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Contact: Cindy Mackey (757) 754-4553, cindy@thinkotto.com
Billy Ennis, VGF Executive Director (757) 368-1944, Billy@vagentlemen.com
Ross Vierra, VGF Chairman (757) 470-2068, RVierra@axisge.com

JT WALK & BEACH PARTY ON PACE TO RAISE MORE THAN \$1 MILLION ON OCTOBER 6
Thousands walk for ALS research and services

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. – (September 2013) – The JT Walk & Beach Party will bring thousands of walkers to the Virginia Beach boardwalk for the largest single-day walk in the country to support ALS research and services. Individual walkers and teams can register onsite at 34th Street the morning of the event. Walkers must raise a minimum of \$25 to participate. Each registered walker receives a commemorative t-shirt, a ticket to the Beach Party, food and drinks.

The walk was initiated by the Virginia Gentlemen Foundation in 2008 to support local surfer Josh Thompson's fight with Lou Gehrig's disease or ALS. It started as one team in the Hampton Roads ALS walk and has since raised \$6 million for ALS research and other community projects.

The walk has provided funding for JT's Grommet Island Beach Park & Playground for EveryBODY, which was dedicated in 2010. In 2011, the Virginia Gentlemen Foundation also funded a new child-friendly neonatal and pediatric mobile transport for Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters, nicknamed the Grombulance. Its newest project is Camp Grom, a 70-acre adventure camp in Virginia Beach for children and adults with disabilities, wounded veterans and families of the fallen planned to open in 2014.

The event is one of the most fun along the boardwalk with live music all day, a treasure hunt for children, a fleet of inflatable bounce houses, face painting, BBQ, hot dogs, cotton candy and much more! A new component has been added to the fun atmosphere this year. Big screen TVs will play all of the day's football games under the tent at the Beach Party.

Walk Schedule

- 9 a.m. Pre-walk registration and reception at 31st Street and Atlantic Avenue with entertainment, coffee, pastries and refreshments
- 10:30 a.m. JT Walk Line Up at 31st Street
- 11 a.m. JT Walk begins at Neptune's Park

- 11:30 am Half Way Party at Mahi Mah's, RockFish and Waterman's Surfside Grille
- Noon Beach Party begins at 31st Street with live entertainment featuring The Deloreans, Gridlock 64, Guava Jam and more
- 2 p.m. King Neptune's Treasure Hunt at 31st Street
- 4 p.m. 50/50 Raffle Drawing
- 5 p.m. Beach Party ends

One of the most popular components of the walk is the King Neptune's Treasure Hunt for children. More than \$10,000 in prizes are buried beneath massive treasure mountains on the beach at 31st Street. Children can search for thousands of valuable coins that can be redeemed for fun prizes from Sunsatons on Atlantic Avenue and 34th street. Children are grouped by ages to make sure that everyone has an opportunity to win.

Over the last five years, more than 30,000 people have participated in the JT Walk & Beach Party. This year promises an even bigger turnout with an estimated 5,000 walkers.

Sponsors include TowneBank, Gold Key/PHR, Bruce Thompson and family, MEB General Contractors, the Mitchum family, Interval International, Monarch Bank & Mortgage, Sysco, Virginia Beach Jaycees, and John Dominquez and family.

About Josh Thompson

Nobody enjoyed the beach more than Thompson. He was an avid surfer. He loved taking his family to the beach. He grew up on the beach and thought he'd be riding his board for years to come. But in late 2006, Thompson was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, better known as ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease. He had to turn his attention from riding waves to fighting ALS, a battle few so young have to face. Thompson and his family have mobilized the Virginia Beach community and beyond to search for and fund new treatments and eventually a cure.

About Virginia Gentlemen Foundation

The Virginia Gentlemen Foundation, a nonprofit organization, was formed in 2007. It consists of a group of young men who have grown up together in Virginia Beach and who want to make a difference in their community. The Foundation awards stem cell research grants from the proceeds of the JT Walk & Beach Party each year. Past grant recipients have included Johns Hopkins Medicine, Emory University, University of Michigan, Eastern Virginia Medical School, Cedars-Sinai and Duke University. To learn more, join in other activities of the Virginia Gentlemen or to donate, visit www.vagentlemen.org.

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