Robert Hemm’s legacy gift to Virginia Tech . . .

. . . will never affect his lifetime assets
. . . was simple to establish
. . . can be adjusted if he wishes
. . . is his way of “giving thanks.”

“The thing I like best about exploration is planning an expedition with a goal in mind: to document things that satisfy our curiosity.”
— Robert Hemm ’50

Ready for Adventure: Thank you, Virginia Tech.

Robert Hemm ’50 explores the ends of the earth. You may have seen him on The History Channel, leading an expedition off the coast of Patagonia in search of Magellan’s lost fleet. He is a Fellow of the venerable Explorers Club, where membership includes those who first reached the earth’s poles, first scaled Mt. Everest, and first walked on the moon.

Hemm has visited Easter Island (where he is pictured above), Tibet, Morocco, China, Africa, underwater Mayan caves in Yucatan and Belize, and other exotic locales. “I’ve wanted to do this all my life,” says the octogenarian. “I love it.”

He’s not simply sight-seeing. “The thing I like best about exploration,” says Hemm, “is planning an expedition with a goal in mind: to document things that satisfy our curiosity.”

Scientific exploration is not for the faint-hearted. Explorers face remote sites, extreme weather, and primitive conditions. Hemm has piloted one-man submarines and collapsible aircraft, descended into caves, dived under the sea, climbed mountains, and parachuted through the air — camera in hand — to accomplish his goal of recording expedition findings.

Hemm found it far easier to accomplish another of his goals: creating a gift to recognize the role Virginia Tech has in his life. “Your legacy is measured in part by how you’ve paid back,” he says. “I want to do something that’s meaningful to me and my family.”
NEW VISITOR CENTER

Ready to welcome you to campus is Virginia Tech’s new Visitor and Undergraduate Admissions Center. Located inside the Prices Fork Road gateway to the Inn at Virginia Tech, the center opened July 5, 2011.

Stop by for information, visitor parking passes, interactive Virginia Tech history displays, and a warm Hokie welcome. You can even take a photo with the center’s Hokie Bird, as did Bob Smythers (page 3).


Touch the Future Without Touching Your Assets

Estate gifts are flexible.

- You retain full lifetime access and control of your assets.
- You can change your gift at any time during your life.
- Your gift can provide for a loved one before supporting Virginia Tech.
- You can choose to designate your gift to a particular area, or make a gift the university will use where it is most needed.

Estate gifts are simple.

- You create a bequest when your attorney adds a few words to your will or trust.
- You create a beneficiary designation when you sign a form — provided by the firm that manages your account — designating the Virginia Tech Foundation Inc. as a beneficiary of your IRA or other retirement fund.
- Estate gifts make a Virginia Tech legacy possible for almost everyone.

Estate gifts include . . .

- Bequest in a will or trust
- IRA or other beneficiary designation
- Charitable remainder trust beneficiary designation
- Life insurance
- Retained life estate

Sample bequest language

“I leave _____ percent (____%) of the remainder of my estate to the Virginia Tech Foundation Inc., Blacksburg, Va., for the support of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. This bequest shall be used for the (named scholarship, professorship, unrestricted gift, etc.).”

More bequest language online at www.givingto.vt.edu.

Virginia Tech’s Legacy Society recognizes the generosity of those who create a gift that will come to the university in the future.
Estate Planning

Why do I need a will or trust?

So you can direct your life’s assets to the people and institutions most important to you. Without a will, strangers, courts, or government agencies will decide for you.

So you can maximize your family’s inheritance by designating which assets will go to heirs and which will become charitable gifts. Choosing to donate a highly-taxed asset to Virginia Tech, and to pass other assets to heirs, can make a big difference for your family.

So you can continue to care for those you love. Your will or trust names guardians for minor children and can provide assets, income, or investment management for a spouse or other loved one first, and then provide for a charitable gift. Your will can include a charitable gift to simplify the settlement of your estate. Whatever the size of your estate, a valid will or trust will make it easier for your loved ones at a difficult time.

What steps do I take?

Speak your mind

Your attorney can help you create a will or trust that clearly states your wishes, is valid in your state, names an executor, and is “self-proving” so missing witnesses won’t delay probate.

In your will, you can name heirs, assign guardians, and make charitable bequests. Your attorney can also help you update or change your existing will.

Review what you’ve said

You can change your will at any time, for any reason. It is particularly important to consider updates if you have a change in marital status, retire, have a grandchild, receive an inheritance, sell a business, or decide to include a charitable gift.

Review your will or trust periodically and when key circumstances change.

Let us know your wishes

If you have included a gift for Virginia Tech in your estate plans, we hope you will let us know, in confidence and without obligation. This helps ensure we fully understand and record how you wish your future gift to be used. And it allows us to thank you, today, for your gift to the future.

Learn more: Use enclosed card to request a free copy of “Your Will and Other Ways to Transfer Assets.”

2011 Income Tax Exclusion for IRA Rollover Gift Expires Soon

Until December 31, 2011, qualifying donors age 70 ½ or older can transfer certain charitable gifts up to $100,000 directly to the Virginia Tech Foundation Inc. from their traditional or Roth IRA and avoid the usual additional tax liability.

More about this special opportunity at www.givingto.vt.edu/GiftPlanning/ira-rollover.html or call the Office of Gift Planning at 800-533-1144.

Consult your tax advisor before making a lifetime gift of IRA assets.

Meet Bob Smythers

Bob Smythers ’82 joined Virginia Tech’s gift planning team in 2005, bringing to his alma mater global experience helping donors plan their gifts to the Christian Children’s Fund.

Now associate director for gift planning, Bob is both a proud Hokie and a proud Hokie parent.

“I love working with the Hokie Nation and helping them explore ways they can help our students and faculty,” says Bob. “This university is on the cutting edge in so many disciplines that it gives our donors a myriad of charitable opportunities to help shape the future.”

Ask Bob about gifts that not only benefit Virginia Tech, but also help you meet your retirement or estate planning goals. He’s here to help.

Make a will or trust that clearly states your wishes. It will speak for you after your lifetime and empower your decisions.

Need a tax-wise alternative to the charitable IRA Rollover?

Designating the Virginia Tech Foundation Inc. as a beneficiary of your IRA, 401(k), 403(b), SEP, or other retirement account remains a great tax-wise option.
“Education gives you context. Each new thing becomes a tool that creates opportunities. Virginia Tech prepared me well.”

Bernard’s [School] and Virginia Tech, I wouldn’t have these resources. This legacy is important to me.

As part of his legacy, Hemm created a retirement account beneficiary designation that will provide a gift for Pamplin College of Business after his lifetime. It was simple to put in place, and he continues to have full access to his funds throughout his lifetime, available for unexpected needs. “We never know how long we’ll live. It could be to 100,” he says. “For me, this is the right gift. This gift works.”

“I love Tech,” says Hemm. “I had a great time there. Education gives you context. Each new thing becomes a tool that creates opportunities. Virginia Tech prepared me well. Not just the academic side, but the whole experience.”

Hemm arrived in Blacksburg as a transfer student, intending to continue in engineering, but switched his major to business to take advantage of his entrepreneurial aptitude and gift for persuasion.

Business courses honed the planning and organizational skills that helped lead to Hemm’s financial success as president of a large national marketing firm and a national broadcast sales division. Hemm’s enterprises included documentary film production which, in turn, opened doors to global exploration.

Hemm says his early undergraduate engineering background has been useful on expeditions, giving him a greater understanding of mechanical design and more confidence when using critical equipment.

Also valuable to Hemm were extracurricular activities, including a regular column for “The Virginia Tech” student newspaper, a starring role in the Maroon Mask production of “The Philadelphia Story,” and varsity wrestling. He says these experiences helped him develop writing, speaking, and physical skills that have been useful all his life.

“Expand your interests,” says Hemm. “That’s what I’d encourage anyone to do. Get really involved with as many things as you can learn from. I try to pass that to my children and grandchildren. Reach out, and if you’re capable, do things.”

Hemm says that while he retired some years ago from working to earn a living, he hasn’t stopped working. “I’ve always been curious,” he says, “and there is still so much I want to explore.”

Asked about his next adventure, he doesn’t hesitate. “I’ve always wanted to go to Outer Mongolia,” says Hemm. “I’m planning the trip with my son.”

Hemm met Jean Murray, now his wife of 61 years, through fellow Tech student, Cal Schadel ’51. Jean, a Radford coed, married Hemm in June 1950, a month after her reign as that college’s May Queen. The couple had one daughter, now deceased, and two sons who are well-established in their careers. They also have three grandsons.

Hemm credits his education and good fortune for his success. “I discussed this gift with my family, that it’s my way of giving thanks. With our children financially successful, that takes away a concern and makes possible estate gifts to both my schools. If it weren’t for [Gill] St.

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**Making Friends**

Assistant professor of mechanical engineering Dennis Hong (left) and his students are designing our new best friends: robots that do chores, use a computer keyboard, and introduce themselves.

A first for US humanoid robots, Virginia Tech’s Robotics and Mechanisms Laboratory (RoMeLa) won the RoboCup 2011 soccer competition in July, in Istanbul, Turkey.