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There’s plenty to love at Potomac Shores. Like award-winning homes. A new elementary school. Sports fields, parks and trails. And a close-knit community of residents enjoying events and experiences that make it feel like you belong to one great, big happy family.

Share the love on Facebook or Twitter #PSILoveYouVA
COMMUNICATION WITH PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Communication is comparable to an intricate machine. Various pieces of a machine must all work together, or there will be a break. With proper attention however, a well-oiled machine avoids the consequences of foreseeable friction and instead allows its operators to focus on end results.

Much like we service our trains, we must also ensure our communication processes with our partner organizations also remain in excellent working order. Our staff strives to uphold the well-proven practices with our partners, as well as identify and strengthen the lines of communication that need to be further developed.

What does this all mean to you, the rider? It means – We speak with our host railroads about long-term service goals, as well as service in the short-term. We communicate organizational activities to our Operations Board (which consists of elected officials from our service area), and the Operations Board in turn provides guidance on how to move forward in the best interest of their constituents, communities, and our system as a whole. Plus, we participate in conversations with Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) about regional goals, and share information that may better inform their upcoming projects.

An essential part in our communication machine is our Operations Board meetings, which is open to the public. The meetings are typically held at the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) building in Woodbridge on the third Friday of each month. I invite you to find the full schedule on vre.org and join us at an upcoming meeting.

Sincerely,

DOUG ALLEN
Chief Executive Officer
Virginia Railway Express
Later this summer, the City of Alexandria in partnership with Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) will begin construction on the King Street-Old Town Metro Access Improvement project. The purpose of this project is to make the area surrounding the Metrorail station safer and more aesthetically pleasing for station users. The new design will also accommodate future needs, including bus service expansion making transit a more convenient and attractive travel mode. The project completion timeline is split into two phases. The first phase begins the summer of 2018, and the final phase is expected to be completed in 2020.

Vision Zero

The King Street-Old Town Metro Access Improvement project is a long-standing project to improve access and safety at the station which aligns with the City’s Vision Zero initiative. The City of Alexandria adopted the Vision Zero Action Plan on December of 2017 to help achieve its goal of eliminating all traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2028.

How this Project May Impact You

Here are a few items station users should expect during the year-long first phase:

- Bus bays will be temporarily relocated to Diagonal Road, Daingerfield Road, Cameron Street and King Street. After completion of the first phase, buses will move back to the station.
- There will be no Kiss & Ride area during construction. Customers who use these areas should use either Eisenhower Avenue or Braddock Road Metrorail stations.
- There will be no shuttle area within the station, and all local shuttle service must use either Eisenhower Avenue or Braddock Road Metrorail stations.
- The existing parking lot and bus loading area will be under construction, except for pedestrian paths to the bus bays.
- Expect increased traffic congestion along Diagonal Road, especially during peak travel times.
- Those using the bus facilities and VRE riders should add extra travel time to the station.
- The King Street-Old Town Metrorail Station will remain open with no impact to train service.

Learn more about the project schedule in future issues of RIDE, or visit alexandria.gov for more information. Please note the King Street-Old Town Metro Access Improvement project is separate from the WMATA project to rehabilitate their station platforms beginning the summer of 2019.
**ALEXANDRIA & FRANCONIA-SPRINGFIELD: NO LONGER "L" STATIONS**

**What are "L" Stations?**

Our on-time performance is based on the entire run on the line - from Broad Run to Union Station or from Spotsylvania to Union Station. While we might arrive two minutes behind schedule at a station, we often can make up time in route and arrive on schedule at the following stops.

Our "L" schedule stations are another way to allow for "catch up time." As noted on our schedule, trains will depart L stations when station work is complete. Conversely when trains are running on schedule, this may mean an early departure from L schedule stations.

**Why are Alexandria & Franconia-Springfield no longer "L" Stations?**

We've experienced an increase in passengers boarding northbound trains at the Alexandria and Franconia-Springfield stations. We want to provide a high level of service to these passengers, and therefore cannot leave early from their station.

So, if we arrive early in Franconia-Springfield or Alexandria, we will leave at the scheduled departure time.

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**USE Metrobus to Catch VRE from Franconia-Springfield**

For riders who are currently driving to the Franconia-Springfield station to catch the VRE – there may be a better way.

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)'s Metrobus picks up at conveniently located stops around the area, and drops off at the Franconia-Springfield station.

Best of all, many VRE riders can use the Metrobus service for free. Present your monthly or TLC ticket to the bus operator when boarding and enjoy a free ride to the station.

To learn more about Metrobus, visit WMATA's website: wmata.com or call 202-637-7000 (TTY 202-962-2033)

**Cost**

| Holders of Transit Link Cards (TLC) or monthly VRE ticket | ride free on regular Metrobus routes and pay a discounted fare of $2.25 on Metrobus express routes. |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| **Not a TLC or monthly VRE ticket holder but interested in taking the Metrobus?** |
| **Regular Metrobus Fares** |
| $2.00 using a SmarTrip® card or cash |
| $1.00 using Senior SmarTrip® card or cash (with proper ID) for seniors and people with disabilities |
| **Express Bus Fares** |
| $4.25 using a SmarTrip® card or cash |
| $2.10 using a SmarTrip® card or cash for seniors and people with disabilities |

Money-saving weekly passes are available for unlimited travel on Metrobus.

**Metrobus Rider Tips**

- Bus operators do not carry money. Please have your pass or exact fare ready when you board.
- If standing, please stay behind the yellow line and hold a handrail securely.
- To alert the bus operator that you want to get off at the next stop, pull the cord that runs along the top of the windows or press the button on the handrail leading out the back door.
- Onboard, it is unlawful to:
  - Eat or drink
  - Smoke
  - Spit or litter
  - Play audio or video equipment without earphones
  - Bring animals (except service animals)
The Early Years
Union Station in Washington, D.C. opened on October 27, 1907. At the time it was built, the Station covered more ground than any other building in the United States and was the largest train station in the world. The total area occupied by the Station and the terminal zone was originally about 200 acres and included 75 miles of tracks. In fact, if put on its side, the Washington Monument could lay within the confines of the Station's concourse.

Union Station brought to the nation's capital a new grandeur that echoed the Chicago World's Fair and began Washington's monumental transformation. Seventy pounds of 22-karat gold leaf adorned the 96-foot barrel vaulted, coffered ceilings. The white granite and classic lines of Union Station set the stage for the next 40 years of Washington's classic architecture – reflected in the construction of the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials and the Supreme Court building. The cost was monumental as well – $125 million for the station and its approaches.

In many ways, Union Station was a city within a city. At various times it employed a staff of over 5,000 people and provided such amenities as a bowling alley, mortuary, baker, butcher, YMCA, hotel, ice house, liquor store, Turkish baths, first-class restaurant, nursery, police station, and a silver-monogramming shop.

Presidential Accomodations
As train travel was the mode of transportation for even U.S. Presidents in the early 1900s, a Presidential Suite was added to Union Station (now B. Smith’s Restaurant). In 1909, President Taft was the first President to use the room and over the years many dignitaries were officially welcomed here, including King George VI and Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain. The last President to use the Presidential Suite was President Eisenhower, although, President George Bush did use it during an Inaugural Ball in 1989.

On April 14, 1945, a funeral train crossed the Potomac and backed into Union Station carrying the casket of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Disrepair and Rennovation
The advent of air travel led to a decline in railroad passengers, and Union Station began to fall into disuse. In 1968, in anticipation of the Bicentennial, the decision was made to transform the Station into the “National Visitor Center.” The ill-fated project opened on July 4, 1976 but failed to draw sufficient crowds to sustain its operation, and was closed in 1978. While Congress debated the fate of Union Station, rain damage caused parts of the roof to cave in and toadstools began to grow inside. The entire building was finally sealed in 1981. Congress had to decide whether to save the building or bulldoze it. That year, Congress enacted the Union Station Redevelopment Act of 1981, which called on Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole to develop an ambitious plan for the commercial development of the station with the goal of making it financially self-sufficient. A unique public/private partnership was formed to faithfully restore the building to its original state and create a viable mixed-use transportation center.

Following three years of renovation at a cost of $160 million, Union Station reopened on September 29, 1988 – restored to its former glory. This living and working museum was redeveloped as a bustling retail center and intermodal transportation facility with over 130 unique shops and restaurants. Today, Union Station continues to make history as the most visited destination in the nation’s Capitol with over 32 million visitors a year.

Visit vre.org/blog for more station history.
Wonder Woman 1984 to Film in Northern Virginia

The follow-up to Warner Bros. Pictures and DC’s hugely successful Wonder Woman, titled Wonder Woman 1984, will film for several weeks in the Alexandria area this summer.

“We are delighted to welcome the Wonder Woman team to Virginia,” said Governor Ralph Northam. “We are confident that this trailblazing project will find a perfect home in Alexandria, and look forward to the super impact it will have on our economy and the continued growth of Virginia’s lucrative production industry.”

“We are pleased to host the production of Wonder Woman 1984 and are enthusiastic about what a film of this size will contribute to state and local economies,” said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Brian Ball. “The Commonwealth’s film production industry is a fast-growing sector of the Virginia economy, with a total annual economic impact of nearly $697 million. Additionally, the film industry supported nearly 4,300 full-time jobs and provided more than $27 million in state and local taxes in 2016. We are confident this project will help pave the way for tremendous future growth.”

The movie is scheduled for release November 1, 2019.
It is the rider’s responsibility to have a validated ticket prior to boarding the train, and by boarding our trains the rider has consented to our policies. We understand there may be reasons why someone may not have a validated ticket, but the summons issuing process is not the time to state your case. In the conductor’s eyes, you either have a valid ticket or you don’t. Per the Code of the Commonwealth of Virginia §18.2-160, if you board the train without a validated ticket, you will receive a citation for fare evasion even if you are a longtime, monthly rider.

Why must the conductor issue a summons?
First, it’s a law. Secondly, our goal is to keep our fares as low as possible while continuing to maintain our current level of service. Passenger fares cover half our operating costs. If riders do not validate their tickets or don’t have a ticket, then VRE’s revenue goes down. Keep in mind that your fare pays for more than just your trip. We use those funds to pay for parking lot leases, station cleaning, the ticketing system, and many other items that go along with providing train service. Unfortunately, the best way to ensure that everyone takes this seriously is to enforce the policy. And we enforce the policy by writing summonses.

What is the conductor’s responsibility?
If a conductor checks a ticket and finds that it has not been validated, or you are found to be riding outside of your zones, the conductor is required by the state to issue a summons.
FRED ADDS SERVICE TO SPOTSYLVANIA VRE STATION

Wish you could cut down on your drive time to the station? Starting this month, FRED Transit will begin offering transit service to the Spotsylvania VRE station, meeting two trains each morning and each evening.

Spotsylvania not your station? FRED transit is also working with Stafford County to add service to the Quantico VRE stations later this year.
NEW "KAWAII" BULLET TRAIN

Japan’s "culture of cuteness" – known as kawaii – has become a prominent aspect of the country’s modern culture. Hello Kitty is considered a staple of kawaii, and the character now finds herself the subject of a bullet train with the goal of revitalizing regional communities in western Japan. In a collaboration between West Japan Railway and Sanrio, the Hello Kitty Shinkansen began operation on June 30.

The train’s exterior features a ribbon design (with Hello Kitty bows) intended to represent the wish to ‘link’ and ‘connect’ regional areas. Stepping inside the train, riders are met with an original melody composed exclusively for the Hello Kitty Shinkansen.

The themed train cars present information on the regions of western Japan, include a shop to purchase limited-edition goods and regional specialty products, feature a spot for taking commemorative photographs with a Hello Kitty travel guide, and more. The train also boasts a hidden Hello Kitty in car two, and invites riders to come on board and look for her.

Onboard regional campaigns and activities are scheduled this year to provide riders with recommended destinations and events in specific prefectures (districts) of Japan. These campaigns will feature original Hello Kitty designs celebrating their prefectures.

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Get Noticed With VRE Advertising

Reach our passengers with advertising opportunities on our platforms, in our trains and through our award-winning RIDE Magazine. 70 percent of passengers have an annual household income of more than $100,000.

For more information, visit: vre.org/advertising

Contact: advertising@vre.org
(703) 838-5417

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GLOBAL TRANSIT UPDATE

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RAIL TIME PUZZLES

ACROSS
1 Bring under control
2 Appear without warning
3 Sweeping stories
4 Hem in
5 Iliad warrior
6 Belltile
7 Person from Zagreb
8 Do a fall chore
9 Air-base structure
10 Compact car since ‘72
11 Comes before
12 Not as much
13 Cornfield birds
14 Does some roofing
15 Brother in Genesis 4
16 Ballet bend
17 Peanut butter variety
18 Liquid-Plum rival
19 Body shop sprayer
20 Term of endearment
21 Assort in oratory
22 Small numero
23 Taproom servings
24 Sirloin, for instance
25 Impersonate
26 Tank top or tee
27 Sassy
28 Many profs.’ degrees
29 British dairist
30 Apply (for), as a promotion
31 Rodeo Drive designer
32 Visibly stunned
33 Source for oil and ink
34 DVR remote button
35 Actress Shire
36 Indy constant
37 Newspaper essays
38 Skating leaps
39 Disneyland shuttles
40 Palm fruit
41 Repetitive learning
42 Squirrels away
43 Manning of the NFL
44 Food processor setting
45 Large quantity
46 Gold cubes
47 Sudden insights
48 Underground resource
49 Commission recipient
50 Class jottings
51 Muscle switches
52 Planetarium roof
53 Decline to bid
54 December season
55 Pacific weather phenomenon
56 Extend across
57 Venerable candy on a stick
58 Website promo
59 Euphemism
60 Harbinger of the future
61 Part of eight of this puzzle’s long answers
62 Having what it takes
63 Oscar winner
64 Witherspoon
65 Remove a stubble
66 Hefty book
67 Top-billed role
68 Church officer
69 Himalayan region
70 Timetable listing
71 Affectionate greeting
72 Reads closely (over)
73 Woodpile covering
74 Just shy of shut
75 Prepared
76 Track wage
77 Out with a paper towel
78 Wind instruments
79 Print makers in snow
80 Have no __ for (dislike)
81 Whirled pippin
82 Boorish
83 Free from fear
84 Equilibrium
85 Southern Mexican state
86 Winter cap feature
87 Fencing blade
88 Suffix for percent
89 HMO network members
90 Little laugh
91 Sandy expanses
92 Cultural pursuits
93 Fledgling
94 Honorary degree
95 Honorarium
96 Appear, as to speak
97 Theoretically
98 Complain, as to speak
99 Remain unsettled
100 List shortener
101 Spot for an earring
102 The Big Easy
103 Moved quickly
104 Force
105 Spill a secret
106 Underlying cause
107 Round for weapons
108 Thought-provoking
109 Slim swimmer
110 Spokane winter setting: Abbr.
111 "Maybe next time you announce your paternity before you get out your lightsaber."

DOWN
1 Woodpile covering
2 Just shy of shut
3 Prepared
4 Track wage
5 Out with a paper towel
6 Wind instruments
7 Print makers in snow
8 Have no __ for (dislike)
9 Whirled pippin
10 Boorish
11 Free from fear
12 Equilibrium
13 Southern Mexican state
14 Winter cap feature
15 Fencing blade
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32 Spill a secret
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35 Thought-provoking
36 Slim swimmer
37 Spokane winter setting: Abbr.

SUDOKU

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

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