

CRACK 'N CAB



Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse, PO Box 2801, Syracuse, NY
web: <https://www.gmss.club> (updated!) Volume 53 Issue 12, Dec. 2023
209 Oswego St (Ponderosa Plaza), Unit 15, Liverpool, NY



November Auction Time!

Judy's Photo Review:
See Pages 7 -9

*Amazing and
wonderful items*

Also in this issue:

"My Top 5 Most Lovable Rocks n' Things" – Page 5

The Sad Story of "Kik" – Page 6

Christmas Party Photo Review – Pages 9 through 13



Photo by Judy Cook

HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

President's Message

John Sweeney



We had a very successful **auction last month (See photos on Pages 7 to 9)**. We had a large crowd at the meeting and plenty of help. Thank you to all the runners and record keepers who kept it all running smoothly. We even managed to sell a few pieces of coal which if you are lucky you might find in your stocking. It was after all blue

iridescent. Now *there's* a reason to get on the naughty list!

Our **Christmas party** was well attended, and the food was good (See photos on Page 9 to 13). We were joined by two marine lance corporals and a navy corpsman that collected our Toys for Tots and food donations for holiday give away. What a great thing to be able to provide toys and food to others for the holidays. I'm proud to say our members were very generous. **Cathy Patterson and Kip Perkins** pretty much put the whole gathering together and did a great job. Thank you, ladies; I think you put us all in the Christmas Spirit.

As we move closer to the holidays and the New Year, I think it's natural to become a little retrospective and as I **look back on this year**, I think it was a good one for the club. We've grown our membership; attendance is up at the meetings, and we've had some tremendous speakers and programs. We've had some very generous donations to the club. Our newsletter is awesome. A lot of students have passed through the lapidary classes, and we had a successful show with lots of collaboration and turn out from the members. We've got a good home for the club, a great website and Facebook page, a board that gets a lot done and a lot of really nice members. This group rocks! Have some happy holidays however you celebrate them and safe travels if you're moving about. I'll see you in the New Year.

Ho HO Ho



John Sweeney,
President/sometimes
Santa Impersonator

Executive Board Meeting December 5, 2023 Minutes

Executive Meeting at 6:45

Called to Order at 7PM by Cathy Patterson

Executive Meeting:

Amanda Lyle discussed Email security for our GMSS.club emails. With the changes she has recently made to our account, our yearly cost for web and marketing basic plan has been lowered from \$355.20 to \$214.69 yearly. Great job, Amanda!!

President: John Sweeney

Kudos, laurels, accolades for an excellent job running the auction November 20, 2023!

Secretary Report: Teresa Arnold

Accept Minutes (November 2023): Motion to accept by Dick L. second Larry P. / accepted unanimously.

Treasurer Report: Linda Sweeny

We made a sizable profit from November's auction. Exact amount to be shared later, but it may have been enough to pay for 1 month's club expenses which is considerable.

VP report: Cathy Patterson

Christmas Party - December 10, 2023 from Noon to 4PM. 43 are registered! Marines will collect Toys for Tots. Brunch menu. Offerings for Food Bank and gift to share.

January 15, 2024 - Field Trip Lowdown - Tim Hart, Jeremy Wrolstad, Dave Millis, possibly Lee Levesque, and 1 or 2 others will give a show and tell about what they have discovered during last year's collecting trips. What did they learn? What worked? What didn't? What was worth returning to?

February 19, 2024 - Dave Arcaro - Fossil Life in Upstate NY - 350 million years ago.

March 18, 2024 - Marie Cole Skill Center: Students/Teachers Show and Tell.

April and May 2024 - TBA - Auction of members' things.

June - Worknight for annual show.

Building Use - Cathy Patterson

An email blast was sent to all board members re: Dave Millis requesting to hold a wire wrap class on December 9th from 10 to 3:30. It will consist of 2 parts: In the

morning they will making a wire wrap ring; in the afternoon, they will be wire wrapping a cabochon. There will be a 1-hour break between classes. The fee for the class will be \$5.00 payable to the club by GMSS members. Non-members will be charged \$10.00. He also proposed 2 other similar classes on January 20th and February 24th. All classes were approved.

Facebook: Judy Cook

Judy has put Holiday Party information on Facebook.

Membership: Raise Dues Jan 1, 2024

Junior Rockhounds: Rick Moore

Form a Youth Group Committee to address concerns about having more kids join the club?

Hospitality:

Refreshments for the January meeting will be provided by Jeremy Roland, Deb Killian, Bill Verge and Chris Lane.

Lapidary committee: Steve Shorey and Bill Verge

New Lapidary class starting in January. The December classes are just finishing up. January classes will be on the 13th, 20th and 27th from 10 to Noon. You will create your own cab from a rough slab!

Steve talked to the arts instructor at a local YMCA. The Y has silversmithing classes and would like to refer students to our Marie Cole Skill Center to cut cabs that they will then learn to set in the Y's class. Kudos Steve!!

Bill had looked into **classes for mature member children**, ages 10 and up to learn to cut simple cabs. They must be accompanied by a parent (GMSS member). Sounds like an excellent self-esteem building activity! Dick Lyons reports that we have the appropriate insurance for having supervised children in the lapidary classes. KUDOS Steve and Bill!!

Sunshine: Cards will be sent to: Keith Gilmer / Mary Davis / Livingstons / Charlie Brown

Meeting adjourned at 8 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Teresa Arnold / Secretary

A Good Gathering!

Cathy Patterson

Elsewhere in this newsletter are comments and photos of our December 10 Holiday Brunch at Bella Domani (**See Pages 9 through 13**). I want to thank **Kip Perkins** again for her artistic surprise boxes filled with rockhound goodies. **Cathy Patterson** provided the shark teeth from a long ago dig in the Chesapeake Bay area with **Jay Tinker, Dave Arcaro**, and others. Herkimers came from Cathy and **Matt Klingner** via **Cheryl**

Brown. Tumbled stones were direct from the GMSS clubhouse. Sugary treats came from Kip and Cathy. We hope all enjoyed the festive boxes.

Everyone looked so festive! Wow! I think we had a record crowd which was a perfect opportunity to take some visiting time we don't normally get at our meetings. The young marines, at our table, from Toys for Tots, got a good education about cabochons, Herkimers, minerals and the like. They seemed pleased with their surprise boxes, raffle ticket gifts, and, of course, the food!

How good to see **Bob and Joan Livingston** and **Dorothy and Keith Gilmer!** We know they don't get out too much lately. We send strong healing vibrations to Keith!!

As I wind down my term as Vice President, I want to let all know how grateful I am to have served as an officer in different positions over the years. Planning programs, parties, and field trips was my job description as VP. It has been a real privilege! This is an amazing club where I have formed many friendships over 30+ years. It is our family for sure. If anyone is considering running for an office on the board do NOT hesitate! You will learn so much and feel great helping make decisions about the direction of our club for the future. Take those "reins!"

Recognizing Active Members

Cathy Patterson

I have been amazed and thrilled to see so many of our newer and longtime members helping out on Saturdays organizing our collection. What a great learning activity! This is a perfect opportunity to learn how to recognize physical properties of the many minerals we have in storage. Given a handful of similar minerals can you name most of them? What characteristics helped you make that determination? Who goes "over the moon" finding certain fossils? Who is moved to do research on certain minerals/fossils to become more knowledgeable, to teach others, write an article for this newsletter, to put together an exhibit of said specimens at the annual show for the visitors to enjoy? You know who you are and so do I! Way to go rockhounds!

We'll have more work sessions come 2024. Come and help organize, label and display the wealth of mineral/fossil specimens we have. Also attend **Show Committee** meetings and help us get ready for the July and now the new November shows! Volunteer!

Oh, and THANK YOU for getting involved. You'll get out of being a member what you put into it.

Labels? Huh?

Cathy Patterson

The last huge collection we continue to handle at the club was extraordinary because so many specimens were LABELED. Why is this important? I speak from years of experience and mistakes. After a dig you think you will remember the location and items collected. Nope! They likely will go into a box and perhaps be wrapped in newspaper. Good start! LABEL the box and the specimens. It's funny how over time those boxes

become mice bedding when you aren't looking. Use plastic or metal bins if you can. The writing on the paper also fades over time or disintegrates with the help of insects. You might want to use some kind of plastic labeling system or photo and print a picture of the contents and box they are in. Some seasoned rockhounds put a small Whiteout dot, in an inconspicuous spot, and number it. The number corresponds to a record system saved to a sheet of paper or computer file. Keep a notebook with this information.

Having a barnful of rocks, collected over 35 years, many without labels, I don't know where we got them or what they are! I should have LABELED them! Rocks like this become just pothole fill at some point. So sad. Get the picture? Bring a small pad of paper and pen to your dig. Ask others to help you identify what you collect. LABEL! Take this advice from a long-time collector and mistake maker. YOU DO IT RIGHT!

January

The January 18, 2024 meeting will be presented by our very own Field Collectors! I've invited **Jeremy Wrolstad, Tim Hart, Dave Millis**, and others to tell us how their collecting trips went. They'll bring some of what they found, tell us what they learned about the site, what they had to watch out for, and give us ideas about planning similar trips ourselves. Come with questions to ask them that night. There will also be a short business meeting prior to their short 45-minute talk and refreshments will be available after.

February

Dave Arcaro has offered to give us a talk about life in NYS 350 million years ago. Emphasis will be on what we like to call, today fossils, where they can be found, and what they were like. Again, bring your questions for Dave.

Anyone else have a passion that's rock related.... or lapidary in nature that you'd like to share with the group? We're all in this together and you are among friends so don't be bashful. Contact me! Let's learn "stuff!"

My Top 5 Most Lovable Rocks n' Things

Amanda Lytle

1. DESERT ROSES

Although desert roses come in different shapes, it's the round ones that overload me with cuteness whenever I see them. Honestly, they remind me of the tribbles from Star Trek, in the classic episode: "The Trouble with Tribbles." Desert roses may not be recognized as a mineral species, but they are a "rose-like" crystal cluster of gypsum (sometimes celestine or baryte) with sand inclusions of the desert from where they formed. There's just something

charming about a desert rose, most likely because they make me feel like I'm holding a fossilized tribble. Even better that I don't have to worry about them invasively reproducing.

2. GEODES

Every time I think about a ball-shaped, plain looking rock and taking a gamble on cracking it open for a really cool surprise inside - there's little doubt over the way geodes are awesome to love. While I do admit to having a cute-obsession with round rocks and things, it's the Geodes' 'reveal features' that keep me hooked with their suspense and charm. Geodes owe their fun-loving nature to being a rounded nodule of different colorful quartzes in concentric layers, that includes a hollow center which may contain independently crystallized minerals inside. From the big ones down to the very tiny ones, their lovable nature always makes me smile. Geodes truly are the fun rocks.

3. TRILOBITES

Trilobites had a really good, maybe 400 million year run in their sea life until they succumbed to a mass extinction during the late Permian era. My little fella (also curled into a ball) that I bought at my very first club meeting during Trilobite Night, is so well preserved you can even count his eyeballs. Trilobites take me back to when I was a kid finding potato bugs in the backyard under a board or rock and playing with them. By potato bug, I mean wood louse, pill bug, roly poly.... you know what I mean.

Meanwhile, I'm kind of heartbroken that trilobites weren't even the least bit related to those land isopods I once played with, but their ability to do their roll-up thing I think is really adorable....as long as I don't think about mine having possibly rolled himself into a ball of despair in the extinction event. One behavior trilobites and today's Armadillidae share in common is rolling into a ball for their defense against predators and other safety measures. Just don't lie to me and say that Trilobites wouldn't be fun as an aquarium pet.

4. BEACH ROCKS

Before SkyNet takes over, one thing I'd love to do this summer is have time and friends for at

least one bonfire on a beach and go out along the shoreline for hours picking water-polished rocks and hagstones. There's no stress with it because I'm not out digging for a specific mineral - I get all the leaverite specimens to my choosing; I just see rock, rock pretty, take rock. Personally, it's my sustainable rockhounding outlet because I can bring what I don't want any more back to the beach, and it definitely gets my hunter-gatherer gratification on.

The rocks along the beach, most definitely as glacial deposits to ponder are so easy to enjoy. I remember last year when a friend of mine took me to the lake with a couple of fluorescent flashlights, and suddenly rock picking at the beach kicked up a whole new level of adventure. While I think the geologic discoveries I follow on Mars are fascinating, little discoveries like fluorescing rocks on a local river or lakefront remind me that this planet we live on is truly incredible and full of surprises.

5. CACTUS QUARTZ

I seriously didn't have a Number 5 on my list, but I saw my tiny cactus quartz cluster on my desk and remembered why I have it. Besides reasons of being cute and adorable, I've gathered my list of academic research for including it on my lovable rocks list: when the faces on a first-generation quartz get covered over by a newer generation of teeny, tiny crystals all pointing outward from the prisms it grew on (phenomenon called Epitaxy), and takes the patience of some hundreds or thousands of years - the results become glamorous. Also, adorable.

I love the festive feel from a cactus quartz overall. Whenever I hear its alternative name being a pineapple quartz, it lightly fuels my sense of novelty with it.

Cactus quartzes make me think of quartzes that just wanted to be extra. If they can be shamelessly extra like with the hydrothermal conditions they fed from, then so can I. My tiny cactus cluster by far isn't an impressive piece. On the other hand, when making a mini-pastime out of observing its details and its reflective play under a light and magnifying glass, my less-than-impressive specimen would

probably blow any Zen meditation practice right out of the water. Maybe that's why its other alternative name is spirit quartz....



And here's the favorite five all together!

**Check out our almost-still
brand-new web address:**

WWW.GMSS.CLUB



Easy to Remember!



Easy to Tell Your Friends!

(GMSS = **G**em & **M**ineral **S**ociety of **S**yracuse)

Lots of cool, up-to-date information!

Geo Lexis (Puzzle) By Anne Fitzgerald

"Getting a [sic] Kik Out of Fossils"

Do you ever get a sick feeling that someone is following you? That feeling might be true, and it just might be someone in the future.

Matthew Wooller (no relation to the woolly mammoth) is an isotope scientist out of Fairbanks, Alaska. While watching his students study isotopes and fish bone layers, he wondered if the isotopes in a woolly mammoth's ivory tusks could tell him anything interesting. In an Alaskan museum, he was able to find the tusks of a 17,000-year-old woolly mammoth. They named the mammoth "Kik" because he was found near the Kikiakrorak River in Alaska, and because I am guessing his real name was too long to write on specimen labels and was way too hard to pronounce.

Like people buying souvenirs and eating the local fare while on vacation, Kik's ivory tusks stored isotopes showing where he had been. Those isotopes recorded the water, soil, and vegetation the mammoth consumed or picked up along his journeys.

Because there is a strontium map of Alaska, researchers were able to map Kik's movements over his lifetime by matching his strontium levels in his tusks to the levels in different parts of Alaska.

They discovered that in his wandering days, Kik could cover 700 miles total. He quit wandering in his final years, and the final year of Kik's life is recorded in the last four inches of his ivory tusk. This layer showed a nitrogen increase indicative of starvation. Most mammoths lived to be around 60 at the time, but poor Kik died when he was about 28 years old.

Kik can teach us lessons about our environment and extinction. He probably has more followers today than in his lifetime. Maybe being followed is not so sick after all.

Here are some word puzzles associated with fossils, or things you might find while looking for fossils. The answers are on Page 7 of this newsletter.

C shell
fossil iiiii
stone dogs
plummeting H2O
tiny clock sounds

Upcoming Events

JAN. 2, 2024 – GMSS Board meeting – 7 pm at the Clubhouse. All are invited.

JAN. 15 – GMSS meeting – 7:30 pm at the Clubhouse. **"Field Collecting"** This one will be an in-house presentation by YOU! If you have done some collecting this year, **please contact Cathy Patterson and I'll put you on the list to say a few words about what you found.** This will be a slightly shorter program than usual so we can include a business meeting and refreshments and get home before it snows!

- Where did you go?
- What did you find? Please bring something to show.
- What was your experience like, especially if you are a new member/collector?
- What did you wish you knew before you went field collecting?
- What advice do you have for other newer members about field collecting?

Next GMSS Lapidary Classes begin on January 13, 10 AM!

Any Member or Non-Member interested in taking the three-week beginning Lapidary class please contact Bill Vergé at:

b.verge@comcast.net

or text 617-872-4528 for more information.

This is the class you need if you would like to use any of the Club's Lapidary equipment in the Marie Cole Lab.

Bill Vergé

Upcoming Winter Shows:

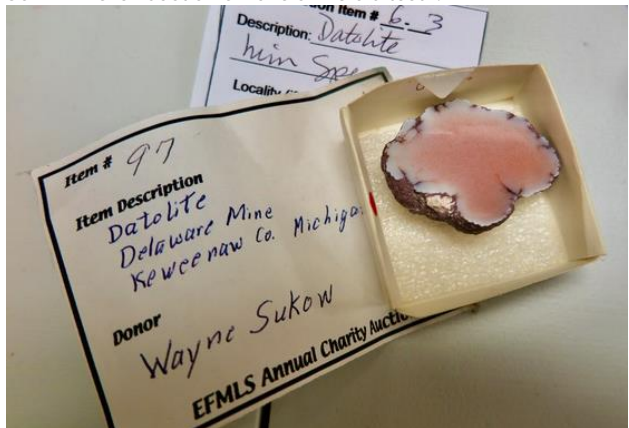
Jan. 24- Feb. 4—TUCSON, AZ: Annual show; JOGS Tucson Gem & Jewelry Show; Tucson Expo Center, 750 E Irvington Rd ; daily 10-5, Sun. 10-4; Registered Buyers: FREE - General Admission: \$20 - Proof of Military: FREE - Children: No Children Under 14; The show features a wide variety of products from a diverse group of vendors, including jewelry designers, manufacturers, miners, wholesalers, & jewelry liquidators from countries such as the US, Europe, Africa, India, Thailand, Mexico, Canada, Germany, Nepal, Poland, Russia, &

more; contact Yelena Masenko, (213) 629-3030; Email: advertising@jogsshow.com; Website: www.jogsshow.com

Jan. 27- Feb.10—TUCSON, AZ: Wholesale & retail show; Adam Aaronson; Mineral & Fossil Marketplace, 1333 N Oracle Rd; daily 10-6; Free; Get up close to gigantic sea monsters & full-size dinosaur skeletons! The Mineral & Fossil Marketplace is growing. New container lot, large tent, & remodeled gallery host international fine minerals & one of the best fossil exhibitions in Tucson. Come find meteorites, monster crystals; contact Adam Aaronson, (520) 245-3052; Email: mineralfossilmarketplace@gmail.com; Website: www.mfmshow.com



John will even auction off one of his old teeth!



Answers to Geo Lexis

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| C shell | seashell |
| fossil iiiii | fossilize |
| stone dogs | rockhounds |
| plummeting H2O | waterfalls |
| tiny clock sounds | ticks |

Sources and further reading:

www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/scientists-tracked-movements-17000-year-old-woolly-mammoth-180983064/
Richard Grant, November 2023

<https://alaskapublic.org/2021/09/22/from-a-fossilized-tusk-uaf-researchers-unravel-the-story-of-kik-the-woolly-mammoth/>
Mary Auld, KUAC

<https://academic-accelerator.com/encyclopedia/primordial-nuclide>

Nov. 20 Club Meeting Review

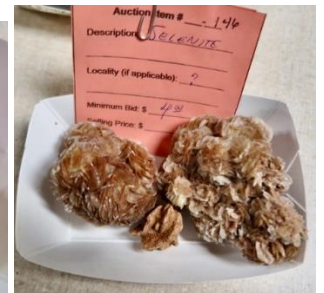
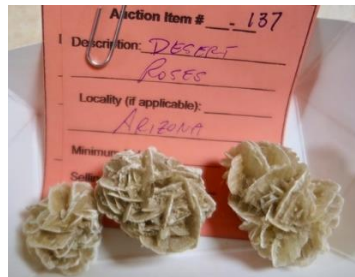
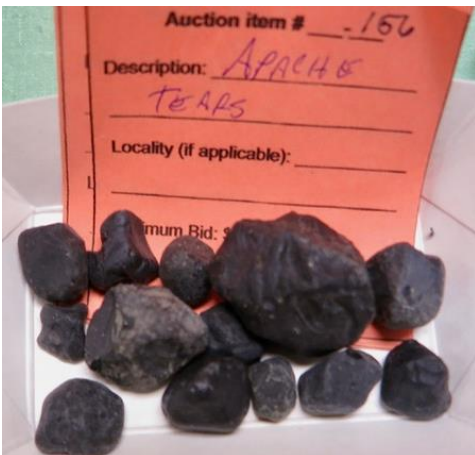
“A Night at the Auction”

Photos by Judy Cook

Our ever-popular annual club auction of fossils, minerals, jewelry, tools, and rocky related items.



John Sweeney, our auctioneer, with assistants Kris Boronczyk and Rick Moore.





John's also handy at traffic control!



"It's a Wonderful 'Toys for Tots' Christmas Party!"

Dec. 10 at Bella Domani

Photos by Judy Cook



John Sweeney introduces the two Marine Lance Corporals.



Some objects just don't fit the boxes...



Everybody's waiting to order their specially made own omelet!



And then there was the food!



Look how skillfully the chef flips that omelet!



Somebody at this table is a special prize winner. Wait til the end.



There was fun gathering together and enjoying each other's company.



Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree!



And, remember this, from the November newsletter?

Our famous “monster” Herkimer diamond collector, **Lee Levesque III** is headed to the Tucson Gem Show in February at the request of one of the organizers! To help him defray the substantial costs to travel to and from Tucson, our generous fellow club member, **Tim Hart**, is having a raffle of a LARGE amethyst cathedral. All proceeds go to Lee for his trip to show off what he found in NYS! We know he'll do a fine job representing the GMSS at this prestigious show!



Well, the raffle is over, and the prize has been won!



And the winner is...our own Susan K!
Congratulations!

Paleobotany Trivia for the Geologic Time Scale:

Did you know Plant Life has its own Eras on the Geologic Time Scale? Both Animal & Plant Life are divided into three sections:

1. **Paleo** - *Ancient/ Early Life*
2. **Meso** - *Middle Life*
3. **Ceno** - *Recent Life*

Same Names, but with a Twist:

The Eras for **Animal Life** append a “ZOIC” suffix, which form the names:

Paleozoic, Mesozoic and Cenozoic. These are the names we're usually familiar with.

On the other hand - when talking **Plant Life**- the suffix appended becomes “PHYTIC,” forming the names:

Paleophytic, Mesophytic and Cenophytic for its Eras.

Which Periods represent each Plant Life Era on the Geologic Time Scale?

The **Paleophytic** Era spans from *Silurian to Permian* Period; **Mesophytic** spans from *Triassic to Early Cretaceous*; and **Cenophytic** spans from *Late Cretaceous to Present Day*.

Source citation: Petrifiedwoodmuseum.org.

Amanda Lytle



Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse
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First Class Mail
 Time-Dated Material



www.amfed.org www.amfed.org/efmls [Future Rockhounds](#)

Eight people organized the Gem and Mineral Society of Syracuse in 1951. Since that time it has grown in membership to include adults, families, and young folk. The Society was incorporated in 1969 under the same name.

The objectives of the Society are to stimulate interest in mineralogy, paleontology, and the lapidary arts. Member interests include collecting, identification, and display of minerals, gems, fossils. Members share and develop their artistic skills in jewelry design and creation.

Our monthly meetings provide social and educational experiences. Field trips give collectors chances to find specimens and enjoy the out of doors, exercise and time with old and new friends.

Meetings - 3rd Monday of the month
Future Rockhounds @ 6:30 - General Meeting @ 7:30
(NO Meetings Jul, Aug, Dec)
209 Oswego St (Ponderosa Plaza) Unit 14 & 15, Liverpool, NY
Visitors are ALWAYS welcome!

See online Newsletter <http://gmss.us/resources/newsletter>
 You can also visit our facebook and flickr pages
Annual member dues
Adult \$10 • Family/Couple \$15 • Junior \$5 • Life \$5

If you would like to join or renew membership download the application form (PDF), see <http://gmss.us/about/membershipform.pdf> You can get a form at a meeting or send requests to **GMSS, PO Box 2801, Syracuse, NY 13220** We will mail an application/renewal form to you.

2023 – 2024 GMSS Officers/Contacts

- President:** John Sweeney pres@gmss.club
- Vice-President:** Cathy Patterson vp@gmss.club
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- Hospitality Committee Chair:**
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