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SAG RAG

VOL. 10 No. 6

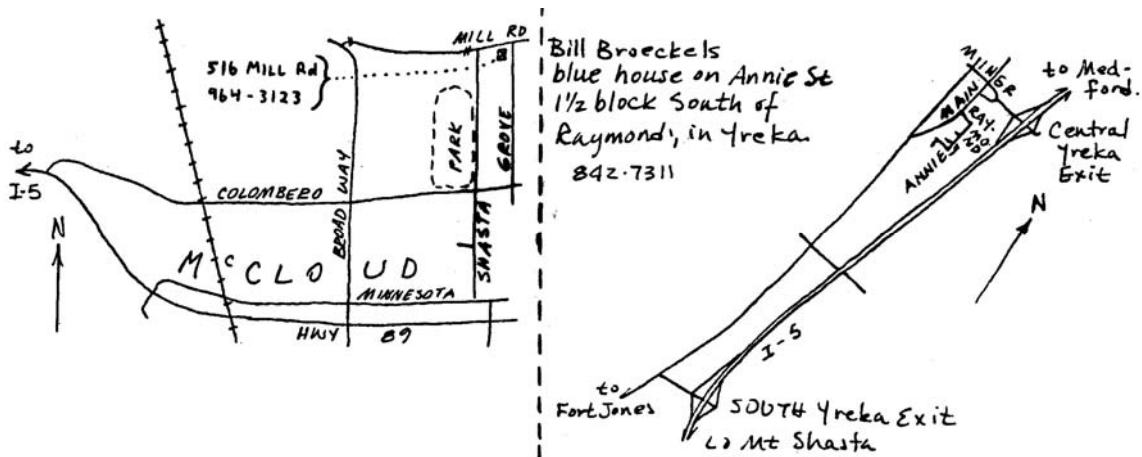


The SAG RAG is published bi-monthly by the Shasta Area Grotto of the National Speleological Society. Typist: Judy Broeckel; Typist's Assistant: Bill Broeckel, 524 Annie Street, Yreka, CA 96097-3015. Newsletter Review Editor: Dick LaForge, 450 Redmond Road, Eureka, CA 95501. Printing: Ray Miller. Grotto Meetings are held the second Friday of each month at 7:30 pm. Meeting locations are announced in the newsletter. Membership dues (including newsletter) are \$6, due January 1, and prorated by quarter. Uncopyrighted material may be copied, with credit given to the author and the SAG RAG.

CALENDAR

Jan. 10, 1992 Grotto meeting 7:30 at Wolffs' home in McCloud.

Feb. 15, 1992 Grotto meeting 7:30 at Broeckel's home in Yreka.



Jan. 24-26, 1992 Oregon Caves Restoration project. Contact: Liz Wolff, PO Box 865, McCloud CA 96097 964-3123

1992 NSS CONVENTION

August 3 - 7
Salem, INDIANA

Mark your calendar now and plan to come to what is guaranteed to be the largest NSS Convention ever! The campground has a private lake, beachfront, barefootin' grass, cabins, lodges, and plenty of camping. Caving will be highly encouraged with a guidebook which will highlight over 80 Indiana Caves.

INDIANA, THE HEARTLAND OF THE KARSTLAND

Register now (until 12/31/91) for only \$60.
Send a check to 1992 NSS Convention, PO Box 2929, Indpls, IN 46206
Please note that **ALL fees are completely REFUNDABLE!**

MINUTES from the SAG meeting, Nov. 8, 1991. Present were George and Dorothy Reel (hosting), Bill Broeckel, Liz Wolff, and Jim and Bea Kottinger. Jim K. presided as V.P. October minutes were approved as corrected with the Treasurer's report. Income (Western Regional) – \$451.54. Expenses from Regional – \$246.49. Balance on hand – \$504.56. Old business – Jim Wolff's article about the Western Regional was reviewed, with photos by Neal Smith. This is for the CAL CAVER. Nice job, men! Liz Wolff reported on the Cave Restoration Project at Oregon Caves, Nov. 2, 1991. She was interviewed on Channel 10 TV news. We were invited to return in January. Also report was given of the Columbus Day Speleocamp in the Marble Mountains. New business – Jim K. presented his comment on the cave management plan for Sequoia/King's Canyon Natl. Parks. Nominations were accepted for 1992 SAG officers. Finally, we agreed to notify local newspapers of upcoming SAG meetings. Meeting time – 1 hr 3 m. This summary was condensed from more detailed notes. Respectfully submitted by Dorothy Reel, Secretary.

MINUTES (unofficial) from the SAG meeting and Christmas dinner, Dec. 14, 1991. Present were Mark Fritzke and Linda Villatore (hosting and most of cooking), John Bair, Julie Donavon, Joel Despain, Kyle Fedderly, Jim Wolff, Al and Phylis Henderson, Dick LaForge, and Bill and Judy Broeckel with their children Becky and Benj. Jim W. called the meeting to order. The November minutes were not read, but were accepted along with the Treasurer's report. Liz Wolff has submitted a Treasurer's report showing a balance of \$496.53. Old business – SAG elections were discussed, and the office of Treasurer will be placed on the ballot on a write-in basis. New Business – The next Oregon Caves Restoration Project week-end was set on the last week-end in January, Jan. 24-26, 1992. The Jefferson State Grotto is to be invited to join SAG on this trip. Meeting time – 8 ½ minutes. After the meeting, Dick LaForge conducted a brainstorming session regarding Marble Mountain cave rescue, and showed some of his excellent slides.

Meet the Typist's Assistant. William Francis Broeckel was born near El Cajon, California, 12/20/55. He's six feet tall, smart, and a great dad, which qualifies him well for his number one duty as typist's assistant – distracting our two kids. Bill majored in Biology at Pacific Union College. Luckily for me this included some Geology so I have someone to help me decipher the fascinating but technical writings of say Dick LaForge! Bill's achievements outside of caves include having a photograph published in the New England Journal of Medicine. He is a pediatrician in Yreka, CA, where he spends his off work hours, hiking, writing, climbing to the highest points of various California counties, and oh, yes, caving. He is a far better caver than I, with more experience and more guts. He's been finding holes to poke into for years, and seems remarkably pleased to have found a group of other people who spend time similarly. by Judy Broeckel

COVER: Adapted from How the Grinch Stole Christmas by Dr. Seuss.

“Staring down from his cave
with a sour grinchy frown,
At the warm lighted windows
Below in their town.”

Note that the Grinch will be leading a tour to the wild portions of his cave on New Years Day. Everybody meet in the hills above Whoville.
(Typist note – Alternate date 4/1)

THE 1991 WESTERN REGIONAL MEET

by Liz Wolff

The weekend began for those working to set up the campground and activity areas nearly a week before the regional began. A water tank was arranged for and water was located at Slagger Camp since Harris Springs had dried up. Kottingers and Wolffs planned for the areas of the rescue seminar, meeting and auction, breakfast, and slide show. Reels bought the ingredients for the breakfast while they vacationed, and Ray finally got away for his vacation, missing the Regional in the process. Registrations trickled in and buttons were made.

Friday, the 27th, dawned clear or cloudy, depending on whether you were near Harris Springs or not. Kottingers and Reels had arrived the night before to be sure to be on hand for the septic service people. Port-a-potties arrived and the water tank was picked up and filled. Wolffs pulled in just after noon, having put up signs enroute to the campground. Then it began to rain, thunder, and hail, just as the first of 82 cavers and 2 dogs pulled into the camp. The rain only lasted an hour but was enough to settle the dust and the bees for the entire weekend. We had the non-exclusive use of the grounds and one hunter was there to take in the organization and activities of cavers; he had never seen so many people in that area before.

On Saturday the rescue seminar began a bit later than Ken Laidlaw, the rescue expert, wanted but it was well attended and everyone learned a lot. The cave trips were well attended as well. Sixteen cavers were led to the Freudian Complex, stopping by Three Level Ice Cave on the return trip. One caver walked the 0.8 mile from camp to see Red Tape Cave. Many others visited Harris Mtn, Pallet and Deep Ice caves and Catwalk Cave. Some talked of going to Lava Beds too.

As darkness descended the regional meeting got under way. Business covered Cal Caver costs and editorial policy; region finances, and the disposition of funds. Dues were raised to \$6 for NSS members. Region chair Derek Hoyle did an excellent job of maintaining order during the airing of KMCTF's discussion of the Cal Caver's editorial policy. A fund was established for the Cal Caver.

Then came the auction. The Bobcat Cave cache had been donated to the region and good prices were gotten for some of it. Some boxes were sold with mystery contents. Bidding was brisk for the Bosted photos, but disappointing for Billy Post which was reserved for another auction, along with many other items.

Sunday brunch was served to 72 with everyone getting his fill. A cup of hot coffee was the item most in demand, then the sausages, eggs, pancakes, and orange juice. Some cavers pulled out early to go home or to go caving; others wandered around talking to people hadn't seen in awhile. The major complaint heard was that the weekend was too short.

The campground was empty of all but Kottingers, Reels, and Wolffs at noon. Clean up began in earnest. The water tank emptied, garbage collected, fire rings checked for hot coals, forgotten items gathered, and the campground given the once over. Signs were taken down and a final good-bye said to some cavers leaving from that "one last cave" as we headed to Ash Creek to return the water tank, and McCloud to dump the trash. All in all it was a good weekend. Organization pays.



1991 WESTERN REGIONAL
HARRIS SPRINGS
SEPT 28-29

OREGON CAVES RESTORATION Nov. 1-3, 1991

First view by Phylis Henderson

In accordance with previous directions, we arrived early at the caves, about 4:30 pm on a dark and dismal afternoon. As it turned out, this was very early; we were the first ones there, and "somewhat unexpected". We ran into a person while wandering into the gift shop entrance. He showed us to the sleeping areas, pointed out the ones that were warmed, and those that were not. He also showed us the eating area and how to get there in the early morning.

This person turned out to be Chaz Davis, one of the many nice people at the caves. He even has a good taste in music. We appreciated his helpfulness. In any case, since we were the first, we picked the best place to sleep. It was warm.

After staking our claim, we retired to the lodge to oversee the fire building, and comment on its progress, while we were waiting for the others to arrive. No couches caught on fire, no doubt due to proper supervision.

Dinner was prompt and good along with the other meals.

The next morning we were on our way with buckets, shovels, and other tools. After a review of the work required, three of us, Jeff, Al and I found ourselves in the upper area of the Ghost Room, just south of the new tour path. There we grubbed in the red clay based dirt and rocks. Our objective was to remove an old trail fill to restore the area to its original state (I think). Our tools were somewhat inadequate, and the dirt seemed to be heavily impregnated with lead. In spite of this, progress seemed good.

As time passed, we were joined by others and after lunch, with better tools and more people, progress became even better.

About 4:15 pm, there was a general decrease in activity and everyone began congregating in our work area. After some minor indecision (understated), the work party proceeded toward the downstream exit.

With some pauses along the way, we exited the cave through the 110 exit. Just after passing through the gate, a small bat flew into my face, well, almost into my face. I couldn't determine the species, probably because I was moving too fast.

When we emerged, it was almost dark with a short walk and a pleasant evening ahead of us. Since our last time here was a tour in 1953, we found this a very pleasant and interesting experience.

Second view by Bill McGahey

Cindy Wright and I arrived for my second SAG restoration outing at Oregon Caves with the ulterior motive of revisiting the Bone Room, but the cave had a lesson in patience and humility in mind.

Saturday morning found us following John Holt up to the exit tunnel with tools in hand and a sumptuous breakfast inside. We worked near the exit tunnel on three projects: removing rubble from the South passage, chipping cement from the ceiling near the stairway to the ghost room, and removing the built-up pathway to the old stairway into the south ghost room. Our group worked hard keeping up with Bair's maniacal pace, and we were all proud of what we had accomplished. It was especially enjoyable to cool off for dinner by exploring a few small delicately decorated passages.

As if turkey dinner and birthday cake and ice cream for Kelly (sweet sixteen!) weren't enough, Jim, Wayne, John, Julie, Kevin (cave guide) and I enjoyed a spelunking tour of narrow canyon passage near Jacob's Well in addition

to an unsuccessful search for the Bone Room. Kevin showed us a small side passage above some flowstone I was hesitant to climb, but it had some gorgeous formations, and interesting historical graffiti. We went to bed after a steam shower. (Only scalding hot water available!)

Sunday breakfast was French Toast and bacon by Kevin, and goodbyes for most of the crew. John, Julie, Cindy W. and I went on a final trip to pick up carbide dumps, not coincidentally in the area of the Shovel Room. John, and to some extent I, became quite intimate with most every conceivable breakdown crawlway in or near that part of the cave, and we finally did discover a chute above the narrow chimney that was the last point I knew for sure was on the route. We enjoyed once again the crystal ceilings, boxwork, clay worms, and even the exposed rough marble surface of Echo Dome, but left the second time in as many days without achieving our objective. (Jay, where are you when we need you?)

We did compensate for our impact by removing two carbide dumps, and the cave's taunting me only makes me love it more. I am eager for the opportunity to uncover the mystery of where we went astray.

I am also convinced there are few more idyllic excursions than this: hard but gratifying work, easy cave access, hot! showers, gourmet food, and excellent company.

Third view by Liz Wolff

The November trip to Oregon Caves was pretty quiet this year with lots of work being done. No couch fires greeted us, but the usual hospitality and good food did. First arrivals Al and Phylis Henderson were setting up camp in the dormitories when Bill McGahey and Cindy Wright arrived just before Jim and Liz Wolff with Matt and Sara, and friends Wayne and Cindy Repass with their kids Jeff and Kelly. Sara and Kelly were going to baby-sit the Broeckel kids, but Broeckels were unable to attend at the last minute. Late arrivals John Bair and Julie Donovan (of Arcata) were greeted the next morning over breakfast.

John Roth, cave specialist for the monument, arrived as we kitted up for the cave and told us what we'd be doing for the day. He also told us that channel 10 TV news would be in the cave to see what we were doing and talk to some of us. John toured the areas to be worked, then we split into three work groups. Most of the crew elected to move rock out of the South Canyon Passage near the airlock door of the exit tunnel, a few dug out a filled-in stream course, and fewer still chipped out old cement that had been applied to the walls above the Ghost Room. Lint removal was offered too, but there were no takers after John showed us the sodden lint and gave a verbal description of its consistency.

Liz, Cindy, and Cindy chipped cement until noon. Chas Davis, Concessionaire, introduced the cement chippers as the "Anita Hill Brigade" to the news reporter. The "Brigade" was videotaped and interviewed as they worked. The cement had been curing there for 50 years and was quite hard. It was finally chipped off the wall. Some areas had been four inches thick; it was exciting to have a large slab of red colored cement come off. Boxwork formations and some crumbly white moonmilk were found underneath the cement. Electrical cables had been covered with the cement and had to be removed as well. The cement removal was done by 3 PM following a lunch of cheeseburgers. Light coatings of soft cement remained to be wire brushed away later.

The trail through the area where the rock removal was going on looked like it had walls built on either side late that afternoon; crews would be coming into the cave later in the year to remove all that rock. The stream course crew had made

quite a hole in the old trail and filled in an area that had been excavated. All the crews regrouped and headed out of the cave via the "110 entrance". We stopped by the Grand Column to look at the pristine white formations in the crawlway there.

Dinner that night was turkey with all the trimmings. It was Kelly's birthday so there was lots of dessert – 2 chocolate and 1 cherry cake that night and a pumpkin pie. Most of the cavers chose to re-enter the cave that night to see some other areas. They saw the River Styx and Jacob's well.

(Typist note: If this cave restoration work sounds like fun to you, consider attending the next SAG week-end at Oregon Caves on the last week-end of January, Jan. 24-26, 1992. Be sure and call Liz Wolff at (916) 964-3123 ahead of time if you are interested in helping out.)

MARBLE MOUNTAINS SPELEOCAMP – 1991

By Jim Wolff

This year's Columbus Day Speleocamp was one of concerted effort. Like for instance consider the day when "everyone" in camp went into Bigfoot Cave, and the next day everyone went into Apogee Cave! Although most of the concentrated efforts were over the long week-end, a few cavers stayed up in the Marbles all through the week following and did more than I report here. What was done in Bigfoot over this week-end will be reported later by someone else, in some other newsletter.

Arriving at the trailhead late Friday evening, I slept in the truck. So the next day, after a rather good sleep, I set off with my fairly heavy pack. I had some repaired caving equipment, more food than I could possibly eat (I didn't want to starve!) and too much clothing (I didn't want to freeze!) and extra batteries (all the heavy items, you notice?) ... Well, after reaching camp, I wasn't up to anything big, but went "cave hunting" with Bill Broeckel anyway. It was really like, "Hey, isn't this the new entrance to Skunk Hollow Cave?" (and answering myself) "Yes it is!" "Why don't we go in the main entrance and have a look at it from below, eh?"

Skunk Hollow's new entrance is a vertical crack of climbable dimensions..., up to a point. At the connection juncture where it dumps into the cave, there is a ceiling hole that is centered in the dome overhead. It would be easy, but the return would be the pits, literally! A drop of perhaps 8-9 feet puts the caver in the second large room of the cave, on the left as you enter. It was good that we went in the main entrance to see this lead, the other route risks a broken ankle or worse.

Next we wandered around the surface above Skunk Hollow, looking for Wahashun Cave. Bill found it, so he had the honor of going down. We had not really looked at the map, so we



"You guys are born witnesses... He laughed when my marshmallow caught on fire."

failed to recall that full vertical gear is recommended in the KMCTF's description of the cave! Bill got within a few feet of the floor of the pit and had to turn back because it belled out. We will be back someday, prepared to use rope this time. Nice little cave, and so close to camp, too.

Several other trips went to digs, and there was some mapping done too. For instance there was the exploration of a new entrance to Bigfoot, discovered late last year by Cynthia Ream. This time they had plenty of rope to explore and map this new portion of the Meatgrinder section, netting several hundred feet of cave

Apogee Cave was on the agenda Sunday, with many leads and a dig to do. Since there were eight or none of us going into the cave around the same time, there would be some waiting expected, to go down and then up the 80 foot pit inside the cave. After several cavers went down, it was noticed that the rope was next to and under a 50+ pound rock that moved when the rope went taut. Dick was on the rope, so we told him to stop moving! We assessed the situation as disastrous and had Dick return to the top of the rope. We pulled the rope up and told the people to head for safety, and then let the rock fall. After the dust settled I went down the rope, kicking the rock off several ledges in the process. The rock cleared most of the ledges, but bouncing off one ledge it hit the opposite wall, twenty or more feet away. At impact the rock shattered into a million pieces with some flying 40' or more away and striking the leg of a caver who thought she was a safe distance from the action.

After everyone was at the bottom safely, we teamed up by desired length of trip. I went with Cynthia Ream (trip leader), Midori Sundquist, Dick LaForge, and Julie Donovan. We were to look around the Big Room area, mop up a lead, and find anything that wasn't on our copy of the map and survey it! Of course, we had to refer to the map often to find where we were in the cave. Dick and I went into a side room in which we found the passage continuing as a steep tube above a breakdown-choked crack in the wall. Dick climbed up as I fiddled with my carbide light. I THOUGHT I had chosen a safe and out-of-the-way spot to do tills, but when I heard a sound I looked up to see a rock the size of a melon coming at me! The rock went between my legs and crashed into a void between rocks behind my knees, glancing off to hit the wall behind me. After composing myself, I went to my lamp to finish the repair job while waiting for Dick's return.

After rejoining Cynthia, Midori, and Julie, we soon were mapping merrily along in virgin passage. I found the passage sparkling with a crystal-lined crust on a floor of untracked mud, and just littered with BONES! I let Dick go ahead and chose a route around the most sensitive areas as we mapped. Midori went crazy over each find. There are some massive bones that are bigger than a bear. That new discovery, the Bones of Contention passage, is so strange that it must have a unique geological history to go with it. It will be nice to keep the traffic to a minimum in this new discovery, until the bones can be studied. This passage leads back into the Big Room and has no apparent leads off of it.

The area around the Big Room needs to be looked at a lot more. Because of the sandwich-like arrangement of the layers of passages between huge blocks of breakdown it will be a certain nightmare to illustrate this cave on two-dimensional maps. Good luck mappers of this fine cave!

The trip out was as if everyone had had his fill all at once. So, it was one long wait to get on the rope. Some went poking around in the cave, in order to kill time and keep warm while they waited ... Time? Why it was only 3 AM when we got out of the cave! Considering we didn't start the trip until 1 PM or so, it wasn't that bad of a trip after all.

Dick's Newsletter Review by Dick LaForge. For this issue of the Rag I have another in Cindy Heazlit's short introductions to the climbing hardware essential for vertical caving. Here is a page on the venerable Jumar and similar types of ascenders.

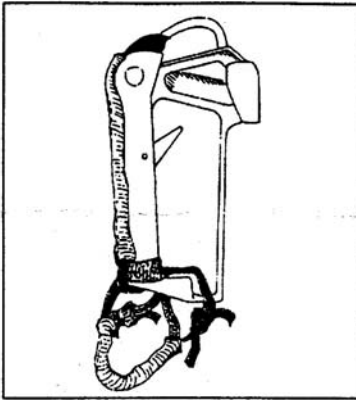
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From SFBC Newsletter, Vol. 34, No. 5, May 1991, page 2

Equipment: The Jumar Ascender

Text by Cindy Heazlit

Illustrations from *Wilderness Search and Rescue* by Tim Setnika



Jumar, Clog, Petzel and CMI ascenders are used mostly in Mitchell, Texas, and Frog ascending rigs. These ascenders all have one major advantage over the Gibbs ascender, or even the Prusik knot. They are VERY easy to get on or off rope.

Their disadvantages are numerous. They are quite expensive, and weaker than the Gibbs. They have sharp teeth on the cams, which can wear the rope, especially under shock loading. These sharp teeth also mean that the ascender can only bear the weight of a single body - the extra weight would stress regular ropes. On some ascenders, the parts are not replaceable, which means replacing the entire ascender when parts become worn. These ascenders may also be torqued off a rope, especially when in the horizontal position. Despite the negatives, these ascenders are very popular due to their great convenience. In multi-pitch caves, where easy on and off are required, this is the only type of ascender one will see.

Mechanical ascenders may be cast, formed, or machined. Cast ascenders are the most susceptible to stress fractures if dropped, especially in a cold cave. Machined ascenders are also susceptible, but less so. Most cams for these ascenders are made from stainless steel.

One should not clip a carabiner directly in to the handle of these ascenders, as this could induce a torque and stress the metal. The safest attachment is to run some webbing from the top hole of the ascender down through the bottom hole, and clip the carabiner in through the bottom loop. One should check this loop frequently, as the nylon webbing will be rubbing against the rope and will wear out faster than normal.

When clipping in, make sure that the cam is not caught back in a partly locked position. It is no fun to pop off the rope half way up a pit!

The following are some statistics on the more popular ascenders:

JUMAR These are the weakest of the ascenders, although they are the least expensive. They are made of cast aluminum, and will clip in to a 7 - 14 mm rope. The gray ascenders will hold up to 160 kg, the yellow ones 680 kg. They come in right or left handed models.

PETZEL Comes in 3 styles, Expedition (big handle), Jammer (little handle), Croll (no handle). The Croll is for a chest attachment only. Do not use it for a foot or hand attachment. The Expedition will hold up to 880 pounds. The cams have downward slanting teeth for some self cleaning. The Croll comes only in a right handed model, the Expedition comes in right or left handed models.

CMI CMI stands for Colorado Mountain Industries, the manufacturer. These ascenders can be used on ropes 7 - 16 mm in diameter. They are made from machined aluminum, and weigh 8 ounces. The cam, spring, and axle are made of stainless steel. They come in right or left handed models.

CLOG Basically the same as the Petzel. It is made from formed aluminum.

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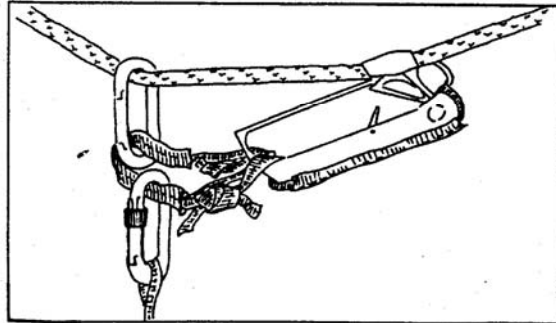
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Due January 1.

(Typist note: Attention here everybody, it is time
to pay up. And what a deal! Happy Caves!)

SAG RAG
524 Annie Street
Yreka CA 96097

STAMP

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