



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**GEORGE LYLE ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF VIRGINIA
MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY BOARD OF
TRUSTEES**

MARTINSVILLE, Va. (June 1, 2006) – George Lyle has been elected chairman of the Virginia Museum of Natural History Board of Trustees, replacing Professor Ervin L. Jordan, Jr., who completed his two-year term as chairman of the museum’s governing board last month.

Lyle, who has served as the County Attorney for Henry County since April 2003, is the first Martinsville resident to serve as chairman of the VMNH Board of Trustees.

“I am humbled to be selected by my fellow trustees to lead the board during this exciting time,” Lyle said. “As we move closer to the opening of the new museum I believe we are on the brink of great opportunities for our museum, our staff and the community. We have a very bright, capable and energetic staff and I think it is important for trustees and the chairman to give them the tools they need, point them in the right direction and stay out of their way.”

Professor Ervin L. Jordan, Jr., who served as chairman from 2004 to 2006, praised Lyle’s leadership and support of the museum.

“I am pleased by George Lyle's election as the new chairman of the Virginia Museum of Natural History's Board of Trustees,” Jordan said. “A tireless supporter of the VMNH and current chair of the Board's Education and Public Policy Committee,

George has long demonstrated his dedication and commitment to the museum and the Martinsville-Henry County area. With the opening of its new building later this year, and its formal dedication next year, George Lyle and the VMNH are poised to carry our work to next level as the VMNH becomes a new cornerstone for the future of Virginia and the nation.”

“I look forward to working with George Lyle as Chairman of the Virginia Museum of Natural History Board of Trustees,” said Timothy J. Gette, executive director of the Virginia Museum of Natural History. “George has been a constant source of support for me as Executive Director since I joined VMNH in 2004 and I look forward to his leadership as Board Chairman as we prepare to open our new museum building at 21 Starling Avenue.”

Prior to his service as County Attorney Lyle was an attorney in private practice handling a wide variety of matters from real estate closings to murder trials. He has also served as a trust officer for a bank and from 1997 to 2000 served as a legislative aide in the Virginia House of Delegates. From 1988 to 1993 he was a writer and columnist for the *Martinsville Bulletin* and a contributing writer for Virginia Business magazine where he penned a number of cover stories. He has also written and published a wide variety of articles in such magazines as *The State*, *Washington Golf Monthly*, and several NASCAR racing publications.

He previously served as vice-chairman of the Virginia Museum of Natural History Board of Trustees. He served 8 years as member and two years as chairman of the Blue Ridge Regional Library Board of Trustees and is the 2005 recipient of the Virginia Library Association Trustee of the Year Award and the Virginia Public Library Directors Outstanding Trustee Award. He is a past-president of both the Fieldale-Collinsville Rotary Club and the Martinsville Uptown Revitalization Association. He also serves as a Virginia Bar Association appointee to the Board of Directors of the Virginia Legal Aide Society.

Lyle is a native of Maryland. He is a graduate of Virginia Wesleyan College in Virginia Beach and the University of Dayton School of Law in Ohio. He and his wife Lisa, who is admissions director and chief financial officer for Carlisle School, live in Henry County with their daughters Hanna, 11, Sally, 7 and ‘Winnie’ the beagle.

Past chairs of the VMNH Board of Trustees include:

- *Professor Ervin L. Jordan, Jr. of Charlottesville* (2004-2006)
- *Daniel G. “Bud” Oakey of Roanoke* (2002-2004)
- *Elizabeth T. Greer of Rocky Mount* (2000-2002)
- *Dr. Mitchell A. Byrd of Williamsburg* (1998-2000)
- *John G. Rocovich, Jr. of Roanoke* (1997-1998)
- *Dr. William A. Shear of Farmville* (1995-1997)
- *F. Seward Anderson, Jr. of Danville* (1992-1995)
- *Peter Boisseau of Richmond* (1988-1992)

ABOUT THE VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

The Virginia Museum of Natural History in Martinsville seeks to increase understanding of and appreciation for the natural history of the Commonwealth through education, research, collections, publications and exhibits. The museum – an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution – is accredited by the American Association of Museums, a distinction earned by fewer than 10 percent of museums in the United States. A new, \$28 million museum currently is being built in Martinsville. When fully completed in early 2007, the new museum will offer five times the exhibit and public space of the current facility.

The museum is a member of the Association of Science-Technology Centers, Virginia Association of Museums, Heritage Preservation, and an agency of the Secretary of Natural Resources for the Commonwealth of Virginia. With 22 million objects in its collection, it reaches nearly 1 million people annually through on-site and traveling exhibitions, classroom outreach programs, the museum’s Web site, public events and publications.

The museum is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays from 1 to 5 p.m. Members are always admitted free. Admission is \$5 for adults; \$4 for senior citizens and youth 12-18; \$3 for children 3 to 11; and free for children 2 and under. For more information about membership or volunteer opportunities, please call 276-666-8600 or visit the museum’s Web site at www.vmnh.net.

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