



The Federation Reporter

Washington State Federation of Chapters

National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association

November-December 2010
January 2011

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- See “new” officer, chairmen reports, this issue
- NARFE to “Go Green,” Jan. 1, 2011
- Dues increases effective Jan. 1, 2011
- Reminder: Stay current with GEMS
- NARFE: www.narfe.org
- WSFC: www.narfewa.net

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From the WSFC President – Sandy Cagle

Are you prepared to defend and fight for your “earned benefits?”

This message needs to be asked of every active and retired federal worker! Each day, it seems, there is another proposal to solve the country’s financial problems, including the deficit, by “simply” furloughing federal workers for two weeks, or taking across-the-board 25% cuts of all federal employees’ pay, or significantly reducing retiree annuities and health benefits ... to name just a few examples. At NARFE’s recent national convention, Dan Adcock, NARFE’s legislative director, said, “Now is the time to take charge of your own destiny.”

So, how can we do that? By quickly getting to our respective congressional members when there is a NARFE GEMS “action call!” The quickest way to contact congressional members is either by e-mail or phone calls; letters work, but when going to Washington, D.C., offices, they are delayed due to scanning for security

purposes. Also, does your chapter have a phone tree to contact members without GEMS access to inform them of what they stand to lose and what they can do to make their voices heard?

Yes, it is important that our voices be heard. Numbers do count with Congress and our organization. Did you know, however, that the majority of recruiting is done by NARFE headquarters and not at the chapter level? Further, statistics reveal that 90% of all recruiting in chapters is by the same 1% of members!

NARFE lost more than 10,000 members this year. This was a contributing factor to the necessity for the dues increase ... fewer members, less dues revenue. But, retention is actually the bigger problem because of non-renewals. It is up to us to tell members how important their continued membership is in protecting their current/future benefits.

Because non-renewals is a significant issue, NARFE headquarters is doing a special mass mailing to



dropped members asking them to consider rejoining. Please take this opportunity to review chapter membership records and personally follow up with your dropped members as well. Join the Federation in making this a priority throughout the coming year.

Yes, strength is in numbers; and yes, we need to make our voices heard to defend and fight for our earned benefits.

Sandy

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**Remember:
Strength is in numbers!**



VICE PRESIDENT — Richard Wilson

Here it is – fall, already! One could say the year is nearly over; however, there are still things happening that will have a material effect on both current and retired federal employees, including NARFE members – namely, the mid-term general elections and health benefits changes. Regarding the elections, whatever the results, I believe we're in for the ride of a lifetime.

Our annual health benefits open season is in full swing and there are still a number of health fairs scheduled throughout our state. With all the changes

and their potential impacts, it is more important than ever to ensure these health fairs have a NARFE presence. It can be a great way to get out NARFE information and recruit active federal employees.

Speaking of which, in our Federation and NARFE, declining membership remains a concern. For example at NARFE's recent national convention, we learned that more than 17,000 members were lost due to death since the 2008 convention. It was a staggering number.

Therefore, each of us

should consider ourselves a NARFE recruiter. When we speak to former co-workers, or other current or retired federal employees, we should be asking them if they're NARFE members AND signing them up if they are not. Seems pretty simple, but really, how many of us are doing it? If you are, thank you; if not, please think, NARFE and recruiting – we all need to do it.

Until next time.

Richard

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*Each of us
should consider ourselves
a NARFE recruiter ...
pretty simple,
but how many of us are
doing it?*

Convention 2011 Information scheduled for mailing in early January

SECRETARY — Paul Shell

The hard part of the year is over – two conventions. We are now reviewing the feedback from both, in particular, from the state convention in Everett.

I am pleased to report that either through delegates attending or via proxies, Washington State was 100% represented at NARFE's recent national convention. Thanks to all those who kept the ball rolling to make this happen. Now, looking ahead to our 2011 state convention in

Spokane, please plan ahead to ensure your chapter is represented – either by a delegate or delegates attending, or by using the proxy option.

Also regarding the 2011 convention, I plan to start off the year with an annual mailing. Thereafter, everything should be electronic. We are working to provide information and access to forms via the Federation's web site including, possibly, a form or two that can be completed on line. Watch

for more updates in future *Federation Reporter* newsletters.

Finally, I know you've heard this before – when there are chapter officer or committee chairman changes, please ensure the NARFE F-7 is updated, either electronically or hardcopy, with a copy to me. Thank you.

Paul

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NARFE F-7 ... up to date?



TREASURER — Arlene L. Patton



This is my first report as your treasurer. It's been a busy "learning" few months for me and a steep learning curve!

National announced at the recent NARFE national convention, that January 1, it plans to "Go Green" ... that is, paperless, as much as possible.

What does this mean to chapters? All payments from National will be direct deposited into chapter bank accounts. Therefore, for chapters not set up for electronic/direct deposits, now is the time to get the necessary paperwork submitted. Reports will not be mailed but available on

NARFE's web site: www.narfe.org. Chapters need to ensure someone has computer access and can download the pertinent reports.

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NARFE going paperless!



TREASURER REPORT SYNOPSIS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2010			
Budget Balances		Bank Balances	
Annual Budget	37,915.00	US Bank Checking	7,511.95
YTD Expenditures	5,821.76	Kitsap CU – Savings	99.87
Budget Remaining	32,093.24	CD (matures 10/27/10)	31,961.45
		Total Bank Balances	39,573.27

Remember: NARFE is "Going Green" starting January 1, 2011. Are you ready?

FINANCE — Michael S. Ferri

It's that time again – the Federation's 2011-2012 budget process. Therefore, if you have any specific initiatives you want to be considered for the next budget, please ensure that you've submitted them to President Sandy Cagle. Her

deadline was **October 31**. She will be forwarding what she receives to me. As in the past, the process will begin with a three-year expenditure review for each line item. You meeting **President Sandy's October 31**

deadline is allowing me time to prepare an initial budget starting point for the Executive Board's upcoming November 17 meeting.
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PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINARS COORDINATOR — Michael S. Ferri

Needed – copies of the **U.S. government pages from old phone books in your areas** so I can begin working with those agencies about our NARFE pre-retirement seminars. I've found that current

federal employees have not always received the counseling they need regarding their retirement benefits. Therefore, I'd greatly appreciate any help you can provide in getting me information

about federal agencies in your respective areas.
 Thank you!
Michael
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**2011
 WSFC Convention
 Spokane**

Mark your calendars for
May 15-17,
**Mirabeau Park Hotel &
 Convention Center,**
Spokane Valley,
 for our Federation's
 2011 convention.
 Planning is underway
 with a focus to make this
 a convention
 you don't want to miss.

Note the Location!
Vancouver, Wash.
2012 WSFC Convention



DISTRICT I VP – Teri Sannar

Although still several months away – think May, Spokane, and the 2011 Federation convention! Our Spokane chapter members are working to make this a very memorable convention. So, please continue to re-

mind your chapter members about the convention and encourage attendance.

Our Walla Walla chapter is exploring ways to possibly piggyback on another chapter's newsletter. If you or anyone you know

has ideas, suggestions and/or experience in how this could work, please contact me. Thanks!

Teri

katielove@pocketinet.com

H: 541.938.7657

DISTRICT II VP – Quentin Gates

C-O-N-N-E-C-T the D-O-T-S. With many NARFE chapters struggling with membership, participation and apathy – whether in District II, around the state, or nationally, how is it that some chapters seem to thrive despite these challenges? I believe they've learned that for every challenge there is an action that can either prevent or resolve the problem. They ensure that several key elements are practiced consistently; that is, they **“connect the dots.”**

What does this mean? These chapters:

- Ensure all their members are kept informed through newsletters – printed and electronic.
- Make direct contact with members either online or by phone.
- Ensure meetings are meaningful, informative and fill members' social needs.
- Ensure their chapter is well known in the community through charitable efforts and other forms of public relations. Finally,
- Ensure their chapter is known to the respective elected representatives.

True, most people aren't keen about devoting time and effort to something that's not affecting them ... at least not yet. Therefore, it is easy for many to become complacent. So, here is something to ponder – when Congress reconvenes in January, we may have to deal with new threats that could affect our welfare as either active federal employees or annuitants. How to prepare for this possibility? Start now to **connect the dots!**

Quentin

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“Connect the dots!”

DISTRICT III VP – Bonnie Seesholtz

Yes, been – very busy! Looking forward to – normal hectic. Sound familiar? Whether working to ensure all the district's chapters were represented at the NARFE national convention to attending the district's chapters regular meetings to

dealing other district and chapter issues, busy and hectic are accurate.

However, as others have written, volunteering, and communicating and staying connected have been and are keys to making our NARFE chapters and, ultimately, the

entire organization, viable and successful. Mmm ... how to do that. Guess busy and hectic need to continue to be my norm.

Bonnie

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DISTRICT IV VP – Bill Powers

Looking back – at our March 2010 District IV Workshop, Erick Davenport from the Seattle Region, U.S. Census Bureau, gave us a talk in preparation for the April census. Then in September,

the Bureau presented the district with a very nice plaque for our support, which I'll take to the district's chapter meetings this fall.

Now – ensuring NARFE

representation at fall health fairs throughout the district.

Looking ahead – our 2011 District IV Workshop will be Thursday, March 17,

(Continued on page 5)

DISTRICT IV VP — *continued*

(Continued from page 4)

Sons of Norway Lodge #44, Poulsbo, starting at 9 a.m.

Something interesting – our District IV web site’s “domain name” and “web site

hosting” billing have been split, so we pay separate companies. The domain name provider raised its rate 50% but gave us the option to pay the previous rate if we paid five years in advance. We did

just that, and split the costs among our four chapters. This might be an option for other chapters and districts.

Bill

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DISTRICT V VP — Steve Anderson

I have now attended two NARFE national events – the 2009 legislative conference and 2010 convention. I am increasingly impressed with and inspired by the dedication and quality of our NARFE national officers and their staffs. We are truly fortunate to have this leadership caliber at the national level.

I believe those who were at the national convention understand the critical situation federal retirees and active employees face. For years NARFE has talked

about the need to stem attrition and recruit new members. Now more than ever, it is time to act and do something about these issues.

I also believe we are each in control of our own destiny. Therefore, I have initiated several actions in my home Wenatchee chapter to try to improve service to our members and increase membership. However, since there is not a “one-size-fits-all” solution, I am encouraging the other District V chapters to figure out and implement

what works for them. I’ve also shared these actions with other members of our Federation’s executive board.

If you want to know more about what we’ve been trying, feel free to contact me. And, I look forward to hearing about other actions from across the Federation that are helping increase NARFE membership. Bottom line, we all need to capitalize on each other’s “best practices.”

Steve

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REGION IX VP — Lanny Ross

At our 2010 NARFE National Convention, delegates approved a dues increase. I’ve been asked questions, listened to feedback and concluded there is confusion. Hopefully, I can help clarify the changes:

New national dues:

- One year, \$40
- Two years, \$72
- Three years, \$102

Additional information:

- Chapters will continue to establish their dues; National will continue to collect those dues and remit them back to the chapters.
- Members on dues withholding will receive a 15% reduction on national dues. Their annual dues: \$34, plus

the chapter dues of record.

- Finally, NARFE’s National Executive Board (NEB) established a new \$45, first-year membership. Under our bylaws, “*One-third (1/3) of the Membership Fee ... shall be returned to the Chapters in lieu of the first year’s Chapter dues.*”

- Target implementation date is January 1.

Impacts on the various due categories:

- Existing life members – no impact as they have paid.
- New life members – new actuarial rates have been established and the National Life Membership (F-53) application is being printed. The new application is scheduled to appear in the

December NARFE magazine.

- First-year membership fee – new-member applications are being printed and should be available in mid-December.
- Annual renewal – the first dues renewal notice with the new dues structure is scheduled to go out in January for members whose renewal date is March. Those members with January and February expiration dates will renew under the old dues structure.
- Dues withholding – change effective for members with a March anniversary date.

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FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Note: Chapter boards are again confronted with finding officers and people to serve on committees or as a chairman. The following article from Interface, an American Sewing Guild, Inc., publication, says it all. Think about it as you ask members to serve. Feel free to reprint this in your chapter newsletters.

Sandy Cagle
President, WSFC

Volunteering – It's a Team Sport!

Most of us know that volunteering is a great opportunity to learn something new, develop new talents and enjoy the personal rewards of being an active contributor. But, we're also aware that as volunteers we can burn out from over-committing and extending ourselves. How do we ensure chapters have enough volunteers to spread the responsibilities around and not burn people out?

Creating opportunities

for members to become more actively involved spreads the work among many and lightens the load for all.

How many positions or responsibilities within your chapter are supported by committees or task forces? Ever considered having a "volunteer coordinator" on your chapter board?

What kinds of things would such a volunteer coordinator do? They might contact members – when they join and annually – identifying all your chapter's various volunteer opportunities by providing a list of short- and long-term committees, or one-time or occasional opportunities. Depending on your chapter's size, this could be done in person, by phone or e-mail.

Frequently, new members are the most eager to become active to make new friends and learn more about your organization or group. A survey by the *Philanthropy*

Journal found that 1 out of 5 volunteers say their professional or work skills are not utilized by their organization.

Most of us have abilities and interests not related to professional skills that are equally valuable. Considering our organization is dependent upon volunteers and their contributions, shouldn't we put more effort into identifying what skills our members have?

Administrative, technical, publications, governance, event planning experience are all critical to chapter success. Not everyone needs to be an officer or a committee chair – a majority of members are more willing to make smaller commitments as a committee member or to take on a one-time task and, in the process, will likely develop an interest in doing more in the future.

***"Ever considered having a
'volunteer coordinator'
on your chapter board?"***

*"Creating opportunities
for members
to become
more actively involved
spreads the work
among many and
lightens the load for all."*



SERVICE OFFICER – Charlie Caughlan



Just a reminder – I'm still here and ready to help fellow service officers with any questions you may have. Just give me a call any time, 360.693.0435, or send me an e-mail.

Another reminder – for

those of you who don't have the latest FH-10, *Service Officer Guide*, dated 08/09, you can download it at: www.narfe.org/pdf/fh-10.pdf.

And, a final reminder – have you signed up for GEMS? Between the monthly

NARFE magazine and GEMS updates, you can receive the most updated NARFE information.

Charlie
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H: 360.693.0435

NARFE-PAC CHAIRMAN — Don Binder

By the time you read this article, NARFE's Political Action Committee – its four elected national officers – will have made its decisions regarding NARFE-PAC contributions throughout the state for our federal congressional races. Interesting to note – funds were given in the Senate race and in 7 of the 9 House races. Also interesting, the 2 not receiving contributions are in the state's 4th and 5th districts – both on the state's eastern side.

The Federation web site, www.narfewa.net, has a recap of PAC funds given to Washington's candidates and the latest state/chapter PAC contribution report. Just click on "NARFE PAC" once in the site.

However, following is a quick overview. During this legislative cycle's 7 quarters – January 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010 – 53,996 NARFE members have given \$1,329,676.34, averaging \$24.63 per donor. For Washington, 1,627 members

have given \$44,722.00, which averages \$27.49 per donor – above the national average contribution.

Should you need to review the PAC process or assist other members in their understanding, a good resource is *NARFE-PAC Frequently Asked Questions* at www.narfe.org. After logging in as a member, go to Special Programs, then NARFE-PAC.

Don

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NOMINATING COMMITTEE — Nancy Crosby

A reminder to all: with the recent Federation bylaws changes, the present WSFC officers will serve until the 2012 biennial convention. Therefore, the Nominating

Committee's focus will be different in 2011. However, even without elections, NC members are always looking for candidates willing to serve as officers. Also, members

are most willing to talk with those considering serving on a Federation committee.

Nancy

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ALZHEIMER'S CHAIRMAN — Ray Patterson

Donations continue to flow in from our generous members. Final June 30 year-end WSFC contributions totaled \$11,434.70.

Following are reminders when sending donations:

- Make checks payable to: **NARFE Alzheimer's Research.**
- Have a transmittal letter with the check/checks to help ensure donors receive the proper contribution receipt.
- Mailing address for the donations is:

Ray Patterson

WSFC Alzheimer's
Chairman,
6115 57th Drive NE,
Marysville, WA
98270-9538

- Monthly cutoff date is the 15th for forwarding contributions to the Alzheimer's Research Fund and receiving credit that month. And,
- NARFE has a chapter coordinator's manual. I am attempting to procure copies to ensure each chapter has a copy.

Thanks to all who helped me transition into serving as the Federation's Alzheimer's chairman. I appreciate Federation members' trust to allow me to perform in this worthwhile capacity. Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information.

Ray

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Make donation checks payable to:
"NARFE Alzheimer's Research"





NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMAN — Mike Teefy



November 3 – a crucial point. As the *Federation Reporter* goes to press, we will be either at the crossroads of protecting our wages and benefits or in the crosshairs of fighting to save our benefit rights. At all levels – from our NARFE national leadership to our state and chapter officers to our members – all will need to be prepared to answer in a united manner and fight against assaults on everything from our wages to medical and retirement benefits.

For example, here are some issues I believe we may need to respond to:

- Federal employees are paid substantially more

than their private-sector counterparts.

- Changing “high 3” to “high 5.”
- Freezing wages in 2011.
- Cutting all non-defense spending.
- A 2-week furlough for government employees to help reduce the budget deficit.
- Debt Commission efforts to reduce or eliminate Social Security and Medicare.
- “... taxpayers are subsidizing the fattening salaries and pensions of federal bureaucrats.”

Rights fought for and earned vs. benefits given and

arbitrarily taken away – these are issues. Therefore, I will be contacting NARFE’s state officers and legislative chairs asking for input on how we should:

- Coordinate our actions.
- Inform our officers, committee chairs and members.
- Make our chapters stronger in both numbers and political power.
- Take our concerns with the power of unity to our congressional representatives.

Please contact me if you have ideas or suggestions.

Mike

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H: 360.892.9410

“Make our chapters stronger in both numbers and political power.”

“Certainly with the upcoming elections, there will be changes.”

STATE LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMAN — John Thurber



Yes, another Federation position change since our May convention – President Sandy Cagle asked and I agreed to serve as your state legislative chairman. So, I’ve been trying to learn more about what this position can do to help our Federation’s members.

And even though our state legislature has not been in session since I assumed my position, that does not mean there hasn’t been activity to

watch and monitor! At the top of the list – the state’s budget deficit, and its real and potential impacts. One message I’ve heard – times are tough and going to get tougher.

Just one example of potential impacts due to the budget deficit – the state’s Medicaid program and how a reduction in funding may impact those seniors in nursing homes.

Certainly with the elections, there will be changes. The impact on the state and our lives here – I’ll be watching and monitoring when the legislature goes in session in January.

Please contact me if there is information or something else I can do for you as your state legislative chairman.

John

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PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIRMAN/WEB MASTER — Sam Cagle

Following are several suggestions you may find helpful.

Health Fair Support

- Have copies of the October, November and December *NARFE* magazines when you staff tables; they are great resource materials on “open season.”
- Track the number of contacts made.
- Individualize application forms and literature, including magazines handed out, to ensure you/your chapter receive recruiting recognition or financial incentives.
- Download the current 2011 FEHBP premium rates – health care, dental, vision – and the October 1 *NARFE* release about the rate increases at: www.opm.gov.
- Work with your chapter membership team to follow up on leads.

The *NARFE* Story – More Opportunities

Work with agency health fair contacts for other possible

opportunities to present the *NARFE* story. Examples:

- “Tabling.”
- Lunchtime presentations.
- *NARFE* presentations at pre-retirement seminars and other civilian personnel gatherings – also, encourage membership prior to next year’s dues increase.

Other PR News

- The Spokane chapter is creating a “public relations committee” – more details in future *Federation Reporter* newsletters.
- January – with new officers and committee members, ensure these “public relations members” receive training or are updated.
- *NARFE* pens and displays are available for health fairs and other activities/events; contact me to receive these.

Web Sites

- Both the Federation web site, www.narfewa.net, and *NARFE* web site, www.narfe.org, are a

great resource for PR information and training material. However, if you have questions or want additional training, please contact me.

- The Federation web site has an updated public relations support/recruiting presentation; it reflects the increasing challenges to federal civilian and retirement programs, and can be used as a speech to appropriate groups and/or to prospective members.
- *NARFE*-PAC funding information is regularly updated/posted on the Federation’s web site, including information about which legislators/candidates have received PAC funds.
- The Federation web site is a work in progress to keep it current, useful and easy to navigate. Questions? Suggestions? Please contact me.

Sam

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*Our web sites -
great
PR resources!*



***Reminder:
change your
NARFE chapter
materials
to reflect the new
2011 dues structure.***

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN — Vacant

Recruit, retain, renew!
Easy words to write and say, much harder to actually implement; but, with or without a chairman, we know what we need to do

to maintain our current and future earned benefits:

- **Recruit, recruit, recruit**
- **Retain, retain, retain**
- **Renew, renew, renew**

If you want to volunteer to fill this important position, or for more information, please contact President Sandy, asgwa@aol.com, or 360.456.8509.





RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Washington State Federation of Chapters

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This newsletter is mailed to elected officers and committee chairs listed in the Federation directory, and to a courtesy listing. Notify the editor if you prefer NOT to receive this newsletter.



www.narfe.org



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EDITOR, *FEDERATION REPORTER*— Mary Binder



I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as your new *Federation Reporter* editor! If someone had told me many years ago that my elementary education degree and teaching experience would lead me to a public affairs career for the Army and now to this, I would have laughed. Yah, right!!

Before continuing, I want to personally thank Dave Seesholtz for the many years he served as the newsletter's editor. Unless you've done this type work – or are married to someone doing this type work! – it is truly hard to appreciate the time and commitment. I often equate it to an ongoing labor

and birthing process – deliver one, get ready for another. So, thank you, Dave, and to Bonnie Seesholtz, thank you, too, for your support.

Now, looking ahead. First, you'll notice a change to the overall look and design. Like most editors, my mind is thinking – how can I help continue to make the newsletter a viable and effective communication tool? So, I turned to a trusted friend who has solid design and layout skills. Although not eligible to be a NARFE member, she's taken on this volunteer challenge – yes, a volunteer! Thank you, Dominique!

Together, we view the newsletter as an evolving communication tool. Therefore, what may work for some of you, your chapters and members may not work for others. While impossible to meet everyone's needs all the time, I am attempting to provide useful and pertinent information. But, to do this, **I need your input – ideas, suggestions, constructive feedback, etc.** Otherwise, I have to guess at what you need and want. So, help me to help you. Input, please!

Finally, thank you to all for your support.

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