The Bald Eagle, a Symbol of Freedom

Every day at the National Eagle Center visitors connect with eagles in nature, history, and cultures. Many of these more than 80,000 annual visitors are veterans, coming to connect with the symbol of freedom, the bald eagle. Bald eagles in particular have special significance and meaning to American service men, women, and veterans. Veterans frequently pay deep respect — saluting or removing their caps — when meeting the eagles at the National Eagle Center. It’s difficult to put into words the experience that a veteran can have at the National Eagle Center during an up close and personal experience with an eagle. Having the opportunity to be just a few feet away from an eagle can be a life changing experience for many visitors, but especially for a veteran who views the eagle as the symbol of what they were fighting for. Whether it’s a silent tear shed while gazing into the eyes of an eagle, or the look of pure joy and amazement as they realize just how close they are to an eagle, it’s an emotional connection and it leaves an impact.

An Eagle’s Impact

The National Eagle Center not only offers the opportunity to impact veterans who visit Wabasha, MN, but also those who are unable to visit us on their own. Four days each year the National Eagle Center brings a live eagle program to over 300 patients at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Minneapolis, MN. These visits benefit, honor, and serve VA patients. The National Eagle Center has provided these engaging and inspiring programs at no charge since 2000. These visits with live eagles to VA hospitals provide patients the unique and powerful healing and therapeutic experience that only being up close...
to a live bald eagle can. These visits connect veterans with the eagle as America’s symbol of strength, hope and courage. They present the eagle as a symbol of new beginnings, resilience and stamina and are emotionally and psychiatrically therapeutic for participating veterans.

Al Cooper, United States Air Force veteran and long-time volunteer at the National Eagle Center (see back photo) has presented many of the VA programs and witnessed their impact first hand. “As a veteran, it feels very special to present the national symbol of freedom, the eagle, to other veterans and to understand the power and impact that the eagles represents. We put a smile on their faces.”

One veteran in particular that upon laying eyes on the eagle on Al’s arm during a program became extremely engaged, asking numerous questions throughout the program with a look of “awe” spread across his face. As a presenter, Al is used to this level of engagement from one or many faces.”

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The National Eagle Center also offers U.S. Active Duty Military, Veterans, National Guard and Reserve and their families free admission on Veterans Day weekend to share the experience these magnificent birds provide with those who serve. This is just one of the many ways we say thank you to service members! You can learn more about this program and other participating organizations by visiting: www.arts.gov/national/blue-star-museums

As a veteran, it feels very special to hold and present the symbol of freedom, the eagle, to other veterans and to understand the power and impact that the eagles represents. We put a smile on their faces.” in the Blue Star Museum program. Participating Blue Star Museums offer free admission to the nation’s active-duty military personnel and their families, including National Guard and Reserve, from Memorial Day through Labor Day. More than 220 service members and their families received complimentary admission at the National Eagle Center as part of the Blue Star Museum program this past year.

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Thank you for being a member!

November is Member Appreciation Month!

We appreciate the support of our members and would like to thank you for playing such an important role at the National Eagle Center. With your help, we continue to fulfill our mission to connect people with eagles in nature, history and cultures.

This November we celebrate YOU! Your membership with the National Eagle Center directly supports the care and training of the eagle ambassadors and innovative educational programming. As a member, enjoy exclusive, members-only discounts and benefits all month long:

 ✓ Bring a friend! Bring a non-member guest(s) and they will receive discounted admission — $2 off adult and $1 off child admission prices.
 ✓ Double discount in the gift shop! Take advantage of your double discount Friday, Nov. 24 – Sunday, Nov. 26 with 20% off all purchases!
 ✓ Win FREE tickets! Enter a giveaway for two (2) free eagle viewing field trip tickets! Go to http://www.goo.gl/iPqiUE to enter.

Thank you for being a member!

“Inside the Nest” - Behind the Scenes at the National Eagle Center

Be sure to watch for behind the scenes videos posted on social media showing the day-to-day tasks required to provide on-going care and training for the eagle ambassadors.

Not following the National Eagle Center on social media? Be sure to follow us in November!

Upcoming Events

November is Member Appreciation Month! Receive exclusive discounts and benefits throughout the month!
Nov. 11 - Veterans Day Veterans and active duty service members receive complimentary admission Veterans Day weekend, Nov. 11 & Nov. 12
Nov. 11 - Bald Eagle Viewing Field Trip
Nov. 23 - Closed for Thanksgiving
Nov. 24 - Nov. 26 Holiday Open House 20% off gift store items for members
Nov. 28 - Giving Tuesday Consider a special donation to the National Eagle Center on this global day of giving!
Dec. 9 - Members Only Golden Eagle Viewing Field Trip. Register here: http://www.goo.gl/hDP4jP
Dec. 24 - Closed for Christmas Eve
Dec. 25 - Closed for Christmas Day
Dec. 31 - Open New Year’s Eve
Jan. 1 - Open New Year’s Day
Jan. 20 - 13th Annual Wintering Golden Eagle Survey
Jan. 27 - Golden Eagle Viewing Field Trip

Visit the calendar of events at nationaleaglecenter.org/ events for more information.