

PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

August 21, 2026

Kevin McClure
Mayor
Pigeon Forge, TennesseeVia e-mail: kmccclure@cityofpigeonforgetn.gov

Dear Mayor McClure:

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals—PETA entities have more than 10 million members and supporters globally, including thousands in Tennessee—to inform you that Pigeon Forge is being recognized as “America’s Capital of Captive-Animal Misery.”

Pigeon Forge is home to one of the highest concentrations of outdated wild animal tourist traps in the nation:

- Three Bears General Store confines bears to a virtually barren concrete pit and charges tourists to throw them scraps of food.
- Gatorland keeps a crocodilian in a tiny indoor enclosure as a gimmick to lure in tourists and sell t-shirts.
- Parrot Mountain, a roadside zoo based just outside city limits, uses parrots and other exotic birds as photo props and living decorations at The Island in Pigeon Forge and at local hotels.

Every bear, reptile, parrot, and other animal on display in Pigeon Forge has complex physical, emotional, and psychological needs that are ignored. Their confinement to small, desolate enclosures deprives them of any semblance of the rich life they would have in nature and contributes to great suffering and long-term psychological harm.

Pigeon Forge is already home to numerous attractions that don't rely on harming animals, and the city is situated in an area known for its rich biodiversity and natural landscapes. We ask that you work to move Pigeon Forge past an era of animal exploitation and establish the city as a destination for humane tourism.

Very truly yours,

Ingrid Newkirk
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