

# Along the Lincoln Highway



The Newsletter of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association

Volume 10, Number 2

Summer 2005

## Search Underway for AtLH Editor.

he Iowa LHA newsletter you hold in L your hands is in need of a new editor. Paul Walker, in his tenth year as editor of Along the Lincoln Highway, has decided to step down. The state association is looking for someone who will carry on the traditions of the quarterly journal, providing a mix of personal stories and contributions from the Iowa membership with reprints from highway-related and history-related publications.

The Iowa newsletter is actually a team effort: the Iowa County Consuls as a group are obligated to submit one article per newsletter. In addition, two of the Consuls have alternating feature columns, and the newsletter is the official forum for minutes of ILHA meetings.

As with every post of the nascent Iowa Lincoln Highway Association, Bob Ausberger was the first newsletter editor, circulating his own brand of homespun type-written LH news in the early 90s as the organization took its first steps. Walker volunteered to take over those duties starting in January 1996, and since then the newsletter has been published four times a year in its current format.

Along the Lincoln Highway is the most widely distributed state-affiliated LHA publication, so the new editor is expected to support the current membership base while reaching out to an even broader audience in a drive to increase numbers. The

(**Newsletter Editor**, Continued on page 4)



## You Can't Lick Lincoln Highway Postage.

In 2004, the U.S. Postal Service authorized Los Assert ized Los Angeles-based company Stamps.com to sell customized selfadhesive postage stamps featuring photos submitted by consumers, in addition to the regular postage it has been selling to corporate clients since 2000.

In the first market test lasting just two months, customers bought 2.75 million stamps of varying denominations and submitted 83,000 images. People turned their favorite baby and puppy pictures into custom postage stamps.

One of the 83,000 images was a Lincoln Highway logo in patriotic red, white and blue, submitted by the Iowa LHA and used for state and national correspondence; the finished product in black-and-white is at left. The re-

sponse to a Lincoln Highway postmark was quick and widespread, usually expressed in "Where can I get those Lincoln Highway stamps?" Unfortunately the test ended before many LHAers were able to place an order.

Now U.S.P.S. has given Stamps.com the go-ahead to bring back the custom stamps for an additional year of testing. They went on sale May 17th.

Following the market test, the Postal Service drew restrictions on the kinds of images that can go on stamps: no celebrities, politicians, world leaders or con-

(**LH Postage**, Continued on page 7)



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# Between the Country Western Western Country Country Western Country Western Country Co

#### By JEFF LAFOLLETTE, CLINTON COUNTY CONSUL.

Everyone knows that the Lincoln Highway's eastern terminus is in New York. But, if prior to 1913 the Lincoln Highway traversed the towns of Ringwood, New York, Chancy and Vandenburg, would you believe you were in Iowa, let alone Clinton County?

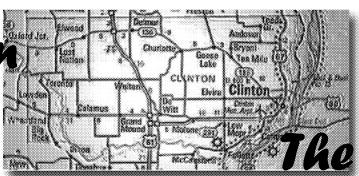
Let the truth be known - these are communities no longer on maps, but were early settlements in the current city limits of Clinton and Clinton County, and were so named until the last domino, Lyons, fell in 1895, creating the current outline of the city of Clinton.

Everyone has seen a postcard of the Lyons-Fulton High Bridge which was opened in 1891 and demolished in 1974. At the site of the old Bridge there is a stone marker commemorating Elijah Buell who settled Lyons in 1835. One year after the founding, another small community sprung up down river. A man named Joseph Bartlett settled on the site, named New York. New York was a fledgling community and would probably still be a small hamlet if not for a bit of geographical good luck.

Lyons was incorporated in 1837, and was named in honor of Lyons, France. Around 1840, New York was a town of a few cabins, two stores, a tavern and a mule or two, while Lyons was becoming a booming mill town with its own ferry service and recognized for its lumber potential.

Also in 1840, Clinton County was organized with the community of Camanche, downriver from Lyons and New York, established as the first county seat. Clinton County was named for the two-term governor of the state of New York, DeWitt Clinton, who was also the promoter of the Erie Canal.

In 1841, the county seat was moved to a town in the center of the county. Vandenburg was established as the county seat by a petition of the Territorial Legislature. Had it been around in 1841, the Lincoln Highway would have left New York and gone west to Vandenburg.



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...and then some

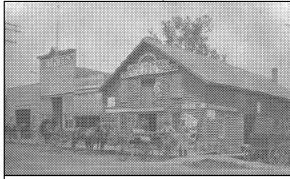
In 1844, Vandenburg would be renamed

DeWitt to further honor DeWitt Clinton. A new courthouse would be constructed in 1853, cementing DeWitt's hold on the county seat. By 1847, Lyons had a population of 4,000 and was a prosperous community with a grain and flour mill, a ferry service across the Mississippi River, and lumber resources just beginning to be tapped, while New York changed very little during those years. All that was about to change with the advent of the railroads.

By 1852, the Chicago, Iowa and Nebraska Railroad – forerunner to the Chicago and Northwestern – was contemplating where to cross the Mississippi. Since Lyons already had rail service to the west, it seemed logical to con-

nect Fulton with Lyons, but this is where the story turns.

After studying where to plat the railroad bridge in 1855, the "C.I.&N." announced a change in their plans: the railroad would cross the river at Little Rock Island adjacent to



1856—Becker Wagon and Buggy Works at 250 Main Avenue, later Lincoln Highway.

New York, with the island providing firm ground for the bridge over a fairly long section of the river, thereby saving on construction costs. That same year, the Iowa Land Company bought Joseph Bartlett's New York settlement and renamed it Clinton. From that date on, Clinton began to grow rapidly and prosper. 1855 also marked the "unofficial" date of the feud between Lyons and Clinton. Folks in Lyons felt that Clinton stole the railroad from them.

(**Between Rivers**, Continued on page 6)

## Ramblings Along the Lincoln Highway.

Minutes of the Spring 2005 Iowa LHA Meeting Community Historical Society, DeWitt, Iowa. 9 April 2005. Submitted by Su Aros, Secretary.

Jeff and Annette LaFollette greeted the 38 attendees at the ILHA Spring meeting in DeWitt. The eastern Iowa location made it convenient for LH enthusiasts from Illinois (Albany and Moline) and Wisconsin to also attend. Special guests included Jo Ella O'Connell, DeWitt Chamber of Commerce who welcomed the group to DeWitt and encouraged a visit to the downtown area time permitting; Ann Soenksen, Director of the Museum; and Rollin Southwell, National Director at Large from Salt Lake City. President Bob Stinson called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the minutes of the January 8, 2005 meeting as published in the spring newsletter.

#### Treasurer's Report

Joyce Ausberger reported a balance of \$2,808 in checking and \$4,519 in the investment account. Attendees were invited to inspect the income/expense ledger. Joyce handed out LH logo decals for consuls to place in business storefronts and car windows. LH brochures were also available. The Iowa 2005 Biennial Report for an Iowa Nonprofit Corporation was filed. Silos and Smokestacks newsletter circulated; note that this organization is a funding resource. Activity is progressing with the Iowa DOT relative to signing the 1928 route, with Jeff Benson representing the LH.

#### Membership Report

**Cecil Stewart** reported that 340 copies of the Spring newsletter were printed. This quantity covers the LH membership in Iowa – both national and Iowa-only members.

#### State Director's Report

Due to term limits, this was **Paul Walker**'s last State Director's report. The Secretary noted that all national LH members will receive the voting ballot in the Spring 2005 issue of The Forum for the new Director Jeff LaFollette is the Iowa nominee to replace Walker.

#### President's Corner

Stinson reminded the Consuls of the challenge to sign county roads. The LH Trading Post will offer discounts for any substantial metal sign quantities ordered.

#### **Business Meeting**

- Walker informed the group that the National Membership Secretary position is open. If interested, Paul will secure more details.
- The LH Heritage Corridor group of western Pennsylvania has porcelain LH signs available at \$19 plus shipping.
- After 10 years as editor of the Iowa newsletter, Paul is resigning after the Spring 2006 issue. A replacement is needed.
- A Lincoln Highway Symposium (free) will be held April 16 starting at 9am at the History Center in Cedar Rapids hosted by the Linn County Historic Preservation Commission.
- A suggestion by Jeff LaFollette for a 2007 Motor Tour Event across Iowa was of interest to attendees.
- Rollin Southwell presented a report on the history and progress of plans for the Fisher Pass Monument in Utah. The ILHA has made a \$500 donation. Individual donations are still welcome. For more information, email Rollin at rollin.southwell@pgrimes.com.
- For the 2005 Ely Conference Rollin showed samples of the badge lanyard and matching earrings he will have for sale. Raffle tickets for "Model A" replicas were also available.
- Action item for guest **Marlou Bitcon**, sister of Carroll County Consul visiting from San Jose, CA: investigate the alternate LH route down and around the peninsula (through San Jose).

#### *Update - 2006 National LH Conference*

- Budget: Suggestions from Rollin Southwell (organizer of the Ely 2005 conference) included setting a policy/budget for invited speakers pay for registration and travel costs. Factor in flyer and registration form copy costs.
- Website: Rollin received a grant to establish the Ely Conference web site. It can be continued for the Cedar Rapids conference.
- Funding: Tourism groups have money. Approach them with "can you help us?"
- Promotion: Get the local Chambers of Commerce involved.
- Paul distributed copies of the proposed brochure for distribution/promotion at the Ely conference. Suggested 150 copies for all conference attendees. The brochure was approved by members present at the meeting.
- A survey for Ely attendees will be completed by Paul Walker/**Su Aros**, the purpose of which is to solicit attendee feedback on what they like, suggestions for improvement at future conferences. Survey to be distributed and collected during annual meeting at Ely.

(Ramblings, Continued on page 4)

(Ramblings, Continued from page 3)

- Mike Kelly continues with video preparation for Ely to promote the Cedar Rapids conference. DVDs of the video will be handed out in Ely in addition to the brochures.

#### **County Consul Reports**

**Clinton** - Jeff LaFollette. Pole-painting to resume soon. Checking into volkswalks.

Cedar - Keith Whitlatch. The Lisbon Historic Preservation Group signed up as a new member. Highway 30 Coalition member, Paul Crock of Mechanicsville, may speak at the October ILHA meeting.

**Linn - Van/Bev Becker**. The city of Cedar Rapids will be extending 18th Street SW through the Shady Acres Motel in the fall of 2005. Depending on the plans, one or two cabins might be able to be saved, or it may be completely demolished. Take your photos *soon*.

Benton - Mike Kelly. Youngville annual meeting next week. Café and Farmers' Market to resume operation in mid to late April. No progress on catching whoever torched the cabins. Discussing restoration of the Tipper cabin. Also have a 1928 marker for the Youngville site - concern over how to protect it from vandals. Ron Preston notes that the garage is mentioned in the book "Iowa Curiosities." Call Ron for garage tours.

**Tama - Allan Richards**. Money is available for repainting the mural and to redo the inside of the King cabin. Hope to have that completed for 2006. LH Bridge Festival parade entries - call Ron Cory to get on the list. Preparations underway for the July ILHA meeting - John F. Ernest Winery.

**Marshall - Catherine Noble**. Absent; no report.

Story - Jeff Benson/Margaret Elbert. Lyell Henry reported that two round gas signs hanging at the gas station at Niland's corner were stolen. Replacement signs to be made by prison inmates. Possibly Bob Stinson.

**Boone - Joe Moore/John Fitzsimmons**. Absent; no report.

Greene - Bob Owens. Kenny Russell/Joyce Ausberger reported LH Grand Junction signs made the front page of the Jefferson newspaper. Bob Owens signed up 4 new members last week. Eureka Bridge / Danger Hill Area - consultant meeting Tuesday, April 12, 7pm at the Jefferson courthouse. Joyce solicited support letters from the ILHA to the Iowa DNR for the approval of a proposed establishment of a Eureka Woods State Preserve in Greene County.

**Carroll - Norma Berns**. Wittrock's building still for sale.

Crawford - consul position vacant.

Harrison - Elaine Ehlert. New business — Brick Street Station (tourist shop) - opened on Lincoln Way in Woodbine in the old Hickey gas station. Elaine plans to display LH memorabilia. Woodbine Historical Corridor leading efforts for roof restoration, trim and paint for the garage. A Logan photography studio gave old negatives to the Harrison Genealogy Society of parades on their brick street. Kathy Dirks reported that the Conservation Board has been holding a \$350K grant which will be applied to an interpretative site if decision made to move forward. Kathy took a supply of LH brochures to distribute at the State Welcome Centers meeting in Waterloo this coming week.

Pottawattamie – **Brent Ford**. No report. The meeting adjourned at 11:55am.

A buffet lunch was served at Steven's Candlelight restaurant followed by a bus tour of Clinton County LH sites, including the gravel section from Grand Mound to Calamus; LH marker at Elmer Ketelsen's home (great to have Elmer on hand); a close-up look at the canopied gas station/restaurant (now private home in Calamus) and cabin (now pet house) in the backyard; pony truss bridge west of Calamus where Jeff and Annette have spent many hours sprucing up (surprise! LH sign posted by the Becker's just for the tour); walk along the abandoned road berms in the Wapsi wetlands and brushing away dirt and leaves for a better view of 1921 LH concrete; steel and concrete bridge piers and finally a stop on a hill to view LH alignments - the old and the new.

All along the tour the fresh pole-painting job was very evident! Thanks again to Jeff and Annette for hosting an interesting and informative ILHA get-together.

Respectfully submitted by Su Aros, Secretary

#### (**Newsletter Editor**, Continued from page 1)

newsletter layout is in Microsoft Publisher, but the new editor is not obligated to continue this format. However, proficiency with a personal computer is required, as well as email capability, and he or she must be a member of the LHA. Interested parties should contact ILHA President Bob Stinson at (515)287-5199.

Walker will vacate the position officially in March 2006.

## The President's Corner

By Bob Stinson, ILHA President

As I write this President's Corner message, you folks who attended the LHA National Conference in Ely, Nevada will be on your way home. I hope you had an enjoyable time, but then whenever we spend time on our beloved highway, we always seem to enjoy ourselves. Sorry I was unable to attend but I need to save my vacation time for a trip to visit my oldest son later this summer. We haven't seen him in over a year and I don't want his son to forget what grandpa looks like!

I received some exciting news from Jeff Benson recently. We may be realizing a goal that was near and dear to my little ol' heart—the official marking of the Lincoln Highway across Iowa. Details as of this writing are few and the project has yet to be finalized but Jeff reports that the Iowa Department of Transportation is involved and it should be similar to the fine marking system used in Illinois. Let's hope it can be completed in time for our conference.

Speaking of the 2006 conference, that's about one year from now. The next board of directors meeting in Tama will be largely devoted to the conference and it's planning. I ask that all of us who took on an assignment related to the conference have a report of our progress to present at the meeting. Let's make sure we are all on the same page with our preparations so it all comes together smoothly in 2006.

This next item is one that is very sad and difficult for me. By now, most of you will have heard the distressing news about our dear friend and LHA member, Norma Berns. This sweet lady was diagnosed with a brain tumor a while back and is currently undergoing treatment. I corresponded with her recently, and she maintains her gentle spirit and positive outlook. Let's all keep this dear lady in our prayers and ask for a speedy and full recovery.

I hope to see you all in Tama. Happy Highways,

Bob

#### **Upcoming LHA State Meetings**

July 9 '05 October 8 '05 January 14 '06 April 8 '06

June 13-17 '06

Tama Cedar County Story County Linn County (Coe) Nat'l Conference

### Corridor Management Plan Provides a Path.

By Jeff Benson, Story County Consul.

You may remember reading or hearing about that Lincoln Highway study conducted by the Iowa State University Department of Landscape Architecture and the Iowa Department of Transportation. You may have seen a presentation about it at one of the Lincoln Highway Association meetings in the past few years. The project, called the "Iowa U.S. Route 30-Lincoln Highway Corridor Management Plan," is now complete and has become the basis for new ways to plan and design road projects in Iowa in this corridor.

The Federal Highway Administration, Iowa DOT, and State Historic Preservation Office are completing what is called "Programmatic Agreement." Based on the Corridor Management Plan, this agreement allows road engineers and planners flexibility to vary from "the standards" as they determine how to maintain and improve some of the road segments that are part of an historic Lincoln Highway route in Iowa. The need to stick to "the standards" has often been a stumbling block when the Lincoln Highway Association and other local citizens have been involved with such road projects. The Programmatic Agreement combines good highway design principles with good historic preservation principles to promote more creative ways to keep highway users safe, while at the same time protecting the historic features of the Lincoln Highway, which is the reason some of those highway users are out there in the first place.

The Iowa DOT has invited representatives of the Lincoln Highway Association to meet with them this summer to learn more about this Programmatic Agreement. At this time all of the details are unclear, but it appears that the Iowa DOT is also working with Counties along the U.S. Route 30-Lincoln Highway corridor so that they might adopt this Programmatic Agreement, giving them greater flexibility for County road improvement projects and also easing some of their liability concerns.

In spite of all of the "improvements" of our modern age, the wheels of change in government seem to turn slowly, but these developments look very promising. We will keep you posted.

(**Between Rivers**, Continued from page 2)

Growth in Lyons started leveling off while Clinton was growing to the north and west. Ringwood was a 260-acre piece of open country and duck ponds between the two, serving as a buffer in the area near what is now North 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Clinton.

By the late 1860's the population had increased rapidly along the Mississippi River compared to the center of the county. Calls to move the county seat to the population base were bantered about and by 1869 a vote would settle the issue of moving the seat from DeWitt to either Lyons or Clinton.

This is considered another chapter in the

feud as news reports of the day described quite a contest between the two communities. Presidential contests reportedly were "tame and flavorless compared with the vote to move the county seat."

By a 511-vote difference, Clinton was chosen as the new county seat. 23 days later at a cost of \$3,200 a new 44'X52' courthouse was constructed and the rest is history.

A sidebar to the courthouse construction: There was talk that the bell from the DeWitt courthouse would be taken to Clinton when the county documents were moved, but in a midnight raid, public-spirited citizens of DeWitt took the bell from the tower and buried it in Elmwood Cemetery. The bell remained buried for more than a year, until a bell was needed for the Christian Chapel (now Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church). Those responsible for hiding the bell again made a midnight visit to the cemetery, and on the day of the church dedication the surprised congregation heard the familiar tones of the old courthouse bell.

1869-

Clinton continued to prosper, but with the railroad it was growing much faster than Lyons, thanks in part to the lumber industry shared by both communities. Clinton grew north as far as the boundary with Lyons, and continued its southward and westward expansion

A small community known as Chancy was plotted to the southwest where the current U.S. 30 alignment flows past the rail yards and rail car shop of the old Chicago and Northwestern

railway. Chancy was named after wealthy lumberman Chancy Lamb, and was annexed into Clinton around 1894. One year later Lyons could not resist the inevitable and was annexed by Clinton, thus completing the growth of the little hamlet of New York, platted just 58 years earlier, with not much of a future until the steel rails made their way across Old Man River in 1855.

One may ponder that, in 1869, had the vote gone the other way we'd be talking in 2005 about the Lincoln Highway starting its eastern terminus at Lyons instead of Clinton.

Another sidebar: although Lyons became part of Clinton in 1895, the community retained some sense of individuality because of the old Lyons High School, which sat alongside the

Lincoln Highway for decades. The school kept its own identity until 1954 when the last class graduated. Thereafter, students residing in the Lyons area began attending classes at Clinton High.

Interestingly, 1955 was the last year that U.S. 30 used the old Lyons-Fulton High Bridge as its Mississippi River crossing. One-hundred years after

the railroad chose to cross at the site of old New York, the Iowa and Illinois DOTs built a new U.S. 30 bridge just a few hundred yards north

of the rail crossing that opened one year later in 1956. If you cross the bridge and look south, in the river you can see the old railroad piers just south of the railroad bridge.

—First Clinton County Courthouse.

Without doubt, the greatest Lyons victory in the feud with Clinton was their claim to the Lincoln Highway crossing, with the

Lyons High School façade.

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bridge bearing their name, not the name Clinton-Fulton.

Credit goes in part to the Clinton County Chamber of Commerce, "The History of Clinton County," "History of County Governments," and www.clintoncountyiowa.com.

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Cecil Stewart

**Pottawattamie County** 

Brett Ford

Newsletter Editor Paul Walker

Noble Sojourner Lyell Henry

## GREAT GRADES.

The Lincoln Highway Symposium in Cedar Rapids was front-page news in the last issue of *Along the Lincoln Highway*. The Cedar Rapids History Center, hosted the big event on April 19, 2005, on the original route of the Lincoln Highway.

The very successful event was planned by the Linn County Historic Preservation Commission and four Iowa LHA members were part of the program. Designed to raise awareness, the all-day symposium was attended by 60+ enthusiasts including Lincoln Highway Association members, county officials, Iowa DOT representatives, educators and history buffs.

Presenters included Drake Hokanson, Carol Ahlgren, Lyell Henry, Van Becker and representatives from the Iowa DOT. Lunch was authentic LH-era food—Maid Rites. With the show of interest and support demonstrated by this symposium, the Linn County Historic Preservation Commission can now return to concentrating on the Lincoln Highway route(s) through Linn County and installing interpretative kiosks at strategic locations. The Historic Preservation Commission Chairman reported that the Linn County Board of Supervisors was pleased and impressed.

Iowa Lincoln Highway Association literature was plentiful and strategically placed near the coffeepot.

A big thank you to all of you who attended! L

#### (**LH Postage**, Continued from page 1)

victed criminals. In addition, nothing obscene, offensive, menacing, or supportive of unlawful action "or otherwise objectionable" is allowed.

Clearly the Lincoln Highway doesn't fit any of the banned categories, so members are again welcome to show their LH pride by purchasing custom "PhotoStamps."

The stamps will still sell for more than face value: a sheet of 20 37¢ stamps costs \$16.99.

If you're wondering whether the Postal Service will treat them like government-issued postage, the Iowa mailings experienced no problems. In addition to a fluorescent-ink watermark, Stamps.com puts a unique bar code on each stamp which the post office can scan to verify legality.

To purchase custom stamps, go to the Stamps.com website and click on the PhotoStamps tab, then follow the instructions. The website will ask for an upload, so it is best to have a preferred image ready.

If you wish to use the Iowa tri-color, it will be emailed to anyone who asks. Please contact Paul Walker via email at walkerpaul@machlink.com.

## Summer Board Meeting Scheduled for Tama.

The summer board meeting of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association is set for **Saturday**, **July 9th**, at the Ernest Winery at mile marker 207 on U.S. 30, two miles east of King Tower in Tama.

Although this is a board meeting, everyone is welcome. Meeting organizer and Tama County Consul Allan Richards will have coffee and donuts on hand from the local bakery. Early arrivers may convene at 9:00 am and at 9:30 President Bob Stinson calls the meeting to order.

The bulk of the meeting will be devoted to 2006 conference planning as well as efforts to mark the LH route across Iowa.

Following the meeting, lunch is arranged at Sweet Repeats on Hwy 63 in downtown Tama, 7 blocks west of Tama's famous Lincoln Highway Bridge. Lunch will run about \$7 with drink, and Allan reports that they serve excellent food. After lunch, Ron Cory should be on hand for a tour of the renovated King Tower cabin for those who want to take a look.

If any special arrangements are required, please contact Allan in advance of the meeting.

#### See YOU on the Lincoln Highway! This issue's new members...

Central Community Historical Society, Ann Soenksen

Edward Clavert Jefferson, Greene Co.<sup>L</sup>
Lincolnway Grille, Mellisa Smith Jefferson, Greene Co.<sup>L</sup>
Lisbon Historic Preservation Lisbon, Linn Co.<sup>L</sup>
Clan Peters

Glen Peters
Lisbon, Linn Co.<sup>L</sup>
Andrea Reisz
Woodbine, Harrison Co.<sup>L</sup>

Ken & Tish Wasulkao Mishawaka, IN

Jack Watts Grand Junction, Greene Co. L

Calvin & Phyllis Whitmore Moline, IL

Adding Iowa to their LHA membership...

Shelly Barron Marshalltown, Marshall Co. L

Robert Jacoby Ellington, CT Steve & Alma Whitmore Albany, IL

Youngville Café Museum Watkins, Benton Co.<sup>L</sup>

Lincoln Highway County

In This Issue....

**Newsletter Editor Wanted! Lincoln Highway Stamps!** 



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