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VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS MAGAZINE

JULY 2015



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Editor in Chief: Alexis Rice
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Access RIDE online at www.VRE.org/RIDE

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FROM THE CEO

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

We are proud that VRE has been serving our region since 1992 and our motto, "A BETTER WAY. A BETTER LIFE."

reflects our commitment to improving our passengers' daily commutes.

Recently, at one of our "Meet the Management" events, I heard from a customer that VRE's service was the "best part" of her day.

VRE is the nation's 10th-largest commuter rail system with ridership reaching over 4.5 million passengers last year. We have a strong safety record, on-time performance that is consistently above 90 percent and a high customer satisfaction rating. We continue to expand our system with the addition of a new station in Spotsylvania County and a new train on the Fredericksburg Line later this summer, plus a new station at Potomac Shores scheduled for completion in 2017.

During peak service hours, VRE trains are currently at full capacity. And with the region's population projected to grow and highway congestion expected to worsen, VRE's ridership will surely continue to increase.

We are addressing capacity by working with our host railroads and our local, state and federal partners to add more trains, longer trains, longer platforms and additional train storage. Last year, we adopted the "VRE System Plan 2040" to outline how VRE could expand service, achieve major improvements and accommodate more riders. The Plan also adds new markets and calls for expanded service for reverse commuting and off-peak travel. We are now developing a financial forecast that looks at the cost of current operations and various growth scenarios through 2040, along with the characteristics of the additional needed funding.

Future projects of "VRE System Plan 2040" would provide service expansion that can be achieved by relieving critical operational bottlenecks such as the Long Bridge over the Potomac River and other water crossings, adding more tracks throughout the corridor, and extending service to the Gainesville-Haymarket area.

With these service improvements and investments, the long-term growth potential for VRE increases to 50,000 weekday passengers – allowing us to try to keep pace with the region's increasing population, helping many more commuters in our region have a safe, reliable and quality commute.

DOUG ALLEN

Chief Executive Officer
Virginia Railway Express



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DOUG ALLEN
Chief Executive Officer





**Alexandria/USA
Birthday Celebration**
Saturday, July 11, 7-10 PM
Oronoco Bay Park
100 Madison St., Alexandria, VA

PRESERVING RAILROAD HISTORY

The Rappahannock Railroad Workers' Museum in Fredericksburg is dedicated to the preservation of historical railroad equipment in the greater Spotsylvania and Fredericksburg area. The museum, located in Spotsylvania County Industrial Park, is open on Saturdays from 9 AM to noon and attracts thousands of visitors every year. From mid-March through October (and other Saturdays weather permitting), visitors can ride the museum maintenance of way train (Little Yellow Train) for a short rail excursion to learn and experience how the rail workers in the mid-1900s commuted to their work sites.

The museum was created by the Rappahannock Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society and was founded in 1989 as a non-profit organization dedicated to railroad history, preservation and education. Housed in restored pieces of historic railway rolling stock, the museum features a Pennsylvania B-60B baggage car, a Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac extended vision caboose, a Norfolk and Western Standard Cupola caboose, a Pennsylvania X-58 boxcar and several motorcars. The museum focuses on rail safety and displays an extensive collection of historical and nostalgic railroad-related items including dining car china, railroad uniforms, lanterns and marker lights, and other railroad life artifacts.

"We are proud to preserve railroad history and educate visitors on the daily lives of railroad workers and rail safety," said James "Jake" Taylor, who leads the Rappahannock Railroad Workers Museum. "Our museum not only presents railroad history and safety, but showcases their legacy as railroad technology advances."

The museum works to maintain railroad history, help educate the community, and participate in interesting rail excursions and projects, using both full-sized and miniature railroad equipment. New members are always welcome to join this group of railroad enthusiasts and participate in their efforts. No prior railroad experience is needed – just the desire to preserve rail history and educate others. Learn more about the museum and membership at www.rrmuseum.org.



▲ Museum visitors ride the "Little Yellow Train" and experience how the rail workers in the mid-1900s commuted to their work sites.

Celebrate America's 239th birthday and Alexandria's 266th along the Potomac waterfront with live music by the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra, patriotic birthday cake, food vendors and a dazzling fireworks display. www.visitalexandriava.com

Model Railroad Open House

Saturday, July 18, 1-5 PM

Historic Vienna Depot

231 Dominion Rd. NE, Vienna, VA

Join the Northern Virginia Model Railroaders and enjoy viewing models that realistically depict railroad life and operations. www.nvmr.org

Fredericksburg Agricultural Fair

Friday, July 31-Sunday, August 9

Fredericksburg Fairgrounds

2400 Airport Ave, Fredericksburg, VA

Founded in 1738, the Fredericksburg Agricultural Fair is the oldest fair in Virginia. Take part in celebrating traditional fair events, contests, entertainment, food and fun!

www.fredericksburgfair.org

25th Annual African American Heritage Festival

Saturday, August 1, Noon-6 PM

Grace E. Metz Middle School

9950 Wellington Rd., Manassas, VA

The African American Foundation of Prince William County presents a family-friendly celebration of African American arts and culture. The festival includes live entertainment, a health fair, a business and job expo, a classic car show plus more than 125 exhibitors including arts and crafts dealers, retailers of African wares, youth groups, college and school exhibits and food vendors. www.maahf.com



▲ Fireworks for Alexandria Birthday Celebration. [Photo Credit: Victor Wolansky]

VRE MOBILE TIPS

It has been nearly two months since we first launched VRE Mobile and we appreciate everyone downloading and using mobile tickets! Based on the feedback we have received so far, we wanted to share a few tips.

MONTHLY TICKETS

- Monthly Tickets are available for purchase in the app from the 23rd of the previous month to the 9th of the current month. For example, August tickets will be available July 23 until August 9. No monthly fares are offered in the app from the 10th to the 22nd.
- This is in contrast to paper tickets from the Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs) on the platforms or from physical vendors. Paper monthly tickets can be purchased from the 10th of the previous month to the 9th of the current month.
- The reason for this difference is that you can access your smartphone 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To access a TVM or vendor, you must plan ahead to visit a location and therefore need more time to purchase a paper ticket.

SMARTBENEFITSSM USERS

This is for users who have SmartBenefitsSM administered by WMATA (Metro). If you have a transit subsidy in the form of a card with a Visa® or MasterCard® logo, use that in the app like a normal credit or debit card.

In order to set up and use your SmartBenefitsSM there are three steps to follow. Please read below then watch our video tutorial at www.vre.org/mobiletips to see it in action.

1. Allocate a payment towards VRE Mobile Ticketing via WMATA's website at www.smarttrip.com/sbftp/vplpat.login. This must be done by the 21st of the previous month – for example, to use August's benefits, you must allocate a payment by 11:59 PM on July 21st.
2. Wait until the 1st of the month to enter your SmartBenefitsSM account number into the app. WMATA does not send us the final file until the last day of the previous month and VRE Mobile cannot recognize your information until then.
3. Use the funds you have allocated. If your payment allocation is not enough to purchase your ticket, please be sure to use the split payment function correctly in the app. Tap "Split Payment" in the section for choosing a payment option during checkout. You know you are doing it correctly if you see a slider function showing you how much you are putting on each form of payment. See video on split payments at www.vre.org/mobiletips for an example.

That's it! After the initial setup, your funds show up on the 1st of every month in the app.



▲ Launched two months ago, VRE Mobile is the fast and easy way to purchase, store and use VRE tickets at your convenience.

AMTRAK STEP-UP TICKETS

- In order to use an Amtrak Step-Up Ticket in the app, you must also have an active multi-day (Ten-Trip, Five-Day or Monthly) ticket in your mobile ticket wallet. You cannot use a mobile Step-Up Ticket in conjunction with a multi-day paper ticket.

Still have questions? Go to www.vre.org/mobile or feel free to call (844) 353-3408 or e-mail feedback@vre.org.

SUMMER WEATHER BRINGS RAILROAD HEAT AND FLOODING RESTRICTIONS

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

If you ever wondered why we have heat restrictions, it is because steel rails expand and contract as temperatures increase and decrease. Careful engineering measures are taken when rail is installed to account for rail expansion and contraction.

To add an extra measure of safety, track inspectors are sent out when the temperature rises quickly from night to day or when the daytime temperatures become extreme, which can cause the rail to expand rapidly. Inspectors look for signs the track is under extreme compression and in danger of kinking out to the side. Signs include wrinkles in the track and disturbances of the ballast.

If warranted by the inspection, speeds are lowered for trains, whose heavy weight can set the steel molecules in motion and increase the potential for these “sun kinks.” VRE trains must follow the lower speeds.

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. That is why there are times we are limited to one track during the summer as we make repairs.

Additionally, a common delay during the summer is severe weather with wind and heavy rain.

Our host railroads have policies in place to deal with severe summer weather. If there is flooding on the tracks, a slower rate of speed will be in effect.

At VRE, safety is our highest priority. If hot or severe weather is in the forecast, please keep in mind that your commute may be affected. Keep up to date with information from VRE through Train Talk email alerts, www.vre.org and VRE's Twitter and Facebook pages.



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MEET THE MANAGEMENT

VRE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Here are some of the top questions we received during our spring “Meet the Management” events, monthly online forums, and through social media and email. If you have any questions, please email us at gotrains@vre.org or participate in our monthly online forum that takes place at noon on the first Wednesday of every month at www.vre.org/chatterbox.

1. WHEN WILL THE SPOTSYLVANIA STATION BE OPEN?

Track work for the new Spotsylvania Station is currently underway and the station is expected to open later this summer.

2. WHEN WILL VRE GET WI-FI?

Until cell phone towers are put in place all along our rail system so that riders have 100 percent connectivity, Wi-Fi will not be available. The installation of Positive Train Control will help cell phone service and the ability to add Wi-Fi, but until then, we do not want passengers to have a negative experience due to weak signal strength.

3. CAN VRE ADD ADDITIONAL LATE MORNING, MIDDAY, EVENING AND WEEKEND SERVICE?

We are contractually allowed by our host railroads (CSX and Norfolk Southern) to operate service only within the allotted window of time that we currently operate and can only operate a specific number of trains. The VRE System Plan 2040 includes increased weekday service as well as weekend and reverse commute service. We will be adding a new Fredericksburg Line train later this summer.

4. WHEN WILL SERVICE START AT THE POTOMAC SHORES STATION?

New service at the Potomac Shores Station is planned to begin in 2017.

5. WHEN WILL THE NEW CARS BE IN SERVICE?

The current legacy cars are set to be replaced with new gallery cars by February 2016.

6. WHEN WILL VRE BE GOING TO GAINESVILLE/HAYMARKET?

The Gainesville/Haymarket extension is in the planning stage. We have started a new study to review the possible extension.



▲ VRE's management hears from riders during “Meet the Management.”

7. WHAT IS BEING DONE ABOUT THE OVER-CROWDING ON THE TRAINS?

We are working on gaining additional storage space so we can add cars to our busiest train sets, but we do not have an estimated time frame as to when such storage space would be able to be developed.

NATURALLY IMPROVING SECURITY AT YOUR HOME

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a concept employed in many industries, including public transportation, that seeks to minimize the risks of criminal activity or other safety issues. VRE employs this technique in the development of new facilities as well as during station remodeling and other upgrades.

CPTED includes the consideration of illumination, lines of sight, incorporation of smart landscaping practices, an adherence to ongoing maintenance and a clearly communicated sense of presence – all of which can be employed into your own home.

Here are some tips:

ILLUMINATION

- Use long-lasting, energy efficient, bright porch lighting and consider keeping it lit at all times.
- Employ multiple points of light, such as lighting at your entrance and out in your yard, to eliminate the “fishbowl” effect.
- Install lighting in darker areas around your house and especially near garages and sheds.

LINES OF SIGHT

- Minimize the obstructions between your house and the road and neighbors’ homes. Although it is nice to have

privacy, criminals feel the same way and the goal is to avoid concealing any wrongdoing.

- Cloistered entrances provide excellent hiding spots for people interested in accessing your home.

SMART LANDSCAPING

- Plant low bushes around your house and if possible, choose shrubs with thorns (i.e American barberry) for placement near fences to discourage intrusion.
- Eliminate tall and concealing shrubs from around your house, especially near doors and windows or where they would otherwise conceal unwanted activity.

PROACTIVE MAINTENANCE

- Signs of limited presence are often used by criminals to case out a potential score. Make sure your home looks well-kept, newspapers are collected and the small flyers stuck in your doors by restaurants are removed. When you travel, ask a neighbor to do this for you.
- Presence should be emphasized in other ways as well. Alarm company signage, lighting on timers and other easily added items should be included.

For more information on building CPTED into your home, visit www.thecrimepreventionwebsite.com and www.cpted.net.

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SPOTLIGHT ON KEOLIS

MEET RICHARD BLACK

Richard Black is the ultimate multitasker. As a transportation manager for VRE, Richard has many roles. He is responsible for on-time performance, crew training, day-to-day operations and keeping open communication with all of the different railroads.

A veteran of the railroad, Richard started his career as a conductor at Norfolk Southern Railway in 1998. After serving in various positions at Norfolk Southern Railway, Richard joined Keolis in 2010 looking for a flexible work schedule so he could spend more time with his family. He started at VRE as an engineer and after a quick four years he was promoted to transportation manager.

"One of the things I love most about my job is that there is a new challenge every day," Richard said. "You are never in one place at one time, and there is never a dull moment."

One of the biggest challenges Richard faces on a daily basis is constantly keeping open communication with the other host railroads such as Norfolk Southern Railway, CSX and Amtrak. Richard explained that it is imperative to always listen closely and pay attention to detail because one mistake could cause a serious accident. Safety is Richard's first priority.

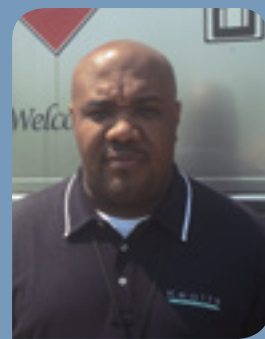
Richard applauds the exceptional performance his crew members put forth every day to run a smooth and safe transportation system. The most rewarding part of his job is putting in the hard work and being able to see tangible results. He enjoys providing and receiving positive feedback and encourages open communication with his employees.

"One of the things I love most about my job is that there is a new challenge every day. You are never in one place at one time, and there is never a dull moment."

"Open communication is the best form of communication," he said.

When Richard is not managing the railroad, he loves to spend time with his 5- and 2-year-old grandchildren, Rylee and Tristan. He is also a die-hard Redskins fan. To relax, Richard likes to kick back and listen to his favorite jazz musician, John Coltrane.

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



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Service Alert

As of June 25, 2015, VRE tickets will no longer be honored on off-peak MARC trains. In conjunction with a legislative mandate, MARC will no longer honor VRE tickets on off-peak MARC trains. MARC tickets, however, will continue to be honored on reverse-flow VRE trains.

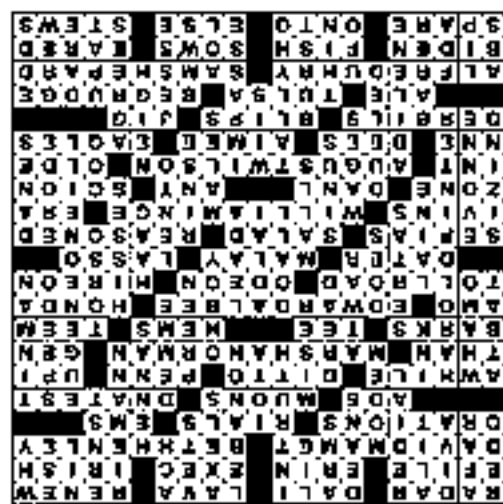


COURTESY REMINDERS

WHEN RIDING ON THE VRE we ask that you make every effort to be courteous to your fellow passengers. Below are two courtesy reminders:

- ➔ You may have had a hard day at work, but remember, do not use the benches at the station as a bed. Sit up and let others also get the chance to sit down.
- ➔ Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



1	8	6	5	9	3	4	7	2
5	7	4	1	2	6	8	3	9
2	3	9	4	8	7	6	1	5
7	6	2	8	4	5	1	9	3
8	9	3	2	6	1	7	5	4
4	1	5	3	7	9	2	6	8
6	2	1	9	5	4	3	8	7
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3	5	8	7	1	2	9	4	6

RAIL TIME PUZZLES

ACROSS

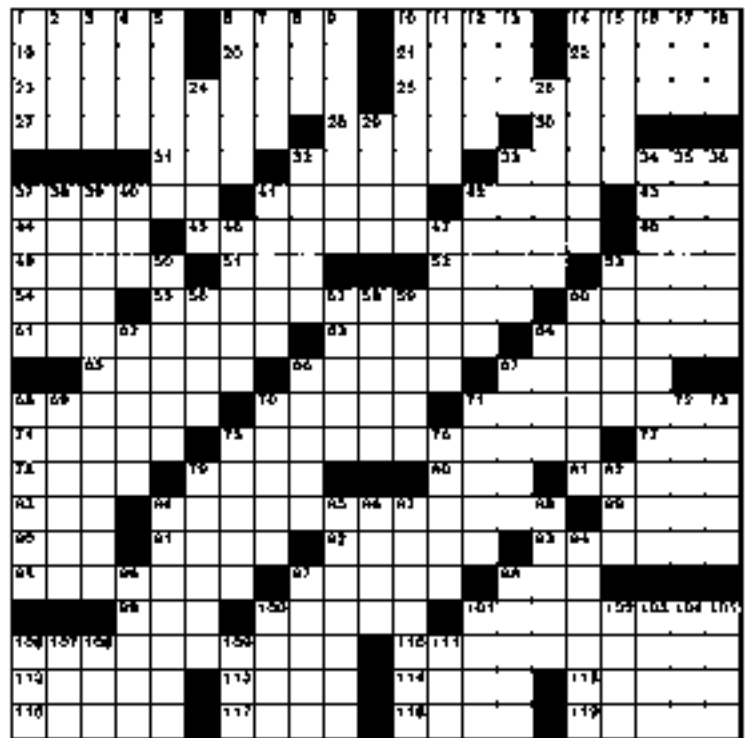
- 1 Plans tracker
- 6 Flamboyant suave suit
- 10 Flowing rock
- 14 Freshen
- 19 Submit a paperless return
- 20 CNN anchor Burnett
- 21 Corporate higher up
- 22 From Cork
- 23 Gangster Glen Rose playwright
- 24 Crimes of the Heart playwright
- 27 How-to addresses
- 28 Money in Iran
- 30 Pak in magnesium
- 31 Words from the sportsbook
- 32 Subatomic particles
- 33 CSI procedure
- 37 Fire spell
- 41 'Game home'
- 42 Ivy League school
- 43 Venerable news service
- 44 When compared to
- 45 'Night, Mother' playwright
- 48 -lar
- 49 Dinnaman sources
- 51 Capital shut
- 52 Sewing ties
- 53 Overflow
- 54 Love, Lie
- 55 The Zoo Story playwright
- 60 Nissan mini
- 61 Pike
- 62 Lining for necktie
- 64 Employ
- 65 Library stamp
- 66 Southeast Asian language

DOWN

- 87 Cow catcher
- 88 Photo bits
- 90 Mixed greens
- 91 Well-thought-out
- 94 Columnist Unity
- 95 Picnic playwright
- 97 Spent of time
- 98 Sector
- 99 Boone's nickname
- 100 Insect of facts
- 101 Derelict
- 102 S&L payment
- 104 The Abominable Snowman playwright
- 109 Ye Shoppe
- 110 Compass pt
- 111 Pollen spreaders
- 112 Pop singer Mann
- 113 Top level Scouts
- 114 Hamster cocktails
- 115 1 Across images
- 116 Dubinina's dance
- 117 Tavern order
- 118 Medieval oil center
- 119 Envy
- 120 Driving Miss Daisy playwright
- 121 True West playwright
- 122 Seneca president
- 123 Certain school group
- 124 Scatters
- 125 Golden- corn
- 126 Do without
- 127 Savvy about
- 128 Adversely
- 129 Slimmers slowly

ACROSS

- 7 Chair supports
- 8 Be allured
- 9 Actually
- 10 Scurry for ordure
- 11 Startling leaps
- 12 American Legion members
- 13 German intersection
- 14 German mathematician
- 15 Kiva contemporary
- 16 Nothing at all
- 17 Language ending
- 18 Tilt's question
- 24 Data-sending device
- 25 Salon colorant
- 29 Bismarck
- 32 Seesaw
- 33 Silence of the Lambs director
- 34 Anna Christie playwright
- 35 Swimmer name
- 36 "If I Only Had a Heart" singer
- 37 Top to the plate
- 38 Fishbowl maker
- 39 The Birthday Party playwright
- 40 Printer supply
- 41 Uneasy feeling
- 42 Dress carefully
- 46 Clashing
- 47 Expectation exclamation
- 50 Alternatives to Seelys
- 53 Sculpted form
- 56 Stage males
- 57 Handy person
- 58 Eleven-year-old faced Eisenhower
- 59 "You can't have" horse
- 60 Radiator sounds



- 62 Singer Frankie or Glen
- 64 Den . . . Nederland
- 65 Shopping plaza
- 67 Slow tempo
- 68 Judging with 'up
- 69 Tennis great
- 70 Contagion
- 71 Competition locale
- 72 Run under water
- 73 Weir down
- 74 Hamlet and family
- 75 Comes on
- 76 Boars and bulls
- 79 Had a swoon night
- 82 Gaseous
- 84 Chisholm Trail and
- 85 Fox hunting cry
- 86 PlayStation rivals
- 87 Stalemate
- 88 Stable sound
- 94 Comes to terms
- 96 Less ornamented
- 97 Pooped
- 98 Reverend Jackson
- 100 Raveled
- 101 Audi computer
- 102 the crack of dawn
- 103 Be bold
- 104 Burgeoned
- 106 Teachers' dogs
- 107 'Sex-pert' theories
- 107 Cup edge
- 108 Cosmetics regulator
- 109 Sci-fi sign
- 111 'You've got mail' co

SUDOKU

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5		4				8		
		6	5	9	3			



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