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WISE TEMPLE

GENEROSITY REPORT

2018-19

THE WISE WAY FORWARD

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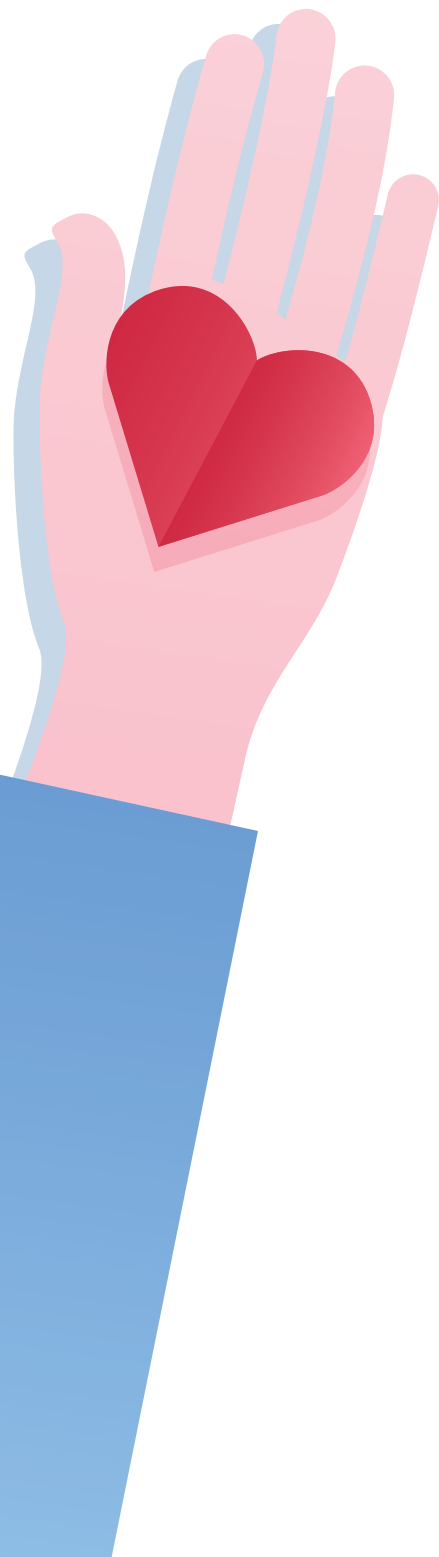
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A WISH TO DO MORE

Rabbi Yoshi Zweiback

His eyes began to well with tears. “My only regret,” he told me, “is that I haven’t been able to contribute as much to Wise as I’d like over the years. I wish I could have done more.” I held his hand. I reminded him of how much he’d done, how much he’d given as a leader of the congregation. But he wanted to do more and as he reflected on his life, his chief regret was not having done enough.

What an extraordinary expression of one’s values: the things we regret not having done or of not having done enough. I am so inspired by the generosity of our community. Our board members, committee chairs, and volunteers give abundantly of their time, their wisdom, their creativity, and their love. Helping out with a food drive, welcoming guests on the High Holy Days, reading to our young scholars as a volunteer in Wise Readers to Leaders, and—yes—making contributions to ensure that we can attract and retain talented staff, maintain our beautiful campus, and provide scholarship assistance for families in need. The list goes on and on and on. There are so many, many ways that our members and supporters contribute to our community, our city, and our People.

What’s beautiful—and, if we’re honest about it, inherently frustrating as well—is that no matter how much we give, no matter how much we contribute, we want to do more. We want to give more. It’s a deeply Jewish sensibility. We hold ourselves to the highest standards. Our tradition demands nothing less than striving to be like God: “You shall be holy as I, the Eternal Your God, am holy!” Our generosity, our capacity to love, our desire to make a difference should be, like God’s, unending.

But our desire always to do more certainly shouldn’t preclude our pausing to reflect on just how much we have accomplished, just how very generous we’ve been. At this year’s Wise Gala, we will offer our thanks for the inspiring work of three amazing couples who have given so much to our community and, more broadly, to the world. Their work, their leadership, and their example inspires us to do more, to be more, and to give more.

“I am so inspired by the extraordinary generosity of our community. Our board members, committee chairs, and volunteers give abundantly of their time, their wisdom, their creativity, and their love.”

We all have our regrets, it’s true. For me, a life well-lived means regretting the important stuff because we have a deeper understanding that the truest way to live is to help others. May we all want to do more, to be more, and to give more.

With gratitude,



GENEROSITY OF HEART: TODAH RABBAH TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Generosity takes so many forms! Wise is enormously grateful for all of our many incredible volunteers who give generously of their time and energy all year: members of the Board of Directors; LA Family Housing "Lunch Bunch" participants; Beit Issie Shapiro Farmer's Market workers; Big Fill/Save the Syrian Children donation sorters and packers; Shabbat Nosh coordinators; Wise Hearts representatives; Wise Parents Association members; Wise Ambassadors and greeters; the list goes on and on!

**OUR WISE COMMUNITY IS STRONGER EVERY DAY
THANKS TO YOUR INSPIRING EFFORTS.**

Get involved by visiting WiseLA.org/TikkunOlam
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COMMITMENT TO CHANGE ✦

When it comes to helping others and changing the world, Andrea and Glenn Sonnenberg and Jodie and Steve Fishman lead by example.

Presidents of the board. CEO of Wise Readers to Leaders. Co-chair of Wise Women. These are just a few of the titles that Andrea and Glenn Sonnenberg and Jodie and Steve Fishman have collectively assumed over their decades as members of Stephen Wise Temple. Together, they embody Wise's mission to make meaning and change the world, spearheading causes benefiting the Wise community and beyond.

In the process of helping others, they have fostered something much more precious—a community of family and friends.

This February, Stephen Wise Temple will honor the Sonnenbergs and the Fishmans for their deep commitment to service and community—and for showing us how far a little good can go.

DYNAMIC DUOS

In speaking with both couples, one thing is absolutely certain: none of the group take anything for granted.

"We're so fortunate," says Andrea, who evinces the sharp acumen that defined her time as an entertainment lawyer. "We've been blessed with family, community, and success that allows us to live a really good life. It's our obligation to help others who aren't as fortunate."

And help others they have. The list of organizations to which they volunteer their time is dizzying: Andrea serves as vice chair of Sylvia Weisz Women's Philanthropy at the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles as well as a volunteer attorney with Bet

Tzedek Legal Services, while Glenn is a board member at both organizations. Andrea also provides *pro bono* legal services for KIND, which works with unaccompanied migrant children, and the Sonnenbergs are on the board for Para Los Ninos, which supports students from Los Angeles' inner cities. Glenn is a board member of USC Libraries, USC Gould School of Law, and Center Theatre Group. Andrea is the vice chair of USC Hillel and a Girl Scout leader.

That's before getting to their extensive efforts on behalf of Stephen Wise Temple and Andrea's position as CEO and founder of Wise Readers to Leaders.

The Fishmans have an impressive lineup of philanthropic and volunteering efforts to match. Jodie previously volunteered with Fulfillment Fund and CASA, where she mentored underprivileged youth, and she and Steve have been involved with the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Birthright Council for over a decade. She is also the co-founder and co-chair of Wise Women. Steve, who is the managing partner of the accounting firm Fishman, Block + Diamond, LLP, is also a National Council member of AIPAC, a trustee of the Washington Institute, and serves on Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion's board of governors, among many other causes.

And when they're not donating their time for a good cause, Jodie and Steve spend time with their children and grandchildren, all of whom live in Los Angeles.

"I feel very fortunate," she says. "We do a lot with our kids. Being involved in their lives is our priority."

For the Fishmans, family is the biggest reason why they volunteer so much of their time.

"It's up to us as parents to teach them to carry it forward," says Jodie.





3



1. Past President Glenn Sonnenberg carried the Torah at the celebratory installation of Rabbi Yoshi Zweiback as Wise's third Senior Rabbi. During his tenure, Sonnenberg oversaw the international search for Rabbi Eli Herscher's successor.

2. Immediate Past President Steve Fishman (pictured with President Janine Kolodny and Senior Rabbi Yoshi Zweiback) oversaw the building of Katz Family Pavilion and Shalom Garden and helped to develop Wise's five-year strategic plan.

3. Jodie Fishman (pictured at right) has helped to build Wise Women, reviving a women's group that bridges generations to bring women together for learning, worship, cultural activities, and more.



The Sonnenbergs concur. "It's important to heal the world and to live a life of meaning," says Glenn. "We hope that we lead by example. Our children are following in our footsteps, as well as other members of the community."

"It's infectious," adds Andrea. "It feels good to do good. When you lead and others follow, they get the same feeling. It enables them to be leaders themselves."

Senior Rabbi Yoshi Zweiback knows just how fortunate the Wise community is to count the Sonnenbergs and Fishmans as members. "We hit the trifecta," he says. "They're committed leaders who bring tremendous skill sets, generous donors who make our programs possible, and *mensch*es who are wonderful role models for our community."

LEADERS ACROSS THE BOARD

When Glenn became president of the board in 2013, Stephen Wise Temple was an organization in transition. Senior Rabbi Eli Herscher had announced that he was stepping down from his role and the synagogue was separating from Milken Community High School.

Before taking over, Glenn was given some advice by his predecessor, Rick Corleto: You can either tread water and let the next person deal with it, or you can go big.

The choice was easy. Over his three years as president, Glenn spearheaded several campaigns, including an international search for a new senior rabbi.

Glenn recalls a moment during a Shabbat service sometime after he and the board enthusiastically decided upon Rabbi Zweiback for the role—he had been serving as Wise's Head of School. "A woman who I didn't know said to me, 'The best thing

"It's been an incredible opportunity for me to learn," said Rabbi Zweiback. "You want to have great rapport with the president of the community, and I've certainly found that in both Steve and Glenn, as well as in their successor Janine Kolodny."



you did for this community was bringing in Yoshi,' " he says. "I've heard that time and time again."

"It's been an incredible opportunity for me to learn," said Rabbi Zweiback. "You want to have great rapport with the president of the community, and I've certainly found that in both Steve and Glenn, as well as in their successor Janine Kolodny."

Meanwhile, Glenn pushed to do more, leading efforts to expand the campus.

"It takes a village," he says. "A lot of people stood up and made the commitment."

Few were more instrumental than fellow board member and Glenn's immediate successor, Steve.

"We work really well together," says Steve, who served on a number of committees before taking over as president in 2016. "Glenn is a fantastic tactician."

Under their leadership, Stephen Wise Temple developed a five-year strategic plan, allowing the community to pursue more ambitious projects. As president, Steve oversaw the building of the Katz Family Pavilion, a \$10 million project resulting in a cutting-edge arts, sports, and cultural space.



"You talk to most people outside of Wise about being president of a synagogue, they look at you like you're crazy," says Steve, "but I loved every second of it."

But for the two former presidents, success isn't just measured by dollar figures and facilities. It's also measured by the deep bond both now share.

"Glenn has become my dearest friend," says Steve. "I wouldn't have met him if it weren't for my involvement with this community."

"If we hadn't gotten involved," quips Glenn, "who would I play golf with?"

GETTING EDUCATED

Andrea Sonnenberg knows the importance of childhood education.

In 2012, she had a chance to walk her talk. Partnering with Rabbi Ron Stern, Andrea founded Wise Readers to Leaders, an ever-growing literacy program that aims to close the achievement gap for students from low-income communities through summer tutoring, enhanced programming, and confidence-building activities. The program also runs year-round tutoring and literacy assistance for its scholars.

"She works incredibly hard for the program's success," says Rabbi Stern. "Her passion and leadership are inspiring to all of us."

Today, the program counts five campuses across Los Angeles including Stephen Wise Temple, Milken Community Schools, American Jewish University, Leo Baeck Temple, and Wilshire Boulevard Temple—all supported by Wise staff members, seasonal staff members, hundreds of adult and teen volunteers serving over 450 students.

"The thing about Andrea is that obstacles make her more determined," says Glenn. "I think what she's doing is so amazing."

Of course, more sites and more students mean more fundraising calls, more grant applications—and more obstacles. But for Andrea, failure is not an option.

"When those kids run off the bus because they can't wait to get to class—that's what keeps us going," she says. "That's what keeps me making those phone calls."

"The thing about Andrea is that obstacles make her more determined," says Glenn. "I think what she's doing is so amazing."

Her persistence has paid off. Wise Readers to Leaders has become one of the most successful literacy programs of its kind. By the end of summer 2019, assessors found that over 85% of Wise Leaders to Leaders' 2nd through 5th graders were meeting or exceeding grade level expectations for reading and reading comprehension skills. (By comparison, LAUSD reports that 42.3% of their students meet or exceed grade level literacy expectations.)

But the program doesn't only benefit students. It has also brought together an entire community of people—young and old, Jewish and non-Jewish.

"We have community members, we have teenagers, we have parents helping out," says Andrea, who hopes to expand the program to every Title 1 school (designated by the Department of Education as schools in low-income communities requiring additional funding and resources). "Los Angeles is a segregated city, but here, we bring these diverse communities together. It's become a gift from the Jewish people to the students of LAUSD."



In addition to helping over 400 LAUSD students receive vital supplemental tutoring, reading assistance, and confidence-building support, Wise Readers to Leaders (under the leadership of CEO Andrea Sonnenberg) also engages nearly 150 Jewish teens from the Wise community (and beyond) as teaching assistants.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Back on the Wise campus, Jodie is also interested in community building. About two years ago, she teamed up with congregant Debbie Liebert and current president of the board Janine Kolodny to start Wise Women, an initiative focused on bringing women of diverse backgrounds together for community, study, and leadership.

“Wise had something like this in the past, but it had fallen to the wayside,” says Jodie. “We thought, why not bring it back?”

Every month, Jodie and her fellow co-chairs organize several events to bring women together for a wide range of events and activities that include speaking events with bestselling authors, such as psychotherapist Lori Gottlieb; informal gatherings for rounds of Mah Jongg, bridge, and more; an annual Challah Bake; study opportunities with Rabbi Sari Laufer and Cantor Emma Lutz—the expanding program is growing exponentially.

“People want to be more involved, to feel like they belong and have a connection to Wise. We help them make that connection.”

“We try to make it educational; we try to make it fun,” says Jodie. “It’s been very well received. People want to be more involved, to feel like they belong and have a connection to Wise. We help them make that connection.”

A SHOW OF THANKS

For all the ways they give back, the Sonnenbergs and the Fishmans share one thing in common: a sense of gratitude.

“There are so many people here whom I admire,” says Steve. “It’s something I’ll always treasure.”

Stephen Wise Temple also offered comfort in the darkest of times. Two years ago, Andrea and Glenn’s son Bradley tragically passed away at the age of 21. As the Sonnenbergs grieved, the Wise community rallied around them.

“They were there for us,” says Andrea. “They helped us survive.”

That community spirit continues to motivate the Sonnenbergs and the Fishmans to look for more ways to help. And through their acts of service, they find a deeper connection to Judaism—a fact they hope to impress on others.

“The call to repair the world—that’s how I express my Jewish values,” says Andrea. “That’s what we teach our teen volunteers at Wise Readers to Leaders.”

“It’s important to recognize and appreciate our Judaism,” adds Jodie. “I would like my kids and their kids to know it’s important. They should never forget who they are.”

As the Sonnenbergs and Fishmans move forward with causes old and new, they’ll always appreciate those who gave them the chance to change the world for the better.

“Wise afforded us opportunities to lead,” says Glenn. “Being involved has enabled us to find meaning.”





SAVING LIVES IN SYRIA



Save the Syrian Children co-founders Tamar and Philip Koosed are the inaugural recipients of Wise's Emerging Leadership Award.

For Tamar and Philip Koosed, there is no such thing as a night off.

After tucking their two children into bed, the young San Fernando Valley couple works tirelessly into the evening, coordinating with a network of doctors, suppliers, and shipping companies to deliver lifesaving aid to war-torn Syria.

The Syrian Civil War has been one of the worst humanitarian crises of the 21st century. Since 2011, the conflict has claimed the lives of more than 570,000 people and forced nearly half of the country's population to flee their homes. But the numbers only touch the surface of human suffering: entire communities leveled by daily bombings, systematic torture and killing, the use of chemical weapons, the deaths of thousands of Syrian children—all captured on cell phones by everyday Syrians.

Horrified by what they saw, the Kooseds contemplated what they could do. They considered donating to a few organizations, but the response felt lackluster in the face of the devastation sweeping Syria.

"We say all the time, 'Never again,' " explains Tamar. "But here it is, happening again. What's happening in Syria is another genocide, and it's our generation's time to act."

Three years ago, the Kooseds founded Save the Syrian Children, a nonprofit dedicated to shipping vital supplies to the parts of Syria where bigger aid groups often can't or won't go. Utilizing their shared skillset—Tamar runs a corporate responsibility and international development consultancy firm, Philip is the president of a multimillion-dollar supply-chain management firm—the Kooseds have helped deliver 56 shipping containers with more than \$127 million worth of aid.

But when asked about the impact of their efforts, the Kooseds are quick to pass the credit to others—the doctors and volunteers on the ground in Syria, and the clergy and community members of Stephen Wise Temple.

"We've seen the worst of humanity, but the work of Save the Syrian Children shows me the best of humanity," says Tamar. "The reality is that people care. They want to do something. It's been incredible to have that message every day."

That includes events such as the Big Fill, an annual donation drive held during Sukkot at Stephen Wise Temple that collects desperately-needed medical supplies, clothing, food, and toys to be shipped to Syria. In its third year, the Wise community donated almost 2,500 pounds of goods. Through Wise connections, entire shipping containers of clothing donations from Jerry Leigh of California and Jody California were sent in 2018. This fall, the Kooseds were connected to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center through Rabbi Ron Stern—80 hospital beds were sent to doctors performing lifesaving work in the region.

"It's a huge amount of aid," says Tamar. "We're fueled by the positivity of this community."

And none of it would have been possible, Philip says, if it weren't for a serendipitous conversation with Senior Rabbi Yoshi Zweiback.

As the Kooseds were developing the idea behind Save the Syrian Children, they realized if they wanted to help immediately, they needed a fiscal sponsor—someone who could accept donations on their behalf while they went through the time-consuming process of applying for 501(c)(3) status. One day, Philip and his father, Terry, were attending a Father's Day event at Stephen Wise Temple when they went to wait in line for bagels.

Next in line to them was none other than Rabbi Zweiback himself.



IMAGES LEFT TO RIGHT:

Now in its third year, Wise's Big Fill drive brings parents and kids together to donate, pack, and ship massive containers of clothing, toys, medical supplies, and more to doctors and aid workers in Syria who are helping refugees of violence in the region. Save the Syrian Children founders Tamar and Philip Koosed say that their connection to Wise has helped to inspire and grow their work.

Save the Syrian Children works with international partners to get desperately needed supplies into the Idlib and Aleppo provinces.

Children and families in Syria received hundreds of toys, clothing items, and medical supplies through Wise's Big Fill and other drives organized by the Kooseds and Save the Syrian Children.

“We’ve seen the worst of humanity, but the work of Save the Syrian Children shows me the best of humanity,” says Tamar. “The reality is that people care. They want to do something. It’s been incredible to have that message every day.”

In the course of chatting with the rabbi, Philip and Terry brought up Save the Syrian Children. Little did they know that Rabbi Zweiback had founded a nonprofit called Kavod, a tzedakah collective that could operate as a fiscal sponsor for the Kooseds.

“Within a couple of weeks, we were up and running,” says Rabbi Zweiback. “It’s a wonderful partnership. They’re humble, gracious. They work diligently without any expectation of recognition.”

“Before we talked to Rabbi Yoshi, we approached at least 12 different organizations,” says Tamar. “Rabbi Yoshi was the first to say yes.”

That “yes” caused a domino effect of support. Thanks to Wise’s involvement, the larger Jewish community began to pay attention to the Kooseds’ fledgling nonprofit. More than 20 Los Angeles synagogues united to create Big Fill events, inspired by Wise, and a slew of Jewish organizations awarded grants to Save the Syrian Children.

Among the nonprofit’s most ardent supporters, few played a bigger role than Rabbi Stern.

“Ron was our best advocate in the community. He was fully behind us,” says Philip. “We got thousands of donations. That doesn’t happen if it’s just Phil and Tamar.”



For his part, Rabbi Stern praises the couple for doing the hard work of putting the Stephen Wise Temple’s values into action.

“Our mission is to make meaning and change the world. They put substance behind the words,” says Rabbi Stern, who helps lead the Big Fill. “In the Talmud, it says if you save a life, you save the world. They’re saving lives.”

For their invaluable efforts and generosity with Save the Syrian Children, the Kooseds are the first-ever recipients of Stephen Wise Temple’s Emerging Leadership Award.

Once again, the couple demurs.

“We’re undeserving,” says Philip. “We’re truly honored to accept this award on behalf of all the brave doctors and volunteers on the team. This is for them.”

“Personally, it’s motivated us to step up and do a lot more,” adds Tamar.

As for the work, the Kooseds plan on spending many more sleepless nights, doing whatever they can to help those suffering in Syria.

“Our ultimate goal is to shut down Save the Syrian Children,” says Philip. “We have one mission: to help as many people as we can, and we’ll keep going until the bombs stop dropping.”



[SavetheSyrianChildren.org](https://www.savethesyrianchildren.org)



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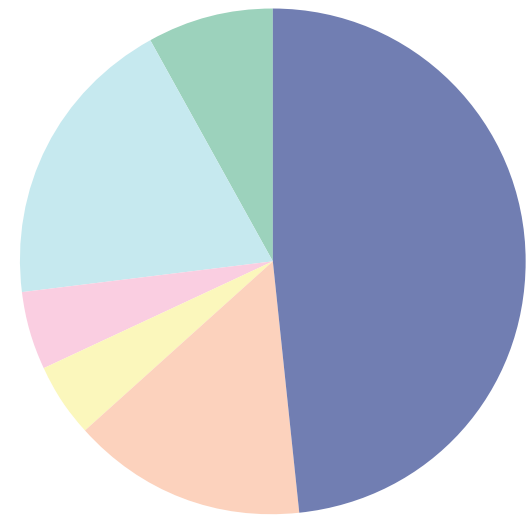
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2019

ACTIVITIES	
Educational tuition and fees	12,520,234
Membership donations	3,810,880
Program activities	1,212,536
Annual Giving	1,387,399
Aaron Milken Center Pledges and contributions	4,856,947
Other Pledges & contributions	1,955,349
Other income	28,313
Total Support and Revenue	25,771,658
Total Expenses	22,192,051
Change in Net Assets	3,579,607
Net Assets (Beginning of Year)	15,398,770
Net Assets (End of Year)	18,978,377

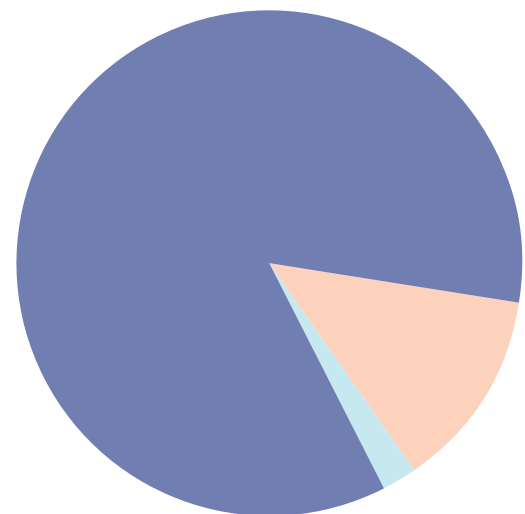
REVENUE AND SUPPORT SOURCES



- Educational tuition & fees (48%)
- Membership contributions (15%)
- Program activities (5%)
- Annual Giving (5%)
- Aaron Milken Center Pledges & contributions (19%)
- Other Pledges & contributions (8%)

FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES	
Educational, Program, Membership	18,865,261
Management & General	2,946,199
Fundraising	380,591
Total Functional Expenses	22,192,051

FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES



- Educational, Program, Membership (85%)
- Management & General (13%)
- Fundraising (2%)

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