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2101 Parks Avenue, Suite 500	Virginia Beach, VA 23451	www.vbfun.com
	ph (757) 385-4700	fx (757) 437-4747

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Ron Kuhlman Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau | 757.385.4700

Jessica Kraft BCF | 757.497.4811 | jkraft@boomyourbrand.com

Virginia Beach Features a Wealth of Attractions

(Virginia Beach, Va., 2009) — Virginia Beach boasts more than miles of beautiful beaches. Explore the coastal wilderness in acres of protected lands. View an awe-inspiring performance and immerse yourself in historical sites. Experience the true meaning of fresh at the Farmer’s Market and ride a tube down a thrilling water slide. We’ve got plenty of suggestions for what to do next. Throughout the year, Virginia Beach pulsates with cultural celebrations and attractions, as the city beckons to “live the life!”

Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center

No stay in Virginia Beach is complete without a trip to the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center, the state’s largest and one of the most-visited aquariums in the nation. It is an authority on the state’s various aquatic and marine environments and features more than 700,000 gallons of aquariums and live animal habitats, more than 300 hands-on exhibits and the IMAX® 3D Theater. A one-third mile-long nature trail connects the two Pavilions that make up this “must sea” museum, and an outdoor aviary offers an up-close glimpse of the marsh birds seen along Virginia Beach’s shore. This summer, the Virginia Aquarium opens its new \$25 million *Restless Planet* renovation, featuring 12,000 square feet of spectacular new habitats, exhibits and aquariums. Home to 6,000 new animals and 367 new species – including Komodo dragons, exotic cobras, hedgehogs, and so much more – *Restless Planet* will more than double the Aquarium’s animal collection.



Virginia Beach Farmers Market

Experience the rural side of Virginia Beach at the Farmers Market, a country-style, open-air market that features fresh, locally grown produce, dairy products, organic groceries, a meat market, home and garden gifts, jams and jellies, and a restaurant. It is open year-round and special events are held each month.

Sandler Center for the Performing Arts

Located in Town Center, the breathtaking new Sandler Center for the Performing Arts is a 1,300 seat venue hosting regional and national artists in the arenas of dance, music and theater. With only 100 feet separating the front of the stage and the furthest seat in the house, the Sandler Center generates a European feel because of the audience’s proximity to the performers. The Center features flawless acoustics, and a comfortable interior. The flexible acoustical environment is capable of conveying both precise intelligibility of the spoken word and the full, warm resonance of a symphony orchestra. A state-of-the-art sound system clearly showcases such genres as jazz, pop, and musical theatre.

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Cape Henry Lighthouses, Memorial Park and the Historic Villages at Cape Henry

Peek into the past at the original Cape Henry Lighthouse. Dating to 1791, it's the oldest government-built lighthouse in America. Once you reach the summit, enjoy a panoramic view of the Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay – the same view once seen by ship watchers more than 200 years ago. Located on the Fort Story military base, the original Cape Henry Lighthouse is open to the public. Across the road, you'll find the new Cape Henry Lighthouse. Built in 1881, it's the tallest iron-encased lighthouse in the country, and is operated by the U.S. Coast Guard. Adjacent to the lighthouses, visitors also tour the Cape Henry Memorial Park which includes a replica of the First Landing Cross, planted by the first settlers to give thanks for a safe voyage after arriving on our shore in 1607. Visitors can tour an American Indian village and colonial outpost at the *Historic Villages at Cape Henry*. Live through the eyes of a young Native American man, as he is initiated to warrior status among the Algonquin people. A live theatrical performance on the outdoor stage, "1607: First Landing," explores the hopes and misfortunes that both cultures were forced to meet and ultimately overcome. *Note: Cape Henry Lighthouse is on Ft. Story military base.*



Access to military bases may be restricted for public tours, and a valid picture ID and vehicle search is required.

Association for Research and Enlightenment

Visitors worldwide gather at the Association for Research and Enlightenment on Atlantic Avenue to attend workshops and conferences based on the works of Edgar Cayce, one of the most documented clairvoyants of the 20th century. As a young man, Cayce placed himself in self-induced trances and then answered questions on any topic. Today, physicians are finding Cayce's "readings" to be on the cutting edge of many health care concerns, particularly the mind-body relationship to health and healing. Founded in 1931, his Virginia Beach headquarters houses 14,000 readings (on subjects from medicine to world affairs) and one of the most extensive metaphysical libraries in the world. Guided tours include films, lectures, meditation classes and ESP demonstrations. The A.R.E. Spa offers a full menu of services including massage, facials and reflexology, as well as The Cayce Health Assessment focusing on overall health and well-being.

The Old Coast Guard Station



Step back in time at The Old Coast Guard Station on 24th Street and Atlantic Avenue. Housed in a 1903 former U.S. Life Saving Station, this oceanfront museum features rescue equipment used by turn-of-the-century surf men to save shipwrecked crews from a watery grave. Learn about shipwrecks that occurred off the Virginia Beach coast and the history of lifesaving service from World War II to the present. Peek through TOWERCAM, a roof-mounted video camera that zooms in on passing ships dotting the horizon. The camera transmits its pictures to a 27-inch television monitor, affording museum visitors the same view crewmen had nearly 100 years ago.

Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum

Discover another treasure on the Boardwalk, the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum. Located in the historically registered DeWitt cottage built in 1895, the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum displays art and artifacts documenting migratory wildfowl that pass through Eastern Virginia. Exhibits of wildfowl and shorebird carvings trace the evolution of this unique American art form. Enjoy on-site wood-carving demonstrations, decoys dating from historic times to present day and a collection of exhibits covering the history of Virginia Beach.

Virginia Legends Walk

At the oceanfront 13th Street Park, the Virginia Legends Walk honors Virginians, by birth or residence, who have made significant contributions to the nation and the world. Celebrated Virginians include Edgar Allen Poe, Arthur Ashe, Ella Fitzgerald, Patsy Cline, Thomas Jefferson and Captain John Smith.

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Norwegian Lady Statue

After the fatal wreck of the Norwegian bark "Dictator" on March 28, 1891, its wooden figurehead, which washed ashore in the ship's wreckage, stood at the oceanfront as a memorial for 60 years. The city of Moss, Norway commissioned the Norwegian Lady statue, a nine-foot bronze replica of the original figurehead, and presented the gift to Virginia Beach in 1962 to commemorate the tragic loss. An exact duplicate was erected in Moss to unite the two sister cities.

Virginia Beach Amusement Park

Enjoy the thrills of this oceanfront amusement park featuring a water flume ride, Ferris wheel and games of chance at 15th Street. Surrounded by lush landscapes, this exhilarating park is sure to please.

Contemporary Art Center of Virginia

One of southeastern Virginia's leading art institutions, the Contemporary Art Center's mission is to teach visitors about contemporary art through regularly scheduled changing exhibits, studio art classes, and special events. Regularly changing exhibitions feature painting, sculpture, photography, glass, video and other visual media from internationally acclaimed artists as well as artists of national and regional renown. Founded in 1952, the CACV has produced Virginia Beach's Boardwalk Art Show for nearly 50 years.

Historic Homes

Historic homes throughout the city offer a peek into the lives of Virginia Beach's earliest residents. The Adam Thoroughgood House (circa 1680) stands on land that was part of the original land grant. Other historic homes still standing in Virginia Beach were constructed later in the colonial period such as the Lynnhaven House (1725), the Ferry Plantation House (1740) and the Francis Land House (late 1700s). All homes are open to the public for tours and host special interpretative programs throughout the year.

Military Matters

Virginia Beach is home to five military installations, including Naval Air Station Oceana. A master jet base, NAS Oceana is home to the East Coast-based F/A-18 Super Hornet aircraft. Visitors to Virginia Beach marvel at the power and grace displayed by the planes during regular flight training. Base tours are available from Memorial Day through mid-September. Also in Virginia Beach, the Little Creek Amphibious Training Command is the largest base of its kind in the world and the major operating base for the amphibious forces of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet. *Note: Access to military bases may be restricted for public tours and a valid picture ID is required.*



Hunt Club Farm

The 26-acre farm features a farmers market with plants, flowers, herbs, potted mixtures, bushes, and perennials, as well as huge pumpkins at Halloween season and a special country Christmas market during the holidays. Kids will love the petting farm, where they will meet llamas, baby goats, sheep, chickens, turkeys, guinea hens, roosters, rabbits, miniature horses, donkeys, peacocks, swans and ducks. The farm hosts special events, including a Fall Harvest Fair, Halloween Festival and Winter Wonderland.

Virginia Beach's Naval Aviation Monument

The Naval Aviation Monument on 25th Street at the oceanfront is intended to educate the public on the vital roles of Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard aviation as key elements in national defense, from 1911 through the 21st century. The monument, which was constructed on a 16,000-square-foot plot, consists of numerous granite "story boards," including the names of the 160 aircraft carriers commissioned by the Navy. In addition, the monument features statues that showcase the history of Naval Aviation in three general categories: the earliest years, World War II and the period from the Korean War to the present.

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Back to Nature

With more than 18,000 acres of state parks and national wildlife refuges, certain areas in Virginia Beach remain almost identical to what the first English settlers viewed when they set foot on North American soil. First Landing State Park, the most visited state park in Virginia, contains 2,700 acres of protected salt marsh habitat, bay and dune maritime forests and freshwater ponds. A registered Natural Landmark, it fronts the Chesapeake Bay. Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, an 8,500-acre plot is made up of barrier islands, dunes, freshwater marshes, maritime forests, ponds and ocean beaches. Sharing a border is the 4,321-acre False Cape State Park, featuring six miles of unspoiled beaches in an ocean-to-freshwater bay habitat. Both Back Bay and False Cape are home to wild horses, feral pigs, loggerhead turtles, American bald eagles and a large variety of migratory birds and endangered species. Additionally, the 2,907-acre **North Landing River Natural Area Preserve**, owned and operated by the Nature Conservancy, is one of the largest and most significant nature preserves in the state.

Ocean Breeze Waterpark

You don't need a passport to escape to a tropical paradise. Inside the 19-acre Ocean Breeze visitors will find brilliant, colorful water slides and tubes for all-day excitement, featuring a million-gallon Runaway Bay wave pool, 16 water slides and a children's section including a pirate ship.

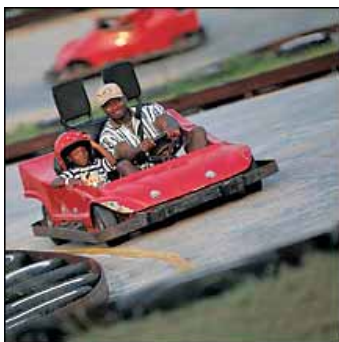


King Neptune Statue

The 34-foot cast bronze King Neptune statue stands at the boardwalk on 31st street overlooking Neptune Park. Surrounded by the creatures of his realm, mighty trident in hand, Neptune's heroic visage honors the maritime legacy of Virginia Beach. Sculptor Paul DiPasquale, who lives and works in Richmond, Virginia, was commissioned to create Neptune's statue. DiPasquale's work, including the bronze statue of Arthur Ashe on Richmond's famous Monument Avenue, has been exhibited in the United States and Europe.

Virginia's Jewel

At an impressive 100' length, the Virginia's Jewel is luxury yacht that glides visitors along the calm grandeur through Broad Bay, a tributary of the Chesapeake Bay's protected waterways. Savor an intimate dining and entertainment experience as you delight in a panoramic route, past First Landing State Park, a yacht club, marinas, waterfowl and majestic skies. The luxury yacht provides two enclosed, climate-controlled decks as well as open air areas on each deck, and addresses accessibility needs throughout. Reservations required.



Motorworld Family Thrill Park

Rev up your engine at the Motorworld Family Thrill Park, featuring 10 racetracks and 200 go-karts for the young at heart. With speed in mind, get behind the wheel of a Formula One Racer and navigate the park's Grand Prix Raceway. Move on to the race-style "Bullit" cars on the Speed Track or the two-seater racer on the Family Track. For younger drivers, the park offers the Mini-Ferrari, Suped-up Semis and Mini Moto cars. The park also features a 36-hole miniature golf course complete with sunken ships, caves and waterfalls, and an amphitheater.

Virginia Beach entices visitors to "Live the Life" every season of the year! Located in the southeastern corner of the state, Virginia Beach is four hours southeast of D.C. by car and within a day's drive or less from two-thirds of the U.S. population. For visitor information, call 1-800-VA-BEACH (800/822-3224) or visit the Web site www.vbfun.com for online trip planning and more information about Virginia Beach's new \$202.5 million convention center. For media information and digital images, click on www.vbpressroom.com.