

THE | PROFESSIONAL

October 2018 Volume 44 Issue 3

BC's Union for Professionals

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I look out my window, heavy smoke is obscuring the view in Kamloops. Across the province, forest fires are impacting British Columbians. Air quality is suffering, people are being evacuated from their homes and livelihoods are being upended.

This summer marks the worst wildfire season in BC’s history. The wildfires are again testing the resolve of PEA members. Many are affected by these events—some where they live, others through the air they breathe. Many PEA members have had to adjust their work to help out at a time of crisis.

PEA members are working in a variety of roles during this state of emergency. Many members are working in wildfire response. We have members acting as regional coordinators, and in various roles in emergency management centres. Agrologists and foresters are helping ranchers move cattle and livestock away from the path of the flames. Many of our members have put in long hours to keep our province safe.

And after the fires have burned out, our members will continue to deal with the aftermath of this disaster. Foresters and agrologists will be addressing how to reforest the land that has been burned. Members will be arranging for infrastructure to be rebuilt.

As a union official, one of my hopes is that the exceptional efforts contributed by PEA members can be fairly recognized. Under the current GLP collective agreement, those who work overtime to fight major disasters like these are not compensated fairly. As we work through another round of bargaining for this chapter, I hope the province recognizes how important it is to provide fair compensation.

The work our members do is critical to fighting wildfires and assisting during other disasters like floods. It’s time our members are paid fairly for the extraordinary work they do in these situations.

Frank Kohlberger

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IT'S ALL ABOUT PEOPLE

COUNSELLORS AT UVIC PROVIDE A KEY RESOURCE TO STUDENTS WHO ARE MAKING THE TRANSITION INTO ADULTHOOD

WORDS JESSICA NATALE WOOLLARD

PHOTOS AARON LUTSCH

For four years, Susan Dempsey, a counsellor at the University of Victoria, worked with an undergraduate student with serious anxiety, seeing her every three to four weeks over the course of her education. The stress of being away from home for the first time amplified the student's difficulties, in addition to the pressure of adapting to post-secondary expectations and transitioning into adulthood.

"The role I provided was one of compassionate listener," Dempsey recalls. "I was a consistent presence in the midst of what could have been debilitating mental health and adaptation challenges.

Years after the student graduated, Dempsey ran into her and learned she was doing well. It was heartening. "It's interesting to follow someone through their whole degree. I felt like I watched her mature and get better and better able to handle life."

Some students need fleeting support from UVic's Counselling Services department, which Dempsey has been part of since 2005. One or two sessions during a time of crisis—exams or a breakup—do the trick. Others benefit from regular visits to help manage persistent issues caused by trauma, a mental health issue or a difficult life challenge.

Dempsey explains: "Sometimes students are coming to counselling because they were in counselling before and it was helpful; sometimes they're here because it's gotten worse. Sometimes it's the stress of how to manage everything in their lives, or it's homesickness and how to cope with change and transition. And," she adds, "sometimes it's very serious mental illness."

The variety of work is what Dempsey loves about her role.

After completing her undergraduate degree in psychology at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario, and her Masters In Counselling Psychology at UVic, Dempsey spent her early career working with victims of trauma at the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre, the Bridges for Women Society and the Mary Manning Centre, also known as Victoria Child Abuse and Prevention Counselling.

"I felt like I was doing really important work in those early years. It felt to me like I was doing something around changing the world," she remembers.

What she says about working with university students: "I love that place in your early 20s that's full of possibilities," she explains. "The students are starting to think for themselves, questioning things they've learned, trying to sort out what are their values and what are their parents' values. I like the combination of self-exploration and moving forward and making real change in one's life."



Dempsey and her colleagues work with students individually as well as in groups, holding sessions for 8 to 16 students on topics such as mindfulness skills for stress and anxiety, building social confidence, coping with grief, sexualized violence support for women and anxiety management. Counselling services are free except for career counselling, which has a nominal fee for a personality or career assessment.

Dempsey also supervises graduate students doing their counselling practicums at UVic, some from the program she once attended. "I really like that teaching piece, helping new counsellors develop their skills," Dempsey says, remembering how much she admired those she worked with when she was a student.

A lifelong learner, Dempsey is a person who loves to try new things and develop her interests. She joined UVic's PEA chapter executive early in her tenure and has stayed involved ever since. She is a local representative for the UVic chapter as well as the second vice-chair of the Association executive.

"Learning about the labour movement and understanding how things work politically are interesting. It really fits with my values around unions and social change and being agents of social change," she says.

She also loves the opportunity to meet people in her chapter and around the province. "PEA is such a diverse union. I get to talk to foresters, lawyers, people who work in libraries. It's really interesting."

Outside of work, Dempsey pursues tai chi (she has practised for more than 40 years) and plays accordion in a local klezmer band. She is a perpetual student of life, welcoming any chance she can to learn something new, change her perspective or develop insight into people.

"I've always been really interested in people and what makes them tick," she says. "I do a lot of reading of novels and going to plays. I'm interested in how people change, and how people make change in their lives."



This quality of curiosity benefits her work at UVic, particularly as the counselling department has grown busier over the years.

She's developed a metaphor for this phenomenon: "I call it the Starbucks of counselling," she explains with a laugh. "You know when a Starbucks opens across from another coffee shop, and you think, where are the customers going to come from? And then both places are full? That's what it's like here. We could probably have 10 more counsellors and we'd still be as busy."

Dempsey says the last statistics she saw showed Counselling Services sees about 18 per cent of the UVic student population.

"I don't know if the stats show more these days, but it feels like more," she says. The seriousness of students' concerns has also increased, she adds, noting that, in recent years, anxiety has become the primary reason students seek counselling, a trend observed in other academic institutions in North America.

When you're embroiled deeply in the mental health and well-being of others, self-care is an important part of the job.

Dempsey and her nine colleagues meet weekly to discuss cases and support each other through the difficult ones. Sometimes, the talking happens over lunch while walking around Ring Road and taking in the beautiful setting; other times, it's a casual check-in at someone's desk.

She's also a long-term practitioner of Hakomi, a kind of mindfulness-based psychotherapy, which has the dual benefit of helping her as well as the students she works with.

A few years ago, Dempsey was instrumental in initiating a staff retreat, which has since become a yearly tradition and is part of the counsellors' self-care regime.

Ultimately, Dempsey's love of her work is all about people, the people she helps every day and the people she works with.

"We have an amazing team," Dempsey says of her colleagues. "We have a lot of respect for each other. We all work differently, but we share a lot of the same values and dedication to the work. I feel so lucky to work with these people."

VICTORIA PRIDE PARADE

On July 8, 2018 PEA members, staff and their families took part in the Victoria Pride Parade. Thank you to the HESU chapter and Christina Lloyd-Jones for arranging for the PEA float.

1. Richard at the Victoria Parade **2.** Kuldeep at the Victoria Pride Parade **3.** All of the PEA and HESU participants at the Pride Parade **4.** PEA Executive Director Scott McCannell **5.** PEA Labour Relations Officer Rhiannon Bray **6.** HESU member Christina Lloyd-Jones **7.** PEA Senior Communications Officer Brett Harper **8.** Sadie on her scooter **9.** PEA member Susan Dempsey and others marching with the PEA banner **10.** HESU members put together a float for this years Pride Parade







ANTI-SOCIAL MEDIA

HOW TO BALANCE ADVOCACY, AUTONOMY, PRIVACY AND PROFESSIONAL DUTIES IN AN ONLINE WORLD

WORDS JACKIE WONG

It's an increasingly seamless extension of our real-life experience, and we use social media for many purposes, often all at once. The quick, live-action nature of the digital landscape is alluring and often gratifying for its instantaneity. But the chummy colloquialisms, reactionary norms and seemingly closed-loop communities of conversation can make for tricky territory, especially when using social media in the context of work. The fact that social media holds many realities at once—our posts are both fleeting yet permanent; their tone casual yet heavily scrutinized and surveilled—makes for increasingly blurry lines in how we present our personal and professional selves while participating in the social web.

Questions about what's appropriate in social media use can be especially prominent in the labour movement, where unionized workers, including members of the PEA, are challenged with balancing their eagerness to participate in or comment on political and public processes with a duty of loyalty to their employers.

"It's a significant duty for public servants," says PEA Executive Director Scott McCannell. "We always take great ef-

fort to encourage members in terms of participating in the political process and to participate fully." That encouragement, however, comes with boundaries.

McCannell explains that members are free to comment in their capacity as members of the public on public policy issues. But if they wish to express themselves critically regarding an issue with which they have had a professional involvement, "we encourage our members to let the union be the pointy end of the stick," McCannell says.

There have been a handful of incidents within the PEA where members have crossed a professional boundary on social media. "In those cases, as soon as we become aware, we obviously intervene and coach our members and encourage our members to get those social media posts down," McCannell says.

"We've definitely had a few members investigated, in some cases terminated, for posts that they've made on social media, if it can be shown to be damaging to the reputation of the employer," adds Melissa Moroz, a PEA labour relations officer.

Moroz and McCannell maintain that such incidents are rare. “We might have a few of those each year,” McCannell says.

“It’s the exception,” adds Moroz, “Certainly not the norm. Most people are pretty aware these days that they have to be careful about what they post.”

WHAT IT MEANS TO THINK OUT LOUD

Care and caution aren’t always at the front of one’s mind while posting about a difficult personal situation online. Nurses across Canada have been following a hot-button case in which the discipline committee of the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses’ Association (SRNA) charged Carolyn Strom with professional misconduct in 2016 after she complained on Facebook about the palliative care her grandfather received and then publicly tweeted the post, calling upon elected officials to act on her concerns.

The discipline committee charged Strom with using her status as a registered nurse for personal purposes, violating patient confidentiality and failing to follow proper complaint channels, thus negatively impacting the reputation of the facility and staff. By early 2017, a petition critical of the SRNA’s findings was launched, and Strom’s lawyer filed an appeal.

The challenge of balancing advocacy, autonomy, privacy and professional duties while using social media is further complicated by the absence of cohesive guidelines. The PEA has general guidelines related to the use of social media accounts by chapter executives, but McCannell says it’s largely up to employers to communicate their social media policies with employees.

In “Social Media and Workplace Discipline: Bringing Employee Free Speech and Reasonable Expectations of Privacy into the Analysis,” a 2012 article for the Ontario Bar Associ-

ation examining social media-related workplace discipline, Denis Ellickson and Meg Atkinson proposed an approach focused around the ideas of free speech and the reasonable expectation of privacy. “Simply by participating in social media, an employee does not sacrifice all reasonable expectations of privacy. It is therefore important to carefully weigh the extent to which a communication over social media was public, or intended to be public, in determining whether discipline is warranted,” they wrote.

The authors went on to say that while employees must be careful to avoid posting inappropriate content through social media, the same rule should apply to employers, particularly in matters involving employee discipline. “The important values of free speech, employees’ reasonable expectations of privacy, and the employers’ duties to discipline employees progressively and consistently should remain central to the analysis in dealing with discipline stemming from social media. An employee’s right to lead a free, private, independent life outside work should not be forgotten,” the article concluded.

NO PLACE FOR HATE

It’s a different situation when the stuff of an employee’s private life involves hateful, hurtful behaviors. This past summer, Dillon Mazzei of Mission, BC, was fired from his job as a forklift driver at Terra-Link Horticulture after taking to Facebook to mock the death of a Sikh man at a local Canada Day parade. A few months previously, Kelly Pocha was fired from the Dodge dealership in Cranbrook, BC, after a video of her yelling racial slurs at a group of diners in a Denny’s restaurant appeared on social media. Pocha’s employers later rehired her, a controversial move that highlights the blurry boundaries that these issues dredge up about where our working life ends and our personal life begins.

These are high profile cases that made news headlines, but their extreme nature does not erase the fact that situations like them arise closer to home. “We’ve definitely had a cou-

ple of cases where a member has posted something, some kind of controversial view, or maybe kind of a racist view or sexist position,” says Moroz. “If the employer . . . sees that,” she adds, the social media post can justify investigation, discipline and sometimes dismissal if the material is found to damage the reputation of the employer.

Such issues can arise even when a member is using their personal social media account, not a work-related one, and they are not posting about work. Moroz notes that some social media posts may reveal a pattern of abusive or inappropriate behaviour that merits investigation and discipline. And in any case where discipline takes place, the PEA is involved.

Moroz explains the PEA’s role in the disciplinary process. “We support the member and make sure that there was just cause for discipline. And we have to weigh out all the evidence and make sure the investigation happens, and if they are disciplined or terminated, we would likely grieve it,” she says.

Her advice to members about how to conduct themselves online is simple, though it may be easier said than done. “Take the high road,” she says. “Imagine someone reading this in another context or at a later time. State your opinions and ideas. But do it in a way that’s not condescending or hurtful.”



2018 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

2018 marks the 25th year that the PEA has been giving scholarships and bursaries to PEA members and their families. Scholarships are awarded based on the results of our annual essay contest.

This year, the Education Committee selected the following topic for the essay contest: Recent research indicates that millennial workers have a more favourable view of labour unions than other generations; however, only a small percentage of young workers are represented by a union. Why aren't young workers joining unions, and what can the labour movement do to change this?

This year's scholarship winners are Chris Clausen, Makalo Duxbury, Octavia Rusch, Gillian Saunders, Molly Tanner, Emily Travers-Smith and Celina Wang. Their essays explored technology, union density, education, transparency and more.

The theme of education emerged as a key issue in the essays. Celina Wang attributes the low rate of unionization among young workers to a general "lack of education about worker's rights, the widespread ignorance of labour union history and achievements, and the lack of awareness of their general mission, processes and

practices." Emily Travers-Smith proposed a solution to the education challenge: "Unions may be well advised to target young people with educational campaigns far earlier than is typical, that is, during high school."

In addition to scholarships, the PEA provides bursaries to PEA members who are registered or are in the process of registering in a part-time post-secondary educational degree or diploma program. This year, three members were awarded bursaries. These members are Xianjing Zhang, UVic; Marlowe Morrison, UVic; and Tanis deZara, HESU.

Read the essays at pea.org/scholarships.

Left to right, first row: Molly Tanner, Octavia Rusch. **Second row:** Makalo Duxbury, Chris Clausen. **Third row:** Gillian Saunders, Emily Travers-Smith.



I will be starting PhD studies in education this fall. Inspired by my work with students who are English language learners, I hope that my graduate studies will result in a better understanding of how writing centres in Canada are adapting to increasing numbers of international students, and how those students might be most effectively supported in their academic communication skills.

Gillian Saunders



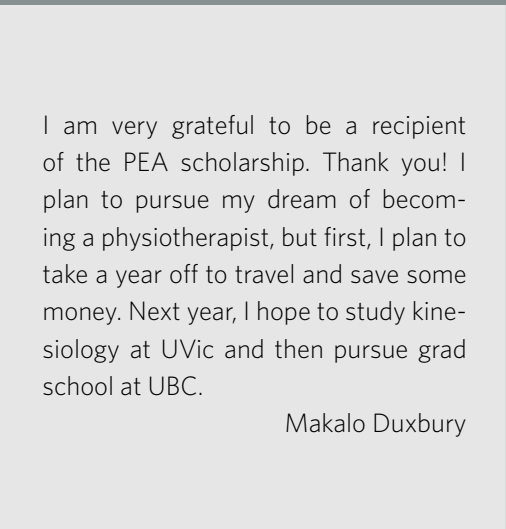
Thank you to the PEA for the financial support that they are providing. I am a second year student majoring in elementary education at North Island College in Courtenay. This scholarship money will help me with my tuition and living expenses for the coming year, and for subsequent years where I plan to attend the University of Victoria to complete my university degree.

Molly Tanner



I would like to thank the PEA for helping me achieve my life long goal of becoming a primary school teacher. I have been accepted into the University of British Columbia's (Okanagan campus) four-year Bachelor of Arts in Psychology program. After completing my psychology degree I plan to attend the University of the Fraser Valley to complete my Bachelor of Education degree.

Octavia Rusch



I am very grateful to be a recipient of the PEA scholarship. Thank you! I plan to pursue my dream of becoming a physiotherapist, but first, I plan to take a year off to travel and save some money. Next year, I hope to study kinesiology at UVic and then pursue grad school at UBC.

Makalo Duxbury



Thank you PEA members for this scholarship. Higher education is increasingly becoming unaffordable which makes scholarships like this all the more important. You've helped make my dream of finishing my degree possible.

Chris Clausen



Thank you for your generous support of my undergraduate education through a PEA scholarship. I am currently in my second year of studies in business at Camosun College. My hope is to transfer to Royal Roads University or the University of Victoria next year to complete a degree in finance or human resource management.

Emily Travers-Smith

CHAPTER UPDATES

GOVERNMENT LICENSED PROFESSIONALS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This GLP AGM will take place in Victoria on Monday, November 5, 2018, 5:00 p.m. at the Coast Victoria Hotel and Marina. Visit pea.org/glpagm for more information.

CALL FOR RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions are written motions decided on by the membership that help shape how the GLP chapter operates. Any GLP member may submit a resolution for consideration. Resolutions must be signed by at least two chapter members and delivered to the PEA Victoria office or emailed to membership@pea.org by October 12.

BARGAINING

The GLP Bargaining Committee met on September 5 and 6 in Victoria to finalize bargaining proposals. Members' meetings were held on September 19 and 25 for the membership to approve the proposal package. The first day of bargaining with the employer is on October 3, 2018.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT LEADER TRAINING

Five GLP members attended Member Engagement Leader Training at the PEA offices in Victoria on September 17 and 18. This training was designed to assist the Bargaining Committee with engaging members during this and future rounds of bargaining. The five members selected were:

- Brian Chow, Engineer, Victoria
- Sam Davis, Planning Forester, Williams Lake
- Trevor Demerse, Engineer-in-Training, Coquitlam
- Geoffrey Klassen, Timber Tenures Forester, Victoria
- Heather Soo, Planning Forester, Campbell River

APPLY FOR A GLP GRANT OR DONATION

GLP members may submit requests to the GLP Grants and Donations Committee for funding of up to \$200 for activities or events that support the goals of the Association and GLP chapter. For the full eligibility considerations and policy, visit pea.org/chapters/glp/grant-form. Requests may be submitted via the online GLP Grants and Donations form. The Grants and Donations Committee meets several times a year to review requests and make recommendations to the GLP executive for ap-

proval. Remember to submit your online request early and before December 2018 for year-end events!

HEALTH SCIENCE PROFESSIONALS

BARGAINING UPDATE

The Health Science Professionals Bargaining Association (HSPBA) is pleased to announce a new \$3 million fund aimed at supporting members of the health care team to undertake professional development. The fund is available to HSP members who work under the HSPBA collective agreement.

The fund was created through a contribution from the Ministry of Health. The PEA's share of the funding amounts to approximately \$25,000. This amount will be split evenly among three professional development areas:

- Retraining of HSPBA members for health science professions experiencing shortages in BC.
- Creating opportunities for health science professionals who work in rural or remote areas of BC.
- Assisting health science professionals to meet the ongoing requirements of their profession.

All health science professionals covered by the HSPBA collective agreement, which includes members of PEA, are eligible to apply for funding. Applications will be reviewed and accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Find out more information on the PEA website at pea.org/chapters/hsp/programs.

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' STAFF UNION

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT RATIFIED

In June, HESU members ratified the tentative agreement, with 82 per cent of members voting in favour of the agreement.

LAW SOCIETY LAWYERS

MEMBERS' MEETING

The LSL executive and Labour Relations Officer Al Gallupe met with members in September to finalize bargaining proposals. John Nalleweg, Claire Marchant, Kate McLean and Camille Karlicki are your Bargaining Committee members. Bargaining with the employer will begin in October.



Above: HESU members at the Victoria Pride Parade.

LEGAL SERVICES SOCIETY

MEMBERS' MEETING

The LSS chapter held a get-together at the Elephant and Castle on September 24. This was a good opportunity to meet new members who have been recently hired and to connect with members who haven't seen each other in a while.

OKANAGAN REGIONAL LIBRARY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The ORL AGM will take place on Monday, October 1, 6:30 pm, at the Marten Brewpub in Vernon.

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

The new collective agreement, lasting until December 31, 2020 is now available on the PEA website at pea.org/orl.

ST. MARGARET'S SCHOOL

WORK INTENSIFICATION SURVEY

Thank you to all who participated in the work intensification and environment survey. The PEA has released a final report. You can find the report on our website at pea.org/sms.

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the UVic chapter will take place on Thursday, November 8, 2018, from 12:00 - 1:30 p.m., in the Arbutus Queenswood Room, Cadboro Commons. Lunch will be provided. Your chapter's AGM is the place to have your say on the direction of your union.

BARGAINING COMMITTEE ANNOUNCED

The chapter executive is pleased to introduce the Bargaining Committee for the upcoming round of bargaining. The committee is made up of three members from the chapter executive and three members selected from the membership at large. The composition of the committee broadly represents the different kinds of work we do at UVic and the range and experience level of our UVic members.

- Kristen Ficke, University Systems
- Adam Gaudes, University Systems
- Ori Granot, Chemistry
- Sandra Guerreiro, Theatre
- Sheryl Karras, Business
- Jesse Oshaneck, Student Recruitment and Global Engagement

PEA UPDATES

CONVENTION 2019

The PEA 2019 Convention will take place on May 3 and 4, 2019 in Victoria at the Inn at Laurel Point. Visit pea.org/conference to find out how to attend.

GIVING BACK

Giving Back returns again this year. This is your chance to nominate organizations you care about to receive a donation from the PEA. The successful organizations will be selected by a membership vote. The nomination period is from September 24 to October 5, 2018. Voting will take place between October 22 and November 2. More details are available at pea.org/givingback.

PROFESSIONAL RELIANCE REVIEW

Over the last number of years, the PEA has conducted ongoing public awareness and media campaigns about professional reliance.

We have lobbied government and opposition politicians on a regular basis and have attempted to create solutions in collective bargaining with the government.

Professional reliance is the practice of relying on professionals hired by industry to manage aspects of developing BC's natural resources.

In June the BC Government released an independent report on professional reliance. The report makes clear that "regulatory outsourcing" compromises the public interest and the environment. The report follows an

eight-month provincial review to examine whether licensed professionals working for government possess the necessary tools and structure to ensure protection of the public interest and the conservation of BC's wild-life and wildlife habitat. The PEA had an opportunity to provide a submission for the review.

Since the report was released, the PEA has met with a number of ministers. We have also participated in the Professional Reliance Working Group, a coalition of environmental, union, not-for-profit and other groups that shares the PEA's concerns.

Finally, the PEA's president and staff have participated in working groups, organized by the government, on two of the recommendations. For more information visit pea.org/professionalreliance.

LABOUR DAY AT THE PNE

Congratulations to the members who won tickets to the PNE for Labour Day. The PEA was a sponsor of the Labour Day events at the PNE this year. The winners were Keen Fong, Elijah Fraser, Ela Gunad, Adrian McKeown, Jamie Cruz, Ronda Field, Cheryl Conant, Nancy Aubut, Greg Jorgensen, Kerry Keller, Ruby Dorais and Sheila Rozen.



IS YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION CORRECT?

Have you moved or changed your email address or work phone number? Don't forget to let your union know!

There are three easy ways to do it:

- Sign in at pea.org and edit your profile
- Send an email to membership@pea.org
- Give us a call at 1-800-779-7736 ext. 200

SUMMER PHOTO CONTEST



THANK YOU TO ALL MEMBERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SUMMER PHOTO CONTEST. THE THREE WINNERS, SELECTED BY RANDOM DRAW, WERE (TOP ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT) MAUREEN, SUNSET AT SOWCHEA BAY PROVINCIAL PARK; BRENT, SUMMER STAYCATION AT SLOCAN LAKE; AND KARLI, TAKING THE DOG SWIMMING.

VIEW ALL OF THE ENTRIES AT [FACEBOOK.COM/PEAINBC](https://www.facebook.com/peainbc)



CONVENTION



MAY 3 & 4
2019
VICTORIA, BC



Do you want a say in the future of your union?
Express interest in attending Convention 2019 by
January 9, 2019 at pea.org/convention



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