

Trouble getting a new car? **WE CAN HELP!**
www.tncarcredit.com



- News
- Classifieds
- Community
- Directory
- Shopping
- My Zwire!

Home -> News -> News -> Top Stories

Monday 21 August, 2006

NEWS SEARCH

Top Stories

GO

[Advanced search](#)

Kids celebrate while bear center gains funds to thrive

By: DEREK HODGES, Staff Writer

August 21, 2006

Email to a friend Voice your opinion

It was a "beary" good day to be an American kid Saturday, as the annual Young Patriots Day capped Pigeon Forge's week of Celebrate Freedom events.

The children's event was held at and sponsored in part by Boyds Bear Country. The day had a bear-centric theme, as the Black Bear Jamboree joined in sponsoring and all proceeds benefited the Appalachian Bear Center.

The day started with a 5K Run for the Bears, from which registration proceeds went to the bear center. Overall winners for the race were Eric Vanderwort of Clinton and Stephanie Newsome of Cummings, Ga. Sevier County's top male runner was Bo Owens, while Sandra Thomsen captured that title for the females. Both of those winners live in Sevierville.

Perhaps the most popular part of the day each year is the Young Patriots' Parade, in which children decorate bicycles, tricycles and wagons for a parade through the Boyds parking lot. This year's parade drew participants from across Tennessee and as far away as Georgia.

"I'm very impressed," Staff Sgt. and parade judge Darrell Self said as he looked over the entries. "These kids have done a great job."

First, second and third place awards were given to entrants with the best bike, trike and wagon. Those winners received \$200, \$100 and \$50 savings bonds respectively from Tennessee State Bank. There were also awards and gift certificates given to the first-, second- and third-best group entry.

The day ended with a talent show, which brought out some interesting displays from adults and kids alike. The winner, Brady Hughes, received the Golden Bear Award and will be featured on stage during an upcoming Black Bear Jamboree show.

Other activities throughout the day included face painting and games for kids, a silent auction, a scavenger hunt, live entertainment, and door prize drawings.

News
Top Stories
Sports
Entertainment
Lifestyles
Community News
Police/Courts
Editorial
Obituaries
National Headlines
Weather
Letters to Editor
Business
▶ Classifieds
▶ Search Back Issues
▶ Links
▶ Business Directory
▶ Our Newspaper
▶ Administrative
▶ Sports Wire!
▶ Fun and Games
▶ Consumer Guide
▶ Personal Finance
▶ Lifestyles
▶ Job Fair Application

Advertisement

Offering flexible options for advancing your career

University of Phoenix™



Trouble getting a new car?

www.tncarcredit.com

"Today was wonderful," Pigeon Forge Special Events Director Lila Wilson said. "It's heartwarming to see all these kids out here and to see that patriotism is alive and well in America. You're never too young to be proud of where you're from."

For the bear center, the day was not only wonderful, it was important. More than \$22,000 was raised for the center, including \$5,000 donations from Boyds Bear Country and Black Bear Jamboree.

"This is our only fund-raiser of the year, so we depend on people to support us so we can continue to provide the needed care to the 12 bears at the center," Appalachian Bear Center Curator Lisa Stewart said. "This event has been fabulous. We couldn't do what we do without it. It carries us throughout the year."

The center, which is headquartered in Townsend, helps rehabilitate sick, injured and orphaned bears from across the region. Stewart, the only paid staff member, lives at the center so she can monitor the bears at all times.

While Stewart may always be on site and a handful of volunteers frequent the center, bear center officials work to minimize the amount of human contact the bears have. They do so to prevent the animals becoming accustomed to being around humans. That helps keep the animals from being labeled "nuisance animals" when they are released.

To volunteer or donate to the center, see their Web site at www.appalachianbearcenter.org.

* dhodges@themountainpress.com

©The Mountain Press 2006

[✉ Email to a friend](#) [🗨 Voice your opinion](#) [↑ Top](#)

Send us your community news, events, letters to the editor and other suggestions. Now, you can submit birth, wedding and engagement announcements online too!

Copyright © 1995 - 2006 Townnews.com All Rights Reserved.