



Western Virginia Regional Jail Authority

Serving the City of Salem and Counties of Franklin, Montgomery, and Roanoke
Charles I. Poff, Jr., Superintendent

MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release

Contact: Bobby D. Russell, Deputy Superintendent
540-380-3023 (Office) 540-525-8068 (Cell)
brussell@westernvaregionaljail.org

Western Virginia Regional Jail Dedication Scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Friday, March 6 *An open house for the public will follow from 1 to 4 p.m.*

March 3, 2009 (Roanoke County, VA) – A dedication ceremony will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, March 6 to celebrate the opening of the Western Virginia Regional Jail – a state-of-the-art facility that will serve the current and future correctional needs of the City of Salem and the counties of Franklin, Montgomery, and Roanoke. After the Presentation of Colors, elected officials from participating localities (see List of Speakers, below) will provide remarks as will Sterling C. Proffitt, chairman of the Virginia Board of Corrections. Sheriffs from participating localities and retired Roanoke County administrator, Elmer Hodge, will unveil the commemorative plaque. It was under Hodge’s leadership that the Regional Jail project began. Tours of the facility will be held at the conclusion of the ceremony, and an open house for the public will follow from 1 to 4 p.m.

“The Regional Jail is the result of an unprecedented effort in regional cooperation,” said Western Virginia Regional Jail Superintendent Charles Poff. “All four of the participating localities have worked together to ensure the project’s success. When the Regional Jail begins operations on March 9, it will alleviate the overcrowded conditions in the local jails of the member localities, which are currently operating at two to three times their rated capacity. The new jail will serve the region’s public safety needs well into the future.”

In 2004, Roanoke County and the City of Salem entered into discussions with Franklin and Montgomery counties regarding the need for a regional facility. Elected officials, law enforcement agencies, and staff from across the New River and Roanoke valleys worked to organize, design, and build a shared facility to better address the region’s current and future public safety needs.

The 264,000-square-foot Regional Jail is located on 42 acres off West River Road, near Dixie Caverns in Roanoke County. It will provide a rated capacity for 605 inmates. A total of 200 cells are double bunked to provide a total of 805 general purpose beds. In the future, further construction on this site can expand the facility to provide an additional 649 rated capacity.



Western Virginia Regional Jail Authority

Serving the City of Salem and Counties of Franklin, Montgomery, and Roanoke

Charles I. Poff, Jr., Superintendent

The Western Virginia Regional Jail Authority is committed to utilizing advances in technology to streamline the operation of the facility, to conserve resources, and to better address the challenges of the environment. It will be the first building of its type in the region to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. The many environmental features incorporated into the building's design will also allow the Regional Jail to operate in the most cost-effective manner possible. Inmate visitation will be provided via video visitation or teleconferencing equipment at each member jurisdiction's local jail. This will reduce travel time and expense for visitors and minimize traffic into and out of the facility, thereby enhancing jail security.

More than 100 correctional officers graduated from the Roanoke County Criminal Justice Academy after 11 weeks of vigorous training in correctional law, firearms, defensive tactics, and vehicle operations. After graduation, the officers also receive intensive internal training to prepare them for the opening of the jail facility.

The total cost of construction and land for the new jail is approximately \$122 million, which will be shared by member jurisdictions and the Commonwealth of Virginia. The new Western Virginia Regional Jail will create approximately 200 jobs.

List of Speakers *(in alphabetical order)*

The Honorable Michael W. Altizer	Chairman, Roanoke County Board of Supervisors
The Honorable Joseph B. "Butch" Church	Roanoke County Board of Supervisors, Catawba District
The Honorable Byron R. "Randy" Foley	Mayor, City of Salem
Elmer C. Hodge	Retired Roanoke County Administrator
The Honorable Gerald S. Holt	Sheriff, Roanoke County
The Honorable Annette S. Perkins	Chairman, Montgomery County Board of Supervisors
Sterling C. Proffitt	Chairman, Virginia Board of Corrections
The Honorable Charles D. Wagner	Chairman, Franklin County Board of Supervisors

###