

RAIL YARD DAWGS ANNOUNCE PARTNERSHIP WITH VALLEY YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION TO FORM ROANOKE JR. DAWGS

ROANOKE, VA (April 5, 2016) – The Roanoke Rail Yard Dawgs (www.railyarddawgs.com) today announced that they have partnered with the Valley Youth Hockey Association (VYHA) to form the Roanoke Jr. Dawgs travel hockey program.

Phase one of the partnership will include rebranding of all Valley Youth Hockey Association travel hockey teams as the “Roanoke Jr. Dawgs.” Valley Youth Hockey’s travel teams have long been recognized as the Roanoke Express. The rebranding to the Roanoke Jr. Dawgs is in recognition that a new era of professional ice hockey is dawning in Virginia’s Blue Ridge Region with the addition of the Southern Professional Hockey League’s (www.thesphl.com) new Roanoke franchise.

“We are excited to join the Valley Youth Hockey Association to form the Jr. Dawgs,” said Rail Yard Dawgs President and Majority Owner Bob McGinn. “We are thrilled to develop this long term relationship to promote and grow the game of hockey in Virginia’s Blue Ridge. With a nearly 50 year history of bringing hockey to the youth of Southwest Virginia, Valley Youth Hockey has proven to be a strong partner for the Valley’s professional hockey franchises.”

The Rail Yard Dawgs (SPHL) made a financial commitment to the Jr. Dawgs in order to supplement the purchase of travel jerseys displaying the Jr. Dawgs logo. The Jr. Dawgs logo has been designed specifically for the Valley Youth Hockey Association’s travel teams by premier Canadian sports artist and Rail Yard Dawgs minority team owner Rob MacDougall.

“This is a great opportunity to form a lasting partnership with Roanoke’s professional hockey team,” said VYHA President Jason Pollard. “We are proud to wear the Jr. Dawg jersey and are looking forward to working with the Rail Yard Dawgs (SPHL) to grow the game of hockey and encourage kids in the community to give the sport a try for the first time. This relationship promises to be a positive development for both the Rail Yard Dawgs and VYHA.”

The multi-stage partnership will include rebranding of Valley Youth Hockey Association’s popular Learn to Play Hockey program and the VYHA’s flagship House League program to reflect the partnership between the organization and the Roanoke Rail Yard Dawgs (SPHL). A timeline for this transition is currently being considered.

VYHA was formed in 1960s as ice hockey began to take hold in the Roanoke Valley. VYHA now consists of a Learn to Play hockey program, House League (recreational) hockey programs and Travel Hockey programs for ages 5 to 18. VYHA programs are conducted at the Berglund Center in Roanoke, the Rail Yard Dawgs (SPHL) home rink. VYHA travel teams participate in the premier travel youth hockey league in the Southeast, the Carolinas Hockey League (www.carolinashockeyleague.com). VYHA’s teams play travel games and tournaments throughout the southeast and mid-Atlantic.

Valley Youth Hockey has approximately 200 children from five to 18 years old who participate in the program each year. VYHA seeks to teach and promote youth ice hockey and provide a fun, safe, challenging environment that encourages players to reach their potential. We work to develop individual and team skills, responsibility and sportsmanship, and offer programs to suit every level of ability. For more information about the VYHA and the Jr. Dawgs, visit www.vyhroanoke.com.