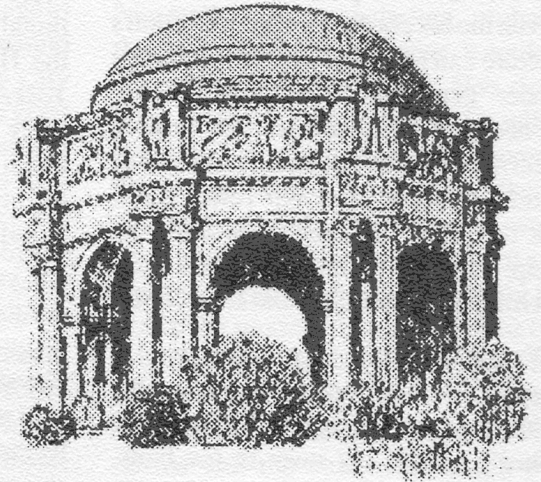


NEWSLETTER OF THE  
SAN FRANCISCO  
**BAY AREA  
ACCORDION CLUB**



December, 1993

### *December General Meeting*

The Christmas '92 BAAC Meeting was my very first with the Club. And here, a mere year later, not only "are I one," but **Marian** has roped me into helping with the newsletter. Who'd a' think it!

It was a GREAT meeting!!! You could feel the Christmas spirit flowing, and our aging old friend, the House of Parties, even sported a few seasonal decorations to remind us of the holidays. Each month, I say to myself, "Wow, I really enjoyed that meeting, how will they ever top it?" Yet somehow our Program Committee keeps stacking one good meeting on top of the next. Take a bow Program Committee - **Joe Smiell, Ed Massolo, Frank Panacci, and Domenic Saso.** Our enthusiastic president **Dominic** recognized them and others at the start of the meeting.

**Dominic Palmisano** opened the Christmas meeting by noting that this meeting was the largest ever !! The Club has really grown due to the outstanding ability

and the dedication of a core of people, most of whom **Dominic** mentioned. With the certain knowledge that some valuable contributor will be inadvertently overlooked, and with my apologies, I will try to note a few. **Walter Traverso** --- he was my first contact with the club, and he had a stack of old meeting minutes in my mail box within milli-seconds of my contacting him. They were still smoking!



### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**January 4th, Tuesday.** BAAC General Meeting in Daly City, 285 Abbott Avenue. Performers include Don Nurisso with violinist Cosmo Antista, Ron Borelli, Curt Van Neck, Lou Soper, Jan Schallenberger, Frank Panacci. Map on p.5.

**January 12th, Wednesday.** BAAC Board Meeting, 7:30 PM. Frank Montoro's home. 415-574-4757.

**February 27th, Sunday.** Accordion Variety Show featuring Horace Lazzari, Joe Morelli, Ken Olendorf, and Chuck Berger. Shoreline Community College Little Theater, Bldg. 300, 16101 Greenwood Ave. No., Seattle. 2:00 PM. Tickets \$10. at door. Sponsored by Petosa Accordions. For discounted (\$9.) tickets and map, write to them at 313 NE 45th St. Seattle, 98105.

**March 19, 1994.** Texas Accordion Association Annual Convention, Plano Texas

**Gordon Piatanesi**, a supporter from the start and a frequent contributor, had given me his phone number. (Gordon's picture can be found in your Webster's under "gentleman.") We already mentioned **Domenic Saso** and **Joe Smiell**, who needs no introduction in any music circle. **Rusty Bartoli**, our Teller, is still "at the ready" for any opportunity to help. Others include **Leo and Ray Lembi**, **Jim Holliday**, and **Lou Soper**.

**Frank Montoro**, another keystone in BAAC's foundation, and currently the Club Exchequer, noted that we were "flush" - 8390 big ones in the bank. Some portion of which was recently moved to Daly City to reside in our adopted home town. **Frank** noted that his particular skill set did not include the ability to talk people out of money and other contributions (I was never good at that either), and he appealed for help. So, if you've kissed the Blarney Stone and have the gift of gab, let **Frank** know. (Perhaps we should trade in some of our Italian players for a few glib-tongued Irishmen). We need help in soliciting gifts for this year's picnic (it's not too early) and other events. **Gordon** can't give it all.

**Algis Ratnikas** began the musical segment of the program with several traditional Hanukkah songs. A nice touch for the Holiday season. He played *Yoskey Yoskey*, *Ereu Sitel*, and *Shoshannim*. They were well delivered and a fresh touch for those of us who occasionally get stuck in the rut of our own favorite brand of music, whatever it might be.

If you attended the San Francisco Accordion Festival, the next player will need no introduction. **Ed Suterko** from Reno, Nevada, where he's the President of their Accordion Club, by the way. He played a BIG concertina. It was so big (how big was it?) that it had its own name. The Bandoneon. He said it was very popular in the mid-west, although I'd never seen one before, and my mid-west pedigree is (reputedly) impeccable. He was outstanding. He played a number of Christmas favorites, and I'd have never guessed that they'd sound that good on a "concertina."

keeps popping up all over the place. Much to our benefit and enjoyment. **Renzo Latone**, often seen dancing at accordion events, had a special recognition ceremony for **Joe**, who shared some personal moments with us. It seems that after WWII, **Joe** took it upon himself to help support some of the many orphans left in Germany by the various soldiers and devastation in general. (America often overlooks the bounty and opportunity in which we live today.) So **Joe**, whose Polka Bands still entertain thousands, put on America's first



THE DANCERS OF CALIFORNIA & THE WESTERN UNITED STATES PRESENT THIS CUSTOM - MADE STAGE IDENTIFICATION PIECE TO MAESTRO JOE SMIELL AND HIS BAND AS A TOKEN OF THEIR APPRECIATION. HE HAS ENRICHED MANY THOUSANDS OF LIVES THROUGHOUT THE YEARS.  
DECEMBER 6, 1993



*Algis Ratnikas*

And what Christmas meeting would be complete without **Lou Soper** and his Christmas Sing-a-Long? (I remember that from last year even if it was my first meeting!) **Lou** left his Santa uniform at home, but he certainly had his Christmas spirit as he led us through more traditional carols from his sing-a-long sheet.

**Joe Smiell**, **Joe Smeill**, **Joe Smiell**. He just

post WWII Oktoberfest and sent the proceeds to seven German orphanages. **Joe**, whose generous spirit is still very visible, received an impressive stage identification piece, created by **Renzo** for all of the great music and associated contributions he has provided over the years. Attaperson **Joe** .....and **Renzo**. **Renzo's** stage identification is pictured above along with the dedication.





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### December General Meeting, cont.

Dominic hopped back up on the stage to let us know that our next meeting would see a change of venue. The Daly City Parks and Recreation Facility. It's a great spot, says Dominic, and not far from our current location. Look for a small map and other details on p.5. We have Frank Panacci to thank for taking the bull by the horns and actually accomplishing what the rest of us could only suggest for (at least) the last year. Attaperson Frank. Site approved in advance by the WCTU.

It was now break time, so Lou Soper struck up a chorus of *Here Comes Santa Claus* and "lo and behold what should appear" but Santa Claus passing out a large bag of candy canes to all the good little boys and girls. Even those who had not been so good! It almost seemed like a family event, and I guess that we are as much of a family of accordion/music lovers as we are a club. (Hopefully as we grow, we won't forget this personal approach.) If the maker or donor of the Christmas cake was mentioned, I missed it - but it sure was good. Attaperson Cake Supplier. Amid the cake eating, Santa and Walter Traverso presided over the prize drawing featuring an array of gifts, again donated by Gordon Piatanesi. Each of us hoped to win a new accordion strap or tape, but we really wanted to win the "Mystery Box." After all, it could have been an accordion. It turned out to be a handsome new accordion case - just like mine actually, less the bumps, dents and scratches. Oh well, maybe I'll win next year. Maybe it will be an accordion next year!

Back to the meeting and yet more fun and entertainment.

Hold on to your hats and wallets. Paul Pasquali, now working out of his hometown, Salt Lake City, (who said "Denver"?) sat down with what looked like a normal (electronic) accordion. But there wasn't anything

"normal" about it, including, probably, the price. As the saying goes, it could do everything but slice bread. He's developed it over the past year, and it will be available at Colombo's in several months. The sounds could only be described as amazing. Guitars, pianos, brass, woodwind and string instruments as well as an entire orchestra were electronically hidden in the unassuming case. It was hard to notice Paul's skill as a musician, which was considerable, because we were so much in awe of the spectrum of this new device and the ease with which Paul moved from one presentation style to the next. His parting rendition of *Malaguena* brought the crowd to its feet. (It seems like we do that often at BAAC. The House of Parties may be a little run down, but it has seen some world class talent and presentations over the months.) (Editor's note: Say, Denny, do check out the price. How does \$7995 sound, including everything but speakers?.)

The final performer deserves and gets a special write up in the newsletter. What a surprise! And where was Rob Campanella? When he hears that he missed a virtuoso button accordion player, he will never miss another meeting. Ever! And Vladimir Kallistov was every bit a virtuoso.

As he moved around the room during the evening you could sense that he was going to be very special. For those of you not at the meeting, Vladimir, as Russian as his name, was blind. He was tall and thin, but not skinny, with a full, well-trimmed beard, a dark suit and a dark pair of glasses. He showed obvious class without even opening up his accordion case. But when he began his first number, Bach's *Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor*, I thought Peter Di Bono (only several chairs distant from me) had died and gone to Classical Accordion Heaven. (Peter says that Classical Accordion Heaven is several octaves above normal accordion heaven, which doesn't even deserve capitalization in comparison.) Well, we were all in our own heavens as

## Vladimir

To say that Vladimir Kallistov made an unforgettable impression on all those who attended the December meeting is a decided understatement. Just talk to anybody who was there....you will hear testimony of an amazingly facile young musician who will undoubtedly further the image of the accordion in the years to come.

We were awed by the sounds which Vladimir, BAAC's newest member, coaxed from his midi instrument with left hand convertible from stradella to freebass. Those who heard pieces of his story continued to be ever more impressed. Let us tell you a little about him.

He is a native of Russia, born there in 1960. Blind since birth, he is both highly intelligent and blessed with an unusual degree of both determination and independence. These traits have carried him through the music school in Odessa and subsequently through Moscow Conservatory, where he earned a degree in Musicology with excellent grades.

Vladimir has won prizes in numerous competitions, including the Pan Russo Competition, the Prague International Competition, and, in Italy, the International Competition for classic accordion in Treviso, and the National Competition in Capranica Prenestina. He was a special guest at Castelfidardo for their 1993 Festival. He is a composer, and has written for instrumental ensembles and for orchestra. And he has given concerts, first in Moscow and later in Japan and Italy.

Vladimir, his pianist wife Svetlana, and their two children have spent the last three years in Italy, where he and Svetlana had planned to establish a music school. The Italian government has been slow in recognizing them as

potential citizens, meaning that he can neither take a position nor establish a business there in the foreseeable future. Therefore, the couple have decided to try to emigrate to the US, where Vladimir would like to teach accordion, Svetlana would teach piano, and both would teach music theory. He is here on a visitor's visa hoping to obtain permanent visas for his family and to identify an area in which they could settle and teach.

While here, he felt that he needed to pay rent to the family in Richmond with whom he is staying and to send a little money to Italy, where rent is also charged. So, he has adopted the BART system as his second home. He travels BART alone and plays his acoustic instrument for hours at a time. He was recognized by our own local celebrity, Herb Caen, in his column of Friday, December 10th, as follows:

Seasonal pluses: The blind accordionist playing Bach fugues in the Montgomery St. Metro station.....

To assist in obtaining visas, Vladimir would like to make as many musical con-

tacts in this country as possible, especially with agents, clubs and organizations which he might join, or with agents or individuals who could help to promote him. A kind immigration lawyer in San Francisco has volunteered her help but needs more documented support in order to make a strong case.

Those of us who have talked with and listened to him are convinced that his musical prowess combined with his personal characteristics make him a powerful spokesman for the capabilities of our favorite instrument. What an inspiring teacher he will be!

He must return soon to Italy, but we are quite sure we will see him again soon. Meantime, he has recorded a cassette tape which is available for purchase from BAAC for \$10.00. It contains:

- |                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <i>Air On a G String</i>            | Bach        |
| <i>The Cookoo</i>                   | Daquin      |
| <i>Toccata and Fugue in D Minor</i> | by J.S.Bach |
| <i>Minuet</i>                       | Boccherini  |
| <i>Prelude</i>                      | Bach        |
| <i>Ave Maria</i>                    | Schubert    |

*Triumphal March from Aida*  
by Verdi

*Neopolitan Dance from Swan Lake* by Tchaikovsky

*March from Carmen* Bizet

*Variations on Russian Themes*  
*Flight of the Bumble Bee*

by Rimsky-Korsakov  
*The Entertainer* Scott Joplin

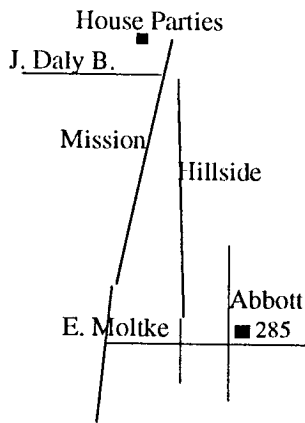
Tapes will be available for purchase at BAAC general meetings while they last. If you cannot come to the meeting, send a check to BAAC (address on outside of this newsletter) to obtain a tape. If you have suggestions or contacts which will help Vladimir, please let us know via the BAAC phone number, (415) 974-9210.

MK



*Vladimir Kallistov*

## HOW DO WE GET THERE?????



Don't forget....in January we begin holding General Meetings on the first Tuesday at our new location, 285 Abbott Avenue, Daly City. The little map to the left is only a guide, but, as you notice, the Daly City Parks and Rec Dept. building is a little South of the House of Parties and on the other side of Mission. Coming South, turn left off either Mission or Hillside, before East Moltke if you wish.

Coming North on 280, either take the Westlake Exit as before and proceed as above, or take the previous freeway exit, bear right to Mission, then right on E. Moltke.

Lots of parking is available either in the small lot or on the surrounding residential streets. See you on January 4th!

## Impressions

by Eino Huhtala

Seventy-two years have elapsed since I, as a youth, became smitten by a strange malady from which I have not been able to free myself. It is known as accordion fever.

This occurred because my parents, not daring to leave their children home alone at night during a winter snow storm in the high mountains of Utah, took me and my brothers to a Finn Hall dance with them.

On our arrival, we met other youngsters and immediately took over the slippery dance floor until the musicians brought their violins and accordions out and began to play their repertoire of polkas, schottisches, and waltzes.

I was transfixed and thrilled by the sounds and melodies which emanated from these strange "button boxes" while the grownups whirled around the dance floor.

Then, tiring, we were fed and wrapped up in our parents' overcoats and laid down to sleep on the benches along the walls.

Eventually, the dance ended and we trudged our way homeward through the snow, my head still ringing with those unforgettable tunes. I really caught the "bug."

Knowing that most of our readers have similar experiences in their backgrounds, I wish to bring out the purpose of this story. Expose your young children and friends to accordion music at an early

age. They will appreciate it and you will benefit by knowing that you are preserving and nurturing the culture and music of the accordion.

*Eino Huhtala*  
Fremont, California

### Dec. Gen. Mtng. from p 3

Vladimir's fingers moved across the button keyboard like a breeze flirting with a full field of wheat. Did he really touch the keys or was it all done with mirrors?

I've heard the *Flight of the Bumble Bee* played numerous times, and it always sounded like a bumble bee to me. I figured that's where the name came from. Not only did the tuning on Vladimir's instrument and his rendition exactly replicate the sound of a bee, but his fingers were a virtual blur as they sped along, and they immediately reminded me of the wings of ..... a bumble bee! So now I'm not so sure where the name came from, but I am sure where great music comes from. Vladimir also thrilled us with Rossini's *Overture to the Barber of Seville* and a final medley of miscellaneous favorites, including *Jingle Bells*. We spend much of the time on our feet (again) and Peter "passed the hat," which was quickly filled with enthusiastic support (i.e. cash!) from BAAC members quick to help a deserving artist. Don't miss the article on Vladimir.

Th, th, th .... that's all folks!



Dennis Huff/J. Hornbrook

### NEW MEMBERS

Corinne Brainard, Alameda  
Rita D'Amico, San Francisco  
Joe Domitrowich, Cupertino  
Don Gilbrook, Danville  
Hubert Kallabis, Castro Valley  
Nora Mazzara, Mountain View  
Brian McBride, Millbrae  
Victor Mencarini, Sacramento  
Andrés Restrepo, San Rafael

We're delighted to have you with us.

We hope to see and meet you at meetings or events and we hope to hear your opinions and ideas.

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## BAAC Board Meeting

November 16, 1993

- Meeting was convened 30 minutes early to allow more time for conversation with our guests, Clifton Buck-Kauffman and Rebecca Browne of the Cotati Festival Committee. See article p.7 for results of this conversation.
- Treasurer Frank Montoro reported \$8892 in our bank accounts.
- Administrative guru Algis Ratnikas has obtained a voice-mail telephone for our Club. The number is (415) 974-9210. For \$30/month the system will record messages left for us, and BAAC will be listed in the San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose directories.
- Algis is working with the Stoschers to draft a format for BAAC business cards. He will then purchase 1000 generic cards for use by all BAAC members.
- BAAC will not receive the \$200 promised to us by the Anchorage Accordion Festival because we did not fulfill our part of the bargain. Fewer players than promised appeared, and most of them did not stay in the places designated by Anchorage. The Board agreed that those who had played as promised should be reimbursed the promised \$25. from our treasury.
- Similarly, we will pay those who played at Festa Italiana \$25 each as promised even though we have received no money from the Festa. In this case, BAAC members were not at fault, but

apparently attendance at Festa was down this year, and they are experiencing cash flow problems.

- Frank Panacci has been instrumental in finding a new location for our general meetings, at 285 Abbott Ave. in Daly City, part of the Daly City Park and Rec. Dept. Considerable time was spent at this board meeting discussing the pros (which are many) and cons of this move and then discussing when it should happen. It was agreed that we should move as of January rather than in December. Meanwhile, Frank will move our bank account to Daly City and Dominic will work on filing with the State and the IRS to obtain non-profit status, both as required in our contract with Daly City. Since the facility is not available on Monday, the Board changed our meeting date to the first Tuesday of the month. We discussed at length methods for handling the serving of alcoholic beverages and decided not to sell liquor at our new location. We will, however, sell soft drinks. Those wishing additional beverages will need to bring their own.
- One hundred dollars was allocated for purchase of goodies for our December meeting.
- One hundred fifty dollars was allocated for an elegant dinner for two for Veikko Ahvenainen as thanks for his fantastic performance at our November meeting.

MK

## Good Will Ambassador

Our favorite dispenser of just plain fun mixed with fantastic musicianship wowed 'em in Seattle, at the Northwest October meeting, from what we hear. Jim (Cotati Festival) Boggio made his way to Seattle on October 11th and was welcomed at the airport by Joe Petosa, Sr. and Ken Olendorf. They made him comfy with an accordion borrowed from Joe, a late lunch, a quickie nap, and a brief warm-up period.

Listen to the report of Jim's performance: "Jim...with Rick Spano on drums and Peter Vinikow, bassist, ...began with a swinging "All of Me", with vocal by Jim....Then Jim launched into a solo version of "What A Wonderful World" in a first-rate impression of Louis Armstrong with a neat segue into "Hello Dolly"....Halfway through "Dolly", Jim picked up a trumpet with his right hand and blew a Louis-style solo while still playing left hand accordion. Whew! .....Ken Olendorf joined Jim and the band for a dynamite jam session on "Out of Nowhere," and a gorgeous romantic "Polka Dots and Moonbeams". "Honey-suckle Rose" garnered a standing ovation and a bluesy encore of "Route 66"....As an accordionist, entertainer, and accordion-booster, Jim Boggio is tops!

How's about that guy? Say,....how long has it been since he came down and played for us??? About time, don't you think? MK

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MUSICAL MERCHANDISE SINCE 1934

Across the Editor's Desk..

Dear Paisanos:

Good Christmas meeting!

I'm still thinking of the performance by the young Russian player. Could not take my attention away from his fingers on right or left. Let's all hope he returns to USA.

Have a good Holiday.

**Gordon Piatanesi**

Colombo & Sons Accordion Corp.

«««««« »»»»»»»»

Dear Bay Area Accordion Club:

We would like to thank you and all your Club members for the nice dinner which you offered to me.

I was so happy to play at the last meeting for all my accordion friends, and I know we will meet again in 1994. Thank you so much.

Have a Good Christmas and a Very Happy New Year.

Sincerely,

**Veikko Ahvenainen**

«««««« »»»»»»»»

Dear Bay Area Accordion Club:

Thank you very much for your newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Area Accordion Club which I do enjoy reading very much.

For many reasons, I cannot go to visit your Club and join you in all sorts of interesting activities. But I just wonder if you and other members would like to come to China to give performances, lectures, and exchange experiences with us, which surely will promote mutual understanding and help improve our accordion playing.

As an accordionist, I need a lot of compositions. If you have any, please send me some or a catalogue to inform me of the cost and postage. Thank you for your assistance.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best Wishes!

Yours sincerely,

**Jiang Jie**

2 Zi Zhu Yuan Rd.

Haidian District

Beijing 100081

P.R. China

COTATI, 1993, Revisited

You may recall that BAAC members expressed a variety of unhappy sentiments concerning the Cotati Festival at our October general meeting. A suggestion was made at the time that we invite persons involved with planning the Festival to meet with BAAC to hear and hopefully address some of our concerns.

Your Board decided to follow through on that suggestion, but to invite them to the Board Meeting rather than two the General Meeting. As a result, at its November meeting, the BAAC Board of Directors held a dialog with guests Clifton Buck-Kauffman and Rebecca Browne of the Cotati Festival Committee.

Josephine's minutes of that meeting report that an open discussion ensued with lively participation from both the Board and from Clifton and Rebecca. She concludes that much was accomplished. Plans for next year's Festival are in some degree of flux because they are considering mechanisms by which they can charge a small admission fee (thereby insuring financial viability) and by which they can accommodate more attendees. These plans include the possibility of closing the main intersection for that weekend and placing three or four stages a distance from one another. In that way, different musical types could be featured on each stage to please our great variety of musical tastes. Attendees would be free to move from one stage to another or to stay in one spot.

Clifton and Rebecca agreed with us that the Jam Tent's location be more carefully considered, with BAAC's input weighing heavily in the location decision. No more specific decision was made for the moment because the Committee is considering expanding the site in '94. We also agreed that there must be better scheduling of announcements made by the MC.

Next time the program will include performers on all 3 (or 4) stages, unless one stage is specifically designated as a drop-in, spontaneous site and is not scheduled before the Festival.

It was further agreed that the Festival Committee welcomes BAAC members at

**BAAC Board Meeting**

December 8, 1993

Synopsis

- Rusty Bartoli reported \$8,232 in our combined bank accounts. Both accounts have been moved to the B. of A. in Daly City to conform with requirements of our new general meeting location.
- Algis has had 1000 BAAC business cards printed at a cost of \$70.53 and distributed 5 cards to each BAAC member present at the December meeting.
- It was agreed that cameras and video equipment at our meetings should no longer be set up in the front. Henceforth, we shall give photographers a place in the back of the room with good visibility from which they can take pictures.
- Chairs at our new meeting place will be set up with a center aisle making it easier for attendees to move around.
- A thank you note from Veikko Ahvenainen was circulated. BAAC had treated Veikko and Tina to dinner at Postrio's as thanks for his wonderful performance at our November meeting.
- Dominic P. and Peter Di Bono are handling the job of filing with both the State of California and the I.R.S. for non-profit status for our Club to qualify us for reduced rental fees at our new location. When the application is approved, donations to BAAC will be tax deductible.
- Non-alcoholic drinks will be sold at our new meeting location. The Board decided to first ask Diane MacKenzie, from the House of Parties, if she was interested in handling this for us. Should Diane decline, Frank Panacci volunteered to handle it on a trial basis.
- Next meeting January 12th at Frank Montoro's.

MK

its meetings and will consider any issues important to BAAC.

For its part, the Board of Directors will obtain membership approval at a General Meeting for any future donations to the Festival.

MK

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**NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY**

January 4, 1993  
7:00PM

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