



THE RAILYARD DISPATCH

NEWSLETTER OF DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM



THIS QUARTER IN THE RAILYARD
(JANUARY - MARCH 2024)

VOLUME 24, ISSUE 1

THE RAILYARD DISPATCH

THE NEWLETTER OF THE DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM
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WELCOME HOME

ELECTRICS!



NYC #100 passing NYC #278 in the DRM Railyard. Photo by Austin Bierlein

ELECTRIC'S ARRIVAL

JANUARY 2ND - 3RD

Happy ending to a long saga for NYC electric locomotives

Written By David Pickett

The historic New York Central electric locomotives S-1 #6000/#100 and T-3a #278 were placed back on rails at Danbury Railway Museum in January 2024 after years of decay on Beacon Island near Albany, NY. Their salvation was the result of tireless work by Stan Madyda and Paul Marsh maintaining and protecting the locomotives, as well as hours spent coordinating with the Port of Albany, contractors and donors.

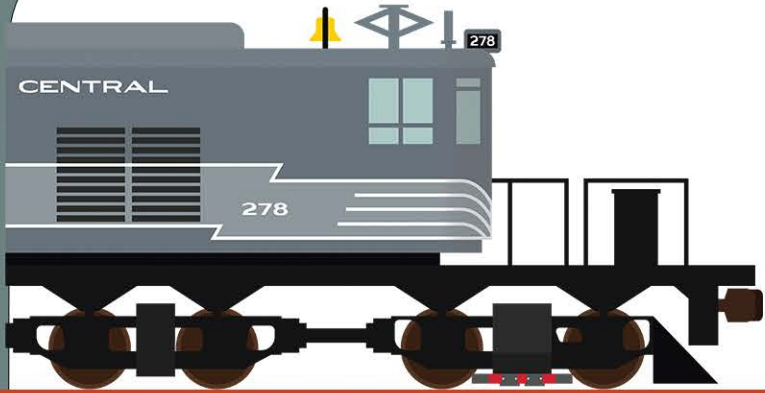
Among the many generous donors to the project, a major contributor to the move was Henry Posner III who has been a strong advocate for saving S-1 No. 6000 and T-3a No. 278. He provided significant resources...

(cont. on 2)

ELECTRIC'S ARRIVAL

(Continued)

JANUARY 2ND - 3RD



NYC #278 raised above its trucks. Photo by Austin Bierlein

...for and assistance with this relocation and helped make connections with strategic partners for logistics and further funding. He also connected the team with Dennis Daugherty, who was instrumental in making sure the locomotives were properly separated and supported during the initial lifting process.

The locomotives had sat on Beacon Island for many years, slowly deteriorating from weather and vandalism damage. Paul did his best to protect them and worked hard to maintain the bearing so they could roll again someday, but they clearly showed their age.

Although the locomotives were within 600 ft of CSX tracks the rails they rested upon were cut off years ago by environmental work on one end and a later bridge collapse on the other. Additional complications included overhead



power lines and an underground high-pressure gas line within feet of the S-1 engine which made it difficult to lift the engines due to clearances and to move the engines by truck due to their weight.

The soft ground was also a major challenge until it was cleared and leveled as part of the development of the site. That allowed Hulcher Services to start moving the locomotives to safety by relocating them several hundred feet southeast so a new roadway could be built. Because the ground was still unimproved, side booms had to be used to lift and move the locomotives out of the way. Unfortunately, they sustained some minor damage during the move. The engines then sat on timber mats for a year while site development proceeded around them.

Eventually, with the new road finished and four feet of compacted gravel around the engines,...

(cont. on 3)

NYC #100 taxiing to the crane. Photo by Austin Bierlein



ELECTRIC'S ARRIVAL

(Continued)

JANUARY 2ND - 3RD

...Flach Cranes and Dagen Trucking could get their equipment close enough to lift and load them in pieces onto trucks for transport off the site. Ironically, after all the site work done by the Port of Albany this part of the process was not terribly challenging. Flach was able to set up two 160-ton cranes exactly where they wanted to, and Dagen was able to stage and load their trucks easily. Although coordinating two huge cranes and threading the pieces between them is an amazing skill, Flach had it all under control.

Getting the five truckloads of locomotive parts from Albany to Danbury and then back onto rails was more complicated for several reasons. Police inspections and escorts had to be arranged, along with the logistics of parking and unloading Danbury. The entrance to the Museum is extremely tight, so Flach and Dagen had to work out a plan to transload each piece from the tractor trailer to a special purpose mobile transport machine. That would then be taken into the rail yard where the locomotives could be reassembled onto the rails with a single 160-ton crane. This process took two days and a number of workers to accomplish, but in the end it all went smoothly.

The two electric locomotives were certainly the most important things on Beacon Island but unfortunately several other pieces of rail equipment did not get saved and had had to be scrapped. NYC Alco RS-3 and NYC GE U25B diesel locomotives were owned by the Museum, but the resources weren't available to save them also. Four railcars owned by the Port were also scrapped, including two D&H diner cars, when new homes could not be found for them.

Fortunately, the two electrics have made it safely to their new home at the Danbury Railway Museum where they will be

protected and cosmetically restored for future generations to admire.

FL9 #2013 in the forefront with NYC #278 in the background. Photo by Austin Bierlein



Both NYC #278 & #100 resting safely in the Danbury Railyard. Photo by Austin Bierlein

As our museum turns 30, I'd like us all to take a look back and remember everyone that got us to this point. So many names come to mind, I've only been here for half of that, and am still hearing stories about the early years of our museum. When it comes down to it, this organization is so much more than the building, and rolling stock, it's the volunteers who dedicate their time to the cause and strive to make sure visitors have a positive, memorable experience. So to everyone who's volunteered, even for a day, thank you. This past year was non-stop, our museum was in notch 8 for most of it, and a number of large projects and improvements are well underway. After last year's thaw, progress on the turntable continued, and this project is about 90% complete. Yard clean-up continues, prettying a 140 year old industrial site is no easy task, but last year over 80 tons of refuse was removed from our museum railyard. Improving signage is another ongoing task. A new yard map was installed, and helps to better direct visitors to rolling stock, new yard limit and safety signs, track markers, and soon new exhibit signs will be printed on site. Track 18 is also receiving some much needed love, as tie replacement is underway. FL-9 #2006 was returned to the railyard following an exterior paint job by our resident "Art"ist, Art Slothower.

Our annual car show generated a very generous donation towards H.O.M.H. a non-profit that builds adaptive transportation for veterans. This year we hope to support our friends at Operation: Toy Train, the east coast's largest Toys for Tots collection effort.

Thanks to volunteer coordinator Alden Burns, we held our first ever Volunteer Workshop, in an effort to bring in new volunteers, this event was well attended and has yielded in some great new people. We also received the donation of Amtrak AEM-7 #917, which is set to arrive in Danbury Railyard by rail in the coming Months.

October saw the return of the Pumpkin Patch, new offerings were on board this year as we rolled out the Storytime Express Pumpkin Patch Special, where a short story was read on board and kids got to keep a copy of the book, these trains were pretty much sold out regardless of weather. We also piloted our Pumpkin Patch Twilight Express, featuring a real campfire where kids were able to roast their own marshmallows and enjoy a s'more while picking their gourds. While this train underperformed because of the weather for most of the month, the last Saturday was dry, and a fully loaded train was able to enjoy the camp fire and s'mores. With that said, even the soggy attendees who braved the rain thoroughly enjoyed their experience, and that's what we strive for.

December saw the Snow Clipper back, and over 1000 kids received gifts from Santa here in Union Station. This was our highest ever grossing event. New this year was a 26-foot-tall snowman on our turntable. As the train would pull up, the kids would be told to yell at Frosty to turn around, as the kids yell, our turntable operators would spin the snowman around to greet the visitors. Back was the Russell Hobo Camp was back, and we even had a big red coal truck to make deliveries to anyone who's naughty.

They said it couldn't be done, but January 2nd saw a milestone accomplishment in a project 10 years in the making. The two one-of-a-kind NYCS electric locomotives finally arrived home and were placed back on live tracks. More about that in this issue. With the momentum of this news, a last-ditch effort was launched to purchase and relocate Boston & Maine SW-1 1127 from Pennsylvania to Danbury. Within 48 hours \$65,000 was raised and preparations are underway to bring the locomotive to its new home. We're looking forward to 1127's return to its roots in New England, the locomotive is in great mechanical condition, and will be a welcome addition to our fleet. ... (Cont. on 5)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(Continued)

In January myself and Alden Burns attended the Railroad Passenger Car Alliance Conference in Cordele Georgia. The 5 day conference was attended by industry leaders, and provided for a great networking opportunity with other organizations running historic railcars. In addition to technical workshops, tours, and networking, we were also reunited with DRM founding Member Tony White! Tony was our treasurer many years ago, and is now NRHS President.

We have been seeing record attendance for the last few months, with train rides coming up, we're looking forward to a busy operating. The last 30 years were a whirlwind, and we have high hopes for the next 30, we'd like you to be a part of it, volunteering even one day a month makes a difference. I hope to see you at the station, but don't dawdle, this train is about to pull out, and you'll want to be on board.

Officer's Reports

Superintendent of Operations

Jim Teer

The Railyard Local running season will be beginning soon with trains running every weekend through December. We hope to have more crew trained and this way the assignments can be spread out and published in a timely manner.

Anyone interested in being operating crew this season can contact me at jim.teer@att.net or 203-885-2064. This would require taking and passing a safety test as well as an operating rules exam. Many of you have done this already and are set for 2024. If you have certain days or dates you cannot operate, please send them to me. I hope to hear from you all to start the scheduling.

Ongoing equipment and track maintenance will start as the running season progresses and volunteers are appreciated to learn and help maintain our trains and yard.

Library News

Stan Madyda

The Reference and Research Library was established in early 1995. It is not a lending library and all books and material must stay within the confines of the library.

The idea was to collect material, artifacts and books concentrating on the Northeast. However, railroad history from around the entire United States and Canada is represented. We have a large collection on Colorado Narrow Gauge and Midwest transit and interurban lines. For researchers living in the Northeast, they do not have to travel to the Colorado Railroad Museum and Illinois Railroad Museum libraries to investigate subjects they are interested in. For a while, we did collect books on foreign subjects but as space grew tight, we stopped. Books already in the collection were moved to storage space we have in the Old Jail on Main Street. ... (cont. on 6)

Library News

(Continued)

For many years, we would see on average 60 – 80 donations per year. That number has decreased since the pandemic. Some donations might be a single item while others represent a lifetime of collecting. Each donor receives a thank you letter and a Deed of Gift which legally transfers ownership to the Museum. We try to avoid accepting items on loan, except in cases where they will be immediately put on display.

We almost never purchase collections. One collection we did purchase years ago was from a church organization that had title to the collection of Harry Vallas. Mr. Vallas was a well known railroad engineer for the New Haven and Long Island Railroads. There were about 100 boxes and the church was asking \$10 a box. Before committing to purchasing, I had a chance to go through many of the boxes. There were a lot of good items that could be added to our collection. In addition, there were many duplicate books that we knew could be sold. We agreed to make the purchase and probably within the first year made back the money we spent. Mr. Vallas was alive at the time but in failing health with memory loss. We learned from others who knew him that we did not get his entire collection. They said there were at one time two or three storage units of just his collection. When he asked about the storage units, he would say to ask his wife, who was also in the same state as he was. He died without ever saying where the storage units were. Apparently, he had a large photo collection which we did not get.

A large collection of books was recently purchased. Just before the pandemic, I was contacted by the Friends of the Southbury Library. A resident had donated his collection of books to the Southbury Library hoping that they would establish a special collection. That did not happen so all the books went for the

annual book sale. The Friends realized the books donated were worth a whole lot more than the usual single digit price they sell books so they started to make inquiries with book dealers and the DRM. John Barton and I examined the collection and saw a lot of books we already had along with many we did not have. I was told they were talking to some book dealers and I am thinking they would get a decent offer, more than what we should be spending. I passed. As life started to get back to normal, they called again and said they still have the collection and would we be interested. There were offers of \$2,000 from two different dealers. I offered \$2,050 and they gladly accepted. Once I got the collection back to Danbury, I started to go through it in detail. Just about all the books were in like new condition with many appearing like they were never read. We added a good number to our collection and duplicates are being sold on Amazon. I would say that by now, the DRM has tripled or quadrupled our initial investment.

Over the next few issues, I will highlight some of the donations we received in the last several years as well as acknowledge individuals and what they donated.

The Library is open by appointment only.

I can be reached at s.madyda@danburyrail.org.

Treasurer's Report

Jeff Van Wagenen

We finished the year with a net loss of \$98,039. At year-end 2023, we held free surplus of \$421,348 and \$80,000 of Board-designated surplus. Board-designated surplus consisted of \$30,000 for the shop/roundhouse, and \$50,000 for the relocation of the New York Central electric locomotives.

We manage our finances based on "Operations" and "Projects". "Projects" consists of funds expended for the acquisition and restoration of our collection. ... (cont. on 7)

Treasurer's Report

(Continued)

"Operations" consist of everything else. In 2023, we spent \$110,345 on Projects, of which \$58,738 came from restricted donations received. Operations had gross revenues of \$229,304, and a net loss of \$46,451. The combination of both Operations and Projects had a loss of \$98,039 compared with the prior year operating gain of \$87,292. The prior year's gain included the non-recurring bequest of \$100,000 from the estate of Patty Osmer. Without that bequest, the prior year would have been a loss of \$12,728.

Projects expenditures are expensed as they are incurred; that is to say, the value of our collection is not carried on our balance sheet (this is typical accounting policy for museums). Major Projects expenditures in 2023 were as follows: NYC electrics, \$44,492, RDC-32 \$22,747, Mill Plain canopy and roofing \$23,259, track restoration \$6,866, turntable restoration \$2,676.

Operations revenues were up in all categories. Our museum admissions were \$48,289, an increase of 44.1%. Membership dues were \$8,702, an increase of 33.9%. Together, these gave us \$16,984 more revenue than the prior year. Revenues for our Halloween and Christmas events were about even with the prior year, due primarily to very bad weekend weather throughout the Halloween event, however, expenses for Halloween were \$14,280 in 2023, compared with \$6,845 for the prior year. Net investment income (net of unrealized gains and losses) was \$2,405, compared to a net loss of \$18,733 for the prior year. Unrestricted grant income was \$26,969, compared with \$18,460 for the prior year.

Overall, expenses for 2023 were up in almost all categories. Utilities expense of \$45,631 was up nearly 25% over 2022 due to significant

rate increases. We spent \$10,394 on refuse removal, compared to \$2,015 from the prior year. This increase was largely due to tie disposal and other yard cleanup which was long overdue. We expect these costs to continue into 2024 as this work continues. We spent \$18,846 on displays and signage in 2023, as well as significant expenditures for library and office equipment, furniture and fixtures, and tools and yard equipment. While all these costs were expensed, many of these costs were for overdue capital improvements and are expected to be largely non-recurring.

We begin the year 2024 with a series of financial challenges. The move of the New York Central locomotives in January 2024 exhausted the restricted funds donations set aside for that purpose, as well as the \$50,000 designated surplus set aside for that purpose. Significant additional funds will be needed for their cosmetic restoration. We are facing unknown costs to move a donated Amtrak AEM-7 locomotive from Rhode Island, which we expect to happen as soon as April. The purchase of an ex-B&M SW-1 in February 2024 has been funded from donations, but additional costs for the movement from Pennsylvania and restoration are currently unknown and largely unfunded. In 2023, we were successful in getting siding, canopy and roofing completed on the Mill Plain Station project, but the remaining windows, doors and interior restoration is currently unfunded and on hold. We want to move forward with all of these projects, but we cannot do so without additional fundraising efforts. Using our existing surplus to fund these projects cannot continue without endangering our ability to continue to exist, as we need to maintain some financial cushion for unforeseen future events.

Secretary's Annual

Reports Steve Gould

1. 2024 Election Results: There were 77 ballots returned vs 289 mailed out which equals a return rate of 26.6 %. Last year it was 30.1%. In 2022, 31.8 % and 37.1% in 2021. The lowest return rate occurred in 2005 when it was 17%. There were checks totaling \$1,725 in donations. The following candidates were elected to the Board of Directors:

Alden Burns 72
 Al Gruber 69
 Don Konen 70
 Mark LeMoine 67
 Jeff Van Wagenen 73
 Bill Wagner 72

2. In January, CT Humanities awarded the Museum a Cultural Operating Grant of \$7,900 for the year. This was the last year for this grant unless the State of CT comes up with more funding.

3. The three articles written by the Secretary for the New York Central System Historical Society's "Central Headlight" publication on the restoration of the Tonawanda Valley were combined for an article for the Washington, DC NRHS Chapter's newsletter in their May issue.

4. The 2023 Car Host and Tour Guide Training Session was held in March with ten in attendance. John Barton and the Secretary presented information to the group for both volunteer positions, which also included a visit to the pieces of equipment used on the Rail Yard Local.

5. The Museum hosted a visit from the Mohawk & Hudson Chapter, NRHS, which arrived late in the day via bus. A special 3:00 PM Railyard Local Trip was run for the group and the Secretary served as Car Host for the trip.

6. The Secretary prepared and mailed updated restoration reports to organizations that provided major grants to the Museum:

NRHS \$5,000 grant for Mill Plain Station
 Amherst Railway Society \$10,000 grant for Mill Plain Station
 Mass Bay Railroad Enthusiasts \$10,000 grant for the Turntable

The NRHS told us that our report was the perfect example for the required follow-up report.

7. In July, CT Humanities awarded the Museum a Summer at the Museum Grant of \$5,069 to help cover the program. This was the last year for the grant and the program itself unless the State of CT comes up with more funding.

8. The "tag team" of Alden Burns, Tom McCullough, and the Secretary did a presentation about the Museum for the Ridgefield Men's Club in June, which was well received by the group. Another presentation was done for the Bethel Seniors group in August. In December, a presentation was done for the Danbury Senior Center as well as for a senior's group in South Salem, NY.

9. There were 238 donation thank you letters sent out in 2023 for donations by check and online. Thanks to Tom McCullough and Don Konen for helping to lighten the workload to get these letters out.

10. John Barton and the Secretary represented Car Host/Tour Guide breakout sessions for the very excellent Volunteer Workshop held in September.

11. Required follow-up reports for both Cultural Operating Grant and the Summer at the Museum Grant were timely filed by the Secretary.

12. The Secretary participated in decorating the rail yard for both Pumpkin Patch and Santa Trains.

Remembering Gerry Herrmann

A Remembrance of Gerry Herrmann by Stan Madyda

When Gerry Herrmann passed away in January 2023 just a few weeks shy of his 94th birthday, he was the longest continuously serving volunteer at the DRM. He was still advising Franz Gerencir and me on ideas for the New York Central wooden caboose.

I met Gerry at the very first meeting that was held at Ives Street in 1994. He came up to me out of nowhere, introducing himself, and we were friends ever since. A widower and recently retired after a long career with Pepsi, he often said how the Museum filled his days. He was not just a weekend volunteer. Any opportunity to help at the Museum brought him out, except for Fridays which was his food shopping day. The projects he was involved in could fill a page.

Shortly after the Museum was founded, the late Peter Cornwall announced that he would like to see a reference and research library formed. Gerry and I saw the sign up sheet and he said "another thing to sign up for." We knew nothing about getting a library and archive started, but Gerry reached out to the Bethel Library Director and set up an introductory meeting. He also contacted the archivist at the New York Transit Museum. We were well on our way, thinking we would never fill the Adams Express Room with books and artifacts. When he was not working on an outdoor project, he could usually be found in the library.

Gerry's other major project was the New York Central wooden caboose #19322. A woodworking enthusiast, Gerry set up the carpenter shop in one of our box cars, which proved to be essential as he worked on the caboose. Progress would have moved along at a quicker pace if there was a building to work in. When people asked him when it would be finished, his answer was "Thursday."

A great ambassador for the Museum, Gerry never shied away from engaging in a conversation with members old and new as well as visitors walking through the railyard. He was instrumental in getting the Museum involved with the Connecticut League of History Organizations. Through that connection, the DRM networked with many organizations and programs throughout the state resulting in grant opportunities and valuable education.

It is said people die twice. The first time is when they physically pass and the second when they are no longer talked about. In Gerry Herrmann's case, he will be with the DRM for a long time.



Photo of Gerry Herrmann

Maria Fareri Children's Hospital

The documentation of FL9 #2021

As one of the two newest Volunteers who joined us in the last half of a year, Austin Bierlein, and I (Jack Racsko) have been working with the Danbury Railway Museum, using our photography skills to create photogenic images for the DRM social media so others can enjoy the railyard from home.

On the side, Austin and I continue our hobbies of trains and photography by shooting trains around the New England area. Though during one of our trips we passed by an old, gutted FL9 resting up against the Maria Fareri Children's Hospital. Later that day we decided to do some research on the engine, finding out it was originally Metro North #2021.

Donated by Metro North themselves, and trucked a short distance from the Harlem Line to the Hospital, hence the reason it was gutted. Though when looking for photos of the inside or just any in general there were none to be found documenting the inside, and any outside photos were very blurry or pixelated. So we decided we wanted to document this engine properly.



FL9 #2021 resting against the Maria Fareri Children Hospital

Side view of FL-9 #2021.
Photo By Austin Bierlein



So we once set out again to uncover this forgotten piece of railroad history. After arriving at the hospital we spoke with the staff, security, and anyone who may be able to let us inside the engine for documentation. This then led to roughly an hour of being thrown around to different hospital personnel until we finally landed with Seth Reiber, the hospital's media manager. After speaking with him about our reason for the visit, and how we'd use the photos, we traded information and continued our conversation via text. We were then told we'd need to send a proper email addressing our reasoning for documentation of 2021, in which Jose Alves, DRM President was nice enough to help send out, including even an offer of some children's books for the hospital.

As we know right now Seth has had a meeting with other hospital executives to confirm our next visit and we should be scheduling a date to go inside of 2021 in the near future.

DANBURY RAILWAY MUSEUM 2024 EVENTS CALENDAR

Open Weekends, Year Round, 10am - 4pm

Train Rides - April through December, subject to availability

January	Absolute Baloney Month	See our website for details! DanburyRail.org/Baloney
January 27 & 28	Amherst Train Show	Visit us at the Big E, RailroadHobbyShow.com
March 23, 24, 29, & 30	Easter Bunny Trains*	Train Rides to visit the Easter Bunny
April 13	MTA Day	MTA Employees receive free admission with ID
May 12	Mother's Day	Mothers receive free admission & train ride
June 8	Steel & Wheels Benefit Car Show*	Raffles, Prizes, Food, & Cars! SteelAndWheels.org
June 16	Father's Day	Fathers receive free admission & train ride
July 13	Owney Day, Celebrating The Railway Post Office Dog*	Stories, history, and children's activities to honor Owney, the R.P.O. Dog
August 3 & 4	Danbury Railway Days*	Educational event celebrating railroads, free to all
September 2 (Monday)	Labor Day	Open 10am - 4pm
September 7	First Responders Day	Free admission & train rides for first responders & their families
TBD	Member's Picnic	Open to museum members, must sign up in advance
September 14	Smithsonian Museum Day	Free admission for folks who sign up on the Smithsonian website. Train rides extra
October 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, 26, & 27	Pumpkin Patch Trains*	Take the train to the Pumpkin Patch! Free pumpkins, cookies, and local cider! PumpkinTrain.org
November 11	Veteran's Day	Free train rides for all veterans & current military
November 30, December 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, and 22	Santa Trains - First Gift Express*	All Aboard the Snow Clipper! This personalized gift-giving experience sells out every year! CtSantaTrain.org

*Family Fundraising Event - Special Pricing

Visit us online at DanburyRail.org/Hours for most up to date info. Reservations suggested for Easter Bunny, and Pumpkin Patch. Reservations required for Santa Trains. Hours and pricing may differ for special events, all events and schedules are subject to change. Like us on Facebook and Follow us on Instagram @DanburyRR

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DanburyRail.org

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Welcoming New Members

January-February 2024 Members List

Michael Shea

Kevin Coon

Savitri Ramrattan

Amelia Corry

Michael LaBouliere

Dieter Boheme

Connor Maher

James Roberts

Scott Becker

Greg Dibrindisi

Brian Blackman

Robert Haile

Richard Krivonozka

Karen Platz

Carol Palanzo

Donald Kennedy

David Caban

Devon Dillard

Neil Finch

Neal Goodwin



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