*ewsletter* Summer 2017 Issue

### **Disclaimer:**

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Advertising

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### Town Hall

### New Look to Town's Website

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The Town's website is getting a fresh new look. While the address will stay the same – www. gillmass.org – the layout is being revised and the computer code that makes it all work will be modern again. The revised layout will be more intuitive and informative, and the updated computer code offers better protection against hackers and malware. The new site is designed and hosted by Montague WebWorks, the company the town has used for the past year for the Town's online meeting calendar. Look for the new site to go live this August.

### CodeRED Signups

Did you get the phone, text, and email message that trash and recycling collection was postponed from Friday, July 7 to Saturday, July 8 due to the Fourth of July holiday? The news was announced as a General Notification using the CodeRED emergency notification service.

There is no deadline to sign up. If you haven't added your telephone numbers (landline and cell), text numbers, and email addresses, visit the Town's website, and click on the link for CodeRED. If you don't have access to the internet, or need assistance with signing up, call Ray at the Town Hall, 413-863-9347.

### **Paying by Check or Online**

REMINDER - when you mail a check for real estate taxes, sewer charges, or motor vehicle excise, write the bill number and tax type ("real estate," "sewer," or "excise") in the memo line of the check. Include the Remittance portion of the bill in the envelope with your check.

If you pay your bills online, be sure your payment includes a note or memo of the bill number and type. Without this information, time is wasted having to research and look up what bill you're paying.

### **Committee Vacancies**

There are vacancies on the Finance Committee and the Agricultural Commission. If you might be interested in serving on either one (or both!), please contact Lynda Hodsdon Mayo, Town Clerk, at 863-8103 or townclerk@gillmass.org. Lynda will put you in touch with John Zywna, Town Moderator, who appoints both of these groups.

The **Finance Committee** acts in an advisory role on all financial matters considered at Town Meeting. Most meetings occur in the late winter and spring months, providing input on the Town's budget for the next fiscal year.

The **Agricultural Commission** has two openings. The principal purpose of the AgCom, according to our Town Bylaw, is to "support agriculture and other farming activities in the Town of Gill." The group meets once a month.

### **Cardboard Recycling**

There is a maximum acceptable size for corrugated cardboard placed out for Gill's recycling collection. It is 2 feet x 2 feet, and the cardboard also needs to be flattened. If you have a lot of cardboard to recycle, the drivers prefer it to be consolidated into one or more cardboard boxes for easier handling. Tying it with twine is okay, but not preferred, as it slows the drivers down and twine is not recyclable. Thanks for your cooperation.

Ray Purington, Administrative Assistant





### **Town Clerk Notes**

The tributes below were shared with the community at the beginning of the continuation of Town Meeting on May 5, 2017. These appreciations will be included in the Town Book of Minutes that go back to 1793.

The second floor of Town Hall has undergone quite a transformation recently. We have been surrounded by some of the very special staging that was a part of a production called Revenge of the Trolls. This play was performed by students from the Gill Elementary School and directed by town resident Amy Gordon. These plays are an extracurricular activity and have been an annual project for the last six years. We thank everyone in the play, and especially director Amy Gordon, for all the work, creativity and direction to make the productions possible.

In the same spirit of artistic and technical production, we would like to recognize videographer Janet Masucci for wrestling with the town's new video taping system. It is such a great improvement from the cassette tapes the Town Clerk used to fumble with and later could hardly understand. Janet, thank you for all your efforts with this!

Another unusual item you may have noticed as you enter the town offices - the original D.O. Paul Store sign now standing (temporarily) in the stage elevator. Nancy Daniel-Green found the old sign hiding in her attic. As Nancy cleaned out her attic in preparation for moving from her home, she discovered the sign and offered it to the Historical Commission. The sign was hanging over the porch of what is now the Gill Tavern during the 1940's. Thank you so much, Nancy.

Moving outdoors, I am sure you have seen the American flags along Main Road and around the Town Common. Many thanks to the Memorial Committee for all their efforts: Chet Kuzontkoski, Gary Bourbeau, Merri Bourbeau, Doug Smith and Elaine Smith. This year Ray Purington stepped down from the Board of Assessors. As Clerk for the Assessors, I can speak to all he has done for this Board over the nine years he has been an assessor. Thank you, Ray.

Another elected official, Ernie Hastings, stepped down this year from his role as the Town's Tree Warden. It is important to remember that this Tree Warden is just one of many hats Ernie has worn in this town. Over the years he was also on the Finance Committee, Planning Board, Superintendent of Streets, Building Committee, Cable Advisory Committee, Field Driver, and a member of the Franklin County Housing Authority Advisory Committee. He is also our Animal Inspector. A plaque of recognition was presented to Ernie, and Gary Stevens wrote:

"Ernie J. Hastings has been Tree Warden in the town of Gill for almost forty years. His dedication to the town of Gill should be no surprise. His great, great, great grandfather, Oliver Hastings, came to the town of Gill in 1817, and so began a rich history of the Hastings family serving this great town for over 200 years. Ernie decided this year to step down as Tree Warden. His service as Tree Warden will be greatly missed. Some people will tell you that Ernie is outspoken and speaks his mind, but it is only because he cares so deeply for this great town we call Gill. Thanks Ernie for your service to Gill as Tree Warden." The other plaque presented to Ernie was the Deed of Purchase for the land bought by Oliver Hastings 200 years ago. Thank you, Ernie.

Finally, many thanks go to the Gill Historical Commission, and specifically to Lynn Tomb, Pam Shoemaker and Ivan Ussach, for their efforts in writing the book, *RIVERSIDE*, *Life along the Connecticut in Gill, Massachusetts*. Their months of collaboration, research and writing made for an exciting year as sales, comments from readers, and the book's popularity went way beyond expectations. This book is a little slice of Gill Magic.

### **Board of Assessors**

The Board of Assessors is working on several projects which have started the process toward the Interim Fiscal Year 2018 assessment of values. Building permit data from 2016 have been compiled and entered into our data base. Form of Lists, which value our business and utilities, as well as any second home personal property were collected through March 1st of 2017. Those who have received exemptions from the Town of Gill can expect to see their application forms arrive during July. Boat excise bills will be mailed in August.

We would like to extend thanks to and welcome Pam Lester and Bill Tomb, who have been elected to the Board of Assessors at the May Town of Gill annual election. Bill has been serving as an Assessor by appointment for one year and is now an elected member. Pam was elected to the vacant three year term this year. Bill completed his 101 Course training in 2016 and Pam will attend the UMASS training this August.

Assessors' Clerk office hours are Monday through Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Board of Assessors meetings are alternate Wednesday evenings at 5:30 p.m.

If you have any questions please call the Assessors' office at 863-0138

Board of Assessors: Bill Tomb, Chair; Nancy Griswold and Pamela Lester

## **Ag Commission**

The Agricultural Commission would like to update the town's brochure listing the products from the farms and forests in Gill. If you like to have information about your agricultural services, goods or products included in the brochure, please contact an Agricultural Commission member or come to one of our meetings. The meeting calendar and contact information are available on the town's website.



# **Energy Commission**

The Gill Energy Commission suggests these ways to save your energy dollars:

1. Go to www.MassSave.com/en/saving/ energy-assessments/

- Find the Mass Save<sup>®</sup> on-site energy assessment that best matches your needs for Homeowners, Renters, Landlords, Multi-Family Facilities, and Business Facility Assessments
- Learn about Income Eligible Programs to see if you qualify for additional assistance based on your income, visit our Income Eligible page to learn about fuel assistance, reduced utility rates, and added savings on energy efficiency incentives.
- Get Facility Assessments for Your Business. Existing buildings in Massachusetts may be eligible for a no-cost building assessment to identify energy savings opportunities. Building assessments find and prioritize ways to save energy and costs for your business. If your property isn't energy efficient, the fact is you're adding to your monthly bills. But, what if you could easily and quickly start on the road to energy efficiency at no cost?
- NEW 0% Loan Options through Mass Save HEAT Loan Program! Through a \$3.8 million US Department of Energy grant, the Mass. Dept. of Energy Resources has expanded the energy improvements eligible for the Mass Save HEAT Loan to encourage more residential energy efficient upgrades and high efficiency renewable heating installations. Zero percent loans are now available for biomass wood pellet boilers (up to \$25,000), deeper weatherization measures (up to \$50,000), and projects in two- to fourfamily buildings (\$25,000 to \$50,000). In addition, the program is offering weatherization barrier mitigation incentives of up to \$2,000 for knob

and tube wiring remediation, and up to \$3,000 for asbestos abatement. Visit the Heat Loan site for details.

• Sign up for a free energy audit. Free audits (video of a home assessment https://vimeo.com/157777138) are available by directly contacting any of these companies:

MassSaves at 1-866-527-7283 www. masssave.com/residential/home-energyassessments

#### Home Energy Contractors:

A. A. Arden, LLC., Attleboro 508-639-9811 www.aaarden.com or email Dennis@aaarden.com

Coop Power, Greenfield 877-266-7548 www.cooppower.coop

Cozy Home Performance LLC., Easthampton 413-529-0200 www.mycozyhome.com

Energia, Holyoke 413-332-9111 EnergiaUS.com

2. energyCENTS (http://public. dep.state.ma.us/Doer/mesa/#/home) allows ratepayers, from residential to commercial and industrial, to search for rebates and incentives across utilities, entities and applications while refining searches by keywords and zip codes. Results from energyCENTS searches will direct ratepayers to the rebate or incentive sponsor's website for additional information and application.

3. "Like" the Gill Energy Commission Facebook page to stay updated.

### Fire Department Receives Grant

On July 14, 2017 the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced it awarded \$118,627 to the Gill Fire Department through the Fiscal Year 2016 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG). The AFG program is a competitive grant of federal funds and provides essential



equipment, protective gear, emergency



vehicles, training and other resources used to protect local communities. Gill's grant









award will be used to purchase 20 SCBAs (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus) to replace the current 20 packs that are 15 years old and can no longer be serviced by the manufacturer. Awards from the AFG program require a 5% cost match from the recipient community. Gill's 5% share is \$5,931 and will be funded using money donated annually to the Town by the Northfield Mount Hermon for the support of emergency services. This is the fourth time the Fire Department applied for this grant, and we are grateful to have received it this year. Grant applications are a group effort, and we thank everyone who was involved with this one. Special recognition is due to Fire Chief Gene Beaubien, Deputy Chief Stuart Elliott, and Selectboard Member Greg Snedeker for their time and hard work gathering the data and writing the grant narrative that proved to be a winner this time around.

# **Memorial Committee**

The Gill Memorial Committee is showing its patriotism with the display of American flags on utility poles in the center of town. We are grateful to those donors who gave to complete this phase. Our hope is to continue our display on the French King Highway in the future. The flags will be displayed from Memorial Day through the Fourth of July and again on Veteran's Day. The cost of the flag, flag staff and bracket is approximately \$43.00. We are considering the possibility of identifying flags in memory or honor of a service person with dog tag identification. We would appreciate any input or thoughts on this idea for the future. We maintain the flags on the utility poles with the same respect as those in our cemeteries. Please contact any member of the Memorial Committee: Chet Kuzontkoski at (413) 863- 9284, Doug and Elaine Smith (413) 863-3115, Gary Bourbeau (413) 768-9543 or Merri Bourbeau (413) 863-8613. SPECIAL NOTICE: Please report distressed flags to flags@gillmass.org.

## **Gill Church**

Greetings from Gill Church. We are just beginning our 22nd year and continue to offer worship services every Sunday at 10 a.m. Sunday school/bible study is at 9 a.m. and we invite Gill residents to visit and check out our friendly, relaxed atmosphere and serious approach to our faith. We have enjoyed a significant increase in attendance in the past year, including folks from Gill as well as the surrounding communities. Merri Bourbeau leads a ladies' bible study every other Wednesday and can be contacted at 413 863-8613.

Gill residents may have noticed increased activity around the church recently. Construction on the scatter garden directly behind the building has been completed. A scatter garden is a plot of land set aside for scattering cremated remains. Although it will take a season or two for the new plantings to become established, it is beginning to take on the appearance of a real garden. We especially want to thank our neighbors for their patience throughout the process, and invite them and the rest of our community to visit the garden. The idea of a cemetery on church property, a tradition in many old New England churches, was set forth a number of years ago. A conventional burial in a typical cemetery must adhere to many regulations; the concept of a scatter garden has become a popular alternative. Cremation is increasingly becoming the preferred choice for dealing with remains in the U.S.. We determined an area behind the Gill Church to be the suitable solution and location. This is a simple plan that preserves personal resources and open space, is eco-friendly, and offers virtually unlimited availability. At this time, the idea is to mark the garden's purpose with a small memorial stone on top of the wall. The availability of the garden is not limited to the Gill Church congregation, and we would be happy to talk to anyone about its use. All members of the community are welcome to visit the garden and

enjoy its serene atmosphere for a moment of reflection, meditation or prayer.

On a different topic: the Church has developed a website that includes pictures of the garden and information about the ministry and its basic beliefs, synopses of some of Gary's messages, book reviews, and links to missions and other ministries the church supports. The site is an excellent way to learn about the church in your town. The address is: https://lhpike. wixsite.com/gillchurch. You can also find it by simply searching *gill church* and locating the address.

Gary Bourbeau can be reached at 413 768-9543 and gryngill@gmail.com.

# **Slate Library News**

A lot of summer fun has been happening at Slate library. Children's librarian Beverly Ketch is hosting two events as part of our summer reading program. On August 5, the library will have an Express Yourself Fest for kids and teens. This program offers visitors a chance to make a zine, tie-dyed t-shirt and act out a play as well as stepping inside to see all the library has to offer. We have new books, audio books and DVDs for the kid in everyone. August 26 is the date for Little Ones Day. Come play in a refurbished sand box, dip your toes in a wading pool and build a fairy house as well as discovering other sweet surprises. We have lovely picture books and new board books for our youngest patrons. We hope you came by to pick up a game board and win prizes for reading all summer long. This program will continue until the end of August so don't be shy about visiting no matter how late in month. After that we will be getting ready for September and gearing up for a brand new story hour program. Please stop by and visit your local library in the center of Gill! Our hours are Tuesday 2-6 pm, Wednesday 3-7 pm, Thursday 2-8 pm, and Saturday 10-2 pm. For more information about any of our programs, you can reach us at gill.slate. library@gmail.com



## **Gill Town Forest**

We are pleased to report that through a \$7,100 DCR Community Forest Stewardship Implementation Grant, the Gill Conservation Commission, in collaboration with the Gill Town Forest Committee, has been able to survey and blaze the boundaries of the forest, take steps toward controlling invasive plants, install two bridges at stream crossings, develop and mark four trails, and install a bike rack. We have also installed a kiosk at the main (and improved) parking area where one can find a map of the forest, a brochure containing information about the trails, and spectacular photographs taken by Paul Sievert of the flora and fauna of the Forest. We accrued enough work-inkind hours for the DCR to reimburse the town an extra \$1,177. Community members involved were Steve Baskowski, Dick French, Amy Gordon, Chris Polatin, Ray Purington, Paul Sievert, Ken Sprankle, Tim Storrow, and Tim Young. Mick LaClaire, Ed Ambo, and John Miner from the Highway Department, along with Doug and Corwin Edson from Renaissance Excavating, also assisted with our projects. We have more trails to develop and other things to do, but this was a great start! Please come take a look and enjoy this wonderful resource. While you are there, take a look at the spectacular scene in the display case painted by Gill's talented young artist, Maia Castro-Santos.

# Zero-Interest Loans for Gill Residents

The Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA) is administering a housing rehabilitation loan program on behalf of the Town of Gill. The program offers zero-interest, deferred-payment loans of up to \$35,000 to income-eligible residents to improve the safety and energy efficiency of their homes. For more information and to request an application, please call Jen at

(413) 863-9781 ext. 137 or email jmorrow@fcrhra.org. Income limits based on household size:

1 - \$44,800, 2 - \$51,200, 3 - \$57,600, 4 - \$64,000.

## Hazardous Waste Collection Day

The Franklin County Solid Waste District is holding its annual household hazardous waste collection on Saturday, September 23rd at GCC Main Campus and Orange Transfer Station. Residents and businesses must pre-register between August 17 and September 15. During that time, online registration will be open: www. franklincountywastedistrict.org/hazwasteday.html. Paper registration forms will be available at participating town offices, transfer stations, and in ads in the Greenfield Recorder. The collection is free for residents of most member towns (see website for list). Businesses must pay for disposal costs. For business registration information, call (413) 772-2438.

This collection provides an opportunity to dispose of hazardous items that should not be put in the trash, such as leftover oil-based paints, stains, thinners, household cleaners, pesticides, herbicides, pool chemicals, motor oil, antifreeze, automobile batteries, and other household chemicals. For a complete list of acceptable items, see the website.

Mercury-containing products such as thermometers, thermostats and compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) should never be disposed of in the trash. At the 2017 Hazardous Waste Collection Event, only mercury-containing items such as thermostats and thermometers will be accepted; fluorescent bulbs will not be accepted at this collection. CFLs and other fluorescent bulbs are accepted at all municipal transfer stations. In addition, fluorescent light bulbs are accepted at Lowe's Stores (all types of fluorescents), and Home Depot (CFLs only).













# Town Nurse Hours at Stoughton Place

Regional Public Health Nurse Lisa White will be available on the second Friday of each month from 9 – 11 a.m. in the community room at Stoughton Place, 12 Main Road in Gill. A collaboration between the Gill Board of Health (through membership in the Cooperative Public Health Service of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments) and the Franklin County Housing Authority, this service aims to provide residents with resources for assisting or improving health, such as:

- preventative screening (blood pressure, weight, BMI)
- help with management of chronic conditions like diabetes, COPD, and high blood pressure
- health goal setting and action planning
- medication management
- assistance accessing needed health and social services
- sharps boxes and sharps collection
- medication safes
- mercury thermometer exchange

This is a walk-in service, no appointment needed, and services are open to the whole community, Please call Lisa for more information at 413-665-1400 x 114.

# Young Artist Competition Grand Prize Winner

Chloe Castro-Santos, age 17, a Gill native and recent graduate of Northfield Mount Hermon, was named a Grand Prize winner of the Fidelity Investments Young Artist Competition. On June 6 she performed as a featured soloist with the Boston Pops Orchestra in Symphony Hall. The Competition selects four students from across the state from hundreds

of applicants. Winners are noteworthy for their excellent musicianship and performance skills. For the competition Chloe sang Everything I Know from the musical In the Heights by Lin-Manuel Miranda. The concert also featured Tony-and-Grammy-Award-winning performer Leslie Odom, Jr. from the musical Hamilton. Chloe has performed throughout the Pioneer Valley in many musical theater productions, most notably with Starlight Youth Theater, Amherst Leisure Community Theater and Arena Civic Theater. Along with the tremendous honor of performing with the Boston Pops, Chloe will become a member of the University of Michigan Musical Theater Class of 2021, the premier program for study of musical theater in the United States. We congratulate her on her accomplishments and wish her continued success!

Press release excerpted from the Greenfield Recorder

# **Honor Roll**

#### 4th Quarter

#### **Pioneer Valley Regional School**

Grade 12 High Honor: Amelia Pelletier Grade 10 Honor: Jake Wallace and Rylie Zager

**Grade 8** Highest Honor: Marin Klein and Emaline Relyea-Strawn Honor: Brian Peila, Jr.

Grade 7 Highest Honor: Meena Relyea-Strawn High Honor: Issac Damon Honor: Robert Kenyon

#### **Turners Falls High School**

**Grade 12** Second Honors: Tahner Castine, Bryn Kruzlic and Jeremy Wolfram

Grade 11 First Honors: Kyle Kucenski Second Honors: Branden Chapin, Kylee Mason and John Wheeler II

Grade 10 Third Honors: Reilan Castine and Jovanni Ruggiano

Grade 9 Second Honors: Alyson Murphy

### **Great Falls Middle School**

Grade 8 First Honors: Karissa Olson, Julie Sprankle, Leah Timberlake, Luke Timberlake, Hailey Wheeler and Olivia Whittier Second Honors: Taylor Murphy

### **College Graduates**

Jackie Lafleur graduated in May from Bay Path University receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Child Psychology and a minor in Education.

Campbell Deem Nilsen graduated from the University of Oklahoma Norman campus with a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Ryan Bezio graduated from Greenfield Community College this June.

### **DEAN'S LIST**

Elizabeth Sweeney was named to the 2017 spring semester Dean's List at Simmons College in Boston.

Theodore Jordan Short, mechanical engineering, was named to the Dean's List for the 2017 Spring semester at Rochester Institute of Technology.

Chloe Castro-Santos, Dominick Poulson, Fiona Tierney, Marina Keator, Katherine Majewski and Noah Burstein were named to the Dean's List for the 2016-2017 academic year at Northfield Mount Hermon. Conner Ethan Theriault earned high academic honors for the Spring 2017 semester at NMH.

### **High School Graduates**

The following Gill students graduated from Northfield Mount Hermon this year: Chloe Juniper Castro-Santos, Rylie Galles Hager-Stone, Martha McLerie Kenyon, Patterson James Malcolm, Sophie Sidney Margola, Julia Catherine McClellan, Dominick Reed Poulson, Henry David Reeder and Kate Elizabeth Sprankle. Ashley Levasseur graduated from Frontier Regional School. Ryder Molongoski and Jacob Wallenius-Duda graduated from Four Rivers Charter



Public School. Mitchell Waldron, Daniel Cloutier II, Jozyan Gonzalez and Robert Rinaldi graduated from the Franklin County Technical School. Graduates from Turners Falls High School include Bryn Kruzlic, Tahner Castine, Kaili Lynch, Jeremy Wolfram, Gabrielle Arzuaga and Nicholas Morin. Pioneer Regional School graduated Amelia Pelletier.

#### Other events of note:

Congratulations to the Turners Falls High School Softball team for winning its ninth State Championship this June. Gill players included senior Gabby Arzuaga, freshmen Alyson Murphy and eight graders Taylor Murphy and Olivia Whittier.

Jimmy Vaughn, a junior at Turners Falls High School, was awarded the Recorder's Spring All-Star Most Valuable Player in tennis by qualifying for post season with 10 regular season victories.

Drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians who wait for the traffic light to change to green at the intersection of Main Road and French King Highway appreciate the planter that decorates the median each summer. Thank you to the family of Sam and Lil Couture who provide this annual floral display for the community to enjoy.

### Gill Historical Commission

#### **Great Falls Battlefield Forum**

Close to 100 people attended the June 22nd Great Falls Battlefield forum in Gill, held at Northfield Mount Hermon's Raymond Hall in the Rhodes Fine Arts Center. The educational forum was the first of three planned for Phase 2 of the Battlefield Project, which focuses on archaeological field works, primarily metal detecting, at several "core" project areas in Gill and Greenfield. As with previous forums in Phase 1, the program began with a presentation by principal investigator Kevin McBride of the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center in Connecticut; he discussed the initial Phase 2 plans and activities. As with previous forums, the second part of the program featured a panel discussion, with Native American scholars and academic archaeologists addressing the role of archaeology in reconstructing the events at the Great Falls on May 19th, 1676, a seminal event of the King Phillip's War. For more information, go to www.kpwar.org or contact the Gill Historical Commission.

#### Summit/Mobil Project

Shortly before going to press, the Gill Historical Commission was notified that initial construction activities would begin soon for the convenience store at the property adjoining the Mobil Station on Route 2. Native American monitors will be present during excavation work to help ensure the protection of any artifacts or burial remains encountered. The project site, at 23 French King Highway, lies within the Riverside Archaeological District and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **Riverside Book**

This month, the GHC is reprinting the book *Riverside*, *Life Along the Connecticut in Gill, Massachusetts*. This will be the fourth printing, and we have sold out each previous printing. If you think you would like a copy of the book or want to gift a copy for the holidays, please reserve a copy as soon as possible. You may find an order form at the Town Hall or on the Town of Gill website (hhtp://www. gillmass.org/historical.php) or email: Lstomb@gmail.com. Thank you

The GHC thanks the Northfield Historical Society for giving us a display case that they no longer are using. We also thank Steve Striebel for helping us move the case into our RMB room. Bill Tomb has also helped with some painting and with moving two new bookcases.







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