



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

Update



703-684-1001

www.vre.org

December 5, 2007

Editor's Note:

Can you believe that the year is almost over? The year seems to have flown by.

And, now that the holidays are here, we know that other winter events are on their way. It is important to note that when we operate the "S" schedule for inclement weather, VRE will operate the same style schedule in the afternoon that we did that morning. See page two for information on how to "train up" for the snow (at press time, the weather service was mentioning a possible "event" this week!)

Next week, please be sure to participate in our annual Toys for Tots collection. Every year, VRE passengers generously donate toys and money for disadvantaged children in our area. We are proud that our riders are often recognized as one of the biggest sources of donations in the area. That is a tradition that we would like to see continue!

Toys for Tots is Next Week!

Just a quick reminder that next Wednesday, December 12, VRE will be participating in its annual Toys for Tots drive, and all riders are encouraged to bring a new, unwrapped toy with them on the train (morning commute only). Leave it on your seat as you detrain, and VRE "elves" will collect the toys at the end of each run. Marines will then pick up all of the collected toys at the layover yard in Washington.

If you haven't had time to go shopping, don't worry—conductors will also cheerfully collect cash and checks that same morning (please make your checks payable to Toys for Tots). And if you don't plan on riding VRE on the 12th, please consider dropping your

toy or cash/check donation at one of the five VRE stations participating in Santa Trains on Saturday morning, December 8. (Participating stations are: Fredericksburg, Leeland Road, Manassas, Woodbridge, and Burke Centre.)



If you haven't yet purchased a gift, please also keep in mind that Toys for Tots is designed for children ages two to 16, but many people tend to gravitate toward toys for the youngest children first. Please keep children 10 to 16 years old

in mind, too, as pre-teens and teenagers are often not as well covered.

Thank you in advance for helping make this our best year ever!

Standing Means Detraining

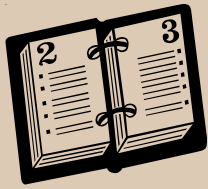
On All Trains at All Stops

We've talked about queuing for as long as we've been in operation it seems. We've begged, pleaded and groveled with our passengers to please remain seated until their train has left the station prior to their own, but still people insist on queuing in the aisles two and even three stations early. The result is crowded aisle ways that sometimes make it impossible for others to detrain and often causes them to miss their stop completely. The problem has steadily worsened, and since begging and pleading have unfortunately failed to change passengers' ways, we've turned to other tactics: putting constant reminders in this newsletter and in Train Talk, asking our conductors to make frequent

announcements to try to rein in the behavior, and running periodic courtesy campaigns to remind people that their behavior can—and often does—have a detrimental effect on others' commutes. But still, queuing continues, and still, people are unable to get off the train when they need to.

It's an unacceptable situation, and of all the strategies we've tried, there's only one that has truly worked. So, beginning Monday, January 7, that solution will be instituted system-wide. It's called the "Standing Means Detraining" policy, and it basically means that if a conductor

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Standing Means Detraining

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Upcoming Dates

Saturday, December 8
Santa Trains

Wed., December 12
Toys for Tots
Collecting on All
Morning Trains

Monday, December 24
(Christmas Eve)
“S” Schedule

Tuesday, December 25
(Christmas Day)
No VRE Service

Monday, December 31
(New Year’s Eve)
“S” Schedule

Tuesday, January 1
(New Year’s Day)
No VRE Service

sees someone standing in the aisle when the train pulls into a station, the conductor will assume that the standing person wishes to detrain ... and they will ask the engineer to not move the train until that person has the chance to detrain. This policy, of course, will only be implemented on trains with adequate seating; if the train is “standing room only,” then the conductors will use their discretion—we like to think of ourselves as the friendly VRE “family,” but even we don’t expect our passengers to sit on each others’ laps!

This system was put into place on a few trains with particularly bad queuing issues a few years

ago to excellent results: when people stayed in their seats until their train had physically left the station one prior to the one where they detrain, the trains ran on time. When people queued and the trains were held as a result, the passengers ultimately created their own delay ... and the incentive to remain seated quickly outweighed the desire to queue.

From past experience, we know that the first week will probably have some delayed trains, but for the non-queuers on the train, rest assured it will quickly resolve itself and you should never have to elbow your way past another queuer again. And that, we think, is something to cheer about.

VRE’s Ready, So, Let It Snow!

VRE is ready to serve you when the weather becomes frightful. Here are some helpful reminders.

For reasons of safety and reliability, VRE may change its schedule to an “S” Schedule. This decision is made on a storm-by-storm basis. Passengers should sign up for Train Talk (<http://traintalk.vre.org>) and check the website for updated information.

For morning service, the decision to use the limited schedule will be made prior to 4:30 am EST.

Additionally, when forecasts for any amount of snow or ice are made, VRE maintenance staff will pre-treat all platforms and walkways.



A few helpful winter weather reminders:

Should VRE decide to reduce service, we would move to our “S” schedule. The “S” schedule is designated with the “S” above the train numbers on your schedule. Unless otherwise noted on the website, VRE will not operate any other trains than those designated with an “S” on its schedule.

As soon as the decision is made, VRE will post the information on the VRE website, the toll free information hotline (1-800-RIDE-VRE), and will send an e-mail to “Train Talk” subscribers. Additionally, we will notify the press, most notably: WMAL (630 AM), WFLS (93.3 FM/1350 AM), WTOP (103.5 FM), WBQB (101.5 FM)

✓ Please wear appropriate clothing and shoes to walk in snow or ice.

✓ Get to the station in plenty of time to make your train; running in snow or ice is a sure recipe for an accident.

✓ Use the handrails when entering or exiting a train.

✓ Use extra caution and the handrail on bi-level stairs.

When “Old Man Winter” comes to call, VRE is ready to serve you. So let it snow, let it snow, let it snow.



VRE Update is a publication of Virginia Railway Express. The newsletter is published bi-weekly 24 times per year. Stories included are for the sole use of VRE riders and its supporters. Comments and questions may be directed to VRE Customer Service at gotrains@vre.org or at (703) 684-1001.

Not to Sound Like the Grinch, but Validating Tickets is a Must

Unfortunately, we've seen an upswing of passengers boarding with tickets that have not been validated, and when questioned by a conductor about it, they've said that they did insert their ticket into one of our Ticket Validation Machines (TVM), and they don't know why the validation did not get printed on the ticket.

If something like this should ever happen to you, please keep in mind the following points:

- We are not currently having problems with TVMs not validating, but if you should come across a troublesome TVM, please alert us by completing the online TVM Information Form at vre.org/feedback/tvmconcerns.php.
- If you insert your ticket but don't see the validation stamp when you pull it back out, make sure you are inserting the ticket the correct way (arrows, face-up, pointing into the machine); if the ticket is inserted backwards or upside down, the TVM cannot read it and will not validate it.



- When you remove your ticket from the TVM, take a moment to look at it to ensure that the date and time are actually printed there. If they are not, please see a conductor before you board.

In order to remove our conductors from the unfair and difficult position of trying to decide who is being honest and who is being less than honest, it is our policy that all passengers are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the ticket they are using is valid. Therefore, before each boarding, Single-Ride and Ten-Trip tickets must be validated by the TVMs in station entrance areas. (Five-Day tickets must have been validated on the first day of travel.) Monthly and Transit Link Cards (TLC) passes

must have your name on the back to be valid. If for any reason you cannot validate your ticket, you must speak with the conductor **PRIOR** to boarding the train.

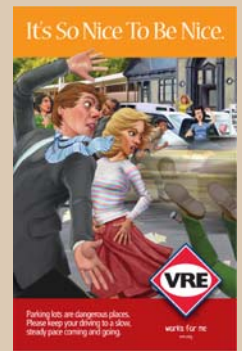
(Passengers observed onboard without valid tickets are subject to a fine of not less than \$150.)

2008 City of Manassas VRE Parking Permits Available December 5, 2007

The City of Manassas Treasurer's Office will be open until 8:00p on Wednesday, December 5, 2007 to issue VRE parking permits only.

The City of Manassas urges you to come to City Hall, Room 103 and take advantage of the extended hours on December 5th. Complete the application on the reverse side or obtain an application online at www.manassascity.org/treasurer.

They will process all mailed and faxed applications beginning Thursday, December 6.



Safety Sense & Courtesy Corner

Parking lot courtesy has become such an important issue that we are combining this issue's *Safety Sense* and *Courtesy Corner*.

Your commute doesn't end in our parking lot, and we know that there are some big time incentives to being the first one out of the lot. Don't trade time for safety. Racing out like Mario Andretti while other people are trying to merely get to their cars is not only dangerous, but is also lacking common courtesy. Keep your speeds low, take turns at intersections, and follow the directional arrows that are provided.

By following these simple rules, everyone is sure to get to their home or other final destination in a timely and safe manner.

Jan-June Permit # _____

July-Dec Permit # _____

Date issued _____

(For office use only)

City of Manassas, Virginia

2008 VRE COMMUTER PARKING PERMIT

2008 Permits must be displayed by January 1, 2008.

**You must complete the entire form. This permit is for commuters only.
The permit can be redeemed by:**

- Mailing this application to the City of Manassas, P. O. Box 512, Manassas, Va. 20108.
- Faxing this application to the Treasurer's Office at (703) 257-8303.
- Dropping this application in the night deposit box located at City Hall - 9027 Center Street.
- Visiting the Treasurer's Office located at 9027 Center Street, Room 103 between the hours of 8:30 - 5:00 Monday through Friday, (703) 257-8242.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

EMPLOYER'S
NAME _____

EMPLOYER'S
ADDRESS _____

DAYTIME ☎ _____

EVENING ☎ _____

A company photo I.D. badge may be presented in lieu of company owner/HR supervisor verification.

* Signature of Applicant

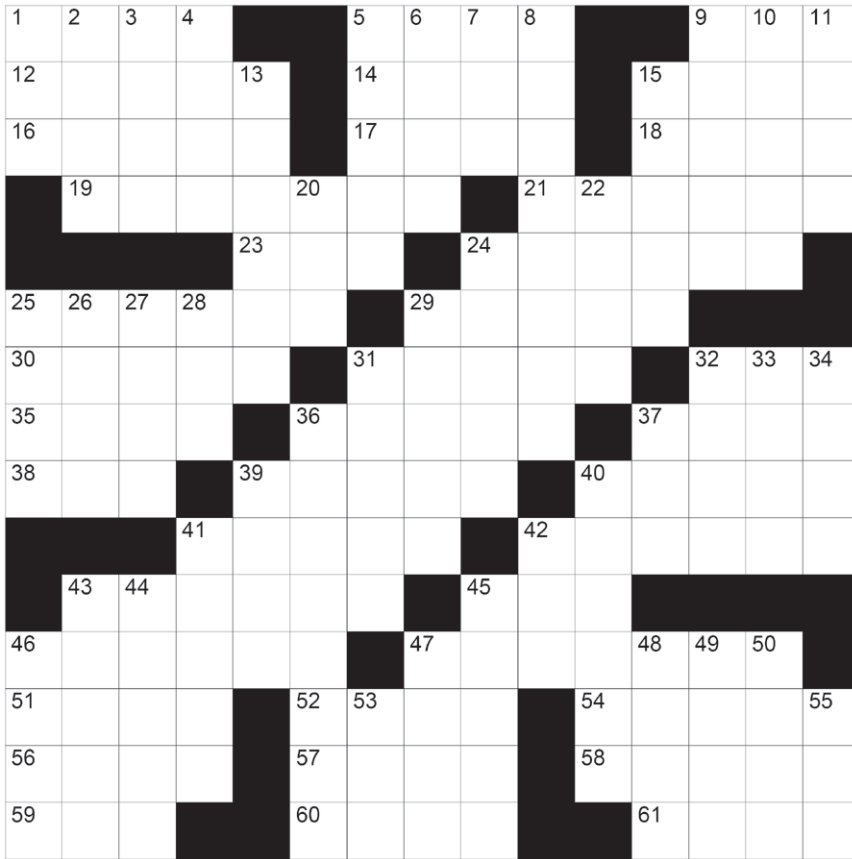
I am requesting a permit for the months of January through June, 2008 and July through December, 2008.

Employer HR supervisor
For employment verification purposes

Signature of Employer or HR Supervisor

* By signing above, you are affirming that use of this permit will be for its intended purpose of commuter parking. Misuse of this permit will result in the permit being revoked by the Manassas City police department.

Breakfast Fare



ACROSS

- 01. Breakfast fare
- 05. Breakfast fare
- 09. Breakfast fare
- 12. Apportion
- 14. Region
- 15. Frost
- 16. Steps for scaling a fence
- 17. Exchange for money
- 18. Rainbox
- 19. Work by Homer

- 21. Mother Superior
- 23. Toxic Shock Syndrome: Abbr.
- 24. Gospels
- 25. Breakfast drink
- 29. Sends a letter
- 30. Compelled
- 31. Breakfast fare
- 32. Breakfast topping
- 35. Dry
- 36. Heals

- 37. Bargain event
- 38. Western time zone: Abbr.
- 39. Rooms in a jail
- 40. Breakfast fare
- 41. Turkeys: sl.
- 42. Adorned
- 43. Domiciles
- 45. What's up ___?
- 46. Breakfast fare
- 47. Cereal topper
- 51. VP

DOWN

- 01. Owns
- 02. Palo ___
- 03. Slipped
- 04. Sacred
- 05. Comforts
- 06. Zane ___, western author
- 07. Solidify
- 08. Wages
- 09. Chartered
- 10. Wrong
- 11. Jumble
- 13. In a way, examined
- 15. A flowering shrub bearing currants or gooseberries
- 20. Direction: Abbr.
- 22. The ___ Jar
- 24. Enclosures
- 25. Fellow
- 26. Henley needs
- 27. Flutter
- 28. The central bank of the US

- 29. Fertilizes
- 31. Electric lamps
- 32. Flat tire necessity
- 33. Healing plant
- 34. Repair
- 36. Burial ground
- 37. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
- 39. Morse, for one
- 40. Grew to be
- 41. Tree trunks
- 42. Baseball's Drysdale
- 43. Love
- 44. Swiss capital
- 45. Author of The Divine Comedy
- 46. Monster
- 47. Financial institution
- 48. Immediately after
- 49. Pier
- 50. Swell of the sea
- 53. George and ___, TV show
- 55. College entrance test

- 52. Esprit
- 54. Lists of food
- 56. Jogs
- 57. Lease
- 58. Additional
- 59. Before
- 60. Harness for oxen
- 61. 27th U.S. President



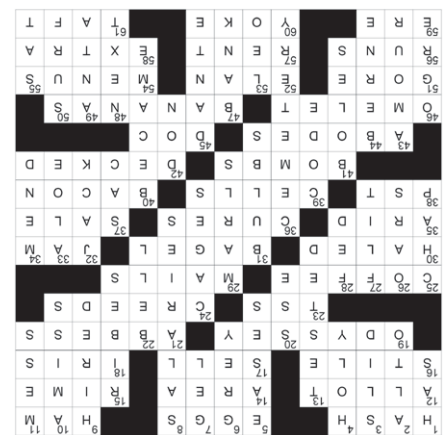
10000 Germanna Point Drive
Fredericksburg, VA 22408
540-891-3012

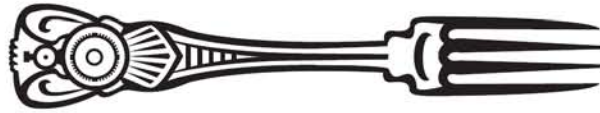
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