

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **GROUNDHOG DAY CELEBRATION PLANNED**

SUFFOLK, Virginia (January 19, 2012) Suffolk Tourism is partnering with the Early Childhood Education Center and the Suffolk Art Gallery to celebrate Groundhog Day, on Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, from 9:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. at the Suffolk Visitor Center Pavilion. This free kid-focused event will include a petting zoo by The Teeny Tiny Farm, Groundhog Day crafts, Playdoh® and blocks stations, as well as storytelling. Attendees are encouraged to bundle up for the event, however outdoor heaters will be provided. Families and pre-school groups are welcome to provide their own snacks. The Suffolk Visitor Center Pavilion is located behind the Historic Nansemond County Courthouse at 524 North Main Street. Please call 514-4130 for additional information.

**Groundhog Day History ([www.groundhog.org](http://www.groundhog.org))**

**European Roots** (*Adapted from "Groundhog Day: 1886 to 1992" by Bill Anderson*)

Groundhog Day, February 2nd, is a popular tradition in the United States. It is also a legend that traverses centuries, its origins clouded in the mists of time with ethnic cultures and animals awakening on specific dates. Myths such as this tie our present to the distant past when nature did, indeed, influence our lives. It is

the day that the Groundhog comes out of his hole after a long winter sleep to look for his shadow.

If he sees it, he regards it as an omen of six more weeks of bad weather and returns to his hole.

If the day is cloudy and, hence, shadowless, he takes it as a sign of spring and stays above ground.

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