

RIDE

SEPTEMBER 2017

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with Seattle's Sound Transit in 2017.

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VRE RIDE SURVEY

Compliments, Critiques, or Ideas?

RIDE magazine was designed to inform and entertain our riders. To ensure we are doing just that and to learn how we can improve, we need to hear from you! Let us know what type of information you would like to see featured. Take our short online survey at: vre.org/ridesurvey



**ADVERTISING
IN RIDE MAGAZINE**

ADVERTISING REVENUE COVERS
PRODUCTION AND PRINTING COSTS.

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS MAGAZINE



Editor in Chief: Cindy King

Magazine Design by Pulsar Advertising

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FROM THE CEO

LEARNING FROM OTHERS

You've been there. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday...every day you're shuffling. The pile of projects is mounting and your task list is growing. How do you step back and take a fresh look at what's ahead?



DOUG ALLEN
Chief Executive Officer

Our development team is comprised of engineers and planners that also have multiple projects they need to advance, but I think it is important that they account for time to take a deep breath and learn from others as part of their departmental goals. Learning from our fellow transit agencies is vital to ensure we operate and grow our service effectively. This departure from the daily grind is time well spent not only for the project manager, but also valued service advice and policy information for the rest of our team.

A member of our team recently visited our friends at Sound Transit in Seattle. Their rail system is similar in age and ridership to ours, and they even have two system lines and a King Street station. Our relationship with Sound Transit dates back a number of years, and many of you most likely would recognize their trains with a blue and green wave design that operated in the VRE system. We not only saw familiar trains during our time with the Seattle agency, but also familiar faces which once graced the halls at our parent commission, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC).

This summer's visit out west is still being detailed for internal consumption, but we can report that Sound Transit provided us with great input about the successes of their system and was very welcoming – in fact, they have welcome mats on their platforms to direct riders where the doors will open. We will consider how we can apply aspects of their model to VRE, but, unfortunately, one thing we know that we cannot replicate in the Washington area – the Pacific Ocean views along Sound Transit's northern line that provide a daily whale watching experience. While we may not have whales, we do have our beautiful Virginia landscape and picturesque views of the Potomac.

We hope you too are able to carve out time to find what will inspire your next great idea – personally, professionally, or both.

Sincerely,

DOUG ALLEN

Chief Executive Officer
Virginia Railway Express



Access RIDE online at
www.VRE.org/RIDE



PROGRESSION OF THE RAILROADERS TIMEPIECE

Timepieces of the early 1800s were known for losing as much as ten minutes a day. Predating automatic signaling, these timekeeping devices however were integral to railroad timekeeping as more and more trains began operating on a non-standardized schedule. The lack of precision finally resulted in the fatal collision of two trains outside of Cleveland, Ohio. Following this incident, railroad investigations revealed that the accident was due solely to the fact the engineer was using a defective timepiece displaying the incorrect time. Later in the 19th century, companies like America's Ball, Waltham and Hamilton and Europe's Hans Wilsdorf Watchmakers (later designated as Rolex) and the Louis Brant watch company (later renamed Omega S.A.) began manufacturing pocket watches that were capable of withstanding extreme temperatures, moisture, and being bumped and dropped – perfect for the demanding railroad environment.



Although much has changed over the past 200 years, railroads operating in North America, including our host railroads Norfolk Southern and CSX, maintain watch-construction and time-keeping specifications. Modern requirements dictate no greater loss of 30 seconds per week is acceptable, and all numbers must be displayed as Arabic numerals.

United States Naval Observatory (USNO) time is statistically one of the most precise clocks on earth, and accepted as the “standard clock.” VRE crews synchronize their personal timepieces with the USNO clock daily to coordinate on-time arrival at your destination.

WHO'S ON FIRST

WHEN FREDERICKSBURG & MANASSAS TRAINS BOTH APPROACH ALEXANDRIA

Sometimes the first northbound train to arrive in Alexandria is not the first train to depart Alexandria. The first step in understanding why, is to understand our host railroads are responsible for dispatching their sections of track. Norfolk Southern dispatches from Broad Run to just before Alexandria. CSX dispatches from Spotsylvania to just after L'Enfant. Amtrak dispatches from the tunnel after L'Enfant through Union Station.

Alexandria is the location where Manassas

line trains transition from Norfolk Southern territory and begin operating on CSX territory. As a result, CSX is unable to see approaching Manassas line trains until reaching a specific point where they can then radio the CSX dispatcher to enter the territory.

Since trains operate on Track 3 north of Alexandria, most Fredericksburg line trains traveling on Track 2 need to cross over to Track 3. This is usually done at the Slater's Lane crossover which is north of the Alexandria station. CSX dispatchers

often have trains pre-aligned to crossover based on the schedule, so if two trains come into Alexandria at approximately the same time, the already aligned train which was scheduled to go first will go first even if the other train arrived in Alexandria first. The reason for this is that the amount of time to change the signals and re-align the switches for one train to another is 12 minutes, so in order not to delay both trains further the pre-aligned train will proceed in front of the other train.



KNOWLEDGE SHARING

VRE VISITS SEATTLE'S SOUND TRANSIT

VRE and Sound Transit have a relationship dating back a number of years. Earlier this millennium, VRE leased Sound Transit locomotives and cars to respond to high volume demand on the VRE system lines. The "Sounder" cars were co-branded to include the VRE name and logo, but still retained the distinct blue and teal wave design.

Our Chief Engineer recently visited Sound Transit to revitalize one another's system understanding, and to shape ideas for new operational efficiencies and station design practices. Our list of things in common with Sound Transit, is pretty lengthy – making them a particularly great transit agency to

collaborate with through knowledge sharing practices. Our similarities with Sound Transit include but are not limited to:

- Culture of Safety
- Host freight railroad utilization
- Two system lines
- Number of daily riders. We average 19,000, and their average is 17,000.
- Age. We started in 1992, and they started in the year 2000.
- Train storage facility
- System and station work to meet current and future ridership demands



Sound Transit offers some interesting features and practices, including:

- **Station Art Program.** Construction dollars are set aside for public art at Sound Transit stations. The STart program includes both nationally known and emerging artists.
- **Station Agents.** A Sound Transit platform representative is available for passenger assistance.
- **Welcome Mats.** Marking where doors will open on the platform, the Sound Transit welcome mat design incorporates a 1800s "Railroad Quilt" pattern.

Image:
Sound Transit
Station Agent

VRE NEW RIDER TIPS

S, L & SCHEDULE DENOTATIONS

S = Special schedules for holidays and snow days.

We run a limited number of trains on government holidays and in some cases of inclement weather. Sign up for Train Talk alerts through vre.org for notifications of when we will only be running S schedule trains. Please note sometimes in the event of a heavy storm, we will cancel all service for the entire day.

L = Train may depart when station work is completed, regardless of scheduled time.

We strongly advise not waiting until the last minute to arrive at your station. In fact, we recommend arriving 10 minutes prior to your scheduled departure. We track our on-time performance based on the entire run on the line - from Broad Run to Union Station or from Spotsylvania to Union Station respectively. While we might arrive two minutes behind schedule at one station, we most often can make up time in route and arrive on schedule at following stops. Our "L" schedule stations allow for "catch up time" as is noted on our schedule, trains will depart stations when the work is complete. Conversely when trains are running on schedule, this may mean an early departure from the L schedule stations.

= Train allows full-size bicycles. (Collapsible bicycles are permitted on all trains.)

Bicycles must board at the northern-most car on the train and use the southern half of the car. No more than two bicycles are allowed on the car. If the car already has two bikes, you cannot bring your bike on the train and must wait for the next one. Bicycles must be tethered to the bench seats using a bungee cord attached to the eyelet on the seat frame. The south end bench is distinguishable by only having four folding seats. Bicyclists will be responsible for securing their bicycle.

VRE & METRORAIL BOOST STATE REVENUES BY \$600 MILLION

Long credited with fueling economic development in Northern Virginia, Metrorail and Virginia Railway Express (VRE) provide more than \$600 million annually to Virginia's general fund, according to a report released September 5, 2017 by the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC). The additional 85,000 households and 130,500 jobs that the two rail systems make possible in Northern Virginia generate both sales and income tax revenues that flow to Richmond. For every dollar the state invests in Metrorail and VRE, it receives \$2.50 in return. While \$600 million represents just over 3 percent of general fund revenues, the amount is significant. It covers Virginia's annual general-fund expenditures on state colleges and universities, about \$316 million, and state police, roughly \$266 million.

"This study makes clear that the economic benefits associated with rail transit accrue to the entire state, not just Northern Virginia," said Jeffrey C. McKay, NVTC's chairman. "The analysis is certain to inform our discussions about finding dedicated and sustainable sources of funding for these two vital rail systems."

Methodology

To quantify the value that Metrorail and VRE bring to the Commonwealth of Virginia, NVTC took the current traffic and development in the region, removed Metro and VRE from the picture, then moved development out of Northern Virginia to the District of Columbia or Maryland until traffic models showed a return to current levels of rush-hour congestion.

Based on the number of jobs and homes moved across the Potomac River, NVTC then estimated how much less the commonwealth would take in from income taxes and the portion of the sales tax that goes directly to the state's general fund.

Part of what distinguishes this study from earlier ones is that it is dynamic, accounting for the level of activity that the regional transportation network can support. NVTC's approach is unique in that it evaluates the interaction between land use and transportation demand. "The approach used in this study raises the bar for future transportation studies, both here in the Commonwealth and beyond," said McKay.

Corollary Findings

The results of the first runs of the transportation model, which removed rail transit in Northern Virginia and held to the existing land use totals, demonstrate rail's importance for commuters in Northern Virginia. With the added congestion, commuters could not travel as far in the same amount of time. Their trip length

decreased by about 5 percent, which is significant. Other impacts associated with a lack of rail transit in Northern Virginia are:

- 56,500 more lane miles of congestion on arterial roadways;
- 50 percent fewer transit trips in the peak period;
- 80 percent decrease in jobs accessible by transit for Northern Virginia households; and
- 130,000 fewer transit trips each weekday.

"It's hard to imagine the gridlock that would exist in Northern Virginia without Metrorail and VRE," said McKay. "They are part of the reason our region has become a premier destination to live, work and play."

Peer Review

NVTC's analysis was informed by the expert opinions of others. NVTC engaged its peers in the transportation community in a comprehensive technical review of the study's methodology and assumptions. These groups – which included the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Administration, Transportation Planning Board, Federal Transit Administration, and George Mason University – considered the work plan, technical approach, and findings, and provided comments on the study.

"NVTC's report drives home the importance of adequate transit funding in Virginia," said McKay. "It is time for legislators from all corners of the commonwealth to work together to find sufficient and sustainable revenues that can be dedicated to Metrorail and VRE to ensure that they can provide safe and reliable transportation – now and in the future."



**"For every dollar the state invests
in Metrorail and VRE, it receives
\$2.50 in return."**

FACE ON LAST MONTH'S COVER

SPOTLIGHT ON DETRIUS WILLIAMS: MANAGER OF OPERATIONS ADMINISTRATION



Met Detrius Williams, a member of the VRE team since 2006. If she looks familiar to you, she should; throughout her eleven years on board, Detrius has participated in many of our special events and is even featured on the poster of our Safety and Security campaign. She has developed a colorful and unique history with VRE,

starting in Customer Service and Rail Operations then moving to the Contracting and Procurement Department. Today, she dedicates herself to her current position as Manager of Operations Administration.

Detrius works to ensure that all mechanical administrative needs are met. "My department works together to procure and process payments for commodities such as diesel fuel, brake shoes, AEDs...even the tiniest nuts and bolts." Without the planning and coordination of Detrius and her mechanical operations team, mechanical repairs would not be possible.

The list is long when it comes to the things she enjoys

about VRE service. "VRE's conductors are professional, knowledgeable, and passionate about their work. Our staff reaches out to our riders through many special events throughout the year. Because I am a mom, I've even benefited a few times from the Guaranteed Ride Home and Security Blanket programs." Grabbing cat naps on the way to and from work have become essential for the Fredericksburg line rider, and she appreciates the opportunity to read, chat or complete work during her commute.

Detrius's love for transportation doesn't end with trains; she is a frequent visitor of Gravelly Point Park, where she satisfies her aircraft fascination by watching plane landings. If you looked at her viewing history on YouTube, you would probably find several videos of fighter jets landing on aircraft carriers. "And yes," she laughs. "Top Gun is still my favorite movie."

Her bucket list consists of taking off and landing on an aircraft carrier, driving a semi-truck to the West Coast, and doing more than a few laps in a stock car. For now, however, Detrius gets her laps in by chauffeuring her daughter to her many sport and dance activities. And when she's not working, driving, or watching fighter jet landings, you can find her tackling yard work with her husband.

TAKE THE CAR FREE PLEDGE!

A WIN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT ... AND A CHANCE TO WIN FOR YOU

International Car Free Day is September 22. Celebrated each year in 1,500 cities and 40 countries, the shared goal is to reduce the number of cars on the street for the day. Commuter Connections is spreading the word about alternatives to driving alone in a car, and asking those in the Washington, D.C. area take an online pledge to go car free or car-lite.

Already planning on taking VRE on September 22? Visit carfreemetrodc.org and take the pledge for a chance to win:

- Capital Bikeshare annual membership, courtesy goDCgo
- Kindle Fire, courtesy Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland
- Free Ride Certificate, courtesy Virginia Railway Express
- KIND Healthy Snacks gift bag, courtesy KIND, #LiveKIND
- SmarTrip card with \$25 in fare, courtesy Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
- Pizza Restaurant \$50 gift card, courtesy Mellow Mushroom Adams Morgan



MANASSAS PARK PARKING GARAGE

Since July 2016, VRE has conducted a study that addresses the need for parking expansion at the Manassas Park station. While currently in the process of preliminary design, a three-level parking garage is proposed on the north side of the railroad tracks across from the Manassas Park City Hall on Park Center Court. The project also includes a pedestrian bridge over the tracks connecting the garage to the existing VRE platform, and parking counters to provide real-time parking availability that will improve convenience and safety for riders.

Manassas Park is the origin station for approximately 750 Manassas Line riders, with 600 surface parking spaces currently being used at capacity. The proposed three-level parking garage would add 560 spaces, resulting in a total of over 1,100 parking spaces for VRE riders. The garage would include two points of access for vehicles from Park Center Court. Stair towers would be located on opposite corners of the garage with elevator access adjacent to the bridge entrance. Two pedestrian entrances would connect to the public sidewalk. A separate bicycle entrance on Park Center Court would provide access to bicycle parking inside the garage.

Among six sites considered, VRE opted for the location on Park Center Court to reduce the distance passengers would have to walk to and from the platform, to minimize congestion on neighboring roads, and to compliment the City Center's vision for growth. The Manassas Park station and parking facility is an integral part of the City Center concept, the city's transit-accessible high-density mixed-use town center.

An added parking garage at the Manassas Park station will alleviate current capacity constraints, especially mid-week when all spaces are often filled, and attract additional riders to the station who might otherwise drive alone on the region's highways.

VRE is currently developing the preliminary design and conducting environmental analysis. The final design of the proposed parking facility is anticipated this fall.

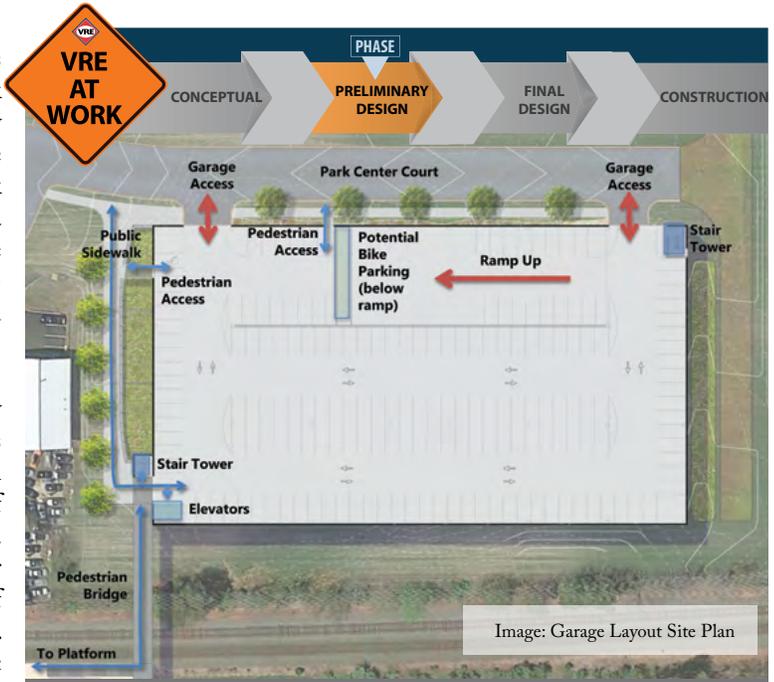


Image: Garage Layout Site Plan



Funding provided by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority



Image: Manassas Park Parking Garage. For illustrative purposes only.

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OCTOBER 27 Fiddlestix Instrument Petting Zoo

DECEMBER 8 Holiday Pops with The Irish Tenors

MARCH 17 Arturo Sandoval, Trumpet

APRIL 27 *Peter and the Wolf* narrated by Henry Winkler

Renée Fleming

Henry Winkler

Arturo Sandoval

The Irish Tenors

FOR MORE INFORMATION
540/654-1324 or email philharmonic@umw.edu

Wine by the Lake Festival

Sep 16 starting at 11am
Lake Anna State Park, 6800 Lawyers Road, Spotsylvania, Virginia
Free

Sample wines from over 10 Virginia wineries as well as get great food from local restaurants, browse local Lake Anna vendors and enjoy live music. A family-friendly event. Proceeds of the event will go to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Arts Alive! 2017

Sep 17 from 1pm - 5pm
10906 George Mason Circle, Manassas, VA
Free Admission

Live performers, visual art on display and for sale, hands-on activities and live demonstrations, local writers reading and selling their work, food and beverages available for purchase. Learn more: pwcartsCouncil.org/pages.php?page=arts-alive

Car Free Day, City of Manassas

Sep 22 from 11am - 8pm
Community Conversations pop-up park on West Street, Manassas
 Hear about car-free alternatives, give your input on transportation issues, and enjoy giveaways. Join a special Historic Downtown walking tour at 11 a.m. Pedal through the city on a special Bike Tour at 4 p.m. and check out the new bike rack at the Harris Pavilion.



22nd Annual Irish Folk Festival

Sep 23 from 12pm-7:30pm
Sherwood Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax, VA & The Auld Shebeen Irish Pub, 3971 Chain Bridge Rd., Fairfax, VA

Go for the Irish music and dance performances on four stages, and stay for the food and craft vendors. Participate in workshops and sessions.

2017 Arts and Craft Show

Sep 23 from 10am - 6pm; Sep 24 from 10am - 5pm
Occoquan - Free Admission
 The streets of Occoquan, VA come alive with this award-winning street festival featuring more than 300 artisans and crafters, live entertainment, great food, and fun activities for the kids!



VIRGINIA IS FOR CRAFT BEER LOVERS



2nd Annual Oktoberfest Sept. 16

- Delicious Oktoberfest beer from Stafford & area breweries
- Traditional Oktoberfest food: bratwurst, pretzels & more
- Treats from local vendors ■ Live Music
- Stein holding contests, corn hole tournament, bounce houses & more
- Sponsored by Adventure Brewing Co.

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www.staffordoktoberfest.com



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PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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RAIL TIME PUZZLES

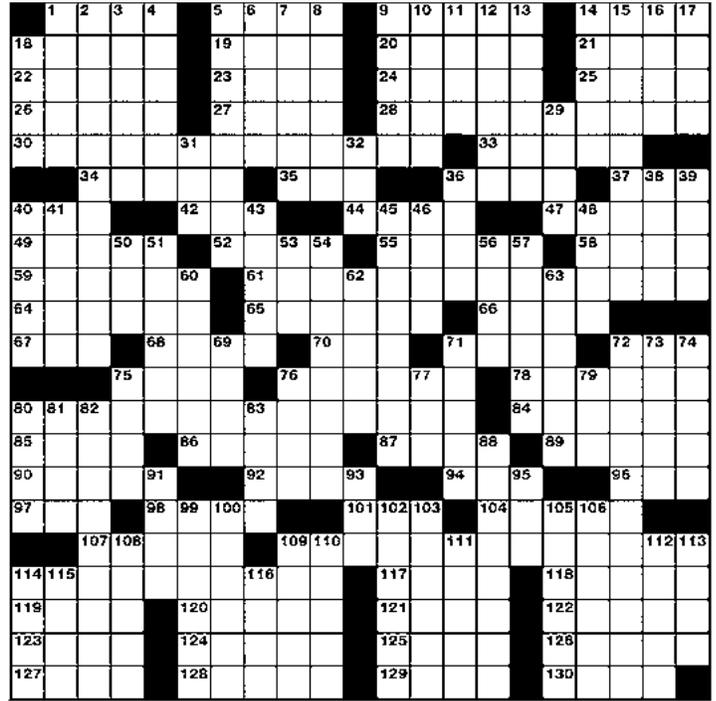
ACROSS

- 1 Shipping hazard
- 5 Big name in trucks
- 9 Sports replay speed
- 14 Not worth debating
- 18 *Divine Comedy* writer
- 19 Hair Beyoncé has had
- 20 Marsh wader
- 21 Sources of shade
- 22 Bride's acquisition
- 23 Castle on a square
- 24 Mindful
- 25 Lose altitude
- 26 Map feature
- 27 Mrs. Jupiter
- 28 Jazz trumpeter icon
- 30 Director of the first two Potter films
- 33 Office space contract
- 34 University of Florida athlete
- 35 Call for help
- 36 Novelist Sholem
- 37 *Familia* member
- 40 Casino cube
- 42 Orange tuber
- 44 Wide-eyed
- 47 Cedar cousin
- 49 Blow one's stack
- 52 Gender abbr.
- 55 Choose to participate
- 58 Jersey's joint
- 59 Type of oval pill
- 61 Giant of Victorian literature
- 64 Eight-time Best Actor nominee
- 65 Don't go
- 66 Burden of proof
- 67 Capital of Japan
- 68 Big brand of blocks
- 70 Pro bono TV ad
- 71 Part of many brewpub names
- 72 Former MGM rival

- 75 Get ready to blow one's stack
- 76 Sway unsteadily
- 78 Reach successfully
- 80 Mentor for Dvořák
- 84 Gulf Coast port
- 85 Swear to
- 86 Christmas carol sextet
- 87 Bus schedule listing
- 89 Miraculous fare
- 90 Pixar title robot
- 92 Blunted blade
- 94 "I should say ___!"
- 96 High fashion monogram
- 97 Underhanded
- 98 Utopian place
- 101 Curator's deg., perhaps
- 104 Subjects to strain
- 107 Its high school teams are the Witches
- 109 Wilson Supreme Court appointee
- 114 *From Here to Eternity* author
- 117 "Get outta here!"
- 118 Singer Krall
- 119 ET carriers
- 120 Rankled
- 121 Fountain fare
- 122 Norwegian playwright
- 123 Great white shark kin
- 124 Vivaciousness
- 125 Part of 101 Across literature
- 126 Hoof sounds
- 127 Planning, for short
- 128 Milking machine attachment
- 129 For fear that
- 130 Bivouac setup

DOWN

- 1 Dressing selection
- 2 Say more about
- 3 Bibliography phrase
- 4 Most sparse
- 5 Soup seasoning
- 6 Run ___ of (conflict with)
- 7 Father of Zeus
- 8 City north of Indianapolis
- 9 SeaWorld performer
- 10 *Arrowsmith* author
- 11 Spoken out
- 12 Gourmet mushrooms
- 13 "Be right with you"
- 14 Badlands elevations
- 15 European evergreen
- 16 Prefix for bus
- 17 Sounds of disappointment
- 18 Data storage device
- 29 Wonka creator
- 31 Less than forthcoming
- 32 Eagles' org.
- 36 PR people
- 38 Optimistic assertion
- 39 Resistance measures
- 40 Fake drake
- 41 Ready to blow one's stack
- 43 Word processor shortcut
- 45 Business behemoths
- 46 Relatively uncluttered
- 48 Decides to learn from
- 50 UN observer group
- 51 Rat out
- 53 Yonder yawl
- 54 Major 32 Down outing
- 56 Venerated person
- 57 Common retail starting hr.
- 60 Getting ready to golf
- 62 Dreadlocks wearer
- 63 Made-to-order



- 69 Jollity
- 71 Property crime
- 72 October to May, in the Negev
- 73 Ceramists' ovens
- 74 Former Heat star
- 75 Cry out loud
- 76 Peanut butter amt.
- 77 CPR learner
- 79 Sched. placeholder
- 80 Dilemma metaphor
- 81 Running track
- 82 Shout of surprise
- 83 Envisioned
- 88 Slow-cooked entrée
- 91 Elongated swimmers
- 93 Layer of extra-large eggs
- 95 Song syllable
- 99 Eerie feeling
- 100 Feigned feelings
- 102 Of public revenues
- 103 Off the ship
- 105 Formally charge
- 106 Fine for fare
- 108 Source of ancient fables
- 109 Don't take
- 110 KitchenAid competitor
- 111 Fabric rolls
- 112 All thumbs
- 113 Opposite of *avec*
- 114 Rise suddenly
- 115 Many miles away
- 116 Geek

SUDOKU

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