



## **First Flight makes list of top 100 bike shops**

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By Bethany Fuller

After the first phone call from Bicycling magazine, Jeff Archer and Wes Davidson were pretty excited that the publication was even considering First Flight Bicycles for a spot on its Best 100 Bicycle Shops list.

Their excitement mounted each time they received another call from the magazine.

"We didn't know exactly what they were doing," Archer said. "We are such a small shop in such a small town. We are not known as a real hotbed for cycling."

When the October issue came out last week, the two men flipped through and found First Flight was on page 67.

First Flight was one of four North Carolina shops mentioned by the magazine.

Statesville isn't like towns and cities on the West Coast,, where cycling is a part of the lifestyle for many, Archer said.

"It's improving," Archer said about cycling in Statesville. "We are getting more opportunities."

Around 40 shops, including First Flight, were featured with a small paragraph, each detailing what made them stand out to the editors of the magazine.

The magazine doesn't rank the shops numerically. Archer said the shops that were predominantly featured are the ones everyone in cycling knows about. Some shops only got their name and locations mentioned.

The paragraph on First Flight recognizes the shop's Museum of Mountain Bike Art and Technology museum, which is one of the largest collections of vintage mountain bicycles in the country.

Archer formally named and started displaying his collection of mountain bikes in 2005. Until then, he said, they were just hanging around the store.

Today, the museum is an attraction in downtown Statesville, bringing in cyclists from around the country.

"They found us," Archer said. "There wasn't an application process."

Archer and Davidson have done a lot to promote cycling in the area.

For the past 10 years, First Flight and Trail Care Crew have carved out 20 miles of Itusi Trail for mountain biking at Lake Norman State Park.

With the help of a \$75,000 Recreational Trails Program grant, Itusi Trail will have another nine miles laid out by the end of 2013, Archer said.

Archer and Davidson have also helped with the Carolina Thread Trail and Lake Norman Bike Route.

### **First Flight Bicycles**

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Read more: <http://www2.statesville.com/news/2011/sep/19/first-flight-makes-list-top-100-bike-shops-ar-1409674/>