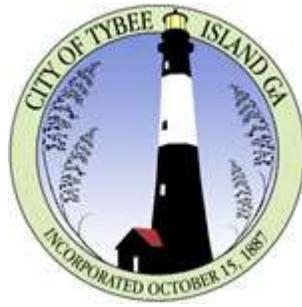


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City of Tybee Island's Better Hometown Initiative Awarded Grassroots Arts Program Grant

Tybee Island, GA – (December 21, 2009) The Grassroots Arts Program (GAP), a partnership between the Georgia Council for the Arts and the City of Savannah's Department of Cultural Affairs/Leisure Services Bureau (which manages the funding initiative) has awarded a grant for Tybee's Better Hometown Initiative community arts program, **Third Thursdays on Tybee**. These funds combined with local contributions will allow these programs to reach their full potential.

On February 18, March 18, and April 15, 2010, **Third Thursdays on Tybee**, a series of three, free, family-friendly, public concerts, will take place in the Tybee Business Corridor. Two **Thursdays** will be on the Southern End and one will be on the Northern End. These one-set concerts in the late afternoons will invite local residents and visitors into the District to enjoy music concerts and will also encourage interaction with local businesses. Each month will feature local Tybee musicians with one month specifically featuring young Tybee musicians. The exact locations and times for each concert will be announced. Details will also be available on the City's website.

This initial Better Hometown initiative community arts project will feature single musicians, duos or trios with simple technical requirements. A call for submissions will soon be available at the City's website. Musicians will be asked to submit a sample of their music and bio information to the Tybee Island Better Hometown Initiative Program no later than January 12, 2010. A panel of invited professionals will select the performers for the concerts.

Part of Tybee Island's Better Hometown Initiative mission is to support and encourage the arts as an economic engine on the Island. **Third Thursdays on Tybee** will help to enhance Tybee Island as not only the #1 Healthiest Beach in America, but also as an Island that is friendly, safe, clean, and culturally enriching. Working with area businesses, organizations and the Tybee Island Tourism Council, **Third Thursdays on Tybee** will help to brand Tybee Island as an inviting and thriving arts community that serves its residents and attracts visitors to the Island.

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 Fort Theater, Fort Pulaski, and the Tybee Island and Cockspar 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 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 Tybee Island's Better Hometown Initiative: Tybee's Better Hometown initiative follows a comprehensive revitalization process that improves all aspects of a commercial district. Better Hometown is a self help approach to economic development for downtown areas designed to grow business and improve a community's quality of life. With broad based community support, it integrates a practical management strategy with the physical improvements of buildings and public spaces, promotion and image building, and economic development in the area. For more information, visit <http://www.cityoftybee.org/BetterHometownProgram.aspx>.

The Grassroots Arts Program (<http://www.gaarts.org>) is supported in part by the Georgia Council for the Arts through the appropriations of the Georgia Assembly and administered by the City of Savannah's Department of Cultural Affairs. GCA is a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

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