



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS Update



703-684-1001

www.vre.org

February 6, 2008

Editor's Note:

One of the topics that is toughest for anyone to talk about is money. Certainly, that holds true for us as well. It is a subject that we hate to bring up just as much as you hate to hear about it.

With that said, we are looking at a fare increase of about 3% this year. Before we institute any changes, we want to hear from you. We have scheduled a number of public hearings and have other ways that you can share your opinion with us.

Anytime we talk about fares, we also hear from you about other issues that matter to you. We know that at the top of your list are performance, reliability, and communications. If you want to comment on these or any other issues, please join us today for our On-Line Forum at noon. Our CEO, Dale Zehner, will be fielding questions from our riders.

Public Hearings to Begin on Fare Increases, Indexing Plan

Beginning February 20, 2008, VRE will hold a series of public hearings to discuss a proposed fare change; the subsequent amendment to VRE's Tariff; and to hold discussions in regards to an indexing plan for future fare increases.

During the FY2009 budget process, VRE's Operations Board authorized a fare increase of up to three percent to offset increases in fuel,

insurance and maintenance costs, which, if approved, would not result in any changes or modifications to the current ticket discount structure.



If adopted, these changes will become effective the first week of July 2008, to coincide with the start of the FY 2009 budget.

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Keep the Door Closed to Keep Fumes Outside

Just about any VRE rider who travels to and from Union Station in Washington, D.C. has probably noticed that, on occasion, the smell of engine fumes filters into the cars, making for a temporarily smelly commute. It's been a source



of ongoing complaints, and while VRE is continuing to work on the locomotives' engines in order to reduce the exhaust emissions as

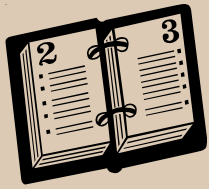
much as possible, we're also asking our riders to do their part, too.

that riders do not walk from car to car. By remaining in your car while the train is traveling through the tunnel, the doors between cars will obviously remain closed, significantly reducing the amount of fumes that get into the cars.

"It's a very simple solution that will really improve the situation," said VRE CEO Dale Zehner. "Diesel fumes get trapped inside the tunnel, and opening those doors while the train is traveling through the tunnel allows those fumes into the train. Asking people to stay in their train car until the train has emerged from the tunnel will also ensure increased safety while riding the rails. The tunnels are dark, and

How on earth can a rider help? Easy. When the train is traveling through the tunnel, we request

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Upcoming Dates

Wed., February 6
On-Line Forum
12 noon – 1:00p

Mon., February 18
Presidents' Day
No VRE Service

Wed., February 20
Public Hearing
PRTC
7:00p – 9:00p

Thu., February 21
Public Hearing
Holiday Inn [L'Enfant]
12:00n – 2:00p

Fri., February 22
Public Hearing
Crystal City Marriott
12:00n – 2:00p

Tue., February 26
Public Hearing
Burke Centre
Conservancy
7:00p – 9:00p

Goodbye, Sounder Cars!

Some loved 'em, some hated 'em. But no matter what you thought of 'em, the Sounder cars were tough to ignore, with their funky bright turquoise and blue wave design running the length of the cars and locomotives.

Sadly, for many of us, it's time to wave goodbye to the Sounder cars, as last week they were taken out of service to begin their journey home to Seattle, Wash., to go into service there.

Three locomotives and 18 Sounder cars first joined VRE's fleet in 2001; Seattle's transit system hadn't reached capacity, and they leased their surplus cars to us, as we were desperate for more capacity. Over the years, as Seattle's ridership has grown, we've returned two of the

locomotives and 12 of the cars ... and now that Seattle's system is nearing capacity, it's time to return the last locomotive and six cars.



(For the curious among you, the Sounder cars will be attached to an Amtrak freight train that goes to Seattle via Chicago. Because the Sounder cars will be treated as freight, they will be returned empty.)

The Sounder trains will be replaced by the new Gallery cars that VRE

began receiving in January, although it will not be an exact swap—rather, the new Gallery cars will be assigned based on need. But regardless of where the new Gallery cars end up, the most important thing to know is that we will not be losing capacity after the Sounder cars leave, thanks to the influx of our new Gallery cars.

Tunnel Fumes

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walking between cars in dark tunnels can make it quite difficult to see. We're really hoping that riders will heed this request, making for a more comfortable and safer commute for everyone."

For those of you who are wondering why the fumes are so bad in the tunnels anyway, here's a brief tutorial that should help explain it: Unlike electric subways, which spend most of their lives in tunnels, trains typically don't spend much time underground due to their exhaust-emitting locomotive engines. But VRE does have to go through a tunnel to get into and out of Union Station, which opens the possibility that fumes can get inside the cars. To minimize the chance, modern cars have a controllable damper that is designed just like a

flue in a chimney. When the train is outside, the damper acts as a fresh air intake for the heating, venting and air conditioning (HVAC) system. Each system also has a blower associated with it to blow forced air throughout the car. When the train goes through a tunnel, however, and the air from outside is unwelcome, conductors go through the train, car by car, to shut down the blower, which closes the damper.

But even with this design, train cars are not airtight or pressurized like airplanes, so they will pick up some ambient, outside air no matter how well the dampers or blowers operate. So please remember! When the trains are traveling through the tunnel, please refrain from traveling car to car. Thank you!



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.

Public Hearings

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Written comments will be accepted through **Friday, March 14, 2008**. Please mail comments to the attention of: Milton Telleria, 1500 King Street, Suite 202, Alexandria, Virginia, 22314. To make your comments via e-mail, please send them to: publiccomment@vre.org OR by fax to: (703) 684-1313.

All public hearings are being conducted in locations accessible to persons with disabilities. Any individual with a disability who requires

special assistance, such as a sign language interpreter, should send an e-mail to publiccomment@vre.org or call Milton Telleria at (703) 684-1001 or TTY (703) 684-0551 at least 10 business days prior to the public hearing in order to make the necessary arrangements.

For additional information regarding these hearings, please see VRE's Web site at www.vre.org.

Public Hearing Schedule

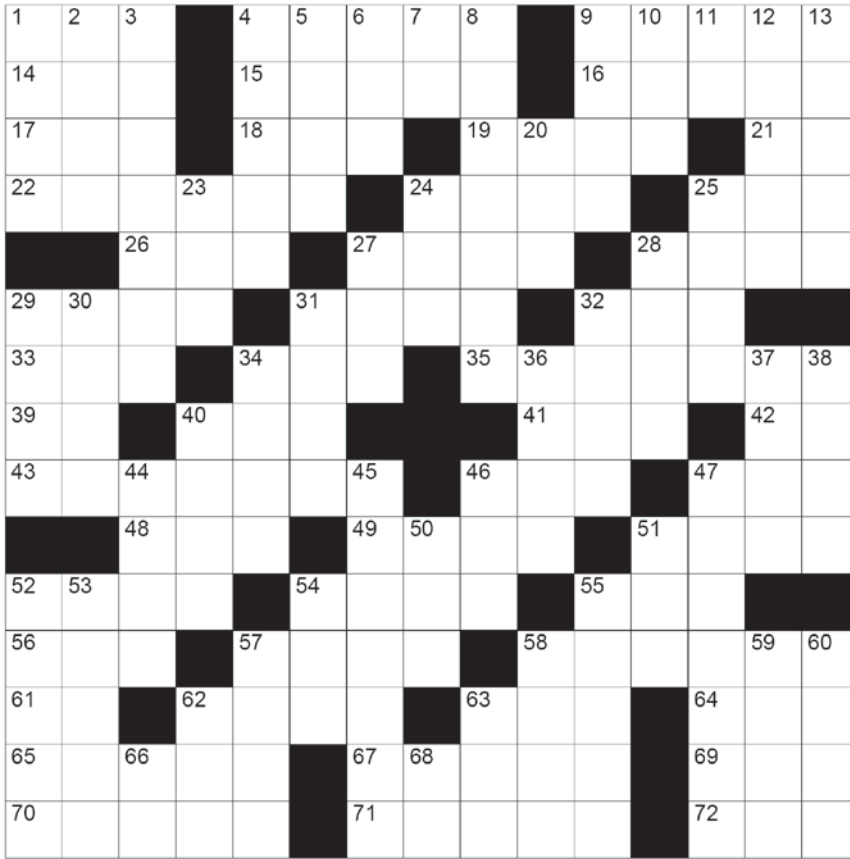
DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Wednesday, February 20, 2008	P.R.T.C. Board Room, 2nd Floor 14700 Potomac Mills Road Woodbridge, VA 22192	7pm to 9pm
Thursday, February 21, 2008	Holiday Inn [L'Enfant] Discovery I Ballroom 550 C. Street, S.W. Washington, D.C. 20024	Noon to 2pm
Friday, February 22, 2008	Crystal City Marriott Crystal Club Room 1999 Jefferson Davis Highway Arlington, VA 22202	Noon to 2pm
Tuesday, February 26, 2008	Burke Centre Conservancy "The Ponds" Community Center 9837 Burke Pond Lane Burke, VA 22015	7pm to 9pm
Wednesday, February 27, 2008	Stafford County Government Center Board Chambers 1300 Courthouse Road Stafford, VA 22554	7pm to 9pm
Tuesday, March 4, 2008	Rappahannock Regional Library Theatre Room 1201 Caroline Street Fredericksburg, VA 22401	7pm to 9pm
Thursday, March 13, 2008	Manassas City Hall City Council Chamber Room 9027 Center Street Manassas, VA 22110	7pm to 9pm

Courtesy Corner

You've had it happen to you in movie theaters - you're relaxed and the person sitting behind you kicks or knees your seat constantly, or grabs the top of your chair and yanks it back to pull themselves up. It happens to you on airlines when the little kid sitting behind you won't stop fidgeting. Every time they move, they bump or kick your seat. Sometimes people just forget that what they do has an effect on others.

The same applies to riding on the train. Obviously, there will be times when you accidentally bump the seat in front of you. Just keep in mind that the person in front of you might be trying to get some work done or just needs to get some rest. Be careful, be courteous.

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- 01. Spring mo.
- 04. Repositories for valuable items
- 09. Tie up
- 14. No: Scot.
- 15. A distinctive odor that is pleasant
- 16. Monetary unit of India
- 17. Give weapons to
- 18. Teeny
- 19. You
- 21. Eastern state: Abbr.

- 22. Meanings
- 24. Frost
- 25. Launching platform
- 26. Provide help to
- 27. Tuber plant
- 28. Without: Fr.
- 29. Pious platitudes
- 31. Fruit of the palm
- 32. Good: Fr.
- 33. Fall mo.
- 34. Obese
- 35. Austere
- 39. What was that?

- 40. Sign of the zodiac
- 41. Before
- 42. ___ and behold
- 43. In a way, discourses
- 46. Check
- 47. Small boy
- 48. Playing card
- 49. In a way, tills
- 51. Container for shipping
- 52. Hillside
- 54. Scarce

DOWN

- 01. Collections of anecdotes
- 02. Peel
- 03. Leftover
- 04. Cut wood
- 05. Square measures
- 06. Enemy
- 07. Typographical space
- 08. Ironies
- 09. Ligneous plant
- 10. Street: Fr.
- 11. ___ the Down Staircase, film
- 12. Automobile
- 13. Plants
- 20. Health insurance gr.
- 23. Take a seat
- 24. Tell on
- 25. Breathe noisily
- 27. Makes lace
- 28. Tender
- 29. University student
- 30. Dull pain
- 31. Woman
- 32. Carping remark

- 34. Destiny
- 36. Vegetables
- 37. Expression of sorrow or pity
- 38. Swelling
- 40. Subspecies
- 44. Sheep cries
- 45. Voluptuous
- 46. Drive a golf ball
- 47. Secrete milk
- 50. Mineral
- 51. Motor vehicle
- 52. Mild preparation of cannabis
- 53. Type of material
- 54. Old cloth
- 55. Satisfied
- 57. Scoundrels
- 58. Telephone
- 59. British PM
- 60. Beach grains
- 62. High school exam
- 63. ___ to Billy Joe, song
- 66. ___ and Pa
- 68. Three toed sloth

- 55. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
- 56. Experiences
- 57. ___ Fear, film
- 58. Bills of fare
- 61. Spanish pain
- 62. Wise man
- 63. Cereal grass
- 64. Novel by Nabokov
- 65. Wanderer
- 67. Dish out soup

- 69. X
- 70. Two-winged insects
- 71. Street sign
- 72. Finish

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