



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

Update



703-684-1001

www.vre.org

June 14, 2007

Editor's Note:

As the days have gotten warmer recently, it seems that tempers have flared as well. We want to remind you that taking matters into your own hands is not in anyone's best interest.

If you find yourself in a disagreement or verbal altercation with a fellow passenger, your best option is to remove yourself from the situation and find a conductor. As the authority on the train, the conductor is in the best position to handle passengers who may be talking on their phone in the quiet car or have been otherwise difficult.

We want your commute to be the least stressful part of your day.

GRTC Launches Express Bus Service Between Richmond & Fredericksburg

Long-distance commutes have become the norm for countless Americans, and in this area, the corridor between Richmond, Fredericksburg and D.C. has become an increasingly popular—and crowded—path for commuters. Traveling between the three cities has typically required cobbling together a patchwork of carpools, vanpools and mass transit, and then mixing in a generous helping of patience and fortitude. But thanks to a new partnership between Richmond-based GRTC Transit System, Martz National Coach Works and VRE, life has just become a whole lot easier for a whole lot of people.



On May 21, GRTC Transit launched a new Express Service between Richmond and Fredericksburg, utilizing two 55-seat motor coach buses equipped with Wi-Fi technology, convenient overhead storage, bathrooms, and luxurious seating. The Route 96 Richmond-Fredericksburg Express operates two morning trips and two afternoon trips

Monday through Friday between Richmond and the VRE station in Fredericksburg. The

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FRC Changes to Take Effect July 1

In the last issue, we alerted you to the change that will occur with the Step-Up tickets on July 1. In addition to the Step-Ups, the FRC program will get an overhaul starting July 1, as well.

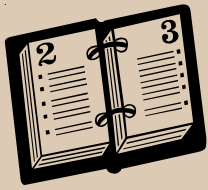
Rather than completely discontinuing the FRC program, as originally proposed, our Operations Board voted to make the program more efficient, and change the policy to say that instead of distributing FRCs when trains are 30 minutes late, we'll distribute them when

trains are 60 minutes late. In addition, in order to make the program more efficient overall, we have made some administrative changes that will affect our riders.



- FRCs will no longer be exchanged after their expiration date. In other words, use 'em or lose 'em. All of the FRCs currently in circulation will expire on July 1, 2008, giving everyone plenty of time to use them.

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Upcoming Dates

June 20
Meet the Management
Brooke
All Morning Trains

June 27
Meet the Management
Manassas Park
All Morning Trains

July 4
No VRE Service
No Independence Day
Express

July 11
Meet the Management
Quantico
All Morning Trains

On-Line Forum
12:00 noon

July 18
Meet the Management
Burke Centre
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.

New Express Bus From Richmond

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service also helps those going to Richmond. In the morning, commuters from Richmond can travel to Fredericksburg (and then hop aboard a VRE train to continue their journey toward D.C. if necessary), and commuters who live in Fredericksburg, but work in Richmond, can then board the bus for the trip back to Richmond. In the evening, the whole process repeats itself, in reverse.

“Our Express service in and around Richmond is our fastest growing demographic, with an increase of 14 percent in just the last year,” said John Lewis, GRTC Transit System’s CEO. “With this increase in demand, GRTC is very excited about our new Express service between Richmond and the VRE in Fredericksburg. There are a growing number of individuals who commute between these two cities every day, and we are pleased to be able to provide a more convenient transportation option to them.”

“Providing an express service between Richmond and Fredericksburg’s VRE station has been in the works for about two years,” added Kathy Shaw-Clary, director of marketing and public relations for GRTC, “and although we don’t have exact statistics about the people who make the trip daily, inquiries and requests for such a service, plus growing anecdotal evidence that large numbers of people are commuting between the three cities, have made it very clear that an express bus would meet the needs of a rapidly expanding demographic.”

In addition to making a long commute far more comfortable, riding the bus will be an economical choice as well, particularly given today’s rising fuel costs. The one-way fare is

\$6.00, exact change only (GRTC will also accept “Go Card” fares).

In the evenings, VRE riders will also be pleased to know that if a train is running late, the bus will wait for it to arrive.

A.M. Trips Weekdays

NORTHBOUND			SOUTHBOUND				
BROOK & PARHAM to VRE			VRE to BROAD & 9TH				
Brook & Parham	Carmel Church	VRE	VRE	Rte. 208 Lot	Carmel Church	Jackson & 4th	Broad & 9th
A	B	C	C	D	B	E	F
A.M. 4:15	4:45	5:30	5:30	5:40	6:15	6:45	6:55
5:05	5:30	6:15	6:15	6:30	7:15	7:45	7:55

P.M. Trips Weekdays

NORTHBOUND				SOUTHBOUND		
BROAD & 9TH to ROUTE 208 LOT				VRE to BROOK & PARHAM		
Brook & 9th	4th & Jackson	Carmel Church	Route 208 Lot	VRE	Carmel Church	Brook & Parham
F	G	B	D	C	B	A
P.M. 4:05	4:15	5:05	5:30	5:45	6:20	6:55
5:05	5:15	6:00	6:30	6:55	7:30	7:55

“Our buses are of course on a schedule, but our bus drivers know the VRE train numbers and schedules of the trains they’re waiting on,” explained Buddy Scherer, special projects manager for GRTC. “So if a train is running late, they’ll adjust their schedule accordingly to ensure that no one is stranded. We’ll also relay the information to our customer service representatives, so that if other passengers waiting at another bus stop call in to our main number [804.358.GRTC] to check on the status of the bus, they’ll also be informed of the train delay.”

For additional information about this new service, or for the complete route schedule and information, please call the GRTC Customer Service Center at (804) 358-GRTC, or visit <http://ridegrtc.com> (click on “Get on the Bus” and then “schedules.” Select the “Richmond – Fredericksburg Express” option in the drop down menu).

FRC Changes to Take Effect July 1

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- Conductors will continue to distribute FRCs at the time of the delay, but if for some reason they're not able to distribute them, FRC requests will then be handled by mail. Distribution will not occur on the next service day.

- If the FRCs are passed out on-board the day of the delay, it will be the passenger's responsibility to follow up with the conductor prior to disembarking the train, or sooner, to let him or her know that you didn't get one, especially if you detrain at stations like Quantico or Lorton in the morning, before FRCs are handed out.

- FRC requests submitted for delayed trains when distribution has occurred on board will not be honored.

- VRE will reserve the right to deny a written request for any reason. Sadly, we've found that some riders are fraudulently using our Daily Download online report to see what trains are late, and then they're claiming they were on that train even if they weren't.

With these changes to the FRC program, VRE will be able to continue this amenity. These changes will cut our costs by two thirds, yet will not create any disincentives for on-time performance. We consider a train to be late if it arrives just six minutes behind schedule at its final destination. This change is solely designed to cut costs while continuing to provide the goodwill benefits of our FRCs.

Railroad Jargon 101

While we often try not to use railroad jargon too often, sometimes it does slip out. The list below includes definitions for many words that we use in the office on a regular basis. Certainly, this is not an exhaustive list, but is meant to give you a taste of what jargon exists in the rail industry.

"B" End of a Car – The end on which the hand brake is located.

Ballast – Selected rock material placed on the roadbed for the purpose of holding the track in line.



Cab – The space in the locomotive unit containing the operating controls and seats for the engine crew. Can also be located in select passenger cars, known as cab cars.

Conductor – Railroad employee in charge of the train.

Continuous rail – Rails of standard length which are welded together at the ends to form a single rail of a considerable length.

Coupler – A device located at both ends of all cars in a standard location to provide a means for connecting one rail car to another.

Deadhead – Train going from one location to another without taking on passengers.

Dispatcher – Employee responsible for directing and controlling the movement of trains.

Engineer – Operator of a locomotive.

Extra board – A list of unassigned employees available to work, normally in the place of the regularly assigned crew.

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Courtesy Corner

Pay Attention to Your Surroundings

If you carry a purse, a backpack, a jacket or anything with a strap onto the train, then this message is for you.

Since most people don't enjoy being struck by someone else's belongings, please pay attention to both your possessions and to the people around you.

As aisles are narrow, it is best to walk down them with your belongings in front of you, so that they don't bang the heads or shoulders of your fellow passengers as you go past.

Likewise, if you need to put on a jacket, it would be better to do so after you have detrained, so as not to drape it across the face of someone else.

By being a little more careful and paying a little more attention, you won't become known as a backpack smacker.

Railroad Jargon 101

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Safety Sense

Take Your Time Detraining

Either you're rushing to that early morning meeting, or it's been a long day and you can't wait to get home. We realize that you are anxious to get to your final destination after reaching your station, but rushing to get on or off the train is unsafe.

As the steps on most trains are steep, it is easy to lose your balance if you do not board or detrain in a slow and orderly fashion.

Most slips, trips and falls happen when people are moving too fast. Stay safe - don't rush.

Flagman – An extra crewman used to flag rail traffic around construction sites.

Frog – A device made of rail sections that permits the wheels on one track to cross another rail of an intersecting track. Resembles an "X" or a frog with legs extended.

Gauge – The distance between the heads of the rails, measured at a point 5/8" below the top of the rails. Standard gauge in the United States and Canada measures 4 feet and 8.5 inches.

Grade Crossing – A crossing at the same level, either between track of different railways or between railway tracks and public crossings (highways and roads).

Hot Box – An overheated axle bearing caused by excessive friction between bearing and axle due to lack of lubricant or the presence of foreign matter.

Hot Box Detector – A wayside infrared sensing instrument used to identify overheated axle bearings, usually placed about every 20 miles.

Hours of Service Law – The Federal statute which provides that all train and engineer crews must be relieved of duty after 12 hours of continuous service.

Maintenance of Way Equipment – Equipment designed for working on tracks and railroad right-of-ways.

Rail – A length of track, usually 39 feet long.

Right of Way – In the strictest sense, land or water rights necessary for the roadbed and its accessories. However, it is now loosely used to describe property owned and/or operated over by a railroad.

Single Track – A main track upon which trains are operated in both directions.

Switch (Turnout) – A device consisting of two movable rails, necessary connections, and operating parts designed to turn a train from the track on which it is running to another track.

Train Order – A written mandatory directive governing the operation of trains that is issued by the train dispatcher.

We would like to thank CSX for the use of their railroad training materials. While these are standard definitions throughout the industry, much of the wording came from a manual developed by them.

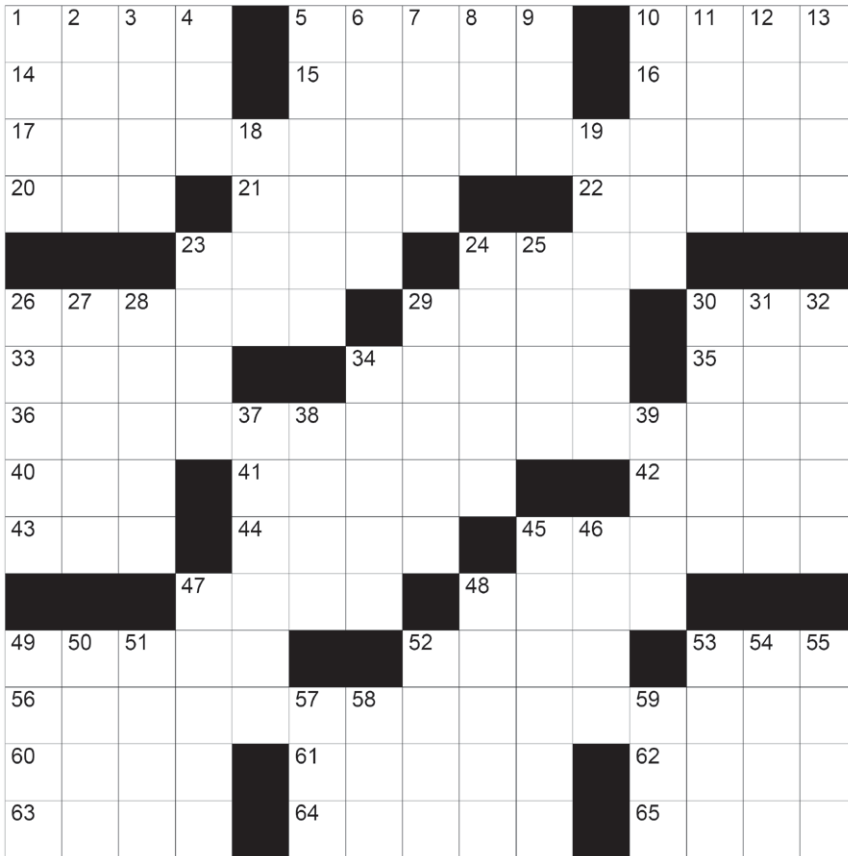


Fourth of July Trains Not Operating This Year

VRE will not be operating the special "Independence Day Express" service this year which normally takes passengers to see the fireworks on the Mall in Washington, D.C. This is due to the drop in ridership that these trains have seen over the past few years. In the

late 1990's, ridership on these trains had been over 3,000. Since the increased security after 9/11, fewer people are heading into town for the fireworks. Last year, the number of people on the Independence Day Express trains was well below 1,000 trips.

Mae West On Love



ACROSS

- 01. Facts
- 05. — Borne
- 10. College test
- 14. Symbol
- 15. Another time
- 16. Sicilian volcano
- 17. First part of quote
- 20. Singer Zeppelin
- 21. Town in New Mexico
- 22. Rope loop
- 23. Shakespearean villain
- 24. Webber musical

DOWN

- 26. Oar
- 29. Alone
- 30. Straggle
- 33. Notion: Pref.
- 34. Halloween need
- 35. Mr. Fortas
- 36. Second part of quote
- 40. John L. Lewis org.
- 41. Roman household gods
- 42. Woman astronaut
- 43. Make a boner
- 44. Prevaricator

- 45. Young swan
- 47. — Misbehavin'
- 48. Chimney
- 49. Long for
- 52. O.T. Syria
- 53. Approves
- 56. Third part of quote
- 60. To suffer: Lat.
- 61. Ponder
- 62. Location
- 63. Type of plum
- 64. Helpers: Abbr.
- 65. Carry on

DOWN

- 01. Brand of soap
- 02. Summit
- 03. Frog
- 04. Actress Margaret
- 05. Handle
- 06. Ice structure
- 07. Asian country
- 08. Actress Ullmann
- 09. Direction: Abbr.
- 10. Mexican monies
- 11. Missouri city: Abbr.
- 12. Type of cuckoo: Pl.
- 13. Get
- 18. Type of type: Abbr.
- 19. Totally: 2 wds.
- 23. Hero
- 24. College students
- 25. Actor Guinness
- 26. Individual part
- 27. British author Gilbert —

- 28. Stage scenery
- 29. Thin
- 30. Rabbit fur
- 31. Dwelling
- 32. French playwright
- 34. Sardine
- 37. The Fighting —
- 38. Hurt
- 39. Exhort
- 45. Chatters
- 46. Arizona city
- 47. Bandleader Shaw
- 48. Weather word
- 49. High pitched barks
- 50. And others
- 51. With regard
- 52. Monkshood
- 53. The Buckeye State
- 54. Singer Eartha —
- 55. Snick or —
- 57. Boston transport
- 58. Interjections
- 59. Fast plane





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