



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

Update



703-684-1001

www.vre.org

February 22, 2007

Editor's Note

For such a short month, February has been packed full of action. Snow days, holidays, public hearings, Burke Centre parking changes, the Quantico bridge. How much can one little month handle?

The month of February is an example of big things coming in small packages. While the snow was nice, we remain hopeful that the groundhog's prediction for an early spring will come true. We know that the other things that February brought will continue on. Public hearings end in February, but we will continue to collect comments through March 2. The Burke Centre parking situation will remain until construction is finished next year. The Quantico Bridge will bring much needed relief to the biggest bottleneck in VRE's service area, especially this summer.

Of course, 2007 has more in store for us. Meet the Management will start again in April. And, later this year, we'll be celebrating 15 years of service to Virginia. We look forward to sharing these important milestones with you.

Remembering the Golden Rule

Keeping Courtesy Alive and Well on VRE Trains

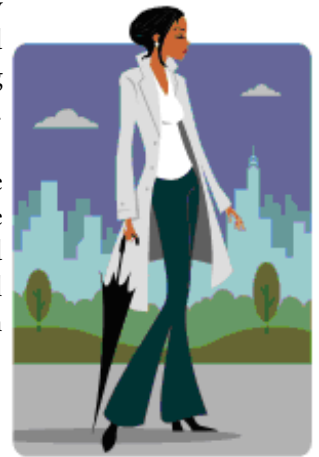
With the cold, wintry weather we've been having lately, our trains are filling with more than just cold passengers ... we're also seeing a lot more bulky coats, trailing scarves, and dripping boots. Unfortunately, the winter wear is frequently being given a seat all of its very own, and those wet, snowy boots are all too often flung over the railing on the second floor to drip on passengers below.

So, with Valentine's Day still (hopefully!) a recent fond memory, we thought it was time that we give a reminder that riding VRE really is nicest when we all try to share the love with our fellow passengers. Best of all, it's quite easy to do:

- Use just one seat per person; your stuff goes in the storage bins or in your lap.

- Drippy umbrellas and boots belong firmly on the floor.

- Cell phone conversations are best kept short and quiet—or not at all if you're riding in the Quiet Car.



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Let Your Voice Be Heard

Public Hearing Scheduled for Today!

VRE riders still have more opportunities to voice their opinions on two recent proposals by VRE—the proposal to eliminate the on-time service guarantee and the proposal to increase the step-up fee for Amtrak users from \$2 to \$10. We had a lively discussion at our first public hearing last Thursday. Thank you to everyone who attended and voiced your opinion on these important matters. We look forward



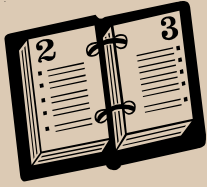
to hearing from more of you in the next week.

Both topics will be covered at a public hearing scheduled for today (February 22) at **Manassas City Hall**, City Council Chamber Room, 9027 Center Street, Manassas, VA 22110 from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

The remaining hearings will be held on:

Friday, February 23, 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. at the **Holiday Inn [L'Enfant]** "Saturn &

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Public Hearings Continue

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Venus” Room, 550 C. Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20024.

attn: Public Comment). All comments must be received by March 2, 2007.

Wednesday, February 28, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Potomac & Rappahannock Transportation Commission’s Board Room, 2nd Floor, 14700 Potomac Mills Road, Woodbridge, VA 22192.

Should the on-time service guarantee be eliminated, it will go into effect at the start of VRE’s 2008 fiscal year, July 2, 2007. Carriers of valid FRCs, however, will be able to continue using them until their expiration date.

In addition to the public hearings, interested parties can also comment via e-mail (publiccomment@vre.org), via U.S. mail (send your comments to **Public Comment**, VRE, 1500 King Street, Suite 202, Alexandria, Virginia 22314) or via fax (703-684-1313,

If the Amtrak step-up fee proposal is approved, it will become effective April 30, 2007.

All five public hearings are being conducted in locations accessible to persons with disabilities.

Upcoming Dates

Thu., February 22
Public Hearing
Manassas City Hall
7:00p – 9:00p

Fri., February 23
Public Hearing
Holiday Inn L’Enfant
12:00n – 2:00p

Wed., February 28
Public Hearing
PRTC Board Room
(Woodbridge)
7:00p – 9:00p

Wed., March 3
On-Line Forum
12:00n

Quantico Bridge Phase Two Completed Early *Two Tracks Available Over Quantico Creek!*

VRE announced that Fredericksburg Line rush hour service had been fully restored for this morning’s rush period. VRE had notified its passengers for several weeks of the impending signal and track work at the new Quantico Creek Bridge, which would have limited the ability of VRE to operate full service during the week of February 19th.

I am pleased to say that we are fully operational a week earlier than anticipated.”

New switches and signals were installed on site, a switch at the south end of the old bridge has been eliminated, and a portion of another switch north of the bridge has been installed. All of this work then had to be reconfigured or “cut-in” to properly allow for travel through the area.

VRE and its contractors, in conjunction with CSX, have worked non-stop since early Friday morning to connect the new track and perform the necessary signal testing to ensure the opening of the second track over Quantico Creek. CSX completed all of their final testing on Monday and after further review, it was determined that VRE would be able to go back to a full operation a full week in advance.

“CSX was totally committed with VRE and Amtrak on opening this vital new bridge on time. Thanks to everyone’s cooperation and active participation we were able to deliver a pleasant bonus to VRE and Amtrak by completing one week early. We at CSX are committed to continuing to work in this spirit to insure that VRE, Amtrak, and freight service will operate smoothly,” said Jay Westbrook, Senior Vice President for CSX.

“When we first announced the impact on our service for this cut-in work back in January, we estimated that it would take two weeks to fully restore the operational capacity of the railroad,” said VRE CEO Dale Zehner. “But after an around-the-clock effort to complete this work, we were able to restore service to normal levels for our customers much sooner.

The Quantico Creek Bridge project is the “crown jewel” in a series of capital projects designed to enhance service on the Fredericksburg line. Funding was provided by

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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.

Keeping VRE Trains Courteous

Continued from page 1

- Personal grooming is easier done at home.
- Watch your back[pack]. Bonking people on the head and shoulders as you make your way down the aisle is a bummer.
- Everyone wants to get home just as badly as you do; please drive safely in our parking lots and watch out for pedestrians.
- Mama doesn't work here; please bring your food containers, newspapers and other unmentionables off the train with you.
- Eagerness is a good trait, unless it blocks others from detraining. Please, don't queue.
- We know it's cold, but strike your matches and blow your smoke in designated smoking areas only.

Being courteous and respectful of other riders doesn't take much effort, but it makes everyone's ride much more enjoyable. Try it. You'll like it!

Quantico Bridge

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the federal government, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and VRE.

"I was delighted to receive the news that work was completed ahead of schedule and that we could restore our full service," said VRE Operations Board Chairman Dana Kauffman. "This is what happens when everyone is dedicated to improving the quality of service on the rails. More importantly, I believe that our customers will see our on-going

commitment to providing them top-notch service."

Two more operational changes during the completion of this project will occur in late March and early April. "We look forward to those two weeks going as smoothly as the last week and a half," adds Zehner. "The completion of this bridge will allow for better flexibility as CSX dispatches our trains. This new bridge will truly allow our trains to be better and faster."



A southbound Amtrak train crosses the new section of the Quantico Bridge Saturday morning (February 17). While more work needs to be done before the bridge is "complete," VRE, Amtrak and CSX trains will be able to use the new section.



Safety Sense

Most train related fatalities occur when drivers and pedestrians fail to be aware of their surroundings. They will watch one train pass and then step forward into the path of another as it travels in the opposite direction. Or worse yet, people will attempt to drive or walk around the arms of a lowered crossing gate and not succeed.

To avoid becoming a statistic, keep these simple things in mind:

Look both ways, several times. There is a reason we teach this to our children when they are about to cross the street: because it works. Second, listen for the sound of a train, its rumble, its bells, its horn. If in a car, turn down your radio. If walking, take off your headphones and listen.

For those who use the crossing in Quantico, it is even more important to make this a new habit. Now that the bridge is done, a new track has opened up and trains are traveling more frequently in both directions at the same time, and at faster speeds. Look, listen, and live.

Tips for Registering for Train Talk

On-Time Performance by Train for the month of January 2007

Fredericksburg Line

300 – 76%
 302 – 81%
 304 – 90%
 306 – 71%
 308 – 95%
 310 – 100%

301 – 90%
 303 – 90%
 305 – 100%
 307 – 71%
 309 – 81%
 311 – 95%
 313 – 90%

Overall - 87%

Manassas Line

322 – 95%
 324 – 86%
 326 – 95%
 328 – 90%
 330 – 90%
 332 – 95%

325 – 95%
 327 – 95%
 329 – 100%
 331 – 95%
 333 – 86%
 335 – 90%
 337 – 95%

Overall - 93%

Still not a member of VRE's Train Talk news service? Why not? It only takes a couple of minutes to join. To register, visit us at <http://traintalk.vre.org/vre> and click on the "register" button. The program takes you through several steps so that you can customize your account and only get emails that are important to you. Once registration is complete you will receive the latest information on schedule changes, service disruptions, seat notices and other news via email and cell phone.

Some things to keep in mind:

There are two types of Train Talk messages, urgent service related messages and newsletter type information. The service related messages can be sent so that you can receive longer messages through regular email or shorter versions on your cell phone or pager. The newsletter is only sent in a long format.

To receive short service messages, you will need to know the email address for your phone (i.e., Nextel phones end with @messaging.nextel.com). Once mobile is selected, enter an email address in the "email block". Then select plain text.

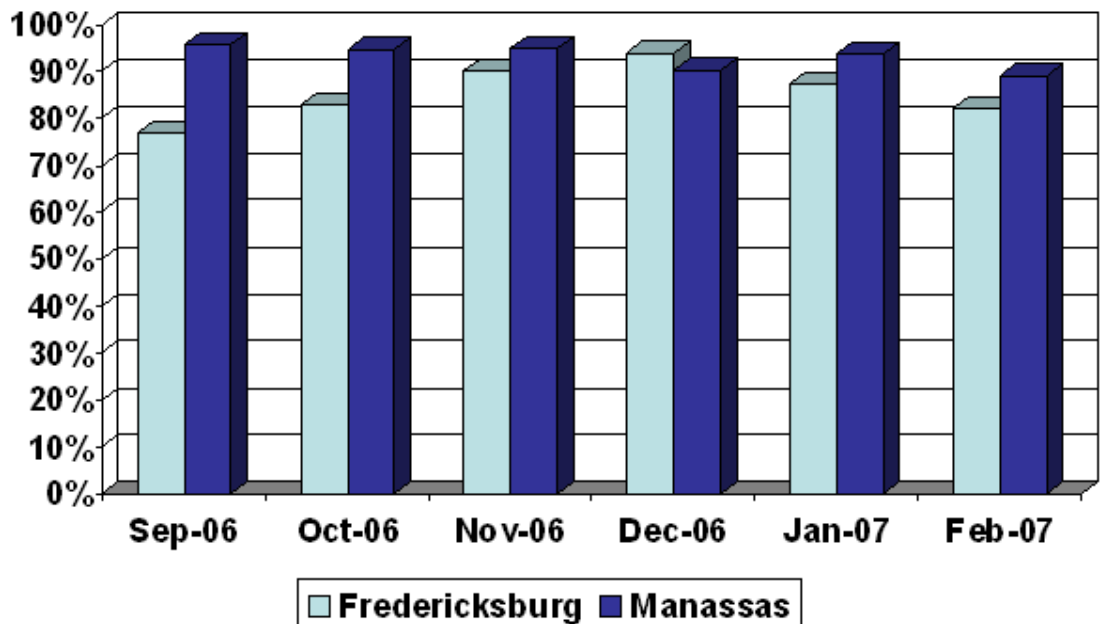
When designing your route, make sure you also tell the program which email addresses should receive the message and when. In the previous step, you created your contact information, but now, we need to know which one should get which messages.

Finally, the preference page allows you to choose some other important features. Would you like to know when an elevator is out of service? Choose the appropriate email address under the elevator notification.

Still confused? Feel free to contact a VRE Customer Advocate for assistance with signing on or troubleshooting at (703) 684-1001.

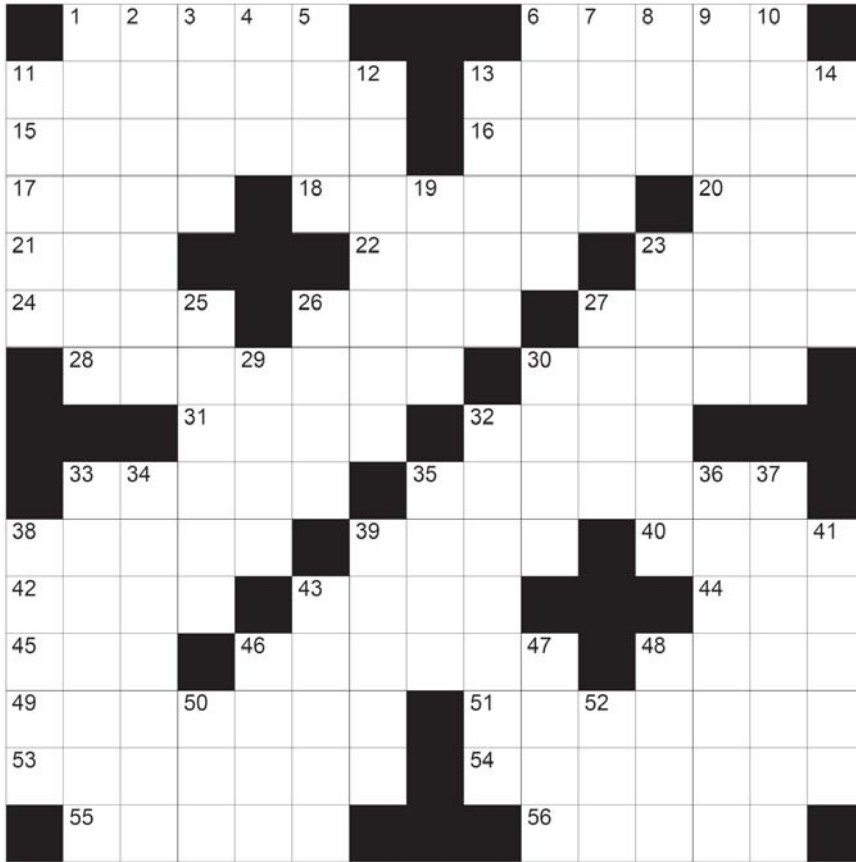
Overall On-Time Performance

*February numbers are through February 16, 2007



Crossword Puzzle of The Week

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DOWN

- 01. Performers
- 02. Beseech
- 03. Precaution
- 04. Honorable title: Turk.
- 05. Hankerings
- 06. Pitchers
- 07. Have the courage
- 08. Belonging to a thing
- 09. Hymn
- 10. In a way, promotes
- 11. Intended
- 12. Sculptures
- 13. Observes secretly
- 14. Citizens of Denmark
- 19. Bills
- 23. Gymnastic apparatus
- 25. Permeable
- 26. Has a seat
- 27. Mad: Sl.
- 29. Cartilaginous fishes
- 30. Long for
- 32. Ooze
- 33. Flags
- 34. Ignorant of
- 35. Small container
- 36. Withdraws
- 37. Pivots
- 38. Residence
- 39. Shapes
- 41. Embryos
- 43. Listens to
- 46. Turn
- 47. Crooned
- 48. Residence
- 50. Pasty
- 52. Follows sigma

ACROSS

- 01. Rot
- 06. Decree
- 11. Supervises
- 13. Swaddled
- 15. person who takes part in a competition
- 16. Theatrical role
- 17. Area unit
- 18. Sarcasm
- 20. Go fast
- 21. Born
- 22. Type of shirts
- 23. Rabbit
- 24. Snare
- 26. Tans
- 27. Flatfishes
- 28. Narratives
- 30. Skin openings
- 31. Darn: Sl.
- 32. Gentlemen
- 33. Floats
- 35. Thin layers of wood
- 38. Hand
- 39. Gnawing animals
- 40. Bastes
- 42. Collections of anecdotes
- 43. Frost
- 44. Lace
- 45. Direction: Abbr.
- 46. Young women
- 48. Swarming multitude
- 49. Alga
- 51. Schooled
- 53. Short trips
- 54. Paints
- 55. Transmits
- 56. Brand of jeans



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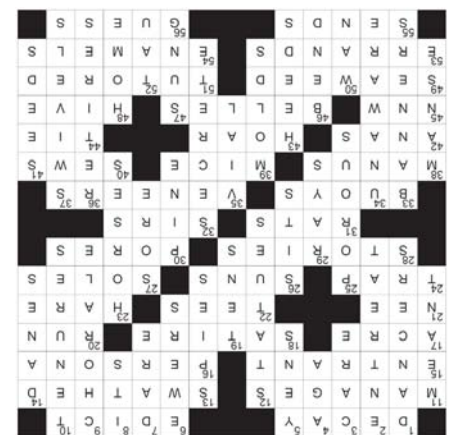
Cuddle up to your cozy gas fireplace or bake a recipe in your gourmet kitchen. Jog on our fitness trails or ride VRE to the office or your favorite destination.

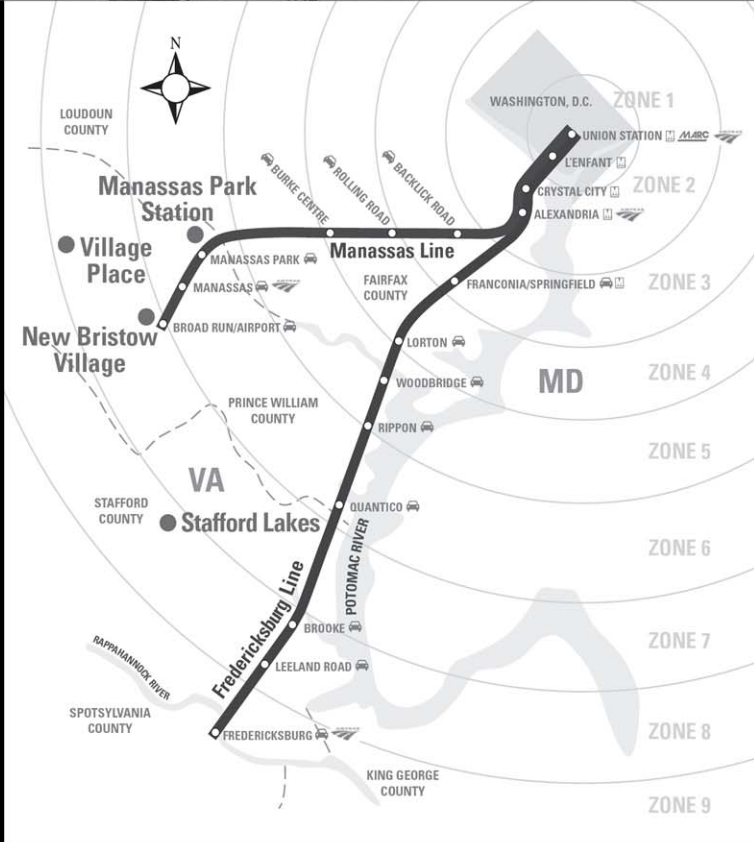
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