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## Notes from the Nest - September 2012

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### Our Three Day Eaglet Fledging Adventure

Anticipation was on high alert at the AEF Hack Tower on Douglas Lake in Dandridge, TN. on August 12. The three eaglets hatched and raised in the nest of non-releasable Bald Eagles Independence and Franklin were weighed, tagged, and banded – and carefully examined to determine their general health before being released into the wild the following day. We knew they were big – but these eaglets had Alaskan genes that pushed their weights up to 9 lbs for the male; and 11 lb. 12 oz. and 12 lbs for the 2 females.

*"Ranger" was the first Bald Eaglet to fledge the AEF's artificial nesting tower on Douglas Lake on August 13th, making a beautiful flight and landing safely in a tall tree.*

Kevin Tierney, videographer for the AEF, spent many hours over a 3-day period so that we Chatters could watch all the excitement "live" on UStream from the lake. Other key players facilitated a wonderful visual experience – thanks to Blue (Craig), Beth, Rob, Danielle, Al, Christine, other AEF staff, interns, and volunteers! Chat was going so fast that our Mods & Chatters could hardly keep up with what was being said!

Ranger (the male) flew away on the first day – August 13th, landing smoothly and safely in a tall tree. Griffith flew on August 14th, but unfortunately, she experienced an in-the-lake misadventure and had to be returned to the hack tower where she was later found to have a significant abrasion on the pad of her left foot. BraveHeart (named by Chatter Becky Ownby of Knoxville, TN) dallied on the perches outside the compartment wingercizing for 2 full days before flying off on August 15th .

To see a composite video from the 3-day event, [click here!](#) (There is no sound with this video. Audio will be added at a later date.)

So – where are they now? Ranger and BraveHeart have left the area and are presumably doing what eagles do naturally in the wild. Griffith's foot, scuffed during her first flight when she landed hard on the ground in a wooded area (before the lake incident mentioned above), has healed quite well. On September 10th, she was moved to a large 150 ft. flight enclosure at the AEF's bird facility in Pigeon Forge. The AEF is being very patient before releasing her again into the wild. She currently shares the enclosure with eagle Sergeant where live rabbits and a pool stocked with trout have been made available to the birds so they can practice catching the kind of food they will most likely encounter in the wild. Another rehab Bald Eagle (an adult) scheduled to be released in September on another East Tennessee lake, also shares the same enclosure. Therefore, Griffith will hopefully benefit from having two eagle "mentors" with him in the enclosure who have already experienced life in the wild, hunting and fishing on their own.

### Update on the Bald Eagle Sergeant

The eagle Sergeant, released from the AEF in 2009, has had a life full of adventures and misadventures in 3 years of

living on her own in the wild and has covered a lot of territory. She was seen in August and again in October of 2009 on Lake Erie, apparently doing very well. A positive identification of her patagial tag "B9" was clearly seen in a photo taken by a local photographer.

Then, on March 21, 2010 she was found with a fractured wing in Ohio. She responded well to excellent care at Raptor, Inc. in Cincinnati, and did well for a year and a half after she was re-released in Ohio.

**More information can be found in this pdf document - click to download.**

However, in August 2012, Sergeant was found by the Alabama Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in a weakened condition due to a parasite problem. She was transferred back to the AEF at the request of Al Cecere for further treatment and to fully recuperate before another attempt in releasing her, hopefully in September 2012. We are pleased to report that she is feisty, healthy, strong, and making significant progress in our 150-ft. flight cage.



*"Sergeant" was spotted doing well on Lake Erie in August 2009 following her release from the AEF.*



*"Old Man Turner" and "Screaming Eagle" - two eaglets hatched at the Wildlife Sanctuary of Florida pictured on the day of their fledging from the AEF hack tower overlooking Douglas Lake.*

### Other Eagle Releases by the AEF

An eaglet that hatched in the nest of Bald Eagle parents Isaiah and Mrs. Jefferson on the Dollywood park was named "Gio" (E2 patagial tag) during a private release on July 15th in memory of a young man who lost his life in the Great Smoky Mountains national park earlier in the year. A photo by Al Cecere taken when this eaglet was a few days old has appeared as [Canvas Art](#) and, most recently, [on an AEF mug](#). (Click on links to purchase.)

Also, two eaglets, hatched at the Wildlife Center in Florida, were released from the AEF hack tower on American Eagle Day, June 20th: "Old Man Turner" named to honor a fallen soldier, and "Screaming Eagle" to pay tribute to the 101st Airborne Screaming Eagles of Fort Campbell. [Watch the release here.](#)

"Old Man Turner" (C2 patagial tag), as well as "Endeavor," (H1 patagial tag) one of Indy and Frank's eaglets released last year, were both sighted in August, 2012 near Pymatuning Lake in NW

Pennsylvania.

We hope all the eaglets that fledged from the AEF hack tower, and those taking their first flights in other areas - from both captive and wild nests, are having great adventures, smooth winds, and abundant food sources — and that they will live long and healthy lives, raising eaglets of their own to also fly free in the wild.

### Eagle Nest Cam Chatters Reunion - July 2012

An idea was planted on the AEF's Nestcam Chat one day to have a "Reunion" during the summer in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee where we could gather at the AEF's headquarters (at Dollywood) to share an experience of "all things eagle" while getting to know each other better. Chatter Joleen (JC) took it upon herself (big cheer here!) to keep us all posted and up to date about the who, what, when, where, how many people, what we would do, where we would go ---- and so forth.

Combined with a deep love and appreciation of Eagles and the AEF among lots of Kindred Spirits, the "Reunion" turned into a weekend that all of us who attended will long remember.

A caravan of cars and planes from 17 states descended into Pigeon Forge July 25 -30, 2012. While some came on Wednesday and left Monday, most came on Thursday and departed Sunday. It was a glorious time! The AEF staff treated us royally — from Head Eagle Al, to every member of the bird care and administrative team.

We saw Control Central for the Eagle Nest Cam with "Blue" and Al giving us a tour; Danielle and Al took us through the artificial incubation and hatching area, Rob and Danielle conducted eagle training flights for us, Challenger and his other bird friends made special appearances to educate us. We saw a number of the AEF's bird aviaries and buildings, including breeding and flight enclosures and outdoor bird weathering / sunning facilities. At the Hack Tower on Douglas Lake, we climbed the ladder and saw the eaglets that had been hatched and raised in Independence and Franklin's nest. ... soon to fly away. We had VIP seats at the Wings Of America bird show where Mike and Danielle gave us a wonderful bird show educational experience. Chat Mod Yami made a cameo appearance during one of the show skits – and earned a rousing applause from his fellow chat buddies. We all had a wonderful dinner together on Friday evening – gifts were exchanged and many photos taken.



*From 17 states we came - kindred spirits all - to soak in the atmosphere and enjoy the hospitality of the place that brought us all together.*

A number of brave souls rode the Wild Eagle, Dollywood's newest attraction. There were notable exceptions to this experience! (LOL)

Lots of items were purchased from the AEF gift shop, which will add to the Reunion memories of those who took them home!

Oul made a recipe book with adorable photos, recipes, and poems contributed by lots of Chatters...

Barbara Wilber created a [great slide show](#) complete with an upbeat selection of music that is a must see if you haven't already done so! (Most of us have it committed to memory by now.)



*Chatters and Mods adopted "Independence" and "Franklin" - twice!*

### Eagle Nest Cam Chatters & Mods Continue to Bring Blessings to AEF

Led by one of our Mods, a campaign to "Adopt" Independence and Franklin was a two-pronged initiative. The first "adoption" brought in \$680, while several weeks later, a second "adoption" added another \$940-plus. In all, the two adoptions totaled approximately \$1,620. Wow!

Not done yet, many Chatters and Mods have also sent in donations which currently total \$2,620.00 earmarked for a solar-powered GPS satellite tracking device. The device will actually cost around \$3,500.00, and about \$500 will be needed each year to pay for tracking data services.

**The AEF is so very grateful for these donations, and wants to express its deepest appreciation and thanks to each person who has made a contribution in any way to the AEF. You bless our efforts and facilitate our work to save and care for America's precious eagles.**

In addition, back in June, "American Eagle Day" was enthusiastically supported and encouraged by the Mods and Chatters as they tirelessly wrote letters to their governors and elected officials, and invited their friends to do the same. Postings on their Facebook pages gave even more visibility to this AEF-led campaign. This year, 25 governors signed "American Eagle Day" proclamations. In total, 40 states have participated to date. Our goal, of course, is to have 100 percent participation from all 50 states and to have our President declare "American Eagle Day" an annual national day by Executive Order.

**Thank you, Chatters & Mods! You are the greatest!**

### Saturday Night Live at the Nest

On our last Saturday Night Live at the Nest, August 25, 2012, Al and Blue took time off to visit with us for an hour on Chat.

Updates were given about Griffith, BraveHeart, and Ranger, and it was announced that our live cam would continue to be left on through October. After that, a certain amount of cleanup and maintenance of the habitat, positioning of new / additional cameras, and eagle checkups will be done – all those things leading up to our 2013 Nesting Season.

The expertise and effort that Al and Blue have made to ensure that we saw and heard as much as we possibly could during this past nesting season - including the Flight of the Eagles from the AEF hack tower - have left indelible marks on all of us.

Who can forget the Rescue of Baby Eaglet by Al and Blue in the dead of night - with flashlights the only source of illumination?

Who can forget the extra efforts by Al and Blue that have been made throughout the season to fix cameras, get the feed right, replace the microphone that Franklin pulled out? And laying cables, and working with the cable companies - and on and on and on... even while the regular work of the AEF was carried on in the usual impeccable way.

We are committed in sharing this nest with other Kindred Spirits -- and all of us, Staff, Mods, and Chatters, are proud of what we have accomplished this year! We have awesome goals for 2013!



*Al and "Blue" - Stars of "Saturday Night Live at the Nest"*

### "Chance of a Lifetime" Charity Auction

As you know, chatters have been bidding on the "Chance of a Lifetime - Volunteer Keeper for a Weekend" Charity Auction sponsored by the AEF --- the goal being to raise money for



*Emoticons provided fireworks aplenty when auction winners JC and Sparky were announced during the final night of bidding!*

weekend at the AEF next summer where they will...

- Get to work as a volunteer alongside our AEF staff for a day
- Pose with AI and Challenger for Photo op
- Have dinner with AI and AEF Staff
- Train with Bird Curator Rob West to handle a bird of prey
- Stay at AI's home for a night / breakfast next day
- Be given a Dollywood Park Adventure Package – with no long lines!
- Visit Eagle Mountain Sanctuary – Feed Indy and Frank!
- Go to the hack tower, help tag and attach transmitter for eaglets that will be released the following day, feed the resident eaglets, & then on the day of release, help staff pull the rope that opens the door for the eaglets to fly free
- Take home a commemorative video highlighting her experience.....

- An additional rehab flight enclosure
- A new weathering yard with netted roof
- GPS satellite tracking units
- New HD cameras and other equipment for our educational Eagle Nest Cam program

On August 31st, the last night of the Auction, the co-winners of this contest were revealed. Joining everyone on Chat, Chief Eagle AI announced, "Since the bidding has been so very close at the \$3000 level, and it appears that two dedicated eagle lovers want the opportunity to be an AEF bird keeper for a weekend.....I am going to declare both Joleen and Sparky winners of the auction, since they are only separated in their bidding by \$1." Their combined bids totaled \$6,000 – and will play an important part in helping the AEF continue its important mission.

When the winners were announced, emoticons and expressions of congratulations took over, and you could almost see fireworks in the sky!

Sincere congratulations to our winners, Joleen Maiden (JC) and Carol Caesar (Sparky). They will undoubtedly have an amazing

### Bald Eagle Glen (or Glenda) is Coming to the AEF

Many of you have heard about Glen (or Glenda) the Bald Eagle rescued by a "good Samaritan" in North Spokane, Washington.

Required federal and state agency approvals and paperwork are in the works to bring Glen or Glenda to the American Eagle Foundation for further evaluation. The eagle had a broken elbow which may possibly make it difficult for it to fly again in the wild. If declared non-releasable due to permanent disability, then the bird will be provided a humane life in captivity and a forever home at the AEF's Eagle Mountain Sanctuary at Dollywood.

This is a good example of private citizens, veterinarians, agencies, and non-profit conservation organizations like the AEF working together for a common goal - the healing and perhaps lifetime care of a magnificent eagle.

[More information](#)



*The story of Bald Eagle "Glen" has captured the hearts of eagle lovers everywhere.*



### Chase Community Giving Campaign — Please Vote for AEF!

The American Eagle Foundation is participating in the Chase Community Giving Campaign. 196 eligible charities will be the recipients of grants based on the number of votes they receive from their fans – \$250,000 to the charity receiving the most votes.

Many of you have already voted for the AEF in this campaign, but we need lots more votes to capture one of the many grants being offered to non-profits.

**Please [CLICK HERE](#) and cast your vote for The American Eagle Foundation.**

**Voting is only open through September 19th, so please take the time to vote TODAY!**

After you've voted, please repost on Facebook, and encourage your friends and family to vote for the AEF.

### Final Memories of AEF's 2012 Nesting Season....

The heartfelt initiatives and talents of our Chat group have no limits. They are videographers, spokespeople, enablers, poets, graphic artists, photographers, and above all, neighbors and friends.

To close out our last Chat Newsletter for this season, we want to share a video produced and directed by Chatter Crystal

Slusher, who compressed our entire 2012 nesting season into a wonderful 7-minute time capsule with music soundtrack. Be sure to have the Kleenex handy. [Click this link](#).

#### Chatters are....

Chatters are what Chatters say  
Love to hear them every day  
Some are bold and some are shy  
So we know the reason why  
They come to talk and listen too  
In what they say there is a clue  
To what they know and how they feel  
It's no mistake that it is real  
There's lots to learn from everyone  
That's what really makes it fun.  
So chat away and do not fret,  
What you hear is what you get!  
~Chatter "Papachops"

#### Fledge Day - A Conversation Between Eaglets

Two bald eaglets, sitting on a pole  
Should they be cautious, should they be bold  
Said one to the other - "Shall we try?  
Shall we sit here or shall we fly?"  
"I don't know," said Griffith to Braveheart"  
We need to be cautious, we need to be smart  
It's awfully nice right where we are  
Fish in a dish, and we don't have to go far."  
Braveheart replied, "I'm telling you  
Ranger was brave, and we should be too.  
He jumped and he pranced, and he finally flew high  
His wings flapped so strongly as he sailed in the sky.  
We must have courage, and we must take our chance  
Nature is calling us to join the Big Dance  
How far will we travel? What sights will we see?  
What does the future hold for you and for me?  
It's a wide world out there and we have to be strong  
And careful, and caring - we can't get it wrong.  
We have journeys to make, a soulmate to find  
So we can raise eaglets & have more of our kind!"  
Said Griffith to Braveheart - "I hope when we nest  
We'll come back to this place - for sure it's the best!!"  
~Chatter/Mod "Carolyn STE"

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#### A Personal Note from Al Cecere, AEF Founder & President

*"I want to thank all our wonderful Chatters and Moderators for your generous efforts, participation, and donations that certainly made our 2012 Eagle Nest Cam Program such a gigantic success. You have not only inspired me and others with your amazing enthusiasm and heart for eagles, but you have also helped facilitate the AEF's mission and programs. Many of you have become personal friends who I know by name and in person, and whose friendship I will always treasure. I am in awe of the positive impact you have had in raising public awareness about eagles and the American Eagle Foundation. I look forward to seeing you all next Spring and in years to come."*

American Eagle Foundation | Post Office Box 333 | Pigeon Forge, TN 37868

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