

Livingston Monthly

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RECORD NUMBER OF LHS MUSICIANS SELECTED BY NJSMA



Photo by Livingston Public Schools

Livingston Public Schools

In an exciting accomplishment for the Livingston Public Schools community, a record number of students from Livingston High School (LHS) have been selected to join the North Jersey School Music Association (NJSMA) Region Band, Chorus, and Orchestra for the 2024-2025 school year. These talented musicians stood out among a competitive field of singers and instrumentalists from across North Jersey, earning spots in these prestigious regional ensembles.

In addition to the impressive individual accomplishments, the LHS Choir program achieved a significant milestone by placing more students into the NJSMA Region Choir than any other high school in North Jersey!

Those who earned a spot in the NJSMA ensembles had the opportunity to perform at culminating concerts held in January and February.

Those selected included:

CHORUS:

- Victoria Alfieri - Soprano 2
- Caroline Bentley - Soprano 2
- Benjamin Best - Bass 2
- Jesse Carmody - Bass 2
- Kennedy Erickson - Soprano 1
- Rhea Fernando - Soprano 2
- Helen Hao - Soprano 1
- Jerry Ji - Bass 1
- Ethan Liu - Bass 1
- Chenhao Luo - Bass 2
- Peter Min - Bass 2
- Aditya Mirchandani - Bass 1
- Samay Nistala - Tenor 2
- Jaden Nzekwu - Tenor 1
- Aanya RajSharma - Soprano 1
- Nikhil Rochlani - Bass 2
- Priyanka Salandra - Alto 1
- Nikhil Tiwari - Tenor 2
- Yaxuan Wang - Soprano 2
- Nisitha Wickramasinghe - Bass 2

- James Yang - Bass 1
- Alexander Yang - Tenor 1
- Zihua Zhang - Soprano 2
- **BAND:**
- Shining Wang – flute
- Jessica Shen – flute
- Clare Cheng – clarinet
- Derek Wagener - tenor saxophone
- Ethan Yang - baritone saxophone
- Lucia Sun - french horn
- Wesley Yang - trombone
- Brandon Shyu - trombone
- Jerry Ji - euphonium
- **ORCHESTRA:**
- Ira Tiwary - Violin
- Ethan Liu - Violin
- Annie Jiang - Violin
- Grace Wang - Violin
- Jessica Hao - Violin
- Elijah Shemesh - Cello
- Jatin Komati - Bass.

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Livingston Monthly NJ

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Michael D Boll, NJVN President

For the last few years, the New Jersey Veterans Network (NJVN) has been helping veterans with resources and assistance with their mental health conditions. Over time we came to realize that the veteran's family was being affected by their struggles as well. Our team had to learn how to include their family members in our outreach efforts. We lose 22 veterans each day to suicide, and they leave behind grieving families. Recently, we decided to make sure all veteran family members can use the same resources that our team has available for veterans. Sometimes we forget about the sacrifices our veteran families have to make and this country should appreciate them for this.

One thing our team decided to do was to have Gold Star families meet disabled veterans at our events, so they can work together and form a bond. This effort was extremely affective and immediately brought joy to both the Gold Star families and to the disabled veterans. By adding veteran family members to the team, it allows us to work together on our peer support and recreational therapy programs. We are honored to have veteran family members to work alongside us and know they are just as committed with helping our veterans live a better way of life.

If you need assistance, or would like to join the team as a volunteer, please send us your name, email, and phone number to NJVN1775@gmail.com.

ABOUT NEW JERSEY VETERANS NETWORK

We are a group of veterans and volunteers dedicated to helping our veterans and their families live better lives. Our mission is to identify veterans and connect them with resources and programs designed to meet their unique set of needs. Help us save Vets! We are always looking for volunteers, with various skills, to join the team. If you are a veteran or family member that is in need of assistance; or are interested in volunteering, would like us to speak at your event, or contribute to our mission, call 973-332-1556 or email NJVN1775@gmail.com. To learn more visit njvn.org.



(above) Michael D Boll, NJVN President, with Dina and Tom Duffy who lost their son Tom Duffy, a Marine Corporal and Afghanistan War veteran.

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STUDENTS HONOR HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY



(above, l-r) Students making paper daffodils at the Jewish American Heritage Club meeting: Emma Drost, Ella Bluevise, Arielle Tobin, and Sophie Abelew.

Submitted by Shyella Mayk,
HMS Teacher & Club Advisor

The students of the Jewish American Heritage Club, advised by Ms. Mayk, made yellow paper daffodils symbolic of the yellow star the Jews were forced to wear in Nazi Germany during the time of the Holocaust. The flowers are displayed on the Daffodil Holocaust Memorial in Heritage Middle School in honor of Holocaust Remembrance Day. This special display in our school was created in memory of the 1.5 million Jewish children murdered in the Holocaust.

In addition to the daffodil making, Harper Rothenberg, the club's founder, and Aaron Vaknansky, a contributing club member, delivered a presentation they created called "Holocaust Memorials Around the World." Together they researched Holocaust memorials in different locations, learned about them, and made an educational Google slides presentation with pictures to teach the club participants. Harper shared about the Für Das Kind Kindertransport Memorial located in Liverpool Street Station, London, the Mémorial de la Shoah, located in Paris, France, and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin, Germany. Aaron presented about the Shoes on the Danube Bank memorial in Budapest, Hungary, the Holocaust Memorial in Miami Beach, Florida and the Holocaust

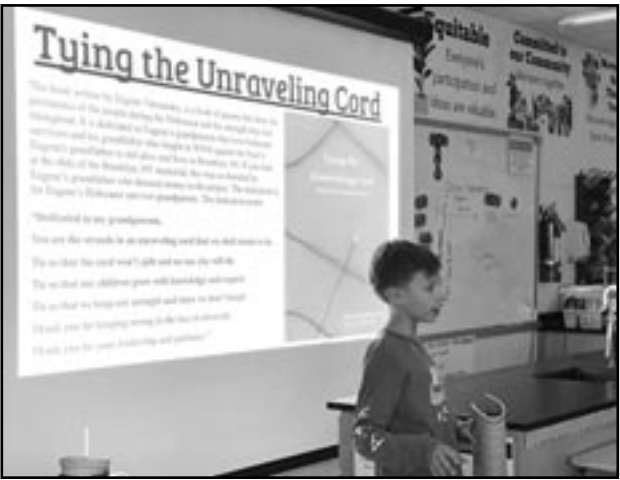
Memorial Park in Brooklyn, New York.

The Holocaust Memorial Park in Brooklyn is of special significance to Aaron since his great grandparents, Naum Feldman and Yelizaveta Pekar, on his father's maternal side, gathered donations and dedicated one of the stones at the memorial in Brooklyn. Aaron also shared with us the poetry book entitled "Tying the Unraveling Cord" that his father Eugene Vaknansky wrote in honor of his paternal grandparents, Abraham and Evgeniya Vakhnyansky, who were Holocaust survivors. Aaron brought the book with him and read the dedication page aloud to the students. It included the poem from which the title of the book was taken.

After the presentation, the students snacked on delicious sliced challah shmear with cream cheese or butter, sponsored by Livingston Bagel.

In addition to the meaningful Daffodil Holocaust Memorial display, Ms. Mayk is planning for Heritage students to take part in The Daffodil Project by planting the starter bulbs so that Heritage Middle School will grow an actual memorial garden. This plan is in the works for the start of the upcoming school year since the bulbs must be planted in the fall.

The Jewish American Heritage Club will always have educational, meaningful, crafty, tasty and fun components at every meeting.



(above) Aaron Vaknansky talked about the poetry book his father wrote about the

Photos by Livingston Public Schools



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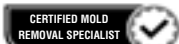
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Essex County Teen Arts Festival is scheduled for Thursday, March 27, 2025. We invite all Essex County teens ages 13-19 to experience professional critiques in visual, writing, and performing arts. Join us for a day-long festival that celebrates the arts. We welcome Essex County teens to participate in classes and workshops dedicated to fine and performing arts. They also have the opportunity to meet other artists and their peers from across Essex County. The visual art pieces that have been submitted for adjudication will also be on display during the festival.

This year's festival will take place at the South Mountain Recreation Complex, 560 Northfield Ave, in West Orange, that includes Turtle Back Zoo, Education Building, and the Codey Arena.

There are Many Ways to Experience the Essex County Teen Arts Festival.

For more information, and to register, please visit essexcountyteenartsfestival.org.

This Year's Festival Theme is "Go Wild"! "Go Wild" is all about encouraging creativity that evokes impactful and impassioned expression. It inspires students to explore creative ideas through different art forms and style, pushing the limits, allowing for infinite possibilities in the visual arts, creative writing and performing arts. While it is not mandatory to use this theme to participate, we encourage teachers to motivate their students to create works that embrace the "Go Wild" theme. During the festival, there will be several workshops and group exhibitions that will utilize the theme of "Go Wild".

Made possible by funds from the Essex County Division of Cultural Affairs, a partner of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

Any questions, please email Maressa McFarlane, Event Manager, at mmcfarlane@parks.essexcountynj.org

CORNERED BEEF FUND RAISER – MARCH 10

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY UNIT #43

*In the Spirit of Service Not Self
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The ladies of American Legion Auxiliary Unit #43 have completed plans for their Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner held annually for close to 60 years. The Auxiliary will serve a Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner, and Corned Beef Sandwiches on Sunday, March 10 from 1-5 p.m. at the Madison-Florham Park American Legion Post #43, 20 Ridgedale Avenue in Florham Park. For a complete dinner including "home baked" Irish Soda Bread and dessert a donation of \$15 is suggested. Also available will be a Corned Beef Sandwich and sides at a suggested donation of \$10. For a child under 10 years of age the donation will be \$5. Take-out orders will be available starting at noon.

Unit President Fran Derin of Florham Park

invites all residents of the area to join Auxiliary members for dinner on Sunday, March 10 to show support for the volunteer and financial support they provide to area veterans in need. The annual fundraiser has also made it possible over the years to sponsor the following in our local communities: local high school girls to Girls State, an annual leadership development program; supporting college scholarships at various levels of the organization for children and grandchildren of veterans; donations to Family Promise providing help for the homeless in Morris County; and provide donations at Christmas to Toys for Tots and Special Olympics.

The ladies of Unit #43 look forward to seeing many of their neighbors at this annual event. If further details are needed, please contact Unit President Fran Derin at francesderin@aol.com.

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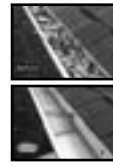
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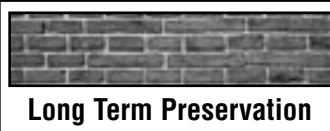
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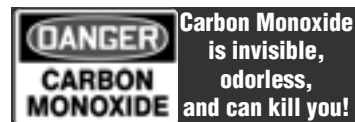


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ALICE IN WONDERLAND, JR. PRESENTED AT LIBRARY MARCH 10

Paper Mill Playhouse Children's Theater Tour Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

On Sunday March 9th at 2 p.m. Paper Mill Playhouse Children's Theater Tour will present Alice In Wonderland, Jr. at the Livingston Public Library.

When young Alice finds herself in a strange world where everything seems upside down, she must find her way home... and find herself along the way. As she travels through Wonderland, she encounters all of the iconic characters that audiences have come to love: including the ever-tardy White Rabbit, the grinning Cheshire Cat, a cool Caterpillar, the wacky Mad Hatter, and the hot-tempered Queen of Hearts.

Alice in Wonderland Jr. features Disney favorites such as "The Golden Afternoon," "The Unbirthday Song," and "Painting the Roses Red" along with brand-new songs, including music from the 2010 live-action film. Whether this is

your first experience with Alice or your hundredth, you'll fall in love all over again with this timeless story of adventure, imagination, and pure fun!

Performed by Paper Mill Playhouse's Children's Theatre on Tour students, the performance runs approximately 60-minutes and is suitable for ages 4 & up.

UNATTENDED POLICY

Children under age 12: a parent or responsible caregiver (age 16 or older) must remain with the child or remain in the Library and be immediately accessible to the child at all times, including when a child is attending a library program.

PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS OF CHILDREN ATTENDING PROGRAMS

Parents/Caregivers of children under 7 years old need to remain with their children at all times.

SEED LIBRARY KICKOFF

After last year's immense success, the Livingston Public Library invites you to participate in our 2025 Seed Library. Starting Monday, March 3rd, stop by the library's Reference department to browse our collection and pick from a variety of flower and vegetable seeds, many of which are organic, heirloom and native to New Jersey. Please take only what you need, limited to 5 seed envelopes a week. When

your plants have matured, harvest the seeds and bring them back to the library for the cycle to continue. Seeds are FREE for anyone to take. You don't have to bring seeds back, but it helps us if you do.

This Seed Library is sponsored by the Friends of the Livingston Public Library and through donations provided by The Farm at Green Village and the W. Atlee Burpee Company.

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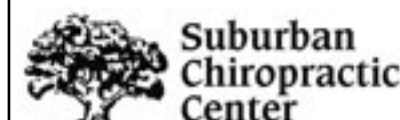
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ANNUAL SHARING THE QUILTS SHOW – MARCH 22

Harvest Quilters of Central New Jersey

Harvest Quilters of Central NJ will present their 41st annual quilt show on Saturday, March 22, 2025. The 41st Sharing the Quilts will be held at the Willow Grove Presbyterian Church, 1961 Raritan Road, Scotch Plains, NJ from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$8 for adults and \$3 for children under twelve.

At 10:30 a.m., Elsa Hahn of Edison will show her work and speak on “Surface Design – Making it Personal.” The award-winning quilter and retired Westfield music teacher will share her firsthand knowledge of various art quilting techniques, including the pros and cons of popular methods.

Janice M. Tellier of Mountainside will be recognized as 2025’s Featured Quilter. The Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) graduate and lifelong creative spirit will display 20 plus works of original art. Of her 14 vibrant bed-sized quilts Tellier quipped, “I often think my beds are better dressed than I am.”

Tellier’s whimsical fiber art will be featured alongside her acrylic paintings, crochet, examples of bobbin lace making and a fascinating diorama of a miniature modern quilting studio. “My hope is to have the quilts speak to the viewer, with a sense of humor or play on words,” Tellier said.

As is tradition, local charities will benefit from drawings for a modern lap-sized quilt, a traditional queen-sized bed quilt, gift cards and craft themed gift baskets.

In addition to viewing a full array of modern, traditional, art and wall-hanging quilts, attendees can participate in viewer’s choice awards, kid’s crafting table and vendor sales area.

A tearoom offering lunch, snacks, homemade baked goods, and beverages will benefit Willow Grove Church programs.

For additional information, please visit harvestquilters.com, or email: harvestquiltersnj@gmail.com.

LIVINGSTON TOWNSHIP UPCOMING EVENTS

TECHNOLOGY, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND MENTAL HEALTH – MARCH 11

The Livingston Mayor’s Wellness Campaign is offering a presentation on technology, social media, and mental health. The presentation will be on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and will be held virtually via Zoom.

This workshop will focus on understanding how technology can have both positive and negative effects on teens’ well-being, learning, and self-esteem. Parents will learn how to set healthy limits, and support and guide their teens in using technology responsibly and safely. Parents will leave with a better understanding of the importance of face-to-face interactions, physical activity, and outdoor time.

Pre-registration is required. To register, email Jessica at jekelly@livingstonnj.org or call 973-535-7961 ext. 7110. Information on accessing the presentation via Zoom will be shared upon registration.

MEDICATION REVIEW: WHAT’S IN YOUR BAG? -MARCH 26

The Livingston Health Department, in conjunction with Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center’s Pharmacy Department, will offer a medication review program on Wednesday, March 26, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the Livingston Senior/Community Center, 204 Hillside Avenue, in Tahaney Room 3 on the first floor.

Meet one-on-one with a member from the Pharmacy team at Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center to review the medications and supplements you are taking. Come have your questions answered, ensure you’re taking your medications and supplements properly, and learn how to prevent potentially unsafe drug interactions.

Appointments are required. To make an appointment, call the Health Department at 973-535-7961 ext. #7110, #7109, or #7108. Please bring all of the medications and supplements you are taking with you to your appointment.



(above) Janice M. Tellier will be recognized as 2025’s Featured Quilter.

Courtesy photo

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(And What They Mean)

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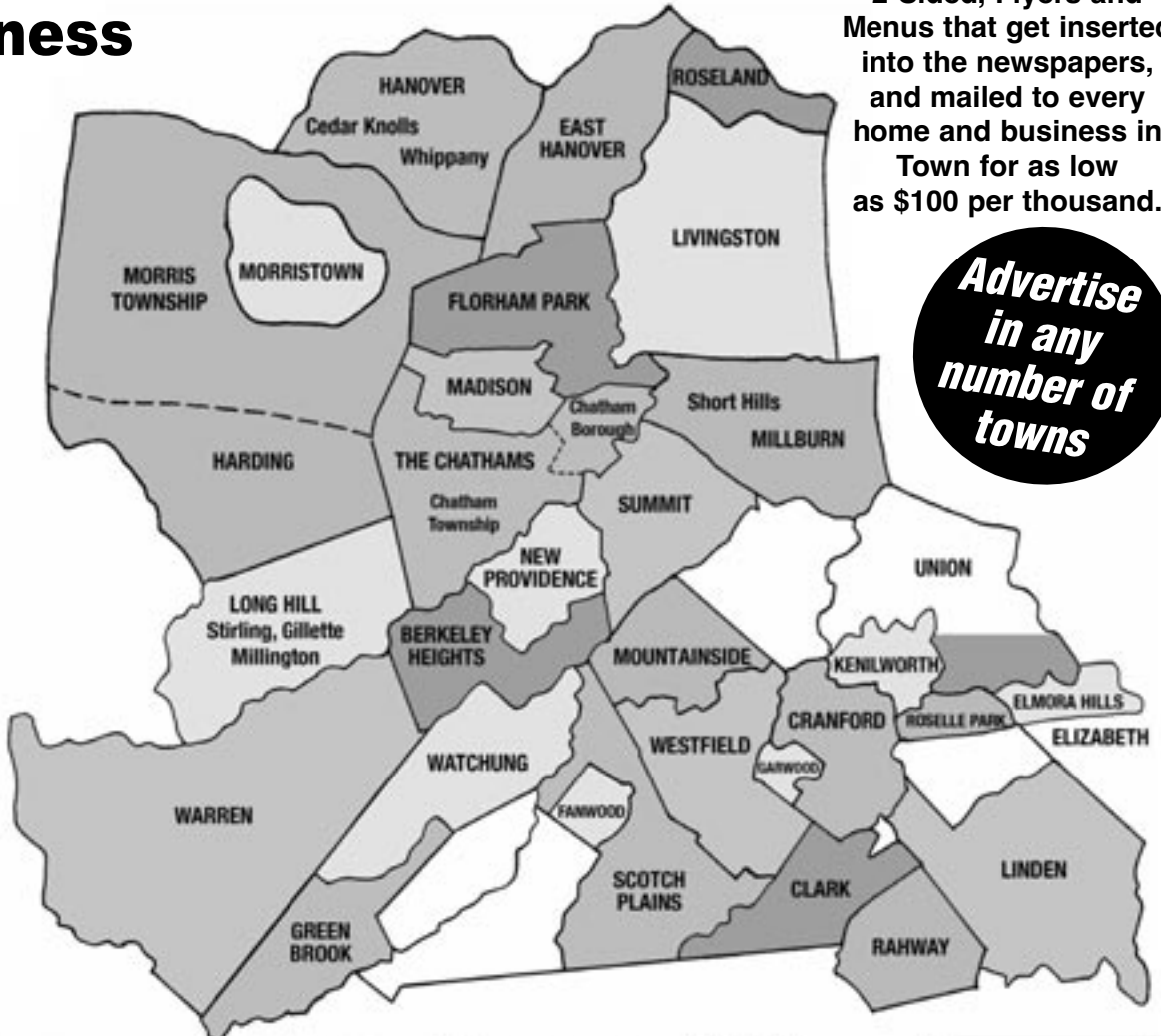
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6 Units	6.5"x6.25" or 10"x4"	320	760	1200	1400	1600	1800	2000	2200	2400	2600	2800
9 HALF PAGE	6.5"x9" or 10"x7"	360	860	1300	1600	1900	2200	2400	2600	2800	3000	3200
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SINGING AT THE THRESHOLD

Garden State Threshold Choir

A choir that rehearses but does not perform. A choir that goes in a very small group to sing to one person at a time. A choir whose mission is to provide, not entertainment, but kindness and comfort, to someone who is dying. That is a Threshold Choir.

Threshold Choir is a nonprofit network of about 200 chapters across the country and abroad. And there is one right here in Whippany, NJ, called the Garden State Threshold Choir.

Founded 25 years ago, Threshold Choir singers go, by invitation, to sing at the bedside of those crossing life's challenging thresholds, especially the final threshold between living and dying.

The Garden State Threshold Choir began in 2017 when Whippany resident Judy Hahn retired, looked for a chapter to join, and, finding none nearby, started recruiting to form a new chapter. "It takes time and patience to establish a new

chapter," says Hahn. "And it takes time and patience for each singer to be ready to do this work. What we have is an incredibly dedicated and compassionate group of women."

Arriving in a group of two to four singers at a hospital, nursing facility or home, they carry folding stools and sit by the bed. "Even if the hospice patient is nonresponsive, we believe they can hear us and feel the vibrations of our harmonies," says Hahn. "For those close to the end, it is said that we are 'singing them home.'"

Threshold Choir has its own unique repertoire of songs, written mostly by members. The songs are simple and short, sung softly a capella, first in unison, then repeated and layered with harmonies. The lyrics speak of rest, comfort, letting go, or about peacefulness and love.

"People wonder how we can sing to a dying person," noted Cedar Knolls resident Bonnie Adams. "But to us it's an honor to be present in that sacred, intimate space. We see the breathing



(above) GSTC members Judy Hahn, Rockie French and Delia Cashin sing at a hospice facility.

Courtesy photo

relax; and when the patient is surrounded by family, the songs give voice to their feelings and help them grieve."

The Garden State chapter is accepting inquiries for membership. A singer has to be able to carry a tune, hold her own part in harmony, blend with other voices, be willing to self-monitor and accept gentle feedback, and, above all, communicate kindness with their voice. Rehearsals are held on Tuesday evenings, alternating between Zoom sessions and in-person at the First Presbyterian Church of Whippany.

Threshold Choir is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that honors all spiritual paths and has no religious affiliation. All of the chapter's services are free of charge.

Much more information about Threshold Choir is available on thresholdchoir.org, and about the Garden State Threshold Choir at thresholdchoir.org/Garden_State

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