VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 2018

VRE’S STORY OF STORAGE ... 2
ROLLING ROAD PLATFORM EXTENSION ... 4
THE BROAD RUN EXPANSION ... 7

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This issue of RIDE magazine highlights several system improvement projects currently underway. These projects aim to increase the efficiency of our service, to include minimizing system bottlenecks and running longer trains.

You may remember us referring to the System Plan 2040 in previous issues, which is the long-term plan our Operations Board adopted to add capacity including more trains eventually (during both peak and off-peak times), and to also offer service for commuters traveling south – rather than north – for work.

A very important, complementary component of this 2040 plan that we are actively pursuing in the near-term is addressing the anticipated service needs resulting from Natural Growth in the area. To respond to Natural Growth, or ridership growth over time due to regional increases in population and employment, our team is leading projects to support lengthening our trains. Simply put: we are working to add more available seats on our trains.

Just by implementing our plans for Natural Growth, we will add thousands of seats to our system by 2040. Efforts to support the longer trains include lengthening platforms (find information on the Rolling Road Platform Extension on page 4) and increased storage to "park" the trains when not in service (see page 2). The Broad Run Expansion is also a response to expected Natural Growth needs on the Manassas Line (see page 7).

If you ride to L’Enfant or farther north, you’ve probably noticed a parked train on a storage track near the L’Enfant station. After you read about the importance of storage to our system in the article to follow, please let the stored train serve as a reminder when you pass that VRE is working for you.

Sincerely,

Doug Allen
Chief Executive Officer, Virginia Railway Express

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ADVERTISING REVENUE COVERS PRODUCTION AND PRINTING COSTS

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

Manassas Transportation Townhall: September 17th

Broad Run Platform Event: September 26th

Clifton Day: October 7th

Columbus Day (No VRE Service): October 8th

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Access RIDE online at VRE.org/RIDE
Passenger rides train… passenger leaves train to go to work… train takes passenger back at the end of the day. It may not be the most typical love story ever told, but it should be a familiar one to anyone who’s ridden the Virginia Railway Express.

But there’s one part of this story most riders never get to hear. What happens to all those trains while you’re at work? The answer is exactly what all rom-com characters hope to hear from the ones they love: They wait for you. Enter VRE’s storage yards.

VRE’s current storage yard projects are designed to expand and improve upon our current storage facilities so that we can run as long a train as our locomotives allow, as frequently as possible. After all, we can only run as many trains as we can store in our yards. There are three major storage projects going on right now.

L’Enfant North & South Storage Tracks
Because Amtrak will need to use the Ivy City yard just north of Union Station during the midday hours when their new trains arrive in a few years, we needed to find new places to store VRE trains each day. That’s why we’re constructing storage tracks both north and south of L’Enfant Station so that they can be used to temporarily store one trainset north of the station, and two trainsets south of the station, during the middle of the day. These storage tracks are an interim solution until a new Midday Storage Facility is operational.
Midday Storage Facility

We are developing a new yard north of Union Station and once completed, we’ll be able to store the train consists we need for current service, plus convert the temporary L’Enfant storage tracks into a fourth mainline track. The Midday facility also includes recommissioning an out-of-service track from Union Station north. This new yard track will help to minimize delays to VRE trains traveling between the storage yard and Union Station by providing a more direct route to the lower level tracks at Union Station used by VRE.

Broad Run Expansion

We’ve secured funding for additional passenger cars for Manassas Line trains and need to increase the capacity of the Broad Run maintenance and storage facility (MSF) to be able to store them. The new cars will allow us to operate longer trains and provide about 1,700 more seats in the morning and evening on Broad Run-based trains. The MSF improvements include space for five trains, up to 10 cars long, plus spares.

Together, these projects will significantly increase the amount of train storage we can use, moving us closer to our goal of being able to run more and longer trains throughout the system. We’re committed to improving other areas of our service too, so that passenger capacity can increase to 25,000 rides per day by 2020, daily trips can reach 40,000 by 2040…and you can absolutely love every single ride you take.
The existing Rolling Road Station platform accommodates five-car train sets for boarding and detraining, meaning many passengers must move to different cars for getting off longer trains. The platform extension project will build a 250-foot platform extension to accommodate eight-car train sets.

The final design plans are being reviewed by Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) and once VRE has received and responded to their comments, the project will be advertised for construction. The construction period should be about 6 months, weather permitting.

The Benefits

This project will create additional platform space at the Rolling Road Station, resulting in:

- Easier boarding and exiting for passengers from all train cars
- The ability to service up to eight-car trains now and ten-car trains in the future
- Improved operational flexibility and efficiency
THE DRIFTERS, CORNELL GUNTER’S COASTERs, AND THE PLATTERS
September 15th at 5:30 PM
5030 Gordon W. Shelton Blvd, Fredericksburg VA 22401
The Drifters delivered numerous hits including Under The Boardwalk, Save The Last Dance For Me and many more. Cornell Gunter’s Coasters are known for such hits as Poison Ivy, Yakety Yak, and many more. The Platters’ debut hit single Only You (and You Alone) launched the vocal group as superstars on the world stage. Learn more: celebratevirginiaafterhours.com

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION TOWNHALL ON LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION
Hosted by the Manassas City Council
September 17th at 7:00 pm
Manassas City Hall
The City of Manassas is updating its Comprehensive Plan, and is asking for input on its first Transportation Master Plan to guide the future of transportation in the city. Learn more at: manassascity.org/2431/Comprehensive-Plan-Update

MANASSAS CHORALE SILVER SERENADE CONCERT
October 5th at 7:30 pm
Hylton Performing Arts Center
10960 George Mason Circle, Manassas
Help kick off the Manassas Chorale’s 25th anniversary season with “Silver Serenade” featuring premier high school vocal ensembles in addition to the 90+ voice Chorale! For more information visit manassaschorale.org

10TH ANNUAL NORTHERN VIRGINIA VETERANS PARADE
November 3rd at 11:00 am
Old Town Manassas
VetPar, Inc. will host the 10th Annual Northern Virginia Veterans Parade on 3 November in Old Town Manassas at 11am. This year they will honor the 100th Anniversary of the American Legion. Additional information is found on the parade website: vetpar.org.

3RD Annual Oktoberfest
Sat., Sept. 15
- Enjoy a variety of beers from several Stafford breweries
- Traditional Oktoberfest food: Brats, pretzels and more
- Compete in stein holding contests, corn hole tournaments
- Children’s activities
- Bring canned goods to support S.E.R.V.E. (Stafford Emergency Relief through Volunteer Efforts)
- Free admission; beer tickets available for sale on website.
- Sponsored by Adventure Brewing Company

Noon-7 pm
Doc Stone Professional Building
95 Dunn Ave., Stafford, VA 22556
www.staffordoktoberfest.com

COMMUNITY UPDATE
We are sad to announce our second chief executive officer, Steve Roberts passed away this past July. He served VRE for almost seven years between September 1993 and June 2000.

Steve graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1965 with a bachelor’s degree in history. He then completed his master’s degree in public administration at the University of Oklahoma in 1973, while on active duty with the United States Air Force.

Prior to VRE, Steve was the director of finance and project development at the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC). Steve helped lead the establishment of VRE with the Commonwealth of Virginia, regional agencies and local governments during his time at the NVTC. He helped to gather funding and grants, created management programs, and managed services for VRE. He initiated agreements with Conrail, Amtrak, Norfolk Southern, and the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac Railroad (RF&P) to make commuter rail services safer and more affordable for the public. He also reinforced Virginia’s participation in the Washington Metro system and helped create policies for Virginia’s transit system.

During his time with VRE, Steve was responsible for getting an agreement with Amtrak allowing our commuters access to select Amtrak trains. He strengthened our relations and collaborations with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), Maryland’s MARC Train Service, federal government, state governments, local transit operators and landowners. He also contributed to cashless fare collection and web-based customer service.

“Steve was a character,” said Sharon Bulova, the chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, in a VRE board meeting after receiving the news of Steve’s passing. “He really knew his stuff and he was tenacious. So, he would not give up (when things were difficult),” she added.

Bulova also shared her favorite memory of Steve. She said Steve owned a toy store in Prince William County, and it was his part time avocation. He would bring whistles from his toy store to VRE’s rail rallies for people to blow. One year, VRE was planning to host its rail rally in Burke, Virginia. VRE invited many congressmen and senators trying to build support among the federal government and state governments. The rally was accidentally scheduled on St. Patrick’s Day, and people were unhappy about it. To make the best of things, Steve came with his face painted green and wore elf ears from his toy store – giving the rally a St. Patrick’s Day theme.

In 2000, Steve left VRE and joined SYSTRA. Steve was the vice president and program manager at SYSTRA for a total of 11 years, before becoming the principal of Roberts Rail Resources through this year.

He also took time to give back to the society despite his busy schedule. In January 2012, he volunteered to work with seniors on their financial stability at AARP, a nonprofit organization serving age 50 and older Americans.

Steve’s lifelong contribution to railroad transportation and services will be forever remembered and appreciated by VRE and many others.
Preliminary design is underway to expand parking and modify the station platform at the VRE Broad Run Station, increase the size of the Broad Run Maintenance and Storage Facility (MSF), and add seats to VRE Manassas Line trains that originate their trips at Broad Run. Learn more about the proposed improvements on September 26th from 4:00 to 8:30 PM at an Open House at the VRE Broad Run Station.

Scheduled for completion in 2023, the Broad Run Expansion is designed to meet expected VRE rider demand through 2030 for seating on-board trains and parking at the station. Six hundred parking spaces are proposed to be built at Broad Run north of the Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) tracks, bringing the station parking capacity to 1,400 spaces. A pedestrian-only tunnel under the tracks is included to connect riders using the new parking lot to the station platform.

VRE riders using Route 28 will be able to access the new parking lot directly from Route 28/Nokesville Rd. via Residency Rd., providing an alternative to Piper Lane. Combined with Prince William County’s plans to widen Route 28 and add a multi-use trail, there will be enhanced opportunities to bike or walk to the Broad Run Station. In addition, the purchase of new coaches to lengthen trains will add 1,700 seats for riders on the Manassas Line.

A third main track is also proposed within the NS right-of-way between the Broad Run complex and the Manassas Station. The new track will expand rail capacity and minimize potential conflicts between VRE trains and freight or Amtrak trains to help ensure long-term maintenance of VRE on-time performance.

VRE Manassas Line capacity improvements, including those at the Broad Run complex, are made possible through a concession fee paid to the Commonwealth by I-66 Express Mobility Partners, the private-sector consortium that is building and will operate the I-66 Outside the Beltway Express Lanes now under construction. The Commonwealth Transportation Board approved $129 million in concession fee funds for VRE improvements including the purchase of passenger coaches, additional parking at the Broad Run and Manassas Park Stations, expansion of the Broad Run MSF, construction of the third main track between the Broad Run and Manassas Stations, extension of the Manassas Station platform, and implementation of a real-time VRE train arrival and seating/parking availability system. Combined with funding from the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority and federal funds, just over $151 million will be invested in the VRE Manassas Line capacity improvements.

Additional information about the Broad Run Expansion is available on the VRE web site at: vre.org/development/system-enhancements/broad-run/
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Contact: advertising@vre.org (703) 838-5417

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Puzzle:

8 1 6 4 9 2 5 3 7

7 4 3 8 5 2 1 9 6

Answer:

Small: 4 1 9 2 7 5 8 6 3

Large: 3 5 1 9 4 2 7 8 6
RAIL TIME PUZZLES

ACROSS
1 Declare
6 No different from
12 Stuff in shakers
16 Molotov
19 Reef builder
20 Bottled T-shirt
21 Fargo help
23 Senator Snowe’s hometown
25 Fully set
26 Jogging pace
27 Catalyst
28 Silicon breaks
30 Rugged rides, for short
31 Took charge
32 Sandy spot
33 Shopper’s romp
34 Latched onto
39 City founded as a mining camp
42 Poker bump
43 Preço competitor
44 out a victory
45 “Theme Park Capital of the World”
51 Bring to mind
56 Director Anderson
57 Some beachfront units
58 Antarktik unit
59 Shoey garden shrub
60 Keep (out)
61 Thing of the past
63 Pukup
64 Entry-level position: Abbr.
67 Steel mill city
72 Longing feeling
73 Come into one’s own
75 Lowly workers
76 Decide to drop
78 Base for beer
80 Before now
81 Contributing element
84 “_’s dreaming?”
87 Dress code details
88 Where Will Chamberlain went to college
91 Pilot light fuel
92 Hera’s hawkish boy
93 Very
95 City with a “cowboy up” philosophy
96 Take after
97 Aquatic weasel
98 Actor Quinn of Elementary
99 Trail carrier
100 Paltry
101 Place for rouge
102 Underhanded
103 Dugout furniture
104 “Vertical transportation” giant
105 “Scram!”
106 “Country mail rite.”
107 Five-star general’s nickname
108 Overdue
109 “Admiral alternative”
110 HMO person
111 One Benjamin
112 “Waterloo” group
113 Box spring supporter
114 Arrange logically
115 Concrete
116 Meditative practice
117 You . . .
118 Sends a duplicate email to
119 Become agitated
120 Much of Libya
121 Campus environment
122 Minimal amount
123 Starter like anti-
124 Exodus 14 locale
125 Left the ground briefly
126 Storybook story
127 Designer Diane Furstenberg
128 Utter unclearly
129 Sound heard in Snow White . . .
130 Surgeon
131 Extremely uncommon
132 Has a bug
133 Merit badge org.
134 Pode that may be picked
135 “Country mail rite.”
136 Five-star general’s nickname
137 Coming up soon
138 Kept cool, perhaps
139 Spanish surrealist
140 Operatic song
141 Emerald measure
142 Actor Baldwin
143 Peace Nobelist
144 Walessa
145 Overdue
146 Absolutely alternative
147 HMO person
148 One Benjamin
149 “Waterloo” group
150 Box spring supporter
151 Arrange logically
152 Concrete
153 Meditative practice
154 “Makes sense”
155 "Much obliged,“ in Bonn
156 Black aquatic bird
157 PD personnel
158 Qualifying race
159 Substantive content
160 Andersen title adjective
161 Human spirit
162 Spot for a lot
163 Earth-friendly prefix
164 Half of deus
165 Campground visitors: Abbr.

DOWN
1 Band’s travel plans
2 Ship that carried Heracles
3 With no slack
4 Golf pro Ernie
5 Produced for the theater
6 Intended
7 chanted
8 pope
9 Cut and paste, perhaps
10 Name on the cover of The Fountainhead
11 Become agitated
12 Much of Libya
13 Campus environment
14 Minimal amount
15 Starter like anti-
16 Exodus 14 locale
17 Left the ground briefly
18 Storybook story
19 Designer Diane Furstenberg
20 Utter unclearly
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You’re not surrounded by brake lights ... take a moment to enjoy the view!

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