

VRTA NEWS AND VIEWS

Summer 2006

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Annual Golf Classic Generates Large Return



VRTA's 8th Annual Golf Classic had the largest turnout ever this year. VRTA raised over \$18,000 for the Loudoun Youth Initiative. Trans/Air MFG was the event sponsor this year and has already pledged to be the even sponsor for next years event

VRTA's 8th annual Golf Classic, sponsored by Trans/Air MFG was held July 20, 2006 at Bull Run Country Club. The event produced 120 golfers from all over the Country. This was the first year VRTA had a car, donated by Shenandoah Motors, to give away as a prize for a hole in one. While no one won the car, there were several who were very close. Over 40 businesses pledged to be hole sponsors. Between the large number of golfers, hole sponsors, and auction items which included two round trip business class tickets to London donated by Maxjet airways, VRTA was able to raise over \$18,000 for the Loudoun Youth Initiative, making this years tournament the most successful tournament in VRTA's history. Trans/Air MFG has already pledged to be next year event sponsor which will be held July 19, 2007.

Annual Company Picnic and Rodeo great success

The annual company picnic and Rodeo took place

on July 8, 2006 and had over 100 attendees. The day kicked off at 8 am with twelve participants in the VRTA Rodeo. Contestants were given 5 points towards their retention plan for participation. The rodeo tested drivers mind with a written test and tested their driving skills with a very challenging course. Charlie Starliper from Purcellville took first place and won the trip, while Bill O'Connell came in second, and Jennifer Grooms claimed third. Directly following the Rodeo employees and their families enjoyed VRTA's employee appreciation picnic. Over 20 door prizes were handed out to employees. Everyone feasted on New York Strip Steak, hamburgers, and hot dogs.



VRTA employees and their families enjoying annual employee appreciation picnic

5% wage Increase Implemented

Starting July 9, 2006 all employees hired prior to May 1, 2006 were given a 5% wage increase. This is the largest increase in VRTA history. Pay checks should now reflect this increase. Employees also received a brief performance evaluation. Feedback is welcomed about the usefulness of these evaluations. This evaluation was a prelude to the annual Road to Rewards detailed performance evaluation that will be taking place in December. Drivers have until the end of October to complete all job requirements, this includes making up any missed training classes. A helpful hint would be to make sure to know VRTA's mission and vision statement as this will provide additional points on performance evaluations!

What's Happening?

CTAV EXPO 2006



CTAV 2006 EXPO attendees will stay at the beautiful Double Tree Hotel in Richmond, Virginia

The 2006 CTAV Expo will be held August 15-17 in Richmond, Virginia. Mike Socha from VRTA, also serves as the Executive Director for CTAV and is putting the show together. A number of staff from VRTA will be attending. Mark McGregor, the CEO for VRTA is conducting a class on Cost Allocations.

BONUSES YOU COULD EARN

VRTA has multiple ways employees can earn more money. Often new

employees are unaware of them or forget that they have the opportunity. This article is designed to explain the bonuses that VRTA offers to new employees. Only employees employed in Loudoun County Locations are entitled to a \$1000.00 sign on Bonus! This bonus applies to all new Full



Time drivers after their initial 90 days and completion of their CDL. All applicants are required to have CDL Learners permit within 30 days of hire. Those employees who complete the CDL License and have completed their 90 days will then receive \$100 per pay for ten pay periods. There is a \$500 sign-on Bonus, again for Loudoun County only, for Part Time employees after 90 days with a CDL License. All applicants are required to have CDL Learners

Time drivers after their initial 90 days and completion of their CDL. All applicants are required to

within 30 days of hire. Upon successful completion of the initial 90 days, and after obtaining a CDL License, Part Time employees will receive \$100 per pay for five pay periods. If you are an employee at VRTA, and you know someone who you think would be a good driver, you could be eligible for a bonus. VRTA offers to all employees, except supervisors excluded by management, a \$500 recruitment bonus. If both referee and referral are still employed with VRTA after 90 days the referral will be issued a one time bonus of \$500. There is no limit to how many referrals are submitted. Other great bonuses that are available to all employees are airbrakes endorsements and school bus endorsements. Once a driver completes the Airbrakes endorsement he or she will then receive a \$100 bonus. School Bus endorsements are also worth a \$100 bonus. Currently VRTA is running a special \$200 bonus for those drivers who complete their School Bus endorsement.

West Central District

Updates from West Central

Recently, West Central has been concentrating on improving service and ridership in the town of Front Royal. The FRAT routes have been extended with new stops added to better serve the community. New brochures were developed and distributed in Front Royal. The Transit Manger, Mike Barnes, has joined the Downtown Business Association (DBA) and has made important presentations about the bus route and services in an effort to get the Town's support and to help spread the word.

Additionally, VRTA was on the local radio station to discuss the FRAT bus and its impact on transportation within the community. The noon show, The Valley Today, aired on July 24, 2006 and was instrumental in informing the area listeners about the FRAT service. Mark McGregor, Michael Socha, and Michael Barnes were present to discuss VRTA. Advertising has also begun in a widely circulated monthly news magazine, "Out and About", which featured an article about the bus and has an ongoing advertisement each month. It

is expected that this advertising will attract patrons from the surrounding area as well as visiting tourists.

West Central is pleased to announce that ridership has escalated to all time highs (507 in June and 461 in July – up from an average of 260 previously) since this campaign has begun and there is much excitement about the future prospects for the FRAT bus service.



Mike Barnes, Mike Socha, and Mark McGregor went live on July 24, 2006 about the FRAT service

Mountain District

Wal-Mart Supports CATS

The Staunton Wal-Mart Manager, Michael Martin recently donated \$500 from Wal-Mart to the CATS program. Combined, Wal-Mart has donated \$600 to help support public transportation in the Staunton area.

Day-Lily Festival bring in large numbers

The Day-Lily Festival was held July 15th and 16th in Staunton. CATS provided transportation for the festi-

val, during which 4,231 riders were served.

VAIL Applauds CATS

Valley Area Independent Living Centers (VAIL) staged their annual evaluation of the CATS services on Monday, June 19th. Representatives from Blue Ridge Disabilities Service Board, Waynesboro Disabilities Services Board, and Virginia Department of Hearing and Vision Impaired rode the 250 Connector from Waynesboro to Staunton where they transferred to the Silver Trolley. The visitors' goal was to evaluate the services CATS provides to VAIL to insure buses have proper ac-

commodations and that bus drivers are properly trained. CATS received extremely positive feedback.



Valley Area Independent Living Centers (VAIL) stopped for a quick picture at the Staunton visitor center where they met with John Maher to discuss their opinions.

Purcellville District

Space Museum's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy center was formally

VRTA is now using the space to park all company busses.

Sterling Countryside connector continues to grow

The Sterling Countryside connector which provides transportation to over 3,200 passengers a month is continuing to grow nearly 200 passengers more a day. Talks of a second bus are in the works. County financing is needed to purchase the second bus.



Ribbon Cutting at the Air and Space



Left: John D. Marsh, General Jack Dailey, Mayor Walker, Supervisor Delgaudio, Supervisor Snow, Vice Chairman Tulloch, Congressman Wolf, Supervisor Frey, CEO

The new extending service to the Smithsonian National Air and

Christened August 4, 2006 by Congressman Wolf and other Virginia Delegates. This service runs 7 days a week providing more weekend hours for those who would like to work. **New Lot Now Open** The new parking lot behind the Purcellville office is now complete. Previous plans to rent the space are cancelled.

Piedmont District

condition due to repair and upkeep provided by the Town of Blackstone. The

and proves to be important to the people of Piedmont. VRTA looks forward to the continued success of PAT.

PAT running smoothly

Piedmont Area Transit (PAT) is currently working diligently to complete their new bus schedules. Presently PAT is also working towards installing bus signs. PAT is running off of two buses which, are both in good running

Piedmont District is working with two drivers originally taken from the STEPS program. These drivers have remained with the Piedmont District and are doing quite well. PAT's ridership for the month of July was a total of 533 riders. PAT continues to grow

Bus sign that are currently being installed in the Piedmont District



PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Charlie Starliper Won the Rodeo
Charlie Starliper from Purcellville took first place at the Rodeo held on July 8, 2006 with a score of 611. Charlie won an all-expense-paid trip with CEO Mark McGregor to the Bus Con Expo in Chicago, Illinois October 23, 2006-October 25, 2006.

Drivers work hard to be accident free

All drivers have done an amazing job this past month. The entire company was accident free for the month of July. This news will also be shared at VRTA's regularly scheduled staff meeting to be held August 12, 2006.

General Manager, Mike Socha is Joining the Elite

Mike Socha, General Manager is Virginia and VRTA's newest Certified Community Transportation Manager, having passed his exam. This program is sponsored by the Community Transportation Association of America. To pass, a candidate must satisfactorily pass five individual sections as follows: Human Resources, Financial Management, Operation Management, Transit Development, and Procurement and Contracting. Socha Joins CFO Kathy Finniff and CEO Mark McGregor as CCTM's.

Quick Thinking By Drivers Saves Passenger

Thanks to the quick thinking from drivers John Matthews, Wilkie Wilkens, and Jack Loesch passenger Joan Bitzig was found. The drivers became concerned

about Bitzig, a regular Staunton Demand-passenger, after she failed to show for her weekly scheduled demand ride. Matthews, Wilkens, and Loesch decided to contact the Staunton Police, who managed to enter the home of Bitzig, who had lost consciousness and was left unable to call for help. Unfortunately, Bitzig died two weeks later, but was grateful to the men for allowing her to have the needed time to spend with her family.

New to VRTA

- Bowen (Bo) Drenning- Construction Manager
- Pauranoit Singh- Driver, Loudoun
- Calvin Dade- Driver, Loudoun
- Robert Wemm- Driver, Loudoun
- Jeannie Puffenberger- Driver, Mountain
- Ruth Conway- Driver, Loudoun
- Marian Unger- Driver, Loudoun
- Douglas Saturday- Driver, Loudoun

It's Coming!

Make up Training Day

There will be a training day on October 14, 2006 in Purcellville. This regularly scheduled training day is drivers' last opportunity to make up missed training classes. The training that may be made up is from March, June, and August. Topics to be discussed are: Accidents, Emergencies, and Policy and Procedures from March, Fire Extinguisher Renewal, and Wheel Chair Securement from June, and Customer Service, and Radio Procedures from August. If any of these classes were missed please plan on attending.

Training Calendar for 2007

Currently VRTA staff are meeting to discuss next year's Training Calendar. If anyone is interested in suggesting a desired or needed training course to be added to the program, please see your Transit Manager. All input is considered.



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WWW.VATRANSIT.ORG



Your Access to Mobility

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

Driving Safety Tips

- Make sure all passengers are seated before taking off.
- Make quick frequent scans of the inside of the bus to assure passengers stay seated at all times.
 - Scan outside mirrors frequently.
- **NEVER** under any circumstance use your cell phone while driving!



42,018 More Riders In April—July 2006 than in April—July 2005!

April, May, June, and July Totals:

	<u>2005</u>	<u>vs.</u>	<u>2006</u>
Purcellville District:	83,608		110,572
West Central District:	42,347		46,240
Mountain District:	43,928		55,089
Totals:	169,883		211,901



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!

July:



Yvonne Lucas
(Purcellville)



Dennis Bridgett
(West Central)



Lewis Bolen
(Mountain)

June:



Cindy Ray
(Purcellville)



Edward Martin
(West Central)



Wilkie Wilkins
(Mountain)

May:



Marlin Washington
(Purcellville)



Allen Rinaca
(West Central)



Bill Garrett
(Mountain)

April:



Tiny Alston
(Purcellville)



William "Jack" Corum
(West Central)



Nancy Thompson
(Mountain)



Celebrate Birthdays

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

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

June

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

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

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

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

