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FUTURE ON-SITE VRE STATION
RIDE readers are aware of many VRE system improvement projects on the horizon. From yard expansions that will help us lengthen our trains to parking expansions that will support station growth – we are actively working every day to increase system efficiency and serve the region.

This year is very exciting for our team as we will be advertising many projects for design and construction, as well as breaking ground on Quantico station improvements and two platform extensions. Additionally, new station lighting continues to be installed throughout the system as safety is at the heart of everything we do.

“Triple tracking” is an important component to increasing system efficiency by reducing rail congestion. Together with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, we are planning for a future with a third track the length of our Fredericksburg line. Many of our projects directly include laying a third track.

These construction projects are essential to maintaining a safe and efficient system. They also will allow us to enhance and expand our service. As many of these projects move ahead, it’s nice to take a moment to reflect on our progress and consider how, when the projects are complete, they will improve the commutes of our riders.

Sincerely,

DOUG ALLEN
Chief Executive Officer
Virginia Railway Express

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE REMINDER

Memorial Day, May 27: No service
Independence Day, July 4: No service
MEET THE MANAGEMENT
THE WHAT, WHEN & WHY

If you’ve never happened into one of our Meet the Management events, you may be asking yourself – what is this all about? Meet the Management is more than a good opportunity to grab a cold drink and something tasty. It’s an easy way for you to ask our management any and all of your VRE-related questions.

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 most Wednesday afternoons in May, and the first Wednesday in June.

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

2019 MEET THE MANAGEMENT SCHEDULE
ALL EVENTS SCHEDULED FOR AFTERNOON SERVICE

**MAY 1:** UNION STATION

**MAY 8:** L’ENFANT STATION

**MAY 15:** CRYSTAL CITY STATION

**MAY 29:** ALEXANDRIA STATION

**JUNE 5:** FRANCONIA-SPRINGFIELD STATION

METRO PLATFORM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
WHAT VRE RIDERS SHOULD EXPECT

From this Memorial Day (5/27) to September 8, Metro will shutdown six Metrorail stations in Virginia on the Yellow and Blue lines for platform reconstruction and other major capital work. The partial closure of these lines is expected to have significant impacts throughout the region, and transit partners have adjusted summer service where possible to transport displaced Metro riders.

Due to limited railroad availability, VRE is not able to offer expanded service during this time. However, VRE will offer assistance to Metro riders by providing information on how our service may be utilized to travel between our northern-most stations.

What does this mean for long-distance riders?

Please expect new riders to begin boarding northbound trains at Franconia-Springfield/Burke Centre and north. Likewise, please expect more riders needing to detrain at the northern-most stations during our southbound service. We will ask able-riders who are traveling short distances to offer seats to riders traveling long distances, so that we may more quickly and easily deliver people to their stops. The standing means detraining policy will become especially important during the Metro summer shutdown as we need passengers to remain seated until just prior to their stop to allow new riders to board.

**Is there a bright side?**

First and foremost, the upside is Metro will complete important safety rehabilitations.

Second, Metro announced the non-rider parking fee will be waived during the shutdown, which should help VRE riders as well as other riders utilizing alternate transportation departing from the Franconia-Springfield station.

Third, area transit partners are adding additional bus services to our stations. FRED will begin a new "feeder" service to Quantico, and Omniride will add feeder services to Rippon and Woodbridge.

What about the other construction at the King Street Metro station?

The project outside the station is expected to be completed in mid- to late 2020. For more information, visit: alexandriava.gov
**NEW Weekday Shuttle!**

**N. Stafford/Quantico VRE Feeder Service**

FRED Transit now offers early morning and evening bus service between N. Stafford and the Quantico VRE Train Station.

Bus stops at N. Stafford commuter lot, along Rt 1 and Quantico Corporate Center.

See RideFRED.com for route and schedule. Operates M-F, except Federal holidays.

**FREE May & June**

(All riders need a current photo id to travel onto the base).

RideFRED.com • 540.372.1222

Avoid the hassle. “Take FRED Instead!”

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Northern Virginia Supplemental Service

**Alexandria/DASH**
- Enhanced AT3 & AT4 Service
- Expanded King Street Trolley and Water Taxi Service
- Bus & HOV changes on Washington St

**Fairfax Connector**
- Additional 393/394 Express Bus Service
- Promotion of existing Connector routes and Fairfax commuter options

**OminiRoad/PRTC**
- Free Shuttle - Dale City Commuter Lot to Rippon VRE
- Free Shuttle - Lake Ridge Commuter Lot to Woodbridge VRE
- Promotion of existing, underutilized express commuter routes to Pentagon, Rosslyn, DC

**Virginia Railway Express (VRE)**
- Utilization/promotion of existing train capacity at Franconia-Springfield and King Street/Old Town Stations
- Subsidized Amtrak step up fare available

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**Metrorail Station closed**

May 25–Sept 8

No Blue or Yellow Line rail service south of National Airport

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Partial Metro shutdown affected area and alternative transportation options.
With Positive Train Control (PTC) fully operational on all VRE trains and as we complete the burn-in phase, riders can expect a decline in train delays associated with the new safety technology. VRE has received numerous inquiries from passengers over the last few months as it implemented PTC. Those questions, many based on incomplete information, have informed RIDE’s list of PTC myths.

**PTC MYTHS VS REALITY**

**MYTH #1:** PTC slows trains, which results in delays

**REALITY #1:** PTC only slows or stops trains in the rare instance where an engineer has not taken suitable action for a given situation. The technology is designed to prevent train-to-train collisions and derailments caused by excessive speed.

**MYTH #2:** PTC implementation was the sole reason for recent delays

**REALITY #2:** Freight and Amtrak train congestion as well as signal and mechanical issues were other factors driving delays in March and April.

**MYTH #3:** VRE’s rush to implement PTC to meet a federal mandate resulted in train delays

**REALITY #3:** VRE has been working methodically with its host railroads for more than a decade, since Congress mandated the adoption of PTC by 41 railroads nationwide, to ensure an effective and timely roll out of the technology. When other railroads implemented PTC, they experienced delays which abated over time as train crews and other personnel became familiar with the technology. VRE’s experience has been similar.

**MYTH #4:** PTC should virtually eliminate all rail accidents

**REALITY #4:** PTC monitors things that are known, such as a train’s speed and its location in relation to other trains and work zones. Because it cannot detect people who trespass, vehicles that stall or trees that fall on the tracks, incidents may still occur.

**MYTH #5:** VRE implemented PTC on passenger trains without first testing it on non-revenue trains

**REALITY #5:** VRE, along with our host railroads, spent most of January and February testing PTC at night on non-revenue trains.
GOOGLE TRANSIT

We’re excited to announce our schedules are going live on Google Transit. This means checking the schedule for your station just got a little easier, as Google Maps will display the next scheduled train time.

We are also working on a realtime feed with Google Transit. The realtime feed will use the same tracking as in the Train Status on our site.

I-66 CORRIDOR SURVEY

The Department of Rail and Public Transportation is conducting work to continue improving the travel experience on I-66 outside the beltway, and is asking our Manassas line riders to provide input.

Learning more about what makes you choose the travel modes you do – I-66 express lanes, carpool, vanpool, rail or bus – will help develop the plan to keep traffic congestion down and quality of life up.

Go to i66plan.metroquest.com to find out about the changes, share your opinion, and qualify for one of 66 prizes. Keeping pollution and stress levels down is a community effort, so please take the survey and spread the word.

i66plan.metroquest.com

Saturday, May 11 ☘️ Noon-5 pm ☘️ Embrey Mill

Enjoy an afternoon of food, fun, local wines, fresh berries, berry-theme treats, food truck specialties, Bourbon tasting and music. Kids will be treated to face painting, kids’ tattoos, balloons and Godzilla golf. Ticket are $15 or 2 for $25. Minors, designated drivers and non-tasting festival goers free.
As the weather warms and the sun shines longer each day, we encourage you to take advantage of attractions near your office. The final southbound VRE trains leave Union Station at 6:40PM (Fredericksburg) and 6:50PM (Manassas) – giving you time to grab a bite with coworkers, walk an historic area, or shop before heading home.

The first-ever Old Town Cocktail Week will be May 3-11, delivering more than craft drinks. If Alexandria isn’t your stop, consider deboarding your usual train in Alexandria and then continuing your trip on a later train (you will be able to use one ticket though you are splitting your trip).

Old Town Cocktail Week kicks off with Art on the Rocks on May 3, presented by The Art League at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, and culminates with a Meet the Makers Virginia Spirits Tasting Event on May 11 at Gadsby’s Tavern Museum.

More than 20 events at boutiques, historic sites and restaurants will include special tastings, cocktail seminars and more. Events include the Kentucky Breakfast Stout Derby Party at Mason Social on May 4; the Old Town Drinks book release party at The Hour on May 7 with tastings of cocktails featured in the book; a Hoptails event at Chadwicks with Port City Brewing Company on May 8; Bubbles, Barrels, and BBQ at George Washington’s Distillery & Gristmill on May 10; and a trio of cocktail seminars at Columbia Firehouse on May 11.

Admission varies depending on the event. For more information and to plan your Old Town Cocktail Week experience, visit OldTownCocktailWeek.com. Join the conversation online by using #OldTownCocktailWeek and #visitALX.

**WHAT:** Old Town Cocktail Week  
**WHEN:** 9 days, May 3–11, 2019  
**WHERE:** Restaurants, boutiques and historic sites in Old Town Alexandria, VA  
**ADMISSION:** Varies depending on the event; check website for details  
**INFO:** OldTownCocktailWeek.com

Special note: While VRE encourages bonding time with co-workers and catching up with old friends, we in no way endorse drinking and driving or any other illegal and unsafe activity.
RECENT ONLINE FORUM ACTIVITY

My only major complaint is about the unreliability of your ticket vending machines.

VRE Response: Thanks Courtney. The ticket vending machine are being upgraded to include new technology on the touch screens which will not be affected by dust and weather, new pin pads to accept chipped cards, and all new internal components. Installation should begin this summer.

Courtney from Spotsylvania

Why hasn’t a fence been installed at Fredericksburg between Track 2 & Track 3?

People regularly ignore the posted signs about the danger of crossing the tracks.

VRE Response: The track centers are too close to allow proper clearance for an inter-track fence like you see at Woodbridge and Springfield. There are signs posted which say "Do Not Cross The Tracks."

Sean from Spotsylvania

Have questions? Join VRE’s Online Forum the first Wednesday of each month at noon. vre.org/chatterbox

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The generous donations of “Friends of the Philharmonic” make it possible to fund student scholarships to orchestra members. In 2017-18, over $60,000 in scholarships were given to deserving students. The donations of the Friends also help bring in the outstanding outside artists that have appeared with the orchestra. For more information, e-mail: philharmonic@umw.edu

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RAIL TIME PUZZLES

ACROSS
1 Fabric-dyeing technique
6 Most populous African population
11 Sound of scissors
15 Missile on a board
19 Speak one's piece
20 City on the Missouri River
21 Simple binary choice
22 Three-layer cookie
23 1990 Best Picture
25 Oscar film (3:01)
26 Super Bowl champ's prize
27 Party supply
28 Informal turnout
29 Almost immediately
30 Musical buzz
31 Color-changing reptile
35 Brag boldly
37 Architect Saarinen
38 Bring to (start of bubbling)
41 Over amplified
42 Retirement fund acry.
45 1956 Best Picture
46 Oscar nominee (3:40)
51 Pump surcharge
54 “Have a good day” reply
55 Polynesian language
56 Reporter’s credential
58 Very: Fr.
61 Audacity
62 Assumed-name introducer
63 Road material
64 Royal wand
67 3d well
68 1939 Best Picture
72 Four-time film role for Ford
75 Film’s raw footage
76 Energy Star org.

DOWN
1 Woman’s fitted vest
2 Tasonry or Cochise
3 Hindrance to musicianship
4 Company designation
5 New Hampshire city
6 Oven setting
7 Parisan pal
8 Capone-era weapon
9 Festival showing
10 Cut in a lumber mill
11 Tex-Mex condiment
12 Of Mice and Men, e.g.
13 Opinion introducer
14 Great Performances
15 Hip-hop headwear
16 N. Mex. neighbor
17 City near Tahoe
18 Drive-thru order
24 On the Road narrator
25 Granola morsel
30 Oscar winner as Woolf
32 Apple products
giant
33 Follows orders
34 They’re highly frowned upon
36 Latter-day pale
39 Where some RNs work
40 Auction grouping
42 Nose game
43 Repel, with “off”
44 Edward heard in Up
46 Must
47 Add more branches
48 Sacred choral music
49 Transform, in sci-fi
50 Edit
51 Collegian’s no.
52 Genesis floater
53 Body for buoy
57 Two-dimensional measures
59 Hot saison
60 Did tailoring
61 Bagging order
63 Emergency supplies holder
66 Actor Wheaton
67 Admission of defeat
68 Supermodel Campbell
70 Strike down, in the Bible
71 Sudden pledging
72 French prep school
73 Temporary rage
75 Texter’s 75 Down
77 Sound of surprise
81 Confessional music
82 Empty-headed
84 External appearance
86 Heaven on earth
90 Poetic preposition
92 Salt-cured pork
93 “I’ll do that for you
95 A part (audition)
96 Peanut
97 Cumberbatch, in The Limitation Game
98 Short-tailed weasels
99 Bag on a bed
100 How a teacher may mark mistakes
103 Organic compound
104 Suffix for stock
105 Mauna __
106 Seasonal fast-food sandwich
107 Whipped call
110 Spiny houseplant
111 Marshmallow-topped tubers
113 Ancient Andean
114 Shade of socks
118 ___ Cruces, NM
119 MD’s brain test
120 Admiration in verse
121 Suffix for stock

SUDOKU

8 9 2 4 1 6
5 7 3 2 8 1
2 6 3 5 4 9
7 9 4 6 8 2
5 8 1 2 9 7

9 6 3 1 7 8
7 9 5 6 8 4
1 8 7 5 6 9
4 7 9 1 5 3
2 8 5 6 1 7

“Well one of us is doing it wrong.”
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