

VRTA NEWS AND VIEWS

Spring 2006

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VRTA to Connect People of Loudoun with New Smithsonian Air and Space Museum



Soon the Virginia Regional Transit Association will provide an accessible and convenient way to connect existing transportation services in Loudoun County with the brand new Smithsonian Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum in Dulles, Virginia.

Soon after July 1st, VRTA will begin providing a new transit service that will connect existing VRTA services in Loudoun County with the newly built Smithsonian Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum near Dulles Airport in Virginia. The project is made possible through a joint effort between VRTA, Fairfax County, Loudoun County, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, and the Federal Transit Administration. The project is also made possible in part through the use of

revenue. The project is able to use such funds because plans are in place to one day connect the Air and Space museum transit service with select Loudoun County hotels. Implementation of this plan will make Loudoun County a more attractive destination for tourists.

Since the museum opened, there has been a great need for a public transportation service that connects Loudoun County with the new Air and Space museum. The new VRTA service will allow passengers to travel from rural Purcellville, Virginia to the Air and

t a x e s Space museum in Dulles, Virginia for the cost of only \$0.50 per person each way, which includes free transfers.

The new service schedule and details of operation have not yet been finalized, however, the possibility exists that services will be available on weekends. The new service is sure to be a success as it will make a visit to the Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum an affordable option for all Loudoun residents and provide access to the Museum to rural Loudoun County residents.

What's Happening? Wages to Increase in July

4th Annual Bowl-A-Thon



The 4th Annual VRTA Bowl-A-Thon, held on February 25, 2006, was the most successful Bowl-A-Thon event yet! The event was held at the Leesburg Bowling Alley and raised approximately \$3,000. Fifty bowlers participated in the event and various prizes were awarded to event participants. Mark Roberts notably won the 50/50 raffle prize of \$300.00, sponsored by Sonny Merryman, and graciously donated the award to the CTAV scholarship fund. Overall the event was a tremendous success. Remember to mark your calendars for next year's 5th Annual Bowl-A-Thon, which will likely be held at the end of February, as has become tradition.

Effective July 9 all full-time and part-time all eligible VRTA employees will receive a 5% cost of living adjustment raise. Regional managers will meet with each employee to discuss wage increase details. Since



1997, VRTA wages have not been frozen and a cost of living wage increase adjustment has occurred each year.

Employee Assistance Program Underutilized

A little known fact is that VRTA pays for a service called the Carilion Employee Assistance Program that entitles all employees and their families to three professional consultations for each problem that requires professional services. The program is

intended to provide assessment, referral and short-term counseling for issues. To utilize the Employee Assistance Program, employees in need of professional services must call the program at (800) 992-1931. The Employee Assistance Program refers employees in need of assistance to affiliate professionals that assist in alleviating or solving the problem or issue. In order for professional services to be covered by the Employee Assistance Program, services must be used that are referred through the hotline.

Details relating to issues reported to the Employee Assistance Program are kept entirely confidential from VRTA.

CARILION

VRTA encourages all employees to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the Employee Assistance Program as the service is included as one of the benefits of working as a member of the VRTA team!

West Central District

On May 11, 2006 at 11:00 AM groundbreaking for phase one of the new multi-modal VRTA administrative, training and maintenance facility began in Culpeper, Virginia. Phase one of construction will complete site development and construction of the maintenance facility. Phase two of construction will complete the construction of the administrative and training building. The new facility will be located at 1099 Brandy Knoll Court. It will provide an administrative, operational and

maintenance headquarters for the West Central District. The facility is being built by the Kenbridge Corporation of Kenbridge, Virginia.

struction of the facility is being made possible through the joint efforts of VRTA, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, the Federal Transit Administration and the Town of Culpeper.



Michael T. Olinger, Butch Davies (CTB member), Pranas A. Rimeikis (Mayor of Culpeper), Darrel Feasel (Rural Section Manager VDRPT) and Mark McGregor (VRTA CEO) are pictured left to right at the May 11 VRTA Culpeper facility ground breaking ceremony.

Mountain District April 2005.

Access to transit services in the Mountain District is expanding and increasing in popularity. The Page County Commuter route to Front Royal was extended a half mile to provide service access to the newly built Interbake Foods plant. The new service is catching on quickly as Interbake employees are already using the service. In Page County the Tuesday/Thursday On Demand service is providing mobility to an expanded range of clientele— service was provided to 91 more riders in April 2006 than

Demand for transit services provided to the Blue Ridge Community College is increasing as well. April 2006 ridership was up by 661 more than April 2005!

In Staunton, a new Silver Trolley service began operating on April 3, 2006. The new service is being well received as 899 rides were recorded for its first month of service. Bus signs to promote the new service will be installed in the city soon.

The Mountain District hosted a

Bowl-A-Thon of its own on Saturday May 13, 2006 at Staunton Lanes. The event hosted 42 bowlers and raised over \$1200.00 to support public transit operations in the region.



Driver Bill Garrett stands in front of the new Silver Trolley in Staunton, Virginia. The new service is expected to remain popular.

Purcellville District

VRTA Driver Makes Perfect Score



Ken Pollock of CTAV hands Barbara Bush her trophy for achieving a perfect score in the Serpentine event at this year's State Roadeo.

Barbara Bush of Purcellville, Virginia scored a perfect score in the Serpentine Competition at

this year's State Roadeo. The State Roadeo took place at VRTA in Purcellville, Virginia on April 29, 2006. Barbara is a van driver by trade and competed against 35 BOC bus drivers and 12 other Van drivers.

VRTA Driver 4th Overall at State Roadeo

Congratulations also go out to Charlie Starliper of Purcellville, Virginia who took fourth overall at the State Roadeo!

New Bus Added to Fleet



This year's Roadeo tested driver skills in a variety of vehicular competitions.

Purcellville has added a new bus. The bus serves the Sterling-Countryside fixed route. Demand for the service continues to rise and is averaging 150-160 riders per day. Due to the high demand of the service, plans are being discussed to add another bus to the fixed route.

Piedmont District

Transit services operating in the new Piedmont District began operating in October 2005 and are managed by Jennifer Beck of Blackstone, Virginia. The Piedmont District operates along a route that runs through Amelia, Buckingham, Prince Edward and

Cumberland Counties. Each route has 35 bus stops. Service in the region have been awaited by residents since public transportation was suspended by the previous transit provider. VRTA General Manager Mike Socha is able to help this area develop because he has experience working in the area as he graduated from Longwood College

and began his transit career working with the Farmville Area Bus service.

Piedmont Area Transit signs (pictured right) will soon be placed throughout the region.

The signs will help to increase awareness and popularity of the service.



PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

New Employees Join VRTA Ranks

Dana Decker: Accounts Payable

Dana is originally from Pembroke Pines, Fl. Since 1997 she has resided in Round Hill, VA with her husband and son. Before coming to VRTA, Dana worked in accounts payable for the Winchester, Virginia company Trex.

Jackie Swofford: DMV

Jackie is originally from Ft. Smith, Arkansas and now lives in South Riding, Virginia with her prized cat Precious. Jackie has two grown children, a son and a daughter, both of whom

reside in Arizona. Jackie has extensive DMV experience as before she came to work in Purcellville, she worked at the DMV offices in Leesburg and Westfield, Virginia.

Peggy Oates: Administrative Assistant

Peggy is originally from Nashville, TN. She currently resides in Winchester, VA and is surrounded by males. Peggy has two sons and five grandsons! Peggy came to VRTA 5 months ago, after working for the PolyOne Corporation for 23 years.

Kim Knoll: Public Relations

Kim will be working for VRTA as the company's first Public Relations position. Kim is originally from Philadelphia, PA and now lives in Charles Town, WV with her fiancé. Kim comes

to VRTA from Target where she worked after graduating from Old Dominion University.

VRTA Bids Farewell to Good Friends and Colleagues

The VRTA family has experienced three losses. Bus driver Peter Ythier died in January 2006. Bus driver Robert Fleming died in March 2006. Construction Manager John Conti passed away most recently in late April 2006. Each of these people will be greatly missed. VRTA sends out its deepest condolences to all friends and families that have experienced these recent losses.

It's Coming!

- The 2006 Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) Conference will be held June 5-9 in Orlando, Fl. VRTA is sending 13 staff members to the EXPO.
- Employee Training will be on June 10 and will cover fire extinguisher usage and wheel chair securment.
- VRTA's Roadeo and company picnic will be held July 8th. All drivers may compete in the Roadeo. The top finisher will receive a **free trip** to the 17th National Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation Conference from October 22-25, 2006 held at the beautiful Skamania Lodge in Stevenson, WA .



The Skamania Lodge (above) of Stevenson, Washington is located 45 miles from Portland, Oregon in the beautiful Columbia River Gorge.



- The 8th Annual VRTA Golf Classic will be held on July 20, 2006 at the Bull Run Country Club. Everyone is encouraged to support this event— contact Ms. Peggy Oates for details

2006 VISION—TO BE A MULTIPURPOSE ORGANIZATION,
PROVIDING TRANSIT SERVICE SOLUTIONS THROUGHOUT
THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

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Your Access to Mobility

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

Driving Safety Tips

- Be Aware of Surroundings.
- Make Good use of Mirrors.
- Drive Cautiously at all times.
 - Maintain a safe speed.
- Follow all state and Federal laws!



34,903 More Riders In January—April 2006 than in January—April 2005!

January, February, March & April Totals:

	<u>2005</u>	vs.	<u>2006</u>
Purcellville District:	76,281		96,320
West Central District:	38,355		44,994
Mountain District:	29,236		37,461
Totals:	143,872		178,775

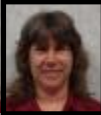


Employees of the Month

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!

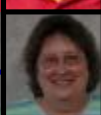
April:



Tiny Alston
(Purcellville)



William "Jack" Corum
(West Central)



Nancy Thompson
(Mountain)

February:



Arthur Curry
(Purcellville)



Tony Padmore
(West Central)



Bill O'Connell
(Mountain)

March:



Kassaye Demena
(Purcellville)



Alan Rinaca
(West Central)



Jerome Jones
(Mountain)

January:



Jennifer Gillespie
(Purcellville)



Angela Richards
(West Central)



John Matthews
(Mountain)



Celebrate Birthdays

July

- 3 Russell Booker
- 4 Kathy Finniff
- 6 Lael Alston
- 6 Lewis V. Bolen
- 9 David A. Huff
- 10 Mark A. Draskovic
- 10 Philip Ernst
- 16 Richard L. Lucas, Sr.
- 17 Debra Genovese
- 19 Thomas L. Thompson
- 20 Kathleen E. Carrasquillo
- 26 Florence E. St. John

Happy Birthday wishes go out to all employees born in the months of April and May as well as to those employees born in the upcoming months of June, July, August and September!!!

April

- 1 Yvonne F. Lucas
- 3 Joan E. Runion
- 7 Charles R. Starliper
- 8 Herbert M. Cockrell
- 16 Gregory W. McGowan, Sr.
- 17 Marlin D. Washington
- 19 Santos H. Castro
- 21 Linwood G. Wilkes
- 28 Kassaye W. Demena

August

- 1 Peggy Oates
- 5 Lou Ann Soper
- 6 Michael J. Socha
- 9 Grace H. Wallace
- 9 Yale H. Wolfe
- 17 Anita L. Porter
- 20 Joseph Laduca
- 21 Elena V. Yeger
- 24 Edward N. Waalewyn
- 25 Shields Warren III
- 27 Daniel F. Dovel

May

- 1 James M. Conner
- 16 John S. Walker
- 19 Darlene B. Hiner
- 22 Maria M. Baltuano-Valle
- 24 John P. Maher
- 26 William E. O'Connell
- 26 Fred D. Williams
- 27 Clarence D. Wilkins
- 28 Dennis L. Bridgett
- 31 Mary E. Stewart

September

- 1 Paul Brooks
- 2 Mark McGregor
- 6 Joyce Robinson
- 7 Donna L. Ferrell
- 8 Jeff Bailey
- 11 Jefferey R. Wood
- 12 Edward J. Martin
- 22 Karen S. Wimer
- 23 Dennis G. Brazil
- 23 Arthur W. Curry
- 29 Tony S. Padmore

June

- 16 Carlos Valladares
- 21 Billy J. Good
- 24 Robert R. Kennedy

