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**For Immediate Release**  
**Best-Seller “The Shepherd of the Hills” Penned A Century Ago**

Branson, MO – When Harold Bell Wright first published “The Shepherd of the Hills” in 1907, he could never have imagined the impact that his best-selling novel would have in bringing visitors to the Ozark Mountains of southwest Missouri.

The tale is still re-told each summer evening at the Shepherd of the Hills outdoor pageant, based on actual events and inspired by the book that helped spark the beginning of the area’s tourism. Branson’s popularity as mid-America’s live entertainment destination, with its traditional American values and Ozark Mountain hospitality, continues to bring folks from all over. They come to see more than 100 shows featuring renowned entertainment, enjoy the many family attractions and relax in naturally scenic surroundings. Add to that the latest shoppers’ paradise, some new and different musical fares, additions to those already popular attractions and an elegant spa and you find yourself in one of the best vacation destinations on earth!

“This year, visitors will be treated to an unprecedented variety of new things to see and do on their vacation. Branson has a unique combination of world-class live entertainment, shopping and dining, yet close to outdoor and lake recreation. Along with our famous Ozarks hospitality, this really sets Branson apart from other destinations,” according to Ross Summers, President/CEO of the Branson/Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau.

***A Giant Swing, the Titanic and 50 years of American Bandstand***

New in 2007, Silver Dollar City, the award-winning 1880’s theme park, presents the Giant Swing, a \$6 million ride that launches riders more than seven stories in the air – and nearly upside down – at roller-coaster speeds. The internationally awarded theme park debuts its newest ride during *World-Fest*, the first of six festivals, with performers from six continents, including the Zunyi Acrobats of China and Polynesian FireKnife dancers. *Bluegrass & BBQ* brings in top performers in American bluegrass music, including performances by Ricky Skaggs, Rhonda Vincent and The Grascals, and a huge barbecue feast. Throughout summer, *Kids’ Fest* features the new show *Circus of the Century – On Ice*, along with performing dogs and Kid Concoctions. *Southern Gospel Picnic* presents Southern Gospel artists from Dottie Rambo to The Isaacs. The *Festival of American Music & Crafts* features hundreds of the nation’s best craftsmen and musicians, a new production show “Headin’ West,” and a special performance by cowboy music icon Michael Martin Murphey. *An Old Time Christmas*, ranked one of the world’s top holiday events by CNN.com, features a new Christmas Light Spectacular around the Square, a Holiday Light Parade, the popular production *A Dickens’ Christmas Carol* and over four million lights.

Now in its second year, the World's Largest *Titanic* Museum Attraction, a 17,000-square foot, ship-shaped structure built half-scale to *Titanic*'s original size, is adding over \$1 million in new guest experiences in 2007. Beginning in April, guests arriving at the museum attraction can stroll through the 'London Waterloo Train Station,' just as many of *Titanic*'s most prominent passengers did in 1912 while they waited for a train to Southampton, where the ship departed on its maiden voyage. And in May, the all-new *Titanic* audio tour, featuring stories told by the ship's actual survivors, will guide guests on an intensely emotional and personal journey through 20 galleries on two decks with more than 400 priceless artifacts. *Titanic*'s new web-cam, available at [www.titanicbranson.com](http://www.titanicbranson.com), offers a live bird's-eye view of *Titanic*, the new 'train station,' and the Branson Strip (Hwy. 76).

Dick Clark's American Bandstand Theater, already the home of Righteous Brothers' Bill Medley, Fabian, Paul Revere & the Raiders and more, celebrates 50 Years of Cool Cars & Rock Stars with a new matinee production show commemorating 50 years of American Bandstand. The show features the songs you remember by the original voices that defined American pop rock-n-roll, with a revolving line-up of stars including The Comets, Danny & the Juniors, The Crickets, Shirley Alston Reeves of the Shirelles, Dave Sommerville of the Diamonds, and more. Dick Clark's American Bandstand Theater also adds Club '57, an entertainment lounge, and expands '57 Heaven – the world's largest collection of 1957 automobiles & memorabilia.

***See Favorite Stars, New Music Shows – Plus Comedy and Magic Extravaganzas***

Andy Williams and Charo will perform together at the Moon River Theatre this year and The Welk Resort Theatre hosts The Welk Stars Reunion, The Tillis Family Reunion starring Mel Tillis & Pam Tillis and the Tony Orlando Veterans Salute. Branson Variety Theater adds The Twelve Irish Tenors to its line-up for the 2007 season. A cappella sensation SIX and the exciting "Best of Motown" perform at Hughes Brothers Theatre; The Mansion will host "Jammin' for Jesus" in association with Gospel Music Television with an array of artists coming to town. Music Makes the World Go Round debuts at the Tower Theatre and at RFD-TV The Theater, you can see a daily show and catch national acts like Willie Nelson, Loretta Lynn and Lorrie Morgan. These entertainers join long-time Branson headliners such as Jim Stafford, Mickey Gilley, The Lennon Sisters, Yakov Smirnoff, Buck Trent, Shoji Tabuchi and more, and keep folks coming back for the best in music and entertainment.

With so many choices of music, comedy, magic, acrobats, Broadway-style production shows and the Dixie Stampede, it's hard to see everything. And Branson's family shows are better than ever! Bounding with youthful enthusiasm, shows such as Presleys' Country Jubilee, which celebrates 40 years and four generations all on stage together in 2007, and the third generation of the Mabe family at Baldknobbers Jamboree, along with the Duttons, Haygoods, Hughes Brothers, Lowe Family, Doug Gabriel and many others, continue the time-honored tradition of bringing wholesome family fun to Branson audiences.

Branson's grandest lake experience, the 700-seat Showboat *Branson Belle*, features elegant dining and a beautiful cruise as well as the spectacular *Showstoppers!* show. A talented cast performs, headlined by nationally acclaimed comedian Todd Oliver and his live talking dogs, as the Showboat cruises Table Rock Lake.

### ***Branson Landing, New Hotel and Convention Center, More Great Golf***

A \$420 million sprawling shopping, dining, luxury lodging, condominium and convention center facility, situated along 95 acres of Lake Taneycomo shoreline in the historic downtown, Branson Landing is the largest development of its kind in the state's history. Anchored by Belk department store and Bass Pro Shop's White River Outpost, Branson Landing boasts over 100 specialty shops and restaurants. In Town Square of Branson Landing is the new boutique Hilton Promenade at Branson Landing with 242 beautifully appointed guest rooms, many of which have spectacular views of the \$7.5 million water spectacular that synchronizes light, sound, music and fire. Adjacent to Branson Landing sits the new Branson Convention Center that will open late this summer and accommodate some 4,500 people in a stunning, state-of-the-art setting. A curving, exposed timber pedestrian concourse offers a pleasing view of the waterfront as visitors walk between the center's meeting and exhibit space and the adjacent Hilton Branson Convention Center Hotel, where guests will have a chance to experience the pampering luxury of a metropolitan hotel in the heart of small-town America. Convention-goers will soon have even more reasons to extend their stay with Murder Rock championship golf course at Branson Creek set to open in August and The Tribute, honoring the memory of Payne Stewart, opening next year in Branson Hills.

### ***Relaxation and Recreation***

On top of the tremendous variety of live entertainment and attractions awaiting guests in Branson this year, the 301-room, AAA Four Diamond Award-winning Chateau on the Lake Resort and Convention Center presents the ultimate in relaxation, a \$6 million, 14,000-square foot spa overlooking Table Rock Lake. Spa Chateau features 10 treatment rooms, an outdoor Roman bath, men's barber spa, salon, fitness studio for group and individual instruction, and an all-new state-of-the-art fitness center located in the main resort.

At the Butterfly Palace and Rainforest Adventure, guests have the opportunity to walk among thousands of exotic butterflies, watch a 3D movie about their life cycle, and experience the sight and sound of a real rainforest.

Of course, the surrounding Ozark Mountains provide a gorgeous backdrop for all of this spectacular entertainment and are the perfect playground for the growing number of outdoor enthusiasts. Visitors can hike, bike or ride horseback through the beautiful wooded hills; there are three crystal-clear lakes offering water activities and fishing galore with easy access to boating, canoeing, kayaking, cruises, houseboats, jet-skiing and even "duck" rides.

"Branson has seen record-breaking growth in the past few years and we will continue to see expansion for years to come. Our new and better roads make coming into and getting around in Branson much easier for our visitors. And we continue to be the friendly, hometown place that people have enjoyed for many, many years," said Summers.

To order a free Branson Vacation Guide, call the Branson/Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau at 800-214-3661 or visit [www.explorebranson.com](http://www.explorebranson.com).