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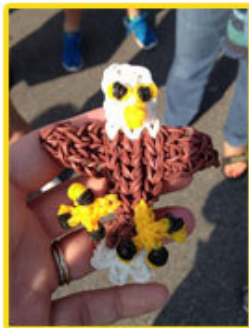
July 29, 2014



On June 26-28, 2014 scores of people gathered from 14 states and Nova Scotia, Canada to descend on the American Eagle Foundation's facilities in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee - many for the first time.

Excitement rapidly reached a fever pitch on Thursday morning as we gathered at Patriot Park where name badges and maps were handed out before we embarked for the AEF off-site facilities. Adorable little eagle pins made by Elaine Black from brightly colored rubber bands were given to each person there - and we wore them with pride throughout the Reunion.

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After arriving at the AEF off-site facility, we were enthusiastically welcomed by AEF staff members, and then divided into groups of "first timers" and "those who had been here before" so that the tours could be individualized appropriately. After climbing stairs to get to the second level of the flight barn, we looked down into the flight areas and breeding compartments while staff talked about the specific eagles we were seeing, and gave updates on the rehab progress of some of the eagles.

We visited the weathering areas where the birds are taken to sun themselves and get fresh air. Many of the raptors were enjoying being outside that day, so lots of photos were taken. Another place of interest was the incubation room, with Caregivers explaining the procedures used to ensure a safe delivery and early feeding of newly-hatched eaglets.

We spent money! Chatters loved the merchandise area, and loaded up with new tees and other souvenirs.

Of course, we saw Challenger fly, and visited with Osceola, Mr. Lincoln, and other feathered friends who are cared for by the AEF. The staff, along with eagles, owls, and other raptors, graciously shared a photo op with chatters who wanted a tangible memory to take home. Click the video below to see a "facility tour" slide show by Dragonlainey.

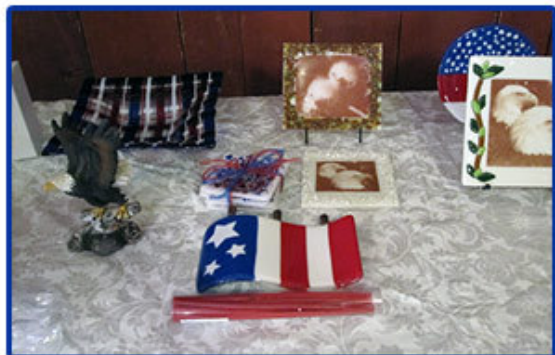


Video by Dragonlaine. (Rick & Elaine Black)



Thursday evening found us at Honeysuckle Hills where we enjoyed dinner and the AEF Raffle/Auction. Wonderful items went home with many of our Chatters, sometimes after a fierce bidding war, artfully handled by Henry Slusher, a born auctioneer if ever there was one!

Two original works of art were donated for our auction by very gifted supporters: a beautiful original acrylic painting of Challenger by Jack Turner, and an oil painting on tile of Romeo and Juliet done by Kathy Polizzi. We'd like to acknowledge & thank them for their contributions. Thanks goes to Challenger, who donated jesses from two seasons of personal appearances; and to Franklin & Independence who donated the 3 artificial eggs they diligently sat on during nesting season. In addition, AEF provided baskets of goodies for the auction, and many of our talented supporters gave us hand-crafted items that raised even more money for our favorite non-profit!



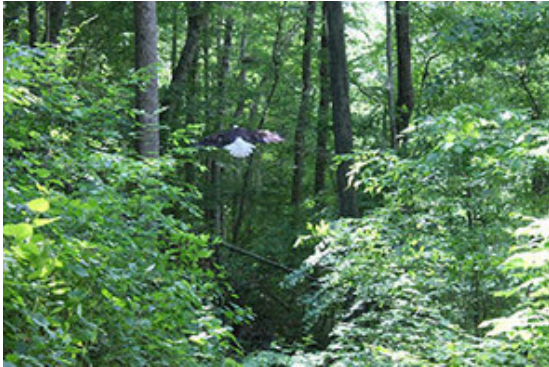
AND THE BIG WINNERS WERE: Challenger's jesses from the 2013 traveling season went home with Carol Caesar. Ginny Cataldo made the high bid on Challenger's flag jesses & anklets from the 2014 traveling season, and Challenger's off-season jesses from 2014 went to Debi Chernisky. The Challenger painting high bid was made by Carol Rausch. Frank & Indy's wooden eggs were taken home by Marylee Turner & J. Robert Turner, and the high bid for the Romeo & Juliet tile was submitted by Lori Staudt.

On Day 2 - Friday, June 27, 2014 - an eaglet was released from the hack tower on Douglas Lake in honor of Col. Donald Lee Keil, U.S. Army, who passed away September 6, 2013. The eaglet was given the name "Hallmark" for the company in VietNam that Col. Keil served with. Col. Keil was the father of Chatter Parker Allen (paeg), and instead of having a contest to Name the Eaglet, the Mods made a unanimous decision to award the honor to Parker's father. To watch the ceremony and the release was an experience that none of us is likely to ever forget. AEF videographer, Kevin Tierney, has put together a terrific movie so we can revisit it again. Just click on the image below.



After the release - and Hallmark wasted no time in flying free - we all enjoyed a great lunch at Angelo's on the Point at Douglas Lake.

On Saturday (Day 3) we went to Dollywood --- most headed straight to Eagle Mountain Sanctuary to see "in real life" the eagles we follow daily via live streaming HD video on the nest cam during nesting season. There was Hero and Volunteer's nest - "Oh, there's Frank!" "Look at the eagles in PAM!" --- and we waved and waved at those watching us from home. A list was shown via our cam containing the names of many Peeps who indicated that even tho they could not be with us this year, they were "here in spirit!"



At the Birds Over America show, AEF showstoppers Mike Acuff and Christian Knatt kept us entertained and educated - and Paula Brophy made the best "Buzzard Bait" imaginable!



The show ended with a vocal performance by Mike and Christian that left us all reaching for Kleenex. Wow. Click the picture below for a replay.



Video by Dragonlaine. (Rick & Elaine Black)

Monies Raised!

The auction and raffle brought in \$2,743 to AEF; sales at the AEF off-site facilities (the merchandise room) contributed another \$880.98. In addition, there was a lively trade at the Dollywood AEF store on Saturday, although we don't have firm figures for the exact amount. Tuck also grabbed quite a number of bills from Chatters to stuff in his collection box after the Birds of America show.

To put together an event of this magnitude takes much effort and planning, and we especially want to thank some of the people whose behind-the-scenes efforts went above and beyond: Joleen Maiden, MarthaAnn Madigan, Crystal Slusher, & Cathy Poer! It's a monumental task, and things just don't automatically fall into place. You guys are the best. Thank you, Thank you!

To all our Chatters:

You support us, you encourage us, you inspire us. Thank you so very much, and we'll see you next year Where Eagles Fly.

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



