!

Find Heart River Voice at the following fine establishments:

DICKINSON Family Fare (Roughrider Blvd) Cashwise Country Kitchen Country Rose Diner Dakota Diner Blue 42 The Brickhouse The Brew Mandy's Bagel Bar Dunn Brothers Coffee Dickinson Theodore Bootsell Regional Airport	TownPlace Suites Microtel Inn & Suites Hawthorn Suites Americinn Roosevelt Grand Dakota Hotel Frankie's West Side Shell Villard Cenex The Hub Rosie's Food & Gas The Rock Fluffy Fields Dickinson State University Dickinson Area Public Library
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CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

#SmileDickinson

Travel has always been a part of our country, whether it is for short one-day trips, a summer vacation, sporting events, or business. It's been an adjustment, a big adjustment, to the restrictions that we have all taken for granted - moving about at will. As restrictions become lifted, options for continued safe activities will be the first recommendations, such as the social distancing outdoor activities that are popular especially as the warm weather enters into our season.

For many years, the Convention & Visitors Bureau has created many marketing plans based on attracting visitors to Dickinson and our area to experience our attractions, events and rugged landscape. Today, we are in a different marketing world. We are here to help our locals even more than ever. The CVB staff has been creating new formats for providing ideas for things to experience, learn and do. Let's rethink our local history. How can we make it not only interesting information, but also fun entertainment? We're going to create ideas for outdoor experiences for children, a fake dino hunt idea, wildlife viewing tips, and so on.

Our message this month is to use our website as a resource for ideas and local and business information. www.visitdickinson.com and of course we are on social media. We hope that if you see incorrect information on any of our platforms, you will please let us know so we can update them.

We will come back to experience all the wonderful attractions and events that we love. It might be with additional cautions and safety measures, but we will get there. Tell a joke, make someone smile. What did the horse say when it fell? I can't giddyup! #SmileDickinson

Leadership Dickinson's

A monthly article is written for Heart River Voice that relates to the travel industry. Storylines include trip ideas, travel facts, and other tourism related content.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



DICKINSON CVB ASSISTED MEDORA CVB BOARD

Mid-March, the CVB traveled to Medora to meet with the Medora CVB Board of Directors to discuss some of the common standards of CVB organizations, and the steps towards developing a 1% Hospitality Tax for their community.

2020 CENSUS

The CVB was a partner with the 2020 local census committee, attending local meetings and producing five videos. The videos showed importance of filling out the US Census to local residents. They were distributed to other community partners to place on their social media platforms. The CVB also produced a local video in Hispanic, featuring Spanish community member as the spokesperson.



STARK STRONG CAMPAIGNS

The Stark Strong campaigns were developed to keep shoppers shopping local in Stark County. The first campaign was held in the summer and the second, Holiday Stark Strong was held just prior to the Holiday Season. The CVB assisted the committee with both campaigns.

ND SMART RESTART

The CVB kept a close eye on each of the ND Smart Restart protocols during the different risk levels of COVID-19, sending out information to the Lodging and Dining establishments.



Economic Resiliency Grant (ERG)

The CVB assisted in sending information out to Dickinson and southwest North Dakota hospitality businesses to be able to apply for funding to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Hospitality Economic Resiliency Grant (HERG) and HERG Plus

These programs were created to assist the restaurants, bars, entertainment venues and lodging properties with funding to cover the basic operational costs during the pandemic. The CVB sent out information to Dickinson and southwest North Dakota hospitality businesses.



HOSPITALITY & UNIQUE SHOPPING UPDATES

Meeting Marketing

This year began with committed association and local meetings that ended up canceled. The meeting world stopped in person meetings, resulting in primarily Zoom Meetings. Hand-written cards were sent to the contacts in our files to show sensitivity and assurance that we will assist them when they are ready to resume their plans. The quarterly postcards were not sent out in 2020.

- Ramada Grand Dakota Hotel was rebranded – Roosevelt Grand Dakota Hotel, BW Signature Collection
- Faith Expressions relocated
- Hub Café opened - Schlotzky's & Cinnabon closed
- Rodeway Inn closed
- Relax Inn closed and was torn down
- Travel Inn closed
- The Wurst Shop Kitchen closed
- Perkins Restaurant closed
- Joy (shopping) relocated
- Lillian's closed
- GG's replaced Sassy Sister Boutique
- Red Coach Lounge closed
- Dairy Barn closed and was torn down
- C & K Sweet Shoppe Downtown opened
- Astoria New York Pizza opened
- The Crossing closed
- Donut Hole remodeled
- Backyard Play Café opened
- BK Subs opened
- Papa Murphy's relocated
- Odyssey University 2 at DSU closed
- Food Riot Truck relocated to old St. Joe's Hospital facility
- Deja Vu Tots relocated
- My Pueblito opened



EVENT GRANT PROGRAM

Each year the City budgets \$50,000 that the CVB administers in providing event assistance. In mid-September, the City of Dickinson enacted a 30-day moratorium on all events in Dickinson for which a special permit would need to be granted by the City. Awarded in 2020 – Because of COVID-19, most events did not apply and were canceled.

- Western Edge Bull Riding Finals
- PBR Bull Riding
- Harvest Festival
- Dickinson Sports Commission
- Downtown Dickinson Association Events
- Roughrider Days Fair & Expo - Canceled
- ND State Seniors Singles Bowling Tournament
- 2nd Annual Winterfest – 2021

PEGGY RIXEN-KUNTZ – A TRAVELER’S BEST FRIEND

In 2000, the Dickinson Convention & Visitors Bureau moved to new building at 72 E. Museum Dr., next to the Dickinson Museum Center. The first person hired for a summer position was Peggy Rixen-Kuntz, a local resident who possessed a lot of knowledge of Dickinson and the area, along with having a great personality to welcome visitors. Peggy has worked evenings, weekends, and most lately summer afternoons for the Convention & Visitors Bureau for twenty years.

The lobby office comes alive when visitors walk through the door. “Welcome to the CVB, and how may I help you?” is the standard greeting everyone receives with a smile on her face. She expounds on the opportunities they can see starting with the Museum Center next door, the other Dickinson attractions, and then onto the hotel lodging information and where the best restaurants are.

In 2012, Peggy was nominated and given the Front-line Tourism Employee award during the ND Travel Conference by then Governor Jack Dalrymple. Front-line Tourism Employee – Individual who provides outstanding customer service to tourists and visitors on a daily basis. This was a most deserving award for Peggy.

This past September she turned 90 years young!



Dickinson Convention & Visitors Bureau

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