



Streamlines

Volume 45, Issue 2
Spring 2010

from Green Valleys Association at Welkinweir

8th Annual Environmental Festival

Saturday May 8, 2010

GVA will hold its 8th annual Environmental Festival, **EnviroFest**, on Saturday, May 8 at our beautiful headquarters, the 197-acre Welkinweir nature sanctuary.

EnviroFest is a unique event in northern Chester County that brings together businesses and non-profits from the areas of sustainable watershed practices, renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, land conservation, green building, energy efficiency, and environmental education.

Educational and entertaining for adults and children alike, this year's EnviroFest will feature live music, local microbrew tasting, fishing, workshops, demonstrations, and much more. Last year over 1,100 people attended; this year, we have moved the event from May 1 to May 8, so that visitors will have an opportunity to tour the 55 acres of gardens at the height of spring bloom!

This year's EnviroFest will benefit from many improvements: spacious tents for exhibitors, an expanded event layout, improved parking and other amenities for visitor and exhibitors, presentations in our education building, house and gardens tours, a mini farmers market, and more children's activities.

See page 3 for a partial listing of speakers and events. We will be updating our website as new events are added.

Join the outdoor fun and learning at Summer Nature Day Camps!



Enjoying a game at GVA's Summer Nature Day Camp 2009.

As the long, cold winter comes to an end it's time to think about the warmth of the summer – and another year of outdoor fun and learning at Summer Nature Day Camps! Our nature camps are designed to engage children in fun and educational outdoor activities in order to foster a better appreciation for the natural world. Themed, weekly camp activities include nature walks, guest presentations, educational games, craft projects, and self-discovery through nature play and exploration of the 197-acres of forest, meadows, and water habitats that Welkinweir has to offer. New programming has been added for this year, including new overnight programming for 9-11 year olds, additional camps for 12-14 year olds, *Nature Play Family Camp* for 4 & 5 year olds and their adults, and an End-of-the-Summer Family Campout.

Earth Day tree planting

Two riparian buffer planting projects celebrate the 40th anniversary of Earth Day. The Green Valleys Association is teaming up with Girl Scouts in the Owen J Roberts School District to plant tree seedlings along our local streams. Twenty-eight troops have committed to plant up to 1,000 trees on two farms. On April 24th the Scouts will plant trees on the former Griffith Farm, now township-owned open space, in Ludwig's Corner, West Vincent Township and at Beaver Farm in Kimberton, East Vincent Township.

The first project will take place in the headwaters of the exceptional value Birch Run north of Ludwig's Corner on the west side of Rt. 100. 700 native trees and shrubs will be planted in an area first identified

See "Earth Day," page 2



PECO, an Exelon company, provides important support for community events like EnviroFest and other projects throughout our region.

8th Annual Run for Green Valleys

**Save the Date:
Saturday, June 5, 2010**

5K Run/Walk begins at 9 a.m

This certified road course will begin and end at the Welkinweir property nestled in historic East Nantmeal Township. The scenic route will lead you through the rolling hills of northern Chester County where picturesque farmland abounds. View for yourself the unspoiled green valleys we strive to preserve.

\$20 Pre-registration until May 28, 2010. \$25 registration on race day. Call Chris Wittlinger at 610-469-4900 to register.

Our Mission is



to protect and preserve the quality and quantity of water resources in northern Chester County through advocacy and education.

GREEN VALLEYS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEASTERN PA

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Webmaster — Suzanne Murphy

Stanley Smith Curatorial Fellow —

Kimberly Oellerich

Streamlines, our quarterly newsletter, highlights local and regional activities focusing on water resource conservation and preservation. If there are water resource issues you would like to learn more about through our newsletter, contact the office at 610-469-4900 or gva@greenvalleys.org.

GVA's new on-line look

Green Valleys Association's home on the Web has been completely renovated. We've changed the look and made it more accessible. The new site will benefit from a constantly growing menu of content and services. We plan expanded versions of our newsletter online with photo slideshows and useful links. GVA press releases on important events and issues will draw new visitors to the site. For young environmentalists, there will be an expanded section of online resources and links to assist them with their learning.

The stream monitoring data section will be especially important to GVA's Mission—there you will find important data from past studies and results from our ongoing stream water quality testing. Our past and current grants and projects will be showcased, as will all the volunteers, donors and funders. We plan to get the mapping resources page up as soon as possible which will eventually include a natural resource interactive mapping tool specific to our area. You'll be able to design your own nature hike, share a picture of that hawk at your feeder to our map, and much, much more.

Advances in software have made the process of updating the website something that GVA can now do in-house. This means web content will be more current and responsive to ongoing issues and projects, while reducing overhead costs. We are working through a lot of material, so some new resources and features will not be immediately available.

We are grateful for the creativity, professionalism, and in-kind donations from our past webmasters Alan Underkoffler and Todd Palmer, and we welcome our new webmaster, Suzanne Murphy. Thanks!

Earth Day, from p. 1

for buffer restoration by West Vincent Township's Environmental Advisory Council and GVA consultants in 2003.

The second project will take place at the non-profit Camphill Special School's Beaver Farm, where a tributary to the exceptional value French Creek flows through. An additional 300 native trees and shrubs will be planted at this site. This project was developed through discussions begun in 2008 between GVA's John Hoekstra and Guy Alma, Development Director for Camphill.

Planting design, education programming, and project coordination is being done by landscape architect Margot Taylor.

Support for these projects will be coming from Green Valleys Association, the Chester County Master Gardeners, the Pennsylvania Landscape and Nursery Association, Bartlett Tree Experts, and other fine local organizations.

The Scouts will create and exhibit a display at the Green Valleys Association's EnviroFest on May 8th to Show 'n' Tell what they've accomplished and to hand out literature and resources that explain the importance of their work.



The new homepage at greenvalleys.org.

Annual StreamDay Cleanup expands into the “Schuylkill Scrub”



Volunteers will join with GVA on May 1 to clean up the streams in northern Chester County.

Since 1997 GVA lead volunteers have gathered annually for StreamDay Cleanup to rid our streams of the refuse that has made its way into and along these streams.

This year GVA, working with the Hay Creek Watershed Association and PA CleanWays, will be organizing with other stream cleanup programs into a regional event aptly named the Schuylkill Scrub. Under the Schuylkill Scrub,

which runs from April 15th to May 31st, existing stream and river cleanups will be registered and promoted, and new cleanup programs throughout the Schuylkill watershed will be fostered.

For more information visit our website. If you'd like to volunteer for a cleanup please contact John Hoekstra at 610-469-2596 or jhoekstra@greenvalleys.org.

Look for our exciting report on the Schuylkill Scrub in our summer newsletter. For more information about stream and river clean-ups occurring around the nation please visit American Rivers National River Cleanup www.americanrivers.org/our-work/restoring-rivers/national-river-cleanup/

Important update for private well owners

Chester County Health Department (CCHD) has discontinued providing low-cost testing for bacteria and other parameters. The EPA recommends having your water tested yearly for total coliform bacteria, nitrates, total dissolved solids, and pH. For a list of certified testing labs visit the CCHD's website <http://dsf.chesco.org/health/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=605580>.

“A Chemical Reaction” Catch the premiere on May 5

The award-winning environmental documentary *A Chemical Reaction* will have its Pennsylvania premiere at the Colonial Theater in Phoenixville event on Wednesday, May 5 at 7 p.m. The event, which will feature a Q&A session with the film's executive producer Paul Tukey, is hosted by GVA and sponsored by Pauline Morton Foundation along with support from the Organic Mechanics Soil Company and the Lionville Natural Pharmacy.

The documentary examines the use of (and bans on) pesticides and fertilizers used in lawn care and their effect in the health of our watersheds. Pesticides can make their way into the natural food chain through the insects eaten by birds, or through direct grazing of grass by wild animals. Fertilizers can travel away from their application point also by rain water. Nitrogen fertilizers can even enter the air as nitrogen oxides which subsequently get rained out and into our watersheds.

To view the movie trailer, visit www.ChemicalReactionMovie.com.

Volunteer at EF!

Volunteers are essential to GVA's mission and we have many opportunities for individuals or groups to get involved in such important work. If you are interested in helping with this year's EnviroFest, contact Victoria Laubach, 610-469-7543.

Envirofest activities, from p. 1

Below is a partial list of EnviroFest 2010 activities. Check the Website for more.

Mike McGrath, keynote speaker, will share the *Seven Secrets of Successful Organic Gardening*



Fishing for kids

Guided house and garden tours

Mini farm market

Renewable energy

Electric transportation

Building energy efficiency specialists

Township Environmental Advisory Councils

Local non-profits

Tree planting, composting and vegetable garden planting demonstrations

Native Plants

Victory Brewing

Local food

Raffles

Reptiles and Raptors programs

calendar

April

Sat, Apr 10 GVA's Summer Nature Day Camp Open House; 9:30 – 11:00 a.m.; at GVA education building. Walk the grounds, see our facilities, and talk to the Education Director to get your camp questions answered and help ease any apprehensions new campers may have. *No advance registration required.*

Sat, Apr 17 Phoenixville Library Program: 'Egg-citing Eggs!'; 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.; at the Library; FREE; Birds aren't the only animals that lay eggs. Go on an egg hunt in search of different kinds of eggs and find out which animals laid them. Appropriate for ages 5 to 12 with adult. *Please call the library to register, 610-933-3013.*

Sat, Apr 17 Wildlife Walk with Sue Lucas; 8 – 9:30a.m.; meet at GVA Education Building; FREE; Enjoy a guided walk throughout Welkinweir in search of local wildlife. Appropriate for ages 6 and up.

Sat, Apr 24 Wildlife Walk with Tom Reeves; 8:00 – 9:30 a.m.; meet at GVA Education Building; FREE; Enjoy a guided walk throughout Welkinweir in search of local wildlife. Appropriate for ages 6 and up.

Sat, Apr 24 Henrietta Hankin Library Program: 'Egg-citing Eggs!'; 10:30-11:30 a.m.; at the Library; FREE; Birds aren't the only animals that lay eggs. Go on an egg hunt in search of different kinds of eggs and find out which animals laid them. Appropriate for ages 4 to 12 with adult. *Registration begins on April 12. Call the library to register, 610-321-1724.*

Fri, Apr 30 Community Nature Program: 'Spring Songs Night Hike' 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.; at GVA education building; Fees (for adults and children): \$4 members, \$6 nonmembers; Who is making those strange noises at night? We'll find out how and why amphibians and other animals call at night as we walk the nature trails in search of them. *Refreshments provided by GVA;* Appropriate for ages 6 and up. *Advance registration required by 4:00 p.m. evening of program.*

May

Sat, May 1 Girl Scout Badge Day at GVA: 'Water Day'; Brownies "Water Everywhere" Try-It from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.; Juniors "Water Wonders" Badge from 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.; Fees: \$7 per Scout; *Advance registration and payment required 7 days prior to program.*

Stream Day Cleanup for more info contact John Hoekstra at 610-469-2596 or jhoekstra@greenvalleys.org .

Sat, May 8 EnviroFest 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sat, May 8 Wildlife Walk with Rick Keyser; 8 – 9:30a.m.; meet at GVA Education Building; FREE; Enjoy a guided walk throughout Welkinweir in search of local wildlife. Appropriate ages 6 and up.

Sun, May 9 Mother's Day Tea and Azalea Bloom Walk 1 – 5 p.m. RSVP only to 610-469-7543 or Welkinweir@gmail.com.

Sat, May 15 Community Nature Program: 'Reptiles!'; 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. at GVA; Fees (for adults and children): \$4 members, \$6 nonmembers; *Refreshments provided by GVA;* Learn more about these scaly critters and the important role they play in the environment as we explore the grounds for reptile homes, eggs, and the snakes and turtles themselves. Children can then make their own "reptile" to take home. *Refreshments provided by GVA.* Appropriate for ages 5 and up. *Advance registration required by 4:00 p.m. Friday, May 14th.*

Sat, May 15 Phoenixville Library Program: 'Water, Water Everywhere'; 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.; at the Library; FREE; What watershed do you live in? How clean is your water? Through demonstrations, we'll find out how wildlife and people use this precious resource and how to protect our local waterways. Appropriate for ages 5 to 12 with adult. *Please call the library to register, 610-933-3013.*

Sat, May 15 Wildlife Walk with Sarah Neto; 8 – 9:30a.m.; meet at GVA Education Building; FREE; Enjoy a guided walk throughout Welkinweir in search of local wildlife. Ages 6 and up.

Sat, May 22 Wildlife Walk with Sue Lucas; 8 – 9:30a.m.; meet at GVA Education Building; FREE; Enjoy a guided walk throughout Welkinweir in search of local wildlife. Ages 6 and up.



The run for Green Valleys. See June 5, below.

June

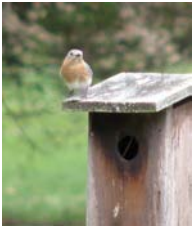
Sat, June 5 GVA's Summer Nature Day Camp Open House; 9:30 – 11:00 a.m.; at GVA education building. Walk the grounds, see our facilities, and talk to the Director of Education to get your camp questions answered and help ease any apprehensions new campers may have. *No advance registration required.*

Sat, June 5 The 8th Annual Run for Green Valleys; Registration 8:00 a.m., 5K Run/Walk begins 9:00 a.m. \$20 *Pre-registration until May 28, 2010, race day registration \$25.* The certified road course will begin and end on the Welkinweir property nestled in historic East Nantmeal Township. The scenic route will travel through the rolling hills of Northern Chester County where picturesque farmland abounds. View for yourself the unspoiled green valleys we strive to preserve.

Welcoming spring

Spring is more welcome than ever after February's amazing snow storms. The witch hazel plantings began to bloom while there was still a foot of snow on the ground. The yellow, coppery orange and red blossoms were dramatic against the whiteness of the ground and the dark green conifers.

In just four weeks there was an incredible transition from winter; we have gone from knee-deep snow to the first tree swallows arriving. The robins swarmed in, eating the remaining fruit off American hollies. Over-wintering birds—cardinals, chickadees, song sparrows, and titmice—began to call, red-winged blackbirds have been busy establishing their territories and the bluebirds are investigating nest boxes as potential homes. The trilling of spring peepers has replaced the roar of snow plows.



Bluebird

As the snows receded, the snowdrops that had already started blooming in January, were once again in evidence. Fortunately, all that snow had not damaged their nodding white bells. These were quickly followed by numerous other early spring bulbs: bright yellow aconites blanketing the ground under deciduous trees, pale purple crocuses scattered throughout the lawn, and deep blue Siberian squills.



Aconite

We can look forward to the succession of bloom as daffodils open, along with fragrant viburnums, winter hazel, and magnolias, the earliest of the spring-blooming trees and shrubs.

As ever, we invite you to enjoy the spring flowering at Welkinweir. Walk the grounds on your own or join one of our naturalist-led walks.



Witch hazel



Snowdrops

Welcome Kim

A warm welcome is extended to Kimberly Oellerich who has accepted the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust funded Curatorial Fellowship position here at Welkinweir Arboretum. She is a 2008 graduate from Penn State and has interned at Epcot, Longwood, and Morris Arboretum. Austin Deputy, currently completing his junior year at Temple's Ambler campus, will be returning as summer intern.

Grant awarded

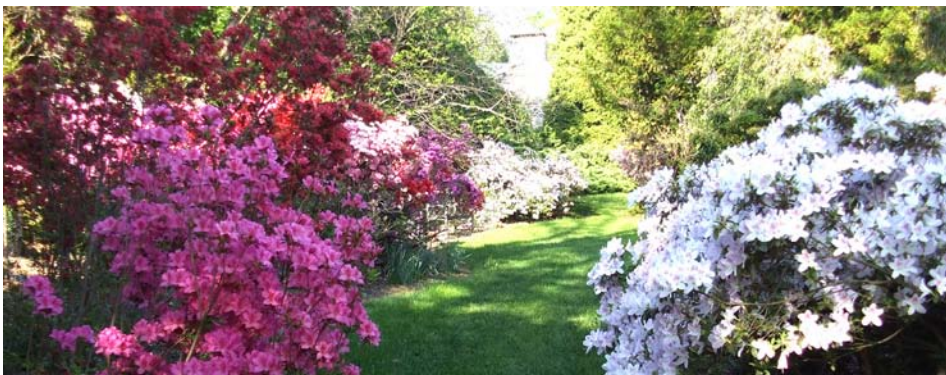
A \$5,000 grant from the Department of Community and Economic Development has been received. This grant, through Senator Rafferty's office, will partially fund salaries for our horticultural interns and allow the purchase of new equipment to help maintain low humidity for our archival records while reducing energy consumption.

Welkinweir Spring Hours

Welkinweir's arboretum and surrounding natural lands are open Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and weekends for members or by appointment.

Annual Mother's Day Tea

Mark your calendar and join us for our Mother's Day Tea on Sunday May 9th, 1–5 p.m. at the height of our azalea collection's colorful bloom. Reserve at 610-469-7543.



Phoenixville Area Middle School partnerships continue

2010 marks the 7th year for the **Environmental Awareness Club** (formerly Eco Action Club) for 6th, 7th and 8th graders interested in learning more about natural resources, careers in conservation, and promoting environmental awareness in their school. Currently the Club's 9 student members will meet once a week after school for 9 weeks and many of their meetings will be field trips to Welkinweir, the Phoenixville Wastewater and Water Plants, and the John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove (just a few of the locations the students will visit) to learn more about local wildlife, natural resource conservation and water pollution and treatment.

Students promote environmental awareness to their fellow students through a battery recycling program (last year, student and teachers recycled over 400 batteries), and through maintenance of the interior courtyard habitat, re-designed and improved by last year's Club members. The courtyard features bird feeders and bird nest boxes, native trees and plants, and a pond with fish and wetland plants.



A 6th grader touches a live ball python during the Adaptations outreach program

GVA's Outreach programs for PAMS teachers are our best known program for four years now. Designed to enhance the school curriculums, both in and out of the classrooms, programs, such as **Habitat Study** and **Adaptations** for 6th graders and the **Wetland Study** for 7th graders, help students become aware of nature in their own community and bring it up close and personal for them. These programs are valued by the teachers and our staff. "It's very rewarding to teach such programs," says Dawn White, GVA's Director of Education, "since many of the students have never seen what is inside of a bird nest box, or touched a turtle shell before."

PAMS programs have been made possible through funding from the Phoenixville Area School District and other foundations. GVA has begun seeking potential funders for the upcoming school year in order to continue our valuable programs at the Phoenixville School District.

Take a walk on the wild side

Wildlife Walks are designed to offer the community a chance to explore the diverse habitats at GVA's home, Welkinweir. Our expert guides, local naturalists and birders, help participants turn up all sorts of sightings; from a variety of migrating birds in the spring and fall, to foraging mammals, emerging wildflowers, and active amphibians in the spring and summer. Join us for a free walk this spring and discover the beauty of Welkinweir, the hidden treasure in your backyard.

We are in need of more walk leaders! If you would like to volunteer to lead a Wildlife Walk, please contact Tom Reeves, at naturalist@verizon.net or 610-361-8027.

Girl and Boy Scout badge programs offered

Badge programs for Girl Scouts and Boy Scout fulfill many of the necessary requirements to earn badges relating to the natural environment. To further the Scouts' appreciation and understanding of the natural world, the programs include hands-on activities and exploration of the forests, fields and streams of Welkinweir.

Programs can be scheduled for individual troops, or troops can choose to work with each other to complete badge requirements during *Badge Days*, specific days set aside for workshops that can accommodate a larger number of troops.

Our next **Badge Day at GVA is Saturday, May 1st**. Brownie troops will work on their "Water Everywhere" Try-It from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.; and Juniors will work on their "Water Wonders" Badge from 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. Fees are \$7 per Scout and advanced registration and payment are required 7 days prior to program.



Girl Scouts perform a water study at GVA during a Water Wonders Badge workshop.

For all program information and registration, contact Dawn White at 610-469-8646, or dwhite@greenvalleys.org.

Thank you to . . .

Dave and Cheryl Zelinger for the funds to continue our family nature programs at the Phoenixville Area and Henrietta Hankin libraries.



Chris Wittlinger

Davida Waters of the Devereaux School for curriculum books, natural items for crafts and many other educational supplies.

Erica Duske for a computer printer.

Herr's Food, Inc. for a discount on snacks for Camp.

Giant Food Stores on Nutt Road in Phoenixville, and Suburbia Shopping Center, Pottstown for gift cards to support our community night hike and campfire.

Christine Wittlinger and Rebecca Seel

for serving as heads of the Education Department for three months while Dawn White was on maternity leave.

Photos: Chris Wittlinger and Beckey Seel read to Nature Club members at West Vincent Elementary School.



Beckey Seel

Make a difference

Donate to the Summer Camp Scholarship Fund

Not everyone can afford to attend GVA's fun and educational camps. Five children are already on our scholarship waiting list and our goal is to make it possible for each of them, and any others, to attend one week of camp. A donation of \$175 is needed to sponsor one child, but any amount is appreciated. All donations are tax-deductible. Change a child's life by contributing today. You can send your contribution to GVA's Summer Camp Scholarship Fund, 1368 Prizer Road Pottstown, PA 19465.

Library Programs rescued

Recently our free nature-themed family programs offered at the Phoenixville Area and Henrietta Hankin libraries were in danger of being suspended due to lack of funding to the library budgets. GVA sought our members' support and a generous donation from members *Dave and Cheryl Zelinger* will allow us to continue programming at both libraries through the fall, to expand our programs to the Pottstown area library and to hire an educator to teach all library programs.

Explore nature at Kinder Nature Classes

Discover the wonders of nature with your children at Kinder Nature Classes offered each fall and spring for preschool and kindergartners and their parents. This spring we are offering 5 programs for 3-5 year olds. Sign up for one or more! Hands-on activities, stories, crafts, and nature hikes introduce young children to the natural world. More details and a registration form at www.greenvalleys.org or contact Dawn White.

Each program meets from 12:30 – 1:45 p.m. at GVA and is for ages 3 – 5 with an adult. Individual program fee (per child): \$5 for members, \$7 for nonmembers. All programs include a craft, story, nature walk and activities.

Tue, Apr 6 'Signs of Spring' Look for animals returning from winter vacation, flowers blooming, frogs calling, and more. *Advance registration required by Monday, April 5th.*

Tue, Apr 13 'Things with Wings' Discover the world of flying animals. *Advance registration required by Monday, April 12th.*

Tue, Apr 20 'Discover the Stream' Use your senses to explore the stream and find out what lives there. *Advance registration required by Monday, April 19th.*

Tue, Apr 27 'Grow a Garden' Explore the garden and plant some of your own garden vegetables and flowers. *Advance registration required by Monday, April 26th.*

Tue, May 4 'Busy Bees' Become a 'bee' to learn how they live and taste some of the food they make. *Advance registration required by Monday, May 3rd.*

Donations sought

New or gently used:

- camping tents
- canopies (3, 10x10')
- crayons and washable markers
- medium and large storage bins with sealing lids
- painting smocks (children's or adults' sizes)
- children's garden gloves and spades
- kites
- metal or plastic strainers with handles

Please join us . . .

Join GVA or Renew Your Membership Today! *ONLINE MEMBERSHIP now available!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

ZIP _____ Phone _____

Township _____

Watershed _____

Email _____

I would like to volunteer time to GVA.

Dues and contributions are tax-deductible. Green Valleys Association is a registered charitable organization. A copy of the registration and financial information is available by calling 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Make checks payable to Green Valleys Association and mail with Membership Form to 1368 Prizer Road, Pottstown, PA 19465. Visa/MasterCard accepted—please call office.

BASIC MEMBERSHIPS Check if this is a gift membership

Basic Membership includes quarterly newsletter, notice of events and programs, access to Welkinweir grounds, reduced rate to special programs (including summer environmental camp) and fishing with a GVA permit.

Supporter \$50.00

Naturalist \$100.00

Environmentalist \$250.00

Protector \$500.00

Preservationist \$750.00

Steward \$1,000.00

SUPPORTING CONTRIBUTION

Friend of Welkinweir \$25.00

FISHING PERMIT

Welkinweir Fishing Permit \$5.00



Green Valleys Association
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Pottstown, PA 19465

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