

# BRANCHING OUT

## What's Happening at Lake Wilderness Arboretum

### Members' Picnic PLUS Plant Sale



Members enjoy good food and conversation at a previous year's picnic.

**Y**ou, your family and friends will want to be sure to join us on **Tuesday, August 3rd at 6pm at the Lake Wilderness Arboretum gazebo** for the annual Members' Picnic. SKCAF will provide Polish dogs and buns, condiments and drinks, as well as the utensils. Please bring a potluck dish, salad or dessert to share. Also, if you'd like, bring lawn chairs for your comfort and convenience.

Please RSVP to Maureen Paszek at 425.432.5205 to let her know how many will be attending with you, which will help in planning the appropriate amount of food and supplies.

Also, you'll have an opportunity to look over

the 1965 to 1989 Arboretum History albums that Darlene Stump and her hard-working committee have been putting together since January.

As you may be aware, lots of enhancements and new plants have been added recently to the Arboretum. (For all the details, see Cindy Ostermann's article on page 3.) You'll want to take some time to walk around and see what's been accomplished.

Not only will the Members' Picnic have great food and conversation, there will be a Members-Only (and guests) Plant Sale. This is a great opportunity for you to buy some of the unique plants the Arboretum nursery has to offer. The Sale starts at 6:30pm. Maria VanZanen is in charge and is looking for a few volunteers to help her with setup, cashiering, etc. Please call Maria to offer your help at 425.432.2213.

Mark your calendar now for August 3rd, and be sure to call Maureen with your reservations. ♦

### Update on Loie Benedict Garden Donation

**T**he plant relocation portion of the Loie Benedict Garden Donation project is finally coming to a close. The holding area for the rescued plants at the Arboretum nursery is filled. TWIGS members and Arboretum volunteers, under the leadership of Judi Alvau and Judy Nash on Thursday and Saturday mornings during this spring and early summer, have dug up selected plants from Loie's garden. In addition, they have taken countless cuttings and carefully collected seed. All were meticulously documented.

They will be taking some large trees and shrubs with a back-hoe at the very end of the project and also are putting some of the plants in the Arboretum mother bed to take cuttings from each year for

plant sale material. The same goes for perennials that will be used for seed collection each year.

Photos were taken, and plants were tagged and numbered for identification purposes. Many ferns, woodland type bulbs, daylilies, perennials and iris as well as mature shrubs were saved from the developer's bulldozers. Cuttings were taken from trees and shrubs that were too large to move.

Loie was an avid collector, liked unusual plants and had many species of a large number of plants in her large garden in Auburn.

The TWIGS members wish to thank all volunteers for their hard work and dedication to saving this garden. Without all of you this garden would have been lost forever. ♦



## President's Message

by Kadri Linask-Goode

This summer finds our volunteers busier than ever. The new Volunteer Garden is progressing nicely with an enterprising team of volunteers professionally designing the project with zest. Salvage continues on Loie Benedict's garden with an exceptionally dedicated group of volunteers putting in truly significant hours to dig up many exciting specimens which are being relocated to the Arboretum to save them from the eventual bulldozers. Numerous groups have also volunteered their time this summer to maintain the Arboretum, all under the direction of many of our tireless volunteers. We also had a Scout event using our fire circle for their ceremony recently.

The Arboretum continues to be an important part of the Maple Valley community, and we are ever grateful for the volunteer and community support. Come and join us!

We are delighted to welcome two very talented volunteers to the SKCAF Board!

**J. Patrick Bowman** has joined the Board as Corresponding Secretary and is currently working with the Design Committee on the Volunteer Garden project. Pat is a writer, educator, photographer, and landscape designer and has developed and operated businesses in the latter professions. He writes a monthly column for *B&B*, the official publication of the Washington State Nursery & Landscape Association, as well as writes various horticulture and management related prose. Also, he has developed and presented seminars on landscape design for nurseries, garden clubs, community organizations and college classrooms as well as mentored landscape design students who have gone on to successfully operate their own businesses. His years of self-study in the arts has led to photographic work in such diverse genres as scenic, travel, fine art, horticulture, and model portfolios.

Pat is a Washington Certified Professional Horti-

culturist, member of the Washington State Nursery & Landscape Association, and the Garden Writers Association. Pat, his wife Becky and daughter Maeghan live in Maple Valley.

**Geoff Culbert** lives in Redmond but has spent much time over the past several months in the Arboretum's Forest Reserve area, an area where his father has always enjoyed walking his dog on the trails.

The five miles of trail area have seen much effort by Geoff. He's cleared debris from the past winter's storms, as well as cut back salal and other plant material which threatened to obliterate the trails. Geoff grew up in Geneva, Switzerland, but has lived in the Pacific Northwest for over 20 years. He worked at Microsoft for 17 years in international business and localization, most recently on MSN, their online web portal. "In the few months I've been helping the SKCAF, I've been impressed with the level of support you receive and how engaged the volunteers are. It was particularly gratifying to be part of the annual Plant Sale," Geoff said. Geoff and his wife have three children, ages 2, 5 and 7. ♦

To fill the vacancies we are thrilled to welcome J. Patrick Bowman as Corresponding Secretary and Geoff Culbert as a Board Member At Large. Patrick and Geoff have been active volunteers with the Foundation, and we welcome the unique talents they bring to the Foundation. You can read more about Patrick and Geoff in the article below.

If you haven't been to the Arboretum recently or have been thinking of volunteering, be sure to visit or contact us as we would love for you to join us at any of our many volunteer opportunities. I hope everyone is having a safe and fun summer! ♦

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## Renovations & Enhancements Taking Place in Older Gardens & Trails

by Cindy Ostermann

In recent years, great strides have been made in refining and expanding the scope of the Smith Mossman Western Azalea Garden as well as significantly improving the efficiency and propagating capabilities of the Arboretum's nursery area. In addition, the Alpine Garden was enhanced with additional plant material, an irrigation system, and basalt rocks. Last year, a dry shade garden was begun adjacent to the forest edge near the gravel parking lot. Work in these areas continue under the enthusiastic and caring eye of Property Management & Development (PMD) Chairman Maria Van Zanen and a cadre of talented volunteers.

With the Smith Mossman Garden and nursery nearing a more completed stage, more resources can be focused on some of our other assets that need our attention as they age.

**Forest Reserve and Interpretive Trail:** Green River Community College Natural resources Instructor Rob Sjogren, new to the Board this year, has used Lake Wilderness Arboretum as a hands-on lab for his students. Their focus has been on the Forest Reserve area and our Interpretive Trail (which features native plants in their natural setting). Volunteers with native plant know-how are already starting to enhance this trail that ties in with the curriculum of local grade schoolers. Another recent addition to our Board and active volunteer list, Geoff Culbert, has spent countless hours in the Forest Reserve clearing and widening the nature trails there. Volunteer and Part-time Property Manager Bill Paine continues to coordinate Scout projects that improve access and usability to those trails as well as gravel pathways in the Public Gardens.

**Public Display Gardens at the entrance from the gravel parking lot:** A coordinated effort by Property Managers Bill Paine and Rebecca Stewart as well as Maple Trails Garden Club, volunteer Liz Gadwa, and PMD led group volunteer efforts such as Boeing Community Service time has resulted in pruning, weeding, and the addition of bark and plant material in several areas of the North Ameri-

can Garden area. All these efforts have made a noticeable difference. Rebecca has done some severe pruning to bring several rhodies and a smoke tree back into proportion. Within a year or so these previously gangly looking plants will be filled with lush new growth. In addition, in May the Board approved the renovation of a bed in this section in honor of all those volunteers (past, present, future) who contribute so much to both the Foundation and Arboretum. This bed, which is anchored by the large lace-leaf Japanese maple (known as the Anniversary Maple) on one end and by a giant sequoia (near the Alpine Garden) on the other will be named the Volunteer Garden. The renovation will be funded by contributions on behalf of Sherry Shaffer, a long-time Foundation supporter and volunteer who passed away last month and by donations earmarked for the garden.

The Foundation is fortunate to have three talented volunteers (new Corresponding Secretary Pat Bowman, Propagation Manager Judy Nash, and Rebecca Stewart) step forward to work on a design for the Volunteer Garden – a garden that we hope will be a fitting tribute for our volunteers and the work they do. All three have training and experience with garden design and lots of plant know how. Both Pat Bowman and Judy Nash have already drawn a preliminary design that keeps key elements of the existing garden, removes plants that have outgrown the site, and adds variety and new dimensions to this older area of the Arboretum's public display gardens. Every effort will be made to place significant plants removed from the present bed in an alternate location where they can be showcased to their full potential. After input from our PMD Committee and other sources is considered, a final design draft will be presented to the Board for final approval before the planting process begins, hopefully before year's end.

Contributions for this project may be sent to: SKCAF, PO Box 72, Maple Valley, WA 98038. Please designate the donation for the Volunteer Garden. ♦

## Board Position Available

Would you like to be a part of the planning process and of making decisions for the Arboretum? Then please call 425.413.2572 to learn more about the Second Vice President position that is currently vacant on the SKCAF Board. ♦

## Shrubs that Attract Birds to Your Yard

by Linda Bartlett

It has been fantastic to watch the birds increase every year in my yard as the shrubs I planted for them a few short years back are maturing now and bearing fruit. Last July there was a big flock of cedar waxwings feeding voraciously in the blue elderberry for a number of days while the big clusters of dusty blue fruit lasted. And in June, as I write this, there are evening grosbeaks enjoying the fruits of the Indian plum. I also watched a purple finch feeding on the twinberry

Here are a few of the plants that are especially good for attracting birds:



Here's a hermit thrush relishing a berry in Linda's yard.

Undoubtedly the **Cascara** would be at the top of the list. Its small fruits attract the grosbeaks, woodpeckers, jays, robins, tanagers, grouse, band-tailed pigeons, mourning doves, and then the leaves and branches bring in bushtits, kinglets, chickadees, nuthatches and flycatchers. And if that were not enough, the larva of several species of butterflies eat the leaves of this tree.

Another plant which is equally as attractive to birds would be the **Serviceberry**. Its berries are really tasty, I think, and so do the woodpeckers, chickadees, thrushes, towhees, waxwings, orioles, tanagers, grosbeaks, goldfinches,

juncos, crows, grouse and pheasants. Blue birds feed on them too, but unfortunately we do not see blue birds here as much as we used to.

The **Red-twig Dogwood** is another excellent shrub to plant—especially if you have a wet area, although it does okay with minimal water. It is attractive to vireos, warblers, kingbirds (E. WA), robins, flickers, flycatchers, wood ducks, grouse, quail and band-tailed pigeons. Its fruits can vary from white to a bluish color. The deer find this plant irresistible too, so be prepared to fence it off for awhile until it gains some size then occasional deer browsing won't bother it. Deer are also extremely fond of the next plant.

The **Elderberries**—ahh—those beautiful shrubs that are so pretty in blossom as well as when they bear fruit—some have red berries and others are blue. The red ones come on first and the blue (*Sambucus caerulea*) bloom and fruit later. The birds love them all. You will see sparrows, thrushes, warblers, jays, tanagers, grosbeaks, sapsuckers, woodpeckers and band-tailed pigeons coming to these bushes.

And in conclusion, I must mention the **High Bush Cranberry**. One day in the late fall I had a hermit thrush in my yard at the base of this plant, feeding on the remaining berries that had fallen to the ground. It is attractive to thrushes, jays, blue birds, flickers and other woodpeckers, finches, waxwings, robins, grouse and pheasant. ♦

## The Anniversary Maple

In 1990 for the 25th anniversary of the South King County Arboretum incorporation as a non-profit foundation, a celebration was held on Arbor Day that included planting an *Acer japonicum verde*. This Japanese maple, located by the rhododendrons near the Lake Wilderness



Chinook District Director Diane Green and Arboretum members June Mehrer and Cecile Chelette plant the Japanese maple on Arbor Day, 1990.



The Anniversary Maple as it looks today, 14 years after being planted.

Arboretum entrance, is known as the Anniversary Maple and is to be a “centerpiece” of the Volunteer Garden, now in the planning stage. Darlene Stump was the Arbor Day chair, and her son Robert gave an invocation and blessed the tree. Also students from the agriculture class at Tahoma High School made a presentation. ♦

## Featuring Some of Our Volunteers

We asked some of our Arboretum volunteers how they became interested in gardening, what got them started at the Arboretum, and if they had a favorite gardening book or tip to share. Here are their answers:

• **Lori Koyamatsu** said that a love of gardening “runs in the family.” Her grandparents raised a big vegetable garden, her father is Head Gardener at

South Seattle Community College, and her parents raise a vegetable garden, as well as the flowers her mother enjoys. She became involved at the Arboretum through the Late Bloomers Garden Club when the Smith-Mossman Garden project began. Lori then assisted with the rhododendrons and azaleas for Arboretum Plant Sales and was chair for the past two years. Her favorite book is *Greer’s Guidebook to Available Rhododendrons*, and her favorite magazines are *Gardens West* out of Canada, and *Fine Gardening*. Lori feels that observing everyday-home gardens is the best place to get gardening ideas and see the “real-life” effects of gardening and that fellow gardening friends are a wealth of information and quicker than looking it up in a book! To find new additions for her collection of plants and rhododendrons, Lori’s favorite places are the Late Bloomers Garden Club plant swaps and the Arboretum. “Gardening is where I go to relax and enjoy myself,” asserts Lori.

• **Hal Lamon**, like many of us, came to the Arboretum several years ago to find replacement plants for rhodies which he lost in an ice storm. He had “hit” several of the nurseries starting in Enumclaw and eventually heard the Arboretum had a Plant Sale going on. There he bought a truckload of rhodies and was asked if he would like to become a member. “I thought that for \$5.00 I would get the newsletters that would tell me about the sales and when they would be,” said Hal. While involved in the Spring Plant Sale, he noticed people struggling with cashiering. Since he had a lot of experience from owning and operating two hardware and garden stores, he offered help and now is the Board Treasurer. While he doesn’t know botanical nomenclature, he has always had an interest in gardening. His favorite book is *Sunset Garden Book*, Western edition.

• **Liz Gadwa** had a garden as a teenager in Seattle. She moved to Maple Valley 35 years ago and has volunteered with other organizations in

the community. While taking a Sunday walk, she came into the Arboretum and saw a man mowing the meadow. She thought it rather strange that he would be working that day, and stopped to visit with him. It was Bill Paine, and he told her he was a volunteer. She asked if she could also volunteer at the Arboretum. He assured her that she could, and she has been there faithfully winter and summer for a year, spending at least 12 hours each month weeding. She belongs to several garden clubs, and enjoys seeing “what the birds bring” to her own backyard, which is listed as a Washington Backyard Sanctuary for Wildlife.

• **Viola Scoby**, Program Chair for the past four years seems to know every “who’s who” in gardening! Her grandmother, mother and aunt were avid gardeners. Viola, as a toddler, followed her grandmother in her flower garden, and at 13 she wanted to start a garden club but did not know how and her classmates lived too far apart. She quit work in the early 1970s just so she could garden and belong to a garden club and also joined Master Gardeners after hearing Ed Hume talk about the Master Gardeners on his radio show. She became interested in the Arboretum through knowing the founder, George Tersisky who told her all about the Arboretum. Her favorite garden tip concerns pruning annuals and some perennials to keep them blooming and from getting leggy. She does her annuals every two weeks.

• **Gladys Krohn** said, “I have always loved gardening!” Her parents raised a big vegetable garden and yearly canned 600 or 700 quarts of fruit and vegetables. As a pre-teen, she sold magazines to have money to buy perennials. When she read about the Arboretum in the newspaper, she felt she could be of benefit. George Tersisky, the Arboretum founder, was teaching at her high school and had his students build the greenhouse and help start plants to sell in “tin can” pots at Plant Sales. As a member of the Maple Trails Garden Club, she visited many scenic areas and learned about plants and geology. She got an old book, *Western American Alpines* by Gabrielson to help in plant identification. took classes on gardening, and joined the Native Plant Society and the Primrose Society. In classes, she learned propagation, which she says she loves! She has donated many plants that she’s propagated to the Arboretum. ♦



Lori  
Koyamatsu



Hal Lamon



Liz Gadwa



Viola Scoby



Gladys Krohn

## Why an Arboretum?

by J. Patrick Bowman

What is an arboretum? According to Webster, “A place in which trees are cultivated and displayed.” This is not a very exciting definition of arboretum, but one Webster is content in using. But, of course, that was old Webster. The new Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, eleventh edition, 2004, says, “A place where

trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants are cultivated for scientific and educational purposes.” A bit more colorful definition. Baker H. Morrow’s *A Dictionary of Landscape Architecture* (University of New Mexico Press, 1987) calls an

arboretum “A botanical garden in which trees and other woody plants may be grown for scientific or educational use and for strolling pleasure. A kind of Botanic or Botanical garden.” Now we are free to move within one!

Association and foundation mission statements are further indicators of what an arboretum is. The American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta declares its mission is to “serve

and strengthen public gardens by supporting their work, value, and achievements in horticultural display, education, research, and plant conservation.” Our own South King County Arboretum Foundation mission statement states “To develop and maintain the Lake Wilderness Arboretum in a way that preserves and displays Northwest ecosystems and cultivated

landscapes in an environment that acts as a wildlife sanctuary. The Foundation will promote horticultural science and conservation as well as provide opportunities for education and passive recreational experiences.” Now, not only can we walk, but we can also enjoy passive recreational experiences.

Knowing what an arboretum is provides foundational knowledge but knowing why an arboretum exists relates more importantly when attempting to influence a funding entity or garner community support for a site or project. Whenever a request for goods or services is made of an individual, funding source, municipality, or community, the

spoken or unspoken “why” is asked. “Why should we honor your grant proposal? Why should I volunteer for that work party? Why is your cause more worthy than the last one or next one?” The answer to why is often more personal and adds a human element to the what of a definition. Sooner or later we have to answer those whys for ourselves in order to provide answers to those around us.

In “Creating Space to Flourish,” an article published in *B&B*, the official publication of the Washington State Nursery & Landscape Association, I discuss the need “To create spaces where people, as well as plants, would come into their own and flourish...the end result is a space restorative in nature, maintainable in practice, and complementary in style.” Although I was referring to the practice of residential landscape design, I believe the same holds true to an arboretum.

The best way to answer those why questions is to expose people to the arboretum. For example, a friend or neighbor might feel honored to be invited for a tour. “Becky and I love taking the kids to the arboretum after dinner some nights just to walk around in the cool air and see what has changed. Would you like to come the next time we go?”

Once there we should supply sanctuary, that space restorative in nature; aesthetics, an arboretum clearly maintainable in practice; and sensibilities, a venue complimentary to the character of the area in which it is found. “Flourishing only comes when space is created that is at peace with its people.”

The Arboretum web site echoes these same feelings: “With the rapid loss of open space and environmental learning opportunities, the Arboretum trail system and gardens provide a unique opportunity for those who visit.”

“Why should we honor your grant proposal? Why should I volunteer for that work party? Why is your cause more worthy than the last one or next one?” We answer those questions partially with what we say, partially with what we do and if we can just get people to visit the Arboretum, the Arboretum will speak for itself. ♦

Bowman can be contacted at [shutterstory@aol.com](mailto:shutterstory@aol.com) for comment.

**Whenever a request for goods or services is made of an individual, funding source, municipality, or community, the spoken or unspoken “why” is asked.**

## Eagle Scout Recognition

by Bill Paine



Tristan Wells of Boy Scout Troop 777.

Tristan Wells of Boy Scout Troop 777 completed his Eagle Scout Project at the Lake Wilderness Arboretum on June 5th and will be approaching review by the Chief Seattle Council, BSA, for recognition as Eagle Scout.

This spring, Tristan began organizing his team of Scouts and supporters for improvements at two areas within the Arboretum. His efforts concluded in the improvement of our nursery facility and our display garden trail system. Gravel was distributed and leveled in areas within the nursery that are experiencing increased foot and vehicle traffic as the nursery expands its operations. Raised beds for plant propagation efforts were filled

with specialty growing soil mix. Trail surfaces in the Chinook District Garden were top-dressed with fine gravel for improved appearance and ease of use. In all, 50 cubic yards of material were distributed.

Special thanks are extended to Tristan, Troop 777, supporters and family members. Additional thanks are offered to Palmer Coking Coal for material resource and Bill's Engraving of Seattle for engraving service.

Tristan provided a very useful improvement to the trail system, offering the public easy traveling in the display gardens and the nursery, which is vital center of our propagation efforts and site of our two annual plant sales. We congratulate Tristan's accomplishment of Eagle Scout rank and wish him all success in the future. Thank you, Tristan! ♦

## LDS Youth Work Party

by Bill Paine

On Friday June 18th, at least 75 members of the Latter Day Saints Youth Conference participated in a work party at the Arboretum. Special thanks to Paula Thompson and Stephanie Broadbent, as well as other adults, for organizing and overseeing this very successful work party.

The activities included three areas of improvement: 1) Weeding and distributing mulch to selected areas in the Smith Mossman deciduous azalea garden, under the guidance of our own Cindy Ostermann. 2) Potting up hundreds of colchicum bulbs and other nursery

tasks directed by Gail Mayou. 3) Top-dressing of trails with fine gravel inside the Steuber Rhododendron Garden, led by Geoff Culbert and Bill Paine. We engaged five teams for thirty minutes each from 4 to 6:30pm

These volunteer efforts are an important part of the development and operation of the Lake Wilderness Arboretum. We are very grateful for the participation of the LDS Youth Conference in another rewarding community service work party. Good luck to you all. Thank You from all of us at the South King County Arboretum Foundation! ♦

## A Tribute to Sherry Shaffer

by June Mehrer

Long-time member and devoted volunteer Sherry Shaffer passed away Sunday, May 9th, in Ellensburg, Washington. A member of the South King County Arboretum Foundation for more than 15 years, Sherry served on the Board, as hostess for the general meetings with her daughter Crysta, and as Plant Sale Perennial Chair since 1995 until Maureen

Paszek accepted the position. She often served as the "go to" person when help was needed in plant identification, amazing all with her knowledge of perennials including their botanical names and

their needed growing conditions. Sherry also enjoyed helping with trees and shrubs at plant sales.

Sherry loved growing things, and many of us enjoy plants and plant divisions in our own gardens which were gifts from her.

She visited with many friends at this year's Spring Sale and will be remembered for her pretty table decorations, tasty refreshments, and delicious brownies.

Her family has asked that remembrances be made to the Arboretum in Sherry's name and directed specifically for use in the Volunteer Garden which is now in the design stage. ♦



So. King Co. Arboretum Foundation  
PO Box 72 • Maple Valley, WA 98038  
425.413.2572 • 206.366.2125  
www.LakeWildernessArboretum.org  
Info@LakeWildernessArboretum.org

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## June & July Bird Surveys

by Linda Bartlett

On June 19th, the Arboretum Bird Survey group had the highest species count of the year – 37 – which included ten new birds. Especially gorgeous was the cedar waxwing, and especially challenging to spot (thank goodness for a good scope!) was the willow flycatcher. Also, we're excited that Bill Paine observed a great-horned owl on June 30th. For the July 17th count, the area was quieter. Birds, having reared their young aren't as vocal in the summer and aren't defending territory. Several young kingfishers were having a squabble at the lake, and a pied-billed was vocalizing – an interesting sound. The two new species for July were a green heron and an immature glaucous-wing gull. Since several of our group will be away for our next regular 3rd-Saturday count, Linda Bartlett plans to do a weekday morning survey either the second or third week in August. Please contact her (253. 631.1959) if you would like to go along. ♦

## Fall Plant Sale: September 11

Fall is the perfect time to plant! The plants' roots have time to get established before winter, and you can be assured in our climate that there'll be plenty of water without your having to get that hose out. Start planning your wish list now for Saturday, September 11, 10am to 4pm, at the Lake Wilderness Arboretum Nursery, 22520 SE 248th Street in Maple Valley. There will be an excellent choice of native plants, shrubs, trees, rhododendrons, azaleas and perennials – and some really great bargains! ♦

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**Branching Out:** Published every other month. Free with membership.

Editor: Marlys Hoon Staff: Maureen Paszek, Arlene Deavel, Kadri Linask-Goode

Contributing Writers: Maureen Paszek, Cindy Ostermann, Bill Paine, Pat Bowman, Linda Bartlett, June Mehrer, Kadri Linask-Goode

Articles welcomed. Deadline September 1. Send comments & articles to [MarlysHoon@pobox.com](mailto:MarlysHoon@pobox.com) or to SKCAF, Box 72, Maple Valley, WA 98038

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