

Memo

February 2007

A Word from Dorothy Do you want cheese with that?

Everyone driving through fast food lanes with an order inevitably hears the question, "Do you want cheese with that?" "Would you like an apple pie?" "Anything else?" I get irritated. If I wanted that "added" thing, I would have ordered it!

But then I got to thinking. I have, occasionally, decided, "Well, by gum, I will have an apple pie!" If someone asked me, I was inclined to answer--and accept the idea. Of course, I knew I had been snookered too and that made me feel lousy--not to mention that I really didn't need that apple pie in the first place.

What is it about "value-added" things in our culture? And do we have value-added things in our churches? What would it be like if, for example, the pastor would say, "Would you like to add 30 minutes of prayer to your week?" Or, if the congregational treasurer would say, "Would you like to add a zero to that check?" Would we be insulted, angry, challenged, humbled, grateful, generous?

In Jeremiah 1:4-10, we have the retelling of the calling of a prophet and the Lord put words, added-value words, into young Jeremiah. "Now I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant." Powerful. Challenging.

Our prayers as an area conference are to hear the words of Jesus as value-added words to our daily lives and witness. Our life together is powerful--a value-added dimension when we join together to nurture faith, plant churches, sustain pastors, educate our youth, build retreat and campgrounds, call gifted women and men to leadership. Western District Conference empowers its congregations to witness, to dwell justly, to connect to God's mission in the world. Now, that's value!

-Dorothy Nickel Friesen

Western District Conference empowers its Anabaptist/Mennonite congregations to:

- *Witness and invite others to faith in Jesus Christ,*
- *Dwell in just and loving relationships,*
- *Connect to God's mission in the world.*

Prayer

Our creator has gifted us with flowers that have unique aromas, colors, and textures. Roses are one of those delicate flowers that tease the senses with their sweet perfumes, velvety petals and rich colors. However, attached to the stems are thorns. Among the things we enjoy in life are challenges, hurts and pain. How do we deal with them and still enjoy all God has given us? Prayer. God is available in all circumstances, at all times. When the unexpected occurs and you are hurt physically, emotionally or in any way, God is available. Pray.

"Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:17

-Debbie Thimm, Vision 2012 Prayer Partner

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Please include announcements from this Memo in your bulletins and newsletters.

You are encouraged to copy and distribute the entire Memo in your churches.

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WDC prayer reminders

Feb. 4 - Pray for the musicians in your congregation who lead music and nurture faith through voice and instrument--with joy! Pray that the WDC choral festival today hosted by Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge KS will be a celebration of faith through music.

Feb. 11 - Pray for Marshall Anderson who is licensed as Assistant Pastor of Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman KS this morning and for Bruce Bradshaw as he is ordained as pastor of Zion Mennonite Church, Elbing KS this afternoon.

Feb. 18 - Pray for the WDC Low German Mennonite Task Force as it responds to the pastoral and health needs of new immigrants--mostly farm workers and their families.

Feb. 25 - Pray for the WDC Leadership Commission as it plants new churches, identifies new pastors and credentials pastoral leadership for all WDC congregations. Also pray for the new church plant in North Houston and the church planter, Aurora Parchmont, and that God will provide an adequate facility for their meeting place (presently in a trailer-home.)

Pastoral openings

(Congregational Information Forms completed & available):

Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, KS (one-half time) associate pastor

Beatrice Mennonite Church, Beatrice, NE (full-time) pastor beginning September

Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS (full-time) associate pastor beginning August 15

Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, KS (full-time) associate pastor with youth emphasis, beginning summer

Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, KS (full-time)

associate pastor with youth emphasis, beginning summer

Fort Worth, TX (one-fourth time) church planter

Transitions

Marshall Anderson will be licensed as Assistant Pastor at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman, KS on Sunday, February 11 at 10:30 a.m.

Marlene Bogard will be ordained at 3 p.m. on April 15 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, KS.

Floyd Born will be interim associate pastor (3/4 time) at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS, mid-March through mid-August.

Joan Boyer will be ordained at First Mennonite Church, Newton, KS on March 4, at 10:30 a.m.

Bruce Bradshaw will be ordained on February 11 at 3:30 p.m. at Zion Mennonite Church, Elbing, KS.

Muriel Kaufman Graber was licensed /commissioned to interim pastoral ministry at Beatrice (NE) Mennonite Church during the January 21 morning worship.

Tom Harder, pastor of Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, KS, will be a music leader for the adult worship services at San Jose 2007, the MC USA Convention, July 2-7.

Lawrence Hart, pastor at Koinonia Mennonite Church, Clinton, OK had quadruple heart bypass surgery on January 12. He is making a good recovery. Pray for his healing.

Houston Mennonite Church and a new church plant in North Houston, **Iglesia Menonita Nueva**

Jerusalem, have committed to become sister congregations.

Norma Johnson will retire March 31 as Associate Pastor of Bethel College Mennonite Church. A farewell potluck/program will be at noon on March 25.

Tim Kliever, pastor of Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, KS, has announced his intention to retire by September 2008.

Congratulations to **Nathan** (and Esther) **Koontz**, interim youth pastor of Faith Mennonite Church, Newton, KS, on the birth of their daughter, Anne Marie, on January 1. She was the first baby of the new year to be born in Newton, KS!

Esther Martinez, church planter and pastor of Mennonite Church House of Healing, Dallas, TX, will be married on June 2 to Jose Vasquez. He began January 1 as the co-executive director for the Leadership Learning Institute Anabaptist Resource Center.

Jerry Moore, retired pastor, died January 15. He served as pastor at Greensburg (KS) Mennonite Church and Inman (KS) Mennonite Church, in addition to serving in other denominations. Services were held at Buhler (KS) Mennonite Church on January 19.

Sympathies to **Jim Ostlund**, former youth pastor at Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, KS, on the death of his father, Ron Ostlund, on January 15, after a farm accident.

Todd Schlosser has begun as full-time counselor for Mennonite Mutual Aid. **Lynn Schlosser** continues as pastor at the Bergthal Mennonite Church in Pawnee Rock, KS.

Alan Stucky, youth pastor at Buhler (KS) Mennonite Church, has submitted his resignation effective at the end of July. He plans to continue his educational work at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

On January 7, Turpin Mennonite Church (OK), held a Service of Thanksgiving where Pastor **Jeff Wintermote** preached his first sermon upon return to full-time ministry following a September 30, 2006 hospitalization and long recovery period.

Check It Out

Take a look at some new resources on **Gracious Christianity and Radical Faith**. Featured are books that should pique the interest of many a Mennonite: how to live the love we profess, how to live as an ordinary radical, how to connect spirituality, justice and Christian practice. This monthly newsletter is also available on our website: www.mennowdc.org. Call or email to reserve one of these new books!

-Marlene Bogard, Minister of Christian Nurture and Resource Library Director

WDC web site up!

Check out the new look of the WDC web site--at www.mennowdc.org. There are tabs to find out about pastoral openings, events, and access to the Resource Library--plus much more to come. Thanks to Phyllis Regier for her (ongoing) work to make information accessible.

Upcoming event reminders

Remember the WDC Choral/Hymn Festival at 3:30 p.m. on **February 4** at Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, KS.

And remember to attend Stewardship University on **February 17** at Hesston College (KS). (www.StewardshipUniversity.org)

Staff changes

South Central Conference has reduced the position of their conference minister to one-half time or less effective immediately. **Robert Nolt** has resigned that position. WDC wishes Bob well in this time of transition. Bob served WDC as associate conference minister for the eleven Oklahoma congregations for nearly five years as a trade-for-time for Marco Guete who serves as associate conference minister for the ten congregations plus five church plants in mid-Texas--all dual-affiliated with South Central Conference.

WDC will host a farewell and thank-you open house in the WDC conference room on Tuesday, **February 20**, 4-6 p.m. Drop by to thank Bob and Anna; if you can't come in person, send your cards to 1701 West 4th St., Newton, KS 67114.

David Gerbrandt, pastor of First Mennonite Church, Clinton, OK, has been named by WDC Staff Relations Committee as Associate Conference Minister for Oklahoma on a one-day per week basis, effective immediately. Dave will assist with pastoral searches, reviews, giving counsel and coordinating communication among churches and pastors. We bless Dave for this ministry and welcome him to the WDC staff.

Mediation Skills Training Institute

Lombard Mennonite Peace Center (LMPC) focuses on peacemaking education, and will conduct the Mediation Skills Training Institute for Church Leaders at Southern Hills United Methodist Church in Tulsa, OK **March 12-15**. This training is designed to equip church leaders with the skills necessary to deal effectively with interpersonal, congregational, and other forms of group conflict. It also includes a component on congregational intervention and consultation, placed within the context of family systems theory. Pre-registration deadline is February 12. After this the tuition will increase from

\$625 to \$700. See: www.LMPeaceCenter.org for information.

Pastors' Day Apart

The next Pastors' Day Apart will be held on Thursday, **March 15** (8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.) at Tabor Mennonite Church, rural Newton, KS. (This replaces the earlier advertised February 24 event with Walter Wink which was cancelled due to health issues.) The topic will be "**Pastor: know thyself - another look at family systems and congregational leadership**". Presenter will be Keith Harder (and others) with participants expected to share genograms. Brochures will be sent to pastors in mid-February. Cost - \$25 (including lunch).

Women's Spring Sunset Supper

The annual Mennonite Women's Sunset Supper for WDC and SCC women will be held **March 15**, at 6:00 p.m. at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston, KS. Lois Harder & family will give a program. Cost: \$5.00. Check your church bulletins for contact person & registration deadline.

Camp Mennoscah 2007 camping schedule

- March 16-18 Explore the Night Sky Retreat (*This is a great way to learn about the different stars, moons and galaxies, and where they belong. This will be led by John Hobbs and staff from the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center. Cost: \$80 per person and includes meals/snacks. If you'd like to come out just for the gazing in the evening, the cost is \$5 per person per night - meals are extra. Pre-register by March 1.*)
- April 20-22 Mennonite Men & Boys Retreat
- April 23-25 Retirees' Relaxation Retreat ("*The Good Ole Days*". We will have speakers on: *Early Camp Years; Bees: Stings & Honey; Building Antique Wagons; Scrolling: Sawdust to Satisfaction. Cost per person including meals: Retreat Center \$85, Staff House \$75, Own Camper or RV \$65. Contact camp for partial event fees. Register by April 9.*)
- May 27-28 Just fOr You (JOY) Disabilities Retreat
- June 7-9 First Camp
- June 10-16 Junior I Camp
- June 17-23 Junior High I Camp
- June 24-28 Pre-Junior I Camp
- July 1-7 Junior II Camp
- July 8-12 Pre-Junior II Camp
- July 15-21 Junior High II Camp
- July 22-27 Senior High Camp
- July 29-Aug. 4 Junior III Camp
- Aug. 4-5 Grand Camp

- Sept. 8-9 Mennonite Women & Girls' Retreat
- Sept. 17-21 Work and Play Retreat
- Sept. 28-30 Pastor/Spouse Marriage Enrichment Weekend
- Oct. 12-14 Mennofolk on the Prairie Family Camp
Contact Joyce Pankratz at Camp Mennoscah for information on any event: 620-297-3290, campmno@mennowdc.org

Camp Mennoscah News

The Retreat Commission (with the approval of Western District Conference Executive Board) is creating two new positions of “**Long-Term Volunteers**” (maintenance/grounds/custodial and food service) at Camp Mennoscah. These positions would follow traditional voluntary service guidelines with modest stipends and food/lodging costs covered by Camp. (These positions are in addition to current long-term staff – Camp Director, Maintenance Coordinator.) The Retreat Commission is exploring the possibility of creating an MVS unit at camp with Mennonite Mission Network and the Hutchinson MVS unit Leadership team. We hope to announce the names of the first volunteers by April. We are excited about this new chapter in the Camp's life and ministry. Thank you for your prayers and support.

Consultation on Children's Ministry

“Let Them Come to Me: a consultation on children's ministry,” is being planned by our neighbors to the north, the Central Plains Mennonite Conference. It will be at Hidden Acres Christian Center near Ames, IA on **March 17**. Marlene Bogard will be one of the presenters and invites others from WDC to attend this day of networking and talking about children's ministry in Mennonite churches. Look at resources, think about how to choose curriculum, and hear stories from churches that have an active children's ministry program. Cost: \$50 includes lodging, meal and registration. Contact Marlene at 316-283-6300 or mbogard@mennowdc.org by March 1 if you are interested in this event. Registration materials may be viewed at www.centralplains.mennonite.net

2007 Tournaments

The annual WDC tournaments will be held in late March (**basketball at Bethel College March 27-31; volleyball at Hesston College March 30-31**). The purpose of the tournament is to have a good time with other adults, to become involved with your church members and fellow conference members, to play with a fun, yet competitive attitude. Tournament information has been sent to each church, **register by March 9**.

--WDC Tournament Comm: Shirley Dietzel, Lisa Hochstetler, Melisa Cooper, Neal Denno, Pat Flaming, Alan Koller

Lunch for retired pastors

WDC and South Central Conference retired pastors are invited to a lunch meeting on Thursday, **May 3**, from 11:30 - 1:30 in the Mantz Library commons, on Bethel College campus, North Newton, KS. Mark your calendars. More information to come in April.

Basics of parish nursing

This new course offered by Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) and endorsed by the Mennonite Nurses Association, will be taught online, utilizing the International Parish Nurse Resource Center curriculum that was developed in consultation with the National League for Nurses and the American Nurses Association. EMU will teach this course from an Anabaptist perspective. The official dates are **May 7 to June 25**. Tuition cost: \$945 (\$800 for MNA members and RN's from Anabaptist churches who provide a letter from the pastor indicating membership in the church.)

For more information, visit the EMU website: www.emu.edu.

The King is going to San Jose!

We have received word that "**The Upside-down King--a rock and roots musical on the ministry of Jesus**" with music by Doug and Jude Krehbiel and script by Duane Johnson (Southern Hills Mennonite Church, Topeka, KS) will be presented twice at San Jose MCUSA convention--and once at the joint conference of WDC and SCC at Tulsa this summer. Cast members are youth from Goessel, KS area; director is Greg Bontrager (First Mennonite/Newton). There will be a premier concert fundraiser in late June--watch for dates and dream up ways to financially support this huge project. (Send contributions to WDC and mark "musical" in memo line.)

Tulsa--here we come!

The WDC and SCC Program Committee has begun planning for the joint **annual conference** sessions to be held at the DoubleTree Warren Place Hotel in Tulsa, OK, **July 27-29**. The WDC Reference Council will meet 1-4 p.m. on July 27; registration is 4-7 p.m.; opening worship is 7 p.m. Separate delegate sessions will be Saturday a.m.; workshops/seminars Saturday afternoon; a youth musical in the evening. All sessions will end by 11 a.m. Sunday. Hotel rates are \$89 per night (1-4 persons per room); package of meals/snacks/ice cream social will be \$80 per person (less for children) which waives costs for use of ballrooms, seminar rooms; registration fee of \$50 per person (less for children). Begin selecting delegates, marking your calendar, and praying for the Holy Spirit's guidance in all preparations. Brochures will be available in late spring.

Marriage enhancement weekend

WDC and SCC have received a Schowalter grant for up to 20 pastoral couples to attend a Marriage Enhancement weekend to be held at Camp Mennoscah on **September 28-30**. The grant will make the registration very reasonable and will also provide for paying for pulpit supply the Sunday you will be at Camp. Marlene Bogard, WDC Minister of Christian Nurture, will be the trainer/facilitator, having received certification in C-Prep in June of 2006. C-Prep is Christian Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program. Along with group presentations, there will be time for recreation, quiet, and fellowship. So....talk to your spouse and your church leaders about attending this special event. More information coming soon.

Software available

A software package is now available without charge to WDC congregations:

The **Pastoral Compensation** software provides a quick way of calculating compensation according to the annual guidelines from Mennonite Church USA and incorporating this information into a covenant of understanding between the congregation and the pastor. This software is useful to pastors, church treasurers, Pastor-Congregation Relations Committees and others. Download the software from: www.manygifts.org/salaryguidelines. (This is made available by the Leadership Commission through endowment funds.)

Additional information about each of the software programs, including a short instructional video, is available at the website. For free downloads, indicate the name of your congregation and select Western District Conference as your area conference.

Congratulations

Hugo Saucedo, Conference Youth Minister - Texas-based, who also serves as the DOOR (Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection) national program director, recently received the Mader Award, in honor of his work in promoting faith-based volunteerism in the San Antonio community.

DOOR works in partnership with local helping agencies including homeless shelters, food pantries and community outreach organizations. It also brings in speakers to share with groups about issues like immigration, economic and social policy, and poverty.

Safe Sanctuaries update

Many WDC churches have received training in how to become a "Safe Sanctuaries Church" and have begun to put in place policies and procedures for safe ministry with children and youth. Most weeks I continue to have conversations with pastors and lay

leaders about these issues. Here are some things to continue to think about:

- How are you managing the ongoing "paper trail" related to Safe Sanctuaries? (Covenant forms, who has received training, etc.)
- Who is overseeing ongoing training and concerns related to Safe Sanctuaries? (Deacons? Task Force? Christian Nurture Committee?)
- Have all your nursery workers received training? (If you send out a call for help, make sure those who offer are trained).
- Have all your VBS and Wednesday night and Sunday morning volunteers received training?
- Have you placed the "Safe Sanctuaries" lens on all activities that are hosted at your church or hosted by your church at an off-site location?
- What kinds of on-going training or networking can WDC provide?
- Have you put in place parameters and procedures if a sexual offender would like to attend your church?
- Clergy - have you attended Prevention of Clergy Misconduct Training? (WDC will have one this year).

Please continue to call or email me with questions, concerns and ideas. Let's keep these conversations going and begin to make plans for the next steps in training for risk management awareness.

-Marlene Bogard, mbogard@mennowdc.org, 316-283-6300

Library lounge lizards welcome!

The Library and AMBS-Great Plains Student **Lounge** is officially open in the Conference Resource Library. There you will find a place to meet friends, make some coffee or tea, use the internet (lounge computer for use by AMBS students only, or bring your own laptop) or quietly read and browse resources. The lounge is open 8-5, M-F or during special events, meetings or seminary classes. This is part of the Vision 2012 funds at work - helping phase 1 of the library expansion become a reality. Expenses were also shared by AMBS-Great Plains and the 2500 Place Building fund. Come, enjoy, read, connect, relax!

deo (discipleship, encounter, outreach) news

The first annual deo mid-year retreat was held in Phoenix, AZ the weekend of January 12-15. All participants and staff spent the weekend engaged in a variety of activities including worship, sharing, hiking, eating, singing, laughing, and praying. Several special activities included visiting House of Refuge and Valley Christian Center (two of the work sites of the Phoenix team members), hiking North Mountain, and sharing in the Sunday morning worship service at Trinity Mennonite Church. Time was also spent interacting with the developmentally disabled residents who live

with the Phoenix deo team as part of the Golden Sun project. Pray for the deo team members (Mary Goering, Jessica Penner, Audra Christophel, Jared Widmer, Angela Stauffer, Kim Driedger) as they return to their assignments in Denver and Phoenix for the second half of Phase Two of the deo year.

New Mennonite Mission Network resource

In January, Mennonite Mission Network launched *Relate: a Christian Service Newsletter*, an Anabaptist youth ministry resource for pastors, sponsors and lay leaders working with youth and young adults from middle school through college. You can receive this free HTML newsletter every other month. See a preview and sign up online at:

www.Service.MennoniteMission.net/Relate.

Scholarships

“Church Matching Scholarship Programs”

are encouraged to fill out participation forms with MC USA-related colleges/schools soon. Check out school websites to determine eligibility for grants.

Western District Conference coming events

Feb. 4 - Choral Festival, Eden Menn. Church, Moundridge, KS
Feb. 8-10 - Damascus Road anti-racism training, Bethel College, North Newton, KS
Feb. 16-18 - Senior High Snow Camp, Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp, CO
Feb. 17 - MMA Stewardship University, Hesston College, KS
Mar. 15 - Mennonite Women’s Sunset Supper, Whitestone Menn. Church, Hesston, KS
Mar. 15 - Pastors’ Day Apart, Tabor Menn. Church, Newton, KS
Mar. 16-18 - Senior High Snow Camp, Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp, CO
Mar. 27-31 - Basketball Tournament, Bethel College, North Newton, KS
Mar. 30-31 - Volleyball Tournament, Hesston College, KS
April 20-22 - Pastor Spouse Retreat, Roman Nose Resort, Watonga, OK
April 20-22 - Men & Boys Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
April 23-25 - Retiree’s Relaxation Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
May 3 - Retired pastors’ lunch, Bethel College, North Newton, KS
May 27-28 - Just fOr You (JOY) Disabilities Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
July 27 - (1-4 p.m.) - Reference Council, Tulsa, OK
July 27-29 - Western District Conference & South Central Conf. joint annual conference, Tulsa, OK
Aug. 4-5 - Grand Camp, Camp Mennoscah

Aug. 18 - Day on the Farm, rural Hillsboro, KS
Sept. 8-9 - Women’s Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
Sept. 17-21 - Work & Play Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
Oct. 12-14 Mennofolk on the Prairie Retreat, Camp Mennoscah
Oct. 19-21 - Anabaptist Vision and Discipleship Series, Hesston College, KS

Conference Ministers’ schedules

Feb. 2-3 - Anabaptist History Class (MB); Leadership Commission, North Newton, KS (DNF, MG)
Feb. 4 - Anabaptist Biblical Institute meeting, Dallas, TX (MG); Choral festival, Eden Menn. Church, Moundridge, KS (DNF)
Feb. 6 - Vision 2012 Steering Committee (DNF)
Feb. 7 - MC USA leaders breakfast (DNF)
Feb. 8 - Mennonite Mission Network meeting (MG)
Feb 8-10 - Damascus Road Anti-Racism Analysis Training, North Newton, KS (LL)
Feb. 9-11 - Houston & Pasadena, TX (MG)
Feb. 10 - Resource Commission (MB)
Feb. 11 - License Marshall Anderson, Bethel Menn. Church, Inman, KS; Ordain Bruce Bradshaw, Zion Menn. Church, Elbing, KS (DNF)
Feb. 12 - Staff Relations Committee (DNF)
Feb 13 - Wichita, KS pastors meeting (LL); Health-care de-briefing meeting; Alexanderwohl Menn. Church, Goessel, KS search committee (DNF)
Feb 14, 21, 28, March 7 - Relationship Enhancement series at Faith Menn. Church, Newton (MB)
Feb. 15 - WDC/SCC program planning for annual conference (DNF, MG); Low German Task Force (DNF)
Feb. 16 - Women pastors' breakfast; Executive Committee and Board (DNF)
Feb. 17 - MMA Stewardship Univ., Hesston, KS (DNF, MG)
Feb. 19 - MCUSA Congregational Resources Network Meeting (MB)
Feb 20 - Western KS pastors’ meeting, Dodge City, KS (LL); Staff meeting
Feb. 23 - Prairie View board meeting (DNF)
Feb. 23-25 - Cultivating the Call training retreat, San Antonio, TX (MG)
Feb. 25-27- "Generational Giving" consultation, Pittsburgh (DNF)
(Marlene Bogard-MB; Dorothy Nickel Friesen-DNF; Dave Gerbrandt-DG; Marco Güete-MG; Doug Krehbiel-DK; Lee Lever-LL; Hugo Saucedo-HS)

The MEMO is published monthly for WDC pastors and committee members. Submit articles and correspondence to: Dorothy Nickel Friesen, dorothyf@mennowdc.org.

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