WHAT TO DO IN ANCHORAGE

Visit the Zoo – Anchorage’s zoo is quite unique in that it is home to many “local” critters such as moose, bears, wolverines and musk ox. Most of these animals have been injured or abandoned and are being safely cared for while at the same time offering our visitors a close up glimpse. Open year-round. Free shuttle from downtown. Located on O’Malley Road. 907-346-3242. www.alaskazoo.org

Earthquake Park – This part of town was profoundly effected by the 1964 Good Friday Earthquake (the largest ever recorded in North America!). Many homes were lost as the ground shook and they slid into the Inlet. There are interpretive signs here and great views of Cook Inlet and downtown Anchorage.

Bike the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail – About 10 miles long, this paved and very scenic trail winds along the Inlet between downtown Anchorage and Kincaid Park. Oft seen wildlife include moose, bald eagles and beluga whales. Bikes can be rented at several downtown locations. Walking the trail is fun too. In winter, this is a great cross country ski trail!

Westchester Lagoon – Located very close to the Susitna Place B&B, this is a great birdwatching spot in summer and the ultimate skating pond in winter. Bordered by a bike trail, the lagoon can be accessed via the Coastal Trail. Just off L Street.

Get some History – The Anchorage Museum of History & Art is just the place to learn about Alaska’s brief yet fascinating past. Located at 121 W 7th Ave. Open daily, year-round. Phone: 907-343-4326. www.anchagemuseum.org

Go for a hike – Chugach State Park, the 3rd largest in the US, is only 15 minutes from downtown Anchorage. With over 495,000 acres, there are miles of hiking trails to chose from as well as some excellent berry picking in late summer. Rental car would be necessary. For maps or more information, call 907-345-5014 or go to: http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/units/chugach/

Log Cabin Visitor Information Center – Open daily, year-round, this center offers maps, brochures and other information about the city. Located downtown at F street and 4th Ave. (907) 274-3531. www.anchorage.net

Alaska Public Lands Information Center – Located at 605 W 4th Ave in the Old Federal Building, this office has some excellent resources for those looking for books, maps or general information on Alaska. (907) 271-2737; www.nps.gov/aplic/center/

Resolution Park/Captain Cook Monument – Located at the end of 3rd Ave on L Street, this is a grand place to view Cook Inlet and on a clear day, far off Mt McKinley. The monument commemorates the 200th anniversary of Captain James Cook’s exploration of the area on his third and final voyage.

Alaska Aviation Heritage Museum – For those of you who are plane buffs this is a must see. The museum focuses on Alaska’s aviation history and features a theatre, observation deck, three hangars and special exhibits. There are also 28 vintage aircraft on display. Located near the airport on Aircraft Drive. Contact-(907)248-5325 or http://www.alaskaairmuseum.org/

Alaska Native Heritage Center – This showcase for Native cultures of Alaska is a gathering place that celebrates, perpetuates and shares Alaska Native tradition. Come face-to-face with Alaska’s first people. Open 9AM to 9PM daily; admission is $19.95 for adults, $14.95 for children. (907) 330- 8000; www.alaskanative.net

For more information, or to receive the current Anchorage Visitor’s Guide, contact the Anchorage Convention & Visitor’s Bureau at (907) 274-3531, or 800-478-1255, or through their website – www.Anchorage.net.

You can also write to them at 524 W 4th Ave, Anchorage, AK 99501.