Best Portrait Photo
Division 4: Weekly and Daily Newspapers
2018 Better Newspaper Contest
By Greg Lindstrom, Flathead Beacon

Titled: Best of Preps
# MNA Calendar

## November

- **22** Federal holiday: Thanksgiving Day
- **22 - 23** MNA office will be closed for the Thanksgiving Day holiday

## December

- **4** Montana Newspaper Foundation 2019 Internship Grant application deadline
- **14** Deadline to submit articles for the December Press Pass newsletter
- **20** Montana Newspaper Foundation 2019 Internship Grant winners announced
- **24 - 25** MNA office will be closed for the Christmas holiday
- **25** Federal holiday: Christmas Day
- **31** MNA office will close at noon for New Year’s Eve

## January

- **1** Federal holiday: New Year’s Day
- **1** MNA office will be closed for the New Year’s holiday
- **3** 2019 MNA Better Newspaper Contest is open for entries
- **7** Start of the Montana Legislative Assembly
- **18** MNA and MNAS Board of Directors’ meeting in Helena

## February

- **1** Begin accepting nominations for the 2019 Montana Newspaper Hall of Fame, Master Editor/Publisher Award and Dick Crockford Distinguished Service Awards
- **13** 2019 Better Newspaper Contest is closed for entries at 10:00 pm
- **18** Federal holiday: Presidents’ Day

## March

- **10-16** National Sunshine Week
- **16** Deadline to submit articles for the March Press Pass newsletter
- **22** Nomination deadline, 2019 Montana Newspaper Hall of Fame, Master Editor/Publisher Award and Distinguished Service Awards
- **29** Montana Freedom of Information Hotline Inc. event at the Montana Capitol

## April

- **5** MNA and MNAS Board of Directors’ meeting - Missoula
- **15** Montana Corporation Annual Report filing deadline with the Montana Secretary of State

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### WELCOME

**New Bronze Level Associate Member**

**Bronze Level Associate Member**

**Bronze Level Associate Member**

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### OUR MISSION:
To advance and sustain the news publishing industry in Montana.

Jim Rickman, Executive Director | jim@mtnewspapers.com
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mtnewspapers.com
High fives and hard hits at Flathead Roller Derby league

By Matt Baldwin, Daily Inter Lake

The Misfits team captain Kari Hammer (aka Vengeance) and size take to an oval track to play a game of roller derby at the Flathead County Fairgrounds in d'Alene on Nov. 18 at the Flathead County Fairgrounds. Shayna Swanson (Ruh-Roh) work to block a jammer during the bout against the Snake Pit Derby Dames of Coeur d'Alene on Nov. 18 at the Flathead County Fairgrounds. Shayna Swanson (Ruh-Roh) work to block a jammer during the bout against the Snake Pit Derby Dames of Coeur d'Alene on Nov. 18 at the Flathead County Fairgrounds.
Jim Strauss, former publisher and editor of the Great Falls Tribune, has been named the new publisher of the Missoulian and Ravalli Republic.

“Jim is an exceptional leader with a history of exemplary service in Montana,” said Nathan Bekke, vice president of consumer sales and marketing and Lee group publisher. “His experience leading one of the state’s major daily newspapers and his background of award-winning journalism make him uniquely qualified for the role.”

Strauss was president and publisher of Great Falls Media, which is owned by Gannett, for the last 15 years. He was executive editor of the company, which includes the Great Falls Tribune, from 1995 to 2003.

The Tribune won the Pulitzer Prize for explanatory reporting in 2000 under Strauss’s leadership for its year-long series on the impacts of alcoholism in Montana.

Strauss was assistant managing editor for The News-Sentinel in Fort Wayne, Indiana, from 1989 to 1995.

Strauss succeeds Mike Gulledge, who announced in September that he was leaving Lee Enterprises, parent company of the Missoulian. Gulledge has been serving as the interim publisher while a search was underway for a replacement in Missoula and Hamilton.

Strauss said he was “excited to be back in Montana and to be a part of a vibrant Missoula community. The talented staff of the Missoulian has built impressive print and digital audiences through quality journalism and outstanding service. I look forward to working with them to further grow our reach and help businesses in our community be successful.”

While in Great Falls, Strauss served on 10 different state and local boards, including the C.M. Russell Museum, the Montana Chamber of Commerce and the Montana Newspaper Association.

Strauss said he believes in the importance of local journalism and the crucial role it plays in public discourse.

“What I love about this industry is we make a difference in the community every day through our journalism, shining a light on problems and also rallying the community around causes,” he said. “We also make a difference through our advertising department. We deliver the audience that local businesses need to drive business success. As a team, we all need to be unified and focused and move forward.”

Strauss said he understands the importance of separating the business and news functions of a newspaper.

“If it’s always important to keep our news report free of conflicts of interest,” he said. “Where conflicts of interest arise, I’ll recuse myself of any decisions. That being said, it’s also important as a news media outlet, we can’t be aloof. We can’t be separate from our community. I believe strongly in giving back and I plan to be active in business groups, arts groups and nonprofits, but I’ll recuse myself if there’s any conflicts of interest.”

Amid declining revenue, an industry-wide problem, the Great Falls Tribune saw layoffs over the past decade under Gannett ownership, as did the Missoulian under Lee ownership. Strauss said it’s “much preferable” to increase revenue rather than cut costs.

“What we have to do is do a better job of getting our story out,” he explained. “We need the public to understand the resources we devote to putting out an objective news report, how we seek to be balanced and thorough in our coverage.

“On the advertising side, we need to get the message out that we’re far more than print. We not only have a digital audience, but we have the largest digital audience for advertisers, and we need to do a better job of telling our story.”

Strauss holds a bachelor’s degree in journalism and economics from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls and a masters of business administration from the University of Notre Dame. His wife, Dee Strauss, was recently named executive director of The Village Health & Rehabilitation center in Missoula.

He and his wife have five grown children, including two sets of twins born 21 months apart. He said he likes to fish, hike and read in his free time.
ITC releases formal decision on newsprint tariffs

The U.S. International Trade Commission has released its formal decision regarding the decision to reverse tariffs imposed earlier this year on Canadian newsprint.

Among its key findings were: transportation costs, availability and reliability of supply were as important or more important than price to newsprint consumers; Canadian imports did not depress domestic prices; and the domestic newsprint industry’s poor performance was not due to competition from subject imports, but rather was the result of the decline in demand and the shift in demand to a lighter-weight newsprint that most domestic producers could not or would not produce.

Also on Oct. 18, NORPAC issued a notice of its intent to seek judicial review of the ITC’s decision at the Court of International Trade. While this step is required to challenge the determination, it does not obligate NORPAC to do so. The Canadian government and manufacturers would still have to determine if they wanted an appeal to be heard, and such an appeal would likely take years.

On Aug. 29, the ITC voted unanimously that imports of uncoated groundwood paper from Canada do not cause material harm to the U.S. paper industry. Preliminary tariffs were first imposed in January after a trade case was brought by NORPAC. The tariffs drove up the cost of newsprint by nearly 30 percent, forcing many newspapers to reduce their print distribution and cut staff.

The full report can be found at: https://www.usitc.gov/publications/701_731/pub4822.pdf

Reminder: Code your legal ads and public notices

The MNA is reminding members to double-check their legal advertising and public notices to make sure the “MNAXLP” code is on the page or with the ad. This includes all liner and display, legal and public notice ads.

The “MNAXLP” code allows the MNA to digitally transfer legal advertising and public notices to our critical public notice website: http://www.mtpublicnotices.com/mna/legals/

If you have any questions on the process, please contact Jim Rickman, executive director, at (406) 443-2850, or jim@mtnewspapers.com

Now is the time to prepare for the 2019 Better Newspaper Contest

Our 2019 Better Newspaper Contest is only a few weeks away. Now is the time to prepare by collecting and selecting your best work from 2018.

The contest will be open for your entries on Thursday, January 3, 2019 and close on Wednesday, February 13, 2019.

Find the 2019 BNC rules and instructions at:
https://www.mtnewspapers.com/better-newspaper-contest/
In January 2018, the nonprofit Montana Freedom of Information Hotline Inc. launched its annual operating revenue donation drive, asking for contributions from all Montana Newspaper Association and Montana Broadcasters Association members as well as several other nonaffiliated newspapers and organizations.

To date, 51 media organizations and a few individuals have donated $5,273.50 toward our $9,465 operating expenses. Our goal for donations was a minimum of $7,500. As you can see, we are about $2,227 short of our minimum goal so I am making a second request, asking Montana broadcasters and print media, who haven't already given, to contribute to the Hotline before Dec. 31, 2018, and help us make our goal.

The Hotline board has not been able to secure any grant funding this year to help with operating expenses, so we are relying on Montana's media members to fund our operations. The basic suggested donations are $62.50 for weekly newspapers and radio stations, $125 for large weekly and small daily newspapers, $150 for TV stations, $250 for medium dailies, and $375 for large dailies, but, honestly, we would be happy with any amount that you can contribute.

The single largest part of our budget ($9,000) pays to keep Helena attorney Mike Meloy on retainer to provide legal advice for free to news media and citizens on matters relating to Montana open public meeting and document laws. The Hotline does not handle federal freedom of information matters. Mike can be reached at 406-442-8670, via email at mike@meloylawfirm.com or online at www.montanafoi.org. Through Sept. 30, 2018, Mike has responded to 158 requests for help accessing public documents or attending public meetings. Sixty-six of those requests have come from members of the media and 92 from private citizens.

I know, especially for newspapers, that budgets are tight, and I also know from reviewing Mike's reports that Montana's daily and weekly newspapers and TV news stations are using the Hotline regularly. That's what we're here for, but we won't be able to continue to provide this service in the long-run without your support. And the Hotline is a heckuva bargain. The going rate for 30 minutes of advice from an attorney is about $200. Your contribution to the Hotline gives your news staff unlimited access to a highly specialized public access attorney at a bargain rate.

Information on the Hotline and Montana public access laws is available at www.montanafoi.org. You can also find information on Facebook at: facebook.com/montanafoi/.

Please send your tax-deductible donations to the Montana FOI Hotline Inc., in care of Treasurer Gary Moseman, P.O. Box 73, Lincoln, MT 59639-0073. Or, if you wish to contribute using a credit card, please go to our website and click on the “donate” link on the upper right side of the Home page.

Here are the generous organizations and individuals who have donated to the Hotline between Jan. 1 and Oct. 31, 2018:

- Associated Press
- Carbon County News
- Cascade Courier
- Choteau Acantha
- Clark Fork Valley Press
- Cowles Media
- Cut Bank Pioneer Press
- Belgrade News
- Big Horn County News
- Big Timber Pioneer
- Billings Gazette
- Blackfoot Valley Dispatch
- Boulder Monitor
- Bozeman Daily Chronicle
- Broadwater Reporter
- Montana Standard
- Daily Inter Lake
- Daniels County Leader
- Dillon Tribune
- Forsyth Independent Press
- Glacier Reporter
- Glendale Ranger-Review
- Great Falls Tribune
- Havre Daily News
- Helena Independent Record
- Herald-News
- Harlowton Times-Claron
- Hungry Horse News
- Jordan Tribune
- Judith Basin Press
- KCGM FM
- Donna Koch
- Lake County Leader
- Laurel Outlook
- Lewistown News-Argus
- Livingston Enterprise
- Meagher County News
- Miles City Star
- Mineral Independent
- Missoulian
- Montana Broadcasters Association
- Montana Free Press
- Montana Newspaper Association
- River Press
- Searchlight
- Shelby Promoter
- Stillwater County News
- Terry Tribune
- Valierian
- Western News
- West Yellowstone Star
- Whitefish Pilot
- Wibaux Pioneer Gazette

Melody Martinsen is the chairwoman of the Montana Freedom of Information Hotline Inc. board. She is also the editor and co-owner of the Choteau Acantha weekly newspaper. She can be reached at 406-466-2403.
Ashley and Nate Kavanagh have joined the Cut Bank Pioneer Press staff and will be taking on the advertising and marketing responsibilities at the newspaper. The pair made the move back to Cut Bank after spending over a year in Boston and are excited to be back in Montana working with area businesses.

In addition to selling advertising in the print and e-editions of the Cut Bank Pioneer Press, Nate and Ashley plan to offer additional services such as website development, email newsletter and social media consultation.

“We are hoping to act not only as your go-to for print and digital newspaper advertising, but also serve as a marketing agency for our community,” said Ashley.

“With the many differences in how people, and generations, prefer to view information today, we want to provide options and services to put your message in front of the right people,” added Nate.

Prior to joining the Cut Bank Pioneer Press, Ashley began her professional career as the marketing director for CWG Architects in Helena and was responsible for creating and implementing marketing plans, writing blog and social media content, community relations and gaining new business. She then worked at LaunchSquad, an award-winning communications agency in Boston, where she worked with multi-sized companies to develop marketing strategies and earn media mentions in national publications, such as the Wall Street Journal and PC Magazine.

Nate gained valuable experience leading a rebranding and website redesign project during his time as communications director at the Montana Chamber of Commerce. He went on to be a digital marketing specialist at Acadian Asset Management in Boston working on website redesign and digital strategy development for the company.

Dale Burk to be inducted into the Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame

Inside Dale Burk’s very full publishing office in Stevensville, there are a couple of walls filled with plaques honoring decades of journalism excellence, outdoor advocacy and volunteerism.

Sometime after Dec. 1, the well-known owner of the longtime Stoneydale Press will find room to add another.

Burk said it will be one of two that are closest to his heart.

When the Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame announced its 2018 class of inductees, Burk’s name was one of 16 on the list that included iconic names like Smoke Elser, Arnold and Helen Bolle, George Grant, Phil and Robin Tawney and Jack Ward Thomas.

In his nomination letter, Steve Woodruff, the Missoulian’s former opinion page editor, credited Burk’s hard-hitting exposes on misguided forestry practices in the 1960s and early 70s for helping to usher forest stewardship into the modern era and ensure meaningful citizen participation in decisions affecting national forests.

“A wave of gratitude hit me one recent November morning... as I descended a ridge northward from the Continental Divide: gratitude for the healthy, diverse Bitterroot National Forest sprawling before me; for the weight on my pack frame — the first load of an elk destined for my freezer and table; for the blessing that is life in Montana, with its wildness, wildlife, and abundant outdoor opportunities,” Woodruff wrote. “And, not the least, gratitude for Dale Burk.”

“If not for Burk — lifelong journalist, publisher and conservation advocate — the productive, multiple-use forest I beheld and all Montana forests that sustain our lives and economy would be altogether different, altogether diminished.”

Woodruff said Burk broke new ground as a journalist during a time when the Montana press was shaking off its “Copper Collar” of control under the Anaconda Company.

“No tradition of environmental reporting existed then, much less investigative reporting by Montana media,” he wrote. “Burk broke new ground to inform and engage Montanans about forest management — catalyzing crucial public support for reforms by the Forest Service and Congress. Burk’s exhaustive work was controversial at the time, but has stood the test of time.”

Continued on Page 8
When Burk joined the Missoulian in 1968, it had the largest circulation of any newspaper in western Montana.

Wayne Chamberlin of Helena said Burk’s series of articles in 1969 about controversial clear cutting techniques on the Bitterroot National Forest and his later testimony before U.S. Congressional committees in support of sustainable forestry practices opened the door for the public participation.

“When any of us attend a Forest Service meeting or write a letter to a Forest Service agent, think and thank Mr. Burk,” Chamberlin wrote.

From his office in Stevensville, Burk said that was all made possible by support from his editor and publisher who made a commitment at the time to set aside the resources necessary to inform the public on these important issues.

“I had the good fortune of working for an editor, Ed Coyle, who just got put into the Montana Journalism Hall of Fame, and a publisher John Talbot,” Burk remembers. “We had a meeting about all of this when all the dialogue about the environment and public policy began. They made a commitment they would assign their reporters to inform the public.”

“I enjoyed that and I appreciated that support,” he said. “All the people in the newsroom did. It was critical. They stood behind me under incredible intensity of opposition to work I did. As a writer, journalist and a citizen now, I appreciated that.”

This year, the MOHF executive committee selected 16 inductees from 39 candidates nominated by the public. The new class — the third since 2014 — will be honored during an induction ceremony and banquet on Dec. 1, in Helena.

“It is a remarkable list of men and women whose accomplishments span a lifetime of keeping watch over Montana’s natural wonders,” said Bruce Whittenberg, director of the Montana Historical Society and member of MOHF.

The hall of fame was created to honor individuals, both living and posthumously, who made lasting contributions to the restoration and conservation of Montana’s wildlife and wild places.

Others being inducted include Charles Allard, Ravalli; Michel Pablo, Pablo; Jack Atcheson, Sr., Butte; Stan Meyer, Great Falls; Len and Sandy Sargent, Cinnabar Basin; P.D. Skaar, Bozeman; and Gail Small, Lame Deer.
In Memoriam

**Einar John Stromnes**, recently of Helena, passed away on Oct. 26, 2018. John was born in Great Falls on Oct. 13, 1942. He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Jean Stromnes, and three daughters.

In his teen years, John played the trombone and taught himself to play piano by ear, a gift inherited from Harriet. John learned quickly and became an exceptional jazz and blues musician. He was a beatnik, wrote poetry, endlessly read literature and history, composed music and, in short, was an iconoclast.

John studied at the University of Montana and entered the Marine Corps in July 1962. He received the rank of EPL E-4 in 1963, a rifle sharpshooter badge, and was a cryptographer. He served in the Marine Corps Reserve from July 1965 until March 1968.

John found a spiritual home in the practice of Zen Buddhism. He meditated and played the shakuhachi flute.

John worked at the Missoulian from 1973-2006. He started as a printer and typesetter, then moved to staff reporter. He later worked as an editor, and was instrumental in starting the Montana Outdoors section of the Missoulian. John, with colleague Jeff Herman, received the paper’s first Pulitzer Prize nomination in 1977, nominated by the President of Long Beach State University for a series on bogus credits for college athletes, which had regional implications.

He was selected to go to Japan to interview Ambassador Mike Mansfield and cover the Montana-Army football game. John also wrote columns with a piercing irony and humor. He practiced integrity, professionalism, and a direct but easy manner with people. Lacking pretense, he was an advocate for the everyday individual, regardless of money or status. He made lifelong friends at the newspaper.

Throughout his life, John instilled a strong work ethic, passion for the pursuit of knowledge and a love of the outdoors in his daughters. He enjoyed being in the company of family and good friends.

**Thomas Charles Hillstrand**, 79, of Great Falls, passed away on Tuesday, October 30, 2018. He was born February 9, 1939.

Tom joined the Navy after graduating from Great Falls Central High School, serving for two years on the USS Toledo. He attended Gonzaga University for three plus years, majoring in math and physics. Tom returned to Great Falls to assist his family in the care of his father, who had MS.

The Hillstrand family had a strong relationship with the newspaper and printing business. Tom was an ad salesman for the Great Falls Tribune for many years, as well as traveling the state while working with Credit Associates as a salesman.

In his younger years, Tom was an avid skier and member of the Great Falls Ski Club. He bought a kit for a 20-foot sailboat, which he built and sailed in Montana and the San Juan Islands. He was good at projects and constructed a home with his wife, Vickie. He was a longtime member of the Great Falls Ad Club, assisting with the annual Charles M. Russell Auction by working backstage, lining up the paintings, sculptures, and other art items.
Get out of the office to write better stories
By Bart Pfankuch

In the Internet age where information is easy to get, it may seem almost quaint to seek out first-hand, up-close, eyes-on experiential reporting opportunities.

With smaller news holes to fill, frequent deadlines to feed the web and responsibilities of reporters to maintain vibrant social media profiles, it’s understandable that the number of stories featuring real people and real-world activities has dipped in recent years.

I would argue that newspapers, websites and broadcast TV are suffering as a result. News produced from inside four walls is less vibrant, less interesting and less human. For the improving writer, failing to leave the office equates to missed storytelling and crafting opportunities.

Twenty-five years ago, as a cub reporter — hungry to learn and hungry for front-page bylines — I had a beat covering city hall in Eau Claire, Wis., but you wouldn’t have known it from my clips.

What a blessing it was to work for an afternoon paper whose daily deadline was 11 a.m. (or noon if you pushed it). My typical routine was to file city government stories, up to three short pieces on some busy days, take lunch and then figure out what to do with the afternoon hours.

I would sit all antsy and hyper at my desk for an hour or so until the city editor, Doug Mell, would tire of my jumpiness and demand, “Pfankuch, get the heck out of the office.”

I took that advice and would often just drive around town, into the country, stroll through City Hall or the library or the courthouse and, truth be told, sometimes head to the bowling alley to play a couple video games.

Those little journeys could have been a waste of time, but they weren’t. I often discovered things that turned into stories, such as a new business, a major road project, a llama farm or a cheese factory operated by an old German woman.

Throughout my career, reporting from the field and not the phone has led to my most memorable pieces. In Florida, I spent a night on a shrimp boat, layered sandbags along a flooding riverbank, drank moonshine with a mystery author in the Okefenokee Swamp, witnessed an execution with a rifle-packing rancher.

In the nine months since I left the editor’s chair and re-joined News Watch, he served as editor of the Rapid City (S.D.) Journal.

November 16, 2018

Bart Pfankuch

Bart Pfankuch

In the nine months since I left the editor’s chair and re-joined News Watch, he served as editor of the Rapid City (S.D.) Journal.
Let’s face it, even the most experienced writer can get carried away with too many adjectives or fail to notice the odd typo. But as easy as it is to do so, mistakes like these can leave the reader struggling to make it through your copy.

So whether it is for that quick turn-around piece or a long-form feature, tight and clear prose is essential to whatever form of journalism you are pursuing.

Check out these free resources to iron out any bad habits – they are all free and ready to help you tackle some of the most common problems that writers have.

Writefull
Writefull gives you various grammar and word suggestions when you find yourself torn over word choice.

The chrome plug-in is simple to use, where users can ‘compare’, ‘define’, ‘say’ and ‘translate’ inputs from a language database informed by Google Scholar, Google books, Google news or Google web.

If you cannot make up your mind between words or phrases, ‘compare’ will show you the more popular choice across the database you have selected in percentage, which may affirm the more favourable option for you.

‘Define’ will generate a definition of the word, allowing you to run it against sources to see it in published sentences, or press the audio button next to the word to hear a pronunciation of the word.

Alternatively, the ‘say’ command will do exactly the same in its own function, and ‘translate’ will detect foreign words and translate them into English — no doubt these are handy reference tools when writing articles or speaking in podcasts.

Hemingway
Hemingway allows you to see how your copy reads. Just copy and paste into the text box, or type straight into it, and Hemingway will show the parts of your work which are easy and hard to read.

Areas of your work which need improvement will be highlighted as yellow or red. Blue or green shows strong wording, and purple has simpler alternatives. This amounts to a readability score up to 15.

In the ‘show more’ section, the tool also breaks down your work into reading time and word count statistics.

Zenpen
Zenpen is a minimalistic writing resource which encourages you to get in your writing zone — essentially a clean slate to help you see clearly what you are trying to say.

A small menu of options is tucked away in the top left-hand corner, and from here you can hit the full-screen option to block out all distractions, switch to a black background if that helps you concentrate, and assign a word count limit which displays a coloured bar that progresses from blue to green as you surpass your word count target.

Finally, there is a save option where you can export your text into markdown, HTML or plain text formats.

Grammarly
Probably the most well-known amongst the writing correction tools, this chrome plug-in detects grammar mistakes and poor phrasing of words in web-native type boxes, such as emails or blogposts — like an on-the-go spellchecker.

Grammarly can also offer alternative synonyms if you need. But do not worry, Grammarly can be turned on and off for certain websites, depending on where you need it most.

When you are in the tool, by hitting ‘see more in Grammarly’ under the red recommendations, you’ll be taken to an editing page, where all the suggestions are listed on the right-hand side.

From here you can accept the suggestion by simply by clicking on the red word with the green line underneath it. Otherwise, you can follow the drop-down arrow to ignore the suggestion or add it to the dictionary so it will not flag up again.

If you are looking to use more than one word-correction tool at the same time, you can, but you are able to disable Grammarly if it is confusing.

Easywrite
Easywrite is designed to help reporters get straight to the point.

Using 1,000 simple words, it aims to spot any wording which is hard to read. This should help you come across as clear as possible and leave your work nice and simple.

You can then change these parts yourself or use a tool like Grammarly to suggest changes — but that usually offers longer words, so watch out if you’re using these tools side by side.

By Jacob Granger
SALES AND DIGITAL MARKETING SUPPORT

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