



July 2013

OmniNews

Fare Increase Takes Effect

A fare increase took effect on all PRTC buses on July 1, 2013. It was the first PRTC fare increase since July 2010.

Half fares are available for those 60 and older, those with a disability and those with a valid Medicare card, though those fares also have increased and continue to be half of the regular fare.

A fare increase was necessary to contain the amount of subsidy required from the local jurisdictions that sponsor PRTC bus services. Passenger fares cover only a por-

tion of the cost of operating service, so the balance must be covered by federal, state and local subsidies. The source for the local subsidy is a 2.1% motor fuels tax in Prince William County, Manassas and Manassas Park.

Prince William County provides the majority of that local subsidy since it is the only local jurisdiction that sponsors PRTC's commuter bus services and is the principal source for local bus service. But the County's 2.1% motor fuels tax now generates less revenue than what it

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PRTC Serving New Commuter Lot First Step in Western Restructuring Plans

As of July 8, the Linton Hall Metro Direct route was altered to serve a new commuter parking lot on Cushing Road, near the intersection of I-66 and Prince William Parkway.

The 433-space lot, built by the Virginia Department of Transportation, provides easy access to the I-66 eastbound HOV lanes and is expected to offer a significant incentive to encourage residents of Gainesville, Haymarket and other western communities to use public transportation.

The new lot is the last stop served by morning buses before getting on the I-66 HOV lanes, and is the first stop served by afternoon buses bringing commuters home.

Service to the Cushing Road lot is the first step in PRTC's plans to restructure commuter bus services

in western Prince William County.

The next step is expected to come this fall with the introduction of a Gainesville OmniRide route serving Washington, D.C. Currently, many passengers on Manassas OmniRide buses live in western Prince William and drive to Manassas in order to have a one-seat ride to their destination. Others use the Linton Hall Metro Direct bus to reach the West Falls Church Metro Station and then continue their commute on a Metro train or a bus from another transit provider.

By shifting some existing resources away from the Linton Hall Metro Direct and Manassas OmniRide services, PRTC can create the new Gainesville route and offer residents of western communities easier ac-

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Get a Teen Pass Today!

The OmniLink Teen Summer Pass, which enables teens to get unlimited local bus rides for the whole summer for one low price, is on sale!

And this year, teens will save even more money by showing their Teen Pass at several fun, teen-friendly attractions that are partnering with PRTC.

Teens ages 13-19 can have unlimited rides on OmniLink and Cross County Connector buses between Monday, June 3 and Saturday, August 31, 2013. The pass costs \$30 and is available at multiple locations throughout the area.

Teens can save even more when showing their Teen Pass at these attractions until Aug. 31:

Potomac Nationals—\$1 off general admission at Friday home games;

Prince William Ice Center—\$2 off public skate entry;

Bowl America— one free game per visit, per day;

Manassas 4 Cinemas— \$1 off admission (except Tuesdays and Wednesdays) and \$1 off jumbo popcorn; and

Stonewall Pool— \$1 off admission.

For more information, call (703) 730-6664 or visit PRTCtransit.org. ■



Fare Increase

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costs the County to provide PRTC bus and VRE rail services.

Because the tax yield is less than the County's annual subsidy for transit service sponsorship, the shortfall is currently being covered by tapping fuel tax reserves built up in prior years—a stop-gap solution. As a result, PRTC must rely more heavily on fare revenue and an anticipated increase in state assistance from the transportation funding legislation passed during the last General Assembly session to contain the magnitude of local subsidy. ■

Website Redesign

PRTC will soon have a new and improved website—the first time the resource has been redesigned since 2008.

“We are looking forward to a website that is more user-friendly and that functions better on the new devices that have been introduced over the past five years,” said PRTC Executive Director Al Harf.

Although the website's basic architecture will remain the same, the redesign will add features to improve navigation and will include a new section featuring Frequently Asked Questions.

And coming soon is a new feature that is sure to please passengers: a Trip Planner featuring Google Transit. With the soon-to-be-launched Trip Planner, riders can find the bus stop closest to their origination and destination points and learn what time the bus is scheduled to arrive and depart. Trips can be sorted by the best route, least walking and least number of transfers.

And because the Trip Planner is designed by Google Transit, it will also include travel options for areas outside of PRTC's service area. ■

New Commuter Lot

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cess to buses and a one-seat ride to their destinations.

The Linton Hall Metro Direct and Manassas OmniRide routes will continue to operate, and those who live further west will have easier access to their destinations — a win-win for everyone.

The final step in PRTC's western commuter bus restructuring plans will come later in FY 2014 when Metro's Silver Line opens. At that point, the Linton Hall Metro Direct and Manassas Metro Direct buses will no longer serve the West Falls Church Metro station, but instead will serve the new Tysons Metro station.

With this change to Metro Direct service, commuters bound for Tysons will have a one-seat ride, and commuters needing to complete their trip on Metrorail will have the same convenient connection they do today, just at a different Metro station. ■

Outstanding Employees

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

And we are pleased this month to once again feature behind-the-scenes personnel with the Technician of the Quarter.

Operator of the Month

Betty "Judy" Berryman — November 2012

Ms. Berryman, who has been with First Transit for more than 10 years, currently operates Dale City OmniRide trips. She says that meeting new people is the best part of her job. Originally from Woodbridge, she now lives in Stafford County and is married with four children. In her free time, she enjoys travel, gardening and cooking. Ms. Berryman requested that her photo not be included. ■

Mayra Rivas—December 2012

A Dale City resident, Ms. Rivas said getting passengers safely where they need to go is the best part of her job. She has been with First Transit since October 2012 and currently operates trips to the State Department in the mornings and from Crystal City in the afternoons. She also enjoys spending time with her two daughters at parks, watching movies and shopping. ■



Claudia Gomez — Operator of the Year 2012

Ms. Gomez was recognized as Operator of the Year for her outstanding performance. She has worked at PRTC for nearly three years and is originally from Mexico. She currently operates Montclair OmniRide trips in the mornings and afternoons. Ms. Gomez requested that her photo not be included. ■

Amir Mohamed Taha—January 2013

An operator at PRTC for nearly eight years, Mr. Taha earned his Master's degree in business management in his free time. He lives



in Woodbridge and currently operates trips on the Woodbridge OmniLink route. He said the best part of his job is seeing his co-workers and assisting the senior citizens who use PRTC's services. ■

Milton Lainge—February 2013

Originally from Jamaica, Mr. Lainge has lived in the area for 20 years and now lives in Woodbridge. He has worked at PRTC for more than nine years and currently is a "stand-by" operator in the mornings and operates the Capitol Hill OmniRide trip in the evenings. He is married with two children and enjoys football as a hobby. ■



Amphaphonh Phouthone — March 2013

Mr. Phouthone has been a bus operator at PRTC for more than three years and currently operates a trip to Crystal City in the mornings and a Manassas OmniRide trip in the afternoons. He was born in Laos and now lives in the Manassas area. He is married with children and enjoys playing tennis. He requested that his photo not be included. ■

Anotchi Severin — April 2013

Mr. Severin believes that driving and meeting new people are the best things about being a bus operator. He has worked at PRTC for nearly eight years and currently operates trips on the Montclair OmniRide and Manassas OmniRide routes. He is originally from the Ivory Coast and now makes his home in Stafford. He has four children, and in his free time enjoys sports and traveling. ■



Technician of the Quarter

Charles Adkins — 1st quarter 2013

Mr. Adkins is marking his fifth anniversary of working for First Transit in July 2013. A Virginia native, he is a resident of Orange County and enjoys golf and fishing. He says the thing he likes best about being a technician is the variety of work he is able to do. ■





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

I Want to Know...

***Can PRTC help my elderly mother get to and from her doctor's appointments?—
D. P. of Woodbridge***

Absolutely! Your mother has several options with PRTC.

Option 1—OmniLink

PRTC's OmniLink buses serve routes in Dale City, Dumfries, Woodbridge/Lake Ridge, the Route 1 Corridor, Manassas and Manassas Park. There may be a bus stop near your mother's home and the medical facilities that she uses. Call the PRTC Customer Service office at (703) 730-6664 for assistance in determining the location of the nearest bus stop.

Option 2—OmniLink off-route trips

OmniLink buses are able to travel up to 3/4 mile off the standard route to pick people up and drop them off. So even if there is not a bus stop near your mother's home or the medical facilities she uses, OmniLink still may be able to take her to and

from her appointments.

Arrangements for off-route service must be made in advance by speaking with a Customer Service Agent at (703) 730-6664. We recommend that off-route trip reservations be made at least 2 hours in advance and up to two days in advance.

The off-route service is available to the general public; however there is a \$1.30 surcharge for this option unless the passenger is 60 or older, has a disability or a valid Medicare card.

Option 3—Wheels-to-Wellness

Wheels-to-Wellness is a medical transportation assistance program operated by PRTC with grant funding provided by the Potomac Health Foundation.

Eligible participants receive a rechargeable payment card that can be used to help pay for health-related trips by taxi and wheelchair-accessible commercial vehicles.

To qualify for Wheels-to-



Wheels-to-Wellness

Wellness, participants must be:

- 80 years old or older; OR
- Disabled as defined by the Americans with Disability Act; OR
- Have income that is no greater than 1.9 times the federal poverty level and not be eligible for non-emergency Medicaid transportation benefits.

In addition, participants must live in one of these ZIP codes: 20112, 22025, 22026, 22125, 22134, 22172, 22191, 22192, 22193.

To learn more about Wheels-to-Wellness and to receive an application form, contact PRTC's Customer Service Office at (703) 730-6664 or visit PRTCtransit.org

