

Project Category

NSBF Byway Community Award: Event

The Spoonbills & Sprockets Cycling Tour introduces our byway to new participants while challenging our returning riders to see the byway with fresh eyes through eight (8) selfies of their time along A1A to win prizes. Spoonbills & Sprockets Cycling Tour is an example of best practice for the byway that has grown through the cycling community's support and has a reputation for excellence.

Project Name

8th Annual Spoonbills & Sprockets Cycling Tour – Crazy 8's

Byway Name

A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway

Established: June 13, 2002

Length: 72 miles

Overview

You ride your bike through your neighborhood. Setting off on the familiar route, you zone out and cycle on autopilot. A deer meanders from the woods and you suddenly focus and take notice of your surroundings.

As with so many annual events, it's easy to host it on autopilot, forgetting that those paying money to attend (in other words, helping you fundraise for your organization) are coming to be entertained.

Now in its 10th year (2021) the Spoonbills & Sprockets Cycling Tour always offers our participants something different, and in 2019, we hosted our "Crazy 8's" themed ride for the 8th annual event. Participants were challenged to take 8 selfies of their time along A1A, and they had a blast sharing our byway from point of view. What was so great about this contest?

Not only did it bring and introduce our byway to new riders during the event, who were excited about the contest, it challenged our returning riders to see the byway with new eyes and identify places they love to include in their submissions. It was the set of photos from Kimmarie Martinez, a career IT specialist for NASA, avid cyclist and multi-year Spoonbills & Sprockets participant who showed us the most creative and humorous looks from the byway, and she was selected as our winner.

From photos at the historic Marineland Dolphin Adventure, to the Castillo de San Marcos, the Bridge of Lions, the St. Augustine Alligator Farm, and south to the beaches and waterways along A1A in Flagler County, watching the giggling and comparing of photos at the Marineland attraction after party, we know it was a wonderful bonding experience for our riders and a memory of an adventure they'll never forget.

Intrinsic Qualities

Recreational

Partners

Byway leaders and volunteers – These are the lifeblood of our entire organization. Whether it's stuffing swag bags, checking in riders, staffing SAG/rest stops, or cleaning up after the event, our dedicated volunteers are the foundation for this event.

Marineland Dolphin Adventure – Event participants love the opportunity to tour the world's first oceanarium, learning about the attraction's history and conservation efforts of today after enjoying a catered post-ride luncheon on site.

Tourism Partners – Whether it's securing a grant to help the event grow or spreading the word organically to their followers, subscribers and visitors, we appreciate the support of our tourism partners locally at the TDC and VCB, and at the state level through Visit Florida.

Business Community – Retail, restaurant and lodging partners donate items for the swag bags, assist with food donations and hoteliers provide blocks of rooms for participants at special rates, each contributing to the success of the event.

Earned Media – Friends of A1A enjoy a strong relationship with our media partners who help advance the event and provide event or post-event coverage. We support them by sharing their stories via our website, social media and newsletters to thousands of followers across the nation.

Byway Best Practice

Spoonbills & Sprockets Cycling Tour is an example of best practice for the byways and contributing to the visitor experience for several reasons.

First, it has grown through the support of the cycling community and has a reputation for excellence, as a result of feedback from cycling enthusiasts and professional cycling event organizers. Why not learn from the best?

Second, while keeping the fundamentals of the event in place, each year we always add something new to the event to keep it fresh and fun, while generating excitement. Third, it's about being strategic. SAG/rest stops are placed at locations along the byway that are also stops on our A1A Scenic Byway Mobi Tour. What better way to encourage visitors to return and learn more about history than to have them stop for a minute? Surveys over the years have reflected the effectiveness of this approach as riders list the route among their top favorites of the entire event, and when asked, specifically identify places they'd like to return and learn more about, creating repeat visitors.

For the 2019 ride – Crazy 8's, the riders stopped and took selfies at locations along the byway as part of a contest, creating lifelong memories they'll share when returning home, and helping to tell our byway's story for us! Instead of just driving the byway, they're experiencing the byway.

Keys to Success

Our success is dependent on several factors, many listed above, and all are driven by the excitement of our team. We have a passion for this event as it touches so many key elements for our organization. It showcases the two counties spanning our byway, and some of the most unique historical locations in the nation. It directly correlates to our primary intrinsic quality of recreation and is set up to offer everyone a chance to participate – from youth/beginner to professional level athlete, we have a route distance to meet every need. Working closely with our area's tourism officials, business community and nonprofit partners, it's an event that welcomes visitors from start to finish with true show of hospitality and an unmatched enthusiasm for our region.

Why do they love it? You'd think after doing the event several years in a row, participants would get bored. Not here. We have so much fun designing custom medals and signature jerseys each year, creating a theme, and wowing our riders with celebrity entertainers and unique activities that it never seems like the same event twice!

Additional Information

Contact Information

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Project Year(s):

01/2019 – 11/2019

Website

[Scenic A1A Highway](#)

Photographs

