

Potomac ALMANAC

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Retired Chief James Seavey pins the chief's badge on Corinne Piccardi, who was sworn in as new head of the Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department on Monday, Jan. 22. She is the county's first female fire chief.

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PHOTO BY PEGGY McEWAN

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News



A pipe on the bed of the C&O Canal by
Great Falls Tavern keeps water from filling
the canal during construction.



Workers construct a temporary causeway
across the C&O Canal near Great Falls
Tavern.

Park Repairs Underway

Year-long project
affects C&O.

BY PEGGY MCEWAN
THE ALMANAC

Visitors to the C&O National Historical Park at Great Falls in Potomac can already see evidence of a \$6.7 million project to improve local sections of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal.

The canal has been drained between Little Falls, below Glen Echo, and Violettes Lock near mile marker 22. Pipe has been laid on the canal bed to drain water from the construction, orange fencing is up to guide visitors safely along the towpath and workers have begun preliminary construction.

It's a big project according to Pete Peterson, supervisory park ranger for the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park Palisades District which includes all of the park in Montgomery County.

"Eight different structures are going to be repaired, in stages, over the next 500 days," Peterson said.

The National Park Service announced the project, called Maintaining the Flow, last month.

"A \$6.7 million construction project will soon be underway to improve several locks, waste weirs,

bridges and other water control structures within one of the most popular segments of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park (C&O Canal). These improvements will help the park's historic structures withstand impacts from Potomac River floods and make the features easier to maintain," a December press release said.

More than 5,000,000 visitors a year visit the park, according to the press release.

Peterson said the whole project is going to take all of 2018 and probably to April 2019.

"It's temporary," Peterson said. "The end goal is to enhance the structures and the visitor experience."

Areas of the park that will be directly impacted by construction are Swain's Lock, Great Falls Tavern, Olmstead Island, Carderock, Rock Run Culvert and Lock 7 – Glen Echo.

Peterson said visitors to the park will be directed around construction and have full access to the towpath and trails in the park.

He said the Charles Mercer, the Park's excursion boat will not operate this summer since there will be no water in the canal. He is hoping that visitors will be able to go on the boat for interpretive programs.

"We will be having interpretive programs, living history and guided walks," he said.

More information can be found at www.nps.gov/choh, the park's website.

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Hail to the Chief

Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department installs county's first female fire chief.

BY PEGGY McEWAN
THE ALMANAC

Corinne Piccardi, a 19-year member of Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department, was installed Monday, Jan. 22, as the department's chief, the first female to earn the rank of chief in Montgomery County. She has been serving as acting fire chief, taking over the reins from James Seavey who served in that position for 26 years.



PHOTO BY PEGGY McEWAN/THE ALMANAC

Brooke Holden, Tatyana Tareq, Kerry Pullano and Amy Ballard, from left, probationary members of Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department, watch as Corrine Piccardi is sworn in as first fire rescue chief in Montgomery County.

"Corrine has been here almost 20 years," Seavey said. "She and I hit it off very quickly because she is such a worker. She said her goal was to be chief of this department."

The new chief expressed her thanks to Seavey and to her family for their support and to all of the volunteer firefighters who work to keep their communities safer. She pointed out that 69 percent of all firefighters in the United States are volunteers.

"My success could not have happened without those in this room and those who sat in this room before and those who will in the future," Piccardi said. "My job is to find the balance between [the past and the future.]"

Piccardi said she looks forward to the challenges ahead.

In a press release announcing her appointment, Michael Harting, Cabin John Park VFD board president, called her "a visionary — a forward thinker who brings not only a wealth of background and experience to the chief's position but also respects the heritage and community values of the Cabin John, West Bethesda and Potomac citizens we serve."

Piccardi, 47, is a Baltimore resident. She is married to Monika Piccardi and is the mother of Nicole, 18, and Riley, 8, who were at Monday's dinner and swearing in, celebrating with CJPVFD members and fire officials from Montgomery County.

The fact that her mother is the first female fire chief in Montgomery County is an inspiration, Nicole said.

"It's showed me that no matter who I am, I can do anything," she said. "It makes me proud to be her daughter."

Kerry Pullano, 17, and Brooke Holden, 18, probationary members of CJPVFD, said they find it inspiring to have a female chief to look up to.

"It's empowering because, like me being a probationary member, ... to see how far you can go," Pullano said.

Besides Piccardi's long track record in all department ranks, the board and membership cited her specialty training and qualifications in fire suppression, emergency medical service, swift-water rescue and community outreach in a press release.

"The new chief will oversee more than 100 active firefighters and emergency medical service, administrative and auxiliary volunteers. Her leadership philosophy and approach to public safety management are straightforward," the press release said.

"Everything we do is to make the community safer," Piccardi is quoted in the release. "I don't believe in stagnation. We can consistently explore ways to better serve our citizens, fellow first-responders and volunteers."

Born and raised in Manly, New South Wales, Australia, Piccardi holds a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Sydney and taught locally in Potomac and Bethesda private schools for 13 years as well as seven years in Australia. She is a nationally certified full-time firefighter/paramedic with the Manchester Fire Department in Carroll County and works part-time for Baltimore County's newly established Upperco Volunteer Fire Department.

"I hope that I am the first of many female volunteer firefighters who put in the work and achieve the rank of Chief Officer. The



PHOTO BY ED TENNEY

New Chief Corinne Piccardi with retired Chief James Seavey.

fire service is a male-dominated industry and that is particularly evident in the volunteer service. This is a nationwide trend and not just evident in Montgomery County. All fire organizations struggle to recruit and retain women on the fire side of the service, the EMS side of the service is more attractive. Why that is, is a discussion that could take hours. MCFRS and CJPVFD has provided me with every opportunity to succeed but it is 2017 and we are still having to highlight the progress of women into a role that they are very capable of filling because we still meet resistance simply because of our sex," Piccardi wrote in a December email.

Har Shalom Players To Present 'The Secret Garden'

Working together like a family.

BY SUSAN BELFORD
THE ALMANAC

"The Secret Garden' is all about second chances and realizing one's potential when in a different environment. Many of the characters are damaged and unhappy but with nurturing and care, they become fuller people that they didn't know they could be. Just like a garden that some may write off as 'dead,' people can be rejuvenated with work and love." Paul Rossen, vocal director for "The Secret Garden" defines the essence of this inspirational play — a performance that will delight and invigorate audiences of all ages.

The Har Shalom Players (HSP) — a cast of 51 including students



The Secret Garden family photo: Back row, from left, are Steve Cairns (Archibald Craven), Eric Jones (Dr. Neville Craven), and Paul Loebach (Captain Albert Lennox). Front row, from left, are Megan Evans (Lily), Blake Strauch (Colin), Meredith Abramson (Mary Lennox), and Michelle Moses-Eisenstein (Rose Lennox).

from five area schools — will perform "The Secret Garden" at Congregation Har Shalom's Burke Sanctuary with performances at 8 p.m. on Saturday Jan. 27 and at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 28.

The production team for this year's musical is led by Shelly Horn (director), Marci Shegogue (orchestra director), Paul Rossen (vocal director) and Ken Lechter and Stew Remer (producers).

In this production, a young girl wants to "make things grow." Her story, written by Frances Hodgson Burnett more than a hundred years ago is still transformational. The musical tells the story of 11-year old Mary Lennox, a girl raised in India during the 1920s who was sent to live with her only remaining relatives in Yorkshire, England due to her parent's death from

SEE 'SECRET,' PAGE 6

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WINTER FUN & ENTERTAINMENT

Submit entertainment announcements at www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday.

ONGOING

The Wonder People. Through Feb. 25 at Photoworks Gallery, in Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. "The Wonder People" exhibit is a series of portraits of children and adults caught in the global refugee crisis. Photographer Dorte Verner captured the exhibited photographs of people from Afghanistan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Kurdistan, Myanmar, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria and more over the past one and a half years. Visit www.glenechopark.org.

DANCING

Thang Ta. Wednesdays, 6-7 p.m. at Sutradhar Institute of Dance and Related Arts, 1525 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring. Learn the ancient art of the sword and spear. \$25. www.dancesidra.org.

Weekly Blues Dance. Thursdays 8:15-11:30 p.m. in the Back Room Annex at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. Capital Blues presents rotating DJs and instructors with beginner workshop 8:15-9 p.m., no partner necessary. \$8 for all. capitalblues.org

Weekly Swing Dance. Saturdays, 8 p.m.-midnight. The DC Lindy Exchange presents a swing dance with live music in the Spanish Ballroom, Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Beginner swing dance lesson at 8 p.m., followed by dancing. Admission \$16-\$18, age 17 and under \$12. Visit www.glenechopark.org.

Argentine Tango with Lessons. Most Sundays, 6:30-11 p.m. in the Back Room Annex at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd., Glen Echo. Argentine Tango lessons followed by a Milonga most Sunday evenings. Beginner lesson 6:30-7:30 p.m. and intermediate lesson 7:30-8:30 p.m. Cost is \$15/lesson and includes the Milonga. For just the Milonga, cost is \$10 and the open dance with DJ runs 8:30-11 p.m. No partner required. Visit www.glenechopark.org.

Contra and Square Dance. Fridays and Sundays 7-10:30 p.m. in the Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Blvd. The evening can include square dances, mixers, waltzes and other couple dances. All Contra and Square dances are taught, no partner necessary. Lessons at 7 p.m., followed by the called dance with live music at 7:30. \$13 for nonmembers, \$10 for FSGW members, \$5 ages 17 and under. Visit glenechopark.org.

Live Music & Dancing. Fridays and Saturdays, 7-11 p.m. in Margery's Lounge, Normandie Farm Restaurant, 10710 Falls Road, Potomac. Dance to the music of Barry Gurley. Call 301-983-8838 or visit www.popovers.com.

JAN. 26-FEB. 4

The Underpants. Various times at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, 603 Edmonston Drive, Rockville. Rockville Little Theatre will continue its 70th consecutive season with an adaptation of Carl Sternheim's "The Underpants," written by actor, comedian, musician and writer Steve Martin. "The Underpants" contains some mature themes and humor and is recommended for ages 13 and over. \$22 for adults and \$20 for seniors and students. Call the box office at 240-314-8690, or visit fscottfitzgerald.showare.com.

SATURDAY/JAN. 27

MoComCon. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Montgomery County Library, Silver Spring branch located, 900 Wayne Ave., Silver Spring. Montgomery

Art by Elizabeth (Penny) Smith
Art Exhibit

"Points of View," will feature paintings by Sara Becker, Nancy Butler, Helen Gallagher, Caroline Orrick, Ann Rossilli, Elizabeth (Penny) Smith and Maureen Ward. Exhibit will be on display through Feb. 3 at Gallery B, 7700 Wisconsin Ave., Suite E, Bethesda. Call 301-215-7990 for more.

County Public Libraries will host its second comic convention. This event is open and accessible to all, including seasoned comic conventioners, novices and the curious of all ages. The comic convention will include a variety of presenters, workshops, programs, displays, exhibitors and cosplay (costume play, dressing up as a character) opportunities. Free. Visit montgomerycountymd.gov/library/programs/mocomcon/.

7:30 p.m. at the Potomac Community Center, 11315 Falls Road, Potomac. Performances (70 performers), activities, ethnic appetizers, Lion Dance and more. The community is invited. Visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec/where/centers/potomac.html.

SUNDAY/JAN. 28

Live Music. 7 p.m. at Focus Bethesda at Positano's Restaurant, 4948-4940 Fairmont Ave., Bethesda. The Harried Americans and The Aloha Boys are in concert on Jan. 28 at 7 p.m. at Focus Bethesda at Positano's Restaurant, 4948-4940 Fairmont Ave., Bethesda. Tickets are \$18 in advance at www.focusmusic.org/buy-tickets and for members, \$20 at the door.

JAN. 31-FEB. 25

"Handbagged." Round House Theatre, 4545 East-West Highway, Bethesda. In *Handbagged*, the fourth wall comes down as Queen Elizabeth II and Margaret Thatcher tell their respective stories of their time working together. Their stories frequently conflict not only with each other but also with themselves, as we see both younger and older versions of each leader. Visit RoundHouseTheatre.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 3

Concert Series. 8 p.m. at Westmoreland Congregational UCC Church, 1 Westmoreland Circle, Bethesda. Members of the Pressenda Chamber Players – performing repertoire for violin, viola, cello, and piano – will be featured as part of the Washington Conservatory Concert Series. Free (donations welcome). Audience members are invited to a post-concert Wine & Words in the church social hall. Visit www.westmorelanducc.org/.

Swing Dance. 8-9 p.m. drop-in lesson; 9 p.m.-midnight dance at Spanish Ballroom at Glen Echo Park, 7300 MacArthur Boulevard, Glen Echo. Swing Dance with Baltimore's Sarah Sullivan and The New Old-Fashioneds. \$20. Visit www.americanswing.org.

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'The Secret Garden' To Be Performed

FROM PAGE 3

cholera. Her guardian is her uncle, Archibald Craven, a hermit who lives in a secluded and haunted manor on the British moors. Inside his manse, she finds a collection of reclusive and long-suffering souls including her uncle's invalid son, Colin who bears the weight of his mother's death on his shoulders. When Mary discovers her Aunt Lily's secret garden, she stubbornly decides she is going to restore the garden and once more make it beautiful and full of life. Surrounded by the "spirits," Mary brings peace and happiness to the home, demonstrating the power of one small girl.

Meredith Abramson will be performing the lead role of Mary Lennox — she is new to HSP this year. "I'm enjoying trying theater in the round and playing Mary, who is very bratty and withdrawn at first, but then becomes more mature. I feel I am a bit like my character because we are the same age and we both like a little bit of drama. Also, Mary tries to help her cousin Colin and I think I would also try to help if I were her," she said. Meredith has performed in productions at Rockville Little Theatre and at the Kennedy Center.

Patricia Groisser is playing the role of Martha, the chambermaid. "I play the role of Martha who has a special fondness for the children — and is somewhat of a child herself," she said. "A young woman who has had a life of hard knocks but is filled with optimism. I certainly share Martha's optimistic outlook on life most of the time, and one might say I don't act my age. The role however, is a bit challenging: learning an accent and singing in a vocal style and range I was not accustomed to was a wonderful growth experience." She is performing for the second time with HSP and said, "HSP is an incredibly warm and welcoming community — it feels like family all gathered in our living rooms



Table read (early rehearsal): From left are Joni Donlon (Nurse, Adult Dreamer), Toby Holtzman (Mrs. Winthrop, Adult Dreamer), Gene Ridberg (Ben Weatherstaff), and Paul Loebach (Captain Albert Lennox).

to plan a sing along. Members of this family are incredibly talented, dedicated and supportive — many of whom have been performing or working with HSP since it began 13 years ago. While I have experienced a similar sense of warmth and family in other community theatre companies, at HSP I have felt especially welcomed — even after a 7 year hiatus — it is as if I had never left. I have loved seeing the same familiar friendly faces."

Stew Remer is again serving as co-producer with Ken Lechter. He has been involved with HSP since the beginning 13 years ago. He helped to create HSP as a community builder for the synagogue and to involve their many talented members in a fun and enriching activity. Since the first musical, lasting relationships have been formed and fostered. He said, "We are fortunate to have a combination of highly talented actors who perform regularly with us as well as around our community. Our cast has worked especially hard during rehearsals to learn the difficult vocals and I am looking forward to them 'wowing' our audiences with their incredible talent. Seeing our production will give them the opportunity to see the novel come alive in a musical format with enchanting and haunting melodies that enhance the



Co-producers for The Secret Garden: Kenneth Lechter (left) and Stewart Remer

story line."

General Admission tickets for "The Secret Garden" are \$22 for adults and \$18 for children (12 and under).

Chai Patron tickets, which include guaranteed front row seating, a voucher for intermission refreshments, reserved parking, and special recognition in the playbill, are \$180 each.

Patron tickets, which include reserved/preferential seating, re-



Steve Cairns (Archibald Craven) and Eric Jones (Neville Craven).

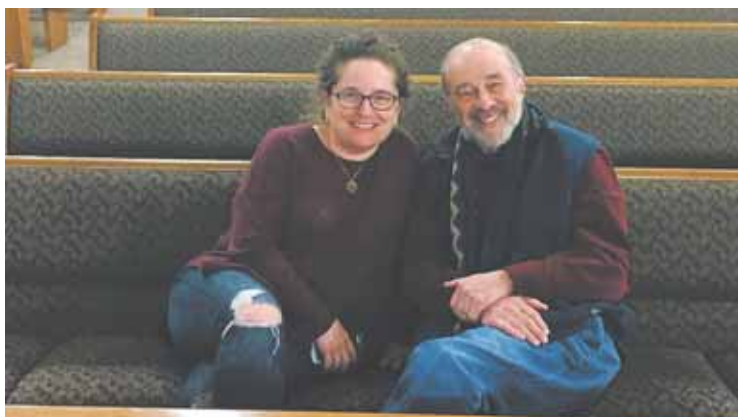
served parking, and special recognition in the playbill, are \$100 for adults and \$36 for children (12 and under).

Tickets can be purchased online at www.harshalom.org/play or <https://tinyurl.com/hspthesecretgarden>

For information on group sales, email play@harshalom.org or call 301-299-7087. Ticket pick up and check-in begins one hour prior to the show.



Tech rehearsals: (from left) Steve Cairns (Archibald Craven), Eric Jones (Neville Craven), and Megan Evans (Lily).



Tech rehearsals: Patricia Groisser (Martha) and Gene Ridberg (Ben Weatherstaff).

POTOMAC ALMANAC

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SCHOOLS



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Lauren Ty receives the Award of Excellence for Outstanding Interpretation of the Theme in Photography. With her is Andrea Gumlia, PTA Art Reflections co-chair, and Stephanie Sheron, acting principal.



Anna O' Connor receives the Award of Merit for Interpretation of the Theme in Literature. With her is Andrea Gumlia, PTA Art Reflections co-chair, and Stephanie Sheron, acting principal.

Honored in Reflections Contest

Students from Hoover Middle School participated in the National PTA Art Reflections Program with entries for writing, fine arts and photography. Two Maryland State Finalist students and two Honorable Mention students will send their work on to the state competition.



Kaylen Chang receives an Honorable Mention Award in Visual Arts. With her is Andrea Gumlia, PTA Art Reflections co-chair, and Stephanie Sheron, acting principal.

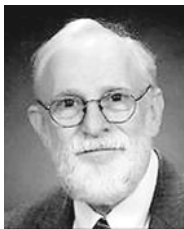


Caroline Chou receives an Honorable Mention Award in Photography. With her is Andrea Gumlia, PTA Art Reflections co-chair, and Stephanie Sheron, acting principal.

OBITUARY

Rabbi Leonard S. Cahan

Rabbi Leonard S. Cahan of Potomac died on Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2018. He was the devoted husband of Elizabeth Peilen Cahan; father of Jonathan and Benjamin Cahan, Dr. Sara (Dr. Kenneth) Helms Cahan and Rabbi Joshua (Dr. Tamar Gordon) Cahan; brother of Naomi Katz; and pop-pop of Elisha and Yair Gordon-Cahan.



Originally from Philadelphia, Pa., Rabbi Cahan was the Rabbi Emeritus of Congregation Har Shalom where he served 27 years. In addition, he held pulpits in Detroit, Mich., and Oakland, Calif. He was a Navy Chaplain and served in Quantico, Va., and Japan, and retired as the rank of Com-

mander. In 2012, Rabbi Cahan was part of the original planning group which chose the name Potomac Community Village, and became a director of the nonprofit corporation which two years later achieved exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code. Volunteering to serve as its treasurer, Rabbi Cahan continued in this position, even after diagnosis and treatment for pancreatic cancer.

Funeral services were held on Friday, Jan. 19, 2018, at Congregation Har Shalom, 11510 Falls Road, Potomac, followed by burial at Judean Gardens, Olney, Md.

Memorial contributions may be made to Congregation Har Shalom, JSSA Hospice or to the Lustgarten Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research (www.lustgarten.org). Arrangements were entrusted to Torchinsky Hebrew Funeral Home.

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Lost in Space



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not a reference to the iconic television series of my youth, but there was "danger," Ken Lourie, and it wasn't caused by Dr. Zachary Smith nor by "robot," (Robbie) either. And it wasn't a conspiracy. It was simply a confluence of absenteeism by my health care providers. Both my oncologist and internal medicine doctor were absent with leave and yours truly was caught in the crossfire, so to speak. Let me provide some context to help you appreciate my dilemma.

I have chemotherapy every six weeks. Accordingly, I have lab work the Wednesday before the Friday to check for anomalies – anomalies which over the years have occasionally delayed my infusion by up to two weeks waiting for my body to settle. In the early days of treatment, my white blood cell count was crucial; too low and no treatment; too high, it was never too high. No treatment and the cancer was left unchecked. An incredibly stressful occurrence when your treatment is stopped. Whether or not a week or two delay ultimately mattered in checking the cancer, it certainly mattered – emotionally, to the patient. You feel adrift, sort of, which is exactly how I felt during the first two weeks of January.

Typically, what my current lab work presents is my creatinine level and the associated glomerular filtration rate, measuring kidney function/efficiency. After nearly nine years of infused toxicity, I have suffered some collateral damage to a major organ. My oncologist and internal medicine doctor are incredibly sensitive and concerned about this damage. Per these results, every medical decision made concerning me; from prescriptions approved to "normal" internal medicine stuff to whether I get "contrast" when I have my scans and MRIs to what chemotherapy drug I infuse and how frequently its infused, is decided with my kidneys in mind. Nothing happens medically until my kidneys sign off on it, if you know what I mean?

As it happened, my creatinine level for my Jan. 12 infusion was higher than usual. When this measure occurs, I know to call the Infusion Center and ask the head nurse if I should come in for treatment. She will contact my oncologist and with his direction, will advise me what to do, except for this week. My oncologist was away and though another oncologist – whom I've never met – was covering, I'm not really sure she knows enough about my situation. Specifically that I'm a bit of a special case, per my oncologist's own characterization of me, and I've never gone seven weeks, let alone eight weeks without treatment. Delaying my infusion would break a multi-year precedent. In fact, around the holidays when I asked my oncologist if I could extend my infusion interval from six to seven weeks (to accommodate life), he emphatically said "No." Moreover (to complicate a covering physician's decision), my oncologist has also told me that if I were a new patient with creatinine levels as chronically high as mine, he wouldn't/couldn't treat me until those levels reduced.

So not only was I in the middle of an unprecedented one to possibly two-week delay in my infusion, but I also needed an oncologist – who I don't know and who doesn't know me – to decide/make an exception/maybe risk her medical license (if something were to happen to me), to authorize treatment for a patient whose creatinine levels fall outside of protocol, and me not having either of my two primary-care physicians available for consultation. And other than the default emails advising that both were out of town, I had nowhere to go and no one to turn to.

Heck, I might as well have been on another planet, given the limited choices I had.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

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