

December 24, 2018

Warm Wishes for a Joyous Holiday Season and Abounding New Year!

The Explore Fairbanks Team sends heartfelt gratitude for your support of and contributions to the local tourism industry. Indicators to date demonstrate that we're having a rock-solid 2018:



- Through October, Hotel/Motel Tax collections in the Fairbanks North Star Borough, including the cities of Fairbanks and North Pole, increased by more than 9%.
- We celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center. Through November, the Explore Fairbanks Visitor Services team welcomed a record number of 155,870 guests to the center, nearly an 11% increase over the same 11-month period in 2017.
- The local tourism industry team successfully coordinated many events, including the Fairbanks Visitor Industry Walk for Charity and Community Night for the Alaska Travel Industry Association's Annual Convention in Fairbanks. Next year, we'll welcome the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention for the sixth time since this annual gathering reconvened in Fairbanks in 2005 after a 16-year hiatus.
- Through September, the Explore Fairbanks team demonstrated strong performances:
  - The Communications Department launched the Aurora and Midnight Sun Tracker, a one-of-a-kind digital invention created to aid travelers in the Fairbanks region. We hosted 35 media tours with 56 participants. Facebook "likes" increased 12%; Twitter followers upped by 11%; and Instagram followers improved by 79%.
  - The Tourism Department brought to fruition a contract with East-West Marketing Corp. to represent the Fairbanks region in the China tourism market. They participated in 15 international trade shows, connecting with more 1,300 industry contacts and three domestic trade shows connecting with 286 contacts.
  - The Meetings and Conventions dynamic duo generated 23 bookings worth \$1.9 million in Estimated Direct Attendee Spending. And they diligently coordinated the forward momentum on the Polaris building and convention and performing arts center.



We look forward to continued growth in 2019. Meanwhile, wishes for a happy holiday season and a healthy new year to you and yours. It is our honor to work beside you. Enclosed please find the Explore Fairbanks' *2019 Official Visitors Guide* and *2018/2019 Winter Guide*. If you would like multiple copies of the guides, please email Executive and Finance Coordinator Judy Dellinger at [jdellinger@explorefairbanks.com](mailto:jdellinger@explorefairbanks.com).



With Warm Regards,



Deb Hickok, President and CEO  
Explore Fairbanks