

August 2010

OmniNews

Half-Fares Extended on OmniRide's Tysons Express

The Virginia Department of Transportation and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation will continue offering promotional fares on OmniRide's Tysons Express through this fall.

The two state agencies—partnering together as Virginia Megaprojects—provide all funding for OmniRide's Tysons Express. The bus service, which is operated by PRTC, was created to provide commuters with an alternative to driving along I-495 and in Tysons Corner during construction of the High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes and the Dulles Metrorail project.

All PRTC bus fares increased on



July 6, 2010, but the OmniRide's Tysons Express fare is still half the cost of a regular OmniRide fare. Tysons Express passengers pay \$2.65 per trip with a SmarTrip card or \$3.30 cash rather than the regular OmniRide rate of \$5.25 per trip with SmarTrip or \$7 cash.

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First of Rebuilt Buses Returns to PRTC *61 Buses to be Overhauled Over 4 Years*

After a long journey from Florida, OmniRide bus 302 was parked in one of PRTC's maintenance bays in late July. From the outside, the bus looked like many other buses in PRTC's fleet, but it was practically brand new on the inside.

Bus 302, manufactured in 2002 by Motor Coach Industries, was the first of 61 PRTC buses to be rebuilt under a contract with ABC Bus in Winter Garden, Florida. The company won a competitively bid contract in April. That work will include replacing engines, transmissions, suspension systems, wheels, brakes, lighting, seats, repairing

electrical systems and rebuilding the air conditioning systems. The 45-foot, 57-seat buses even will get an updated paint scheme to reflect PRTC's new service logo.

The 61 PRTC buses that will be overhauled over approximately the next four years were manufactured between 2002 and 2006, and the oldest buses will be taken care of first. By virtually rebuilding the buses now, PRTC will circumvent potential future maintenance problems and keep the fleet in top condition while extending the life of the buses to at least 14 years, said Eric

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3 Manassas Metro Direct Trips Extended

Did you know that the Manassas Metro Direct route offers three trips to the Vienna Metro Station in the mornings—and that those trips then continue on to the West Falls Church Metro Station?

The three trips that previously ended at Vienna were extended in November 2009 to help commuters make easier connections to Tysons Corner. Rather than disembarking at Vienna and riding Metro to West Falls Church before transferring to a neighboring bus system, passengers now can ride directly to West Falls Church and eliminate the train portion of their commute.

The extended service is entirely funded by Virginia Megaprojects—a partnership of the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation. The two agencies funded the extension of the three Manassas Metro Direct trips in an effort to ease congestion during construction of the I-495 HOT lanes and Dulles Metrorail project.

The three extended trips arrive at West Falls Church at 6 a.m., 7:22 a.m. and 8:50 a.m. There are no return trips from Vienna; all trips to Manassas continue to start at the West Falls Church Metro Station. ■

Try Transit Week Starts Sept. 20 Win a One Year Transit Pass & Two Amtrak Virginia Tickets

If you're reading this issue of OmniNews, chances are you use public transportation at least occasionally. So why not take advantage of that fact and enter a drawing for a chance to win a free one year transit pass and two round-trip tickets on Amtrak Virginia?

The third annual Try Transit Week is being held September 20-24, 2010. The statewide event is designed to promote a variety of options to driving alone including bus, rail, carpools, vanpools and telework. It is sponsored by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, DRPT.

Simply visit www.TryTransitWeek.com and pledge to try transit during the week of September 20 and learn more about your transit options. Everyone who takes the pledge by September 24 will be entered in the free drawing for a one year transit pass on the transit operator of their choice and two round-trip tickets on Amtrak Virginia.

In addition, the pledges will be categorized by jurisdiction and the winning locality will be recognized for its efforts to increase transit ridership. Prince William County has won the competition the past two years!

Most people say they could use more money and time. Transit helps you get more of both!

Those who use transit save on fuel and car expenses that can add up to more than \$9,300 annually for the average family.

"The variety of transit choices available in the Commonwealth makes it easier than ever to fit transit into your travel plans," said Corey Hill, DRPT Chief of Public Transportation. "And if you pledge to try transit during Try Transit Week, you can win big."

So take the pledge today at TryTransitWeek.com and tell your family and friends that they have an extra incentive to Try Transit in September! ■



Tyson's Express

(Continued from page 1)

Ridership on the Tyson's Express route has been steadily increasing and is nearing PRTC's expectations for the first full year of service. In July, the buses carried an average of 116 riders daily, but there's still room for more!

OmniRide's Tyson's Express offers four trips to Tyson's in the morning and five trips back to eastern Prince William in the afternoon. Buses serve two local stops: the Woodbridge VRE station and the Route 123/I-95 commuter lot.

Not only are the buses comfortable, but they offer free Wi-Fi so passengers can put their commuting time to good use—whether by catching a nap, reading a newspaper, paying bills online or getting some work done. Regardless of how you spend your time during the commute, it will free up time for you so you can concentrate on other things when you arrive back home! □

Bus Overhaul

(Continued from page 1)

Marx, PRTC's Planning and Operations Director.

ABC is overhauling two PRTC buses at a time, keeping the vehicles for approximately 12 weeks at first. Eventually, the company estimates it will be able to overhaul two buses every six weeks. By working on two buses at a time, PRTC will minimize the impact to the fleet while continuing to operate regular service. PRTC is using spare buses from its contingency fleet to replace buses that are being serviced, Marx said.

PRTC already has \$6.6 million to rehab the first 31 buses, and additional funding is expected in the future to pay for the others. The funding comes from a combination of federal, state and local sources. In addition, First Transit Inc., the contract operator for all of PRTC's bus and routine maintenance services, is contributing \$50,000 toward the work for the first 30 buses.

This project marks the fourth time PRTC has undertaken mid-life overhauls on buses in its fleet. Buses manufactured in 1993 and 1995 were rehabbed in 2004 and 2006, respectively; and buses made in 2000 were overhauled in 2009. □

Outstanding Operators

First Transit, the contract provider for PRTC's bus services, chooses one outstanding operator each month for special recognition. If you have a compliment about your operator, please let us know.



Quentin Richter— January 2010

Mr. Richter enjoys meeting and greeting his customers. He has been at PRTC for 3 years and currently operates a Dale City OmniRide trip in the mornings and a Linton Hall Metro Direct trip in the evenings. □

Baba Mohammed — February 2010

Mr. Mohammed quickly learned all of PRTC's routes because his ambition was to become an extra board operator—someone who can be called upon at any moment to fill in on any route when necessary. In that position, there's always something new and challenging. He has been with PRTC for 2 years. □

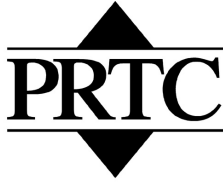
No Selection — March 2010

Anotchi Severin — April 2010

Known for his polite and calm demeanor, Mr. Severin has been with PRTC for nearly 5 years. He currently operates two morning trips: a Dale City OmniRide and a Lake Ridge OmniRide, and in the evenings he handles a Dale City OmniRide trip. □

Jeffrey King — May 2010

Mr. King worked his way up to the job of bus operator, starting at PRTC more than 6 years ago as a bus fueler and washer. He now operates a Dale City OmniRide trip and Lake Ridge OmniRide trip in the mornings as well as a Dale City OmniRide trip in the evenings. □



Potomac and Rappahannock
Transportation Commission

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**Serving Prince William County,
Manassas and Manassas Park**

I Want to Know...

I recently moved to Northern Virginia and want to learn more about public transportation. Do you have services in place for people who need to leave work early? — N. P. of Dumfries

Yes, N. P., you have several options if you need to leave work early.

OmniRide offers some mid-day trips for those who are working half-days or who need to leave in the middle of the day for any number of reasons. Check the printed schedule brochures to determine what time the trips leave, or visit PRTC's website to view the timetables. Of course, you also are welcome to contact PRTC's Customer Service office

at (703) 730-6664 or Omni@OmniRide.com for some one-on-one assistance.

A second option is PRTC's Metro Direct bus service. If you live in eastern Prince William County, you can leave work early and make your way to the Franconia-Springfield Metro Station to catch the Prince William Metro Direct bus. Or, if you live in the Manassas area, you can head to the West Falls Church Metro Station and catch the Manassas Metro Direct bus. Both Metro Direct routes loop continuously from about 5 a.m. to about 10 p.m. for those who have non-traditional hours. The Metro Direct routes serve some OmniRide commuter lots, so if you've parked at a lot that is

served by both OmniRide and Metro Direct buses, you'll be able to access your vehicle regardless of which bus you take home.

Finally, we recommend that you register for Commuter Connection's Guaranteed Ride Home program. This free program provides a free ride home when you have unexpected emergencies or unscheduled overtime. To participate, you simply have to work in the greater metropolitan Washington region, register for the program, and rideshare, bike, walk or take mass transit as least twice a week. Get more information about the Guaranteed Ride Home program at commuterconnections.org or 1-800-745-RIDE. 