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## **Handcrafted Copper Weathervane Tops Silver Dollar City's Giant Swing** *10-Foot Tall Copper Rooster Adds to Unique Ride Theming*

(Branson, Mo. 4/07) At the Missouri theme park Silver Dollar City, a ride is not just a ride but an entire themed experience. So when the park's new \$6 million Giant Swing was under development, the challenge was to find the right thematic elements that would fit the 1880s era, contribute to an atmosphere of fun and entertainment, and add the distinctly Silver Dollar City stamp of authenticity. The Giant Swing at the Great Barn – the first ride of its kind to be highly themed - needed a traditional barn-top icon: a rooster weathervane.

But for the *Home of American Craftsmanship*, with 100 demonstrating craftsmen, not just any weathervane would do. “We wanted the weathervane to say Silver Dollar City in a big way,” said Genesis Estes, Silver Dollar City's creative director for the Giant Swing. “So we approached our coppersmith Rex Morton about making a huge rooster weathervane entirely out of copper, and he created this incredible 10-foot tall original work of art.” At 10 feet tall, seven feet wide and weighing 300 pounds, the weathervane may be the largest rooster weathervane in the world, as Internet searches find none even half the size, Estes said. “And it really works,” she added.

Morton, a craftsman at Silver Dollar City's fall festival for over 20 years before joining the crafts colony at the park, said the weathervane is the largest copper sculpture he has ever made. Using the technique of free-form repoussé, the rooster body and feathers were completely hand-hammered, and then heat treatment produced a multi-colored sheen on the feathers. The detailing extends even to the interior -- the rooster has a time capsule-like copper box inside for future discovery: a 2007 silver dollar, a scripture verse and a letter from Silver Dollar City's general manager.

At the weathervane installation March 27, just prior to the public debut of The Giant Swing, Morton was in a mechanical lift above the barn to complete the process of setting his sculpture high above the park. “It felt great,” he said. “As a craftsman, I try to make things that are totally unique, and this was a new creation, now displayed where everyone can see and enjoy it.”

Silver Dollar City's craftsmen demonstrate America's heritage crafts throughout the season, March through December. For park information, call 1-800-831-4FUN or visit [www.silverdollarcity.com](http://www.silverdollarcity.com). For updates, visit <http://www.silverdollarcity.blogspot.com>.