There’s a lot to love about our well-appointed Tidewater homes—welcoming families to Potomac Shores. Choose from five new neighborhoods by Ryan Homes and NVHomes. Traditional and main-level living with indoor/outdoor floorplans. Over a dozen home designs with two to seven bedrooms. And golf or forest views. It’s riverfront living only 30 miles from DC. Where every home comes with an exquisite community. Upcoming VRE stop—now under construction.

CALL OR VISIT THE GREETING HOUSE:  855-808-6051

*Mention this ad to receive an additional $10,000 towards options or closing costs. Offer ends 1/31/16. Promotion subject to change at any time.
As we look back on 2015, I am very proud of the major accomplishments we have made to improve your VRE experience. From a new station and an additional train on the Fredericksburg Line, to the launch of VRE Mobile, a redesigned website and being recognized for excellence in security, 2015 was truly a year of notable achievements.

We recently opened Spotsylvania Station, our first line extension since we began operations in 1992. This new station is now the southern terminus for VRE operations of the Fredericksburg Line and consists of a 1,500-space parking lot, waiting area with restroom and a 700-foot platform with a covered canopy for riders. We also began operating a new train on the Fredericksburg Line to provide more capacity and another commuting option.

To improve technology and communications, we launched VRE Mobile. This app allows you to conveniently use your transit benefits and to purchase and validate tickets all from your smartphone. VRE Mobile already has over ten thousand downloads. We also unveiled our redesigned website to enhance the online and mobile experience for VRE passengers by providing easy access to the most requested service information and real-time alerts.

Safety and security are always a priority at VRE. In fact, last February we were awarded the 2014 Baseline Assessment Security Enhancement Program Award by the Transportation Security Administration for achieving the highest standard of excellence in security. We participated in the Federal Railroad Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board’s forums addressing the dangers of trespassing on the railroad right-of-way. We also coordinated first responders’ drills and full-scale emergency simulations while delivering our safety message to Virginia motorists through our “Railroad Crossing Safety Blitzes.” We also made many safety and security improvements throughout our stations including: installation of emergency supply boxes, restriping parking lots, replacing worn stairs and benches and improving lighting.

To prepare for the future, we have initiated a two-year study to evaluate an 11-mile extension to bring VRE service to the Gainesville-Haymarket area. This fall, we hosted several meetings, participated in community events and received positive feedback. If the analysis supports continued project development, final design and construction would follow contingent upon Norfolk Southern’s approval and funding availability.

Thank you for making 2015 a very special year for VRE. We wish you and your family a safe, happy holiday season and a prosperous new year. It has been our pleasure and privilege to provide you with commuter rail service and we hope to see you riding VRE in 2016.
VRE UNVEILS NEW SYSTEM & ZONE MAPS

VRE launched new clear, concise and easy-to-use system and zone maps. These can be found at our stations, on printed materials and our website.

NEW SYSTEM MAP

NEW FARE ZONE MAP

NEW VRE MAPS

18th Rappahannock Model Railroaders Train Display and Show
Saturday, Dec. 12, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 13, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
Fredericksburg Fraternal Order of Eagles Lodge # 4123
21 Cool Springs Road
Fredericksburg, VA
This show features operating model trains displays in all scales, including the Rappahannock Model Railroaders’ exciting modular railroad project, a Lego Layout, HO and N-Gauge trains, as well as model train vendors.

www.rmrailroaders.com

Christmas at Mount Vernon
Now – Wednesday, Jan. 6
George Washington’s Mount Vernon
3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy.,
Mount Vernon, VA
Mount Vernon invites you to celebrate this festive time of year with their special Experience Christmas program. Go behind-the-scenes on a rare tour of the Mansion’s third floor, and celebrate the way the Washingtons would have.

www.mountvernon.org

First Night Alexandria
Thursday, Dec. 31, 2 p.m. – Midnight
Old Town Alexandria, VA
This Alexandria tradition brings in the New Year with art galleries, historic sites, churches, and retail shops transformed into cozy live performance spaces.

www.visitalexandriava.com

DEC./JAN. CALENDAR

DEC. 9 LEAVE TOYS FOR TOTS DONATIONS ON YOUR MORNING TRAIN
DEC. 12 SANTA TRAINS / TOYS FOR TOTS COLLECTION
DEC. 24 CHRISTMAS EVE – “S” SCHEDULE
DEC. 25 CHRISTMAS – NO VRE SERVICE
DEC. 28–31 “S” SCHEDULE
JAN. 1 NEW YEARS DAY – NO VRE SERVICE
JAN. 18 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY – NO VRE SERVICE
VRE added a new train to the Fredericksburg Line on November 30th. This new train modified schedules for both the Fredericksburg and Manassas lines.

FREDERICKSBURG LINE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>NORTHBOUND VRE TRAINS M-F</th>
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| ★ Special schedules for holidays and snow days. ● Train may depart when station work is completed, regardless of scheduled time. ○ Train allows full-size bicycles. Collapsible bicycles are permitted on all trains.

SOUTHBOUND VRE TRAINS M-F

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AMTRAK TRAINS®

| AMTRAK TRAINS® | 86° | 174° | 84° | 94° | 66° |

CHANGES FOR TLC

For those riders who utilize the Transit Link Card (TLC), you can expect some changes for 2016. The paper version of the TLC is going away as part of the WMATA effort to end paper fare tickets. The TLC paper ticket is being replaced by a pre-loaded WMATA SmarTrip® card plus VRE sticker-based version. The new card plus sticker TLC will work similarly to the old paper version, a flash-pass/visual inspection on VRE and scanned (like any SmarTrip®) on WMATA. The new card plus sticker TLC will only be sold by Commuter Direct. All the other vendors who sold the paper TLC will no longer sell TLC’s after this change. More information will be provided through VRE’s Train Talk.

RIDE Magazine | December 2015/January 2016 3
On November 16th, VRE opened the Spotsylvania Station. The first train departed at 4:57 a.m. with many first-time and regular VRE riders aboard. Each person was treated to coffee and pastries and received a commemorative opening day ticket.

VRE hosted a ribbon cutting event later that morning. Many state and local officials came to give their remarks, including: U.S. Representative Rob Wittman (VA-1), U.S. Representative Dave Brat (VA-7), Virginia Senator Bryce Reeves (17th District), Director of Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation Jennifer Mitchell, Berkeley District Supervisor and Spotsylvania County Vice Chairman Greg Cebula, Fairfax County Supervisor and VRE Operations Board Chairman John C. Cook, and Lee Hill District Supervisor and VRE Operations Board Vice Chairman Gary Skinner.

The Spotsylvania Station is now the last stop on the Fredericksburg Line and the first station located in Spotsylvania County. The station consists of a 1,500-space parking lot, waiting area with bathroom facilities and a 700-foot platform with canopy capable of supporting a train up to seven cars long.
On November 10th, VRE hosted the first community meeting for the Gainesville-Haymarket Extension Study. The VRE project team also held focused sessions with staff and elected officials from the jurisdictions along the Manassas Line. A special session with the project Community Advisory Committee included a dialogue with VRE riders, local home owners associations, and environmental groups.

The purpose of these meetings was to seek input on alternative options including station locations, route and track configurations and train service schedules. VRE officials explained how the new service would serve a greater number of Northern Virginia commuters, providing the quality service that VRE customers currently enjoy. One of the main concerns when considering a new service is how it will fit into the existing VRE system. It must deliver significant benefits for both VRE riders and the surrounding communities, ensure enough seats are still available in order to maintain the highest quality of VRE service and qualify for future project funding.

VRE’s main priority is to select the alternative that will deliver the maximum benefits to both VRE riders and the surrounding communities.

General feedback from the community and committee meetings was very positive, with many participants requesting accelerated implementation. The most common concerns related to potential impacts of the project were: noise levels, traffic congestion, and impact to property along the proposed route.

The VRE project team will be analyzing these and other key issues in detail in the coming year. Next steps include developing ridership estimates for the extension, analyzing potential funding sources, and identifying potential station locations for further analysis. The study team will present these findings and solicit additional feedback at the next community meeting in spring 2016.

Please visit www.vre.org/ghx to see the latest meeting materials and to send your comments or suggestions.

VRE PREPARES FOR WINTER WEATHER

VRE is preparing for the upcoming winter season, and as always, safety is our main priority. While we work diligently to keep the trains operating and on-time, inclement weather can impact our ability to provide normal service. Another key component to safe VRE operations is the ability for you to reach our stations.

When a winter storm is projected to affect our region, VRE works with our host railroads, the National Weather Service and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to help determine if conditions will allow for the safe operation of our trains. We also activate our snow removal plan working with VDOT, the local jurisdictions and our own contractors to clear parking lots, sidewalks and platforms. VRE also participates in regional and state agency “snow calls” when conditions are projected to affect the daily commute.

While we do take the decision by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) into consideration regarding the operation of the Federal Government, it does not necessarily dictate whether or not VRE trains operate. We realize that many of our riders are not employed by the Federal Government, or are considered essential personnel who need to get to work, we still make every effort to offer at least an “S” schedule operation.

One of VRE’s highest priorities is ensure our passenger’s reach their stations safely. In the event that we do need to cancel service, or operate on a modified schedule, we will get that information out as early as possible, usually no later than 4:15 a.m. of the affected service day. All information will be posted to our website at www.vre.org, on our Twitter and Facebook accounts, through Train Talk text and email alerts, on our station signs and our information hotline, 1-800-RIDE-VRE. VRE also contacts local media including TV, radio and traffic reports.

We also encourage our riders to properly prepare for winter weather travel by:

1. Having a backup plan in the event of a long delay or cancellation
2. Always carrying a fully charged mobile phone
3. Wearing sensible shoes and using great care when driving to stations or walking to the platform
4. Bringing water and snacks, in the event that there is a long delay
5. Dressing in layers

Thanks for riding VRE!
SPOTLIGHT ON KEOLIS

MEET WALTER FISHER

Walter Fisher works daily to ensure every VRE passenger travels safely from home, to work, and back. At only 22, Walter is the youngest member on the team, but don’t underestimate this assistant conductor. As a third-generation railroad employee, this Beaverdam, Virginia native hopes to keep his family tradition going strong.

Walter’s journey to assistant conductor began when he by listening to stories of his grandfather leaving for an early day on the rails with CSX Transportation. Both his father and his grandfather worked in the transit industry for many years. Walter later joined a freight team with a local company, Buckingham Branch Railroad, but was looking for a job that would lead him into a career. He found that with VRE.

Walter joined the VRE in October 2014. He starts every day with a job briefing and thorough inspection of the train before heading out. According to the assistant conductor, the best part of his job is getting to work with his team members to do their job well. Walter says his job would be nearly impossible without his team’s hardworking effort.

“A friend from high school encouraged me to pursue a job with the VRE. In June, he passed away. Because of him I decided to go for it,” Walter said.

Walter remains driven in both his professional and personal life, and plans to move up within the company as an engineer or manager in the next two years.

Joining the VRE was one of Walter’s best career and life choices. He now looks forward to a new change coming into this life. He and his wife are expecting a daughter in March 2016. When his workday is over, Walter enjoys spending time at home awaiting his new bundle of joy, performing gospel music for his church and even singing at a few coworkers’ weddings.

“My personal goal is to be the best husband and father that I can be. I aspire to be the best at what I do, be it music, VRE or family. I aspire to be the best,” Walter said.

CHECKING YOUR TRAVEL SAFETY LIST TWICE

The holiday season is here, and with it comes the busiest travel time of the year. Which means it’s more important than ever to keep an eye out for suspicious objects or behavior.

Unusual behavior can include people staying at train stations for long periods of time without getting on, an individual who seems fixated only on a particular object or location, or people entering unauthorized areas at train or bus stations.

Suspicious objects may include bags, boxes, or packages left unattended – especially if partially hidden or in unusual locations. These bags or briefcases may simply be forgotten or discarded items. But at this time of year, it’s better to be safe than sorry.

If you see something, say something™

If you do see something suspicious, please report it immediately. Take detailed notes, such as the train number or station name. Then notify a police officer or transit personnel. If you can’t easily locate someone in uniform, call the police at either 1-877-4VA-TIPS or 911.

Save your local police phone number into your contacts for quick future reference. By staying aware of your surroundings, you can make this holiday season truly the most wonderful time of the year.

To make your travel safety list (and check it twice), visit SecureTransit.org.

Keolis is VRE’s contractor that maintains and operates VRE trains.
VRE LAUNCHES REDESIGNED VRE.ORG

VRE has launched a new and redesigned website at www.vre.org. In planning the new website, VRE reviewed the most requested information from our riders to provide and create an intuitive, user-friendly experience that works on devices such as desktop, mobile, and tablet. The website includes a responsive design and a mobile-friendly strategy with auto-detection capabilities for smartphones, tablets, and geo-locations services. We also renamed “Rail Time” to “Train Status” and “Daily Download” to “Daily Performance,” so that new riders could easily find key items on our site.

The new website will provide you easy and efficient access to the most requested service information and create effective communications for real-time alerts and news plus important information that may affect your commute.

We have sought to simplify the site’s navigation through new visual elements and maps and made it compatible with major browsers with a load time of less than two seconds. It is designed to integrate with social media and is accessible for people with physical, sensory, or cognitive disabilities. The website also has a multi-language translator powered by Google Translate, and in the near future, we will integrate a trip planner powered by Google Transit.

Please visit the new website at www.vre.org and let us know what you think. If you have comments or suggestions for the new site, please email newwebsite@vre.org.

VRE WEBSITE
Imagine your home, totally organized!

Call for a free in home design consultation and estimate
800-293-3744    703-330-8382
www.closetsbydesign.com    Follow us
Licensed #VA 2705068445 #MD 131690 #DC 420214000077 and Insured
2014 © All Rights Reserved. Closets by Design, Inc.

Positive Train Control Update
VRE is implementing Positive Train Control (PTC) technology, as it will further enhance the safety of our passengers and service. President Obama signed a short term surface transportation funding authorization bill that includes a three year extension to the December 31, 2015 deadline for implementation of PTC. This means that there will be no service disruption to VRE due to this issue. VRE continues to work with our host railroads to fully implement PTC.

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 www.vre.org/advertising or contact advertising@vre.org or (703) 838-5417.
WHICH BAG LOOKS SUSPICIOUS?

DIFFICULT CHOICE, RIGHT?
(The answer is ALL OF THE ABOVE)

REPORT ALL UNATTENDED BAGS AND UNUSUAL BEHAVIOR TO POLICE OR TRANSIT PERSONNEL.
1-877-4VA-TIPS

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING.
securetransit.org
Purchased with funds provided by the US Department of Homeland Security