Grins that stretch from ear to ear is pure Americana. That’s exactly what you’ll find at our Shores Club, just 30 miles from DC along two miles of Potomac River shoreline. Come discover the riverfront community with award-winning homes, golf, hiking and biking trails, an upcoming VRE train stop, future schools and a big rec center that families will absolutely love.

Recreation Center with Swimming Pools (Now Open)
On-Site Elementary School (2017)
Future On-Site VRE Train Station
Hiking & Biking Trails
Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course & Clubhouse

Homes from the $300s to $900s

703-640-3975
This issue of RIDE magazine features stories related to the preforming arts. Continuing with our series on railroad history, page two lifts the curtain on the transportation of animals and circus equipment for what was known as the "Greatest Show on Earth." Similarly, the Smithsonian Folklife festival this summer is themed Circus Arts, and we invite you to learn more about what to expect this year as the festival reaches a milestone anniversary of its own.

There are two standard definitions of the word performance. The first being 'presenting a form of entertainment,' and the second being 'carrying out a function.' We believe that these two definitions do not necessarily work independently of one another. While trains are synonymous with stringent operations, we like to think of running trains as an art form. There is a lot of synchronization and orchestration involved in each VRE service. The dispatchers must be intuitive and skilled to complete a successful performance of clearing Amtrak, freight, and VRE trains in the most effective order. Train lovers and time-keepers appreciate a great performance of this nature.

Our train enthusiasts may also find our trains themselves to be works of art. For those of you, this issue highlights VRE paint schemes throughout the years, including a glimpse of something special to keep your eyes open for this year.

DOUG ALLEN
Chief Executive Officer
Virginia Railway Express
Ladies and gentlemen, children of all ages, step right up and witness the final bow to what was once the greatest ride on Earth! The Circus Train! Not only have railroads proven well-suited for commuters and freight, but for over 140 years they have also been known to ease the transportation of massive animals and heavy equipment often for the purpose of your entertainment. In fact, during the late 1800s, the term “railroad show” was synonymous with large circuses and carnivals. One of the largest and best-known users of trains was the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus (RBBX).

During the 1820s, there were approximately 30 animal circuses touring the eastern United States. These shows traveled nightly by wagon through muddied country roads. By 1872 the P.T. Barnum Circus had grown so large that they decided to only play at large venues, and to travel by train. They developed a system of ropes, pulleys, inclined planes and crossover plates between cars that, first used in 1872, was continued through more modern methods by the RBBX up until its retirement this year.

The RBBX circus trains were more than one mile in length and consisted of 60 railroad cars, which is the equivalent of 120 trucks. The trains consisted of stock cars for exotic animals, flat cars for heavy equipment, and coaches to the rear. No space went underutilized.

Stock cars were 72 feet long and of two basic types. One was designed for the horses and ring stock, and the other for the elephants, or “bulls.” The cars designated for bulls were about a foot taller than the others, with solid sides and small windows for ventilation near the top. The bulls were usually positioned in three pairs at each end of the car and another elephant could be loaded at the center. Thus, each bull car could carry 12 or 13 adult elephants.

Stock cars were usually coupled directly behind the locomotive to help minimize jolting the animals, and were then followed in the consist by the flat cars which were the heaviest due to rides, wagons and other equipment. Finally, the passenger coaches brought up the rear of the train.

The circus had a very strict employee caste system that was apparent in the sleeping assignments onboard. Featured performers and key personnel were often assigned a stateroom or even a half or third of a car. Some of the larger shows had a private coach for the owner or star performer. Most of the circus coaches were filled top to bottom with bunks, and an individual’s assignment in the circus and length of employment dictated the assigned bunk. For example, a newcomer might be assigned a top bunk, while working men might be assigned two to a bunk. These cars were not air conditioned and many a circus worker chose to sleep on an open flat, beneath the wagons, on a hot summer night.

Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circuses traveled in two trains, the blue unit and the red unit, following an alternating two-year schedule to bring a new show to each location once a year. Up to their retirement, between 250 and 300 performers and other circus workers traveled on each of the two trains for more than 40 weeks each year. The Red train made its final run on May 7th this year, transporting its last show to Rhode Island. The Blue train followed suit two weeks later, on May 21st, with its final show in New York.

Although the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus no longer performs, other circuses still take advantage of the railroad for transportation. From circuses to lumber to coal and to people, America’s railroads have played a vital role in building, connecting, and even entertaining the country. Among all opportunities made possible by the railroad, who knows what could be next?
Heritage Festival 2017
July 4, 2017 from 7:30 a.m.-10:30 p.m.
Admission: Free
Various Locations, Fredericksburg, VA 22401
www.visitfred.com

Celebrate America's Birthday with a variety of family friendly activities! The Heritage Festival combines a car show, live music, street festival, and so much more. Truly something for everybody.

Alexandria/USA Birthday Celebration
July 8, 2017 from 6-10 p.m.
Admission: Free
Oronoco Bay Park, 100 Madison St., Alexandria, VA 22314

Visitors will celebrate America's 241st birthday and Alexandria's 268th along the Potomac River waterfront at Oronoco Bay Park and enjoy live music by the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra, patriotic birthday cake, food vendors and a dazzling fireworks display.

The Winery at Bull Run Annual Civil War Day
July 9, 2017 from 11 a.m.-7 p.m.
Admission: Free
15950 Lee Highway, Centreville, VA 20120
www.fxva.com

Experience a full day of living history with Civil War reenactors, award-winning Virginia wine, sangria, a live skirmish, bluegrass music, food trucks, and more!

Ladies' Tea
July 15, 2017 from 1-3 p.m.
Admission: $35
Rising Sun Tavern, 1304 Caroline Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22407
www.virginia.org

Ladies are invited to don a hat and summer dress for tea and refreshments in the tented garden of the Rising Sun Tavern. Reservations are required. Call the Rising Sun Tavern by July 12. Cost is $20 for members. $35 for the public, $30 in advance.

Friday Night Family Movie Night
July 21, 2017 from 8:30 p.m.-10 p.m.
Admission: Free
Harris Pavilion, 9201 Center Street, Manassas, VA 20110
www.visitmanassas.org

Bring a blanket or a chair, wear your pajamas and enjoy a great kid-friendly movie outdoors. On July 21st, see Disney's Moana.
One thing that makes riding VRE unique is the opportunity to create meaningful relationships with fellow passengers. When Jack Schreibman and Doug Goldring began riding in 2003, they never anticipated the close friendship that would develop only a month or two into riding the Manassas Line.

The two commuters discovered VRE upon moving to Northern Virginia 14 years ago. They both favored the rail service over a daily highway commute. “I love having the opportunity to relax in the morning on the way into work. In the evening on the way home – to talk, read, surf the Internet or do whatever else I need to do,” Doug told us. Jack agreed, “Since I have taken VRE, I come home refreshed and ready to help my two daughters with school work or activities.”

It was the Bourne series that sparked conversation between the two, just about a month into their new shared commute. It didn’t take long to realize they had much in common. They began sitting with one another on the train, and quickly joined a group of riders who regularly conversed throughout the trip. This ‘Train Gang’ became very involved in each other’s lives. “When I purchased my house, they helped me paint,” Jack recalled. “They also installed ceiling fans in my house and even created a new attic space.”

Although the close-knit train crew consisted of about 20 riders, the friendship between Jack and Doug was unique. Their friendship eventually brought their two families together. “I remember the first time we double dated, both of our wives sort of looked on in awkward silence.” Doug told us. “They wondered why they were even invited,” Jack mentioned, “Fourteen years and four kids later, our wives and our children are best friends.”

Since 2003, the two friends have endured long delays, held parties on and off the train, witnessed the retirement of their dearest friends, and have watched their families grow together. Today, you can still find them sitting together during the evening ride home. “When either one of us travels, the train does not seem right.” Jack told us. “Who would have thought that I would meet such a good friend on the train?”

"If not for VRE, I would have never met my best friend."
CONDUCTOR SPOTLIGHT

Curtis Powell – Manassas Line
Curtis took an interest in the railroad at a young age when his father, a freight conductor, introduced him to the field. He began his railroad career in 2012 and takes great pride in passenger services with Keolis and VRE. “Passengers are gracious with the work that we do every day. You don’t get that kind of feedback on a freight train.” Curtis enjoys working out and playing a good card or board game, with his favorites being Tonk and Monopoly. His main hobby, however, is making life as easy as possible for his newlywed wife.

Bonnie Olliff – Fredericksburg Line
Fourteen years ago, Bonnie was working freelance on theater productions and waiting tables. Had you asked her then what other career path she’d consider, ‘train conductor’ would have never crossed her mind. A frequent customer convinced her to give the railroad a try in 2003 and she hasn’t looked back since. In addition to her role as a conductor, Bonnie represents VRE and Operation Lifesaver as Mrs. Claus on the annual Santa Trains. She finds great joy in landscaping and gardening, and treasures every moment she can spend with her mother and her animal family of two cats and a dog, Alias, Hiccup and Banjo.

Chris Chandler – Manassas Line
Chris started his railroad career in 2005 when his wife discovered a recruitment ad for Norfolk-Southern freight conductors. When he’s not at work, you can find him smoking a premium cigar at Tobaccology in Manassas or Cigar 210 in Fort Washington, Maryland. He enjoys spending time with family and friends, but don’t try to plan anything for this Washington Redskins fan on Football Sunday. “That day is sacred!”

Robert Easley – Fredericksburg Line
Railroad careers span back generations in Robert’s family. Though he began working at CSX in 2008, it wasn’t until his longtime friend and coworker pressured him to apply for a position with Keolis that he became a familiar face on the VRE. “He kept telling me to submit my resume and I never got around to it. Eventually, he went to my mother’s house and told on me.” Robert blends his love for family with his passion for the outdoors through frequent camping trips with his wife and children.

Tony Arthur – Fredericksburg Line
Tony’s decision to join the railroad was inspired by a friend’s uncle, who convinced him of the exceptional opportunities a railroad career could offer. Today, he’s a member of the VRE/Keolis team and appreciates the trust passengers place in crew members. “I enjoy knowing they have faith in us to do our job daily, and to make sure their ride to work is pleasant and enjoyable.” Tony spends his free time watching boxing, MMA and football, and he loves cleaning and detailing cars.
Smithsonian Folklife Festival Celebrates 50 Years

This summer the venerable Smithsonian Folklife Festival celebrates 50 years of cultural exploration and exchange on the National Mall. To mark the occasion, the Smithsonian presents a series of dynamic programs exploring the diverse identities and creativity found in communities throughout the United States.

“Circus Arts” lifts the tent flap on the people who make circus one of this country’s great art forms. Youth performers and master artists will learn from one another in a circus school, while visitors try their hands at juggling, tightrope walking and more. Throughout the day, the Festival will feature workshops, full-scale performances and the interactive circus school where visitors can meet and learn from master artists from across five major circus disciplines: acrobatics, aerials, clowning, equilibristics (e.g., tightrope walking) and object manipulation (e.g., juggling). Visitors can meet costume designers, makeup artists, riggers and more. On selected nights, circus performances in the Big Top will feature award-winning professional artists from around the world, with preshow showcases presented by major American youth circus troupes.

Photos from left to right: Circus Harmony, Christylez taken by Yacouba Tanou, Festival Marketplace by Raven Ruffin
The program “On the Move: Migration Across Generations” will bring together hip-hop artists, muralists and poetry slam performers, among others, to explore immigration and migration from new and diverse perspectives. Visitors will experience live performances, sports activities and discussions on the themes of migration, identity, creativity and community. The program will also include two citizenship ceremonies for young U.S. citizens-to-be at the Ralph Rinzler Stage on the National Mall. “The ‘On the Move’ program brings to light America’s enduring story, at once vivid and varied,” said Olivia Cadaval, program co-curator. “It is this synthesis of diverse traditions, evidenced in the experiences of youth, that the program highlights and invites visitors to explore.”

As always, two of D.C.’s best kept secrets—the Festival Marketplace and the Festival food concessions—will feature exquisite crafts and tasty bites. At the Marketplace, visitors can watch demonstrations by award-winning artisans from around the world while shopping for one-of-a-kind crafts and Festival mementos. Food choices will include barbeque from Memphis, modern America-Vientamese, Irish pub grub, artisanal gelato and more.

“Visitors to this year’s Festival will encounter both story and spectacle,” said Sabrina Lynn Motley, Festival director. “From the thought-provoking discussion stages to the dazzling Big Top performances, visitors to the Festival will have the opportunity to interact with and learn from hundreds of musicians, artists, performers and others as we celebrate 50 years of cultural exchange on the National Mall.”

The 2017 Festival will also include a series of evening concerts and dance parties at the Ralph Rinzler Stage. Performers include BeauSoleil, Los Texmaniacs, the Chuck Brown Band and Los Pleneros de la 21, among others. These events, many featuring the National Endowment for the Arts’ National Heritage Fellows known for their mastery of folk and traditional arts, will both entertain and inspire visitors with a rich array of music from around the world.

The Festival will be held Thursday, June 29, through Tuesday, July 4, and Thursday, July 6, through Sunday, July 9, on the National Mall between Seventh and 12th streets. Admission is free. Festival hours are from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day, with dance parties at 5:30 p.m. and circus performances at 7 p.m. on selected evenings. For more information, including a schedule of events, visit festival.si.edu.
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VRE trains for several years have sported a red, white and blue external color scheme. Longtime riders will recognize the various looks of the locomotives and the cars throughout the years. Riders both veteran and new to the service can appreciate that creative minds in the VRE accounting department have been responsible for the sleek designs for more than a decade.

VRE UPDATE

VRE PAINT SCHEMES THROUGH THE YEARS

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RAIL TIME PUZZLES

ACROSS
1 70’s vice president
6 Chew like a rodent
10 Alternative to corn syrup
15 “Enough already!”
19 Show clearly
20 Alternatively
21 Associate of Sulu and Chekov
22 ‘90s vice president
23 Possible crime scene evidence
25 Bully, at times
27 Disney film franchise
28 Donut shape
30 Key of Beethoven’s fifth
31 Talks too much
32 “Tasmanian” beast
33 Timely blessing
34 Make merry
37 Script dialogue
38 Stretch out
42 Unraveled
43 Clairvoyant ability
45 A&M members
46 Roomy bag
47 Newborn
48 Anchor store department
49 57 Down predecessors
50 Evils narrator
51 Eerie
55 Madame Tussaud
56 Mexican ranch
58 Is warned
59 Special Forces wear
60 Newspaper essays
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62 Ballet leaps
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68 Clipper crew
70 Drying device
72 Dude
73 Picnic intruders
74 Demolish
75 Shade of purple
76 Explorer for George III
77 FDR’s European commander
78 What a teacher’s tenure provides
82 Light source for digital clocks
83 What hoops may hang from
86 Initiates
87 Indiana Jones phobia
88 20 fers
89 No-longer-made
90 Candidate of 2008
92 Director Boyle
94 Apt to topple
96 OPEC member stat
100 Role model
102 Most significant
103 Where the elated walk
104 Allure alternative
105 Publicity gambit
106 Absorbs, with “up”
107 Just now
108 Exchange quips
109 Edible sample
69 MLB semifinal
70 Set as a price
71 London’s Broadway
72 First light
73 Ryder rival
74 Grocery checkout display
75 Equal
76 Masked mammals
77 Making eyes at
78 City on the Rhine
79 Crunchy ice-cream ingredient
80 The King and I actress
81 Riveted with attention
82 Included with
83 Spanning
84 Restaurant, or its patron
85 Gaudy jewelry
86 Hidden downsides
87 Luo greeting
88 Election official
89 Scales in the sky
90 Utopias
91 Email listing
92 Genetic attribute
93 Outskirts of
94 “12 Days of Christmas” octet
95 Goodwill
96 47 Musical battlers
97 (or, for short)
98 Takes seriously
99 Key next to G
100 Like leprechauns
101 Feel the presence of
102 Canadian length measure
103 Modern class-notes holders
104 Couthier Geoffroy
105 Disposed to
106 Succulent
107 Elm by-product
108 Press session, for short
109 Key to the 2000
110 Supreme joy
111 Overstuffs
112 Eat into
113 Oxen harnesses
114 Forms of 10 Across
115 Porcupine quill
116 Dodger Hall of Famer
117 Italian bread
118 Maleficent star
119 Actor who was knighted killed clad
120 In the know about
121 Confirms, as a password
122 Crime lab procedure
123 Ascertain
124 Fresh talk
125 Be a carpenter
126 Show scorn
127 May honorors
128 Bolognese bye-bye
129 Reusable fastener
130 No-win result
131 Sch. near Beverly Hills
132 A/C capacity measures
133 Mardi Gras follower
134 Russian-born artist
135 Compass reading
136 Where eddies may be found

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