

Virginia Railway Express

Update

ALEXANDRIA CRYSTAL CITY L'ENFANT UNION STATION
BROAD RUN MANASSAS MANASSAS PARK BURKE CENTRE
FREDERICKSBURG LEELAND ROAD BROOKE QUANTICO RIPPON WOODBRIDGE LORTON FRANCONIA/SPRINGFIELD

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www.vre.org

May 18th, 2011

VRE Celebrates National Train Day



Does 16-645F3B mean anything to you? If it does, we enjoyed seeing you at National Train Day, if it doesn't, it still doesn't mean you weren't there, and that we didn't appreciate seeing you, it just means you may not have been fully aware of the pure mechanical artwork that was being revealed to you.

We're talking, of course, about the main diesel engine housed within our new Wabtec/MotivePower MP36-3C locomotive. And it was on display, in all its glory at Union Station Washington, D.C in observance of National Train Day.

National Train Day is a pseudo-holiday that was created by Amtrak in 2008 to remind the public that commuting and shipping freight by rail remains one of the most viable, cost effective and environmentally friendly modes of transportation around. Each year, partners in our region's rail transportation scene open pieces of their rail equipment for inspection by the general public. Amtrak, MARC, VRE and Norfolk Southern among others, all featured equipment displays on the upper platforms at Union Station. Inside the great halls of the terminal were booths demonstrating the history and future of travelling and dining on trains, important messages about safety around trains from Operation Lifesaver and live acts such as singing and dancing.

We featured one of our new locomotives (photos of the insides to the right) and a cab car, both in regular service. We enjoyed the opportunity to showcase our many years of planning and investment. We hope to see you next year at Washington for another exciting National Train Day.



Miss a back issue of the VRE Update?
Past issues can be found in our online
archive at [http://www.vre.org/
service/newsletter/archives.html](http://www.vre.org/service/newsletter/archives.html)

Tolerance as a Courtesy

While the debate on courtesy and tolerance may rage on forever, we're still happy to see that for most of our riders, VRE is still a community of selflessness and kindness. One rider writes:

"On Tuesday, May 10, I fell while crossing the street at the Crystal City VRE station and suffered a head injury. Several VRE riders assisted me by selflessly offering first aid, calling 911, and awaiting the arrival of the ambulance. A slight concussion dimmed my memory of your names, but please accept my heartfelt thanks for your kindness."

You've seen our brightly colored and humorously illustrated Courtesy Campaign Posters hanging at the stations. And you've undoubtedly heard our "Life on the Train" series of audio announcements on the trains reminding people to be considerate of their fellow riders. Despite our continued efforts, the complaints we hear most often from our passengers, believe it or not, are complaints about other passengers.

We recently took the opportunity to look up the definition of the word "Tolerance" and we had to smile. Tolerance is the practice of deliberately allowing or permitting a thing of which one disapproves.

We all have our annoying little habits, like biting our nails, smoking, chewing gum, constantly checking our blackberry, interrupting others, talking too loudly or too much, wearing too much perfume, constantly clearing our throat, or 1,000 other things that drive many people crazy. Nobody is perfect. We're all unique individuals just trying to make it through another day.

Instead of taking notice of what bugs us, we should all take a step back, breathe and remember what it was like to drive on 95 or 66. We can learn to relax and resist the

impulse to sweat the small stuff. We know that's easy to say and sometimes hard to do, but we would probably be a whole lot happier and healthier if we just looked away, moved to another seat, turned the other cheek or aspired to remain unaffected by taking a deep breath and mentally deciding not to let it bother us.

We know the conditions are crowded, the parking is limited and people can sometimes be grouchy or just having a bad day. Regrettably, that's the VRE world we live in right now until we can obtain the much needed funding for expansion. Until then, we just need to learn how to live together (tightly), practice a little patience and be tolerant of other people. It's bad enough we have "road rage" on the highway but the train is supposed to be the alternative to that, right?

We will, of course, continue to remind riders of behavior that annoys other people. Sadly, we can't make people behave, we can only suggest it. Tolerate your fellow riders, and in-turn they will tolerate you. Well, perhaps that is a little naive, but the fact remains, you can't control a lot of things, but you can choose to use your experience on VRE in a positive way by practicing self-control and being patient with others.

Capital Bikeshare



Now that spring is here, you probably want to get out and enjoy this great weather as well as get a little exercise in the process.



If you love to ride bikes but don't want the hassle of trying to bring one aboard the already overcrowded VRE, why not rent one when you step off the train.

Capital Bikeshare has a great program available with 114 stations across Washington, D.C. and Arlington Virginia. They have a total of 1,100 bikes in all. It's one of the newest and greenest transportation programs in the country.

Renting a bike is easy. Go to CapitalBikeshare.com to sign up for an annual or 30-day membership for \$75 or \$25 respectfully, and they'll mail you a key to unlock your

bike. One Day and five day memberships are also available at any Capital Bikeshare station for \$5 and \$15 respectively*. The first 0-30 minutes of every ride is free, 31-60 minutes is only \$1.50, and 61-90 minutes is \$4.50. Each additional 30 minutes is \$6.00. Don't forget to bring your helmet. Return the bike to any Capital Bikeshare station and repeat as many times as you like.

For current bike availability and a map of the stations, please check out CapitalBikeshare.com or download the mobile app, SpotCycle, for on-the-go information.

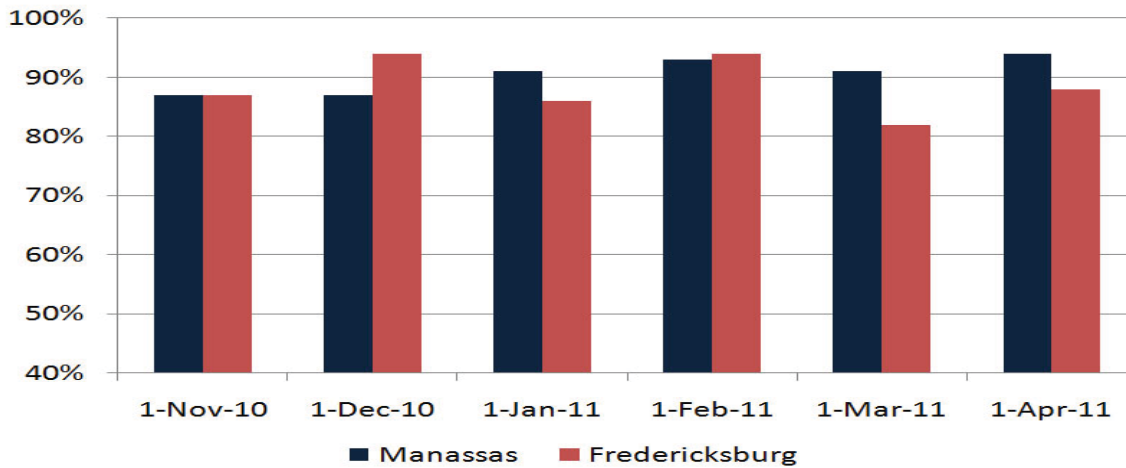
**For 24-hour memberships, a preauthorization hold of \$101 per bike will be placed on your credit card. This serves as a security deposit and will be returned to you when the hold expires which is determined by your credit card company.*

Enjoy this beautiful spring weather, get some exercise, and get out and bike!



VRE Update is a publication of Virginia Railway Express. The newsletter is published monthly 12 times per year. Stories included are for the sole use of VRE riders. Comments and questions may be directed to VRE at gotrains@vire.org or at (703) 684-1001.

On Time Performance for the Last Six Months



Metro to begin phasing out SmartBenefits® Vouchers

The End of SmartTrip Vouchers:

Metro has recently made the announcement that SmartBenefit vouchers are being eliminated and that June 2011 is the last month employers can place an order for SmartBenefits® vouchers with WMATA.

For purchasing VRE tickets at VRE ticket Vendors, or sending vouchers in to VRE for reimbursement for TVM (Platform) Credit Purchases, the last day Vouchers will be accepted is Nov. 30th, 2010.

No vouchers will be accepted after that date. So please, do not wait till the last minute to use them up.

The Future:

Those who previously used vouchers are likely to now be provided their Benefits electronically via the WMATA "Electronic Smart Benefits" system. This system allows benefits recipients to receive and manage their benefits online (via the WMATA website www.wmata.com), and to assign those benefits either to their SmartCard (which VRE is not able to accept) or to assign those benefits to a participating Electronic Smart Benefits Agency such as VRE, for use at one of our vendor locations. As a VRE rider, if you get Electronic Smart benefits, you will have two options:

To receive your VRE tickets in the mail, you can sign up with CommuterDirect. Their information is available online at <https://www.commuterpage.com/splash.cfm>.

For electronic benefits, the first thing you will need to do is to get a SmartTrip Card and set up a "Personal Services Account" through Commuter Direct. This account, based on your SmartTrip Card number, will allow VRE riders who are registered for SmartBenefits to have their employers load the dollar value into the account so that it can be

designated for use to purchase VRE tickets. Based on the information that you provide during registration, CommuterDirect will then mail out VRE tickets to you according to your preferences.

There are, of course, other alternatives to receiving transit benefits, like TransBen checks or transit based debit cards. It will be up to your employer to determine how you will transition from Vouchers to these other options, so contact your human resources or benefits administrators for details. Also, for more information, check out WMATA's website at http://www.wmata.com/business/employer_fare_program.

If you have further questions about this, please contact us at gotrains@vre.org.



On-Time Performance April 2011

Fredericksburg Line

- 300 – 95%
- 302 – 90%
- 304 – 90%
- 306 – 95%
- 308 – 86%
- 310 – 86%
- 312 – 76%
- 301 – 90%
- 303 – 90%
- 305 – 81%
- 307 – 90%
- 309 – 86%
- 311 – 86%
- 313 – 86%

Overall – 88%

Manassas Line

- 322 – 100%
- 324 – 95%
- 326 – 95%
- 328 – 95%
- 330 – 100%
- 332 – 95%
- 336 – 100%
- 338 – 90%
- 321 – 100%
- 325 – 95%
- 327 – 95%
- 329 – 95%
- 331 – 90%
- 333 – 86%
- 335 – 95%
- 337 – 86%

Overall – 94%

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



Tomorrow's Cancer Care For Today's Prostate Cancer Patients.



SENTARA UROLOGY CENTER AT POTOMAC HOSPITAL

For patients with prostate cancer, early detection and quality care can make all the difference. When you access Sentara for prostate care, you are tapping into comprehensive cancer care with sub-specialized expertise. The Sentara Urology Center at Potomac Hospital provides the most advanced cancer care in Northern Virginia, from diagnosis and treatment to follow-up and support.



- The prostate cancer program offers:**
- Board-certified, fellowship-trained prostate cancer specialists
 - Leading-edge minimally invasive surgery using the da Vinci robot
 - Advanced treatments including external beam radiation, cryoablation and seed therapy
 - Expert second opinions for those already diagnosed
 - Patient navigator and ongoing support groups



Schedule an appointment with a prostate cancer specialist online at sentara.com/urology or call our referral center at (703) 221-2500.

sentara.com/urology Your community, not-for-profit health partner

