

VRTA NEWS AND VIEWS

Volume II, Issue I

1st and 2nd Quarters 2005

Special points of interest:

- Company Event Highlights
- VRTA's 15th Year Anniversary
- New Chargeable Accident Policy
- Emergency Response Information
- Employees of the Month
- Two New Transit Managers Join VRTA

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VRTA Provides Service to C.O.P.E.



The COPE Teen Center is held at the Purcellville Skating Rink.

On March 4, 2005 Virginia Regional Transit began providing service for the COPE youth initiative program.

COPE stands for the Community Organization for Prevention Education. The program is funded by a Federal program associated with the Student Services Section of Loudoun County Public Schools. The COPE program was started by Purcellville resident Janet Clarke. The intended purpose of COPE is to help reduce and prevent youth substance abuse and violence by providing teenagers with opportunities to become more active

and socially connected with the local community. Clarke believes that “a lack of social connectedness is one of the primary reasons for substance abuse among teens in Loudoun County.” To combat this problem the COPE program has established a teen center for middle school and high school students. The COPE teen center is located at the Purcellville Skating Rink. The Center is free and open every Friday night for middle school students from 7:00-9:00PM and for high school students from 9:00-11:00PM. The teen center provides a positive environment for teens that includes music, four-square, video games, and arcade games as well as a fully equipped snack bar.

Clarke approached VRTA to see if it would be willing to provide transportation to the

Purcellville Skating Rink on Friday nights. VRTA responded by agreeing to provide a three-month pilot transportation program, at no cost to COPE. Clarke recalls that VRTA was “more than happy to provide a pilot for three months and they were so pleasant to work with.”

Since the program started, VRTA's services have been consistently used by both middle school and high school students. The COPE program has been well received by both youth and parents. It is likely that the partnered efforts of VRTA and COPE will help to provide teens with a positive social environment as well as to increase among youth an awareness of VRTA's other services.

What's happening?

Golf Tournament

On July 21, VRTA will host its 7th Annual Golf Classic. The event will be held at the Bull Run Country Club in Haymarket, Virginia. The event will feature a "Captain's Choice" style Golf Tournament in addition to door prizes and a silent auction. The event is predicted to raise approximately \$10,000 in local funds, which will be used to support VRTA's transportation services.

State Para-Transit Roadeo

The State Para-Transit Roadeo was held at the Southwest Virginia Community College on April 30th. At the State Bus Roadeo, VRTA was well-represented by several of our operators. VRTA personnel participated in various events, skill compe-

titions and knowledge tests. Other VRTA staff members served as judges. Lael Alston notably won first place in the "Right Turn" category. Alston has won an award two years in a row.

Lunch With Mark

Every two weeks someone will be randomly selected by the Human Resources Department to eat lunch with VRTA CEO Mark McGregor. Employees will have the opportunity to candidly discuss and describe their thoughts, views and reflections regarding the company at lunch with Mark.



Employees will be randomly selected every two weeks to lunch with VRTA CEO Mark McGregor.

Emergency Response Numbers

Call First: Greg McGowan, Transit Manager— cell: (571)-217-3136
home: (540)-829-8413

If no response:

Call Second: Donna Ferrell, Safety & Training—(571)-217-3146

Call Third: Tom White, Fleet Manager—(703)-431-8555

Call Fourth: Mike Socha, General Manager—(703)-431-2548

In the event of an emergency:

* Make **NO** comments to anyone!

* Direct **ALL** questions from media personnel to the General Manager!



Emergency Response Card

In the event of a VRTA-related transit emergency, dial 911 and then consult the card depicted above for VRTA personnel contact information.

VRTA's 15th Year Anniversary

This August VRTA will celebrate its 15th year anniversary! The Purcellville office will feature an open house that will be open to the public. If anyone would like to contribute to the festivities contact Elena Yeger by email at elena@vatransit.org.

West Central District



Clarence Wilkins operates a Circuit Rider Bus in Fauquier County.

Services in the West Central District are continuing to grow and are doing very well. Route changes have

been made to fixed route services in Warrenton, Culpeper and Orange in order to make services there more consistent and effective. Along with the redesign of Warrenton's routes, new brochures will soon be printed and distributed. On January 18th, countywide services run by VRTA became recognized by Culpeper County and signs are being put up to mark stops for the County Express service. The Town of Culpeper has agreed to work with VRTA to allow for free transfers from VRTA's

countywide service to transportation services within the Town of Culpeper. Residents of the Town of Front Royal have been pleased with the revival of public transportation services there.

The West Central District is looking forward to the building of a new transit facility in Culpeper. The new facility will take pressure off of the Purcellville office as well as help to improve services in the West Central District.

Mountain District

The Blue Ridge Community College Shuttle service has been a great success. In February alone the BRCC Shuttle provided service to over 900 riders. Blue Ridge Community College has been very pleased with the services that VRTA has provided to it. Blue Ridge Community College will provide funding for VRTA's transportation services through a student activities fee,

which will amount to approximately \$32,000 a year.

Service in Page County celebrated its one-year anniversary on March 1, 2005. According to a six-month survey review of Page County Services, passengers responding to the survey reported that they are pleased with VRTA's services. The Page County Board of Supervisors have stated that they "look forward to a continued relationship with VRTA and are pleased with the services provided" to its community. The Route 250 Con-

ductor bus service, which runs from Staunton to Waynesboro has experienced incredible growth this past year. In 2004 the route provided service to 898 riders total. In February 2005 alone, service was provided to 1,502 riders!



Page County Transit celebrated its one-year anniversary in March.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

New Transit Managers Bring Experience to the West Central and Purcellville Districts



Mike Barnes is retired from the U.S. Air Force and has taught elementary school.

Mr. Michael Barnes joined VRTA on April 4, 2005 as the West Central District's Transit Manager. Mr. Barnes is retired from the U.S. Air Force, where he served as a Pilot. After retiring from the Air Force, Mr. Barnes worked in the commercial trucking

industry as a safety and training manager and later taught in a private school as a 4th grade teacher. After this, he worked with the JAUNT para-transit service located in Charlottesville, Virginia for about two and a half years. At JAUNT, Mr. Barnes worked to establish and improve its safety and training program. Mr. Barnes has made efforts to enhance safety and training in the West Central District and has been enlisted to contribute to the Development of VRTA's overall Safety and Training Programs.

Mr. Greg McGowan was selected to fill the Transit Manager's position in the Purcellville Region Office. Mr. McGowan comes to VRTA from TRANSPRO, a transportation service located in South Bend Indiana. Mr. McGowan was born

in South Bend, but has lived in both the Washington, D.C. area and the South Bend, Indiana area. Mr. McGowan has been working in the transit industry since 1983. He drove a Charter Tour Bus for over twenty years during which time he accumulated over three million safe driving miles. Six years ago, Mr. McGowan began working within the operational and management aspect of the transit industry, where he continues to work. Mr. McGowan currently resides in Culpeper Virginia.



Over the course of a 20 year career, Greg McGowan has driven over three million miles as a Charter Bus Driver.

Purcellville District



Transit services provided to George Washington University has been expanded due to high demand.

The Purcellville District has continued to expand and grow. Services provided to the George Washington University have been running smoothly and demand for it has been strong. On March 28, George Washington University service was expanded from 14 hours a day to 18 hours a day. Plans are being discussed to extend the service

to include Saturday.

On March 1 the Purcellville Fixed-Route service began to include a stop on the campus of Patrick Henry College

There are plans to develop a new bus parking lot at a site adjacent to the Purcellville office. VRTA is still in the process of trying to find a general contractor. The parking lot will provide approximately 60 spaces and options for its use are still being discussed. There are also plans to install a dumping station adjacent to the Purcellville office site. Construction efforts on the 15' x 15' sanitation

facility will begin as soon as approval for the project is obtained from the Town of Purcellville.

Consolidation of Leesburg's services from six routes to three routes has led to tremendous success and gains in ridership. Weekend Trolley Service began in Leesburg on the weekend of April 16th. Weekend services will run from 10:00-4:00PM on Saturday and 12:00-4:00PM on Sunday. Expanded weekend service is set to last only during the summer and will be concluded on the weekend of August 27, 2005.

It's Coming! • The annual CTAV Expo will be held from August 16—18 in Richmond Virginia. The event will provide training opportunities as well as glimpses of new vendor equipment.

- A new transit service, coordinated by VRTA, in South Central Virginia will begin operating this fall on October 1st. General Manager Mike Socha will oversee the early stages of project operations. Socha is familiar with the region as he began his career in the transit industry in this region.

MISCELLANEOUS

- A new Ford 650 wrecker and service truck equipped with a complete towing outfit was purchased by VRTA. This vehicle will enable VRTA to tow all busses excluding the fleet's two largest transit vehicles.
- The new service books have been incredibly popular and continue to be distributed. 5,000 new service books were ordered in response to high demand for them.



VIRGINIA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION, INC
 2005 VISION—TO BE A MULTIPURPOSE ORGANIZATION, PROVIDING TRANSIT
 SERVICE SOLUTIONS THROUGHOUT THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

109 N Bailey Lane
 Purcellville VA 20132

Phone: 540-338-1610
 Fax: 540-338-0690
 Email: mark@vatransit.org



Your Access to Mobility















don't spin your wheels—leave the driving to us

Recent Employees of the Month

Each month a VRTA employee will be chosen from each district as "employee of the month." Each "employee of the month" satisfies the criterion of consistent attendance and sustaining no accidents for the month that he or she is chosen. "Employees of the month" from each district are selected by their peers via ballots.

Remember to fill out "employee of the month" ballots each month so that you can help select your region's next employee of the month!

	February: Mickey Conner (Staunton)		April: John Matthew (Staunton)
	Sylvia Trammel (Purcellville)		Ray Milburn (Purcellville)
	Jack Coram (West Central)		Dennis Bridgetts (West Central)
	March: Wayne Rankin (Staunton)		May: Robert Jackson (Purcellville)
	Scott Walker (Purcellville)		David Lanham (West Central)
	Barbara Allaire (West Central)		Lewis Bolen (Mountain)

***61,296 more riders in
 February, March & April
 2005 than in 2004 !***

February, March & April Totals

Region:	2004	vs.	2005
Purcellville District:	25,603		58,721
West Central District:	17,146		29,749
Mountain District:	7,663		23,238
3 Month Totals:	50,412		111,708



Celebrate Birthdays July

A belated Happy Birthday goes out to all employees born in the months of April through May. Happy Birthday wishes go out to all those born in the upcoming months of June, July, August and September!

April

- 2 George Grunewald
- 3 Joan E. Runion
- 4 Michael W. Bard
- 7 Charles R. Starliper
- 8 Herbert M. Cockrell
- 16 Greg W. McGowan, Sr.
- 17 Marlin D. Washington
- 19 Denis R. Murray
- 19 Alma E. Rector
- 21 Linwood G. Wilkes
- 23 Kelly G. Franklin
- 28 Kassaye W. Demena
- 29 John A. Ross

May

- 1 James M. Conner
- 16 Scott S. Walker
- 19 Darlene B. Hiner
- 22 Mercedes. Baltuano-Valle
- 26 Scott K. Lecy
- 26 Fred D. Williams
- 27 Clarence D. Wilkins
- 28 Dennis L. Bridgett
- 6 Daisy B. Dunlap
- 13 Matthew W. Bland

June

August

- 17 Gerald A. Carlson
- 21 Billy J. Good
- 24 Bob Kennedy
- 1 Sandy N. Frazier
- 3 Russell Booker
- 4 Kathy Finniff
- 6 Lael Alston
- 6 Lewis V. Bolen
- 10 Philip Ernst
- 16 Richard L. Lucas, Sr.
- 19 Thomas L. Thompson
- 24 Alberto M. Pangan
- 25 John A. Torrey
- 28 Robert M. Fleming
- 29 Jean A. Daniel

September

- 6 Philip D. Christy
- 6 Mike J. Socha
- 9 Grace H. Wallace
- 9 Yale H. Wolfe
- 15 Anibal Cruz
- 21 Elena V. Yeger
- 24 Tyler Q. Houck
- 24 Edward N. Waalewyn
- 25 Shields Warren
- 27 Daniel F. Dovel
- 28 Boisy L. Davis
- 29 Patricia D. Neal
- 1 Paul Brooks
- 2 Mark McGregor
- 4 Keena L. Lingelbach
- 7 Donna Ferrell
- 10 Douglas A. Garling
- 10 Kevin O'Malley
- 11 Jeffrey R. Wood
- 22 Karen S. Wimer
- 23 Arthur W. Curry
- 25 Fernando Gamarra

