

VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS MAGAZINE

RIDE

MAY 2016

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TRANSACTION

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COURTESY REMINDER

➔ Please do not spray perfumes, colognes or other aerosols onboard our trains. Riders may be either allergic to various spray fragrances or fragrances may trigger an asthma attack. We appreciate your courtesy and understanding.

Editor in Chief: Joseph M. Swartz
Magazine Design by Pulsar Advertising

FROM THE CEO

VRE'S CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITMENT

We launched our Meet the Management events for 2016 in April at Washington's Union Station. Throughout May and June we will continue coming out to the big destination stations for an opportunity to personally meet you, our riders, and listen to your comments and suggestions about the service. I always enjoy these events and come away feeling I have gotten important perspectives on how we are doing and what we can improve upon.

The remaining events will be the next four Wednesday afternoons, when we will be out at the remainder of our destination stations. This year we will also be doing one morning event at our newest station, Spotsylvania.

Here is schedule for our upcoming events:

Date	Time	Station
Wednesday, May 11, 2016	Afternoon and Evening Service	L'Enfant
Wednesday, May 18, 2016	Afternoon and Evening Service	Crystal City
Wednesday, May 25, 2016	Afternoon and Evening Service	Alexandria
Wednesday, June 1, 2016	Afternoon and Evening Service	Franconia-Springfield
Wednesday, June 8, 2016	Morning Service	Spotsylvania

We really hope to see you at one of these stations, but if you cannot join us for Meet the Management, VRE also offers several ways to share your suggestions and feedback through our monthly online forum, Facebook, Twitter and our annual Customer Opinion Survey. Comments and inquiries may also be submitted by phone, fax, mail, email or through our website. Go to www.vre.org/feedback for all the ways to contact us.

I am looking forward to seeing you at Meet the Management and as always, thank you for riding VRE.

DOUG ALLEN

Chief Executive Officer
Virginia Railway Express



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DOUG ALLEN
Chief Executive Officer



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Access RIDE online at www.VRE.org/RIDE



PLEASE RECYCLE THIS MAGAZINE





**Antique Rose Garden
Tea & Treats**

Saturday, May 21, 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Ben Lomond Historic Site

10321 Sudley Manor Drive

Manassas, VA 20109

See the beautiful side of spring's transition to summer by spending an afternoon in the antique rose garden at Ben Lomond. Beside roses and other flowers, visitors can enjoy tea paired with light refreshments and a special talk about spring flowers. It's one of the largest rose gardens in the Washington D.C. metro area, which makes it worth the \$30. www.virginia.org

Mother's Day at Mount Vernon

Saturday, May 7 – Sunday, May 8, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy

Mount Vernon, VA 22121

Join "Martha Washington" this Mother's Day for a stroll through the pristine gardens of Mount Vernon. Along with Mrs. Washington, her granddaughter "Nelly Custis" will be there to help hand out lavender sachets to all mothers – while supplies last, of course. www.mountvernon.org

Guided Arbor Day Tour

May 29, 2016, 9:30 a.m.

Arlington National Cemetery

Arlington, VA 22211

Celebrate Arbor Day this year at Arlington's Memorial Arboretum, a place that more than 8,000 trees call home. Horticulturist Kelly Wilson will speak about urban forestry – including all of the state champion trees, turf and ground maintenance, and all of the techniques required to keep the grounds pristine. www.arlingtoncemetery.mil

Fredericksburg Greek Festival

Sunday, May 22, 12 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Nativity of the Theotokos Greek Church

12326 Spotswood Furnace Road

Fredericksburg, VA 22407

This is the 30th year of the Fredericksburg Greek Festival, an event dedicated to celebrating Greek food, history, and culture. All are welcome, and there's something for everyone. The younger crowds can enjoy the Kids Zone with face painting and a bounce house while adults can try authentic Greek cuisine and wine. Don't forget about the Agora – Greek marketplace – which will host local artisans and baked goods. www.yasas.com

SCULPTURE UNCOVERED

If you are riding the VRE through the City of Manassas, beginning in May you will see new sculptures popping up around the Historic Downtown. They may inspire you to take the next train and enjoy taking a look around downtown.

In October 2015, the City of Manassas arts group began working with Northern Virginia Community College's Assistant Professor of Studio Art, Zac Jackson. The project was to work with NOVA sculpture students to produce outdoor sculptures to be displayed in the Historic Downtown area of the city.

Jackson and his students worked to create a website where art group members could view and comment on sculpture submissions. As the projects progressed, so did the website with more commentary and photos to capture the growing sculptures. The arts committee worked with City of Manassas staff to locate sculpture pad sites for the projects and in April, the students visited the Historic Downtown to select their sites.

On May 6, 2016 during the Manassas First Friday Gallery Walk, these 10 pieces were unveiled to the public. An online map is available at www.manassascity.org/art. After a year these sculptures will be replaced by the next year's art students' projects.

The 2016 artists include Alex Dorney, Paige Fischer, Audrey D'agastinio, Hunter Knight, Frank Albert, Harry Mayer, Micheal Flatequal, Harold Martin, Jessica Morales, Sarah Fischer, Christian Gallik, and Andrea Rivera. Some of the pieces were created specifically for the Historic Downtown, like Belle, a Civil War era lady or Danville, a train made of geometric shapes that represent the many trains that pass through the city. Others capture the artist's imagination, like Distracted, a representation of a person staring at their cellphone.

The Sculpture project is part of an ongoing initiative by the City of Manassas to encourage art and artistic expression. Other art projects in the city include the Banner Art Competition, the Little Bits project and other competitions held throughout the year. To find out more, visit www.manassascity.org/art.



▲ Sculpture being installed.

COMMENT ON INITIAL VRE GHX ALTERNATIVES ONLINE

VRE hosted a series of meetings with area residents, elected officials, and local government staff during the month of April to gather feedback on the initial alternatives for the Gainesville-Haymarket Extension (GHX) study. Public meeting materials have been posted at www.vre.org/ghx.

The initial alternatives included various service plans, feasible station locations, and potential storage and maintenance facility locations. The service plans described the proposed number of trains, the frequency of service, the stations being served, and the end-of-line or terminus options. Estimated ridership, savings in vehicle miles traveled, and preliminary capital and operating costs for the alternatives were also presented to help weigh the benefits and drawbacks of each option.

Questions and comments received will help VRE identify a smaller set of alternatives for further refinement and evaluation. Another community meeting will be held in fall 2016 to review the results of this more detailed analysis. These efforts should bring the project closer to its final overall configuration, so that more detailed engineering and environmental analysis can take place later this year and next.



▲ Members of the GHX Policy Advisory Committee discuss the Initial Alternatives.

VRE welcomes you to share your thoughts on the best way to advance the GHX project toward construction and service start-up through the project website at www.vre.org/ghx, email ghx@vre.org, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/VRE.GHX, or Twitter @VRE_GHX.

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SUMMER WEATHER BRINGS RAILROAD HEAT AND FLOOD SPEED RESTRICTIONS

Summertime can bring on hot and severe weather. Just as automobiles are sometimes required to lower speeds for various road and weather conditions, trains are subject to similar constraints. Heat and flood restrictions are orders given from the railroad dispatchers to train engineers requiring them to reduce their speed over a given section of track.

While flood restrictions are fairly self-explanatory, the need for heat restrictions tend to perplex many of our riders. The concern is over what are known as “sun kinks” as the steel rails expand and contract from rapid temperature increases and decreases throughout the day, or extremely high temperatures, which can also increase their likelihood. Careful engineering measurements are taken when rail is installed to account for rail expansion and contraction, but the heavy weight of the trains combined with extreme heat or temperature variability can set the steel molecules in motion causing unusual expansion. In the most extreme of cases this can cause the rail to “kink” out, which is a very hazardous condition for rail operations.

Our host railroads are diligent about safety on their tracks and send inspectors out when these kind of conditions exist. The track inspectors look for indications the track is under extreme compression and in danger of kinking. Signs include wrinkles in the track and disturbances of the ballast. When an actual kink or extremely high tension is found in the track, that section is taken out of service, repaired, and then put back into service as quickly as possible. That is why during the summer, as these repairs are made, we are sometimes limited on which tracks we can use.

While our host railroads are extremely thorough in their inspection of the tracks, it is impossible to mitigate every instance and the possibility, while slim, still exists that a kink will form before a piece of track can be taken out of service. That is why they also have strict policies in place on when conditions warrant the slowing of trains, known as a heat restriction, allowing greater time and distance to avoid a kink if one should happen.

At VRE, we strive to maintain high on-time performance as we know your time is valuable, but that will never trump safety. Our highest priority will always be the well-being of our riders, staff, and the general public. So if hot or severe weather is in the forecast, please keep in mind your commute may be affected. You can keep up to date on VRE through Train Talk email alerts, www.vre.org and VRE’s Twitter and Facebook pages.



▲ Sun rail kinks are caused by a combination of heavy rail traffic and extreme heat. Photo is for reference only and is not from VRE's Host Railroads.



▲ Roadway speed restrictions.



All Aboard **NORTHERN VIRGINIA!**

N & W Class J 611 Steam Excursions from Manassas to Front Royal, June 4–5

The American is a half-day, 102 mile roundtrip through the rolling hills of Northern Virginia over the former Southern Railway tracks. Along with historic landmarks you'll see vineyards representative of Virginia's ever-growing wine industry. Continue your journey toward the Shenandoah River, and turn around on the wye along the river at Riverton Junction in Front Royal.

Visit

FireUp611.org

or call

1-800-310-4274

for details and to
purchase tickets.

Brought to you by the Virginia Museum of Transportation. To learn more please visit www.vmt.org

SPOTLIGHT ON KEOLIS

MEET JOHN KERINS

John Kerins loves the railroad business, and especially the “hands-on” aspect of operations. Having worked in the freight and passenger railroad industries for over 30 years, this kind of passion is no surprise.

Passion is a big part of the railroad industry. “As a fourth generation railroad manager, I can tell you that no industry surpasses the rail industry in passion for the job,” says John. “Most railroad employees truly love the industry and the people in it. I know I do.”

Coming from a railroad family, John is the fourth generation to work in the railroad industry and has aspired to it ever since he was child. Getting his start in finance with Omaha’s Union Pacific Railroad after graduate school, he soon moved to his passion: railroad operations.

As a General Manager at Keolis North America, John is in charge of the operations and maintenance of the Virginia Railway Express (VRE). He oversees the conductors, engineers, and mechanical team to ensure safe and timely experiences, as well as manages the upkeep of trains and support facilities.

“We want to create a seamless experience for the customer. VRE has a reputation for high standards. It’s all about meeting and

exceeding these high standards for customer service and safety,” says John.

The most rewarding part of the job for John is the positive feedback from customers about the VRE employees. “To most riders, Keolis employees are the face of VRE, and I’m always proud at the positive comments and survey results we get about them,” he said, continuing: “I’m lucky to have managers and employees at Keolis who are so dedicated and committed to their work, and who take it as a personal responsibility to see the VRE succeed.”

When he’s not working, John likes to golf and travel locally. His family recently moved to the area from Southern California and they enjoy exploring the rich history of Virginia. John’s favorite thing to do is spend time with his youngest daughter who has Down Syndrome. Together they take weekend trips to explore the Civil War history and scenic towns in the area. Spending as much time with her as he can always brings him joy.

Keolis is VRE’s contractor that maintains and operates VRE trains.



TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS WHEN IT COMES TO SAFETY

While most of us agree it’s important to report suspicious bags or behavior, we often stay silent. It can be hard to know what to look for or who to contact about it. You may be worried that it will turn out to be nothing, or that reaching out will cause your trip to be delayed. While all of these may be reasonable concerns, they can cause us to hesitate when we should be taking action. In these cases, it’s always better to be safe than sorry.

If you see something, say something.™

It can be difficult to know what something suspicious looks like, but trust yourself when something doesn’t feel quite right. Take detailed notes, such as the train number or station name. Race, gender or religious affiliations are not indicators of suspicious behavior. Don’t be afraid to report something, even if you aren’t sure how serious it is.

Notify a police officer or transit personnel or call the police at either **1-877-4VA-TIPS** or **911**. If you’re on a bus, tell the driver. If you’re on a train or at a train station, tell a conductor or transit worker.

Working together to report suspicious bags or behavior is our first line of defense against potential threats. For more information about how you can help keep your ride safe, visit **SecureTransit.org**.

This ad was purchased with funds provided by the US Department of Homeland Security.

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AND UNUSUAL BEHAVIOR TO
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1-877-4VA-TIPS



TAKE ACTION ON TRANSPORTATION WITH TRANSAction

You already know that Northern Virginia has some of the worst traffic congestion in the country, but now you have a unique opportunity to get behind the wheel and guide the way toward the most critical transportation improvements over the next 25 years.

You are invited to participate in this important regional initiative, the update of TransAction, Northern Virginia's regional transportation plan. The update is being conducted by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) in coordination with regional agencies, localities and transportation service operators.

The TransAction plan will build upon your comments and suggestions, in addition to the latest available technical data, to develop a multimodal vision for Northern Virginia's transportation system that includes a variety of efficient highway, rail, transit, ridesharing and commuter service program improvements. This vision will serve as the mechanism through which more than \$1.7 billion will be allocated to regional transportation improvements from 2018 to 2023.

As your regional commuter rail service, we have developed a long range plan specific to Virginia Railway Express, and you can view it online at www.vre.org/projects-plans-facility/plans/2040. The VRE System Plan 2040 includes major improvements like the extension of new service to Gainesville and Haymarket, more frequent service along both the Manassas and Fredericksburg lines, and greater capacity for

train seats and station parking throughout the system. Please consider VRE improvements as part of your TransAction project comments.

To ensure maximum public participation in this critical initiative, the NVTA will host spring workshops and pop-up events designed to gather feedback from people throughout the region. Between April and June, the TransAction project team will be out at more than a dozen locations, including transit stations, festivals, parades, community centers and other local gathering points.

Please plan to join the project team at any of the upcoming events listed below.

More information is available on the NVTA TransAction project website at www.nvtatransaction.org, where you can watch the project video, sign up for news, take a brief survey, read the latest planning documents, and share your questions and comments with the project team.

Our region's strengths have attracted countless businesses, families and individuals to Northern Virginia over the past decades, outpacing our transportation capacity and creating major traffic congestion. Today, we have a great opportunity to shape our future transportation network and plan for the new economic growth and vitality that will continue to make Northern Virginia a great place to work and live for generations to come. Please take a moment to participate in TransAction and help shape our transportation future.

NVTA TRANSACTION TEAM IN-PERSON OUTREACH – SPRING 2016

WORKSHOPS

Manassas Park Community Center	May 21 (Sat.)	10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Loudoun County Senior Center at Cascades	May 24 (Tues.)	10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
1776 in Crystal City (METRO)	June 16 (Thurs.)	7 – 9 p.m.
Providence District Office (METRO)	June 21 (Tues.)	7 – 9 p.m.

POP-UP EVENTS

Bike to Work Day, Market Square (METRO)	May 20 (Fri.)	6:30 – 8:30 a.m.
Purcellville Music and Arts Festival	May 21 (Sat.)	2 – 4 p.m.
Rock the Block, City of Fairfax	May 27 (Fri.)	6 – 8 p.m.
Falls Church Memorial Day Parade and Festival	May 30 (Mon.)	10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Manassas Heritage Railway Station Plaza (METRO)	June 4 (Sat.)	10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Ballston-MU Metrorail Station Plaza (METRO)	June 7 (Tues.)	5 – 7 p.m.
The Plaza at Wiehle-Reston Metrorail Station (METRO)	June 8 (Wed.)	5 – 7 p.m.
Celebrate Fairfax, Upper Main Street	June 11 (Sat.)	10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

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PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



6	7	8	4	9	3	2	1	5
1	2	9	5	6	7	8	4	3
4	5	3	1	8	2	6	9	7
8	4	6	7	3	9	1	5	2
3	9	5	8	2	1	4	7	6
2	1	7	6	5	4	9	3	8
5	6	4	9	7	8	3	2	1
7	3	1	2	4	6	5	8	9
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RAIL TIME PUZZLES

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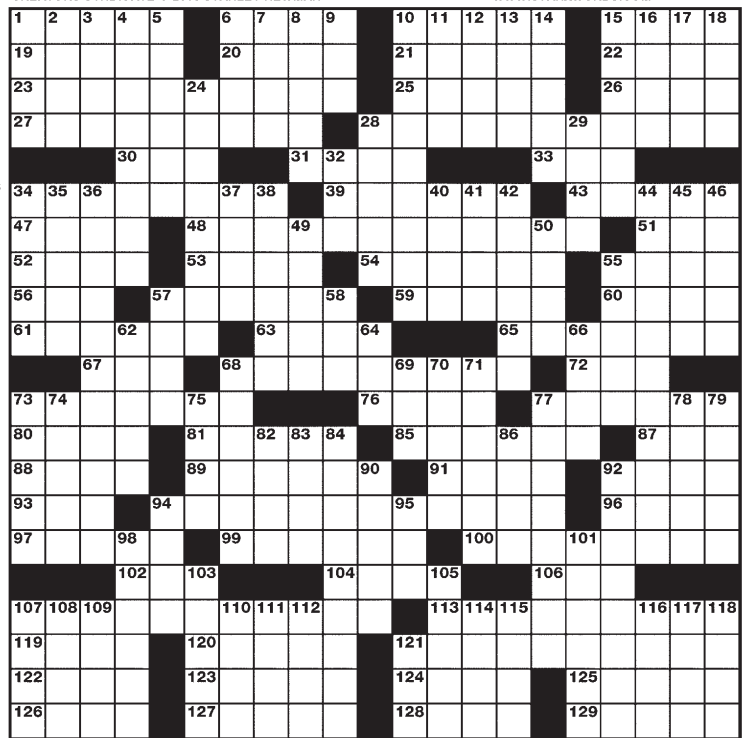
5/29/16

ACROSS

- 1 Five diamonds, perhaps
6 BOGO event
10 Light sprays
15 Top of the head
19 Cardiology concern
20 Tricky move
21 Impromptu
22 Preceder of history or hygiene
23 Being humbled
25 She might be beside herself
26 Lumber factory
27 Painless state
28 Not falling behind
30 Poetic dusk
31 Revealed, with "open"
33 Bathwater tester
34 Thing with springs
39 Appetite enticements
43 Pilot's affirmative
47 Developer's map
48 Getting a walk or hit
51 IRS shelter
52 Nevada city
53 Has a share of
54 Mentally quick
55 Rah-rah
56 Moo goo ___ pan
57 Talk-show talking head
59 Used for dinnerware
60 End of Caesar's boast
61 Electronic instruments, for short
63 Art sch. class
65 Exodus 19 locale
67 ___ step further (do more)
68 Snoopy's fantasy identity
72 Time delay
73 What the Statue of Freedom tops
- 76 Vette gauge
77 Rain garment
80 Goof off
81 Charge towards
85 "Pipe down!"
87 In the know
88 Hamlet lament
89 Disputed European region
91 ___ Mountains (Russian range)
92 Be audacious
93 Japanese chip maker
94 What to stop at a lot for
96 "New to you"
97 TV news anchor
99 Dirt spreaders
100 What decibels measure
102 Actress Farrow
104 Memo heading
106 Napoleon, in *Animal Farm*
107 Redeeming feature
113 Pet seen in *SPECTRE*
119 Arabian sultanate
120 Summing up
121 Slalom, for instance
122 It may start with Starters
- 4 Heel style
5 Dry-cleaner freebie
6 UV protection figures
7 Jai ___
8 Not widespread
9 Watch closely
10 Alexander's realm
11 Loafing
12 Pick up some things
13 Novelist Morrison
14 Hound's following
15 Ellen of *Grey's Anatomy*
16 42 Down solo
17 Soft mineral
18 *Glamour* rival
24 Big-hearted
28 Japanese beer
29 45th Vice President
32 "That's a relief!"
34 Digital video files: Abbr.
35 Set to rest
36 Happening
37 Stitched together
38 Mercury's winged footwear
40 Grp. in charge
41 French cleric
42 Strauss opera
44 In pursuit
45 Author Jong
46 Half-diameters
49 Nine-season CBS spinoff
50 In the mail
55 About birds
57 Cool, in the '90s
58 Mai ___ cocktail
62 Works hard
64 Stick with a kick
66 Schedule opening
68 Sudden commotion
69 Mower power, perhaps
70 Carry on

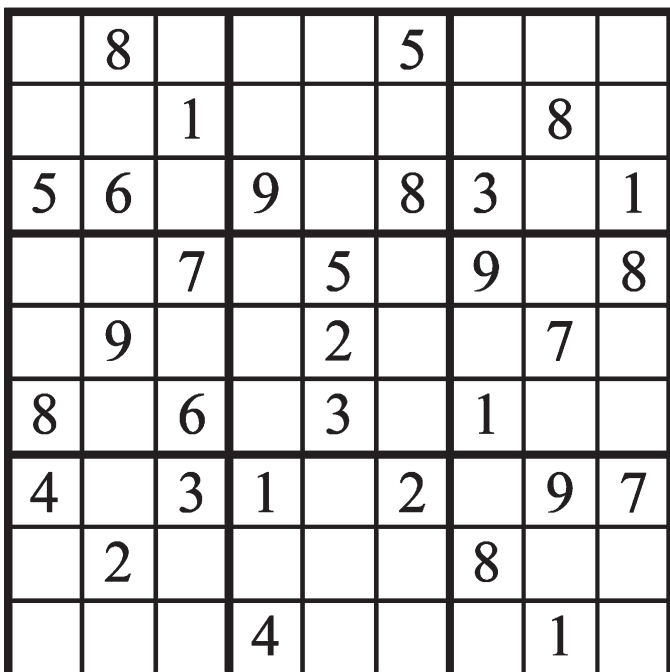
DOWN

- 1 Small statue at the FDR Memorial
2 Diving bird
3 Astronomical bear



- 71 Nickname for Beethoven's Ninth
73 Streetcar sound
74 One with a Buddy List
75 Porpoise cousin
77 Add to a gridiron heap
78 "New" employees
79 Newspaper essays
82 Depiction on Olympic medals
83 Oscar role for Whitaker
84 Squid appendages
- 86 It's south of Fort Worth
90 Banded rock
92 Blue denim
94 Major inconvenience
95 Former flier, briefly
98 Countdown term
101 Sad songs
103 Upset tummy
105 Unvarnished, as truth
107 To a degree
108 Co. with a Platinum Card
- 109 Barn ornament
110 Buzzing pest
111 Incautious
112 Palo ___, CA
114 Start of Alaskan zip codes
115 Amscrays
116 Have empathy
117 Low-pH
118 Beachgoers' shirts
121 ___-mo replay

SUDOKU



A**B**

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CHOICE,
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