Osher students were surprised in July when their classrooms in Wean Hall seemed to shake from the nearby construction. One student likened it to being in an MRI. A study leader joked about an earthquake. Week after week, the trek into the Wean rooms had alerted students to a number of changes in the campus environment. They wondered, “What will be the eventual outcome of all this work?”

Because Carnegie Mellon has only a few credit-bearing summer courses, much construction is planned for the time between the end of classes in May and the beginning of classes in August. This summer’s plans include four enormous projects whose progress and final completion will support “the limitless teaching, learning, and research goals of its students, faculty and staff.”

The additional space will create new laboratories, offices, auditoriums, cafés, and exercise facilities. Ralph Horgan, associate vice president, campus design and facility development, describes the construction projects as “major investments into the university for the purpose of fulfilling our mission.” Projects for the engineering school, the school of business, and the Heinz College “all improve the academics of the university; and the Cohon University Center . . . is going to be a huge quality of life boost for faculty, students, and staff,” Mr. Horgan says.

Work in Wean Hall, where our Osher classrooms are located, will combine existing classroom and office space to create a new classroom space for the Physics Department, a server room and student workspace for the Material Science Department, and a renovated lab for a new physics faculty member.

The new Scott Institute for Energy Innovation focuses on sustainable and affordable energy. The building will house laboratories, collaborative and office spaces, a cleanroom facility, and a café, with a courtyard that will connect four major buildings: Hamerschlag, Porter, Roberts, and Wean Halls.

Anyone driving on Forbes

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More than a picnic

As I write this, I am excited, looking forward to Tuesday, September 1, at 5 p.m., when we will be holding our annual Back-To-School Picnic in the BIG tent on the lawn outside of the Hunt Library. This is an extra-special occasion—in addition to the picnic, we will be holding two special events: first, a meeting of the membership as called by our board to ratify the new by-laws of the organization as proposed by the Board of Directors; second, the dedication of the panel we have purchased in the Maggie Murph Café honoring past Provost (and guardian angel) Mark Kamlet and his wife, Charlee Brodsky. The pictorial panel honors Mark and Charlee for their past and ongoing support of our Osher program here at CMU.

Mark’s support has been instrumental in our success and in elevating our status on campus within the academic and leadership communities at the university.

At this dedication before the meal, we are asking our members to personally thank and recognize Mark for all that he has done to promote our Osher program here at CMU. In addition, it is important that the membership ratify the new by-laws, which streamline and codify the rules by which our organization conducts our business. Look for the by-laws on our website and in the Friday Weekly Essentials email.

The picnic is an ever-evolving process. We learn from previous picnics and improve it each year. This is the perfect opportunity to socialize with your fellow members, meet the board members and officers, and express your opinions on items you would like to see added or changed in our award-winning Osher program. In addition, it will be the perfect opportunity to thank the volunteers on the Picnic Committee whose countless hours make this big event successful.

Volunteers are the key to a successful program.

Osher@CMU differs from most OLLIs in being run by volunteers, taught by volunteers, and led by volunteers, with the support of a small paid staff who manage the day-to-day activities. Most other Oshers have paid teachers and are run by university employees. The volunteer model has obvious benefits—lower cost to the members, teachers with a passion for teaching, and a bond among members of the leadership team that strives for excellence in the program.

We always need volunteers for our various committees—or perhaps for helping to start a Special Interest Group for an activity you enjoy. We currently have a Dining Club and a Bridge Club—the members within the group run their group. You can help form a special interest group for an activity you are interested in—perhaps bird watching or a foreign language conversation group (Spanish, French, Italian, etc.) to help sharpen your skills in an informal setting. You might like to start a walking group or a biking group. All of these are possible at Osher. If you can think of it and would like to see if there are Osher members who would like to join you, the Osher office will help.

The rules for Osher interest groups are simple: The office will advertise the search for interested members and will publicize the activities to members once the group is formed. Each group is independent and selects its own agenda, meeting times, and coordinators. The office will advertise the events and publish the times and place for the activities. This is an excellent opportunity for members with common interests to meet, socialize, and enjoy activities that are special to them.

Dining Group December 2014
How We Explored Ireland with Airbnb

By Leslie Evans

When my husband, Greg, and I decided to travel in Ireland for three weeks, we had nightmares about turning left at intersections and forgetting to stay left. I dreamed I was stuck on an accelerating roundabout because there was no safe way to exit the “carousel.” Greg and I agreed to use buses and trains.

Using Rick Steves and Fodor’s guidebooks, we picked three towns with bus stations and hiking areas nearby: city buses went from Galway City to the Cliffs of Mohr and to the ferry for Inishmore Island; Killarney is in a national park; from Newcastle, County Down, in Northern Ireland, we could walk to the Mourne Mountains.

At each destination I found lodging for under $80 a night (including taxes and fees) on the website Airbnb, a high-tech startup that connects home owners online with would-be renters of their spare rooms or entire units. Airbnb operates in 190 countries and 34,000 cities.

On my free Airbnb account, my personal information is used only after “Verified ID” check. After I entered the desired dates, four or five choices came up, giving room descriptions and photos. In Galway City I selected “The Zen Den” because it is a sunny room in the town’s center. The owner Bebhinn describes herself as “a happy and caring woman who is very interested in traveling and meeting new cultures...honored to show anybody around this wonderful city.”

Our second pick was the Ardree House because it is within walking distance of both Killarney National Park and downtown Killarney. The owners explain that their family has always been in the Killarney hospitality industry.

I based my final choice, “Anne’s Condo,” on a previous renter’s review. “I had a wonderful experience staying with Anne, lovely house, a comfy bed and the breakfast was delicious. Anne was a terrific hostess.”

On the Airbnb site I shared with my potential hosts a short description (“a couple in their 60s”) and our interests (“hiking in the daytime and pubbing at night”). These profiles help the hosts learn more about travelers before agreeing to rent. Once the hosts accepted my request, Airbnb sent me an itinerary, a receipt, and host contact information. If the host doesn’t respond within 24 hours, your request automatically expires. Airbnb waits 24 hours after guests’ arrival before releasing payment to the host.

As I bumped my suitcase down a cobblestone street in Galway City, I started to doubt my choice, but the Zen Den was easy to find. Bebhinn and her boyfriend, Dara, carried our suitcases up their steps, served us chamomile tea for “stress relief,” and gave us a preview of their upcoming street performance. Dara suggested breakfast cafes, dinner restaurants, pubs, and walks. The bed was comfy, the room clean and just as sunny as the photo promised. Even though Zen Den was located in the middle of a tourist area, new windows blocked out any noise. It was completely zen.

To our surprise, the Ardree House in Killarney was a regular B&B, not a guest room in someone’s continued on page 5
Construction
Continued from page 1
Avenue has certainly noticed a lot of construction activity on the Jared L. Cohon University Center. This addition will greatly add to the recreational facilities used by members of the Carnegie Mellon community. Additionally, a new entrance and lobby and a new studio theater will be added.

Further down Forbes Avenue, an addition to Hamburg Hall, home of the Heinz College (graduate degree and executive education programs in public policy and information systems), will add a new lecture hall, study space, student project rooms, and a café.

On the other side of Forbes Avenue, construction has begun on the Tepper Quad. According to the university’s website, it will create “the future centerpiece of the university’s north campus and its initial project will be the new campus gateway and home for the Tepper School of Business.”

As the construction proceeds, our routes on and off campus are often disrupted, and we must plug our ears sometimes, but as Ralph Horgan told us, “…you’ve got to break eggs to make an omelet.”

CMU research eventually contributes to tributes to the well-being of large segments of society. The new Scott Institute for Energy Innovation focuses on sustainable and affordable energy benefitting all. And after a class in Wean, maybe we’ll taste the omelet in the new café nearby in the new Scott Hall.

Gloriana St. Clair
Rosalyn Treger

East courtyard and café in the planned addition to Hamburg Hall

Cohon Center Addition

Another view of the addition to the Cohon University Center. “The addition creates a front door for the university on Forbes Avenue. . . . The addition is configured to establish a clear path from the East Campus Garage to the front door of the UC and further west to the rest of the campus.”
Exploring Ireland
Continued from page 3

residence. We never met the owners Norrie and John, but the hostess was friendly and helpful and the breakfast staff accommodating and polite. Our room was spacious and clean with comfortable beds and free wi-fi. The breakfast menu offered continental breakfast, full Irish, and made-to-order pancakes, waffles, eggs, and bacon.

There were a few negatives: creaking footsteps of guests on the stairs, no way to adjust hot water in the shower, our room unheated at night even though temperatures dropped below 50 degrees Fahrenheit. We were glad for the down comforter.

The Ardree House became the base for our walks into town for dinners, drinks, and rental bikes, and hikes to the Ross Castle and Killarney Park. One moderate fee gave us all-day access to the shuttle for other destinations such as the Ladies View, the Muckross House, the Gap of Dunloe, and our favorite Irish hike—the summit of Carrauntoohil. We hopped a city bus to the Cliffs of Moher, a popular tourist and hiking area. And right across the street was Killarney’s new craft beer brewery.

In Newcastle, County Down, our host, Anne, who works for an adoption charity and is interested in the arts, music, and dance, not only made us feel welcome, but picked us up at the bus station on arrival. She took us to a jazz concert at the local pub. In her car we toured the beach town Newcastle and went to a really good seafood restaurant in a nearby village too far away for walking.

At her residence, with tea, helpful local information, and a healthy breakfast, Anne made us feel at home. From our window the view of the Slieve Donard was so wonderful we decided to hike it. Annie’s last personal touch was to drive us to Belfast on her way to work, saving us the trouble and expense of a bus ticket.

Airbnb requests that hosts and travelers write reviews of each other. Bebhin said about us, “Leslie and her husband were an absolute pleasure to host . . . one of the nicest couples that we have had the pleasure of hosting. Not a bother on them . . . so respectful of our private space and left the place immaculate . . . truly your perfect kind of guest, clean, courteous and kind. What more could you ask for.”

In the five times my husband and I have used Airbnb so far, the experience has been enjoyable and safe. My husband likes the lower price and “. . . avoiding the cookie-cutter hotel room.” We have greatly benefited from the local knowledge and experience of our hosts. We don’t miss having someone come into our room to clean and make our bed. And we’d probably not invite them to visit us in Pennsylvania, as we did with Anne.

A Flighty Friend Visits The Osher Office

Marco, our new sparrow friend, spent a couple of days visiting with us late in July. While here, he bathed often in our fountain, looked for bugs in our plants, checked out literally every office nook and cranny, and provided lighthearted aerial entertainment. Now that he has flown off to seek new adventures, we can call ourselves “empty nesters”!

Lyn Decker and the Staff
Do You Worry About How Secure Your Computer Is?

By Susan Parker

You should have been in the Osher class I took with Dr. José Morales—Practical Computer Security! What a delightful and entertaining instructor he was. Additionally, he was most informative. He interacted with us all and answered questions without hesitation. After each class he emailed us the PowerPoint slides that he used in class. Needless to say, I kept them.

Class #1 – Passwords

You need to use passwords for everything where security is important: online banking, accessing your medical information from your provider or your medical insurance company, and paying your utility bills or your credit card invoices online. You may also need a password when you make purchases online.

However, making purchases may cause conditions when your computer becomes vulnerable to hacking or your credit card is no longer secure. In order to keep your credit card secure when making purchases online, be certain during payment that the address of the website displayed in the browser begins with https: rather than with http: That additional s means that the link is secure. And, if you use Facebook or other online sites, good passwords can protect you and keep your important information safe.

Never use passwords like these because they provide easy access to your account: 123456, 123abc, 111111, sunshine, password, qwerty, and others that might be easily guessed. A strong password uses a minimum of 9 characters and at least three of these rules—at least one special character (those characters above the numerals on your keyboard), one number, one capital letter, one space, and/or one lowercase letter. Don’t use personal information, addresses, significant dates, family or friends, hobbies, vacations, or your username as your password. You can use other private information known only to you and that you will remember. Dr. Morales provided many more suggestions and examples of strong passwords.

Class #2 – Email and Spam

Do you remember the Monty Python episode on Spam, Spam, Spam? Well, they were referring to the canned meat. Spam here means unwanted messages and/or undesirable advertising messages; email consists of messages you receive by electronic means. Because you have found that these electronic messages are quick and easy to use, you often use email rather than sitting down and writing letters that you pay to mail. However, Spam is like the unwanted junk in your mailbox.

Only about 13% of worldwide spam originates within our country and the rest is from elsewhere in the world. The purpose of spam can range from trying to sell you things (innocuous, but annoying), to infecting your computer with malware, stealing your identity, gaining access to other computers, etc.

To avoid spam: 1) do not open mail from senders you don’t recognize, 2) delete mail in which you have no interest, 3) log into the website rather than clicking on links, and 4) in a separate email verify the suspicious email’s authenticity.

Keeping a contact list of your desirable senders to verify incoming email addresses and erasing email that lacks verifiable contact details such as a phone number or address are just two ways to avoid the dangers of spam.

The focus of the three remaining classes was on Safe Web Surfing, Secure Online Transactions, and Social Networking, but I won’t spoil your experience taking this class the next time it’s offered by going into the details of these subjects. And you will also learn much more from participating in the first two classes.

Currently a researcher in the Software Engineering Institute CERT Division at Carnegie Mellon University, Dr. Morales has conducted research in cyber security since 1998. His current focus is on the many aspects of malware. He is a senior member of the Association for Computer Machinery and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.
Meet Study Leader
Elsa Limbach
By Ruth Drescher

When I decided to enroll in Move It or Lose It, I did so because I needed it. I was immediately enchanted by the spirit and the magnetism of the study leader, Elsa Limbach. I was fascinated by Elsa’s ability to generate joy and warmth to a group of aging ladies. Her smile is ever-present and electric, and I just wanted to learn more about her. When I approached Elsa about an interview, she was delighted and very responsive. What follows is the essence of an hour’s conversation:

Q: So Elsa, clearly you are a dancer; when did you start to dance?
A: I was always dancing as a small child, but I didn’t take formal ballet classes until I was about 10. My dream was to dance in a ballet company.

Then at some point I was exposed to modern dance, and at first I didn’t like it that much, but I was intrigued.

Q: What was your connection with Dance Alloy?
A: In 1976, with the help of the Pittsburgh Dance Council, a well-established choreographer, Kathryn Posin, was brought to Pittsburgh, and she selected eight dancers (including me), who then became the beginning of Dance Alloy. Kathryn created our first dance, Pigeons on the Grass, Alas, Alas, the title taken from a poem by Gertrude Stein. During those early years, the company began to explore, experiment and develop, and I grew up as a performer alongside the company.

Q: How long did you stay with Dance Alloy?
A: I was with the company for 15 years until 1991. Between the summer of 1989 and 1995 I traveled frequently to Bulgaria to teach and choreograph. This was a period of dramatic change in Eastern Europe, and it was exciting to witness up close this historic transition. Local people in the arts found me of interest because I brought something very new—not only modern dance.

Of course there were communication challenges. When I first started to teach, my Bulgarian vocabulary consisted of up, down, right, left, and the numbers 1 to 10. My students were very gracious, and gradually I became quite conversational in their language.

Q: When and why did you decide to work with ladies of a certain age?
A: Ruth Westerman, a dance colleague, originated this class. About seven years ago, when Ruth had some health issues, she asked if I would take it over. This brought me back to teaching, and I fell in love once again with doing it. I hope that what I do is helpful to my students’ physical lives, but it also makes me happy to provide an experience which is fun, inspiring, and eye opening. I am thrilled to open a door to the art I love.

I believe everyone can dance. It is so much bigger than the stuff we think of as professional dancing. It is rewarding to help people find the ability to make sense of a sequence of movement. Our brains evolved in relation to movement. Dance provides a beautiful and valuable platform for keeping alive the complexity of what it means to be human.

Q: How about men—have they joined your class?
A: Very few—there still seems to be a stigma attached to dance for men in our culture. I think they are afraid.

Q: Have you considered giving a class just for men?
A: Perhaps I should do that . . . I think it would be great for men, and I would love to teach them.

Q: How do you feel in the morning before the class?
A: A little nervous—take it very seriously, always trying to find something new—it is always a little anxiety producing.

Q: How about afterwards? How do you feel when the class is over?
A: Afterwards, I always feel great. The room is happy so I am happy.

Q: And who are the people in your life who you care about?
A: My 17-year-old daughter, Karolina, who I love madly, and my partner, Taras, who is a magnificent pianist, an enormous artistic spirit and inspiration.
Fun After Classes: Osher Over-Eighties Compete in Tennis Tournament
By Lester Berkowitz

Osher members participated in the 9th annual Bob O’Connor Summer Tennis Classic. The 80+ Division of the Classic, organized by Citiparks Tennis and the United States Tennis Association (USTA), was held this year in the Mellon Park Tennis Center on June 19. In 2007, its inaugural year, it was recognized by the USTA as the largest adult tournament held in Pittsburgh in decades.

This year Bob Dickman, Julian Eligator, Mark Gup, Ed Landerman, Earl Latterman, Pepper Malinger, Irv Rosenthal, and I, members of Osher @ CMU, played in the 80+ Division doubles tournament.

In our Osher program and its predecessor, A.L.L., we’ve been going to classes and have served as study leaders, committee members, board members, and officers. And most of us have played in the Bob O’Connor Classic many times since it was started and play with each other year in and year out.

We really had a good time. Earl and Bob Feldman (not a member of Osher @ CMU) were the winners. We proved to ourselves that age is not necessarily an obstacle to having fun on the tennis court.

Annual Meeting on the Rivers Mixes Business and Pleasure

Annual Meeting on April 24 was held on the Gateway Clipper. Above right, Executive Director Lyn Decker and President Joe Shirk flank Mark Twain (aka Alan Solter), who greeted and entertained the group. Left, Joe Shirk beginning the business meeting, which was followed by a cruise on the rivers.
Brahms à la Carte

Owen Cantor’s enthusiasm is contagious. For the last ten years his Osher classes, based on appreciation of various composers (Brahms this summer) always end with upbeat amusing snatches of classical music morphed into popular film snippets: Katherine Hepburn trilling an arpeggio to a Brahms adagio, Groucho Marx waltzing to a Beethoven andante. He obviously has much fun putting his classes together.

It all started when Flip Conti and Judy Robinson invited him to try his hand at teaching for A.L.L., (which became Osher). Prior to that his time was principally taken up with his successful dental practice and his serious performing on the French horn. Owen describes his life as a richly woven tapestry with many strands. And so much was accidental.

As a child attending an experimental program at Colfax elementary school, where pupils were immersed in German from grade one, and forced to choose an instrument in grade five, Owen wound up with the French horn because a bully got to the trumpet before him. The French horn became his passion and principal interest. Continuing even after dental school, he performed for ten years at a chamber music festival in Bennington, Vermont. When the birth of his first daughter made time in Vermont impractical, Owen created Summerfest, a musical program that was presented in Fox Chapel for 5 weeks every summer for 14 years. Many of the musicians from the Pittsburgh Symphony who participated happened to also be his dental patients. That enterprise, shared with his former wife, Connie, grew into a design firm and then into a touring consortium of chamber groups.

Owen comes from quite a talented family. In a biography of his mother published in the page 2 Portfolio section of the Post-Gazette shortly after her death in 2009, he described her as a “musician, acrobat, dancer, and actress.” Marriage, Owen wrote, “got her out of show business for good.”

His father’s sister, Dorothy, and her husband, the painter Philip Pearlstein, encouraged his musical aspirations. As soon as he acquired his driver’s license at 16, he would whip into New York to share in their rich cultural environment.

Owen combined his love of music inherited from his mother with a professional direction his parents encouraged him to follow. In the Post-Gazette article he wrote that he is named for a grandfather who practiced medicine in Braddock for many years, and called his “wonderful uncle, Joseph L. W. Polk, DDS,” his “Inspiration.” Thus his career in dentistry.

Today Owen teaches each Osher class “as if it were the last day on earth.” “Close your eyes and visualize,” he directs. He puts “everything into it, finds humor, never is bleak, tries to counteract Fox News, and pops the bubble.”

Joan Morse Gordon

A special exhibition of the works of three Pittsburgh friends, Philip Pearlstein, Dorothy Cantor, and Andy Warhol will be on view at the Warhol Museum until September 6.

In our Osher program, many members explore, and study leaders teach, courses outside of their professional areas. Physicians and dentists teach about music; engineers teach about archaeology; psychiatrists play ukuleles; English teachers learn Persian cooking. We would like to hear about readers’ memorable Osher experiences outside their comfort zones. Write to us at itsalltalkcmu@gmail.com
Ice Cream Social Celebrates Volunteers

I scream. You scream. We all scream for ice cream. There was much joviality, conversation, enjoyment of ice cream, and meeting new people at the Ice Cream Social on June 30, when Osher again took time out to honor and thank the many volunteers who serve our lifelong learning program.

Over 75 volunteers and staff had a wonderful afternoon over ice cream and conversation as they celebrated at the Winchester Thurston Middle School cafeteria. The venue was bright and cheery, providing room for sitting, meeting, and talking with other volunteers. We had a chance to thank study leaders we recently enjoyed, talk about how Osher membership is cherished, and learn the many ways members volunteer.

Jayne Keffer and her committee (Barbara Dahlberg, Nancy Denhart, Joan Ewing, Carol Mueller, and Patty Williams) outdid themselves with managing the ice cream, toppings, and marvelous cookies, as well as greeting and making us all feel as though we were special. They were special and we thank them for their hard work.

Osher President Joe Shirk noted the importance of volunteers in our program, where they serve in the office, in classrooms, and on committees. He extended his congratulations and thanks to all who attended.

Jayne Keffer conducted an “Ice Cream Quiz” and reviewed the part that ice cream has played in history. For example, the first ice cream cone was introduced at the St. Louis World’s Fair in 1904. China was the first country to produce ice cream.

All in all, it was a delightful affair and a fitting recognition of our volunteers.

Susan Parker
Joe Scorpion

Top from left: Byron Gottfried and Ivan Frank. Above: in front, David Hammerstein; in back from left, John Olmsted and Alan James

From left, facing the camera: Clarice Vayda, Paula Mathieson, Eileen Olmsted, Paul Schrading
(We would like to identify the man at the far left. Please let us know at itsalltalkcmu@gmail.com)

Photos by Susan Parker
Traveling the Scenic Route to Washington: A Memorable Bike Ride

By Filomena Conti

Leisure travel has become a bit of a chore. By car or van, even with currently lower gas prices, there is often heavy traffic to contend with. By air, extra hours are needed for departures and arrivals, not to mention costs and seating and luggage hassles. There is another way. For a trip, let’s say, from Pittsburgh to Washington, D.C., if you’re in general good health and have kept up with your bicycling skills, a possible alternative is a journey along a biking and walking trail.

Ask Osher member Yale Cohen, who highly recommends a trip along the Great Allegheny Passage (often referred to as the GAP) and the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Towpath. He did it in 2008 and 2010. In 2010 he did it in six days, averaging about 50-60 miles a day. He’s planning to do it in four days next time. This 335-mile ride is not a hardship, according to Yale.

The GAP begins at the Point in Pittsburgh, heads toward the Monongahela Wharf to Smithfield Street (a slight yet-to-be completed portion) to the South Side, across the Hot Metal Bridge, through Homestead and McKeesport, then West Newton, Connellsville, to Ohiopyle, to Confluence. Yale mentions that the 10-12 mile section between Ohiopyle (state park) and Confluence is especially beautiful. Then Rockwood to Meyersdale, where up to this point the trail has been fairly level.

From Meyersdale to Deal there is a rise. At Deal (we’re now in Allegheny Mountain country), we have reached the highest point on the trail, a watershed, at the Eastern Continental Divide. Yale cannot speak too highly of the beauty of this area. He also mentions the geographical and historical significance of the entire trip. From Deal the trail descends, passes through a tunnel, and eventually leaves Pennsylvania and arrives at Cumberland, Maryland.

We’ve traveled 150 miles on the GAP, a paved trail to McKeesport and crushed limestone from there to Cumberland. From there, traveling on the C&O Canal Towpath is on dirt roads, which is fine on dry days but becomes messy when roads are muddied by rain.

The trail now passes into West Virginia to Hancock, where there is a visitors center. There are many visitors centers along the GAP and the C&O Canal Towpath, as well as hotels, inns, and camping areas. We continue to Harpers Ferry, Brunswick, and Great Falls Park, to mention a few of the interesting places, and arrive in Washington at Georgetown, our destination.

As Yale says of this journey, one is never far from civilization. Many stops can be made for sightseeing. Literature and maps are easily obtainable. Yale can advise on where to get information on preparing for such a trip. For Yale, who plans to do it again, biking these two trails is an unforgettable, thrilling accomplishment.
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Carnegie Mellon

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