

Dolly Parton... Dream More

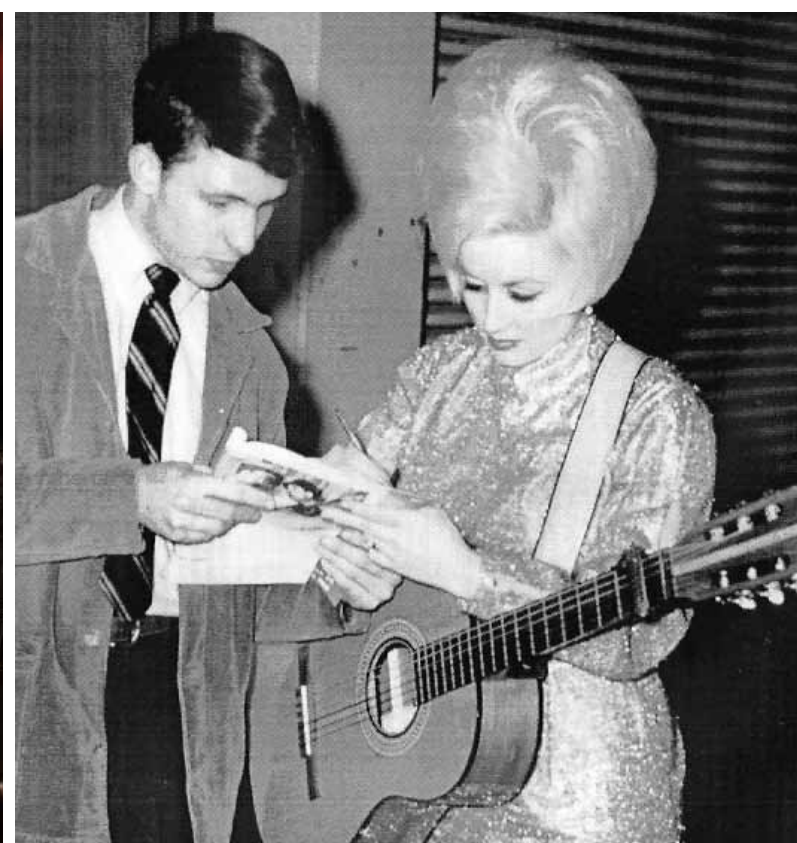
By Mark Zalewski

"I refuse to settle for something less than great. And if it takes a lifetime, then that's how long I'll wait. 'Cause all I want is everything ...is that too much to ask?"

Dolly Parton

Dolly Parton, accompanied by former Governor Phil Bredesen, reads a book produced by her non-profit Imagination Library, which gives children from birth through school-age a free book every month.

Courtesy of Dollywood Foundation



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hen you hear the name Dolly Parton, what comes to mind? Perhaps it is Dolly the country music star with hits such as “I Will Always Love You” and “Jolene,” or maybe it is Dolly the Hollywood actress starring in films such as “9 to 5” and “Steel Magnolias.” Or it could just be her larger-than-life personality that shines through. However you regard her it is indisputable that she is a very accomplished entertainer, earning accolades such as Grammy and Golden Globe awards as well as two Academy Award nominations.

Those feats alone make her a success that would satisfy most anyone and pave the way for a relaxing ride into retirement. However like many successful people she does not settle for just enough and continues to parlay her achievements into greater exploits, using her passion for work to transcend the entertainment world and transform herself into a multifaceted entrepreneur and philanthropist.

In her new book *Dream More: Celebrate the Dreamer in You*, Parton illustrates this passion for work through the word ‘more,’ which serves as a through-line for her life and success. Whether it be dreaming more, learning more, caring more or being more, Parton has lived her life always striving for more. The book grew out of a commencement speech she gave at University of Tennessee in 2009 that quickly became a YouTube sensation.

It all began with dreaming more — first as a little girl, the fourth child of twelve, growing up in foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains with the dream to perform on the stage of the famed Grand Ole Opry, to later dreaming of making it big in Hollywood. The bigger her success the bigger she dreamed. From performer to songwriter she sold more than 100 million records while racking up 26 number one songs on the Billboard Country charts as well as 42 top ten albums, more than any other recording artist. But ever the wise one, Parton cautions to note the difference between dreams and wishes. “Dreams are where you visualize yourself being successful at what’s important to you to accomplish... Wishes are hoping that good things happen to you.” As her dreams came to fruition her dreaming turned into learning, reshaping herself into a businesswoman.

Clockwise from far left: A young Dolly in the recording studio. Dolly leads a parade at her Dollywood theme park that she opened in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee near where she grew up. Preparing to go on stage early in her career. Dolly Parton always knows how to attract the spotlight.

Courtesy of Dollywood Foundation

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er production company Sandollar Productions is known for many notable film and television works such as the “Buffy the Vampire Slayer” series, “Sabrina,” “Father of the Bride,” and the Academy Award-winning documentary “Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt.” But her most well-known business venture has to be the Dollywood Company which owns and operates the acclaimed Dollywood theme park near her hometown in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. What was a small struggling theme park about the Great Smoky Mountains in 1986, Parton gave her name and much of her earnings to date to revitalize and re-imagine it into what today is one of the top fifty most visited theme parks in the world. Though her advisors counseled her against it, referring to her decision as ‘Taking the train to Crazywood,’ Parton stuck to her instincts, saying “I know there is no greater expert on me than me.” Out of this grew another successful business, Dolly Parton’s Dixie Stampede, a dinner theater attraction that has expanded to Branson and South Carolina.

At the same time Parton embarked on another career as an author, writing her autobiography and the children’s book *Coat of Many Colors*. It is both in business and as an author that she works to care more. She has given back to her native Sevier County in Tennessee both in economic fashion by developing Dollywood, through donations to build a new hospital named after the doctor who delivered her and through her passion for literacy by creating the Dollywood Foundation which created the Imagination Library, a non-profit that provides books for young children from birth until kindergarten in order to improve children’s literacy rates. With 1,400 participating communities to date her philanthropy now reaches far beyond the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains all the way to the United Kingdom with nearly 46 million books mailed directly to children.

In the final section of the book Parton talks about being more, reflecting on her own spirituality and her relationships, which includes her marriage of more than 47 years to Carl Dean. Always known for her quick wit she once quipped to a reporter, “We’re really proud of our marriage. It’s the first for both of us.

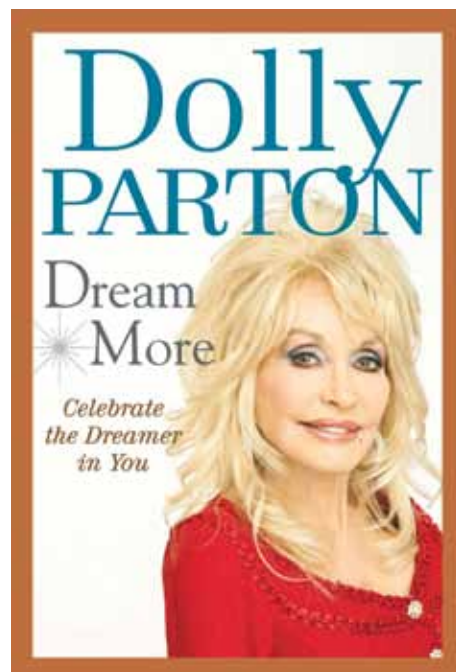
Clockwise from upper left: One of Dolly’s passions is providing young children with the opportunity to read, something she believes is crucial in child development. Dolly holds the five Golden Ticket Awards presented to Dollywood; the park won industry best accolades for friendliness, best food at any park world-wide and best new attraction of 2012. One of the many live stage shows at the Dollywood theme park.



Shaun Flannery Photography



Dollywood



Courtesy of Dollywood Foundation



The Dollywood Foundation Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

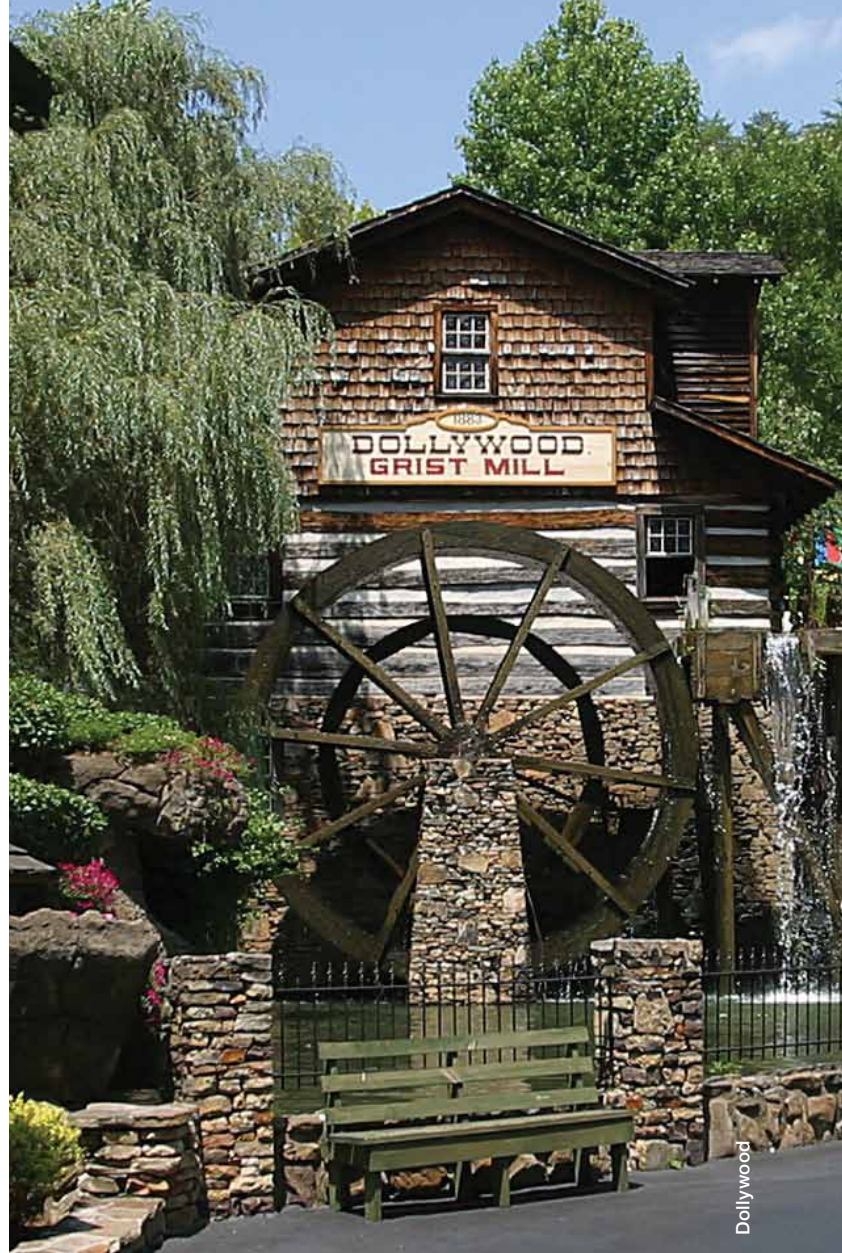
Dolly Parton's Imagination Library was launched in 1996 for preschoolers in Sevier County, Tennessee, as a gift of encouragement for the children of her Smoky Mountain homeland.

**660,000+ children receive
a book each month**

**46 million books provided since 1996
8 million books are mailed each year**

Operates in the USA, UK and Canada in 1,400 different communities. All books are brand new and have the child's name printed on the label. In the USA/Canada all of the books are custom printed, including specific reading tips in the book to help the parents.

For more information, visit:
www.imaginationlibrary.com



And the last." She tempers her drive for success in life with "a commitment to be fair, generous and compassionate to everybody." She believes, above all, in the Golden Rule and applies that to everyone she meets. This ethos allows her to strike a balance between passion for work and philanthropy, allowing her to be more and a true success in life.

Dolly Parton could have rested on her laurels many times throughout her life, from her artistic awards to her successful businesses to her philanthropic achievements; but she continues to strive for more. Her new book is a delightful combination of life experiences and country wisdom that has made her famous and successful. For anyone asking what to make of themselves, whether it be upon college graduation or the first day of retirement, following the words and wisdom of Dolly Parton would be a smart first step to answering that question. ♦

Built in 1982, Dollywood's Grist Mill was the first fully operating grist mill built in the state of Tennessee in more than 100 years. Workers constructed the grist mill exactly as it would have been more than a century ago when folks in the Smoky Mountains relied on the giant water wheel to grind corn and wheat.

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