FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bee City USA® To Celebrate First Street Sign Installation

While it may seem just a simple street sign, the Bee City USA® sign being installed next to the entrance to City/County Plaza on College Street represents the realization of a dream of many volunteers, the commitment of Asheville’s leadership, and an appeal to open hearts and minds to the little creatures who quietly cause most of the planet’s plants to reproduce and fruit.

“With the installation of this street sign,” said Phyllis Stiles, director of Bee City USA, “Our program is progressing from the egg stage into the larval stage. Eventually as other cities join the program we will pupate and become adult bees! We’re pollinating.”

Friends of pollinators are invited to join Bee City USA to celebrate the installation of their very first street sign in Asheville, the inaugural designee of the Bee City USA program. The dedication will be held Monday, September 16 at 1:30 – 2:00 at the Veterans Memorial in Pack Square Park, at the entrance to City/County Plaza.

On June 26, 2012, Asheville City Council voted unanimously to adopt the resolution that outlined the responsibilities the designation entails. Bee City USA launched in Asheville, but the program’s aim is to make the WORLD safer for pollinators, one city at a time. Already, representatives from several other cities have contacted the program’s director about how they can become designees.

Through municipal policies and education, the program’s goal is creating habitats that sustain pollinators by choosing a diversity of native flowering plants rather than exotic plants, avoiding pesticides, and leaving areas natural for nesting.
According to Stiles, “After just a year of existence, we receive invitations weekly to speak, to plant pollinator plots, or to participate in events. We could not have picked a better city to launch this program.”

The program’s steering committee spent a year designing the Bee City USA logo with the pro bono services of Martha Dugger, a well-known local graphic designer. The committee wanted the design to include a bumble bee and flowers. As with all logos, it was challenging to find an image that everyone liked. According to Dugger, “The cause was too important to give up; I wanted to create a logo that would inspire the public to get involved.” This was not Dugger’s first work with bees. She was also the graphic designer for *A Bee Lover’s Garden Calendar* published in 2010 and 2011.

Other cities are invited to apply for Bee City USA designation following a process outlined on the website. Once accepted, they will be given the artwork to make their street signs, proclaiming their commitment to sustaining pollinators.

To learn more about Bee City USA, visit [www.beecityusa.org](http://www.beecityusa.org). Bee City USA is a program of the Center for Honeybee Research.

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