

City and Borough of Sitka

100 Lincoln Street • Sitka, Alaska 99835

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Gary Paxton and Assembly Members

From: Hugh Bevan, Interim Municipal Administrator *HB*

Date: November 8, 2019

Subject:

Attached is the quarterly report from the Chamber of Commerce regarding their use of the Funds the City contributed in the FY20 for marketing Sitka.

Also attached are two articles that showcase Sitka: one in the Alaska Airlines Magazine and the other in Saturday Evening Post



Financial Update: FY2020- Q1

The Profit and Loss statement covers the first three quarters of the 2019 calendar year and is in the new format requested in the new contract executed January 1, 2019 and does not include revenues outside of Convention & Visitors Services Contract. The Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce utilized bookkeeping services from Balance Accounting Solutions. The Chamber operates on a calendar year with budgets and financials reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee and the Board of Directors.

Attachment: The Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce, Inc.
Visit Sitka Profit & Loss Statement, January 1, 2019 through September 30, 2019.

Income Update: 7/1-9/30

The Profit & Loss Statement reflects income from the CBS Contract in the amount of \$308,072. This amount reflects \$233,072 for the last two quarters of FY19 and one payment of \$75,000 for FY20-Q1. The first payment of FY20 was short \$50,050 as the finance department had not made corrections based on the supplemental budget allocations made by the Assembly in April. The Sitka Chamber raises revenues outside the contract through marketing partnerships and sales. Partners of Visit Sitka, which include tourism businesses and non-profits, contributed \$38,084 towards the marketing programs in 2019. These efforts help to maintain account funds to protect the program when contract funding delays arise, enabling continued operations.

Expense Updates: 7/1-9/30

In the expense portion of the report, you will see direct (marketing, promotion, staffing) and indirect (office and insurance) expenses. The overall spending to date is on-track with the budgeted amounts based on the funding allocated and once the obligated funding is sent to the Chamber, the Profit & Loss statement will reflect a \$3,808 variance with one quarter remaining in 2019's calendar year.

Visit Sitka Operation Update

General Overview of Sitka Travel Industry – Outlook to 2020

The 2020 "Draft" cruise ship calendar has been released by Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska. The draft includes most of the ships on the schedule but does not include some of the smaller cruise companies such as Alaskan Dream Cruises and UnCruise Adventures. The draft also does not include berth assignments as these decisions will be made later in the scheduling process. At this time the first scheduled call will be on May 6 and the final call on October 9, 2020. The schedule is reflecting

fewer ship port calls, but over-all the passenger counts will remain flat as the large cruise lines will be switching out smaller berth count ships for larger berth count ships assigned to Sitka.

There is still a lot of uncertainty around 2020 ferry travel. At this time, one AMH Ferry will call in Sitka arriving Sunday morning and departing again 4 to 5 hours later that day. This schedule will continue through the winter until April 2020. At this time there are no ferry calls posted for May 2020. Efforts continue to support reform of the system to create a sustainable marine highway system.

Marketing & Promotion Updates: 7/1-9/30

Visit Sitka (VS) renewed a contract with Element Agency to provide marketing support for 2019-2020. Element will be working with VS staff to create new and updated content for VisitSitka.org and the printed Visit Sitka Magazine, provide new photography and videography, and assist with social media management. In this quarter VS and Element worked on content and layout for the 2019-20 magazine and ad sales for the publication will begin in October.

In this quarter VS hosted or assisted with on-site support for 14 journalists/travel writers who visited Sitka. The writers represented domestic and international publications such as The Daily Telegraph-London, Parade.com, Outdoors, HuffPost, Backpacker and The Food Network. We made 25 PR contacts via email and phone that ranged from providing fact-checking to photos. Sitka was highlighted onboard Alaska Airlines flights in the July issue of Alaska Beyond Magazine (see article [here](#)), as well as the September/October issue of Saturday Evening Post. Both of these articles were a direct result of VS participation in 2018 Alaska Media Roadshow. VS will be sending a representative to the 2019 Alaska Media Roadshow in October.

In this quarter the Visit Sitka website visitsitka.org had 27,515 visits with 73,980 page-views and 22,463 unique visitors. This is an increase of almost 25% more traffic over this same quarter in 2018. We attribute this to the newly designed website, which was launched in 2017, ease of use, improved content and more complete partner information. The website also was expanded to include the Sitka Wayfinding map, the Sitka Shopping & Dining Pocket Guide and a Directory of Visitor Related Businesses & Services.

Meeting & Conventions (M&E) Update: 7/1-9/30

During this quarter Sitka hosted Sitka Fine Arts Camp sessions, Alpine Adventure Run, Alaska Board of Fish, Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute Customer Advisory Panel, Alaska Association of Homes for Children (AAHC), Sitka Seafood Festival, Sitka Mermaid Festival, Change Your Latitude- Open Water Swim, Mudball Classic Tourney, New Archangel Dancers 50th Anniversary Reunion, Southeast Conference Annual Meeting, and Loyal Order of Moose Alaska Hawaii Annual Convention. Meetings & conventions expected in 2019: Alaska Day Festival & Sitka Whale Festival.

VS began working with Element Agency to gather information to create a new collateral program for the meetings & convention program, to include a dedicated M&E planner guide and information sheets to be added to delegate bags. New welcome signs have been designed and are currently being distributed in town to welcome M&E attendees to Sitka. Other new items incorporating the

new VS brand have been produced including vinyl stickers, note pads, thank you note cards and cell phone wallets. These items can also be used at events attended outside Sitka such as Alaska Municipal League, the Alaska Travel Industry Association, and Alaska Chamber Fall Forum, to create interest and awareness about Sitka.

With Southeast Conference, VS kicked off a new “Show Your Badge Discount” Program. Twenty-six (26) local businesses including tour operators, retailers, and restaurants offered special discounts to conference attendees who showed their badge at check-out. VS plans to continue this successful program for future conferences.

Visitor Services Update: 7/1-9/30

For the 4th year in a row, Sitka was awarded the Cruise Critic, Cruiser’s Choice Top 5 Alaska Cruise Destinations Award. This award includes top-rated cruise destinations and lines around the globe according to cruisers, based on member review ratings for trips taken in the last year.

VS team members offered visitor information guidance at the Visit Sitka Information Center (104 Lake Street), Old Sitka Dock Information Booth (4513 Halibut Point Road) and during downtown “walk around” events. VS staff provided 679 hours of support while VS volunteers provided 85 hours of additional support. VS team members directly interacted with almost 6,000 visitors at the Lake Street and HPR locations. Approximately 18,000 downtown walking maps were distributed at various locations, 15,000 printed Visit Sitka Magazines were distributed by mail, locally and throughout the state including new distribution racks at Westmark Hotel Sitka and 2 racks at the Airport, as well as almost 10,000 shopping & dining pocket guides.

Respectfully,

Rachel Roy, Executive Director
Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce | Visit Sitka

Visit Sitka
Profit & Loss Statement
September 30, 2019

	Actuals
REVENUE	YTD
Income	
CBS contract revenue	\$ 308,072
Total Income	\$ 308,072
Direct Expense	
Planner Printing	\$ 15,700
Planner Graphic Design	\$ 40
Planner Photo Usage	\$ 800
Fundraising Expense	\$ -
Salaries	\$ 130,446
Special events expense	\$ -
Advertising	\$ 56,338
Alaska Co-op Marketing	\$ 5,000
Website/Digital Media	\$ 18,000
Webpage (2018 Brand Voice)	\$ 8,062
Postage & freight (Planner)	\$ 10,980
Office Technology	\$ 3,622
Rent	\$ 16,748
Leasehold improvements	\$ 3,189
Payroll tax expense	\$ 11,447
Professional Development/Training	\$ 1,919
Promotion: Cruise	\$ 11,431
Promotion: Conventions	\$ 13,124
Promotion: Tourism	\$ 25,768
Travel Writers & FAM Tours	\$ 3,204
Travel/Training	\$ 3,975
Membership/Volunteer Events	\$ 512
Membership/Volunteer Training: CVS	\$ 593
Total Direct Expenses	\$ 340,898
Indirect Expenses	
Utilities	\$ 3,915
Insurance: Liability	\$ 3,752
Insurance: worker's comp	\$ -
Bank online fees	\$ 2,150
Dues & Subscriptions	\$ 710
Accounting Services	\$ 2,688
Professional Services	\$ 1,245
Office supplies	\$ 2,432
Office Equipment	\$ 84
Telephone & internet	\$ 4,055
Misc Expense	\$ -
Total Indirect Expenses	\$ 21,032
Total Expenses	\$ 361,930
TOTAL NET INCOME (LOSS)	\$ (53,858)

Alaska. BEYOND >>

JULY 2019

LYLE LOVETT

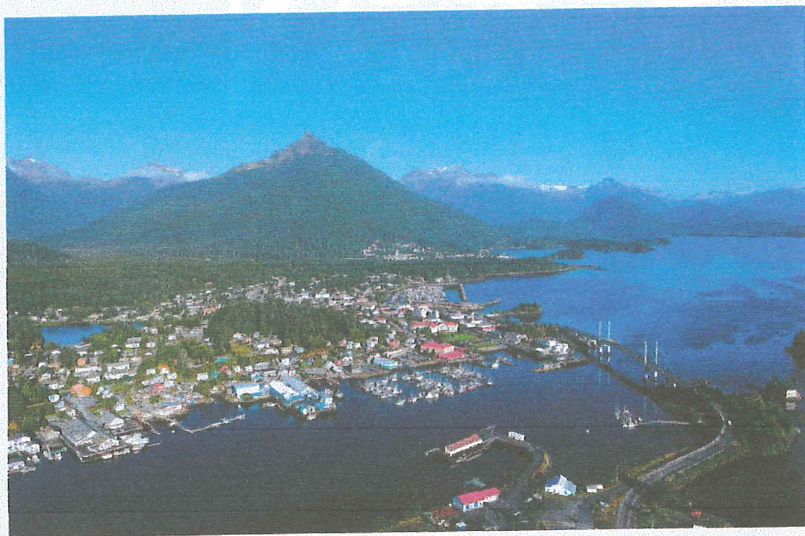
AUTHENTIC TEXAS ON STAGE AND OFF

#1
IN CUSTOMER
SATISFACTION

GRATEFUL
BY THE DOZEN



AMONG TRADITIONAL CARRIERS IN NORTH AMERICA



SEASIDE IN SITKA

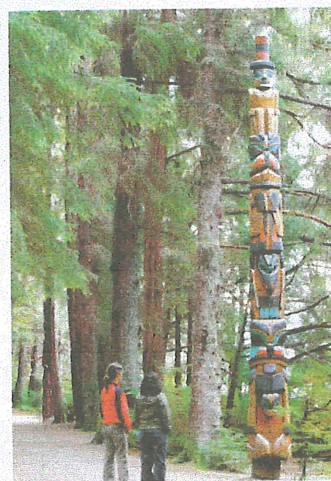
By Eric Lucas

» **Few places embrace** as broad an expanse of history and culture in a half-day walk as Sitka, which was Alaska's Russian capital from 1808 to 1867. The sights here reflect three disparate cultures—Tlingit, Russian and American—and thousands of years of human civilization.

Start at the so-called Castle Hill (Baranof Castle State Historic Site), a 60-foot-tall rise with vistas of Sitka Sound, the city of Sitka, the 3,354-foot-tall summit of Mount Verstovia east of the city and—to the northwest—the iconic dormant volcanic cone of Mount Edgecumbe. This Castle Hill vantage historically held Tlingit and then Russian fortifications, and it was where the United States officially took possession of Alaska in October 1867, after the U.S. agreed to purchase the land from Russia earlier that year.

Just a few blocks east of Castle Hill is St. Michael's Orthodox Cathedral, a green-domed Russian Orthodox church in the center of a downtown traffic island. The cathedral holds one of the Western Hemisphere's finest sets of 19th century Russian Orthodox icons—paintings adorned with gold and silver—including the famed work known as the "Sitka Madonna" (sometimes out on tour) and depictions of the archangels Michael and Gabriel.

A couple of blocks farther along is the Russian Bishop's House, built between 1841 and 1843 and now part of Sitka National Historical Park. The cheery-yellow clapboard structure is built with hand-shaped spruce logs—a cutaway wall inside reveals artful construction. Historically a center of cultural and educational activities, the house is now a museum.



» *Clockwise from top left: An aerial view of Sitka. St. Michael's Orthodox Cathedral. Sitka National Historical Park's distinctive totem trail.*

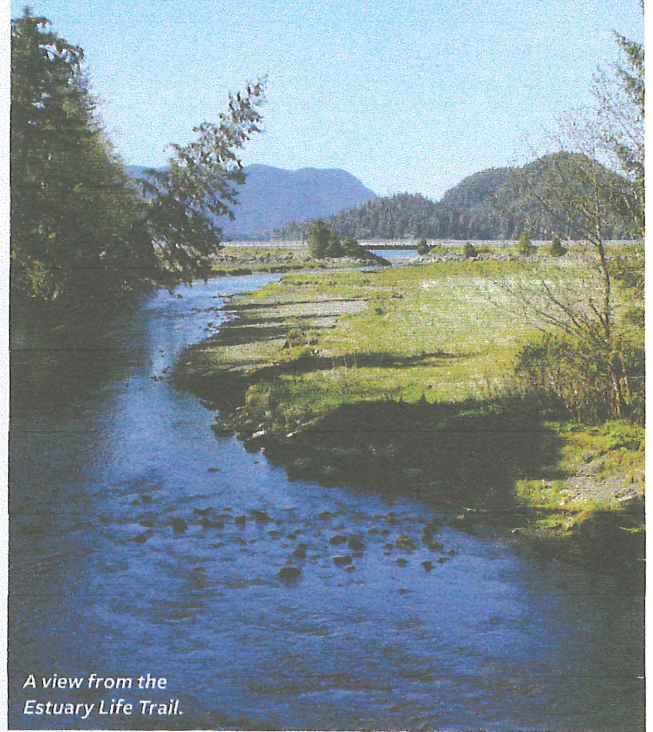
Continuing east on Lincoln Street brings you to a pair of standout local attractions. The Sheldon Jackson Museum occupies an octagonal concrete building that holds a priceless collection of historical artifacts from Indigenous Alaskan cultures, gathered by the building's namesake, a late-1800s Presbyterian minister. Nearby, the compact Sitka Sound Science Center offers a chance to learn about the area's rich maritime ecosystem. See and feel organisms such as anemones and urchins in the touch tank.

Another few hundred yards down Lincoln Street is the Sitka National Historical Park Visitor Center, which provides a brief introduction to a nearby wonder: a winding woodland path whose spruces, hemlocks and cedars shelter historical as well as modern Tlingit and Haida totem poles. Originally established more than 100 years ago (and modified over time), the totem collection is one of the most memorable in the United States.

The park also contains the outflow of the Indian River—known for its summertime salmon runs. When the river surges with pink salmon, there is no better place to marvel at the bounty of Sitka Sound and at the cultures that have thrived beside it for thousands of years. ✈

■ Fly Alaska Airlines to Sitka (SIT) from Seattle (SEA), Juneau (JNU) and Ketchikan (KTN). Visit alaskaair.com to learn more and book tickets.

A boardwalk section of the Forest and Muskeg Trail.



A view from the Estuary Life Trail.

A WILD ALASKA WALK

By Eric Lucas

» **Tongass National Forest**, the largest national forest in the United States, encompasses most of Southeast Alaska's Panhandle. The part of this great maritime rainforest that borders life-rich Sitka Sound is a particularly exquisite area for observing wildlife and marveling at the breadth and diversity of nature.

At Starrigavan Recreation Area, located within the forest and 7 miles north of Sitka, you'll find excellent paths to experience woods, bogs and wetlands. Start on the quarter-mile-long Estuary Life Trail, a boardwalk path whose first stop is a bird-viewing shelter made of local timbers. The site affords a vantage of the sedge and hair grass tidal shores where migratory waterfowl and other avian species flock. Watch for ducks, geese, eagles, blue herons, scoters, kingfishers, ravens and gulls galore.

Continuing on the trail, look for coastal wildflowers that bloom here in late spring and summer, such as chocolate lily, wild geranium,

yarrow and yellow paintbrush. At the end of the boardwalk, cross a footbridge over Starrigavan Creek to the Forest and Muskeg Trail, a gravel path heading uphill. This moderately steep three-quarter-mile trail climbs 150 feet through western hemlocks before emerging at another boardwalk that crosses a level area of muskeg. One of Southeast Alaska's quintessential landscape types, muskeg is a bogland characterized in Starrigavan by deep moss, stunted lodgepole pines, and shrubs such as Labrador tea and bog laurel.



Carnivorous sundews.

Observant hikers may find crowberry and cloudberry plants here, as well as impressive carnivorous sundews. Shooting stars, bog orchids and pond lilies add more color to the scene.

Hikers should stay on the boardwalk—not only is the landscape delicate; bog holes can be treacherous. The trail heads downhill on the return to Halibut Point Road. You'll cross Starrigavan Creek on a bridge that offers a great opportunity to look for whales, otters and sea lions in

Sitka Sound, plus eagles and coastal brown bears feeding on the creek's salmon in late summer (visit the national forest's website for tips about staying safe in bear country).

"Starrigavan" is derived from the Russian for "old harbor"—a nod to Russian settlers' past use of the area. Although the center of human activity shifted to Sitka long ago, the cove still shelters an amazing array of plant and animal life—as evidenced on this coastal hike. ✕

MORE OUTDOORS IN THE AREA

- **Kayaking in Sitka Sound** provides access to sheltered inlets and coves.
- **Sightseeing boat tours** depart Sitka by the dozen on some summer days. Whales are common (mostly humpbacks, with the occasional grays or orcas); other wildlife includes sea otters, harbor seals, Steller's sea lions, bald eagles, marbled murrelets and puffins.
- **Bicycling in Sitka** is pleasant, in part due to fairly light traffic. Ask at the Sitka Visitor Information Center for information on bike tours and rentals. —E.L.


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Robin Moline



TOUCHING ALASKA

On the big ships, you get a good look
at the state's magnificent wilderness.
On a small ship, you step into it

BY STEVEN SLON

When you're in grizzly country, it's a good idea to give the hosts a heads-up when paying a visit. Don't want any awkward moments. So, after our two eight-person skiffs make land, before we even get to the woods, our guides are already shouting "Whoop-whoop!" I join in with "Hey, bears!" feeling the need to make the callout a bit less threatening. After all, it is their territory.

Bushwhacking (rugged hiking without a trail through mud and dense undergrowth, as we're doing now) is one of several options for passengers on an UnCruise Adventure. There are also plenty of moderate activities, such as

kayaking, paddle-boarding, and touring the coastline in small crafts. UnCruise, with its fleet of small (76- to 90-passenger) ships, prides itself on being an alternative to the mega-cruisers that ply the waters of Southeast Alaska. On the big ships, you get an overview of the state's magnificent wilderness. On the UnCruise, you step into it.

Our voyage began in Sitka, on remote Baranof Island in Southeast Alaska, and would conclude in Juneau. Partly to acclimate to the time zone and partly just to spend a little time on dry land before shipping out, my wife Estelle and I hunkered down on Sitka four days prior to our departure. That's highly recommended, since Sitka, in its own way, gives you a feel for the remoteness and beauty of Alaska (see sidebar, page 56).



Bear witness: A grizzly patrols the shoreline.

Thanks to all the shouting, we seem to be alone on the shore, but signs of animal activity abound. We stop to study tracks left by deer, wolves, bears. “Still warm!” says our guide excitedly as she hovers her hand inches above some bear scat.

At first it seems impossible to find a way into the woods from the beach thanks to the thick undergrowth at the forest’s edge. But after several false starts, slogging through mud in our knee-high rubber boots, we find a suitable opening, punching through alder and gently pushing aside thorny devil’s club. This leads us first into a cathedral-like conifer forest of Sitka spruce, mountain hemlock, and yellow cedar. There are mosses and lichens underfoot, and thickets of blueberry.

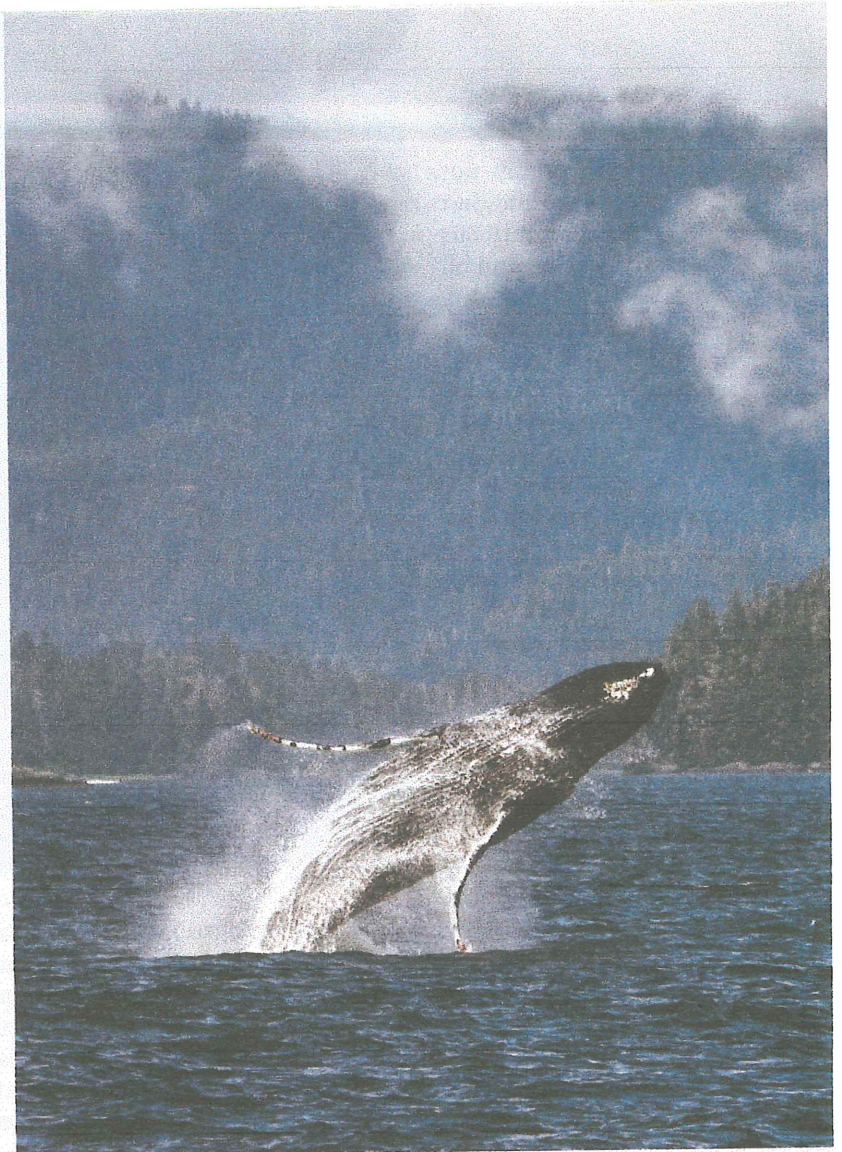
We press on. Suddenly a small, black, cat-like creature pops up in front of us. It’s a marten (of the weasel family). It’s not clear who’s more startled, us or the marten. It freezes, does a double take, then zing! Off it darts, disappearing into the undergrowth.

I wonder if we might surprise a bear in the same way — wishing (just a little) that we will. As the joke goes, you don’t have to run fast if you come across a bear in the wild. Just faster than the next person.

Deeper we go into the dark forest, climbing over fallen logs, pulling ourselves up steep embankments using tree branches for support, when suddenly we come to a large clearing of dense grasses and wildflowers. This, expedition guide Bobby DeMarinis explains, is a musk egg marsh, which forms in low flat areas with poor water drainage. “The water collects and saturates the soil,” he says. “Then oxygen levels decrease in the soil, which also becomes very acidic as needles from conifer trees decompose.”

Spruces and hemlocks tend to die off in these areas, and the result is what looks like a meadow in the middle of the woods. But it’s not like any meadow you’ve ever known. The ground is spongy, the grass thick and deep. DeMarinis identifies the wildflowers as we walk among them — labrador tea, round leaf sundew (a small, delicate flycatcher), shooting stars (featuring beautiful backward-facing petals), and more.

Our ship spends much of each day at anchor. In the evening and at night, it moves along, the gentle rocking ensuring good sleep. Late one afternoon, Estelle and I push off in a kayak from the portable dock lashed to the back of the ship. We paddle softly through placid black water, bald eagles soaring above us, mountains in the distance. For a while, we stop in the middle of the bay,



Making a splash: A humpback whale dances on the water. The ship frequently stops or changes course for animal sightings.

listening to the wind, the birdsong. Suddenly a harbor seal pops up alongside, giving us the once over. Just as suddenly, it disappears.

Between the day’s many options for activities, there are lectures on wildlife, on Alaskan history, on early explorers to the region. But the schedule frequently changes and the ship will stop or change course for sightings of humpback whales, killer whales, seals sunbathing on rocky outcroppings, wild goats, and birds of all kinds. It’s all very freewheeling, and one becomes accustomed to changes in plans.

One morning as we drop anchor, a bear is spotted in the high grasses along the shore. Everyone reaches for binoculars, but a few minutes later, the decision is made to pull up anchor and find a different landing point — too dangerous to land near a bear patrolling its territory. All the day’s planned activities are pushed back as we find another anchorage about an hour away.

That flexibility is typical of the UnCruise experience. As Tim Voss, the captain of our ship, the *SS Legacy*,

explains, "We may not cover a lot of ground, but we take our time and focus on the wilderness and on shore. We'll stop to study a plant or an animal on the beach. It's what we do, and we're passionate about allowing passengers to really feel the places they visit. We want them to say, 'I came to Alaska but I actually put my boots in the mud. I smelled the forest and walked in it.'"

Several days in, while sailing through Glacier Bay, the highlight of many Alaskan cruises, we anchor near the majestic Margerie Glacier. There, not more than 100 yards from the ice, some of us participate in "the polar plunge," a dive off the aft deck into 40-degree water, followed in my case by an extremely fast exit.

Later in the day, a small group debarks for a hike up a steep rocky outcropping alongside the glacier. From our vantage point, sitting on rocks amid lovely blue and white wildflowers, we spot a pod of three killer whales — two parents and a juvenile — on the hunt. Soon, a large cruise ship pulls into the bay and circles past the glacier. As it departs, we wave at the crowds lining the deck high above the water, capturing the stunning vistas on their phones and video cameras. And we feel privileged that for a short while we've been more than just observers of

Thrills and chills: Passengers work up their nerve for the "polar plunge" into 40-degree water.



Alaska's wildest and most beautiful places — we've actually touched and experienced them.

If you go: The per-person cost for a one-week UnCruise Adventure ranges from \$3,000 to about \$7,500. The fee includes delicious food and beverages, including alcohol. (Cocktail hour is a pleasant respite after a day of outdoor activities.) Discounts are available on some trips booked by mid-December. Two other excellent small-ship options with similar amenities and routes are Alaskan Dream Cruises and Lindblad Expeditions.

Steven Slon is the Post's editorial director.

BEAUTIFUL, REMOTE SITKA

Our Delta airliner curls around the Tongass Mountains and plunges sharply into tiny Sitka Airport — ranked as one of the top 10 scariest in the U.S. The landing is smooth, and sighs are audible as dozens of fingers unclench armrests.

Sitka is a lovely little town with a deep history. The native Tlingit settled here 10,000 years ago. The Russians arrived in 1799 to establish a colonial trading company. In 1876,

the U.S. bought Alaska from cash-strapped Russia (for about two cents per acre), but some Russians stayed. Today, there's an interesting mélange of cultures, including North Americans fleeing big-city life, a Filipino community that first came to work in the canneries, and the indigenous Tlingit. Through it all, the Russian influence persists, says Sherry Aitken, Sitka's Director of Tourism. Indeed, the major landmark in the center of

town is St. Michael's Russian Orthodox Cathedral, built in 1848.

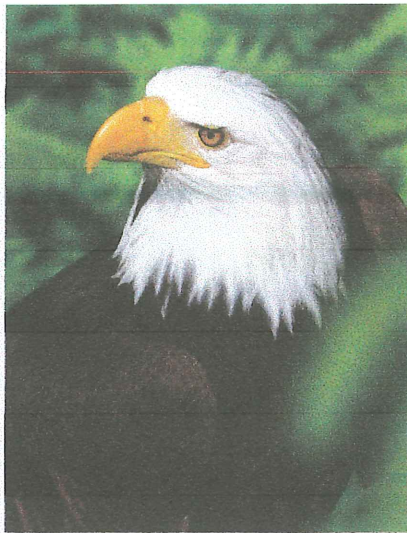
The town's economy is based largely on commercial and sport fishing as well as tourism. Being just a bit out of the way of the standard Alaskan cruise-line routes, Sitka mainly caters to the smaller cruise ships and manages to maintain its identity with 200,000 visitors per year. "We don't want to get overwhelmed," says Aitken. (By comparison, Skagway, a smaller town, gets a million visitors per year — and on days when two enormous ships dock there, Skagway feels like a giant

WHAT TO DO IN SITKA ACTIVITIES

Fortress of the Bear: The nonprofit facility, established by Les and Evy Kinnear, just a short way out of town, takes in orphaned bear cubs and eventually releases them into the wild. We watch as Les tosses a large sofa cushion down to Toby, a mature female grizzly with a ton of personality who joyfully rips the cushion to shreds, then stands up on her hind legs and puts her giant paws together in a gesture that means "food, please!" From a viewing area above the large compound, we watch cubs climbing in trees and two adult males cavorting in water, playing on swings, and knocking over large barrels. For those on a cruise, a \$3 shuttle service to the attraction is offered from the dock (\$10 adults, \$5 kids 7-18).

Alaska Raptor Center: A rescue facility, it claims a 70 percent success rate in healing wounded birds. Go there to see bald eagles, peregrine falcons, large and tiny owls, red-tailed hawks, and more (\$13 adults, \$6 kids 6-12).

Native Culture: Visit the Sheet'ka Kwaan Naa Kahidi Tribal Community House to experience a half-hour performance of songs handed down through the generations. Afterward, meet the cast and pose for selfies



An American bald eagle at Alaska Raptor Center

with them in their traditional garb (\$10 adults, \$5 kids).

Ghost Tour: This one-hour walk through the back alleys and passageways of the town is led by a guide dressed in 1867 period costume and makes for a pleasant evening activity. Along the way, you'll "meet" the spirits of children who died in the hardscrabble early days of the town. The tour concludes with a visit to the old Russian cemetery, which is wild and overgrown and beautiful (\$30).

Sea Otter and Wildlife Quest: Take this 3-hour boat ride to see humpback whales, puffins, cormorants, and thousands of black-headed murre nesting in caves on the otherwise uninhabited Lazaria Island. A highlight:

packs of super-cute sea otters floating together intertwined in what's known as a "raft" (\$130 adults, \$84 kids 3-12).

DINE

The Beak: Fresh-caught fish, informal atmosphere — popular with locals. Reasonable prices. Great food and service, and here's something you don't expect: a no-tipping policy.

Longliner Lodge and Suites:

Excellent food, fresh fish. Ask for a table on the deck for great harbor views. (Rooms \$230 and up.)

STAY

Ann's Gavan Hill Bed & Breakfast:

Consider this very comfortable and homey B&B, where the morning meal is an over-the-top production with delicious coffee cooked up and served by Ann herself (\$105/night double occupancy).

HIKE

Gavan Hill: Active types should consider a half-day hike up Gavan Hill, the trailhead for which is a few blocks from the center of town. In the steepest sections, you get a little help from steps carved out of timber. The old-growth forest is lovely, and there's a small lookout platform at the top to reward hikers with fabulous views of the town below and the mountains and sea beyond.

Alaska-themed shopping mall.)

A pleasant stroll up Lincoln Street takes you to the cathedral. On the way, stop in at Old Harbor Books, a very well-stocked independent bookstore. Diagonally across the street, you'll find an old-fashioned Ben Franklin five-and-dime where you can stock up on necessities for your cruise. (If planning to tramp through the woods, Xtratuf boots are the locals' galoshes of choice.) There are also several Native American craft stores selling beautiful wood carvings, jewelry, weavings, and more.

St. Michael's Cathedral in Sitka

