HELLO, LONGER TRAINS!
Every weekend at our award-winning community, golf is America’s favorite pastime. It gets you out on riverfront bluffs. Tests your skills on a Nicklaus Signature named one of the “Top 10 Best New Courses in the Country” by Golf Digest, 2015. And comes with post-game gatherings at our Clubhouse. Come home to Potomac Shores—it’s all right here in your backyard.

Features and products vary by community. Price, offers, financing and availability are subject to change without notice.

Homes from the $300s to $800s
Sometimes you’re given the advice: Write your Congressman. As you may know from personal experience … it’s actually very good advice. Our Congressmen and women are our advocates and can help enact positive change throughout the state.

Sometimes we at VRE also need to “write the Congressmen.” It literally took an act of Congress to bring VRE into existence, and as public transit, we rely on continued Congressional support. Each year we work with members of Congress on matters like Positive Train Control implementation and commuter benefits equity, as well as issues which would potentially raise our operating costs.

Just prior to the Labor Day holiday, we held a tour for staff members of our Virginia Congressional delegation. We met the group at Union Station, and then boarded a southbound VRE train to Alexandria. Along the ride, we were able to talk about various aspects of the railroad and some upcoming projects.

The tour was a great opportunity to allow the staffers to experience our system first-hand. We feel this type of system knowledge is important in working together as we work through current and future transit issues.

Thank you to the staff members that took time for our tour:

• Jay Kronzer, Congressman Brat
• Ryan McManus, Congresswoman Comstock
• Collin Davenport, Congressman Connolly
• Maggie Ayrea, Congressman Goodlatte
• Nick Barbash, Senator Kaine
• Evan Chapman, Congressman Scott

Sincerely,

DOUG ALLEN
Chief Executive Officer
Virginia Railway Express

Access RIDE online at www.VRE.org/RIDE

Image: Doug Allen hosts tour for Congressional staff members.
While there are several ways to find the status of one’s train, the first step that riders should take is to access our Train Status page at: vre.org/status

The Train Status page is VRE’s real-time train tracking service, which uses GPS to show a train’s current location, its on-time status, and, if delayed, it will show a basic reason for the delay.

Reasons to Visit the Train Status Page First:

1. If you are one of those riders who boards at a station marked on the schedule with an “L” (which designates that trains at the station are allowed to depart early), or if you are a rider who prefers to wait for your train in a warm automobile on a cold day, then the live view of the train’s location will help you judge the time you need in getting to the platform before your train arrives into the station. The live tracking page allows riders to zoom down to the general street level to see exactly where the train is located.

2. For any delay under 20 minutes, the status page is the best resource for checking status. Delay times are always approximate because trains can make up or lose minutes in between each station stop. If the train number on the map shows up green, your train is pretty much on time. If it shows up as red, there is a delay. The approximate “current” delay time will be notated as well as a general reason for the delay.

When Train Talk Alerts and Social Media Reflect Delays:

Minor delays may occur along the route for numerous reasons (maintenance of way, temporary speed restrictions, rail congestion, etc.), however the schedules have been written to accommodate for some of these minor delays. Train Talk alerts and posts to social media usually are reserved for major delays and the detailed reasons for those delays. When you receive a Train Talk Alert, a post or Tweet about a delay, then you can assume a major delay has occurred.

As soon as a train operates 10 minutes behind schedule, station delay announcements are provided on the station monitors, and the Train Status page is updated on our site. We initially rely on our short messaging system (via stations screens and announcements) for any delay between 10 and 20 minutes in length (within this time period, a majority of the passengers are already at the station). Train Talk Alerts via texts or emails are sent out when trains hit the 20 minute delay threshold. The 20 minute threshold exists because, again, trains can make up time. The last thing we wish to do is announce a 10-minute delay and have a passenger show up to the station 10 minutes late only to find that their train made up the time and left the station without them. Once a 20-minute delay occurs, however, trains rarely have the ability to make this time up due to rail congestion.

Currently the Train Tracker on the VRE Mobile app is based on schedules. We are working on real-time arrival information to integrate with the app, however, while this functionality is in beta, delay times may not be 100% accurate.

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REAL-TIME TRAIN TRACKING: VRE.ORG/STATUS
22nd Annual Art on the Avenue
Saturday, October 7th from 10am to 6pm
Mount Vernon Ave, Alexandria, VA 22305
Admission: Free
More than 300 artists (jewelers to silversmith and beaders, woodworkers, pottery makers, soap crafters, glass makers, unique painters, sculptures, and fabric artists), musicians (Irish, folk, rock n’ roll, country and more), and food vendors (hot dogs, BBQ, Indian, crab cakes, chocolate bananas dipped on a stick, and homemade cider donuts). Activities for children include stuff-your-own scarecrow, paint a pumpkin, lotus flower design and weave screen art to name a few. Learn more: www.artontheavenue.org

Clifton Day
Sunday, October 8th from 9am to 5pm
Historic Town of Clifton
Enjoy fine arts, crafts, antiques, music, family entertainment and the civil war re-enactment. VRE will again offer service from Manassas to Clifton to Rolling Road and back to Clifton and all stops in between. The train ride to Clifton is FREE and the return trip costs $5 for kids and adults, babies under two ride free.

Prince William Recycles Day
Saturday, October 14th from 10am to 2pm
Prince William County Landfill
Learn about the county's recycling program, enjoy entertainment, play recycling themed games, get the family's faces painted, tour the County Landfill and more.

51st Annual US Oyster Festival in St. Mary's County, MD
Saturday & Sunday, October 21st & 22nd
Fairgrounds in Leonardtown, MD
3971 Chain Bridge Rd, Fairfax, VA
$10 Admission. Kids under 12 FREE
Home of the US National Oyster Shucking Competition, and Home of the US National Oyster Cook-Off. For more, visit: usoysterfest.com

PRINCE WILLIAM TO CELEBRATE AMERICA RECYCLES DAY

Prince William Recycles Day will be held at the Prince William County Landfill on Saturday, October 14, 2017 from 10am to 2pm. For over a decade, Prince William County Solid Waste Division has been hosting Prince William Recycles Day in conjunction with America Recycles Day. The annual event has grown to attract over 1,000 residents who come out every year to learn about the county’s recycling program, enjoy entertainment, play recycling themed games, get their face painted, tour the County Landfill and more.

This year’s celebration theme is “Recycling Matters,” and the event aims to reinforce the importance of waste reduction, recycling, and buying recycled products to the local community. Local organizations are encouraged to attend to learn how they can support recycling and community outreach efforts.

Featured performers will include “The Recycling Pirates of the Good Life Theater,” a puppet show created entirely from recycled trash materials. Characters such as Captain Jack Sparetire teach children about recycling through song and storytelling.

The landfill’s methane gas electricity program is just one of many things that amaze and interest Prince William Recycles Day attendees when they take the landfill tour and participate in the numerous activities available. The landfill produces clean, renewable energy for county residents by capturing the methane gas that is produced from organic waste and converting it to usable electricity. As landfill waste decomposes, gas is produced, which includes around 50% methane. Upwards of 100 underground extraction wells across the landfill capture the gas.

For more information about Prince William Recycles Day and other Solid Waste programs, visit: www.pwcgov.org/trashandrecycling
VRE UPDATE

TVM UPGRADE

The ability to collect and verify fares is critical to the success of the VRE operation. While VRE is a subsidized system, we have a mandate to cover at least 50% of operating expenses through fare revenue. Making sure every rider has paid their fare, reduces the burden on the jurisdictions for the subsidy they provide to support VRE, and helps keep the need for fare increases to a minimum. Keeping the process of collecting the fare and verifying payment as simple and convenient as possible, while being cost effective, has always been our goal.

The current primary fare collection system, which consists of the platform Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs) and the vendor location machines, was put into service in 2002. This paper ticket system utilizing magnetic stripe encoding has been upgraded at different points, most recently in 2010 and 2011 when the internal computer and the pinpad were upgraded to comply with the Payment Card Industry (PCI) data security standards for the protection of cardholder information. We now have an upgrade underway which will effectively replace every major component in the system, leaving just the stainless steel cabinets from the original system. This upgrade includes:

1. New touch screens to replace the existing optical sensor touchscreens, which have become obsolete. This should eliminate the calibration issues which cause the current screens to not react properly when touched. The current monitors can be affected by small dust or dirt particles which block the optical sensors. The new technology is more like current cell phone screens, not relying on optical sensors.
2. New pinpads for entering debit pin numbers. The upgraded system will comply with the latest Europay Mastercard Visa (EMV) standards, utilizing the embedded chips in the cards for greater security.
3. New, more reliable credit card reader.
4. New computer with upgraded software and operating system, making the system more stable and dependable.
5. New magnetic stripe read/write head and ticket printing mechanism. This component alone should reduce the current issues of improperly validating tickets, capturing tickets, or the issuance of Validation Error Receipts.
6. Pre-configuration for contactless payment types. While not immediately available, the upgraded system will be expandable to allow for contactless payments which could include Apple Pay and Android Pay.
7. Audio jack for the vision impaired so headphones may be utilized in conjunction with the audio commands.

Design and manufacturing is currently underway, with installation scheduled to begin late next Summer.

In 2015, to enhance the fare collections system, VRE launched VRE Mobile. This mobile ticketing system, provided by moovel NA (formerly GlobeSherpa), enables passengers to purchase, validate, and display tickets on their smart phones. Besides being convenient for any passenger, allowing them to bypass the TVMs, VRE Mobile can also accommodate SmartBenefits recipients and those passengers who qualify for reduced fare pricing. While mobile tickets must still be validated prior to boarding the train, the validation is done on the phone itself. Purchases may be done anytime and anywhere, as long as there is a network connection. Since nearly every VRE rider carries a smart phone, we suggest everyone consider moving to VRE Mobile. Our Communications Specialists are available to assist with the transition to mobile from 6 am to 7 pm every operating day at our main office (703) 684-1001. In addition to being convenient for the passenger, VRE Mobile helps lower the overall cost of fare collections, making VRE even more efficient.
RIPPPON WILDLIFE REFUGE ACCESS

VRE’s parent commissions, through VRE, were asked to permit public pedestrian access across the Rippon station to reach Featherstone National Wildlife Refuge. Construction at the station is complete including a platform extension, stairs, and a ramp on the east side of the platform to allow public access to the refuge.

The Featherstone National Wildlife Refuge, which is adjacent to the Rippon VRE station, is a National Wildlife Refuge located at the meeting point of the Potomac River and the Neabsco Creek.

Established with the purpose to protect the features of a contiguous wetlands area, the 325 acres of woodland and freshwater tidal marsh has been administered by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service since 1970. Currently, it is part of the Potomac River National Wildlife Refuge Complex. The refuge covers wetlands and woodlands, and has a railroad right-of-way bordering its western edge.

IMPROVING RAIL SERVICE FROM D.C. TO RICHMOND

DC2RVA High Speed Rail Study Draft EIS Document Released for Public Comment

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) have released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the Washington, D.C. to Richmond Southeast High Speed Rail Project for public review and comment. The Draft EIS details recommended infrastructure improvements to increase reliability and service frequency and provide capacity to add nine daily round trips. Public hearings are planned for October 2017 to present findings and to receive public comments. Visit the project website for details: www.DC2RVArail.com

See the recommendations:
www.DC2RVArail.com/draft

DRPT Recommendations include:
• An additional track in northern Virginia, including additional rail bridges over major waterways such as the Occoquan River, Powells Creek, Aquia Creek, and Potomac Creek;
• A third track through downtown Fredericksburg, with a new rail bridge across the Rappahannock River;
• A third track from Fredericksburg extending south to Ashland;
• Improvements to provide full passenger service at both Main Street and Staples Mill Road stations via the S-line, including an additional rail bridge across the James River.

These recommendations for the railroad having three tracks, along with VRE’s plans to add second platforms, increases the flexibility of the railroad and should help improve our system’s on-time performance.

Your Feedback is Needed by November 7, 2017

DRPT invites you to review the Draft EIS available on the project website and at several locations in the project area (locations listed online) and provide your comments. Public comments are due by November 7, 2017 and may be submitted through the project website, in writing or verbally at public hearings.

For more information:
www.DC2RVArail.com
Facebook: DC2RVArail
Twitter: @DC2RVArail
VRE UPDATE

HISTORY OF ALEXANDRIA STATION

landing a spot on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places in 2013, Alexandria Union Station in Old Town remains an important origin and destination location in the area, serving both VRE and Amtrak trains.

City History & Railroad Projects
The city of Alexandria was first settled in 1695 in what was then the British Colony of Virginia. The town grew quickly through its tobacco warehouses, and was named Alexandria in honor of its original owner, John Alexandria, who purchased the land in 1669 for “six thousand pounds of tobacco and cask.”

In the late 1840s, the city of Alexandria invested in five major railroad projects to better compete with Baltimore as a regional industrial and trade center, but ended up in a confusion of mergers and failures. In 1901, the railroads serving the region built Potomac Yard, a consolidated rail yard (now a shopping area).

In 1905, the city of Alexandria commissioned the Washington Southern Railway Company (later part of the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac, now CSX) to build the Alexandria Union Station at a cost of $62,020.55. The station also served the Chesapeake & Ohio and Southern Railway trains.

Alexandria Union Station opened on September 15, 1905 – serving passenger trains of the C&O, Washington Southern Railway, and Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad until 1971. Ownership of the station building in 1971 was assumed by Amtrak, and CSX assumed ownership of the rails. In 2001, the City of Alexandria took ownership of the station.

Station Design
The station is a one-story brick building consisting of the original main passenger depot and baggage building separated by a 20-foot wide open gateway passage and covered by a covered terrace. The designer used the Federal Revival Style: a 20th century mixture of Neoclassical architecture borrowed from buildings constructed just after the American Revolution, fitting for its location. Both original buildings are still in use.

Though many minor renovations have taken place, including the slightly more extensive renovations that occurred in 1982 and the mid-1990s, the original buildings remain essentially unchanged. The limestone and granite Veterans of Foreign Wars memorial was constructed at the station in 1942.

Today
Since the opening of the King Street Metro station in 1983, the City of Alexandria has made the station area an intermodal hub for regional transit – linking both Amtrak and VRE with Metro and a number of Alexandria DASH and Metrobus lines. Amtrak agents staff the station, and Amtrak reports annual station ridership is upwards of 190,000.

ADDITIONAL CARS ARE COMING!

Five new cars shipped from Rochelle, IL in September, and will be in service in October.

Another four cars will ship this month, and will be in service in November.

We will send updates via Train Talk as to which train sets these new cars help lengthen.
Commuters are eligible to vote by absentee ballot in advance of Election Day. Commuters can use Reason Codes 1C, 1D, or 1E. www.vote.virginia.gov

You can vote by absentee either by mail or by visiting an Absentee Vote Center.

**Vote by Mail:** visit www.vote.virginia.gov and request to have an absentee ballot mailed to you. Request your mail ballot online before 5pm Tuesday October 31.

**Absentee Vote Center:** Absentee Vote Centers open September 22. Visit www.pwcvotes.com for Absentee Vote Center hours and locations. The last day to vote at an Absentee Vote Center is Saturday November 4 by 5pm. Bring Photo ID with you to vote at an Absentee Vote Center.

**Election Day is Tuesday November 7, 2017.**
Polls open at 6:00am closing at 7:00pm. Bring Photo ID with you.

Prince William County
Office of Elections
Phone: 703-792-6470
Email: pwcvote@pwcgov.org
Website: www.pwcvotes.com

This voting guide was prepared and paid for by the Prince William County Office of Elections to inform and educate the citizens and voters of Prince William County. This guide is not affiliated with any political party or candidate.
Get Noticed With VRE Advertising

VRE carries approximately 20,000 passengers every workday and 70 percent of passengers have an annual household income of more than $100,000.

Reach our passengers with advertising opportunities on our platforms, in our trains and through our award-winning RIDE Magazine.

For more information go to www.vre.org/advertising or contact advertising@vre.org or (703) 838-5425.

PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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PUZZLE SOLUTIONS
RAIL TIME PUZZLES

ACROSS
1 Toothpaste portion 60 Yoga accessory
8 Braying brute 72 Mindful (off)
9 Freeze 73 Prone to large
10 Face-valued, as bonds 74 Fluctuations
15 French arm 75 Plant on trunk
16 Enterprising Falana 76 1550s headline
20 Pastel purple 77 One and only
21 Enmy category 78 Pigeon sounds
22 Kaspa procedure 79 Aforementioned
23 Typical Sandi 80 Love word pair
24 Pontal agreement 82 Square-corner shape
25 Slightly wet 83 Cell phone users woes
27 Do the unsuspected 84 Prepared to grope
31 Paying attention 87 Where a judge is in charge
33 Trial software 89 Tenacious
36 Sewn fabrics 90 Tense
38 Loka bordering 91 Engine sound
40 Buffalo 94 Overwhelm with tasks
41 Spring weather event 96 Difficult task
44 Teeth expert’s deg 98 Single lobes
47 Musical groups 100 High society
48 Nadia 101 Romance novelist
49 Lust line 106 Roberta
54 Without commitments 110 Creole
55 Vietnam Veterans 111 Tint the arm
56 Memorial arch 112 Requiem of a formalist
59 Widowed 113 Chief of pollution
68 Casual eater 120 Very long time
69 Manual key 121 That’s a shame!
71 Aircraft carrier 122 Have an indexing
72 Phono-2 123 “Quit nagging me!”
74 Slow-cooker entrée 124 Fill jar fillers
77 Gift giver’s prompt 125 Attention to detail
80 Teacakes 126 Toss ad
82 Korean car 127 Pour quart playweight
83 Common landscaping tree 128 Appetizers, on some menus
84 Conspiring factions 129 Wholefood quantity
86 Industrious employee, internally 130 US&F offense
91 Cut corners 131 Much more than worried
100 Fiji fish 132 Texting ancestor
103 Sniff lobbies 133 Culb Scout leader
106 Very funny folks 134 Dry hands
108 Raise, as a flag 135 Regrettable
111 Tie the knot 136 Narrow for scope
112 Requiem of a formalist 137 Gentle touch
113 Chief of pollution 138 Make Thy Father author
114 Fill jar fillers 139 Bookcase fastener
135 Wholefood quantity 140 Chip-dip Rabbi
142 Corned (off)

DOWN
1 Delighted 67 The Badger St.
2 Ancestral wisdom 68 Informal refusal
3 Snowman in Frozen 69 Be type
4 Nesting 70 Ribosomal
5 Parents out 71 Brulee
6 City near Florence 72 Male
7 Blame 73 Wee Man
8 Lowly (off) 74 Bane or Byron
9 “I’ll get back at you!” 75 Brilliantly
table
10 “Would’ it to you?” 76 Smoke
119 Cloudy 77 Male
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121 That’s a shame!
122 Have an indexing
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134 Dry hands
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137 Gentle touch
138 Make Thy Father author
139 Bookcase fastener
140 Chip-dip Rabbi
141 Corned (off)
142 Corned (off)

SUDOKU

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I’m here about the details.

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A Slice of Heaven Since ‘67

Clifton Day Festival

Sunday, October 8, 2017  9 am - 5 pm

Arts & Crafts • Antiques • Market Area • Live Music & Dance •
Kids’ Park • Pony Rides • Face Painting •
Beer & Wine Garden • Delicious Food ... and so much more!

Ride VRE! See train schedule on cliftonday.com

FREE ADMISSION!

Hosted by the Clifton Betterment Association
For more info, find us on Facebook or visit cliftonday.com

Parking Lots on Chapel Rd. • Clifton Rd. • Kincheloe Rd. • Newman Rd.
VRE Train from Rolling Rd. • Burke Centre • Manassas • Manassas Park