

# BIG BONES. LOCAL STORIES.



## 2019 Annual Report

Dickinson Convention & Visitors Bureau



# INTRODUCTION

2019 was marked by visitor increases that included occupancy rates, google analytics stats, lodging tax and hospitality tax receipts. It was a good summer travel season, August occupancy numbers were well above the previous recent summers, along with a busy fall schedule of meetings, sports events and local festivals.

Our local attractions also did well, as did our neighboring communities who's lodging and hospitality tax receipts also increased. Visitation affects a multitude of businesses, government and organizations including hotel/motels and the staff they employ, museums or other attractions and their staff, cities who receive a local tax on purchases and services, and the list goes on.

The Badlands Dinosaur Museum has had some very exciting fieldwork going on this past year. Paleontologist Dr. Denver Fowler and his team are working on removing a complete, articulated tyrannosaur skeleton in the Montana Judith River Formation. Dr. Fowler has called it "the most exciting I've ever found." Plans are being made to lift the formation this upcoming summer, to bring it back to the Badlands Dinosaur laboratory for preparation.

The ND Legislative session was busy in 2019. As a Co-Chair of ND Travel Alliance Partnership (NDTAP), the Dickinson CVB was active in testimony supporting the ND Tourism Division marketing budget, the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library, County Lodging and Hospitality Tax bill, updating and revising the City Lodging Tax visitors committee and outdated language, along with monitoring the hunting and fishing bills that were presented.

We saw lots of visitors again in our lobby. It's always fun and interesting to visit with the travelers. They are always impressed by our clean community and friendly people. Many are in awe of the wide-open spaces and rolling landscapes. Our conversations will turn to the opportunities in our community, and we sell Dickinson as a place to think about for their next move, with the many jobs available. First a visitor, then a resident. Many times, tourism is the doorway to the first impression of possible relocations.

Stop in our office anytime, we have plenty of ideas and information for you to explore your own area!

## *our mission*

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

### **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



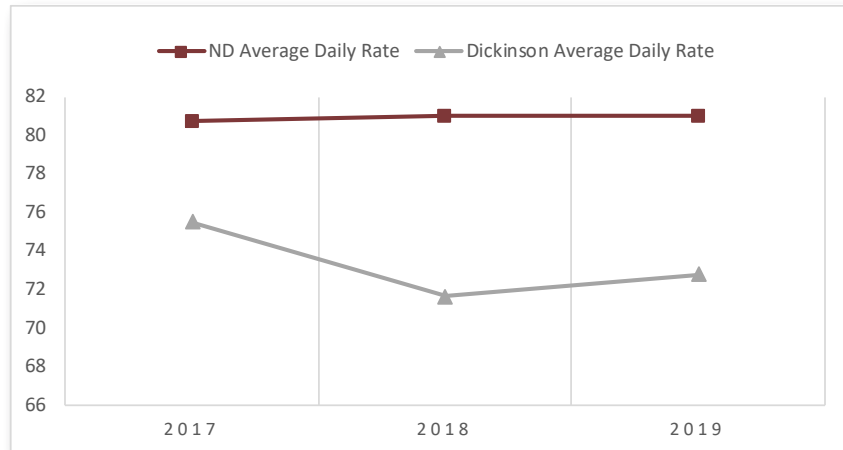
# YEAR END NUMBERS

## Average Daily Rate (ADR)

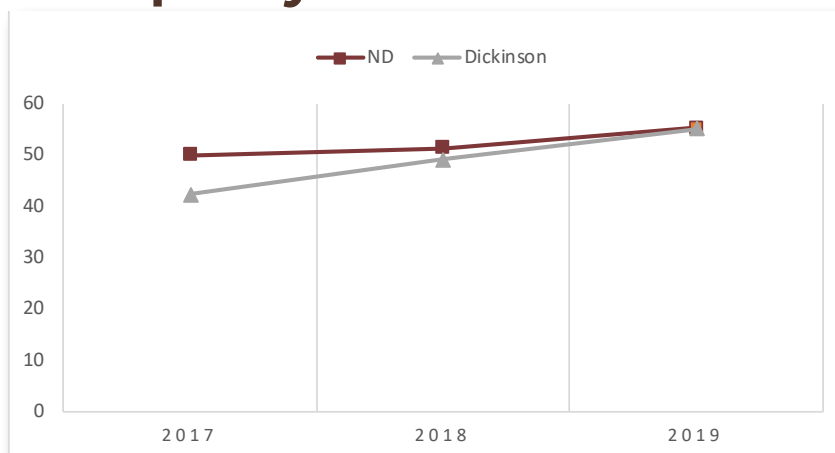
**\$72.79**  
2019

**\$71.65**  
2018

**1.6%**  
% Change



## Occupancy

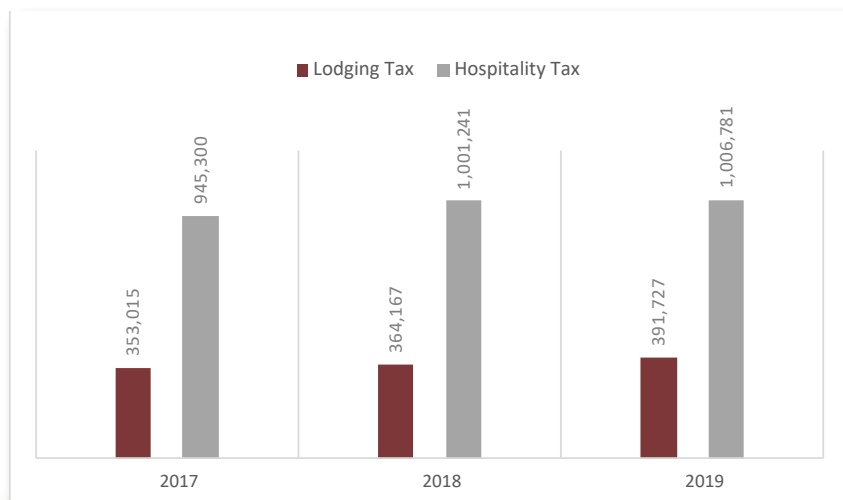


**55.0%**  
2019

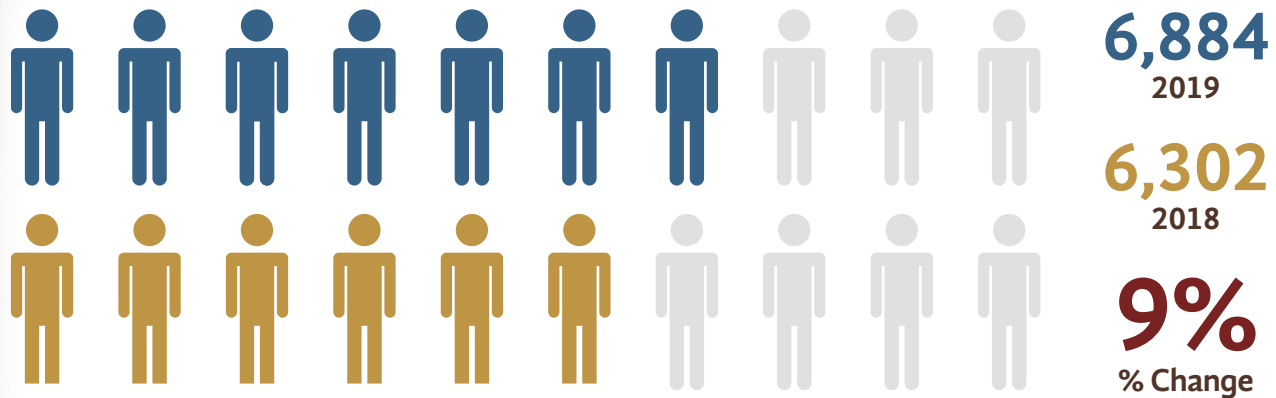
**49.1%**  
2018

**12%**  
% Change

## Lodging Tax and Hospitality Tax



## Visitor Walk Ins - CVB Lobby



## Guest Book



Assisting visitors with local and regional information begins with a warm “Welcome to Dickinson! How may we help you?” Our summer staff provides customer service above and beyond to make sure that the traveler is informed about our Dickinson attractions, lodging, dining and events. And once that is covered, they make sure to tell them about our regional attractions.

*Dear Peggy,*

*I just wanted to thank you for all of your help during my stay in Dickinson with my daughter. We would not have been able to rent a car were it not for your recommendation. We truly enjoyed the Theodore Roosevelt National Park. It is amazing. We even saw a wild mustang running, and of course we saw many bison and prairie dogs. Peggy, you are a wonderful person. You're loving and kind. You were a breath of fresh air for us. Thanks for taking us to Walmart. We appreciate your kindness.*

*Sincerely, Evelyn – Jersey City, NJ*



*Peggy Rixen-Kuntz and Shirley Gengler*

# LET'S GET DIGITAL!

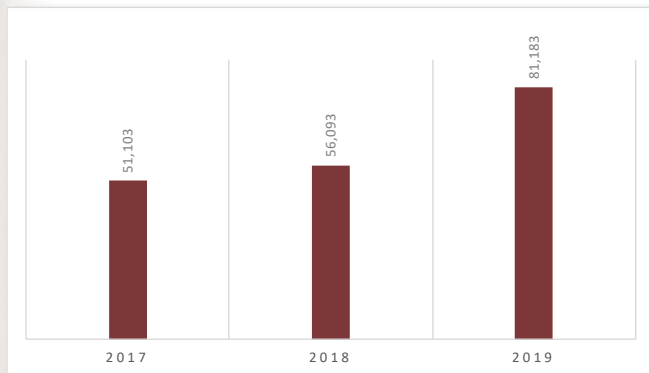
Using Google Analytics provides the information we need to make informed decisions as we create the yearly social media calendar that targets other states. Where is our traffic coming from? What device are they using? What photos or videos has received the most engagements on our paid digital platforms?

## CVB Web Stats

### # WEB VISITORS

2019 **81,183**

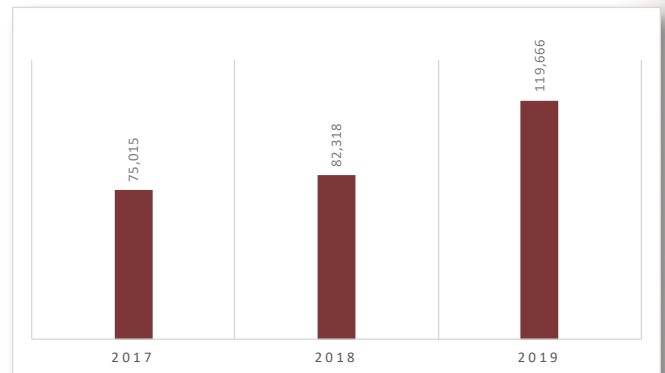
2018 **62,837**



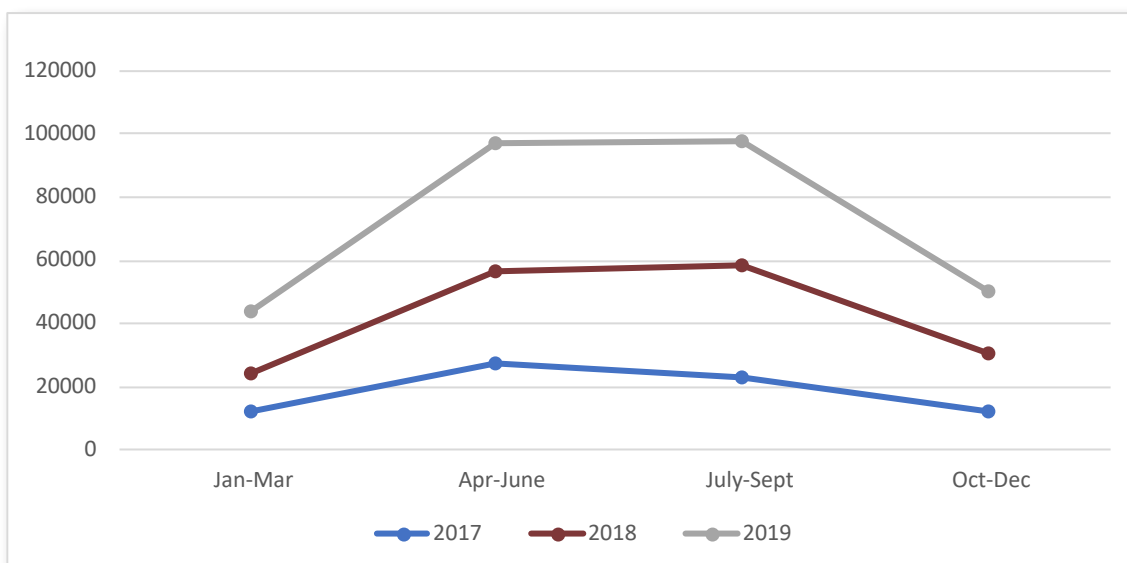
### # WEBSITE VISITS

2019 **119,666**

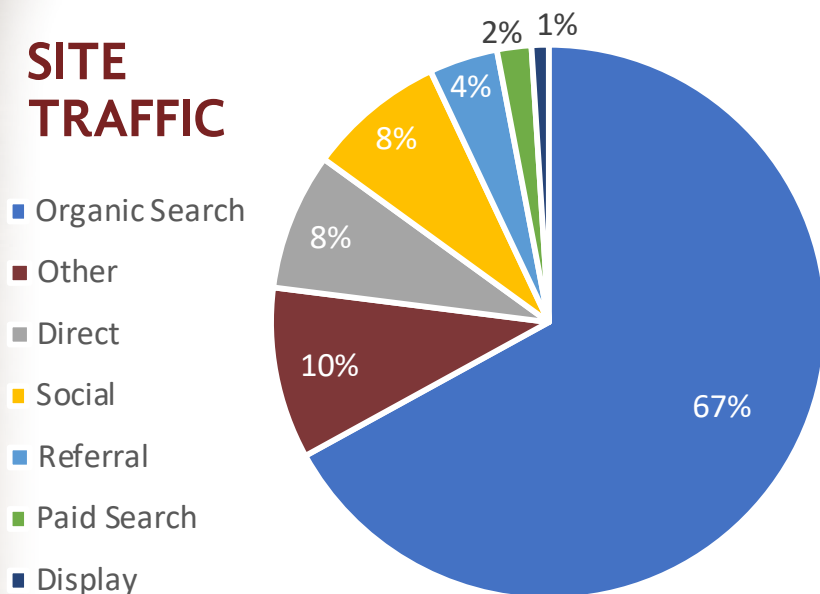
2018 **82,318**



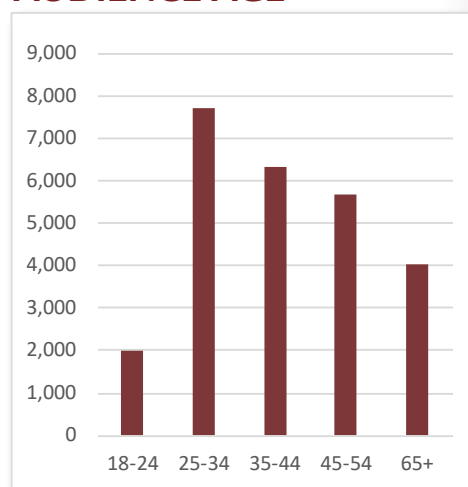
## WEBSITE VISITS BY QUARTERS



## SITE TRAFFIC



## AUDIENCE AGE



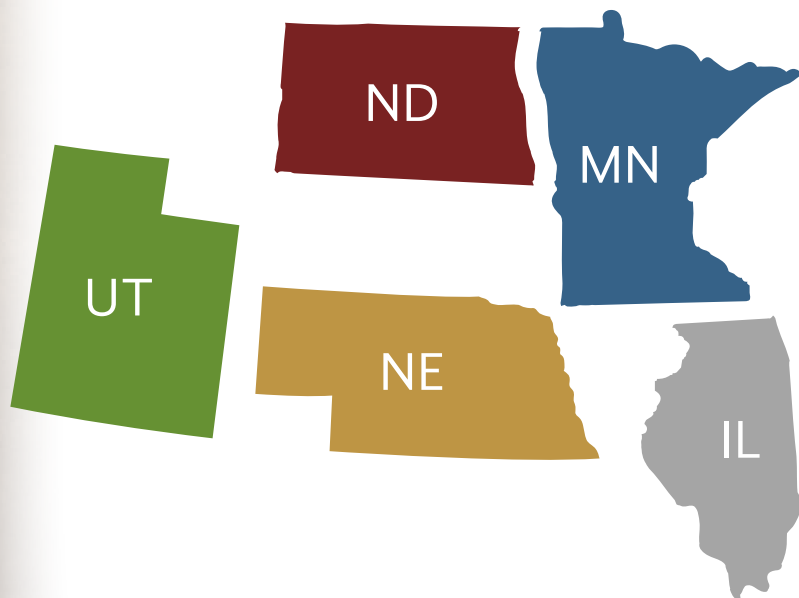
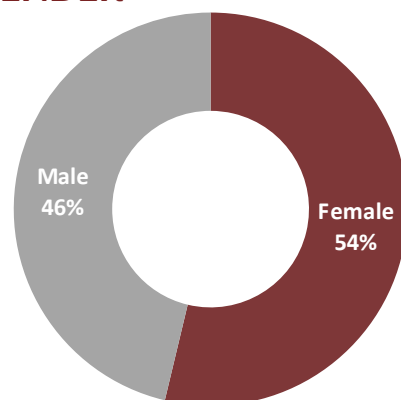
## Top 5 States Visited

1. North Dakota
2. Minnesota
3. Illinois
4. Nebraska
5. Utah

## Top Cities Visited

1. Dickinson
2. Minneapolis
3. Bismarck
4. Chicago
5. Omaha

## GENDER



## Top 5 Web Pages Visited






1. Events
2. Things to Do
3. Roughrider Days Fair & Expo page
4. Dining
5. First on First page





A strategic monthly digital editorial calendar was developed with results analyzed to ensure the maximum amount of targeted audience was reached with the funds that were dedicated to drive visitors to Dickinson. The digital platforms were refined in 2019 with positive increased analytic reports, increased lodging occupancy, and increased visitation numbers at the Dickinson Museum Center.

## Targeted States – MN, WI, MI, IL, Omaha NE

				
<b>IMPRESSIONS</b>	<b>IMPRESSIONS</b>	<b>IMPRESSIONS</b>	<b>IMPRESSIONS</b>	<b>IMPRESSIONS</b>
2019 <b>1,582,464</b>	2019 <b>180,088</b>	2019 <b>1,319,257</b>	2019 <b>498,435</b>	2019 <b>270,544</b>
2018 <b>301,724</b>	2018 <b>148,868</b>	2018 <b>110,000</b>		
<b>ENGAGEMENTS</b>	<b>ENGAGEMENTS</b>	<b>ENGAGEMENTS</b>	<b>CLICK TO ACTION</b>	<b>VIEWS</b>
2019 <b>155,703</b>	2019 <b>5,895</b>	2019 <b>97,816</b>	2019 <b>820</b>	2019 <b>127,229</b>
2018 <b>58,074</b>	2018 <b>6,442</b>			2018 <b>35,486</b>
<b>CLICK TO ACTION</b>	<b>CLICK TO ACTION</b>	<b>CLICK TO ACTION</b>		<b>CLICK TO ACTION</b>
2019 <b>5,694</b>	2019 <b>1,414</b>	2019 <b>531</b>		2019 <b>689</b>

**Targeted Cities –** Minneapolis, St. Paul, MN  
 Milwaukee, Madison, WI  
 Grand Rapids, Lansing, MI  
 Chicago, Chicago Loop, IL

# GOOGLE MY BUSINESS



## CVB KNOWLEDGE PANEL

*(May 1, 2018 - March 16, 2019)*

**279** Total Posts

**803,313** Post Views

## CITY OF DICKINSON KNOWLEDGE PANEL

*(May 1, 2018 - March 16, 2019)*

**643** Total Photos Added

**4,707,284** Photo Views



Julie Obrigewitsch, CVB Social Media Manager, hosted Google My Business seminars at:

- ND Main Street Summit
- ND Travel Conference
- Small Business Development Regional Meeting
- ND Parks & Recreation Annual Conference
- Downtown Dickinson Association



# MARKETING TOOLS

The CVB's marketing efforts encompass multiple forms of advertising that have changed dramatically the last five years. The majority of our paid marketing is digital, but there are still other tools we use such as some print ads, a directional billboard, printed Guide to the City, and tear-off maps.

## Print

ND Travel Guide  
AAA Living  
Travel 50 & Beyond  
ND Hunting & Fishing Guide  
On Wisconsin Outdoors  
Maah Daah Hey Trail Map  
Rocky Mountain International Map  
SW ND Publications

## 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.

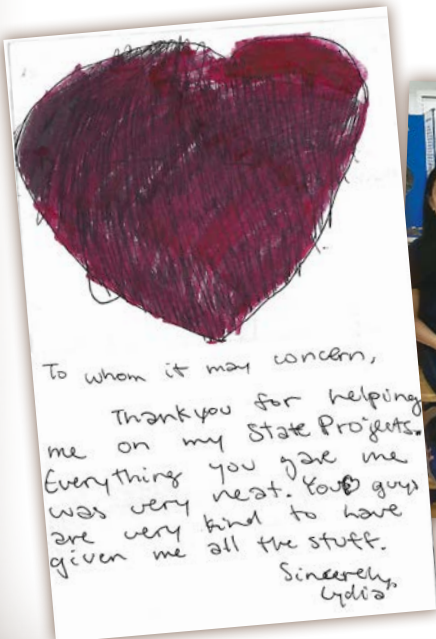


## Paid Digital

ND Tourism Division website  
Facebook  
Twitter  
Instagram  
Google Ads  
YouTube Ads

## Organic Digital (Unpaid)

The CVB also posts and shares on its organic online platforms daily or several times a day.



## Printed Material

**21,000** Guide to the City  
**15,000** Tear-off Maps  
**250** Local Food Tour Flyers  
**500** Hunting Packets Prepared

## Midwest Travel Writers Conference

In June, Medora hosted the second annual Midwest Travel Writers Conference with 35 Bloggers and 31 Tourism Partners gathered to learn more about the value of online travel bloggers and how communities and CVB's can capitalize on partnerships. The Dickinson CVB was an exhibitor at the Conference, along with hosting Steve & Ann Teget from Postcard Jar Blog in Dickinson for two evening and a full day of Dickinson attractions and dining experiences that was posted on their Facebook site Postcard Jar with 7,857 followers.



## Badlands Dinosaur Museum

Annual attendance to the Badlands Dinosaur Museum was up 11.4% for the year, and the summer travel season for the months of June, July and August was up 18% over 2018. It was named #8 in the Top Ten Dinosaur Museums in the world by **The Travel** this past summer.



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH



- The Maah Daah Hey Trail Association celebrated its 20th anniversary. The CVB spoke on behalf of the equine users, congratulating the organization on its dedication and hard work.



- Participate in monthly Community Relations meetings at the Chamber office.



- Assisted the Downtown Dickinson Association with the job search for an Executive Director.



- The CVB hosted Roger Brooks Downtown Development videos for Downtown Dickinson Association members every other Tuesday from November 2018 – May 2019.



- Assist the Dickinson Museum Center Boards with projects and marketing.
- Each year, the CVB hosts the Chamber High School Leadership Team for the Tourism Day trip. This past year, the group went back to Medora to visit the Chateau de Mores, the Theodore Roosevelt National Park Visitors Center, and the ND Cowboy Hall of Fame.



## Hospitality & Unique Retail Update

- Salt Kitchen & Co. expanded at 46 1st Ave. W.
- Phat Fish Brewing opened at 1031 W. Villard St.
- Sassy Sister Boutique closed
- Real Deals relocated to 766 Elks Dr.
- Miss Willows Nest closed
- Motel 6 rebranded to Badlands Inn
- Liquid Assets remodeled and became Neighbors
- The Perch restaurant opened to the public at DSU Student Union Hall
- GG's relocated to 14 1st St. W.
- Forgotten Collections closed
- A second God Father's Pizza opened at 450 E. Villard St.
- Papa John's opened at 1625 W. Villard St.
- Domino's second location relocated to 237 14th ST. W.
- Settled on Spruce opened at 1462 I-94 Business Loop E.
- Sparrow Cottage Mercantile reopened at 42 Sims St., Suite 10
- Pocket Saver closed

# OUTDOOR RECREATION

## US Forest Service

The CVB met with the local Little Missouri National Grasslands Recreation Manager to discuss possible expanded public programs and informational tools for the public who wish to visit the nearby public grasslands. An online map for ATV's has been completed and placed on the CVB's website and printed maps should be available in 2020.

## 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.

## Maah Daah Hey Trail

The CVB continues to promote the use of the Maah Daah Hey Trail to visitors and local residents. Maah Daah Hey Trail events are posted on the CVB's website calendar of events, the CVB regularly informs visitors about the trail with the MDH map, and places advertising on the free map. Detailed maps purchased from the US Forest Service are also for sale at the CVB.

## Crooked Crane Trail & City Trails

Along with the developed City Trails, the Crooked Crane Trail has become an outdoor experience that offers not only scenic walks and biking, but also exercise and play equipment for people. The CVB promotes the trail via brochures, visiting with travelers and on the CVB website.

## Group Travel

We love our group travelers! Group adventure travel makes these things easy and allows travelers to maximize time off. Hosting company representatives is the best way to showcase what Dickinson can provide to groups. The CVB assists in hosting both domestic and international company representatives that are also a part of the ND Tourism Division's efforts.



## CVB Assisted Events

### 2019 Event Calendar Listings

- 18 Convention & Meetings
- 250 Dickinson Community Events
- 42 Surrounding Community Events
- 75 Sporting Events
- 8 Family & School Reunions

## Event Grant Program

Each year the City budgets \$50,000 that the CVB administers in providing event assistance.

### Awarded in 2019

- Amicus Ambush
- Western Edge Bull Riding Finals
- Dickinson High School Rodeo
- A Taste of Culture
- Harvest Festival
- ND UCI Heritage Festival
- Dickinson Sports Commission
- Roughrider Days Fair & Expo
- ND State Youth Bowling
- Cal Ripken 9 yr. State Baseball Tournament
- Cal Ripken 10 yr. Midwest Plains Baseball Tournament
- PBR Bull Riding
- MT/ND All Star Football Game
- NDTA Singles/Doubles/Triples State Dart Tournament





# Meeting Marketing

Drawing meeting groups to Dickinson begins with monthly file reviews and investigative work. The additional tools will include involving local organizational contacts, and a formal bid process that is between cities and sometimes between the local lodging properties for a site selection.

- Cold call sales to organizations
- Quarterly postcards to over 480 ND organizations with different information on each card
- Emailing organization's contacts
- Offering and providing 18 free CVB services including:
  - Unlimited supply of Dickinson's Visitors Guides
  - CVB City Visitor maps
  - Dickinson information bags tailored to your interests
  - Name badges - 1-day adhesive badges, 2-day lanyard badges
  - Table tents - can provide and design "Thank You" sponsorships
  - Provide a 2' x 5' "Welcome" banner  
(Free of charge for multiple-day meetings)



## Additional services for committees:

- Bidding Assistance - present information to executive committee
- Gather facility and date availability
- Provide a Convention/Reunion Planning Manual
- Customized Video
- Digital Save the Date
- Work with site and local planning committee
- Provide directory of speakers & entertainment
- Assist in planning tours and spouse programs
- Provide transportation information
- List of Event Planning Apps
- On-site registration assistance (Advance notice required)
- VIP Welcome - opening welcome can be arranged

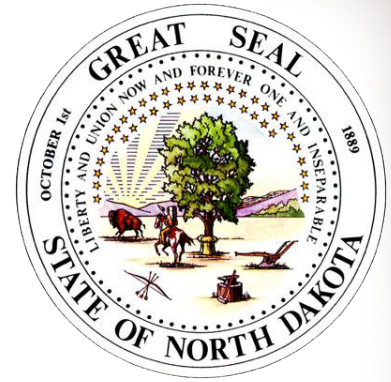


Follow up after the event after the event is important, the CVB provides an evaluation form for the group to fill out and return. The form is shared with the venue that hosted the group for positive and constructive feedback, along with feedback of the CVB assistance.



## 2019 ND Legislative Session

The Dickinson CVB is Co-Chair of the ND Travel Alliance Partnership that is a legislative advocate for the travel industry. The CVB worked on the following bills, along with monitoring other legislation.



- **HB 1018 ND Tourism Division Budget** – Testified for an increased marketing budget
- **SB 2001 TR Library** – Testified for support of the TR Library
- **SB 2192 County Lodging and Restaurant Tax** – Dickinson CVB with Williston CVB to spearhead the legislation to be able to enact a county wide lodging and hospitality tax should the counties choose to implement such a tax for visitor promotion.
- **SB 23193 City Lodging Tax Modernization** – Dickinson CVB worked on eliminating old terminology and inserted the destination marketing organization/visitors committee as the manager of the lodging tax at the local level.



This past summer the CVB hosted German visitor, Ulride Muller for approximately three weeks in our parking lot. Uli was traveling to Alaska in her motorhome that was a German manufactured vehicle when mechanical issues arose stranding her in Dickinson while she tried to find German specific parts. This did not happen, and she was forced to organize a large flat bed fleet trailer in the end to pick up and deliver her motorhome to the east coast bound for Germany. She became part of our “family” here and quickly made friends with local Anneliese Schmidt, who often picked her up and hosted her around town, and later took her to Bismarck for her flight back to Germany.

The Dickinson CVB staff hard at work!

Julie Obrigewitsch

Terri Thiel

Joel Walters



#VisitDickinson



VisitDickinson.com

800-279-7391 701-483-4988

72 E. MUSEUM DRIVE | DICKINSON, ND

