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CITY OF TYBEE ISLAND

PRESS RELEASE:
For immediate release

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Tybee Receives "Bicycle Friendly Community" Award

Tybee Island, Ga. – (August 10, 2011) The City of Tybee Island celebrated its recognition as a "Bicycle Friendly Community" after a ceremony installing the sign awarded by the League of American Bicyclists' Bill Nesper, director of the Bicycle Friendly America Program. The sign is posted at the entrance to Tybee at the Lazaretto Creek Bridge as well as at the Park of Seven Flags on the island's south end of US Highway 80.

The City of Tybee Island received acknowledgement in 2011 at the League's Bronze Level, but then took the group's recommendations to continue to make improvements in order to achieve the Bicycle Friendly designation.

The official presentation of this award was made at 4:30 PM on July 25th at Tybee's Park of Seven Flags, with cyclists in attendance from the island community as well as Jason Buelterman, Mayor of Tybee Island, and Frank McIntosh, Savannah Bicycle Campaign's executive director, who braved the traffic and suffered a flat on the way. After Mr. Nesper's presentation, the group was given a police escort to the Pavilion in Memorial Park, where they enjoyed snacks and drinks provided by the City.

The city has been working to achieve this recognition since late in 2009 under guidelines and suggestions from the League of American Bicyclists. Some of the efforts have included: more communications from the city about bicycling events and programs on cable access, the City's web and Facebook pages, and on the City Hall announcement marquee; participation in the annual "Bike to Work" events each May; sponsoring of bicycle safety workshops; certification of police and city staff as bicycle safety instructors; a renewed bicycle registration effort; and, extension of the city's bicycle route and new signage to mark it and to encourage its use. Mayor Buelterman noted, "We are very excited and honored to be one of a very small group of cities to have achieved this level of certification."

City Manager, Diane Schleicher, a long-time cyclist and Certified Cycling Instructor, spoke about Tybee's experiences qualifying for this program at this week's Bicycle Friendly practicum hosted by the Coastal Regional Commission in Midway.

With large numbers of tourists and their vehicles during the summer months, parking spaces are hard to come by, and the city feels that whatever can be done to encourage bicycle use can help ease the congestion and frustration, in addition to the health and environmental benefits to be derived from

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reducing the automotive carbon footprint on the island. Educational efforts are focused on improving driver awareness, promoting the City's bicycle routes, environmental savings, and bicycle safety.

Mr. Nesper oversees the League's Bicycle Friendly America program, which includes the Bicycle Friendly Community, Bicycle Friendly State, Bicycle Friendly Business – for which the city strongly encourages local businesses to investigate and apply - and Bicycle Friendly University recognition programs. Bill first joined the League as a Membership Assistant in 2002 and moved in 2005 to manage the League education programs and Bicycle Friendly Community Program. Prior to joining the League, he was a touring musician and Artist Manager. He holds a BA in History from the University of Florida and is completing an MA at George Mason University. Nesper rides his bike nine miles to work and is a member of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals, and the Washington Area Bicyclist Association.

About Tybee Island, GA.: The City of Tybee Island, Georgia is on the outermost barrier island off the Savannah area coast. With a wild bird sanctuary, over three miles of ocean beaches, and salt marshes on the back river, outdoor recreation activities abound for visitors to the island. As a key defense point to the important Savannah port, Tybee's Fort Screven, Tybee Post Theater, Fort Pulaski, and the Tybee Island and Cockscur Lighthouses combine with the unique architectures of the island's raised cottages to form a rich backdrop for history buffs. Attracting a strong artistic community, there are several local supporting art galleries. Keeping the island interesting year round are several arts festivals, the Annual Pirate Fest, the Beach Bum Parade, St Patrick's Day celebrations, the Hot Rod Run, the Beach Bash, and the Christmas Parade, as well as fireworks displays on Independence and New Year's Days off the Walter W. Parker Pier and Pavilion. The Marine Science Center cooperates with Georgia's DNR to protect threatened sea turtle species by searching for nests, protecting their eggs, and making sure hatchlings make it to sea. For visitor information, stop by <http://www.tybeevisit.com/>, and to find more about the City of Tybee Island, visit our web site at <http://www.cityoftybee.org/>.

About the Bicycle Friendly America Program: The Bicycle Friendly Community, Bicycle Friendly State, Bicycle Friendly Business and Bicycle Friendly University programs are generously supported by program partners Bikes Belong and Trek Bicycle's One World, Two Wheels Campaign. To learn more about building a Bicycle Friendly America, visit <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/>. The League of American Bicyclists promotes bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation, and works through advocacy and education for a bicycle-friendly America. The League represents the interests of America's 57 million bicyclists, including its 300,000 members and affiliates. For more information or to support the League, visit www.bikeleague.org.

Photo courtesy Tybee Island Tourism Council

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Bicycles outside the Tybee Historical Society shop and Tybee Lighthouse.

Photos courtesy Tybee Better Hometown Program:

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Tybee has earned the "Bicycle Friendly Community" designation from the League of American Bicyclists.



Bill Nesper, director of the League of American Bicyclists' *Bicycle Friendly American* program, and Tybee Mayor Jason Buelterman discuss details of the program.

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L to R: Tybee City Manager Diane Schleicher; Frank McIntosh, Savannah Bicycle Campaign's executive director; Bill Nesper, director of the League of American Bicyclist's *Bicycle Friendly America* recognition program; Tybee Mayor Jason Buelterman; Tybee Councilman Bill Garbett; and, Tybee Councilman Paul Wolff.



L to R: Frank McIntosh, Savannah Bicycle Campaign's executive director; Bill Nesper, director of the League of American Bicyclist's *Bicycle Friendly America* recognition program; Tybee Mayor Jason Buelterman; Tybee Councilman Bill Garbett; Tybee Councilman Paul Wolff; owner of Pirate Pedicab, Kyle Pratt; and, Denise Dubuque, co-owner of Fat Tire Bikes.

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