Northport Visitor Center - 2021 Report

The Northport Visitor Center completed its **14th season**, opening 5-28-21 & closing 11-1-21. The Center provided information to residents and visitors to Northport. Businesses and organizations in Northport, Omena and Leelanau Township were supported; literature from other geographic areas was not displayed. The Visitor Center, 204 Rose Street at 2nd Street, remained "self serve." The building's location provides access to public restrooms, close parking for cars and tour buses, picnic tables, handicapped ramp accessibility, Haserot & Marina Parks, two beaches & the Marina. Our rustic Center doesn't have phone/heating/air conditioning. The broken single ceiling fan in the smaller room was replaced.

This was Bill Rosemurgy's Ist year as harbormaster. The Marina staff & Village landscaper **opened/closed** the Center 51% of this season, while I opened/closed it 42%. Marina staff forgot to open &/or close the Center 7% of the time; this frequency has never happened during my nine seasons as coordinator & is troublesome/frustrating.

The following businesses were "**new**" to Northport this season: *Northport Pub & Grille, Northport Trading Post, Idyll Farms vending machine, nora of northport* and *Yard & Lake*. Two businesses were **purchased & became** *Open Fields* and *Cherry Basket Farm & Floral. Shear Pleasure* **closed.** *Olean's, Omena Bay Country Store* & one business in the former *Eat Spot* building did not open this summer, as planned. *Shady Trails Camp, NPAC* and *Saving Birds thru Habitat* did not open due to COVID; the museums in Northport & Omena decreased their service hours, as did our 8 restaurants.

LITERATURE: Approximately **16,734 pieces** of literature were distributed in 2021. (This number doesn't include an **additional 3,142** NOCOC brochures I continuously restocked @ 72 local sites.) Our Center offered **156** free printed items. **90 flyers** were posted despite event cancelations from Leelanau Uncaged, Wine Fest, NPAC, Lions Fly-In Breakfast, Cars in the Park, etc. Literature from **83 sources** was obtained at no charge. A minimum of **9,011** color pages were printed in-house. Literature included: Leelanau State Park, Grand Traverse Lighthouse, Northport Trails, Dark Skies, local wineries/brewery, Farmers Market, parks, beaches, restaurants, bike routes, Leelanau Visitors' Guide, Friends of Leelanau Township Library, Leelanau Pages, Northport & Omena museums, Leelanau & local business rack cards, brochures, etc. Articles from Leelanau Enterprise, Ticker & Record Eagle were posted.

BUDGET: Both the Village and Leelanau Township allocated $1200 to the Visitor Center for a total of $2400. Only $1434.23 was spent. Discounts totaling $29.19 were utilized.

WEB SITE: The Center's web site, NorthportVisitorCenter.org, links in-house literature, events calendar, local businesses, government, library and other sites of interest.

VISITOR CENTER COORDINATOR: This was my 9th season as organizer/coordinator. I visited the Center @ least once every day, revised in-house printed literature many times, ordered, printed, reordered, restocked, drove to pick up literature/posters/flyers/rack cards, updated bulletin and grease boards, posted flyers and newspaper articles, cleaned the Center and interacted with visitors. I removed inappropriate materials that had been "dropped off". I contacted over 120 businesses in our Township, @ least once. I restocked 14 different brochures in the marina office, 31 @ Sunrise Landing & more @ Pennington Collection, Northport Inn and Bells of Christmas. I continuously restocked 72 sites with the NOCOC Visitor Guide. The sesquicentennial murals were removed & placed in the Northport Area Heritage Museum. Shelley Lavey and I are the only two volunteers; I logged a minimum of **580 volunteer hours** preparing (beginning in March), maintaining & restocking. Shelley Lavey logged **31 volunteer hours** maintaining/revising our website and domain.

MAINTENANCE NEEDS: Openings in the ceiling of the entrance room still need to be re-covered, to keep out animals/birds/wasps and excessive summer heat. Fourteen years of use have "taken a toll." Lisa DeGroot helped weed the flower beds under Brad Price & Chris Holton's supervision. Our flag needs replacement after 2 summer seasons.

2022: With administrative approval from both the Township and Village, I will coordinate and reopen the Visitor Center 5-28-22 through 10-31-22. Shelley Lavey will coordinate our website. I'm requesting a 2022 budget of $1200 from both the Township and Village and request Marina staff continue the daily opening/closing of the Visitor Center.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patty Noftz - Northport Visitor Center Coordinator & Volunteer
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1-14-22