



WYOMISSING AREA

SPARTAN  
SCOOP  
online

Inspiring Excellence, One Spartan at a Time!

## Wyomissing Area Spartans Partner with Pen Pals in Israel



Fifth-grade teacher Mrs. Nancy Boyer collaborates with other social studies teachers around the world as a member of a virtual social studies professional learning community. Through this digital platform, a teacher from Israel expressed an interest in partnering with a school in the United States to connect her students with pen pals. This group of Israeli students attend an all-virtual school, live in various parts of Israel, and come from various religious backgrounds. The diversity within this group provides many conversation topics that they can share with their pen pals. Their teacher's primary goal for the students in Israel is to improve their English skills. While many U.S. teachers expressed a willingness to participate, Mrs. Boyer was fortunate to be chosen for this special opportunity. She connected with the teacher in Israel through WebEx to discuss their expectations for the partnership and what they hoped students would gain from the experience. To match the eleven students in Israel with a Wyomissing Area Spartan, Mrs. Boyer connected with Mrs. Eastadt to use this pen pal experience as an extension opportunity for a group of gifted students. The students WebEx

once or twice a month with their pen pal during homeroom time and then report back to the full class during social studies about what they learned. Working with the whole class, they researched a bit more about Israel, learned about the geography of where their pen pals live, and created a slide show teaching the students in Israel about where we live in the United States. Through breakout rooms, students connect with their pen pal partner to get to know them a bit better. In the coming weeks they will extend their partnership to include handwritten letters that will include tokens of American culture. Students have an ongoing blog they developed with their pen pals and create padlets for one another that they share back and forth. As students build relationships with their pen pals, a central focus is to look for things they have in common. Students are learning that despite living in different countries and having different backgrounds, they do have a lot in common with one another. This is such a great opportunity for students to extend their study of geography and world cultures, to learn about students' experiences living in a different country, and to identify ways in which they are similar despite having so many different life experiences. Thank you Mrs. Boyer and Mrs. Eastadt for facilitating this opportunity for our Spartans and finding so many ways to enrich their education through this special connection!

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## Wyomissing Area Participates in an Hour of Code





Students at the Wyomissing Hills Elementary Center and West Reading Elementary Center participated in this year's Hour of Code activity. "Hour of Code" is a worldwide event aimed at promoting participation in the field of computer science. Mrs. Matz has organized Hour of Code for our Spartans at the West Reading Elementary Center for the last few years but expanded the event to include students at WHEC this year too! This year's Hour of Code event put students to the test as their favorite games incorporated the world of code and they programmed their way through each level to pass the game. Various lessons included both digital and "unplugged" activities and choice options with robotics in many classrooms kindergarten through sixth grade. Students truly put their critical thinking skills to the test and learned how computer science can be implemented into many learning opportunities and future careers. Thank you to Mrs. Matz for organizing this engaging experience for our Spartans. We look forward to seeing this initiative continue to grow.

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## Wyomissing Area Grows Girls Wrestling Program



As female wrestling continues to grow in popularity across the country, the girls wrestling program at Wyomissing Area is growing too. Currently, a group of female athletes participates on the traditionally “boys” team, but with changes occurring county-wide, Wyomissing Area hopes to create its very own female wrestling team in the near future. Throughout the county, there are four sanctioned female teams which include: Governor Mifflin, Exeter, Brandywine Heights, and Berks Catholic. Wyomissing Area Wrestling Coach and Athletic Director Mr. Ferrandino shared “about four to five other schools are competing with girls on their boys team and are also like Wyomissing Area looking to sanction by next year.” Wyomissing Area athletes and coaches are looking forward to the positive changes that can come in the future with a sanctioned female wrestling team.

With more female wrestlers joining the team this year, Wyomissing Area currently has six female wrestlers and is hoping to continue adding more student-athletes as the years go on. The six wrestlers this year include Mia Bosch, Aliah Contraras, Rayne Krotee-Sparr, Renie Harris, Olivia Tillman, and Riley Frymoyer (Captain and senior). Coach Ferrandino says that wrestling is a sport he recommends everyone tries because the sport teaches you so much about yourself. He adds “your self-confidence will grow immediately, and you will instantly become part of the wrestling fraternity. The bond the wrestlers have among each other is unlike any other sport. You just have to come and give it a try.”

Many of the wrestlers this year got a glimpse of what the future could be like with a sanctioned female wrestling team. Freshman wrestler Olivia Tillman says that her favorite part about wrestling is the family bond and friendships that she’s created because she’s creating friendships with people in the school that she never thought she would be friends with. Creating a sanctioned female wrestling team would mean a lot to the six girls that are already on the team. Olivia shared her thoughts; “It would mean a lot because a lot of girls get caught

up with the idea of wrestling guys, because they are on a guys team. It would be nice to have a team of our own. Even though I do like a good challenge!”

While the six female wrestlers on the team enjoy the challenge and unity within the boys team, they are looking forward to the changes and opportunities they can have with their own sanctioned girls team.

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### Special Spartan Accomplishment: Violins of Hope Essay Contest



Earlier this year, students in grades 7, 8, 9 and, 11 attended the Violins of Hope presentation at the Jr./Sr. High School. The mission of Violins of Hope is to promote unity and understanding in our community, utilizing instruments rescued from the Holocaust. The students in grades 7, 8, 9, and 11 can make connections between their Social Studies course content and the presentation. Following the presentation, students from local schools entered submissions in the Violins of Hope Essay Contest. 7th-grade Spartan Katerina Wengrowski earned second-place recognition for her essay. Congratulations, Katerina!

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## Spartan Artists Recognized in Local Art Exhibit



Congratulations to the senior high students whose art was accepted into the 2022 Senior High Juried Art Exhibit at the Yocum Institute for the Arts. The Yocum Institute is located at 3000 Penn Avenue in West Lawn. Student artwork was on display in early February at the gallery. Special congratulations to Reese Dauber and Jordan Newton for both earning honorable mentions for their artwork!

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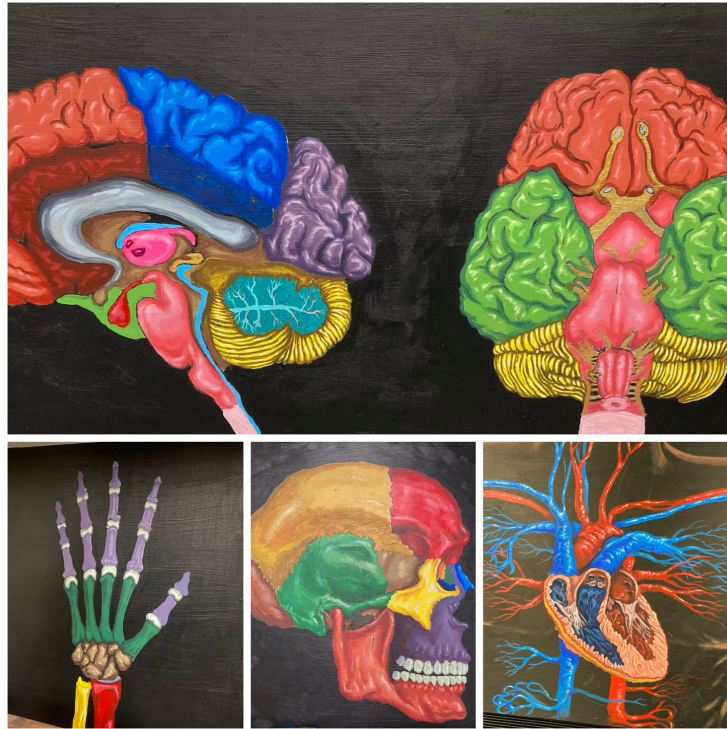
## Seventh-Grade Advisory TeamWrite Activity



In seventh-grade advisory class students at Wyomissing Area spend time every week focusing on Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and related skills. Topics include collaboration, communication, perseverance, grit, and resilience, among others, and students develop and practice these skills through enrichment and intervention teamwork activities. Pictured are seventh-grade students using a pool noodle with strings and markers attached to participate in a TeamWrite activity. The goal was to draw different symbols like a smiley face or the Wyomissing Area lettering by using teamwork and collaboration skills as they communicated and listened to one another to succeed. This is just one of the countless activities students have been participating in throughout the school year. Thank you Ms. Rada, Mrs. Neithamer, Mr. Bratton, and Ms. Leber, our seventh-grade advisory teachers, for collaborating to plan these valuable activities for our students!

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## A New Mural for the Jr./Sr. High School



Students in Mrs. Phillips' Anatomy and Physiology classes have worked for the past few weeks on three anatomy-themed murals. This project was developed by science teacher Mrs. Phillips, former Wyomissing Area art teacher, Mr. Miller, and local artist, Juan Ruiz '07, and funded by the Wyomissing Area Education Foundation. Guest artist Juan Ruiz '07 has been visiting the high school every Tuesday and Thursday to teach our Spartans new artistic techniques to collaboratively complete these works of art. He demonstrated how to sketch out the detailed parts of the body and guided students as they took on the painting that followed. While completing each mural, students drew their version of the body structure and labeled each part to connect the artwork with their course material. Ultimately, students each had the opportunity to contribute to a permanent artistic display of the content they are learning in class. The murals consist of paintings of the heart, skull, and the bones and tendons of the knee and hand. Tuesdays and Thursdays quickly became Anatomy and Physiology students' favorite days of the week as their learning came to life in the classroom and as they were able to first-hand observe the structures that they often see in their textbooks. These murals will remain in Mrs. Phillips' room for many years to come and will be helpful learning tools for future students.

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## Wyomissing Area Participates in the Great Mail Race



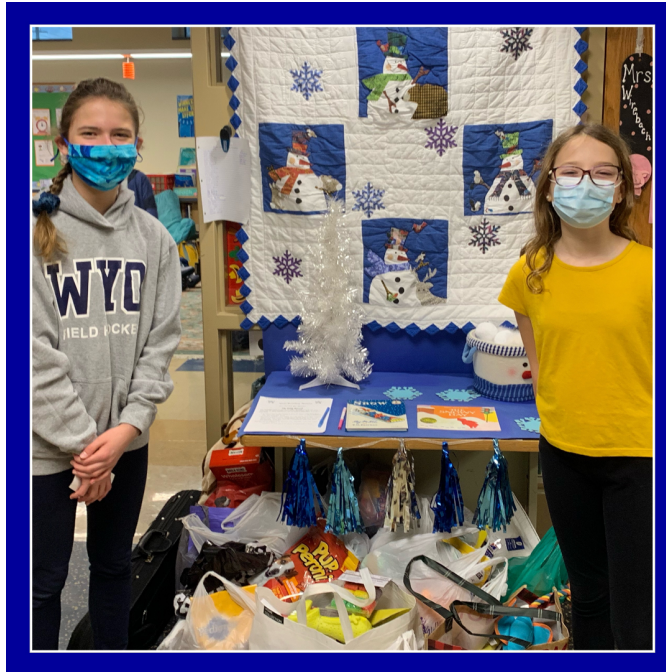
Pen-pal programs offer students the opportunity to connect with students from other schools and potentially around the world to learn about new cultures, languages, and to expand their communication skills. Recently, students in the Life Skills class began participating in a nationwide pen-pal program: The Great Mail Race.

The Great Mail Race is a nationwide activity directed at broadening the communication skills of life skills students by connecting them to students from high schools around the country. Life skills students from Wyomissing Area High School write, address, and send letters to students all around the country to receive a letter in return and create a connection. Not only does this program allow for students to create connections with a pen-pal, but it also teaches them how to write and properly address letters, both of which are valuable life lessons. Additionally, the students obtain valuable research experience as they gain more information to include in their letters or investigate to understand the areas in which their pen pals live.

Wyomissing Area High School's Great Mail Race journey began after a high school in Boise, Idaho reached out, asking our life skills students to participate. This activity teaches the students valuable lessons and ultimately, the program provides students across the country with the chance to make new friends while simultaneously creating a fun classroom experience!

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## Fifth Graders Spread Kindness at West Reading Elementary Center



Nora Tice and Violet Paris have shown great initiative towards spreading kindness in Wyomissing. For their fifth-grade kindness project, these Spartans volunteered to create a fundraiser to support the Animal Rescue League. Nora and Violet made posters, went on the morning announcements, and brainstormed ways to get their classmates to donate toys and treats. “We knew any middle schooler would want a prize, so we are bringing a dog at lunch that people who donated get to meet” explained Nora, “and we passed out flyers in homeroom” added Violet. The morning of the puppy’s visit, kids added toys to an already impressive amount of donations and eagerly signed their names for a chance to spend their recess with a furry friend. Through their creativity, Nora and Violet managed to create a fun event for their peers while facilitating an outstanding impact on our community.

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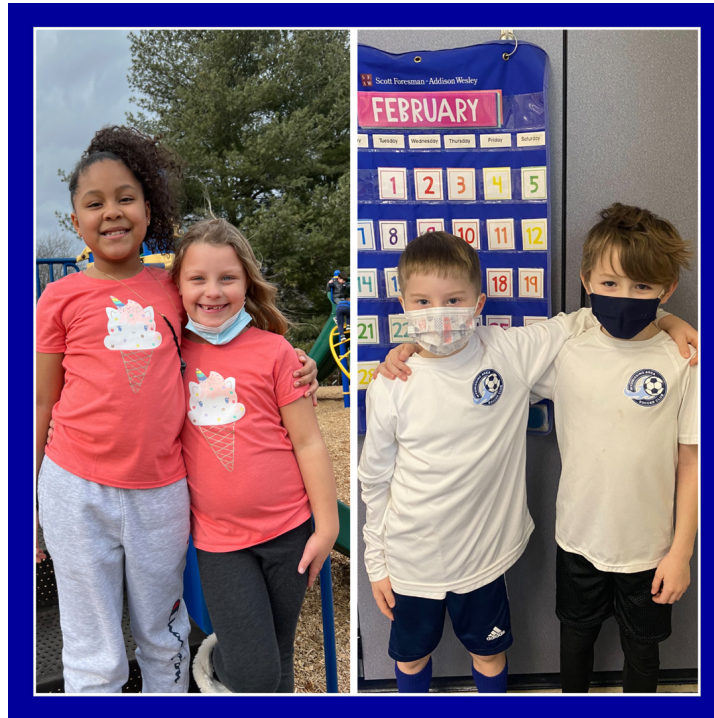
## Students Explore STEAM with ROK Blocks



In STEAM with Dr. Wengerd students explored various activities using ROK Blocks. Pictured are students in Ms. Zechman's class engaged in this neat activity. The ROK Blocks are a core lab for STEM programs across the nation as they allow elementary students to collaborate while learning. As they work with the ROK Blocks students build and engage in engineering practices such as gathering information, explaining the function of individual pieces, problem-solving, and critical thinking. The first-grade classes were able to use the ROK Blocks to continue their hands-on STEM learning while also using their creative touches. They focused on topics such as symmetry, movement of parts, design, and strength which can help them in future stem lessons. Students had the opportunity to build houses, cars, people, and much more with this hands-on experience. The ROK Blocks were borrowed from the BCIU to create different learning opportunities for the first-grade students.

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**Random Acts of Kindness Week at WHEC** (Written by Lila Kaufmann, Grade 4 and Melanie Leshner, Grade 4)



Random Acts of Kindness Week was February 14-18, 2022. We celebrated at WHEC by having happy songs played on the morning announcements, signs around the building, and theme dress-up days. Some of the students' favorite days were "Make a New Friend Day" and "Kindness is Fun." Miss Stem (third and fourth-grade school counselor) said that kindness can teach us how to care for others and can make us better kids by making sure everyone is included. She teaches this in guidance lessons and by being a good role model. Mrs. Cheslock (kindergarten through third-grade school counselor) teaches kindness in her guidance lessons by practicing caring comments and questions with games and activities in first and second grade. She says that kindness is important to teach because it is the foundation of relationships, and to her kindness shows that someone cares. This is how we celebrated Random Acts of Kindness at WHEC.

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**Seventh-Grade Advisory Recognizes Black History Month**

Seventh-grade Advisory teachers collaborated with the seventh-grade Reading teachers to develop a Black History Month research project. Students were tasked with researching various important historical figures that are not typically covered in school textbooks. The project began with a collaborative Kahoot! activity to gauge how much students already knew about Black History Month and the people, events, and experiences that the month recognizes. A whole-group discussion about switching perspectives encouraged students to dig deeper into why Black History Month is so important. Students answered questions about various time periods and circumstances to help frame their perspectives and to guide their learning.

After completing their research, students were provided with a rubric, project parameters, and categories to develop an educational poster displaying what they learned. The posters focused on their selected historical figure and included information on their life, major accomplishments, and why they should be remembered. Student posters are now on display for the rest of the month outside the seventh-grade teacher's classrooms, and students viewed the work of their classmates during a gallery walk to learn from a new perspective.

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### **Wyomissing Area Seeking Community Partners for Internship Program**



*The Wyomissing Area School District is seeking professionals in our community who would be interested in being a mentor for our expanding internship program.*

Internships are designed to provide interested WASD 11th and 12th-grade students with professional experience in their future career choice. Internships can be paid or unpaid, usually consisting of 1-3 hours per day for one semester or the full school year. Our students are expected to participate in activities that will allow them to gain knowledge and skills to equip them for a professional career while assisting their mentor with duties common to your profession.

If you or a colleague are interested in becoming a mentor for our internship program, please contact Dr. Brian Liskey at [bliskey@wyoarea.org](mailto:bliskey@wyoarea.org) or call 610-374-0739 ext. 2305.

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## The Wyomissing Area Education Foundation



WYOMISSING AREA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

*Enriching Education in the Wyomissing Area School District*

WAEF has important dates to announce for the rest of the school year:

1. **Blue & White Party** - our first in-person party since 2019! We look forward to gathering at the Neag Planetarium at the Reading Public Museum on Saturday 5/14/2022 for our important fundraising event featuring raffles, silent auction, live auction, live music, and delicious food and drinks. Please visit our website for more information about attending, volunteering, donating an item or service for the auction, or sponsoring the event.
2. **Senior Day parade of graduates** - Friday 5/20/2022 - this annual tradition celebrates the Class of 2022 with a parade through the elementary school buildings followed by a picnic at the JSHS.
3. **Fire & Ice Party** - this family-friendly event will be held at Happy Hollow Playground on Saturday 5/21/2022 and will feature fun activities for the kids. Please reach out to Molly Murrill if you'd like to volunteer!

4. **Scholarship Award Ceremony** - Monday 5/23/2022 in the JSHS auditorium - we will award scholarships totaling over \$40,000 to graduating seniors and 2 adults in our community. The deadline to apply is Friday 3/4/2022.
  
5. **Distinguished Alumni Reception** - Monday 5/23/2022 preceding the Scholarship Award Ceremony. We will honor Rachel Kuhn, Class of 1990. Rachel is a current school board member and is actively involved in the community in many ways. We look forward to recognizing her achievements at this event!

Please contact Molly Murrill [mmurrill@woarea.org](mailto:mmurrill@woarea.org) or visit our website for more information on these events!

WAEF has funded grants this year including:

- Anatomy Mural in the JSHS
  
- Over \$3000 in Classroom Wishes Grants - teachers request items for their classroom for a max budget of \$200, available on Amazon.
  
- Gardening for a Cause - WREC
  
- Kindness Bench - WREC
  
- One School One Book - WHEC

And more are on the way! Stay tuned for information about grants approved this month.

*WAEF's mission is to support excellence in education in the Wyomissing Area School District by providing an enriching educational experience that expands the knowledge and maximizes the potential of every student.*

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## About the Authors



As the Wyomissing Area School District continues to develop the Internship Program, we are fortunate to have talented students work with our Communications team to develop the articles you read in each edition of The Spartan Scoop. Our students are driven and predominantly self-guided and have the opportunity to attend district events, visit classrooms and teachers, and share positive experiences and stories about the great work in our district. Passionate students like these are a great addition to our Communications team and developing our social media posts and newsletter stories is a great experience for them.

**Emma Care** is a senior at Wyomissing Area Jr./Sr. High school, and is a returning Communication's intern this year. She is a teammate on the girls' soccer and lacrosse team and is a committed member of the environmental club, service club, Model United Nations club, Mini-THON, student tutoring, NHS, and is Chief Editor of the Wyomissing Area High School yearbook The Colophon. In the classroom, Emma strives for academic and personal excellence and loves to push herself to new limits. In Emma's free time, she enjoys volunteering throughout the community and spending time with loved ones. After high school, she plans to attend college on a pre-law or business track, and plans to use the skills from this student internship to guide her along the way. Emma values hard work in school and life but embraces the importance of excitement and fun even more.

**Julian DiMaio** is a senior that participates in football, baseball, and wrestling, and is a member of the service club. He plans to attend college after high school to study architecture



and business. Julian chose this internship to follow the athletic department more closely and to help recognize the accomplishments of our Spartan athletes.

**Olivia Fisher**, a senior at Wyomissing Area, enjoys participating on the Wyomissing Area Cross Country team and as a member of the chess club after school. The Communications internship will be an opportunity for her to build skills and experience in public outreach and social media campaigning, as well as online media design and journalism. She hopes to utilize her interests in online video media, SEO, and online algorithms in an exciting way via this program. Olivia is eager to work with the other interns this year and participate in the Communications internship!

**Jabrea Flowers** is a senior and is actively involved in our school community. Jabrea serves as the High School Student Council President, a Mini-THON Chairperson, and a Class Officer for the Class of 2022. Additionally, she enjoys participating in the environmental club, service club, the WAEF Student Committee, and serving as a student representative on the Wyomissing Borough Council. Athletically, Jabrea is a member of the soccer team and runs indoor and outdoor track. Her future plans include attending a four-year college to double major in international business and communications with a minor in sports management. She chose to pursue this internship to learn more about the Communications Department and to develop her professional writing skills. She also looks forward to getting to visit the other school buildings and seeing the other activities that are going on throughout the rest of the district and the community.

**Victoria Heliodoro** is a senior who enjoys playing basketball and throwing track and field. Being involved at school is something that she loves and she participates in multiple clubs including the Mini-THON committee, environmental club, service club, chorale, Camerata, dance club, Big Spartan Little Spartan, the Gay-Straight Alliance club, and the WAEF Student Committee. Next year Vicky hopes to attend either Temple University or the University of Pittsburgh to major in business and is considering a minor in environmental studies. Vicky chose this internship to help strengthen her communication skills as well as the ability to form connections with others and improve her networking skills.

**Isabel Marshall** is a member of the senior class and is a natural leader. She is a captain of the soccer and lacrosse teams, the Treasurer of the High School Student Council, a member of the National Honor Society and Spanish National Honor Society, Spanish club, and service club. Izzy plans to attend college and is currently considering studying analytical mathematics, finance, or engineering. She chose this internship because she would like to explore the field of communications, and practicing interviewing and reporting skills will only help to enhance her confidence, writing capabilities, and experiences in the business world.

## Communications Coordinator, Ms. Meghan Tierney



**Ms. Meghan Tierney** is the mathematics Department Chair at the Jr./Sr. High School in her eighth year in the Wyomissing Area School District. She received her bachelor's degree from Albright College and earned a master's degree in Teacher Leadership through the University of Delaware. Currently, she is pursuing a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction Supervision at Gwynedd Mercy University. In addition to her role as a classroom teacher, she advises the the Model UN Club and the National Honor Society, and serves as the Communications Coordinator for the school district. Meghan really enjoys the opportunities she has to work with students both in and out of the classroom and loves being a Spartan. Outside of school, Meghan enjoys spending time at the beach and being with family and friends.

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