

NEWS

For Immediate Release
Sept. 4, 2011

DOLLYWOOD UNLEASHES \$20 MILLION WILD EAGLE STEEL COASTER IN MARCH 2012; FIRST WING COASTER IN THE U.S. TO SOAR ABOVE SMOKY MOUNTAINS

PIGEON FORGE, Tenn.—[Dollywood's](#) 2012 season will be a historic one as the Tennessee-based theme park introduces the new \$20 million [Wild Eagle](#) steel wing coaster, the first of its kind in the U.S.

Experiencing the freedom of flight, the new coaster's innovative floorless design positions riders seated four abreast in a forward-facing position, with two riders actually seated on the "wings" along either side of the coaster's track with nothing but air above and below them.

"After the honor of the 2010 Applause Award, we knew that all eyes were on us at Dollywood to see what we'd do next," Dolly Parton said. "Wild Eagle celebrates not only the majestic bald eagle but also my beautiful Smoky Mountains which folks will get a bird's eye view of as they soar high above Dollywood. I'm just thrilled that Dollywood's Wild Eagle is the only place in the entire country where folks can get their feathers ruffled on a coaster like this!"

Perched on the park's highest peak, Wild Eagle rises 21 stories into the sky. Taking off from the Wilderness Pass area, riders experience the sensation of flight as the coaster's massive track swoops and soars along a journey that measures 3,127 feet. Wild Eagle reaches a top speed of 61 miles per hour and maneuvers four inversions including a giant loop, a "zero-G" roll, and a giant flat spin.

Wild Eagle's nearly two-and-a-half minute journey includes a plummeting 135-foot first drop. Located 210 feet above the coaster's loading station, the ride provides spectacular views of the Smoky Mountains terrain below. Each coaster train consists of seven cars which carry four passengers for a total of 28 people per train. Each vehicle features an imposing bald eagle with piercing eyes and broad wings outstretched for flight.

Wild Eagle is the largest single capital investment in Dollywood's 26-year history. The park's development team is collaborating with Switzerland-based Bolliger & Mabillard (B&M), the world's premier coaster manufacturer. Pioneers in ride technology, B&M has built 11 of the 20 highest-ranking steel coasters in the world, according to *Amusement Today* magazine.

The ride's name celebrates the bald eagle, a raptor whose population has increased in recent years due largely to the efforts of the American Eagle Foundation (AEF). Headquartered at Dollywood for 20 years, the AEF is home to Eagle Mountain Sanctuary, a 1.5-million-cubic-foot natural outdoor aviary with the largest presentation of non-releasable bald eagles. Dollywood is one of the AEF's largest benefactors, supporting the not-for-profit organization's work to preserve and protect birds of prey.

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Wild Eagle joins Dollywood's award-winning lineup of coasters. Thunderhead, twice named the world's best wooden coaster, consistently ranks among the world's top five. It was built in 2004. Mystery Mine, a 1,811-foot-long steel coaster, opened in 2007 and was named Theme Park Insider's best new theme park attraction the same year. In addition, Dollywood is a two-time Golden Ticket Award winner for Best Shows and three-time winner for Best Christmas Event.

Dollywood was recognized in 2010 with the theme park industry's most prestigious honor, the Applause Award. The Applause Award honors a park whose management, operations and creative accomplishments have inspired the industry with its foresight, originality and sound business development.

Based in the picturesque Great Smoky Mountains, Dollywood is a 150-acre family adventure park open nine months a year (late March through December) and offers more than 40 rides and attractions; award-winning live entertainment featuring country, bluegrass, gospel and mountain music; and a dozen crafters authentic to the East Tennessee region. A family-friendly vacation destination, Dollywood also includes the 35-acre [Dollywood's Splash Country](#), voted America's "Must-See Waterpark." Dollywood offers all-inclusive vacation planning with a variety of overnight lodging options. For more information, call 1-800-DOLLYWOOD or visit dollywood.com.

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