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# VOICES

The Voice of Delaware's HIV Community

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## Governor Jack Markell Addresses Annual Meeting

More than 125 people attended the Delaware HIV Consortium's Annual Meeting on May 20, 2009, which featured guest speakers and a special appearance by Governor Jack Markell. Community members from around the state, representing more than 30 different organizations and businesses were present. The theme of the meeting was *9 1/2 Minutes*, a reference to the statistic from the CDC and the Obama administration that someone is infected with HIV every nine and a half minutes in the United States.

The meeting was opened with a welcome by Arlene Bincsik, board president, and opening remarks by Executive Director, Peter Houle. The program continued with Consortium staff members reviewing programmatic challenges and accomplishments from 2008. Joe Scarborough, a Red Ribbon Client Advocate and volunteer, spoke briefly about the Denver Principles and Sister Jean Rupertus presented an "infomercial" calling on the attendees to form teams and get involved in this year's AIDS Walk Delaware.

The Annual Meeting was sponsored by GlaxoSmithKline with additional support from Gilead Sciences. The special guest speaker, Derek Spencer, MS, CRNP, executive director of the JACQUES Initiative in Baltimore, was on-hand to speak about the importance of bringing together the entire community into the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS.



Attendees listen to Derek Spencer, MS, CRNP speak at the Annual Meeting on May 20, 2009.

"We need to find funding for our programs that do not rely solely on government aid," he said. Mr. Spencer continued by stressing the importance of combating the social and societal problems in impoverished communities that can lead to the spread of HIV.

The Delaware HIV Consortium was honored with a special appearance by Governor Jack Markell, who acknowledged the devastation that HIV/AIDS has on the state of Delaware. We appreciate that Governor Markell took the time to address the meeting. He continued by thanking everyone in attendance for their work in the field of HIV/AIDS, and for acknowledging the tremendous efforts of the Delaware HIV Consortium.

The meeting concluded with a panel discussion by Pat Lincoln of the AIDS Education and Training Center, Janice Heinssen of Christiana Care and John Kennedy of the Department of Public Health. The 2008 Annual Report is available in PDF form at [www.delawarehiv.org](http://www.delawarehiv.org).



Governor Jack Markell attends the Consortium's Annual Meeting in May

## 2009-2011 Resource Guide Ready for Pick-Up

The Delaware HIV Consortium is pleased to announce the availability of the 2009–2011 Delaware Resource Guide. This convenient directory lists over 200 agencies and programs throughout Delaware which provide HIV/AIDS services and related resources. The Resource Guide includes text in both English and Spanish and can be obtained free-of-charge by calling the Delaware HIV Consortium at (302) 654-5471 or (877) 338-7328 (toll free). Information can be found on services such as: case management, crisis help, HIV counseling and testing, housing programs, medical resources, and supportive services.

The guide is divided into six sections. Section I provides abbreviated charts of agencies by county and category of service for quick referral. Section II provides an alphabetical listing of all 200+ agencies which includes—by agency—the services offered, location, phone number, hours of operation, applicable fees, and targeted populations. The final sections of the guide include medical information about HIV/AIDS, other important resources (helpful web sites, prescription assistance phone numbers, and free internet access sites), and [Continued on page 5](#)

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# Letter From the Executive Director and President of the Board of Trustees



Dear Friends,

Recently officials from the White House, Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced a new five-year national communication campaign, Act Against AIDS. The goal of the Obama administration's campaign is to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS by making people aware of the magnitude of the epidemic. More than one million people in the United States are living with HIV/AIDS. In addition, it is estimated that more than 20% of all HIV-positive persons do not know they are infected, according to the CDC. A primary goal of the Delaware HIV Consortium is to return the focus on the HIV/AIDS epidemic and to demonstrate the instrumental role we can all have in changing the course of this disease.

The Nine and a Half Minutes theme was reflected in this year's Delaware HIV Consortium Annual Meeting. The first and foremost action in stopping the spread of HIV is informing the public of the medical facts and creating awareness about HIV/AIDS. The Delaware HIV Consortium and its members provide up-to-date information, direct client services and raise awareness about the devastating impact this disease is having on our communities. In addition, the Consortium acknowledges the need for effective social marketing and prevention education particularly with the large number of people who are unaware of their status.

Compounding this problem is the fact that many individuals who are HIV-positive are not currently receiving medical care. As a community, we need to find ways to address the barriers to care and help reconnect these individuals into treatment. We also need to ensure that we have the resources to continue to provide care that is integrated, patient-centered, community-based, culturally-appropriate and is of the highest possible quality. People living with HIV disease deserve nothing less.

The Delaware HIV Consortium, along with our community and state members, provide leadership through effective community planning and service coordination. We will continue to fight ignorance, stigma and complacency. We strive to implement effective prevention strategies, but we need your help. The fore mentioned goals are not easily achieved. It will take all of us and all of our efforts to battle this disease. It is up to all of us to change the course of HIV/AIDS and to ensure that the next generation does not lose the fight. We must lead, not follow.

The Delaware HIV Consortium is fully engaged and is committed more than ever to being part of the solution. As an organization, we are proud of the accomplishments of the staff and members of the Consortium, and look forward to seeing the effect of our combined efforts in changing the course of the HIV epidemic in our state.

In the 1990s, the Red Ribbon was the symbol of hope in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Worn by celebrities, athletes and concerned citizens throughout the world, the Red Ribbon was a visible affirmation of one's commitment of support and to stopping the ravages of a world pandemic. More than two decades later, there are many ribbons, of many colors... BUT none like the Red Ribbon, a world-wide recognized symbol of HIV/AIDS. Thanks to the RED ribbon, all the others have followed and none can quite compare. Please join us in being part of the solution. Remember the Ribbon... Renew the Hope.

Thank you.

*Peter Houle & Arlene Binns*

**The Delaware HIV Consortium is a statewide, non-profit organization dedicated to eliminating the spread of HIV/AIDS and to creating a seamless continuum of care for all people infected and affected in Delaware.**

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# From Dover to DC, Red Ribbon Advocacy Reaches New Heights

**By Joe Scarborough, Red Ribbon Client Advocate**

Last fall I was asked by the National AIDS Housing Coalition (NAHC) to contact my congressmen in Washington D.C. to support a resolution about the role that housing plays in the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS. The resolution states that people who are stably housed are less likely to engage in risky behaviors that could lead to HIV infection. It also states that persons who were already infected would be better equipped to maintain medical adherence and take better care of their health, when living in stable housing. This resolution closely reflects some of the objectives of the Delaware HIV Consortium's Policy Committee- so I brought it to the group's attention. The Committee decided to try to pass an identical resolution on a state level. In May, Senate Concurrent Resolution 16 was adopted by both houses of the Delaware General Assembly, becoming the first and only state in the country to pass this resolution.

Because of my work on the original federal version of this resolution and the successes of the Policy Committee here in Delaware, I was asked to speak at a press conference in Washington, D.C., where Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) was reintroducing the resolution (House Resolution 137) to Congress. As I stood at the podium with the Capitol building behind me, I was proud to represent Delaware and the incredible work of the Delaware HIV Consortium's Policy Committee. Through my advocacy I was able to get our Congressman, Mike Castle, to sign on as an original co-signer of the new resolution, becoming the first and only Republican co-signer.



Following the press conference, I attended the North American Research Summit on HIV/AIDS Housing, where I was asked to participate in a panel discussion entitled, *Using Research to Influence Policy and Legislation*. Delaware is being recognized as a leader in the HIV/AIDS arena because of its nationally recognized comprehensive HIV/AIDS continuum of care.

Continuing my advocacy work back home, I was asked to do a presentation on the Denver Principles at the Consortium's Annual Meeting, I noticed how unknowingly I had been living my life by the principles it expressed. The Denver Principles were written by a group of early AIDS activists in 1983. It calls for self-empowerment and advocacy to help formulate policy, combat stigma, and address the needs of people living with HIV. For more information on the Denver Principles Project please visit the web site of the National Association of People with AIDS at [www.napwa.org](http://www.napwa.org).

As a graduate of the Delaware HIV Consortium's Red Ribbon Advocates Program, I learned the tools needed to make my voice heard by legislators in Delaware and Washington, D.C. I have been able to bring national attention to the work that Delaware is doing, and our commitment to overcoming the difficult challenges we face due to the extent of the epidemic in our region. Delaware has proven time and again that together we can make a difference, and that each one of us has something valuable to contribute in the fight against AIDS. You CAN make a difference. Speak up, Speak out, Be heard.

## The Denver Principles Project

The Denver Principles were written by a group of people with AIDS at a LGBT health conference held in June 1983 in Denver. This landmark manifesto outlined the rights and responsibilities of people with AIDS. A few weeks after the Denver meeting, the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA) was formed in Washington, D.C., to provide a unified voice to represent the HIV/AIDS community in the media, in Washington and within the federal government. Now, 26 years later, there is a movement to recommit to these principles of self-empowerment and raising awareness about HIV/AIDS. NAPWA now wants you to recommit to the Denver Principles and aims to enroll 100,000 new members by December 1, 2009.

**Step 1:** The first step is asking individuals and organizations who care about the epidemic to add their name to a list agreeing to recommit to the Denver Principles. Visit [www.napwa.org](http://www.napwa.org), click on The Denver Principles Project link and add your name, or your organization's name, to the roster of those supporting this historic initiative.

**Step 2:** The second step is to raise awareness of the Denver Principles through your organization's resources by including information about the project in your newsletters; by educating staff, volunteers and clients about the history and meaning of the principles.

**Step 3:** NAPWA's goal is to enroll 100,000 new HIV-positive members by December 1, 2009 (World AIDS Day), and they need your help. Because many people with HIV do not have the means, they depend on others to help pay the \$35 membership fee. With a vastly increased membership, the community and NAPWA will be better able to advocate for effective HIV prevention and care as well as to combat the stigma that surrounds HIV and impedes education, prevention and treatment of HIV.



# We Hope You Were WOW'ed

## 5<sup>th</sup> Annual WOW Awards Celebration Raises Over \$35,000 for HIV/AIDS Services

The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual WOW Awards Celebration was held on Saturday, April 18, 2009 at the Clarion Hotel- The Belle in New Castle, and the entire evening could not have been more spectacular. Guests were greeted by the paparazzi on the red carpet and once inside everyone was treated with plethora of delicacies, drinks of all kinds, a live steel drum band, photo-booth pictures, a silent auction, a live DJ, and an endless evening of fun. We would like to thank all of the attendees as well as our donors and sponsors, including Bank of America, PhRMA, BlueCross BlueShield of Delaware, Alan Spiro and The Clarion Hotel- The Belle, the Augusta Grille and Kelly Snively. In addition, we would like to thank our longtime supporters: Moore Brothers Wine Company, Planning Factory International, Tommy Bahama Ultra Premium Rum, Hadfield's Seafood, Iron Hill Brewery and the gracious staff of the Clarion Hotel - The Belle.



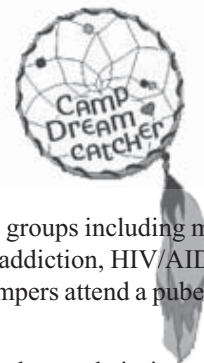
# Getting Away From It All...

## Camp Dreamcatcher Provides a Safe Haven Filled With Fun

Sometimes a name says it all. Other times, such as when one talks about Camp Dreamcatcher, the name does not do justice to the thing that it is trying to describe. Camp Dreamcatcher is much more than a summer camp for children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, according to its Executive Director, Patty Hillkirk.

“Our activities are not limited to just a week at a camp in the summer. We offer a wide variety of programs throughout the year, for the ongoing support of our campers and their families,” said Hillkirk. These programs include camper support groups, a Teen Life Skills Retreat, a Teen Leadership Retreat, Camper/Counselor Reunion Parties, and a Holiday Adopt-a-Family Program. Camp Dreamcatcher’s programs do not focus entirely on providing services to these children. There are also opportunities for the children to give back to their community. Camp Dreamcatcher facilitates a Teen Speaker’s Bureau. In 2007 and 2008, members of the Teen Speaker’s Bureau shared their stories with over 3,500 students and community members.

Despite the spectrum of programs it offers, Camp Dreamcatcher remains best known for its summer camp program. In any given year, the camp welcomes nearly 160 campers, ages 5 to 17, to an action packed week of camp, held on the grounds of Camp Saginaw in southern Chester County. The campers enjoy swimming, basketball, boating, miniature golfing, concerts, an adventure challenge course, go-cart racing, arts/crafts, a hip-hop dance show and Native American storytelling. The campers especially love the horseback riding, a camp-wide carnival, cooking classes, visits from “therapeutic dogs” and an annual talent show and dance. In addition, the kids and counselors participate in therapeutic groups including music therapy, movement therapy, guided imagery, yoga and massage. The teen program includes educational groups on addiction, HIV/AIDS, relationships, depression, HIV medication adherence, body image, abuse and family violence. The 11 to 13 year-old campers attend a puberty education program which will include discussions on relationships, body changes, body image and peer pressure.



“It takes a lot of help to do the things we need to do,” explains Hillkirk, “and we are always looking for people who can donate their time and skills.” Last year a total of 260 counselors, medical staff, professionals and community members volunteered over 13,500 hours of service to make the week an unforgettable one for everyone involved. Volunteers can donate as little as one day of their time, particularly in the days before and after the camp session, as they set up and shut down operations at Camp Saginaw.

The camping experience has changed over the course of the 13 years that Camp Dreamcatcher has been in existence. In its early years, most of the campers were children. Now, more of the campers are in their teens. As a result, workshops offered during camp week changed to meet their needs, on topics such as self-esteem, harm reduction and violence. “Camp Dreamcatcher is more than a camp,” reiterates Hillkirk. “It is a safe, therapeutic place, both individually and in the group setting. At camp, HIV is not a secret, unlike the world most of our campers live in the rest of the year.” Teens who have participated in the camp for several years are also given the opportunity to participate in Counselor in Training programs. Graduates of the program become Junior Counselors for the camp session, moving into leadership roles at camp and within their communities.

Camp Dreamcatcher’s session this year will be held from August 16 -22, 2009. For more information about the camp, volunteer opportunities or its Wish List for this year’s session, visit their web site at [www.campdreamcatcher.org](http://www.campdreamcatcher.org).

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[Continued from page 1](#)

ways in which people can become more involved in HIV/AIDS planning programs. The Resource Guide concludes with an agency index.

Planning Council Data Work Group members worked diligently on the Resource Guide. Rita Devlin Salvo, Manager of Community Planning said, “Thank you to the Planning Council members who took time from their busy schedules to contact the agencies and programs in the Resource Guide. With their help, we verified and updated existing information and added new programs. This year’s Resource Guide provides more thorough Spanish translations than in previous years.”

Salvo continued, “Adding new agencies and more Spanish translation presented challenges with the layout, the quantity of pages and our budget constraints. We wanted to keep the guide in the popular paperback-size format. This year’s Resource Guide is jam-packed with information—literally and figuratively.”

Translating more information into Spanish serves a vital purpose. While Hispanics represent a relatively small percentage of Delaware’s population (about 6%), the HIV/AIDS rate of infection among Latinos is on the increase, according to the most recent Delaware Department of Public Health statistics. “As the Consortium strives to provide a quality continuum of care for people with HIV/AIDS in Delaware, it is critical that we give everyone the necessary tools to understand the disease,” said Peter Houle, executive director. “We hope the new Resource Guide in its bilingual format makes it easier for the Spanish speaking community to access prevention, testing and treatment services.”

The 2009-2011 Delaware Resource Guide can also be found on the Consortium’s web site at [www.delawarehiv.org](http://www.delawarehiv.org) under the HIV Services drop-down menu. The online Resource Guide will be updated continuously between printings. To order copies or for more information, contact Rita Devlin Salvo at (302) 654-5471, ext. 107 (toll free at (877) 338-7328), or by e-mail at [rdsalvo@delawarehiv.org](mailto:rdsalvo@delawarehiv.org).



# News & Events

## Walgreens/Happy Harry's Set to Stop Accepting Medicaid

Walgreens, operated in Delaware as Happy Harry's, said on June 4 that it will stop filling Medicaid prescriptions in Delaware as early as July 6, 2009. Walgreens says the state has cut the rates for reimbursement to such low levels that they cannot afford to fill the prescriptions. Nearly 157,000, or one in five, people in the state are covered by Medicaid which helps low-income families and children afford their medications and health care.

Happy Harry's is the state's largest drugstore chain, operating 66 stores. The second largest drugstore chain in the state, Rite Aid, says it will continue to accept Medicaid. Other pharmacies that take Medicaid include Shop Rite, Acme, Pathmark, Super G, WalMart, and Target, as well as independently owned pharmacies.

## Delaware Ryan White Part B, Public Hearing

The Ryan White Part B Public Hearing was held on June 4, 2009 in the Thomas Collins Building in Dover. Representatives from the Delaware HIV Consortium, AIDS Delaware, Case Management Services, Brandywine Counseling (NSAFE) and Kent and Sussex Counseling Services were on hand to listen to Stanley Waite and John Kennedy from the Department of Public Health. Funding for the Fiscal Year 2009 (April 1, 2009 - March 31, 2010) is in the amount of \$5,271,505 with 75% of the funds going to Core services and the remaining 25% going to Support services.

It was also reported that the Minority AIDS Initiative was funded in the amount of \$4,578 (August 1, 2009 to July 30, 2010).

## Sussex County AIDS Committee (SCAC) Closes Its Doors

June 30, 2009 sadly marked the last day of operations for Sussex County AIDS Committee which served Sussex County and the Rehoboth Beach area's HIV community for many years. SCAC was started in the 1980s by volunteers who met in private homes and it eventually incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1991. In 1995, SCAC entered into its first contractual relationship with the Delaware HIV Consortium, which administers Delaware's federal Ryan White funds. Throughout the years SCAC has provided more than \$200,000 in emergency financial assistance to clients through its own privately raised funds.

SCAC provided an array of supportive services including emergency financial assistance, transportation, supplemental food, an HIV/AIDS resource center, free and anonymous HIV testing and counseling, client advocacy, and community education and outreach. One of the most important programs that SCAC ran was the Transportation Program that provided clients who did not have access to transportation, or who were not physically able to drive, with rides to medical appointments and counseling sessions. SCAC also delivered bags of free food or clothing to clients and even helped pay utilities or rent for people struggling with their bills.

"SCAC's presence will be sadly missed in the continuum of care for Delaware's HIV community," said Peter Houle. "It is a stark reminder that organizations need to continually evolve to meet the changing needs and continue to seek alternative funding streams to sustain its programs and services." The Consortium wishes to thank Sussex County AIDS Committee and its dedicated staff for its years of compassionate care provided to the HIV/AIDS community.

## The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual National HIV Testing Day Held June 27

National HIV Testing Day was June 27 and many local AIDS Service Organizations and health care service providers administered free HIV tests while raising awareness about HIV/AIDS. The CDC recommends that everyone, ages 13 to 64, be tested for HIV as a routine part of their medical care, and individuals who are at high-risk (such as people who have unprotected sex or are injection drug users) for infection should be tested at least annually.

If you didn't take the day to get tested you can always log on to [www.hivtest.org](http://www.hivtest.org) to find a testing center that operates year-round near you. Not having the time or money for an HIV test is no longer an excuse, as many facilities provide free, rapid tests that give results in as little as 20 minutes. Many of the organizations that held events on June 27 routinely provide free HIV tests throughout the year, including: AIDS Delaware, Beautiful Gate Outreach Center, CAMP Rehoboth, Brandywine Counseling, Latin American Community Center, and Each One Teach One. Many other organizations around the state also provide testing for a nominal fee.

The CDC estimates that 180,000 to 280,000 people nationwide are HIV-positive but are unaware of their status. HIV counseling and testing enables people with HIV to take steps to protect their own health and that of their partners, and helps people who test negative get the information they need to remain HIV-negative.

# In the Community...

## Time to Start Building Teams for 2009 AIDS Walk

As the summer heats up, planning for the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual AIDS Walk Delaware kicks into high gear. This year the AIDS Walk will be held in **Wilmington on Sunday, September 27** and in **Dover and Rehoboth Beach on Sunday, October 4**. Last year there was major growth in both downstate Walks and walkers in Sussex County had wonderful things to say about moving the AIDS Walk to Rehoboth. In 2008 AIDS Walk Delaware raised nearly \$192,000 statewide- let's make 2009 even better!

Visit [www.aidswalkdelaware.org](http://www.aidswalkdelaware.org) today to register. Join the Consortium's team, or one of the many other teams or start your own. Once you're registered online it's easy for your friends and family to sponsor you in a variety of convenient ways. The secure web site allows donors to contribute via debit/credit card, although cash and checks (made to 2009 AIDS Walk Delaware) are certainly always welcome.



This year, we need everyone's help more than ever, as donations from individuals and corporations become harder to come by in these difficult financial times. AIDS Walk Delaware continues to be AIDS Delaware's and the Delaware HIV Consortium's largest annual fund raiser. Partnering with the Ministry of Caring and the Faith Community Partnership for the 2009 AIDS Walk, there are many ways you can help, and it all starts with you getting involved and Walking the Walk. Get started today!

## Want to Help Promote the AIDS Walk? It's Easy!

This year, to help promote the AIDS Walk we are buying 100 yard signs that will display the AIDS Walk logo, dates of the Walks and contact info. If you live somewhere that allows signs in your yard (similar to political signs) and has a decent amount of traffic we would appreciate your help in advertising the AIDS Walk. The signs are 1.5 ft. by 2 ft. and double-sided. If you think you could put one of these signs to good use please contact John at the Consortium at 654-5471. Signs will be ready by the end of July and it is important that we get them out a few months ahead of the Walk so that people can start forming teams and fund raising. This is a great way to help out, and it doesn't require much on your part! Also, if you want to help distribute posters and pamphlets in the coming months we would appreciate all the help we can get. We need the Walk promoted in YOUR neighborhood- call Darcy today to lend a hand at 652-6776.

## NAMI Holds 7<sup>th</sup> National Walk for the Mind of America

On May 2, 2009 NAMI- Delaware (National Alliance on Mental Illness in Delaware) held its seventh annual National Walk for the Mind of America. The Delaware HIV Consortium was proud to be among the supporters of this Walk. The Consortium hosted an information table and helped raise money for the event. Team leader, Rita Devlin Salvo, said the energy level was high despite the drizzle.

Pat McDowell of NAMI said, "It was wonderful to see community members, leaders, families and people who are living in recovery all come together to support each other and NAMI's mission. We appreciate everyone's support and hope to see even more faces next year."

## LACC Hosts *Faces of HIV* Symposium

The Latin America Community Center (LACC) hosted the *Faces of HIV* symposium on March 25, 2009. The Delaware HIV Consortium was pleased to have five staff members in attendance. The day was filled with workshops and guest speakers covering topics such as Delaware's needle exchange program (Basha Silverman, Brandywine Counseling), housing issues for people living with HIV/AIDS (Susan Starrett, Homeless Planning Council of Delaware) and updates on HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and case management (Pat Lincoln, AIDS Education and Training Center). The info sessions were presented in both English and Spanish. Executive Director of the Delaware HIV Consortium, Peter Houle, gave opening remarks along with Maria Matos, executive director of the LACC. The Consortium would like to thank the LACC for putting together this educational symposium- it took a lot of work and we appreciate all that the LACC does for the community.

## Ways For You to Get Involved...

At the Delaware HIV Consortium's Annual Meeting held on May 20, 2009, Peter Houle called upon the HIV/AIDS community members to recommit themselves to the fight against HIV/AIDS. Executive Director Houle, reiterated some of the ways that you can help.

1. Join the statewide Planning Council (Rita) or the Policy Committee (Alyson) by calling the office at (302) 654-5471.
2. Apply for board membership. The Board of Trustees meets six times a year and has convenient lunch time meetings.
3. Start an AIDS Walk team at your work, church or with your friends and family. Help hang posters to spread the word.
4. Volunteer at a special event throughout the year, including: the WOW Awards Celebration or "Easy As Pie" Thanksgiving fundraiser.

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