

VRTA NEWS AND VIEWS

Volume 2, Issue 1

Special points of interest:

- Company Event Highlights
- Driving Tip of the Month
- Changes For All Districts
- Congratulations to Michael Socha!
- Mapping and Service Booklet Information
- Upcoming Birthday Announcements

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Plans For the Future

In 2004, VRTA intends to continue its pattern of growth by negotiating new contracts, constructing new facilities and expanding services in existing districts.

VRTA signed a contract with the George Washington University to provide transportation services between Ashburn and West Falls Church.

Five acres were purchased in Culpeper for the site of the new Culpeper facility. For the project, \$140,000 has been provided by the Town of Culpeper and \$1.9 million has been provided by the Commonwealth of Virginia and the FTA . The facility will be approximately 15,000 square feet in size. It will have three garage bays, one wash bay, two lifts, a train-

ing room and a meeting room. The facility is projected to be occupied by December of 2005.

Land adjoining the Purcellville facility has been purchased and will allow for the construction of a new parking lot. The new lot will have a capacity for 40 buses.

Plans are in the works to provide additional trolleys in Leesburg. There are also plans to provide the Town of Culpeper with a Trolley service.

VRTA is working with the State of Virginia to implement new transit systems in Prince Edward, Amelia, Cumberland and Buckingham Counties. The possibility of expanding services along the Route 11 corridor between Winchester and Staunton also exists.

A Summer Trolley service in Chinc-

3rd and 4th Quarters 2004



VRTA will see many changes in 2005 as it expands and grows.

teague, Virginia is being discussed with local authorities there. Maintenance contracts may also be extended to private and public organizations that operate buses in Loudoun. VRTA has become the regional expert on bus fleet maintenance and there is a need within the community for such services. Local garages are often unable to accommodate the special needs of bus maintenance.

In 2005, VRTA intends to grow as an organization and expand its services in order to accommodate the growing transportation needs of the region and State.

What's happening?

Annual Company Picnic

The Annual Company Picnic was held on July 10, 2004. The picnic was held in Purcellville and approximately 60 drivers, staff and families were in attendance.



VRTA Employees and guests enjoy a holiday dinner at the Winchester Country Club.

Annual Christmas Party

The annual Christmas Party was held on December 4, 2004 at the Winchester Country Club. The evening consisted of a slide show presentation, a wonderful meal and raffle prize drawings followed by music and dancing.

Driving Tip of the Month

Adverse weather conditions increase the chances of skidding or sliding. In these conditions we need to recognize where and when to expect slippery conditions and know how to defend ourselves against them.

To avoid sliding and skidding:

- Slow down (we could all use this)
- Do NOT slam on your brakes
- Steer smoothly
- Don't turn or steer with quick motions



If your vehicle begins to skid you should:

- Ease your foot off the accelerator
- Keep your foot OFF the brake
- Turn the steering wheel in same the direction you want the vehicle to go.

West Central District

The West Central District continued to expand and grow during the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2004. To accommodate the needs of transportation services in the area, a new facility is being built in Culpeper and is expected to be occupied by December of 2005. On October 25, 2004 buses began operating in the Town of Front Royal. The new route serves approximately 20 people per day. The Culpeper Express is also

up and running. The bus signs for the Town of Front Royal service have been put up, however, the signs for the Culpeper Express are awaiting authorization. The signs for both services were presented to the Board of Directors on December 9, 2004.

VRTA purchased a school bus that will be used to serve Wakefield's transportation needs throughout the school year. The bus will be op-

erated in the West Central District, but will be maintained by the Purcellville office. In 2005 the West Central District will continue to provide safe and efficient transportation to all of its patrons.



Buses in the Town of Front Royal are already serving approximately 20 people per day.

Mountain District



The Blue Ridge Community College Shuttle Service began running on September 15, 2004.

The routes and services of the Mountain District also experienced growth and expansion during the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2004. Page County's goal of 30 riders per day was reached this fall. John Maher and the Mountain District staff are now turning their attention to a bus sign installation project. The goal of the project is to increase awareness of routes

and services available in all areas of the Mountain District.

The Mountain District began providing bus services to Blue Ridge Community College on September 15, 2004. The service will provide area college students with increased access to mobility.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS



Michael Socha Assumes Role as Executive Director of CTA

Mr. Michael Socha looks forward to becoming the new head of CTAV

VRTA General Manager, Michael Socha was recently selected to become the new Executive Director for the Community Transportation Association of Virginia (CTAV). In this new role, Mr. Socha will direct transportation related programs and projects throughout the Commonwealth. CTAV was formed to bring together transportation providers, agencies, vendors and other transit concerned individuals. CTAV provides training to providers, equipment EXPO's, low cost insurance programs, peer-to-peer networking opportunities and legislative guidance for the transit users. Mr. Socha was involved with the

formation of CTAV in 1990 and was a presenter on several different topics during its formation.

Full and Part-Time Accountants Hired

VRTA has recently experienced many changes to its financial policies and responsibilities. Accounting is now based on an extensive and complex grant-based system. The new system has provided VRTA with a need to expand its staff by adding one full-time accountant and one part-time accountant.

Mr. Daniel Rouse will serve as VRTA's full-time accountant. Mr. Rouse has years of experience working as a CFO and CPA in large firms and publicly traded companies. In 2000 Mr. Rouse was involved in a car accident that broke his back and resulted in the loss of his wife. When Mr. Rouse experienced this



Mr. Daniel Rouse has years of experience as a CPA and CFO and will serve as VRTA's new full time accountant.

traumatic event, he decided that he would retire from his previous career and spend more time with his two children.

Mr. Rouse says that he was "looking for a balance of something interesting, but less stressful" than his previous career. When the new accounting position opened up at VRTA, Mr. Rouse saw the position as the perfect opportunity to pursue exactly what he was looking for. He describes VRTA as a very noble organization that "helps a lot of people." He intends to "give 100% of his experience" to help VRTA grow and prosper.

Stephanie Hutchinson is the mother of two preschoolers and was hired as a part-time accountant. We welcome both new accountants to the VRTA team.

Phil Ernst Stars In Play

Phil Ernst (a driver from Staunton, Virginia) starred as Cooper from Bob Larbey's play *A Month of Sundays*, which was performed this fall at Waynesboro High School on November 18th, 19th and 20th.

Purcellville District

The biggest changes of the 3rd and 4th quarters of 2004 occurred in the Purcellville District. All bus signs are up in Loudoun County as of September.

On November 15, 2004 the six Leesburg Routes were compressed into three fixed routes with 30 minute headways. The new Leesburg Trolley is one of the three new routes. The service runs from His-

toric Leesburg to the outlet mall and is provided free of charge.

The trolley service was inaugurated at a ribbon-cutting ceremony held on November 14, 2004 in the



The Leesburg Trolley is a new and free service that runs from Historic Leesburg to the Outlet Mall.

Ida-Lee parking lot.

On November 14, two entirely new, much needed, routes were added to serve the Ashburn area.

On November 15, 2004 the 7-To-7 On-7 Route began operating with shortened headways of 30 minutes. During peak AM and PM operation hours the 7-To-7-On-7 service is bolstered by two additional buses.

MISCELLANEOUS

- The Accident Review Committee continues with its efforts to improve safety within the company. The Committee examines VRTA accidents in order to see how our own system can be improved upon. Starting in July the Committee plans to issue a Safety Recognition Award to employees who are exemplary of Safety.
- An "Employee of the Month" program will commence in January for each district. Selection will be based on popular vote. Ballots and boxes to cast votes will be placed in the driver's lounge of all district locations.

It's Coming!

The **NEW** Loudoun County Bus Service Booklet is on its way to press and should be released soon after the first of the year! The booklet is a culmination of all bus service programs throughout the region and should take care of any and all questions about services when it hits the street. When booklets arrive, the first wave of schedules will be distributed to residents throughout the Loudoun County area. The booklets have maps, service timetables and information about our Demand Service and Safety Ride. The back page is full of helpful transit link phone numbers and information about Loudoun's commuter service. VRTA would like to thank **ALL** of you who contributed to this great project. The community will certainly benefit from this great team effort. Go VRTA!

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**108,434 More Riders
 in 2004!**

Region:	2003	vs.	2004
Purcellville District:	118,859		160, 759
West Central District:	83,205		113,437
Mountain District:	45,629		81,931



Employee Spotlight

Donna Ferrell



Position:

Safety & Training Manager

Background:

Donna has nine years of experience in the transportation industry. She also has experiencing working in the Restaurant and Construction businesses.

Family:

Donna is the mother of three children. She also has four sisters and according to her “the best mom in the world.”

Interests:

Donna enjoys spending time with her family, hanging out with her friends and simply loving life.

Celebrate Birthdays

A belated Happy Birthday goes out to all employees born in the months of October through December. Happy Birthday wishes go out to all those born in the upcoming months of January, February and March!

- October**
 - 2 James B. Neal
 - 4 Willie Antoya D. White
 - 20 Judy K. Gregory
 - 5 Tanya M. Mejia-Amaya
 - 16 Peter Ythier
 - 18 Tina L. Kearnes
 - 19 Loretta Gilson-Wicka
 - 26 William E. Hildebrand
- November**
 - 16 Eric S. Mail
 - 21 Jennifer R. Gillespie
 - 30 Ray M. Milburn
- December**
 - 4 Teri L. Morrison
 - 9 Alice M. Nelson
 - 12 Douglas Bowman
 - 12 Richard A. Cooper
 - 12 Mohammad Farman
 - 12 Warren A. Robertson
 - 16 Paul W. Barbour
 - 19 Monica G. Galarza
 - 20 Angela Richards
 - 21 Robert G. Caplinger
 - 24 William L. Garrett
 - 28 William F. Brown



- January**
 - 3 Thomas P. White
 - 6 Linda G. Sutler
 - 14 Robert T. Anson
 - 14 Stephanie H. Hutchison
 - 16 Jerome H. Jones
 - 17 Wayne S. Rankin
 - 19 Constance C. Keesling
 - 20 Judy K. Gregory
 - 26 Buddy Smith
- February**
 - 3 Mary A. Micelli
 - 3 Samuel P. Taylor
 - 5 Nancy A. Thompson
 - 6 Matthew Clark
 - 12 David E. Henley
 - 12 Robert E. Jackson
 - 28 Barbara J. Bush
 - 28 Charles R. Sage
- March**
 - 2 Heinz G. Laude
 - 3 Anwar S. Khawaja
 - 16 Edward L. Eutsler
 - 16 John W. Matthews Jr.
 - 18 William R. Coram
 - 21 Charles H. Gibson
 - 23 Cindy J. Ray
 - 24 Sharon K. Kennedy
 - 24 Jack C. Loesch
 - 24 Julia E. Mitchell

