



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

Update



703-684-1001

www.vre.org

July 12, 2007

Happy 15th Anniversary, VRE!

Editor's Note:

It's hot out there! While it may cool off a bit later in the week, the dog days of summer are bound to return. With that in mind, we have some advice on how to keep cool as you commute in the intense heat. While we are working on keeping our A/C running up to speed, you can do your part to keep cool.

Our 15th Anniversary celebration is in full swing. We already have several winners from our trivia and "Where's the VRE Logo" contests. It's not too late to win. We are accepting entries for our essay contest until July 20, and our trivia and logo contests will continue through mid-October. If none of those are your cup of tea (iced, of course, in this heat), then stay tuned. Other chances to win will be announced later this summer.

Who knew that in just 15 years, we'd go from providing just over 4,300 trips a day to nearly 15,000 trips a day ... or go from 16 trains a day without mid-day options to our current schedule of 29 trains a day ... or that people would routinely tell us that they love riding VRE so much that they decided where to buy their next home based solely on how close it was to a VRE station! But sure enough, it's all come true over the past 15 years, and while we're the first to admit that we may have had some ups and downs over the last decade and a half, we're pretty darn proud of our record of serving thousands of Virginians' commuting needs for so long.

And to help celebrate, we thought that it made more sense to plan a series of mini celebrations the whole summer long, rather than one big bonanza of a party that would a) cost more money than any of us care to spend, b) might be held on a day that you couldn't attend, or that c) would end up being on a typical Washington "hot, hazy and humid" (read: miserable) summer day when everyone would rather be chillin' inside than trying to cheer outside.

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Keeping Cool in the Summer Heat

Heat advisories, ozone warning days, and humidity that can kill a good hair day in one second flat. Ahhh, summer in Washington.

But before you decide that it's hopeless to combat it, think again. There really are some strategies you can employ that really can take the heat off and can make a big difference in how comfortable you are as you wait on the platform or find yourself in a crowded train.

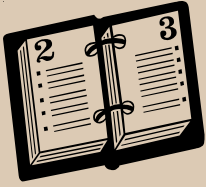
1) Your mom (and doctor) is right: Cool and plentiful water really is your best friend during the dog days of summer. Be sure to bring along a water bottle, and consider



toting it in a small, insulated bag to keep it cool. And remember, drink the water even if you don't feel thirsty, because thirst kicks in only when one percent to two percent of body weight is already lost. (Remember too that caffeine and alcoholic beverages will dehydrate you rather than hydrate you!)

2) Look into small, battery operated hand-held fans and misters sold in many drugstores and online to give yourself a cooling break. Or, carry along a washcloth so that you can wet it with your water bottle and pat your

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Upcoming Dates

July 18
Meet the Management
Burke Centre
All Morning Trains

July 25
Meet the Management
Rippon
All Morning Trains

August 1
Meet the Management
Rolling Road
All Morning Trains

On-Line Forum
12 noon

August 8
Meet the Management
Woodbridge
All Morning Trains

August 15
Meet the Management
Backlick Road
All Morning Trains



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.

15th Anniversary

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So, with that in mind, we've decided on a series of little things, like designing a new special 15th Anniversary logo, which you'll see posted on just about everything this summer. And, we'll post information on Train Talk (our e-newsletter), on our Web site, and in this newsletter about some inexpensive but (hopefully!) fun contests we'll sponsor along the way.

In fact, the first two events were kicked off last week: For the writers among us, we're sponsoring an essay contest in which we're asking interested riders to tell us, in 100 words or less, what VRE means to them. We will choose one grand-prize winner from each line to receive a free monthly ticket on VRE. The runners up will receive a VRE 15th Anniversary edition tote bag with two Free Ride Certificates (FRCs) inside. All winning entries will be published in the VRE Update and on the Web site.

You may enter as many times as you like until July 20th. Enter by sending an e-mail to

gotrains@vre.org with "Essay Contest" in the subject line, or send it by snail mail to Ann King, Virginia Railway Express, 1500 King St., Suite 202, Alexandria, VA 22314. Be sure to include your name, which line you ride, daytime telephone number, e-mail address and mailing address.



We'll also run a trivia contest every week for the next 15 weeks, with a question sent out via Train Talk. The 15th person to e-mail gotrains@vre.org with the correct answer will win a 15th Anniversary prize. Please be

sure to put Trivia Contest in the subject line and include your name, which line you ride, daytime telephone number, e-mail address and mailing address.

More contests and ways to celebrate will be announced as the summer progresses. Good luck, and as always, thanks for riding with us. We look forward to celebrating many more years of service with you.

Ask VRE

Dear VRE,

The Union Station vendor is still not taking credit cards, this happened last month. When is this problem going to be fixed? This is creating an inconvenience for people buying tickets.

Unraveled at Union Station

Dear Unraveled,

We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience you have experienced making credit card purchases with our vendor at Union Station. The credit card reader had to be replaced. The one originally used with the equipment is no longer manufactured. VRE is working to procure another type of card reader that can be

integrated into our system. Unfortunately, we are currently unable to provide a time frame as to when the repairs will be completed.

However, all VRE tickets are available at the TVMs (except for special discounted tickets and TLCs). If you are using Metrocheks, you can submit them to VRE for reimbursement to your credit card for TVM purchased tickets. See our website at http://www.vre.org/service/metrochek_redemption_form.pdf to print the form and mail them to VRE.

We appreciate your patience as we get this issue resolved.

Your Customer Advocate

Keeping Cool

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wrists, face and the back of your neck for a quick cool down.

- 3) Wear lightweight, light-colored and loose-fitting clothing.
- 4) If you can't ditch your tie and jacket, consider wearing wool. Huh? Wool? Word has it that lightweight worsted wool—one that weighs no more than eight to nine ounces per yard—is best during the summer and ultimately matters more than the color of the fabric. Some blends, such as worsted wool with cotton or mohair, or wool and linen, can also work well.
- 5) Ditch jackets and pants with linings for the summer, as the lining can trap heat in hot weather.
- 6) Seek shade, even if it means carrying a light umbrella or parasol to help ward off the worst of the sun's rays. Wear a hat with a wide brim.
- 7) Don't avoid the outdoors completely: going outdoors regularly can help build up your heat tolerance. Did you know that to prepare for summer athletics, it takes 10 to 14 days of regular exercise in the heat, slowly building up to intense workouts at the hottest times of the day, before an athlete can safely (and comfortably) work

out in the heat? The same basic notion applies to just being out in the heat ... if you're not used to it, you're more at risk for heat-related illness.

If you still get overheated, pay attention to what your body is telling you. The warning signs of heat exhaustion vary, but they're often hard to ignore as they may include:

- Heavy sweating
- Muscle cramps
- Weakness
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Paleness, tiredness and dizziness.

Heat stroke is more serious, with warning signs including:

- An extremely high body temperature (above 103° Fahrenheit, orally)
- Unconsciousness
- Dizziness, nausea and confusion
- Red, hot and dry skin (no sweating)
- Rapid and strong pulse
- Throbbing headache.

The summer heat is not something to ignore, so please take precautions and don't overdo it. Our trains are air conditioned, most platforms are shaded, and the walks from train to car are not long. Please, take it easy when the mercury climbs to dangerous levels!

Courtesy Corner

This Courtesy Corner is on behalf of scratched and dinged vehicles in VRE parking lots.

These scratched and dinged vehicles would like to ask people to please be gentle with them as they do not like to be scratched, nor do they like to be dinged.

Please be careful when opening your vehicle doors adjacent to another car. Likewise, when walking in between two cars, please make sure that your belongings do not bang or rub alongside either of the vehicles.

They would like to remind folks that they are somebody's vehicle...not somebody's counter top. So please do not place your belongings upon them unless you're the one who purchased them.

By being mindful of your surroundings, all of our cars can keep their current shine.



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