



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Caption:** Alan E. Ronk (left), Executive Director of Foundation for Roanoke Valley presents Don Moser (center), VMT Deputy Director, and Beverly T. Fitzpatrick, Jr. (right), VMT Executive Director, with a really big check to the delight of the Museum's summer campers. Thanks to the Foundation for Roanoke Valley, these campers and others will soon enjoy new hands-on exhibits in the upcoming *Wings Over Virginia* Aviation Gallery.

The Virginia Museum of Transportation announces that Foundation for Roanoke Valley has awarded the Museum a \$25,500 grant to develop new exhibits in its upcoming *Wings Over Virginia* aviation gallery.

- **The Museum's upcoming *Wings Over Virginia* aviation gallery opens November 17, 2012.**
- **The gallery will feature special exhibits made possible by funding from Foundation for Roanoke Valley.**

August 6, 2012: The Virginia Museum of Transportation announces that Foundation for Roanoke Valley has awarded the Museum a \$25,500 grant from the Foundation's Community Catalyst Funds to develop new exhibits in the Museum's upcoming *Wings Over Virginia* aviation gallery.

At one time, the Museum's aviation gallery was a popular attraction and an educational asset for western Virginia residents and schoolchildren. In 2006, a storm ripped off the roof and destroyed the gallery below. To develop the new aviation gallery, the Museum solicited feedback from the community and developed its interpretive plan around the public's ideas and dreams.

Don Moser, Deputy Director of the Museum and a pilot himself, has led the development of the gallery's conceptual plan. "With the help of many valuable partners, Roanoke and Western Virginia will have a creative, hands-on way to explore Virginia's aviation heritage like never before," says Moser.

The gallery's exhibits will focus on:

- Stories of courageous pilots, civilian and military, who changed the course of history
- Exhibits that trace the development of flight in Virginia, from barnstormers to Virginia's new Spaceport
- Hands-on exploration of aviation technology to teach science and engineering, inspiring the next generation of aviators.

"Foundation for Roanoke Valley's support will help this Museum in a big way in all three of these areas," said Beverly T. Fitzpatrick, Jr., the Museum's executive director. Specifically, the Foundation's funding supports two hands-on technology-based exhibits, an exhibit featuring the notable accomplishments of women in aviation, and a display of careers in aviation.

"We are committed to the advancement of this region, and we realized that these specific and important resources do not currently exist in southwest Virginia," said Alan E. Ronk, Executive Director of Foundation for Roanoke Valley. "The aviation industry is projecting strong jobs growth, but the resources for school children to learn about aviation are mostly in northern or eastern Virginia. Plus, we want our youth to know about the aviation heroes from this area who pioneered air service in the Roanoke Valley and who served courageously to preserve America's freedom in WWI, WWII, and other conflicts."

The Museum continues to seek funding for additional gallery components. Visit [www.vmt.org](http://www.vmt.org) for more information about the *Wings Over Virginia* aviation gallery.

### **About Foundation for Roanoke Valley**

Foundation for Roanoke Valley, the region's community foundation, currently administers over 250 named endowment funds on behalf of the community. Unrestricted endowments are particularly powerful as they provide the Foundation with the flexibility over time to seek out and fund highly-effective programs across a wide-range of community needs. Individuals interested in establishing their own personal or family legacy through an unrestricted endowment or any of the many other types of endowment funds offered by the community foundation should visit [www.foundationforroanokevalley.org](http://www.foundationforroanokevalley.org) or call (540) 985-0204.

### **About the Virginia Museum of Transportation**

Home to two of the most powerful steam locomotives in existence today—the N&W Class A 1218 and the N&W Class J 611—the Virginia Museum of Transportation regularly attracts visitors of all ages from across the U.S. and around the world. Through exhibits, artifacts, and an outstanding collection of rail equipment, cars, trucks, airplanes, and more, the Museum tells the rich story of Virginia's transportation history.

The Virginia Museum of Transportation is the Official Transportation Museum of the Commonwealth of Virginia, but receives no state funding. The Museum is located in the

historic N&W Freight Station at 303 Norfolk Avenue SW, Roanoke, VA 24016. Open Monday-Saturday 10-5 and Sunday 1-5. 540/342.5670. [www.vmt.org](http://www.vmt.org)

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