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Trains with Available Seating

See details inside.

VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS
A better way. A better life.
www.vre.org
My kids’ new school
#PSILoveYouVA

Everyone loves Potomac Shores. After all, it’s a life with everything you need. Like award-winning homes. Jack Nicklaus Signature golf. Sports fields, parks and trails. And our brand-new K-5 school that’s helping to teach, inspire and shape the next generation.

Share the love on Facebook or Twitter #PSILoveYouVA
Our annual tradition of visiting northern-most stations on Wednesday afternoons in May allows us an opportunity to thank our riders in person for their choice to use our service rather than participating in rush hour gridlock on I-95 or I-66. The decision our riders make to take VRE not only benefits them by reducing stress and wear and tear on their personal vehicles, but benefits the overall region by taking more cars off our congested roadways.

While it’s important for us to show our gratitude to riders at our Meet the Management events (expect some VRE goodies and a tasty snack for your trip home as a sign of appreciation), we also want riders to ask us questions or let us know if they have any concerns about our service. Meet the Management is very literal in its name – it is your opportunity to meet the VRE management team. I will be available to speak with, as will several members of our senior staff, Keolis crew members including engineers, and VRE support personnel from various departments. If we have not yet had the chance to speak, I hope you stop by to introduce yourself. If we have had the pleasure of meeting previously, I hope to see you again soon.

Sincerely,

DOUG ALLEN
Chief Executive Officer
Virginia Railway Express

Access RIDE online at VRE.org/RIDE

Sometimes our brains work faster than our fingers ...

Forgive us if you catch a typo or two at times, but we move quickly to deliver you news and alerts while keeping our service sublime.

When we do make these mistakes – boy do we feel cruddy. We ask though you not look past the content ... and by the way, off the bike on the platform please, buddy.
VRE UPDATE

MEET THE MANAGEMENT
THE WHAT, WHEN & WHY

If you’ve never stumbled into one of our Meet the Management events at our northern-most stations, you may be asking yourself – what is this all about? It’s more than a good opportunity for a cold drink and to grab something tasty. It’s your chance to ask the VRE-related questions you may find yourself discussing rhetorically to the rider next to you rather than reaching out to our staff. Simply, Meet the Management is –

WHAT: Meet the Management is comprised of several staffed tables at evening departure stations. Riders may line up for a chance to select items from the tables and ask questions.

WHEN: Meet the Management is held 5 consecutive Wednesday afternoons beginning in May.

WHY: We value our riders and wish to collect feedback firsthand.

2018 MEET THE MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE

ALL EVENTS SCHEDULED FOR AFTERNOON SERVICE

MAY 9: UNION STATION
MAY 16: L’ENFANT STATION
MAY 23: CRYSTAL CITY STATION
MAY 30: ALEXANDRIA STATION
JUNE 6: FRANCONIA-SPRINGFIELD STATION

LONGTIME RIDER FAQS

Longtime riders often have more complex or highly observatory questions they bring to Meet the Management. For example, last year someone asked, “Who is Sally Cooper?” While our CEO Doug Allen explained who Sally Hill Cooper is and why we honored her by putting her name on the train, we also noted the question among others in our internal meetings. From there, FAQs and particularly interesting questions were slated for narratives in RIDE Magazine and through our social media. Stay tuned to see if your question becomes an article, or continue to follow detailed answers to your fellow riders’ burning questions. See the February 2018 issue of RIDE to learn more about Sally Hill Cooper.

Visit our website, umwphilharmonic.com or call 540/654-1324 for more information

Philharmonic Orchestra
Dr. Kevin P. Bartram, Music Director

Season Finale
Masterworks: The Hunt

Prokofiev’s Peter and the Wolf, with narrator Henry Winkler

Friday, April 27
7:30 p.m.
Dodd Auditorium

TICKET INFO:
Friends of the Philharmonic
ticket sales begin Monday, March 19
General Public
ticket sales begin Monday, March 26
POTOMAC SHORES STATION UPDATE

The final design for the new Virginia Railway Express (VRE) train station at Potomac Shores community in Prince William County, Va., will soon be moving forward. The recently executed, final contract amendment between the Virginia Department of Rail Public Transportation (DRPT) and CSX Transportation (CSX) defined what portion of the third-track corridor improvements will be completed in the immediate future.

This new VRE station will be a key component of Potomac Shores' emerging town center. Situated on the banks of the Potomac River 30 miles south of Washington, D.C., the 1,920-acre community is being developed by SunCal, a real estate development company in the U.S. The construction for the Potomac Shores station is being sponsored by SunCal.

As part of the Arkendale to Powells Creek Third Track project, funded by grants from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the Virginia DRPT, CSX has been constructing a third set of tracks from Arkendale northward to North Possum Point, just south of the Potomac Shores, to serve alongside the existing CSX tracks. The design and timing of the construction of the Potomac Shores station has been in coordination with this rail improvement project, itself a significant component of the Commonwealth of Virginia's long-term investment strategy to increase rail capacity, including DC2RVA, Atlantic Gateway and Long Bridge.

The train station's planning, engineering and construction is a public-private project requiring the involvement, review and approval of state and federal agencies, and other entities. Potomac Shores has been working with VRE, CSX, the Commonwealth of Virginia, Prince William County and the U.S. Department of Transportation to coordinate the design and construction of the station.

Potomac Shores is contributing nearly $20 million toward the train station in partnership with the various agencies, and it anticipates construction of the station’s head house will move forward later this year.

In the Potomac Shores town center, much of the site has been cleared and graded in preparation for development. The first commercial pads are complete and accessible from Dunnington Place, and a large portion of the main parkway into the town center will be complete later this year. Final site plans for each development phase will be custom designed for the ultimate end-users.

About Potomac Shores: This transit-oriented development is planned for a mixed-use town center, a new VRE train station, a waterfront village and a corporate campus. Its master plan also includes two public schools, multiple sports fields, 10 miles of trails and over 3,800 residences. The community offers the 13,000 square-foot Shores Club, a private recreation and fitness complex, and has sold over 600 new homes. For more information, visit www.potomacshores.com.

About SunCal: SunCal is one of the largest real estate development companies in the U.S. that specializes in large-scale, mixed-use master-planned communities, and has offices in Irvine, Calif.; Northern California; New York City; Washington, D.C.; Las Vegas, Nevada; and Austin, Texas. For more information, visit www.suncal.com.
P.A.W. Express Mobile Adoption Event: Live Well Festival
April 21 @ 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
Harris Pavilion, Old Town Manassas
Spring is a great time to adopt a four-footed friend and give a dog or cat from the Prince William County Animal Shelter a fresh start on a new life! This event offers free health screenings, fitness classes, children’s activities, entertainment, and more!

Derby-Q: BBQ, Blues, Bourbon & Brews Festival Saturday
May 5 @ 2 pm - 8 pm
3999 University Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030
This community festival will feature specialty beer and bourbon tastings along with a variety of BBQ vendors. Live blues bands will perform on stage while the crowds anxiously await the Greatest Two Minutes in Sports - the Kentucky Derby to be shown on the big screen.

Leaseweb Manassas Airshow
May 5 @ 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
Manassas Regional Airport, 10600 Harry J Parrish Blvd
The airshow features both civilian and military airshow performers from around North America in aircraft ranging from warbirds and vintage airplanes to unlimited class aerobatic and modern day military marvels of engineering.

Lake Anna Brewfest 2018
May 19 @ 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm
6800 Lawyers Road, Spotsylvania, 22553
Over 40 different local and regional breweries with over 80 different beers, cider, wine and moonshine to try. You can enjoy great food from local restaurants, great music, over 30 different local vendors, moon bounces for the kids, corn hole and much more. The Lake Anna Brewfest is a family-friendly event which uses the proceeds from the event to help the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and the Friends of Lake Anna State Park.

Change your commute, change your life!

Urge your boss to consider Fredericksburg!
Visit fredericksburgva.com/considerfxbg to learn how.
THE THREE PIECE SAFETY PUZZLE

You may be familiar with the term Positive Train Control (PTC), and that it is promised to deliver a higher level of train safety. PTC is designed however as a safety overlay, and as such, to only stop or slow a train in the event that several safety processes fail. We have many protocols in place to ensure our conductors and engineers deliver our riders safely, and those processes will continue even after the implementation of PTC.

The anticipated piece to complete our safety puzzle is indeed PTC. Currently, we are working with our implementation team, consisting of contractors and VRE staff, to complete required training, install communications networks and implement a system for crew initialization. We are also coordinating with our host railroads, CSX and Norfolk Southern, with field testing and system interoperability to be completed later this year. We expect to be fully PTC compliant by the end of 2018.

Operating Rules
Railroad operations are governed by a set of rules that describe in detail how nearly all activities are to be undertaken. The rules specify train speeds, signal types and meanings, requirements for braking, acceleration, horn and bell use and other elements.

Efficiency Testing
Efficiency Testing is a collective term for tests the supervisors of railroad operating crews perform in unannounced situations. Our more seasoned riders are aware of this happening from time to time. Testing can include adjustment of the signal system to simulate a train ahead and the use of radar to ensure the locomotive engineer is complying with the proper slow speeds. It can also include the placement of small cards to be discovered during pre-departure equipment inspections. These tests ensure crews understand and comply with the railroad operating rules.

Timetable Speed Restrictions
Railroads can be compared to roadway systems. There are parking lots (we call them train yards), side roads (sidings or spur tracks) and highways (main track). Instead of posting thousands of signs outlining every speed and location name, railroad companies issue books known as “timetables.” Timetables show all of the major landmarks, assign speed limits on certain tracks and further clarify how Railroad Operating Rules should be applied in certain areas. When there is a deviation from the prevailing speed limit, as in a curve, the timetable will note this location and prescribe a safe operating speed. Locomotive engineers are tested and qualified to understand where to make these speed reductions, known as Timetable Speed Restrictions.

Safety/Job Briefings
Railroaders are required to begin their day with a detailed, “all-hands” discussion of the safety implications of their work and describe the work to be done. If anything changes, or a new person joins the group, the safety and job briefing must reoccur and cannot conclude until everyone understands what is being discussed.

Roadway Worker Protection
This refers to a method of keeping people who work on the track safe from passing trains. Under certain provisions, workers will establish a “work zone” and trains will have to request permission to enter this section of track. An employee in charge of the work zone will have to visually ensure there are no personnel or work equipment left in the track creating a safety risk. The Positive Train Control system, when installed, will know the limits of these work zones and will override the actions of the locomotive engineer to stop the train in the event that permission has not been given for the train to enter the work zone.

Positive Train Control (PTC)
PTC is a highly advanced safety system designed to automatically stop or slow a train to prevent collisions or derailments.
Many of us at VRE are also riders, so we understand some trains get more crowded than others – especially, on the way home. VRE is in the process of adding cars to trains to accommodate the growing number of riders. However, adding cars to trains is not as simple as it sounds.

To add more cars to trains, it is necessary to ensure there is enough space to store longer trains. Currently, our mid-day storage facility adjacent to Washington Union Station is at capacity. Another challenge is the length of most station platforms. Most of our platforms were originally built to accommodate five or less train cars. This means riders cannot access all train doors which creates bottlenecks when getting on/off the train. All VRE trains are equipped to operate eight cars on a train set; however, because of lack of storage and shorter platforms, only trains during highest ridership times can have up to eight cars.

While VRE works diligently to solve these challenges, riders have the option of riding on our less crowded trains.

Currently, the later morning trains tend to be the busiest. Riders may want to consider riding 300, 302, 306, 322, 324, 326 or 328. Clearly, this means waking up a bit earlier to catch those trains. Why would you want to do that?! Because those trains are less crowded so you can grab a seat, relax and take a nap on your way to work. Also, the Fredericksburg line train 300 is a limited express train, so you’ll get to your destination faster with plenty of time to grab a cup of coffee before starting your day.

Afternoon trains 303, 307, 309, 311, 327 and 329 usually run at 100 percent or above capacity. For those of you who catch trains early in the morning, trains 301, 305 and 325 might be perfect for you. However, if you’re not a morning person, but still want to grab a seat and relax on your commute home, trains 313, 315, 335 and 337 have plenty of seats available. Those trains run close to or under 50 percent capacity. Maybe consider grabbing dinner in the city, meeting a friend for drinks or doing some grocery shopping before catching the train to enjoy a little extra space.

Whether you decide to make it a bit earlier to the office or enjoy some extra you-time after work, take advantage of our less crowded trains for a more relaxed commute.
In late February, VRE made it to the final round of the annual American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Call Center Challenge during the Marketing & Communications Workshop in San Francisco, CA. VRE was amongst the five finalists selected from over 50 competing transportation organizations nationwide.

Our Senior Communications Specialist, Jennifer Young, represented VRE during the competition. “I was honored to represent VRE during the challenge this year,” said Young. “I know firsthand how important our riders are to us, so our goal is to always excel when it comes to providing the best customer service possible.”

APTA’s members enter the Call Center Challenge to be recognized for their transit system’s call center efforts. Participants are challenged with real life call center scenarios and judged on their ability to resolve each scenario in a friendly and professional manner.

This year Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) won the challenge. VRE congratulates them; at the same time, we will aim to take their place next year.

Railway Age magazine named Greg Deibler, VRE Chief Safety, Security and Compliance Officer, as one of this year’s Fast Trackers 10 Under 40 representing the industry’s best of the best.

Deibler has been part of the VRE family since 2008. His career in the industry has been dedicated to both freight and passenger trains. One of Greg’s many responsibilities is developing and overseeing VRE’s comprehensive first responder training program, for which APTA awarded us an APTA Gold Award.

Greg Deibler is a great representation of who we are as a company, aiming for excellence in everything we do and those we serve. VRE prides itself on hiring skilled, talented and dedicated individuals like Deibler.
Get Noticed With VRE Advertising

VRE carries 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 vre.org/advertising or contact advertising@vre.org or (703) 838-5417.
RAIL TIME PUZZLES

ACROSS
1 Battleite
6 Set lofty goals
12 Tampa NFLer
15 Early afternoon
18 From around here
19 Rectangle quartet
21 Causing wear
23 How piano virtuosos play
25 Layered, as plywood
26 Keaton of Annie Hall
27 Leave speechless
28 Cash holder
35 Homes of twigs
36 Legal prefix
39 Surpass
41 Pirate’s plunder
43 Fills fully
47 Outback bird
48 Queen’s reaction to the London Eye
53 Skyscraping
54 Ship of 1492
56 San __, Italy
57 __ hand (solo act)
59 Atticus Finch creator
60 Sir, in Sonora
61 Little fella
62 Strike down
63 Preparatory night
64 E-fil org.
65 Sources of salt
67 Prepare
69 Florence’s river
71 What’s heard upon exiting a musical in Fairbanks

DOWN
80 Army training academy: Abbrev.
81 Gives off
84 “Patience __ virtue”
85 Doing battle
88 Morse code sound
89 “It wasn’t me,” e.g.
91 Latest info
93 Giggling sound
94 Tesla head Musk
96 Bingeing on Simpsons episodes
99 Celestial body
100 Regatta craft
102 Whom Fallon succeeded
103 Shrink bark
104 Town near Santa Fe
105 20 Down provisionally
106 Completion
110 Beach toy
112 Island east of South Carolina
114 Psychic ability
117 Poetic preposition
120 Overemphasized
122 Close call you got yourself into
126 __ di Pisa (Italian landmark)
130 Put chips on
131 Game of Thrones patriarch
132 Widen, as pupils
133 Ticket portions
135 Prince in Aladdin
2 Stick together
3 Play opener
4 __ __ (der from one’s bank electronically)
6 Justice Kagan
6 First-class
7 What Brits call beans in veggie burgers
8 Front tip of a ship
9 Deduce
10 Rule, for short
11 Poetic preposition
12 Beauty and the Beast girl
13 Russian range
14 Celestial bodies
15 Cookie containers
16 Md. neighbor
17 Poetic preposition
18 Stitch up
20 Occupies, as a table
24 Rupert Murdoch
25 “O Canada,” for one
31 Takecharge type
33 Emulating
34 Casual shirt
36 Energizes, with “up”
37 Cannes confidante
38 Chasing away flies while jogging
40 Early tourney round
42 Has possession of
44 Zane Grey stories
45 Late morning
46 Rainy and icy
47 Coal derivatives
49 Certain sulfanilic subject
50 Alpine song
51 Asylum seeker
52 What “-vore” means
55 Barcelona bulls
58 Paycheck amount
65 Dolphins quarterback great
66 __ __ __ (RR stop)
68 Oldest cabinet department
69 __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ 

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“Tell me about your mother.”
Thanks to rider Jeromie Stephens for sharing this beautiful, creative shot of train 300. Using his iPhone 7+, Jeromie snapped this picture at Union Station from the rear of his train home.

Find more of Jeromie’s stunning photos taken while riding the VRE, and tag your own with #VREviews.