



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

Update



703-684-1001

www.vre.org

January 24, 2007

VRE Unveils New Rail Cars

Editor's Note:

So much has already happened this year! And, it's only January.

Last week, we unveiled our new cars. Two days later they went into service. Two more are expected to go in this week.

This is just the beginning. Several projects will soon reach some important milestones. One is the completion of the Quantico Bridge. This will result in some planned service disruptions during the "cut-in," but will bring much relief to the biggest bottleneck in the VRE service area.

Our Manassas garage project is moving along. The design is nearly complete, and we expect to put it out to bid in March with expected completion in 2008.

As we move through these milestones, we are committed to keeping our trains operating at the level that they have been at during the last several months.

Break out the bubbly, six new cab cars have arrived!

Yes, Virginia, it's true. VRE last week unveiled—and christened with bottles of white wine—the newest additions to the VRE fleet, taking a big step toward fulfilling our commitment to adding more state-of-the-art equipment and providing greater comfort for those who commute by VRE.

The rollout of these six railcars represents the first of 11 new cab signal railcars coming to VRE, and they will be followed by the delivery of 50 additional bi-level railcars starting in December 2007. When all equipment is operational, it will represent a 25 percent increase in seating capacity for the VRE.

The first two cars began running last week on the Manassas line: Train 324 (departing Broad Run at 5:45a), Train 328 (departing Broad Run at 6:40p), Train 331 (departing Union Station at 5:00p) and Train 333 (departing Union Station at 5:30p). These cars replaced the single level cars that were on the north end of the train (where the engineer sits in the morning). The remainder of the trains remained the same.

Fredericksburg line passengers will surely want to know why Manassas got first dibs on the new cars, and the answer is this: When we received our new cars in late November, they were shipped to our storage yard at Broad Run (on the Manassas line) because our storage yard

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Manassas Parking Garage in Planning Stages

Burke isn't the only station where parking will soon get a whole lot easier. VRE and the City of Manassas are currently in the final design stage of a five-story, approximately \$12 million parking garage that will be built just east of the Manassas rail station.

At press time, the project had gained approval from the Architectural Review Board, ensuring that the aesthetics and "look" of the building have been finalized. The less than one-acre site, which currently houses

two separate businesses, has also been purchased by the City of Manassas, and the City is currently consolidating the lots for parking garage use. Once that process is finalized, the site will be turned over to VRE for construction to begin. (As with the majority of our other capital projects, VRE is managing the project with



On the left, an artist's rendering of the north and west sides of the Manassas parking garage. The Depot building is in the distance on the left.

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New Cab Cars Introduced

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Upcoming Dates

Thu., January 25
Planned New Car on
306/305

Fri., January 26
Planned New Car on
308/311

Feb. 12 – Feb.16
Phase One of Quantico
Bridge
Mid-Day Train
Replaced with Bus
Bridge

Mon., February 19
Presidents' Day
No VRE Service

Feb. 20 – Feb. 23
Phase Two of Quantico
Bridge
Limited Schedule
Mid-Day Train
Replaced with Bus
Bridge

on the Fredericksburg line, Crossroads, didn't have the room. As a result, our warranty, inspection, testing and training teams set up shop at Broad Run, and because of logistics issues too involved to get into, it was easier and faster to get the first two cars started on the Manassas line.

Now that the first two cars are in service, we're moving our new car crews to Crossroads so that Fredericksburg can get its fair share of new cars, too. In fact, we plan to have two new cars in service on the Fredericksburg line by the end of this week : Thursday, January 25- Train 306 (departing Fredericksburg at 6:35a) and Train 305 (departing Union Station 4:05p) and Friday, January 26 - Train 308 (departing Fredericksburg at 7:15a) and Train 311 (departing Union Station at 6:00p).

Of course, the rail cars themselves have no idea that so many are vying for them, but they certainly got the royal treatment at their christening, with several elected officials and dignitaries from CSX, Norfolk Southern and VRE in attendance.

"Anyone who lives here knows that mass transit is critical to Northern Virginia," said Congressman Moran, "and these new bi-level rail cars are an important step in what I hope will be a series of steps taken by VRE to continue to help ease congestion, decrease pollution and improve the quality of life for all of Virginia's citizens."

"Without question, all of us—the Board, members of Congress and state officials—have worked hard to ensure that VRE gets these much needed railcars," said Congressman Tom Davis. "As far as I am concerned, this can't happen fast enough for the riders of my district and really throughout the region, who are clamoring for more seats on VRE as we try to find ways to bring meaningful transportation options to the table."

"The new bi-level railcars that we christen here today paves the way for the next generation of capacity improvements as set forth by VRE's strategic plan," said VRE Board Chairwoman Maureen

Caddigan. "These new cars are a smarter and more efficient use of existing track space, allowing us to maximize seating capacity—and, of course, offer more comfortable seats at the same time—into the existing rail infrastructure."

Each of the bi-level cars will be equipped with more spacious 2-2 seating in the lower level and were designed with input from VRE passengers. The cars also will provide passengers with the latest amenities, including push-button doors, automated destination signs, automated station stop announcements, and state-of-the-art heating and air conditioning systems. All of the cars will be fully compatible with VRE's existing rail fleet, infrastructure, facilities and stations.



In attendance at the Christening Ceremony: First row from the left - Supervisor McConnell, Supervisor Barg, Norfolk Southern Assistant Director of Operations Mark Owens, Congressman Davis, Congressman Moran, CSX Assistant Vice President Jay Westbrook. Second row from the left: Supervisor Covington and Mayor Euille. Third row: Supervisor Milde, Supervisor Bulova, Supervisor Caddigan, and VRE CEO Dale Zehner.



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Quantico Bridge Updates Now Online

Riders on the Fredericksburg line have been eagerly watching the progress of the Quantico Bridge project, knowing that once the bridge, and its second track, opens for rail traffic, one of the most serious railroad bottlenecks between Richmond and Washington, D.C. will be eliminated—and the days of having to wait for other trains to clear the bridge will be over.

But with any big jump in growth comes growing pains, and as VRE and CSX get ready to start signal testing and start the “cut-in” phase (tying the new track in with the existing track) on February 10 and again at the end of March, railroad officials are warning that schedule disruptions will occur, primarily because in order to properly test the track, some signals will need to be temporarily suspended.

To keep up with the many changes likely to occur during the weeks preceding the cut-in phases and during the actual testing, VRE will dedicate a page of its Web site at www.vre.org to the Quantico Bridge project.

In addition to the specific week by week schedules, the site will also include explanations as to why the changes are being made, including daily project updates, graphics of how the tracks will be realigned, press releases about the project, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), a photo archives, and an archives of all the articles written about the history and progress of the bridge project.



The final steps bringing the new Quantico Bridge into fruition will begin in the next few weeks, causing some planned service disruptions.

“We wish that we could adjust the schedule just once for this phase of the project, but because the testing and cutting-in will evolve over the course of several weeks, the level of disruption will change depending on what’s being done that day,” explained VRE CEO Dale Zehner. “The Web site will be updated every day to ensure that everyone commuting over the Quantico Bridge will be fully prepared and can plan their day accordingly. We’re very optimistic that the long-term improvements in service that will be achieved because of this bridge will far outweigh the short-term disruptions that we’ll experience over the next two months.”

The Quantico Bridge site is being dubbed “Bigger, Better, Faster” in a nod to the fact that a bigger bridge will mean better service, which will mean that everyone will get to work and home faster. A link from the main Web site at www.vre.org will take online visitors to the site.

A seat notice outlining the “nitty gritty” details of the schedule changes and other details was placed on all Fredericksburg line seats yesterday (Tuesday, January 23). VRE will also provide regular updates through its e-mail newsletter, Train Talk.

Note to Manassas Line passengers: the Quantico Bridge construction will not affect Manassas Line service. During the periods mentioned above, Manassas Line trains will continue to operate on their regular schedule.



Courtesy Corner

The next time you’re out walking about, pay attention to what you are walking on each and every day. You just might notice that the ground isn’t exactly clean, with all of the mud, grass, wet leaves, gum, glass, and general yuck.

As any mother will tell you, this stuff sticks to the bottom of your shoes and you track it around with you all day long. Shoes are dirty, and no one really wants to sit in anything dirty. Be respectful. Please. Please. Please, keep your feet off the seats. We know your mother raised you better.

Manassas Parking Garage

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On-Time Performance by Train for the month of December 2006

Fredericksburg Line

- 300 – 95%
- 302 – 95%
- 304 – 95%
- 306 – 95%
- 308 – 95%
- 310 – 80%
- 301 – 100%
- 303 – 100%
- 305 – 100%
- 307 – 85%
- 309 – 95%
- 311 – 90%
- 313 – 90%

Overall - 94%

Manassas Line

- 322 – 95%
- 324 – 90%
- 326 – 95%
- 328 – 80%
- 330 – 85%
- 332 – 85%
- 325 – 85%
- 327 – 90%
- 329 – 100%
- 331 – 85%
- 333 – 90%
- 335 – 100%
- 337 – 95%

Overall - 90%

close coordination with the City.)

Meanwhile, the garage design is underway, with expectations that it will be finished by the end of February. At the end of March, the project will go out to bid, and construction is scheduled to begin early this summer. The garage should be completed by late summer 2008.

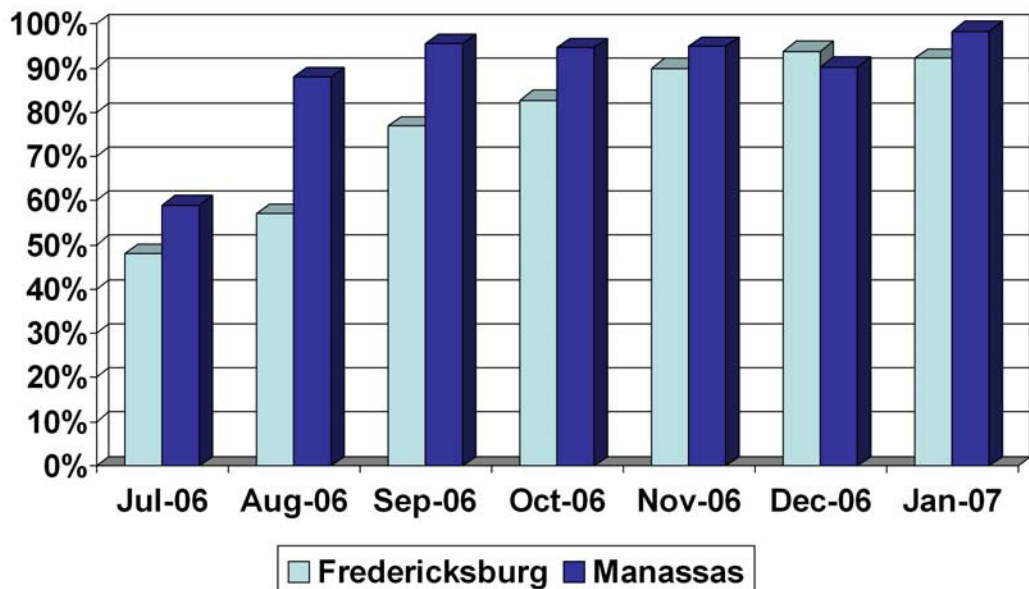
The garage will be jointly owned by the City of Manassas and VRE, resulting in shared cost and shared use upon completion: The City will retain the top two levels of the garage for public use (totaling 210 spaces), while the bottom three levels will be reserved for VRE commuters (totaling 310 spaces), with 10 of the total spaces being handicapped accessible. On nights and weekends when VRE is not operating, all five levels will be open to the public.

The garage will be located across Battle Street, with one side of it adjoining one of the Manassas station's three platforms. Access will therefore be extremely easy; commuters who park on the ground level can access the platform immediately, while those parked on the second and third levels can just take an elevator down to the platform.

Best of all, construction disruptions should be minimal, as the existing parking lots will not be affected by construction. It may at times be necessary to shut down the platform next to the construction site, but since there are three separate platforms at the Manassas station, such closures should not affect commuters boarding or detraining.

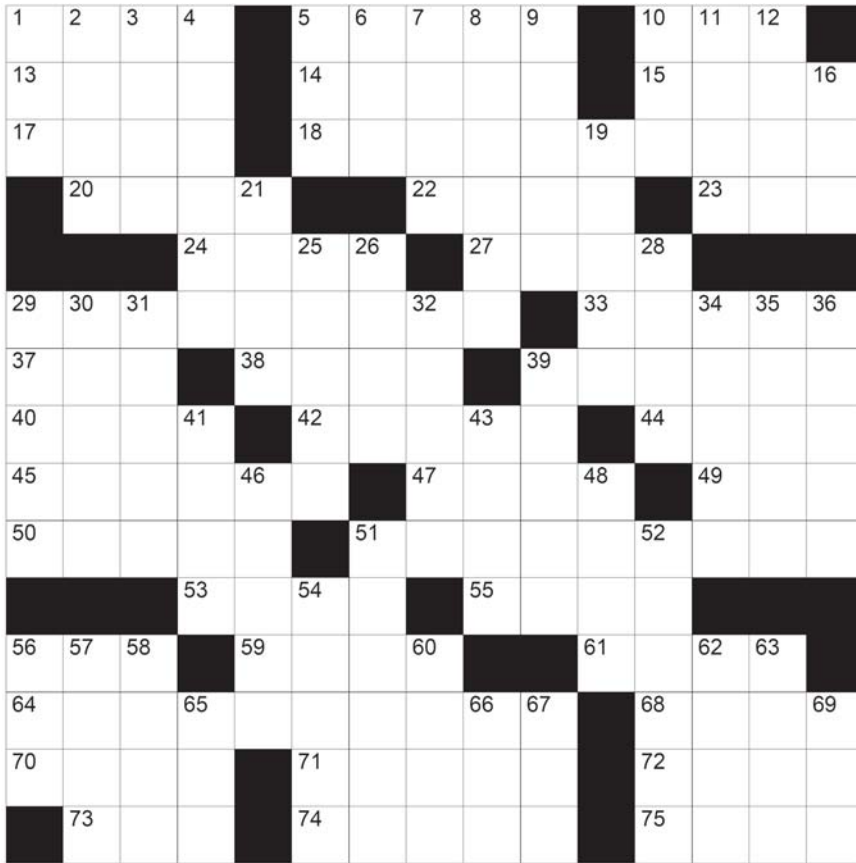
Overall On-Time Performance

*January numbers are through January 19, 2007



Crossword Puzzle of The Week

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ACROSS

- 01. The basics
- 05. Cleansing agent
- 10. Complete
- 13. Level
- 14. Join together
- 15. Foray
- 17. Actor Pitt
- 18. Ornamental
- 20. Child that is a terror
- 22. Door opener
- 23. Born: Fr.
- 24. Diplomacy

- 27. Test
- 29. Dining room furniture
- 33. Not hollow
- 37. Excessively
- 38. Fly alone
- 39. Open ___
- 40. Small hotels
- 42. Evade
- 44. Toothpaste container
- 45. Roistered
- 47. Entirely dependable

- 49. An explosion that fails to occur
- 50. Leftover
- 51. Lessens
- 53. Tree trunk
- 55. After bath powder
- 56. London radio station
- 59. Tin containers
- 61. Grocery bag
- 64. Standard; measure
- 68. Restaurant bill
- 70. Up to the time of
- 71. Mountain lakes

DOWN

- 01. Business woman
- 02. Part of a fish hook
- 03. Despot
- 04. Decorous
- 05. A partially opened flower
- 06. Smallest whole number
- 07. ___ Nelson, singer
- 08. Repented
- 09. Copied
- 10. Mr. Linkletter
- 11. Reclined
- 12. Not recorded or taped
- 16. River in NE Scotland
- 19. To lower in rank
- 21. Chits
- 25. Made a bird sound
- 26. Not short
- 28. Greatest number
- 29. Mixes
- 30. A dialect of Ancient Greek
- 31. One who gives

- 32. Waken
- 34. Praises
- 35. Saturate
- 36. Transfers property
- 39. Junipero ___, Spanish priest
- 41. Wound with a knife
- 43. Heating tube
- 46. Era
- 48. Slippery ones
- 51. Type of floss
- 52. Small tree or shrub
- 54. Remains
- 56. British thermal unit: Abbr.
- 57. 007
- 58. Obviously contrived to charm
- 60. Tender
- 62. Cut with a tool
- 63. High flyer
- 65. Stocky short-legged harness horse
- 66. Direction: Abbr.
- 67. Clairvoyance
- 69. Levy

- 72. The 9th letter of the Greek alphabet
- 73. Actress Reynolds, for short
- 74. Go to bed
- 75. The highest point

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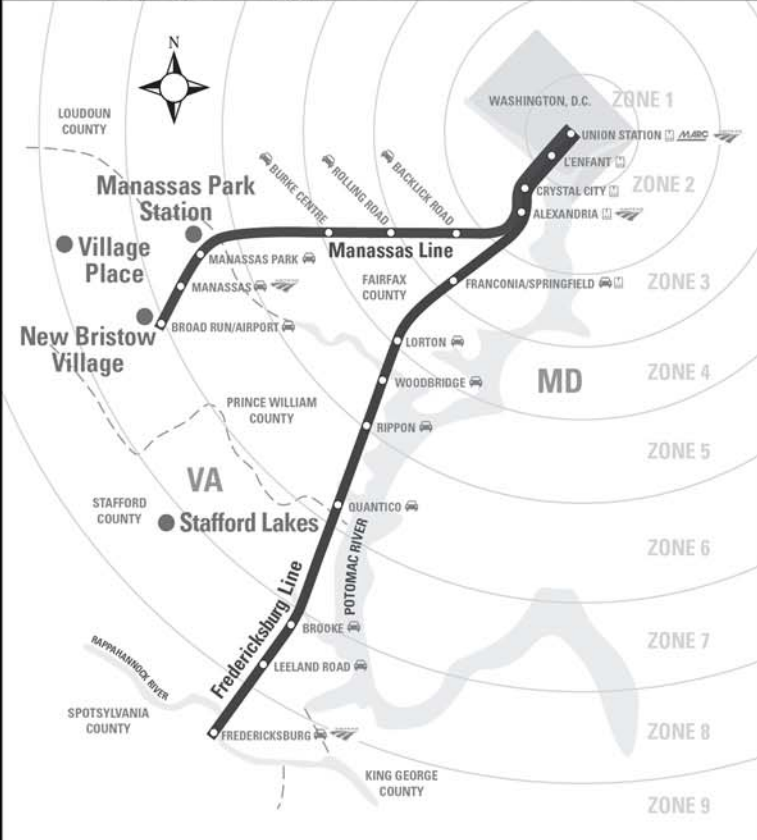
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