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“The government closest to the people serves the people best.” - Thomas Jefferson

Top *News Stories* of 2024

Rising from the ashes?!

below: There was a big surprise for the folks tearing down Silverado Grill in early Jan. Somehow, beneath all the debris that came about as the wrecking ball did its work on the restaurant, the skeletal remains of the old Sandy's restaurant still survived! Many Baby Boomers who grew up in Elmhurst recall spending their youth (or perhaps their misspent youth!) at Sandy's as their primary hangout.

FRANNY MARCUCCI DECKER PHOTO
Elmhurst Independent



Those were the days

above: Here is a rendering of an old Sandy's Restaurant that once appeared in the space that was later occupied by Silverado Restaurant, which recently closed. Many were surprised to see the bare bones of the old Sandy's, which was the hangout for those who grew up in the '50s, '60s and '70s. With a waitstaff wearing plaid berets, Sandy's was a chain of American fast-food restaurants that were started by four adventuresome entrepreneurs from Kewanee, Illinois. On Aug. 8, 1958, the first Sandy's drive-in opened at 4204 N. Sheridan Road in Peoria. On the menu were a 15-cent hamburger, a 20-cent milkshake and a 10-cent bag of French fries. Sandy's would later become part of the Hardee's restaurant chain. When the two restaurants changed merged in 1971, it was planned for Sandy's to maintain its identity, but in 1973, 90 percent of the location had switched to Hardee's. The last Sandy's location to become a Hardee's was the location in Muscatine, Iowa, in 1979.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent

Silverado falls to the wrecking ball



Well, the crane anyway! This crane made quick work of tearing down the structure that was once the Silverado Grill, a local landmark and anchor to the Spring Road Business District. When owners Jack Island and Dave Walradt opened the restaurant, it was the 17th or 18th endeavor to make a go of it in that location, but they all failed. Silverado did it right and stayed successful for the long haul. It was a frequent gathering place for the entire community and was the ONLY place to be for the Elmhurst St. Patrick's Day Parade. Silverado provided education to generations of 5th graders at Jackson School, it was a prime spot to watch sports and, most of all, it had the best that money could buy in terms of burgers, steaks, fries, armadillo eggs, honey mustard dressing, and much more. Goodbye and good night, old friend! This photo appeared in the Dec. 14, 2023 edition of the Elmhurst Independent.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent

THIS STORY APPEARED IN THE MAY 2 ISSUE OF THE ELMHURST INDEPENDENT

Elmhurst goes electric!

City purchases first-ever electric hybrid; police to test viability of cost, public safety

By Dee Longfellow
FOR THE ELMHURST INDEPENDENT

As the City takes inventory of its vehicles and makes decisions on the fate of the older models, it also prepares to bring on newer editions. At a recent City Council meeting, a recommendation of the Public Works & Buildings (PWB) Committee was approved and the decision was made to move forward with the purchase of a 2024 Toyota RAV4 LE Hybrid, that is, an electric hybrid automobile.

According to the Committee report, City staff recommended replacing one of the City's existing vehicles with a hybrid variant. Staff

analysis showed that utilizing a hybrid vehicle could enhance the City's sustainability goals while still being capable of handling required tasks and assignments. The bid for the purchase was awarded to Oakbrook Toyota in the total amount of \$29,726, including a trade-in allowance of \$4,400. There will be additional costs to install emergency lighting and communication equipment in the vehicle in the amount of \$1,500.

Finance Committee Chair Ald. Noel Talluto (4th Ward) shared information to make the public aware of the high upfront costs involved with this hybrid vehicle.

"I want the public to know a couple of things," she stressed. "The purchase of this vehicle is \$13,000 above what we budgeted for and \$18,000 more than what we would normally spend on a gas-powered [similar] vehicle for this purpose. We are spending 25% and 44%, respectively, more than a gas-

powered vehicle."

Talluto noted that she wasn't including the savings in gas, which the Committee had.

"In addition, we are spending \$36,000 per new charger installed on City property, four of which will be installed this year. We will be spending \$36,000 for the charger at the police department plus then, the increased cost of the electric vehicle.

"So we are spending additional dollars to test this concept."

When Ald. Mike Brennan (7th Ward) asked about the installation costs and the source of that information, Talluto said it was verified just before the meeting that night by the director of Public Works and by the police chief.

"It is not only for the equipment to install but also for the electric service that will be needed to upgrade the power and the infrastructure in each of those locations," Talluto explained. "It's \$140,000 budgeted for four EV installers [or charging stations]."

THIS STORY WAS PUBLISHED IN THE MARCH 21 ISSUE OF THE ELMHURST INDEPENDENT

Turkey Trot provides \$220,000 to distribute among 16 agencies fighting hunger

By Dee Longfellow
FOR THE ELMHURST INDEPENDENT

[Following the DGTT], the Independent caught up with Dan Gibbons to find out the results of the 40th annual Dan Gibbons Turkey Trot that took place as usual on the morning of Thanksgiving Day to raise funds for the Dan Gibbons Turkey Trot Foundation (DGTT).

The event had another sensational year with record-breaking attendance and an opportunity to raise enough to be able to distribute \$220,000 to 16 agencies committed to stopping hunger in DuPage County.

"People don't realize it takes \$160,000 to put on the Turkey Trot," Gibbons said. "And of course, numerous volunteers."

Some of the local recipients of the funds include the Elmhurst Walk-in Assistance Network (EWAN), the Elmhurst-Yorkfield Food Pantry, the Immaculate Conception food pantry, United Community Concerns Association (UCCA) and others.

To check in on this coming year's plans, visit DanGibbonsTurkeyTrot.org.

THIS STORY APPEARED IN THE APRIL 4 EDITION OF THE ELMHURST INDEPENDENT

Migrants bus in, take train to Chicago shelters

[Ed. note: In late Dec. 2023, Elmhurst as well as other DuPage communities were stunned and surprised to find busloads of migrants being dropped or stopped at the train station. It turned out to be people on their way to shelters available in Chicago and their safe passage was assured by police agencies as well as the Department of Homeland Security. The County then took a stand to assure safe passage through to their destination.

What follows is the coverage published in the Elmhurst Independent, edited for length.]

PUBLISHED DEC. 23, 2023

Two groups board at Elmhurst station, police say

By Dee Longfellow
FOR THE ELMHURST INDEPENDENT

According to the facebook page of the Elmhurst Police Department, a bus of 58 migrants from Texas stopped at the train station. Someone on board acting as a "leader" purchased Metra tickets for all passengers and they boarded the 9:13 p.m. train to Chicago. Everyone remained on the bus until the train arrived Elmhurst police and fire personnel were on hand at the station to help coordinate the group and answer questions.

Later, there was an update indicating that an unscheduled bus with 33 migrants from Texas, reportedly stopped at the Elmhurst train station. That group boarded the 11:15 p.m. Metra train to Chicago.

In addition, the Village of Clarendon Hills released a statement that it had received reports of migrant buses dropping people off at both the Hinsdale and Westmont

Metra stations for transportation to shelters in downtown Chicago. Clarendon Hills said there had been "no known issues" and that people had boarded the trains, however, the Village temporarily closed the train station and shelters and increased police patrols.

PUBLISHED JAN. 4, 2024

County ensuring safe passage for asylum seekers to Chicago

The County has issued a release pledging to ensure safe passage for those seeking asylum in Chicago. The release read as follows:

"The DuPage County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (OHSEM) is working closely with local and regional partners to ensure asylum seekers who have been arriving on out-of-state buses are transported to the city of Chicago."

"Our primary goal is to help these new arrivals get to their destination in the city as safely, and with as few delays, as possible," said County Board Chair Deb Conroy. "We are grateful for the collaboration with state, regional, and local officials, who have been enormously helpful in ensuring the safety and security of those arriving in DuPage County, as well as our residents."

Since Dec. 14, 49 buses have arrived at train stations in DuPage County containing 2,081 passengers, according to DuPage OHSEM. They boarded trains to Chicago, where city teams guided them to Chicago's "landing zone," which is the only designated location in the state of Illinois for asylum seekers.

City, county, state declare surplus in North York TIF District

Funds to be distributed to taxing bodies; D205 to receive 73%

By Dee Longfellow
FOR THE ELMHURST INDEPENDENT

At the meeting of the Elmhurst City Council on Monday, April 1, a resolution was presented, declaring a surplus in the North York Street Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District.

In April of 2013, the City, DuPage and Cook Counties and the state of Illinois entered into an intergovernmental agreement with Elmhurst School District 205 regarding the North York TIF District. The agreement requires the declaration of an annual 10% surplus, beginning in the 11th of the TIF District. Since the first levy year was 2012, the Year 2022 represented the 11th levy year of the TIF District, collected in 2023 in the amount of \$1,927,097.

Therefore, ten percent of the collected tax increment totals \$192,710 and shall be distributed on a pro rata basis to all concurrent taxing districts within the TIF District in according to Illinois TIF law. Top recipients are School District #205, \$141,444 or 73.4%; City of Elmhurst, \$14,014 or 7.27%; and Elmhurst Park District, \$10,304 or 5.35%.

Top News Stories of 2024



Elmhurst officers honored

Elmhurst Police Chief Michael McLean (right) presents commendations to (from left): Officers Ostrega and Elizalde for outstanding service in an emergency situation due to their assistance with a 67-year-old man who suddenly went into cardiac arrest. The Elmhurst officers were able to use an AED and continued chest compressions until medical assistance came to take the man to a hospital, where he later recovered. The man's family (who asked not to be identified in the newspaper) was very thankful and wanted to do something special to recognize Ostrega and Elizalde. Each was given a teddy bear – when you press one paw, the bear offers nice, uplifting phrases, but if you press the other, you can hear thank-you messages recorded by individual members of the grateful family.

ARCHIVE PHOTO *Elmhurst Independent*



Richard Dufort appointed Chief of Fire Dept.

Long-time resident brings 30 years of experience, community involvement

At the City Council Meeting to be held on Monday, Sept. 18, 2023, City Manager Jim Grabowski will seek City Council's approval of his recommendation in appointing Richard "Dick" Dufort to Chief of the Elmhurst Fire Department.

An Elmhurst resident and graduate of York Community High School, DuFort joined the Elmhurst Fire Department in March of 1993 and has more than 30 years of firefighting experience.

During his tenure with the City, Dufort has served in various leadership roles. Starting as a firefighter, he attended courses to continue his professional development and receive certification in training and education. In 2012, he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant, responsible for the management and mentoring of personnel, fire tactics, and training. Dufort was promoted to Battalion Chief in 2017, supervising employees at two fire stations, participating in contract negotiations, and assisting in policy and procedure development, planning, and budget preparations.

"I am humbled and honored to not only have grown up in Elmhurst, but to have also served the community for the last 30 years," Dufort said. "The Elmhurst Fire Department has a reputation for providing exceptional service to the community. I look forward to continuing that service with a great staff of dedicated firefighters and support personnel."



Sunny smiles with the Easter Bunny

This family came out to enjoy all the festivities at the Spring Road Business Association's annual Egg Hunt at the Gazebo on Saturday, March 30, when the Easter Bunny was available for photos. It was a bright sunny day that wrapped up just in time for rainy skies.

ARCHIVE PHOTO *Elmhurst Independent*

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Ravioli Meat or cheese filled, topped with meat or marinara sauce

(Half Pan-30 Pieces • Full Pan-60 Pieces)

Baked Mostaccioli With meat or marinara sauce

Add Alfredo or Vodka Sauce

Add Chicken

Add Broccoli

ENTREES

Eggplant Parmigiana

Sausage & Peppers

Chicken Vesuvio

Boneless chicken with fresh garlic, mushrooms and roasted potatoes in our white wine sauce

(Half Pan-10 Pieces • Full Pan-20 Pieces)

Boneless Chicken Breast Marsala, Limon or Piccata

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Roasted Potatoes

1 Lb. Italian Beef with Juice

Meatballs or Sausage (4 or 8 Servings)

Meat Sauce Pint • Quart

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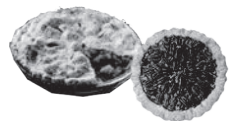


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So long, dear friend

Only a shadow remains where the sign once boasted this building as Lizzadro Museum of Lapidary Art, the culmination of a dream of Joseph Lizzadro, who had a passion for jade and other stones and built this museum through an agreement with the City of Elmhurst and the Elmhurst Park District. The museum opened in late 1962 and was moved to a new location in Oak Brook in 2019. In late August, this building, located in Wilder Park, was torn down.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent



Put 'er there!

That's Elmhurst University President Dr. Troy VanAken at the Elmhurst St. Patrick's Day Parade, offering a handshake to this young lady, possibly a future student. She, however, seemed more interested the candy that might be in his hand!

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent



Officials support University event

Pictured are members of Elmhurst City Council and the Elmhurst Park Board turned out for the Elmhurst University's 54th Annual President's Community Breakfast on Saturday, March 9. Pictured are (back row, from left): Alderman Rex Irby (7th Ward), Ald. Guido Nardini (6th), City Treasurer Dan Curran, Ald. Jacob Hill (2nd), Karen Sienko (2nd); (front row): Marti Deuter (1st), Emily Bastedo (6th), Chris Jensen (3rd) and Collette Kubiesa of the Elmhurst Park Board of Commissioners.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent



CBE named Parade Grand Marshal

Community Bank of Elmhurst was selected as Grand Marshal of the Elmhurst St. Patrick's Day Parade for 2024. The whole crew from Elmhurst's favorite community bank came out to join in the fun on Saturday, March 9, which was a beautiful day.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent



VIPs at President's breakfast

Among the guests mingling prior to the Elmhurst University 54th Annual President's Breakfast on Saturday, March 9 were (from left): Peter Hilton, State Senator Suzy Glowiak Hilton, Mayor Scott Levin, his wife Marisa Mancini, Dr. Annette VanAken and University President Dr. Troy VanAken. After that, everyone headed to Spring Road for the Elmhurst St. Patrick's Day parade.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent



Victory Auto Wreckers closes its doors

Everyone knows that classic commercial... a young man opens his car door, only to see the door break off its hinges and fall at his feet, as he looks hopelessly toward the heavens. The answer was taking the car to Victory Auto Wreckers. In another iconic commercial, the longtime auto salvage yard insisted "that old car is worth money," showing someone handing over the title to their car in exchange for a handful of cash. Located in the industrial area on Green Street in Bensenville, Victory Auto Wreckers has been in business since 1945 but has been owned by Kyle Weisner and his family since 1967. Weisner recently sat down with Dean Richards of WGN-9 News to formally announce that the business would close forever on Thursday, Nov. 30. The only explanation he offered Richards was that it was "time to shut down and take it a little easier."

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent

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Local landmarks and more

Elmhurst Centre for Performing Arts (ECPA) Hearts for the Arts co-chairs Meghan Scarsella and Jessica Berg hold up the set of two tea towels available for purchase, with proceeds to the ECPA. One towel features original artwork of Elmhurst landmarks from York High School student Chloe Wargin. The second towel is an arts-themed graphic design by Elmhurst resident Jeannie Richardson. Berg owns the store Bread & Butter Home, where the ECPA launch party took place.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent



Nancy Wilson honored

In March, Dave Oberg, executive director of the Elmhurst History Museum, presented long-time staff person and volunteer Nancy Wilson with the prestigious Alban F. "Pete" Bates Award, given to those who have made a significant and lasting contribution to the History Museum or the Elmhurst Heritage Foundation.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent



ICG Moms celebrate back-to-school

Last fall, the ICGS 8th grade moms gathered at Katie Butman's home to celebrate their children's final year of grade school and all the memories they have created together over the years at ICGS. Pictured are (back row, from left): Katy Ahern, Jennifer Guistolise, Corinna Wojcik, Erica Landasa; (front row): Mayra McEvoy, Jessica White, Lisa Graziano, Katie Butman.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent



York gymnast qualifies for the state meet

Senior Angela Stangarone of York High School's girls gymnastics team was a standout all season, especially at the IHSA state meet at Palatine High School. Stangarone earned the maximum number of state-meet berths with her performances at the Wheaton Warrenville South Sectional on Feb. 8. The top five finishers in each sectional event automatically qualified for the state meet. Stangarone delivered top-five scores in all four sectional events. She also qualified for the state meet's all-around competition by placing second in the sectional's all-around standings with her score of 37.5. Stangarone's all-around sectional total included scores of 9.425 on the vault, 9.375 on the uneven bars, 9.3 on the balance beam and 9.4 in floor exercises. She finished second in floor exercises and tied for second on the uneven bars. Stangarone placed fourth on the balance beam and finished fifth on the vault. She is pictured during her sectional performance in the vault.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent



Bringing Warm Coats for Cool Kids'

On Saturday, Oct. 21, 'Warm Coats for Cool Kids' came out to Elm Court neighborhood to offer coats for the upcoming winter season to families identified by School District 205. Warm Coats for Cool Kids is a local charity operated by Garry and Debra Vaccaro, who say they will likely serve more than 40 schools in Elmhurst at surrounding communities. Students from St. Francis High School in Wheaton came out to volunteer. One group of girls put together packets of dental hygiene items to give away.

ARCHIVE PHOTOS *Elmhurst Independent*

Picasso exhibition opens at EAM

right: On Friday, Sept. 8, the Elmhurst Art Museum hosted the opening reception of the Global Celebration of Picasso exhibition. Guests mingled among the artworks and enjoyed an authentic Flamenco dancer and shared a champagne toast.

Flamenco dancer wows crowd

below: Guests look on in appreciation as Flamenco dancer Ronaldo Monge performs at the opening of the Global Celebration of Picasso exhibition at the Elmhurst Art Museum on Friday, Sept. 8. Attendees were also treated to a champagne toast in tribute to 50 years since Pablo Picasso's death.

ARCHIVE PHOTOS *Elmhurst Independent*





York football, *Guaranteed Rate* team up

John Noldan (front, kneeling right), Executive VP at Elmhurst's *Guaranteed Rate*, is surrounded by York High School student athlete volunteers who teamed up to assemble more than 600 care packages for Support over Stigma, an organization created to aid active military, vets and first responders suffering from PTSD. Local residents and businesses donated enough items, including personal care, snacks and gum, socks and more to load the packages, the most the non-profit organization has ever shipped out.

ARCHIVE PHOTO *Elmhurst Independent*



YMCA gets gift from *York Hockey*

In 1961, Elmhurst YMCA introduced its outdoor ice rink, the first in Illinois with a youth hockey league. Today, they still host hockey leagues for all ages and are dedicated to teaching skating. On Friday, Sept. 15, 2023, representatives from the York Hockey Club presented a \$2500 check to the Elmhurst YMCA to be used for the maintenance and upkeep of their outdoor rink. They are (from left): Leslie Boeckel, Derek Schlager, John Maffia, Meghann Peiffle, and Mark Soehn.

ARCHIVE PHOTO *Elmhurst Independent*



'100+ Women' doing good works

The "100+ Women Who Care" Elmhurst group presented their quarterly donation to the Elmhurst-Yorkfield Food Pantry (EYFP) last year. There are several "100+ Women Who Care" groups across the country, most with about 100 members, who are committed to collectively donate \$10,000 each quarter. The Elmhurst group changed its name to "100-plus" because they have well-surpassed 100 members. As you can see, this donation to the EYFP is for \$15,510. For more information, send an email to elmwomenwhocare@gmail.com.

ARCHIVE PHOTO *Elmhurst Independent*



Continuing the fight

“Putting love on the shoulders of women in need, one #LovePurse at a time.” Those are the words of Maria Castro, founder & CEO of Love Purse, an organization that provides support and supplies to victims of domestic violence by distributing small purses with necessities, especially for those who were forced out of a situation and had to leave quickly without belongings. Gathered here at a Women in Leadership Luncheon are members of the Love Purse Board of Directors along with Mrs. America Nicole Zwiercan, who was the guest speaker. (from left): Janet DeLorenzo, Durriya Gunja, Zwiercan, Gwen McNutt, Love Purse founder Maria Castro, Nancy Vasser and Toni LoCasto. Vasser and LoCasto are both Elmhurst residents. For more information, visit Lovepurse.org.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent



A hard-working team!

This is the team of workers who came together to install the exhibition at the Elmhurst Art Museum, A Love Supreme, a solo exhibit by Norman Teague inspired by legendary jazz musician John Coltrane.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent



Volunteers make it happen

On Saturday, Sept. 30, 2023, more than 330 supporters gathered at River Forest Country Club to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Elmhurst-Yorkfield Food Pantry (EYFP). Committee members took a break to have some fun at the celebration. Volunteers include (back row, from left): Carol Frank, Jennifer Rosenberg, Deb Mendenhall, Suji LaBine, Scott LaMorte, Juliet Deely, Karen Crum; (front row, from left): Debbie Hayes, Holly Kost, Margaret Rask and Maria Salvatore.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent



The Y's Guys!

Team “Turtle Power” had a lucky day on the course at the 2023 Elmhurst Y Golf Classic. Not only did they take home the Y Golf Classic Championship Belt, but the foursome was also awarded “Best Photo.” Congratulations to (from left): Noah Cage, Jeff Held, Brian Hosler and JJ Schmidt.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent



Let's give 'em something to chirp about!

Birds and berries adore the Crestview Garden Club's tree in Wilder Park. Club members Linda Fischer (left), Mary Smith and Ann Woodward were early birds last year and were one of the first to get a tree ready for the holidays in the park.

ARCHIVE PHOTO Elmhurst Independent

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- Nurse
- EMT
- Call Taker/Dispatcher



Join Our Team!

- Founded in 1959, Superior Ambulance has a rich legacy of training and empowering thousands of EMS providers. Our training programs have equipped individuals to succeed in private EMS organizations, municipal fire departments, public safety departments, hospitals, and beyond.

FREE EMT COURSES!

We are committed to providing you with the tools and opportunities needed to advance your career and achieve your goals. Our comprehensive training programs are designed to equip you with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in your field.

By investing in our employees, we ensure that you have the support needed to thrive both professionally and personally. Whether you are starting your career or looking to expand your expertise, Superior is here to help every step of the way.

Join us today and become part of a team that makes a difference every day. Your journey towards a fulfilling and impactful career begins here. Together, we can save lives and transform futures.

SCAN TO APPLY!



More Info
www.EMSjobs.org

Halloween Concert Spooktacular

FREE
CONCERT FOR THE
WHOLE FAMILY

COSTUME PARADE
AND TREATS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27

2024 | 7PM

HAMMERSCHMIDT MEMORIAL CHAPEL



ELMHURST
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

presents

BEETHOVEN

BRAHMS &

Barton Pine

Sunday, Nov 10

3:00 PM

ROSSINI

Barber of Seville Overture

BRAHMS

Violin Concerto

BEETHOVEN

Symphony No. 7



**Learn More
& Get Tickets**



ElmhurstSymphony.org

(630) 941-0202

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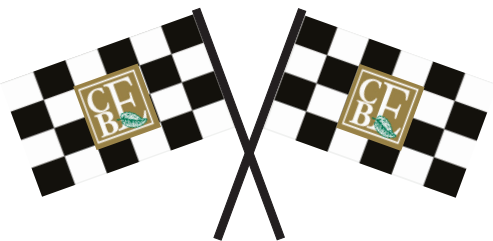


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