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Silver Dollar City Presents The Biggest Festival Year Ever, Plus New *Culinary & Craft School*

(Branson, Mo. 2/08) The internationally-awarded 1880s-style theme park Silver Dollar City launches its biggest festival year ever, with new original stage productions, performing groups, and festival showcases. In addition to its six world-class festivals, Branson, Missouri's number one attraction features, from March through December, the fine artistry of 100 demonstrating craftsmen, music and entertainment, two dozen themed rides, and foods from festival specialties to home-cooked feasts.

New to open the Spring season: an Irish Celebration with *World-Fest's* all new Irish production show, *Fleet of Fire*, featuring a full cast of singers, dancers and musicians plus authentic fire dancing. Then it's *Bluegrass & BBQ*, celebrating Americana at its best with hundreds of award-winning bluegrass performances, along with all the trimmings of this nation's favorite, fresh-off-the-grill foods.

Summer ramps up with family adventures at the park's *biggest Kids Fest ever*, presenting a nationally-recognized slate of entertainment with *The Magic of Peter Gossamer*, a *Kid Concoctions* interactive world of play, a *VeggieTales* live stage show produced exclusively for Silver Dollar City and even an *Ice Circus* with skating performers from around the world.

As Summer winds down and Fall in the Ozarks starts setting in, *Southern Gospel Picnic* features the top entertainers in this traditional genre that has grown to include contemporary artists, increasing in popularity nationwide. September and October, long considered one of the most glorious times in the mountains, welcome the *National Harvest Festival*, the largest gathering in America's Heartland of demonstrating craftsmen, authentic harvest-time foods and musical performances from award-winning artists to down-home picking parties. Plus, the festival presents special events: *A Salute to the American Cowboy* and an all-new *Tribute to the American Farmer*.

An Old Time Christmas, nationally recognized by media from *USA Today* to *Good Morning America* and *Southern Living* as one of the best holiday light shows in America, dazzles with the acclaimed 5-story, Special Effects Christmas Tree and all-encompassing sound and light show on the Square. New to the holiday line-up is *Frosty*, an interactive show for kids.

Culinary & Craft School

Debuting in September, Silver Dollar City, long known as "Home of American Craftsmanship," celebrates its roots with a very special project to highlight this 1880s theme park's most authentic focus: the interactive art of demonstration. Taking the concept to a whole new level, the new *Silver Dollar City Culinary & Craft School* is designed to pass along knowledge of America's heritage through fine crafts, handiwork and culinary arts. Interactive classes will be held within the stylishly decorated and themed timberframe structure, set on a hillside within the City. Experts from top chefs to renowned craftsmen will share with guests "want-to-know" secrets and tips in culinary classes and craft seminars. Along with the seminars from national experts, Silver Dollar City Master Craftsmen will feature heirloom displays, multiple demonstrations and hands-on activities for take-home skills.

Silver Dollar City 2008 Festival Highlights:

WORLD-FEST - APRIL 3 - MAY 4 (*Open Wednesdays through Sundays*)

New: World-Fest presents an all-new Irish Celebration with the largest Irish production show ever, *Ireland's Feet of Fire*, showcasing dramatic "fire dancing" along with championship step dancing and live music. In addition, an Irish crafts colony presents the isle's finest handwork, enhancing this celebration of Irish culture and traditions.

Performers from around the world who are part of America's largest international festival:

- **New: Watoto Children's Choir** from Uganda with African rhythms, ethnic dances and a message of hope
- The **Zunyi Acrobats of China** in their third exclusive U.S. performance at *World-Fest*, presenting their show of amazing balance, agility and strength
- **Invaders**, a steel drum band from Trinidad
- **Russian Academic Band**, brass band music with Russian and American influences
- **Ecuador Manta**, pan-flute musicians from Ecuador
- **Noticky**, a children's dance troupe from the **Czech Republic**

Plus, international foods are featured at *Tastes of the World*.

BLUEGRASS & BBQ - MAY 10 – JUNE 1 (*Open Daily*)

Bluegrass & BBQ, America's premier bluegrass festival, presents a feast for the senses from the stages to the grills. **Bluegrass headliners include:**

- **Seven-time IBMA* Female Vocalist of the Year Rhonda Vincent**
- **2006 & 2007 IBMA Entertainer of the Year The Grascals**
- **2005 IBMA Entertainer of the Year and Grammy nominees Cherryholmes**
- **2007 IBMA Male Vocalist of the Year Bradley Walker**
- **A special concert by 3-time Grammy winner the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band on May 30**

Huge outdoor grills turn out an all-American barbecue feast from ribs to smoked chicken, served up daily in the "House of BBQ," and hundreds of sauces offer regional flavors from smoky chipotle to sweet hickory.

NATIONAL KIDS FEST - JUNE 7 - AUGUST 10 (*Open Daily*)

Silver Dollar City's biggest Kids Fest ever presents nationally branded entertainment and family adventures from roller coasters soaring through the trees to deep cave exploration in the park's Registered Natural Landmark, Marvel Cave.

New this year:

- **The Magic of Peter Gossamer** with tricks, levitations and vanishings from the master illusionist
- **An Ice Circus** with skaters on stilts, aerialists soaring on silks, and animal-themed acrobats from around the world, all on ice
- **The world debut of an original VeggieTales stage show, "The Invention of Silliness,"** starring America's favorite talking vegetables in a musical adventure
- **Kid Concoctions activity center** where kids can make their own creations from the acclaimed Kid Concoctions books and television show

Two dozen themed rides offer family thrills, including high-speed coasters such as the explosive launch coaster PowderKeg, the mega-splashing American Plunge and the Silver Dollar Steam Train.

SOUTHERN GOSPEL PICNIC - August 28 – September 7 (Open Daily)

America's biggest *Southern Gospel Picnic* presents the most acclaimed names in Southern Gospel music, and a picnic feast of Chicken & Fixin's. The festival features top groups from contemporary artists to the traditional. Performers include:

- Dove Award winners **The Isaacs and Jeff & Sheri Easter**
- Grammy nominees **Karen Peck & New River**
- 2006 Southern Gospel News Male Group of the Year **The Booth Brothers**
- Southern Gospel Hall of Famers **The Kingsmen, The Perrys and Gold City**
- The legendary **Jimmy Blackwood and The Blackwood Brothers**

Music continues under the stars as the *Southern Gospel Nights* showcase concerts are presented each evening.

NATIONAL HARVEST FESTIVAL - September 11 - October 25 (Open Wednesdays - Sundays)

The *National Harvest Fest* showcases over 125 of the nation's finest craftsmen demonstrating heritage crafts and hundreds of musicians playing country, gospel and bluegrass, along with fall harvest foods.

- Acclaimed artists including watercolorist and actor **Buck Taylor**, weavers, jewelry makers and leather crafters, and **Best of Missouri Hands** juried artists
- Music groups including **Kenny and Amanda Smith, Roy Rogers Jr., Larry Stephenson Band, Michael Cleveland & Flamekeeper**
- *Salute to the Great American Cowboy* in September, with Western artists and musicians, and roping and riding in the Wild West Arena
- New: *A Tribute to the American Farmer* in October showcases harvest-time activities from show animals to working border collies
- *Headin' West*, an original musical production returns, presenting the adventure of Western expansion with scenes from white water river travel to a buffalo stampede
- **Special Concerts with Asleep At The Wheel and John Conlee**

AN OLD TIME CHRISTMAS - NOVEMBER 1 - DECEMBER 30

(Open Wed. - Sundays in November, Thursdays - Sundays Dec. 4-14, daily Dec. 18-23 & 26-30)

The spectacular *Christmas on Main Street* featuring the **Five-Story Special Effects Christmas Tree** returns with the park's biggest light show ever for *An Old Time Christmas*, ranked as one of the world's top holiday events by *CNN.com*, and one of the nation's top by *USA Today*, *Good Morning America*, *America's Best* and *Southern Living*.

- New Show: *Frosty*, an interactive musical show where kids help bring the legendary snowman to life
 - **The Holiday Light Parade** with colorful, musical floats winding through the city streets
 - *A Dickens' Christmas Carol*, an original adaptation of the classic story and one of the park's biggest production shows with elaborate sets, vanishing ghosts and flying spirits
 - **The Living Nativity** dramatic presentation with actors and a musical presentation
 - **The Silver Dollar Sing-Along Steam Train** and more rides at night
- Plus holiday shows, specialty foods and **over 4 million holiday lights**.

Silver Dollar City opens for select days in March, then opens for the regular season with *World-Fest* on April 3. For festival and ticket information, call 1-800-831-4FUN. For season passes, call 1-800-888-PASS. Information and performance schedules are available at www.silverdollarcity.com.

* *International Bluegrass Music Association*