



VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS

Update



703-684-1001

www.vre.org

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Editor's Note:

This month marks the beginning of VRE's anniversary celebrations. June 22 marked the 16th anniversary of service on our Manassas Line. July 20 will mark the 16th anniversary of service on our Fredericksburg Line. To celebrate, we will have a series of articles on some of those special riders who have stuck with us through thick and thin since DAY ONE.

We are also celebrating another milestone: the opening of the new Burke Centre parking garage. For those who have shifted to the Rolling Road station during the construction, you might want to check out the more spacious accommodations just a few minutes away.

The Manassas garage is also scheduled to open in late July. Manassas Park riders might want to take advantage of the increased parking later this summer.

We invite you to celebrate with us!

Day One Riders: Why They Do It

All of our riders are special to us, but there's a particularly special group that we like to refer to as "Day One Riders"—riders who have been with us literally since the very first day we started operations and who have stuck with us throughout our 16-year history.

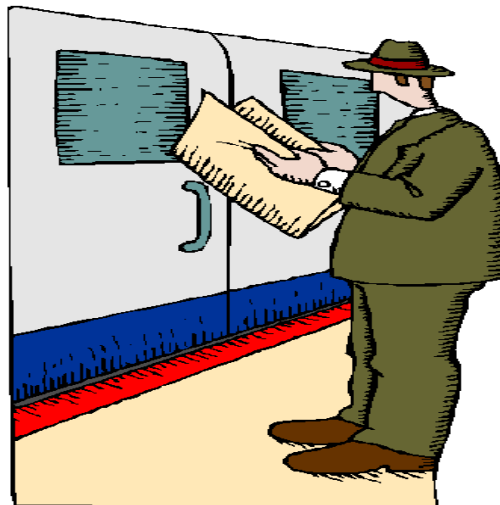
Two of those people are Ralph Gillmann, a day one commuter on the Manassas line, and James Hazzard, on the Fredericksburg line, both of whom were interested in utilizing commuter trains before VRE even started operations.

In the case of Ralph Gillmann, a team leader with the U.S. Department of Transportation, commuting by train caught his attention a full year before service began.

"I was living in an apartment in Arlington and loved the convenience, but I was ready to buy a house," Gillmann explained. "That meant moving further out but I didn't want a horrible commute. I looked for a house in Burke because I knew there were plans to begin train service there. I found out exactly where a station was planned and bought a house within walking distance in 1991. Service wasn't supposed to start until summer of 1992, though, so for the first year I had to take a bus."

He remembers his first day onboard VRE.

"There were just a handful of people on the train, and I remember a reporter roving the cars asking people some questions. He always asked people their ages, and the ladies didn't much like that," he laughed. "Service was uneven at first and problems with signals and freight trains were a surprise. We needed a lot of patience in those early years, but service gradually improved."

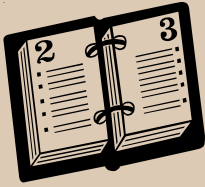


What has kept him with VRE through all these years? "I usually buy a monthly ticket, which makes me reluctant to take a different commute even if there are problems. It's great being able to walk to and from a VRE station, and for many years, from the L'Enfant station to work."

"Once I'm on the train, I can just sit back, read and relax, and don't have to think about it. I've driven to work before, and I'd get to work and feel tense. It's just not worth it. The bus is okay, but you're still in traffic, and there's some stress associated with that even if you're not the one behind the wheel. Taking the train just makes me feel more relaxed when I get to work or back home."

Gillmann has, of course, had his share of frustrations on board VRE, finding that the delays that bother him most are the ones that find him standing on the platform rather than

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Upcoming Dates

Sunday, June 29

Fare Increase Goes into Effect

Monday, June 30

Last Day to use Green and Orange FRCs

Wednesday, July 2

Meet the Management Burke Centre All Morning Trains

On-Line Forum

12:00n

Friday, July 4

Independence Day No VRE Service

Wednesday, July 9

Meet the Management Rippon All Morning Trains

Burke Centre Garage Now Open!

Break out the champagne, Burke Centre riders ... the Burke Centre garage is now officially open! A year and a half in the making, the new, five-story garage boasts 1,292 parking spaces (compared to just 614 spaces prior to construction), with accessible spaces located on the first and second levels, and direct platform access from the second level.

Opened on June 2, the garage has been met with a double thumbs up from users, with utilization ramping up as more and more riders discover that the garage is not only open, but has plentiful capacity as well.

The original neighborhood EZ Bus North and South routes, which were originally put into service in order to alleviate the severely limited parking at the Burke Centre station prior to the construction of the garage, will continue until Fall 2008. Riders using the EZ Bus will continue to be eligible for 20 percent off their monthly VRE ticket costs until June 30th.

Now that the garage is completed, crews will begin the final phase of the garage complex—a bus drop-off area and a Kiss & Ride area—which is scheduled for completion in September 2008. Additional exterior construction will bring the final total number of parking spaces to 1,516.



The new Burke Centre Garage, shown here under construction, was opened for VRE parking on Monday, June 2, 2008.

FRCs Set to Expire in One Week!

On June 30, a large batch of Free Ride Certificates (FRCs) is set to expire and cannot be exchanged for new FRCs! So, if you have any orange and green FRCs with an expiration date of July 1, use them now, because once July 1 rolls around in less than a week, they can no longer be used.

VRE used to exchange expiring FRCs for new ones, but after a program overhaul last year, FRCs are no longer exchanged after their expiration date. Think of it as the “use ‘em or lose ‘em policy.”

Other details of our FRC policy are:

1) FRCs are distributed when trains are 60 minutes late.

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

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

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

5) VRE will reserve the right to deny a written request for any reason.



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.

Day One Riders...

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settled in a seat onboard. And once onboard, his biggest pet peeve is the “too cold or too hot” temperatures on some cars.

“With a lot of the older cars, you get to know what to expect from each one. Some seem to run hot, and some run cold, so if you don’t like the one car, you can switch to another.”

His morning walk has also been given a boost in recent years, as his wife, who works near their house part time, has taken to walking with him to the station and then continuing on for her daily power walk.

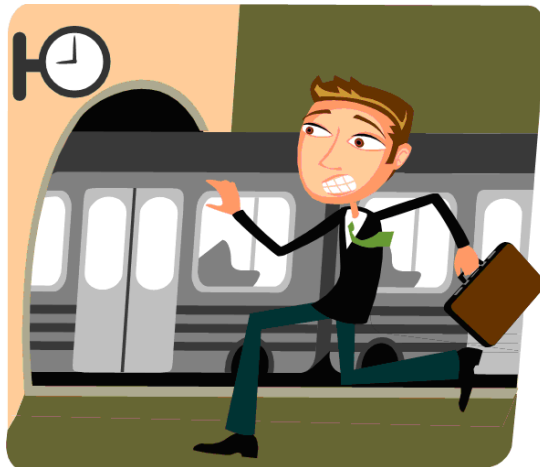
“At times I feel a bit like a kid walking to school with my sister,” he joked, “but it’s a great way to start the morning. I had great hopes 17 years ago that it was all going to work, and it has.”

For Jim Hazzard, who works in Budget Service at the Department of Education, learning about VRE’s future service plans meant that he and his wife could move from Alexandria to Stafford, which they found to be an attractive, bucolic and rural community.

“We wouldn’t have even been able to consider making the move to Stafford,” Hazzard said, “if rail service wasn’t about to commence. It was definitely a lot longer travel than we’d planned on, but VRE made that commute feasible. I carpooled for two weeks while I waited for service to start, but it wasn’t a completely attractive option—the additional travel time required to get to the carpool site, plus the lack of flexibility, were real issues for me. I remember the first day of VRE service—I think there were only about 500

riders total—and I’ve been with it every day since then.”

Hazzard’s total commute is a relatively easy one, as he lives just four miles from the Brooke station and walks just a half block from L’Enfant to his office. Door to door, the total commute is about an hour and a half, time he spends reading the paper, chatting with fellow passengers, and enjoying the scenery.



“Over the years, there are just little, spontaneous gestures that people make for one another that are just really nice to watch. I remember once there was a guy who noticed a couple of kids onboard, and he happened to have a pocketful of balloons, so he started to make balloon animals for the kids. The conductors are also

really friendly, supportive, and helpful to the passengers. I’ve gotten to be friends with some of them, just as I have with some of the other passengers. That’s really another nice thing about riding the train; there is generally the same group of people commuting every day, and it makes for a community of riders who get to know one another and build up friendships over the years.”

Of course, Hazzard’s tenure onboard VRE means that he’s been through some rough patches too, most memorably the CSX derailment in 1997 and all of the delays that followed, but in spite of it all, Hazzard knows that it’s the best option for him.

“I’ve been through thick and thin, but it’s been a great service,” he said. “I couldn’t live where I do and have the commute that I do without the rail.”

On-Time Performance by Train for the month of May 2008

Fredericksburg Line

300 – 71%
302 – 86%
304 – 71%
306 – 57%
308 – 71%
310 – 86%

301 – 95%
303 – 52%
305 – 80%
307 – 95%
309 – 90%
311 – 75%
313 – 67%

Overall – 77%

Manassas Line

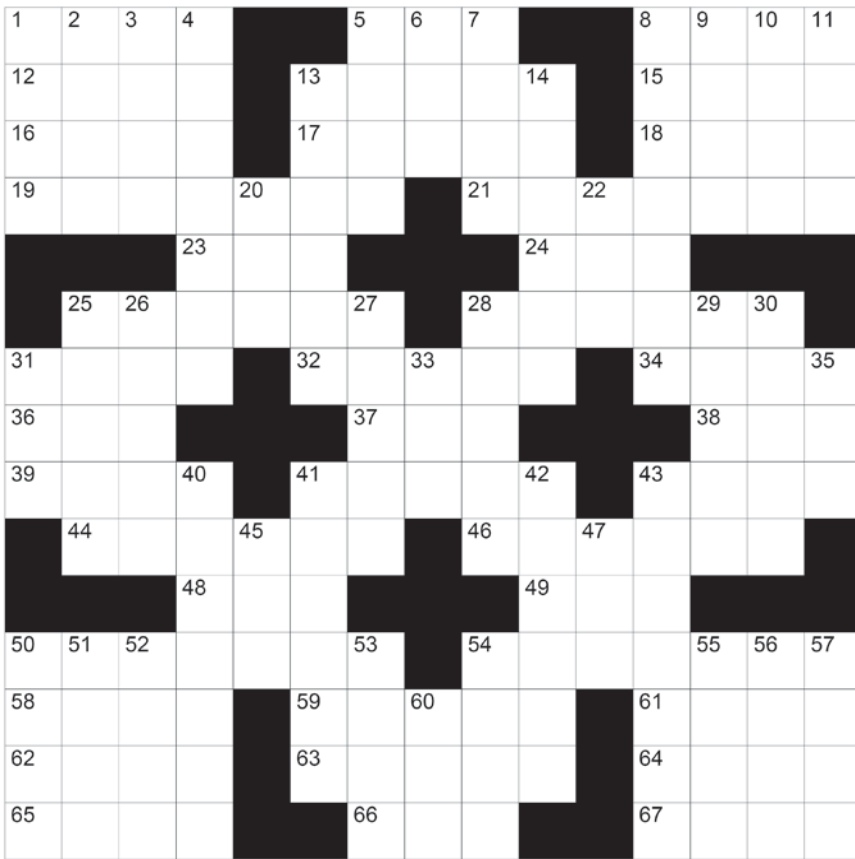
322 – 90%
324 – 81%
326 – 81%
328 – 81%
330 – 86%
332 – 90%

325 – 90%
327 – 67%
329 – 95%
331 – 95%
333 – 81%
335 – 81%
337 – 62%

Overall – 84%

*A train is considered delayed if it is more than 5 minutes later than the posted schedule into its final destination.

Inca Gold



ACROSS

- 01. Film, "Cool — Luke"
- 05. Jack of clubs in loo
- 08. Novel, "The World According to —"
- 12. Fencing blade
- 13. Facial cavity

- 15. Region
- 16. Not common
- 17. Early word form
- 18. Boys
- 19. Rain form
- 21. Onion relative
- 23. C64 chip
- 24. In the past

- 25. LA player
- 28. Amphitheaters
- 31. — pas, social blunder
- 32. Greek letter
- 34. Neuter
- 36. Actress Sothern
- 37. Night flyer

DOWN

- 01. Cattle group
- 02. "On — with", equal
- 03. Fiddling emperor
- 04. Cussler novel
- 05. Cussler hero
- 06. One or some
- 07. "— the word"
- 08. Liquid measures
- 09. Russian sea
- 10. Make over
- 11. Bygone
- 13. Planted
- 14. Cussler novel
- 20. Jar covering
- 22. The — of Enlightenment
- 25. Wife of a rajah
- 26. Uncles wives
- 27. Refute
- 28. Perfume base

- 29. Separated
- 30. Indian garb
- 31. Summer cooler
- 33. Thrash
- 35. Affirmative
- 40. Type of fever
- 41. Cussler novel
- 42. Brown photographs
- 43. Cussler novel
- 45. Egg
- 47. Take up weapons
- 50. Related
- 51. Clamping device
- 52. Singer Fitzgerald
- 53. Australian birds
- 54. Pronoun
- 55. At all times
- 56. Writer Descartes
- 57. Not fast
- 60. "Much — About Nothing"

- 38. Form of "to be"
- 39. New Jersey team
- 41. Author of "The Three Musketeers"
- 43. Eye part
- 44. Prom date
- 46. Responds
- 48. Actress Gardner
- 49. Before (pref.)
- 50. Norm
- 54. Lumber
- 58. Slay
- 59. City in Nebraska
- 61. Mr. Knieval
- 62. — of Haut, off Maine
- 63. Subjects of many portraits
- 64. Nevada town
- 65. Straight
- 66. Chinese sauce
- 67. Got bigger

On-Time Performance

Over the Last Six Months

