

# VRTA NEWS AND VIEWS

Volume II, Issue I

3rd and 4th Quarters 2005

*Special points of interest:*

- 2006 Christmas Party
- 15th Anniversary Celebration Highlights
- Regional News
- 2006 Training Calendar
- Employees of the Month
- Birthday Announcements

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## Trolleys To Begin Operating in Culpeper



*The new Culpeper Trolleys will allow the Town to improve and expand its transit services.*

In late January 2006 the Town of Culpeper expects to augment its transit services with the addition of

two Trolley-style busses. Body-on-chassis style busses have traditionally provided transportation services within the Town of Culpeper. Public transportation in Culpeper is already popular— in November 2005, body-on-chassis style busses provided service to approximately 4,500 people within the Town of Culpeper. Local transit experts anticipate the popularity of the public transportation system to grow

even more with the addition of the trolleys.

The new Trolleys are likely to be more popular than the old style busses because of their aesthetic appeal as well as the various amenities the trolleys offer such as wider bus benches, leather hand grabs, brass hand rails and a quality PA system.

## Public Transportation Revival In Southside VA

In Late 2004 the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation requested that VRTA revive public transportation services in Southside Virginia. Services in the area were formerly run by Central Virginia Transportation and have been closed for the last couple of years. In October 2005 services began operating on a fixed route operational basis in the Southside Virginia Counties of Amelia, Buckingham, Prince Edward and Cumberland. The new service is operating under the name of Piedmont Area Transit. Jennifer Beck, the transit manager for the Town of Blackstone is currently serving as interim man-

ager for the new Piedmont Area Transportation service. Two busses are currently running eight hours a day along a fixed route. The implementation of the new service is being coordinated by a joint effort between VRTA and Southside Training, Employment and Placement Services, Inc. (STEPS). STEPS has set up a Transit Advisory Committee that is charged with the responsibilities of examining routes, developing fare structure and monitoring the progress of transit services in the four-county area. VRTA would like to note that Sharon Harrup and Ryan Foley, from STEPS, have been extremely helpful in the endeavor to coordinate the

revival of transportation services in Southside Virginia. VRTA would also like to welcome Tequila Jackson as she transitions from working for STEPS to working for VRTA as a bus driver operating along the new routes in Southside Virginia.



*Many Southside Virginia communities such as Amelia Courthouse (pictured right) now have access to inter-county public transportation.*

# What's Happening?

## 2006 Christmas Party



The night of VRTA's 2005 Christmas Party was filled with good cheer and dancing.

VRTA's Annual Christmas Party was held on the evening of December 17, 2005 at the Winchester Country Club. The party featured a wonderful meal, which was accompanied by a slideshow picture compilation of past VRTA employees and events. During dinner VRTA's new promotional DVD was unveiled to all employees in attendance. Bonus

checks were also distributed to company employees as part of the VRTA employee retention plan. VRTA's very first employee, **Bill Brown** was notably in attendance at the party. A raffle ticket drawing followed the distribution of bonus checks. Such prizes as various sweets, a boom box and a portable DVD player were given out. Congratulations go out to all employees who won prizes, especially to **Charles Gibson** (West Central) who won the grand prize of the evening—a paid trip for two to Orlando, FL! VRTA would like to send warm wishes to all employees and their family members this holiday season.

## 15th Year Anniversary

On Thursday August 6, 2004 VRTA hosted an open house at its Purcellville Facility to celebrate its 15 year existence. The event was open to the public and guests in attendance

were provided with light refreshments and welcome bags.



VRTA looks forward to a continued existence as it now operates transportation services in over 15 jurisdictions within the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## Recent Safety News

According to a 2005 study published by the American Transportation Research Institute, which surveyed more than 500,000 drivers, there appears to be a link between driving behavior and automotive crashes. The study found that persons convicted of improper lane changes, failure to yield the right of way, improper turning, and failure to maintain the proper lane are anywhere from 91-100% more likely to be involved in future crashes!

# West Central District

Pictured to the right is the site of the future Culpeper Facility. Planning for the facility is ongoing.



VRTA still intends to build a new transportation facility in Culpeper, but plans for developing the facility are still in the works. All efforts

are being made towards achieving the completion of this facility.

In October 2005 the Culpeper County Express changed from a fixed route service to a demand/response service. Immediately after this change was made, ridership improved dramatically by increasing nearly 200% during the first month of new service.

Plans are also being developed to get a bus to run ADA passengers in

the Town of Culpeper. The new service will help the new Connector Trolleys maintain the headways of their fixed route schedules.

Plans are in the works to bring transportation services to the Germanna Heights Apartments in Orange County, VA. The new service is expected to begin operating sometime in early 2006. The St. Luke's Lutheran School in Culpeper is also investigating the possibility of contracting with VRTA to begin a transportation program for its students as early as 2006.

# Mountain District

The Route 250 Connector service was recently reworked and the change has generated great success as ridership increased 19% after the first four weeks of implementing the new service. Successfully changing the service plan was made possible in part by the suggestions of drivers **John Matthews** and **Clarence Wilkins**.

The Page County Board of Supervisors recently approved full funding for Page County Transit. The new service will be called "the People Movers."

Page County driver **Billy Goode** is recovering nicely from the injuries he sustained in October from an accident caused by another vehicle while he was driving.

The Mountain District would also like to welcome **Allan Rinaca** to its workforce. Allan has past experience as a volunteer shuttle driver for the Disabled American Veterans and he will undoubtedly prove to be a valuable addition to the VRTA staff.

Planning is in the works for a new Staunton service called the Silver Trolley, which will be marketed towards the senior population in the area.

The Route 11 Shuttle to Blue Ridge Community College connecting Staunton and Harrisonburg continues to grow. The College is very pleased with the service as 6,353 rides have been recorded in the last three months!



Services in the Mountain District continue to adapt to today's demands. Revisions to the Route 250 Connector were made earlier this year, allowing ridership to increase by 19% during the first four weeks following service revision.

# PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

## Anita Porter Joins the VRTA Staff as a Human Resources Administrator



Anita Porter began working as VRTA's new Human Resources Administrator on October 7, 2005. Anita lives in Round Hill, Virginia with her husband and two children. Anita first became involved with the Human Resources industry when she started working for an overhead-door company in Sterling, Virginia. While working for the company, she obtained her Professional Human Resources Certification from the Human Resource Certification Insti-

tute. Before leaving the overhead-door company earlier this year, Anita had become the Human Resources Manager. Anita enjoys camping, boating, reading and watching her son play hockey and participate in paintball tournaments. Her daughter is currently applying to colleges and expects to be making a decision soon. Anita is very excited about her new position as VRTA's Human Resources Administrator and she looks forward to making a positive impact on the organization.

## VRTA Conducts Transit Manager Training at 2005 West Virginia Transit Conference

Mike Socha, Mark McGregor and Darrel Feasel attended this year's

West Virginia Transit Conference as guests. The conference was held from October 24-26, 2005. At the conference, Mark and Darrel taught a three-day course on the topic of transit manager training. Mark and Darrel are certified to teach the course by the American Public Works Association through CTAA and even worked to develop the course in conjunction with that organization. The course is designed to offer training for rural training managers and emphasizes core values and productive employee management strategies. At the conference, West Virginia Transit officials asked CTAV, an affiliate organization of VRTA, to help with their upcoming rodeo.

# Purcellville District



The new Leesburg bus shelter is designed to keep waiting passengers dry and comfortable.

In Leesburg, Virginia a new bus shelter was built adjacent to the Montessori School located on Fort Evans Road. This bus shelter is the first of three shelters to be built in Leesburg. The locations of the other shelters have not yet been determined, but locations will likely be decided upon after the first of the new year. All bus shelters are dura-

are designed to keep people dry. Virginia Regional Transportation Association will be working closely with the Loudoun County engineering staff to complete the construction of the two other shelters.

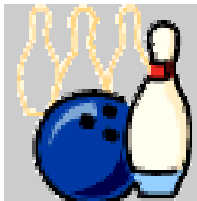
A dump station located at the Purcellville facility has been in operation since early December. Lighting has been installed adjacent to the dump station so that waste dumping at night can be as accurate as possible. The dump station will be used primarily by Yellow Coach Busses and will be used by commercial vehicles only.

Construction is being planned for a new parking lot adjacent to the Purcellville Facility. The construction site has been staked out and planning for

it is nearly complete. The bulldozers and other machinery required to complete the construction of the facility are in place and ground should be broken shortly after the Holiday Season.



The new parking lot adjacent to the Purcellville Facility is expected to be completed in early 2006.



## It's Coming!

- The 4th Annual Bowl-A-Thon will be held at the Village Lanes Bowling Alley on February 25, 2006 and will start at 5 PM. This event is fun for the whole family and everyone is encouraged to attend. If you are unable to attend this event, it is still possible to make a donation that will help VRTA increase its local match and federal monetary funds. The event will feature bowling, raffle tickets, great prizes and great fun. **Mark your calendars today!**

## 2006 Training Calendar

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><u>January 14, 2006</u><br/>-Defensive Driving<br/>-Substance Abuse</p> <p><u>February 11, 2006</u><br/>-Defensive Driving<br/>-Substance Abuse</p> <p><u>March 11, 2006</u></p> | <p>-Accidents<br/>-Emergencies<br/>-Policy &amp; Procedures</p> <p><u>April</u><br/>-Rodeo (date TBA)</p> <p><u>May 20, 2006</u><br/>-Safe Driving</p> |
|---|--|

- Insurance Policies, presented by Don Thornhill
- June 10, 2006  
-Fire Extinguisher  
-Renewal  
-Wheel Chair Securement
- July 8, 2006  
-Company Picnic

- August 12, 2005  
-Customer Service  
-Radio Procedures
- September 9, 2006  
-NO MEETING
- October 14, 2006  
-Make-Up Date for those who missed training in March, June or August

- November 11, 2005  
-On-Road Training Evaluation  
-EAP
- December  
Christmas Party (date TBA)



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## ***19,430 More Riders In October & November 2005 Than In October & November 2004!***

### **October & November Combined Totals**
















Region:	2004	vs.	2005
<b>Purcellville District:</b>	34,543		45,232
<b>West Central District:</b>	17,938		23,720
<b>Mountain District:</b>	15,803		18,762
<b>2 Month Totals:</b>	68,284		87,714



## 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!**

<u>June:</u>			
	<b>Anwar Khawaja</b> (Purcellville)		<b>Douglass Bowman</b> (West Central)
	<b>Robert Caplinger</b> (West Central)		<b>Karen Wilmer</b> (Mountain)
	<b>Nancy Thompson</b> (West Central)	<u>September:</u>	
<u>July:</u>			<b>Robert Jackson</b> (Purcellville)
	<b>Charley Starliper</b> (Purcellville)		<b>Dan Dovel</b> (West Central)
	<b>Russell Booker</b> (West Central)		<b>Jack Loesch</b> (Mountain)
	<b>Billy Goode</b> (Mountain)	<u>October:</u>	
<u>August:</u>			<b>Linda Sutler</b> (Purcellville)
	<b>Osman Farah</b> (Purcellville)		<b>Fred Williams</b> (West Central)
			<b>Clarence Wilkins</b> (Mountain)



## Celebrate Birthdays

*Happy Birthday wishes go out to all employees born in the months of October, November and December as well as to those employees born in the upcoming months of January, February and March!*

<b>October</b>	1 Steven P. Brown 2 Aden Hajimumin 2 James B. Neal 3 David J. Lanham 8 Janelle R. Bohrer 10 Mohammed H. Khan 11 Charles E. Triplett 14 Tara S. Farmer 16 Peter Ythier 29 Michael T. Barnes 30 Victoria E. Bryant	<b>January</b>	21 Robert Caplinger Sr. 24 William L. Garrett 28 William F. Brown 30 Dennis M. Runion
<b>November</b>	10 Ilyas A. Yusuf 21 William A. Brill 21 Jennifer R. Gillespie 21 Felix Martinez 25 Henmer A. Rivera 30 Ray M. Milburn	<b>February</b>	6 Linda G. Sutler 7 Mohammad S. Abdi 14 Robert T. Anson 14 Stephanie H. Hutchison 15 Singh Yadwinger 16 Jerome H. Jones 17 Wayne S. Rankin 19 Constance C. Keesling 25 John Conti
<b>December</b>	9 Alice M. Nelson 11 Osman M. Farah 12 Douglas Bowman 12 Richard A. Cooper 16 Paul W. Barbour 20 Angela M. Richards	<b>March</b>	3 Mary A. Micelli 5 Tequila M. Jackson 5 Nancy A. Thompson 6 Matthew L. Clark 12 Robert E. Jackson 14 Sarah Utterback 28 Barbara J. Bush
			1 Bruce D. Hommel 2 Heinz G. Laude 3 Anwar S. Khawaja 12 James H. Gossard 16 Edward L. Eutsler 16 John W. Matthews, Jr. 18 William R. Coram 19 Sylvia A. Trammel 20 Jesse J. Malpass 21 Charles H. Gibson 23 Cindy J. Ray 24 Jack C. Loesch 24 Julia E. Mitchell 26 Thomas A. Moore

