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Missouri paper

## My trip to Branson

Many years ago when I was little I went to Silver Dollar City in Branson on vacation with my family. It was a very fun trip. Upon arriving in Branson it was immediately evident that there was much to do and see there. All of the restaurants and the parks and all the sights to see, it was truly overwhelming to see at first. However the main attraction had yet to be discovered and we were excited to explore all over Branson and discover all that we could.

Upon entering Branson, we decided to rest at a nearby hotel and to get our bearings on the wonderful city. Once we woke up that morning, we decided to go exploring down the many wonderful streets and avenues that Branson has to offer. We discovered a lot of different, unique and special places we could investigate, like theatres, magic stores, and many wonderful places to eat. My favorite restaurant was a place where we could buy Donuts called Hurts Donuts and they sold some of the best desserts in the town.

We went to many parks and saw many different landscapes and sceneries but my favorite place was a park called Lakeside Forest Wilderness area. It had amazing caves, ledges and rocks we could climb. We could see lots of wild animals and great views of the Valley below. We even, at one point, hiked so deep into a cave we could see bats and lots of crickets. Although it took many hours of hiking to reach that spot, it was still an amazing time and it was one of my best experiences in Branson.

Although there were many other small activities to do in Branson, the main attraction was the amusement park Silver Dollar City. Silver Dollar City is a huge 1800s themed amusement park with rides and many different shops you could visit and buy things. Although there was a

lot to do in the amusement park part of Silver Dollar City, there was an even bigger attraction underground. Marvel cave is a huge, 500 ft deep cave that resides under Silver Dollar City, we were taken on a 60 minute tour all through the catacombs of Marvel cave and found many different drop-offs, ledges, and passageways throughout the cave.

When you first enter the cave it feels like you have to crawl to get through the opening, then you have to go down many flights of stairs to reach the main level. There are a LOT of steps, I think something like 500 steps down, then 200 up. But at the end, you ride a cable-pulled tram up out of the cave. All through the walk hundreds of people are crammed together inside the tight spaces and claustrophobia starts to sink in. When you reach the main floor everyone is gathered together and you can see defibrillators lining all the walls. They give you a pep talk about what to expect, and then you are led by a guide through the never-ending maze.

At one point in the trip they took us into a very narrow passageway where you could not stand up straight and then they turned off all the lights around the area so it was so dark you couldn't see your hand in front of your face. After a while we reached the end of the trip and we met up with some train cars that were going to take us up a 45 degree incline to the exit of the cave. All the way up the steep incline the train is rocking back and forth and you feel like you're about to fall all the way back down to the foot of the cave. Fortunately that never happened, and we made it up safely. After that we were led from the back entrance to the main park again so we could continue with our wondrous trip.

In conclusion I feel like our first trip to Branson was a resounding success and I would gladly go back. I think Branson is one of Missouri's best attractions and brings a lot of tourism and fun to the area. I feel like Branson has so much to offer and is such a fun and eventful city. Silver Dollar City is just one place out of many that is an amazing place to go and have fun and

enjoy the ambience. When I first learned we were going to Branson I did not know what to expect, but now that I have been, I can tell you it is a wonderful place to be and I would gladly go back.