

- NATURALLY PERFECT-

# Lections SUMMER 2022

NEWS & VIEWS FROM THE COVES

Cover page photo from Ken Pell

How do we comment on the speed with which each year seems to go by, without resorting to clichés? Here we are in the final weeks of 2022, with the new year just on the other side of our imminent holiday break. How did that happen?

Despite (or because of) the speed with which 2022 seemed to fly by, the year has seen many noteworthy milestones at The Coves.

On the communications front, we saw the launch of this, our lifestyle e-zine – *Reflections* of what makes The Coves such a fabulous place to call home. The last quarter of the year also saw the launch of The Coves YouTube video channel with the first few episodes of our *Exploring The Coves video series*. We also launched our new mobile app – perhaps that is where you are reading this.

The myriad communiques put out by our management team reflect how much is happening to maintain and enhance the lifestyles we are privileged to enjoy. In this edition, we touch on just a few of them. We rely heavily on our security team for our safety and security, and it is gratifying to reflect on the special recognition awarded to The Coves security team by their employer. As we approach mid-summer our environment and individual gardens are at their best and we celebrate the winners of our garden competition. Our environment continues to do great work and we reflect on the progress being made on sustainability and biodiversity on the *Enviromatters* page.

Our community focus is something that really sets The Coves apart and you can read how this is poised for even greater things in 2023. And there is more, as you will see from the Contents box below, including regular features like *Kitchen Hacks* and *Green Drive*.

We hope you enjoy the read and, as always, appreciate your comments. Email: community@thecoves.co.za.

#### **Andrew**

P.S. If you're looking for a gift idea for this festive season, be sure to check out The Coves new signature liqueer

#### VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings fellow Covers!

Firstly, let me start by acknowledging and thanking JP, Andrew and the previous board, for all their hard work and personal sacrifice in terms of time, energy and input into helping make The Coves what it is today!

Whilst these are indeed 'big boots to fill' I relish the opportunity, along with the new board, in serving our community and building on the solid platform laid by previous boards.

We truly are living in unprecedented times and world events are having a direct impact on each of us and collectively as a country. On the backend of Covid we now have rampant inflation, persistent (and worsening) challenges with electricity and water supply, unparalleled crime levels etc

which all lead to much uncertainty and even fear for the future.

Whilst we may not control macroeconomic and broader issues that impact us, as The Coves we can plan to use our existing resources more effectively, as well as ensure adequate contingencies are in place in order to deal with these challenges.

To this end, and as alluded to in our recent AGM, we are looking to accelerate shoring up our electricity supply both in terms of minimising the impacts of load shedding as well as becoming more self-sustainable.

Water scarcity and ensuring continuity in supply, is another key area that will demand our attention going forward.



Security remains an ever-present focus area and whilst several improvements were launched over the past twelve months, there is always room for further improvement with our internal processes as well as technology advances in this space.

The one thing that sets us apart from other estates is our enduring sense of community. Covers are a special group of people and nowhere is this more evident than in how we come together in the good times and in times of need.

We plan on expanding this muchvalued community facet by investing in value-added infrastructure and hosting more events in line with our residents' needs.

Read more in these pages



Whilst I have given you an insight into some of the specific areas we are/will be focusing on, in simple terms our role as a board, my role as Chair, is to help safeguard your investment and create a platform for that investment to grow.

How do we achieve this? - Two things:

1) make sure the Coves runs like clockwork (management team, staff and infrastructure), and 2) ensure our levy funds are channelled into the areas where they are needed most.

Almost everything else follows on from that.

Building on this, we are very fortunate in that we have a fantastic management team and staff, ably led by Caieta and Dries who help keep our estate ticking over.

They have done a great job this past year and the new board will seek to continue to work closely with the management team in order to deliver on the premise of 'naturally perfect'.

In conclusion, as another year closes, we look forward to what a new year will bring and would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a blessed festive season and fruitful 2023! If you are travelling, please travel safely and we look forward to welcoming you home upon your return!

Gunther Stoger
CHAIRMAN

#### THE COVES SECURITY TEAM

#### SIMPLY THE BEST

"Security remains at the top of our priority list", says The Coves Risk portfolio director, Zach Mostert.

"This is reflected in our operational budget as well as in our capital projects as we continue to raise the bar with respect to safety and security. While, for obvious reasons, we do not share a lot of detail around our security infrastructure, we are pleased to share news from our security service provider Bidvest Protea Coin."

At the recent BPC regional awards function, The Coves was named as the best estate in the Hartbeespoort region for security operations.

Two of the BPC staff on The Coves security team received awards for Outstanding Performance in Estate Protection Services, with another receiving two awards - CCTV Controller of the year and Outstanding Performance - Main Gate Access Controller.



The security team prepares for their shift on the morning of The Coves's Community Fun Day in September 2022. (Photo: Dries Botha)

In addition to celebrating these well-deserved awards, Zach emphasises the difference that relationships make. "It is not just about security infrastructure and processes.

The BPC security team goes the extra mile for The Coves mainly because of the tight working relationship that Dries and his team have built up with BPC management and staff."

In addition to a great team, the board and management team continues to raise the bar with respect to our security in infrastructure.

We are currently in the fourth year of a five-year security infrastructure programme, ensuring continuity and coordination across successive boards. We have also recently completed an independent review of our security protocols and infrastructure, with a view to planning our future enhancements.

The Coves remains on track to consolidate its position as one of the most secure estates in the region.

### SOCIALISING IN THE COVES

What's in store?

We are steadily coming back from a quiet couple of years on the social front.

Recent events include our wine festival, community fun day (including fundraising for rhino antipoaching initiatives), and two wine-pairing evenings.



## Coming up

Coming up is our festival of Christmas Carols featuring singer Anri Greyling, one of our young Covers.

Other attractions include a puppet show, a crafts station for children to make ornaments and cards, and Christmas-themed games.

Word from the north pole is that we can look forward to a very special visitor.



Good news is that our waterfront kiosk will be reopening in mid-December. Look out for news about a reopening celebration on 15 December.





#### New year

A family-orientated New Year party will also be held at the waterfront.



#### Several events are planned for 2023

Several events are planned for 2023. These include a Valentine's Day celebration on 11 February, which will be followed by regular events that will appeal to different age groups and interests.

Ideas being considered include an environmental education day, a pool party, potjie competition, and a Thanksgiving celebration. A firm date for later in the year is our Heritage Day celebration.

Some of these events will include fundraising for specific causes, as we did previously. Events such as these require budget and a lot of organizing and we may be constrained in what can ultimately be accommodated.

Other regular community activities include soccer Wednesdays, specials at The Oaks, a 5km Trail run/walk on the last Saturday of each month, and the return of the ice cream van over weekends - back by popular demand.



## Covers making a difference

#### Our community spirit is something special at The Coves.

Not only does this manifest in how we interact socially with each other, but also in how we look out for each other in times of need. This was very evident during the height of the pandemic. This column looks at another facet of the same traits we see in our community – special people who give their time and talents to make the world a better place for others less fortunate than themselves.

We caught up with Michelle and Nigel Henderson to chat about their role in training guide dogs for their lives of service. Here is an abridged, and edited, record of our chat.

#### How and why did you start working with guide dogs?

We met a lady at a Builders Warehouse, who had a dog with a learner service jacket on. We started chatting and she got us involved with the Guide Dog Association (GDA). We have had dogs of our own over the years but felt that it was not right for us to make the commitment to another dog and that is when our journey with fostering guide dog puppies began in 2015.

#### What is your involvement in guide dog training?

We are called Puppy Raisers. The puppies come to us at seven weeks old, and they are with us permanently until they are ready to progress into formal guide dog training, which typically happens around 12-16 months old. We work with them every day for about a year on every aspect of their upbringing and initial training.

#### What is the structure of that year?

The first five months entails a weekly lesson at the Guide Dog Association and daily activities at home. Thereafter, they go with us wherever we go – shops, farms, schools, airports, and retirement villages. The intention is to socialize them and teach them what to do (and not get distracted).



We try to expose them to many different environments from meeting children, elderly folk, other animals, cars, noises, sights, etc. A specific focus area is in food shops, where they must learn not to be tempted or distracted by the food smells all around them.

#### What happens in formal training school?

They are assigned to one of guiding, service, or autism support depending on their temperament. Guiding is traditional guiding blind people. Service which is helping people in wheelchairs by collecting things or picking up dropped items. Autism support is growing with dramatic increases in the number of children being diagnosed with autism. Formal school is 6-9 months of intensive training at the Guide Dogs premises in Paulshof for five days per week. They return to us each weekend.



Tell us about some of the puppies have you raised and the work that they went on to do.

We started fostering in 2015 and have raised six puppies. We are on our seventh pup now.

They have been mainly Labrador pups and the Association also uses Golden Retriever pups. We had one exception. Electra is a German Shepard who has boundless energy.

She was quite a handful to give sufficient exercise. She went to a lady in PE who, despite her sight impairment, is highly active.

Every day she runs and swims in the sea with Electra at her side.

Gandolph went to a ten-year-old autistic boy, who had never slept in his own bed, would never go out, was completely non-verbal, and had frequent meltdowns. There was a great strain on the parents. When Gandolph joined the family, he got his own bed that was identical to the boy's. The two now sleep together through the night and go walking together, helping the boy to live a more normal life. Gandolph has made such an enormous difference to the lives of the whole family.

Newton's owner is completely blind. Newton normally took his person on the Gautrain to work at Sasol in Sandton until Covid started. His owner was then working from home and is looking to go back into the office soon where he works on the switchboard all day, after which they travel back home together.



#### Tell us about these two friendly chaps.

We have Wyatt who was our sixth puppy who went to formal training school at GDA but had to be withdrawn from the training programme because he has a serious skin allergy that requires daily treatment.

We adopted him and he is now an ambassador dog for GDA. And we have Flash who is our seventh dog and has been with us for about a year.

#### What is next for Flash?

He will move into formal training in January or February 2023. He will continue to come back to us over weekends until he completes his training. He then goes to his new owner for two weeks onsite training, which is followed by a graduation ceremony at which we formally hand him over to his new owner.

#### How will you feel then?

We call it a "sappy" day – happy, but sad. We are happy that our dogs have successfully graduated and that they are moving on to make another person's life more manageable. Simultaneously, we are sad because we come to love them over the 18 months to two years that they have been such an integral part of our lives. It is an emotional time.

#### Tell us about costs and funding.

# How much does it cost to get a puppy service-ready and where does that money come from?

It costs about R500,000 per dog over the 18 months to two-year period from birth to handover to the person they will be serving. There is no government funding, so GDA relies exclusively on donations and bequests. The GDA covers all the puppy's food, vitamins, tick and flea control and any veterinary bills that the puppy needs while they are with you. Covid hit GDA particularly hard, as they could not go to expos, visit schools – all in-person fundraising activities stopped. It has been a tough few years for GDA.

#### How long do you anticipate being a puppy raiser?

(laughing): I would like to get to ten dogs.

If anyone is interested in becoming a puppy raiser, please contact the Guide Dogs Association of South Africa on 011-7053512.



#### **EXPLORING THE COVES**

#### **OUR NEW VIDEO SERIES**

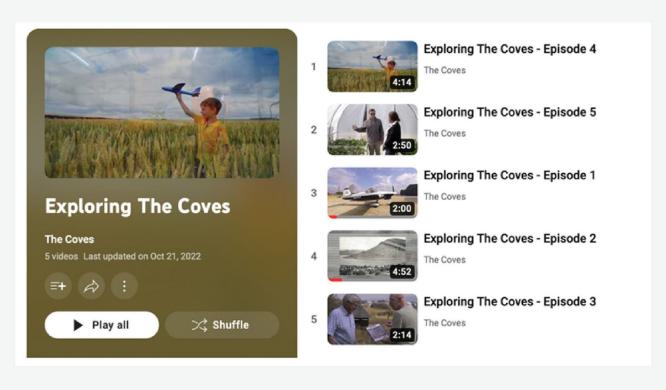
The last few months have seen the launch of The Coves YouTube channel and an initial tranche of our video series, *Exploring The Coves*, in which we explore the many facets of The Coves that combine to make it such a fabulous place to call home.

These videos were conceived as a part of our marketing efforts. Video is the ideal medium to convey our idyllic lifestyles and sophisticated and well-maintained infrastructure to potential investors considering a property in The Coves. Existing residents may also be interested in our heritage and what happens behind the scenes.

The series launched with five short episodes, with durations of between two and five minutes each. Two more episodes are in final edit, with an initial season of 12 episodes planned. A wide range of topics is being covered, including how the estate was initially conceived, designed and developed; Bass Dam and the role it plays; our natural environment and our efforts to promote biodiversity; our working farm; social and community dynamics; general aviation; our waterfront and boating; radio controlled flying.

Take a look at our YouTube channel at youtube.com/@thecoves





# QUICK RESPONSE TEAM COMMUNITY SUPPORT IN AN EMERGENCY

Following two house fires and several medical emergencies in recent months, the Board proposed the formation of a community-based quick response team (QRT).

During these emergencies, several volunteers from our community responded as best they could while professional emergency services were on their way. Our Board and management team, while acknowledging the contributions of those volunteers, also recognized that our collective response could have been better planned and coordinated.

The nature of most emergencies dictates the engagement of medical or firefighting professionals. However, the need for initial support and coordination until professional help arrives is needed. This is the role of the QRT.

Ten residents responded to an invitation to express interest in joining a community-based QRT. Being on the team entails signing up for basic first aid and firefighting courses, as well as being prepared to provide support to residents in the event of a call for help.



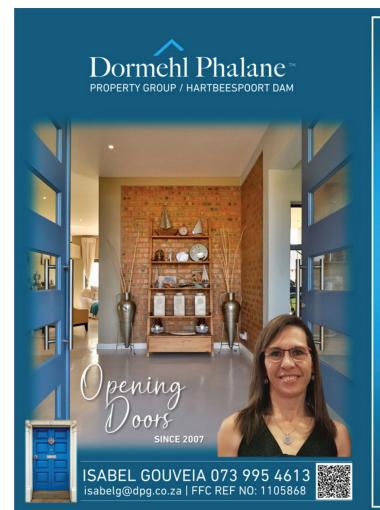
The team has recently held its first workshop and training will be undertaken in the coming months, after which the QRT will be formally launched.

In addition to forming the QRT, this initiative will include basic information and courses for residents, covering fire, medical, and safety. This will afford residents the basic knowledge and skills to act as their own first responders in an emergency until further help arrives. More information on these courses for residents will follow in the new year.

The QRT is the brainchild of Gunther Stöger, who says "We all wish never to face an emergency, but with the establishment of the QRT and offering our residents opportunities to learn basic emergency skills, we will ensure we have a community that can respond and buy critical minutes in an emergency until professional help arrives".

#### Residents keen to join the team are welcome.

Drop an email to community@thecoves.co.za.



# From our hearts to yours...

As the festivities of the season draws ever so close, we look forward to a blessed time spent with family and friends. May this festive season and the new year ahead be kind to us all. There are new beginnings for families we shall soon be welcoming to The Coves, whilst others prepare to close the chapter of living at The Coves Estate as they move on to new adventures. Law I have been fortunate and blessed to play my part in some of your life changing moments and your thankfulness and kind words at the end of each sales process makes what I do so worthwhile. Thank you!

May you have the gift of faith, the blessing of hope and the peace of His love over this Festive Season  $\stackrel{\clubsuit}{\bullet}$ . Thanking all our clients, contacts, and business partners for the incredible support in 2022 as we look forward to an exciting 2023.

Best wishes.

Isabel and The Dormehl Phalane Hartbeespoort Team

#### **EVIROMATTERS**

#### The Coves leads with biological control

Our biggest challenge in fostering biodiversity is controlling alien species. While we have no choice but to use herbicides for many alien plants, we are also proactive in the adoption of biological controls when these are available.

The most visible and aggressive alien plants are the water hyacinth on the dam and pom-pom weeds in our grasslands and we are leaders in using available biological controls for both.

#### Water hyacinth

Water hyacinth (*Pontederia crassipes*) is described by Wikipedia as "One of the fastest-growing plants known. Each plant can produce thousands of seeds each year, and these seeds can remain viable for more than 28 years. [They] are vigorous growers and mats can double in size in one to two weeks [and] multiply by more than a hundredfold in number in a matter of 23 days." The fact that water flowing into our dam from Gauteng is very rich in nutrients contributes to the rapid propagation of the weed.

According to Professor Julie Coetzee of the Rhodes University Centre for Biological Control (CBC), the hyacinth has no natural competitors in our ecosystem. The solution, she says, is to introduce the plant hopper *Megamelus scutellaris*, a native of South America and a natural competitor to the hyacinth. The problem is that the *Megamelus* cannot survive our colder winters.



The Coves has been collaborating with the CBC since 2019 on finding sustainable mechanisms to introduce and maintain a healthy population of *Megamelus* throughout the year. The answer is to maintain hyacinth plants in artificially induced summer conditions through our winter to allow the *Megamelus* to develop. The Coves provided the first privately funded rearing station around the dam and we have subsequently been instrumental in the establishment of other rearing stations.

Several years of painstaking work is now coming to fruition. The latest satellite imagery shows that the coverage on the dam is below 100ha (5.4%), down from over 500ha (27.5%) a year ago. The 2021 image shows that our section of the dam was completely choked last year. It is completely open as of late November 2022.

#### 30 November 2021



#### 28 November 2022



It is fair to note that there are other interventions around the dam, mostly focused on mechanical removal. The boom installed by The Coves at our cost across the dam at the long bridge has played a part in the dam being accessible from our slipway. Nonetheless, *Megamelus* is our choice of hyacinth control.

" I felt my lungs inflate with the onrush of scenery - air, mountains, trees, people.

I thought, 'this is what it is to be happy."



#### POM POM WEED

At first glance, one is tempted to remark how pretty it is, turning the veld to pink between December and March. But looks can be deceiving. Pompom weed (Campuloclinium macrocephalum) is the most serious threat to Africa's grasslands, savannahs, and wetlands. As these areas are the foundation of the food pyramid, this is a fundamental threat to biodiversity across the continent.

We have already seen a dramatic decrease in the populations of insect-eating bird species, relative to their seed-eating cousins, as insect habitats in native grasslands are overrun by aliens, primarily pom-pom weed.





The plant initially establishes itself in disturbed sites such as roadsides, and then invades natural grasslands, open savanna and wetlands. This weed displaces native species, reducing both the biological diversity and carrying capacity of views and veld.



The plant is only visible for three months of the year, when it flowers. Its effective biomass is underground, which leads to the challenge of removing it. Physical disturbance is counter-productive as it generates increased rootstock growth.

The Agricultural Research Council of the CSIR has supplied us with 30,000 South American stem-galling thrips (*Liothrips tractabilis*), which is the approved biological control agent for the pom-pom weed. They have been distributed on pom-pom plants near the contractors' gate, on the Bass Dam berm and at locations in the forest.

Studies show that it is effective in ideal situations, but it is susceptible to extreme temperatures. We await the results of our first foray into biological control of pom-pom weeds.

## THE COVES SIGNATURE LIQUEUR

If you are looking for a gift with a difference this festive season, check out our new liqueur, blended in our valley and packaged exclusively for The Coves.

This fine coffee liqueur is blended in the foothills of the majestic Magaliesberg, after which it is named. It is an apt recognition of the mountain that looks over us – an iconic symbol of the stability and diversity that The Coves, which has something for everyone, represents for its community.

The Magaliesberg is an ancient mountain range. In fact, it is the oldest permanent land mass on the planet. Cashan was the name given to this mountain range by the indigenous people who lived in this valley before Chief Mogale arrived in the region.

It is an adaptable drink. It can be enjoyed neat, chilled or not. It makes for a great topping over ice cream. A blend of Cashan, vodka and espresso shaken with ice makes for a great martini coffee. For a longer drink on a summer's day, drop the vodka and top up a long glass with tonic. And, of course, Cashan and filter coffee, topped with whipped cream and chocolate shavings will round out your dinner party perfectly.

It is available from the office at R120 per 500ml bottle and you can sample it at The Oaks.



#### GREEN DRIVE – let's talk about textile waste

The Coves Green Drive is an initiative aimed at building awareness and encouraging our community, both as an estate and as individual households, to contribute to global sustainability by reducing our individual and collective carbon footprints.

Textile waste is anything from clothing (including footwear), furniture, carpets, sheets and towels. Many of us have stacks and stacks of old clothing whether it be because they don't fit anymore or because everchanging fashion items present options to buy new items every season.

The fast fashion industry results in items of clothing being thrown away. These invariably end up in landfills and have a huge impact on the environment. Statistics show that people are buying 60% more clothing than 15 years ago.

Recycling textiles is not simple due to the different blends that they are made from. The fabrics we use to wear or decorate our homes are complex combinations of fibres, fixtures and accessories.

It is nearly impossible to recycle due to problematic blends of natural yarns, man-made fibres, plastics and metals.

An alternative option is to donate old to the market for second-hand clothes being sold online or give them to the less fortunate to be reused.

While this is beneficial to those recipients, it does not solve the problem, but delays it. This is simply passing on the textile waste problem to others.

Some companies are now making the shift to producing shoes and clothing items from recycled waste like plastic. This is a worthy attempt to reduce the effects of manufacturing on the environment by making new clothing items and repurposing waste.

The process of recycling textiles is more complicated than it seems, we should think about reconnecting with old items of clothing to reduce the effect on the environment.

## OAKS Festive season operating hours

OAKS will be open every day of the week from 22nd November until 15th January, with the exceptions of Christmas Day dinner service on the 25th and closure on the 26th of December.





#### Dam OAKS is back

They will be open on the following days:

15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 26, 30 & 31 December from 11:00 to 20:00





## KITCHEN HACK - Omelette in a Mug

This is a cooking column with a difference. With so many recipes available online to suit every taste and bring out the best in any ingredient, yet another recipe column has limited value. We simply search online for what we want, or what we have in the pantry, and hundreds of recipes will appear. Kitchen Hacks is where we share the quickest, easiest, and simplest ways to conjure up a snack, treat, or side.

This kitchen hack is easy and a great way to make your omelette without the mess!

#### What you will need:

- 3 eggs
- ½ cup chopped mushrooms
- ½ cup sliced viennas
- ½ cup cheddar cheese
- 1 tbls chopped chives
- 1 tbls chopped parsley
- Salt for seasoning



#### How to make:

Crack the 3 eggs into a large mug.

Add the mushrooms, viennas, cheddar cheese, chives and parsley (or anything else that you have available or that appeals to you)

Season with salt and mix

Season with salt and mix
Microwave for 5-8 minutes and enjoy!





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#### THE COVES GARDEN OF THE YEAR 2022

We are pleased to inform you that viewing the gardens for the competition was a huge pleasure. Not only the gardens that were submitted for the competition but many more more around the estate are flourishing and full of life.

The following was considered when the judging was done:

- Variety of Plants
- Garden Layout
- Colour Combination
- Is it a waterwise garden

It was a remarkably close vote amongst the three winners, and we are happy to announce the winners.

#### 3rd Place goes to:

45 Olive Tree Cove Ray Gibbons

#### 2nd Place goes to:

227 Fish Eagle Cove Vaughn Roberts & Jock Green

#### 1st Place goes to:

217 Fish Eagle Cove Johan Borman



# Our thanks goes to our generous sponsors:

- Mokuru Private Nature Reserve
- Oaks Restaurant
- Cheapy Cheap Plants







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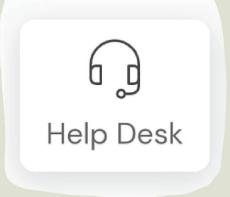
# SECURITY & EMERGENCIES

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# CHAT TO THE OFFICE STAFF



Please use the APP to communicate any issues with our team in the office. Go to Help Desk icon and message us.



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DUTY MANAGER	082 382 3073
AREA MANAGER (BPC)	
	000 0 10 1000
HOA ADMIN	
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EMERGENCY NUMBERS	
BRITS FIRE DEPARTMENT	012 250 2222
NETCARE 911	082 911 / 082 255 8445
AMBULANCE – HEMS	082 695 1240
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HOSPITAL - FOURWAYS LIFE CASUALTY	011 875 1444
HOSPITAL - BRITS DISTRICT PROVINCIAL	012 252 3311
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