

E T H I C A L O U T L O O K

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Sunday Morning Meetings 10:30 AM—Ceremonial Hall

July 3

Picnic in the Park

July 10

**Productive Retirement:
Oxymoron or Opportunity?**

Judith Wank

Assistant to the Leader

Dr. James W. Farer Presides

July 17

An Ethical Look at Current Affairs

Mary Ellen Goodman

Society Member

Frank Prescod Presides

July 24

**Poetry and Ethics, Book Signing
of *New York Poems***

Dr. D. H. Melhem, Poet

Andra Miller Presides

July 31

**Compassion, the Root of All
Ethics**

Dr. Larry Yates

Society Member

Christine Swann Presides

Fall Happenings

Retreat Weekend: Friday afternoon September 30, to Sunday afternoon October 2. See page 6.

Benefit Program for Stained Glass Windows: October 16 at 2:00 pm. See page 6.

Death Penalty Program with David Kaczynski and others: October 23 at 11:15 am.

Senior Leader's Note: The 2005 Westy Awards

Dr. Khoren Arisian

Apparently each year the *West Side Spirit*, a weekly newspaper, sponsors a public ceremony recognizing 33 people who live or work in the neighborhood and who have contributed significantly to the betterment of our community. We are all under moral surveillance(!) as it were, for it appears that the names of individuals whose accomplishments were noticed during the year were submitted to the newspaper's staff which then selected three winners in 11 Westy Awards categories. I was informed that I was among the awardees. I had no prior knowledge of this event, although 2005 is the fifth year the awards were made.



Given the extraordinary range and variety of accomplishments of which this observance takes note, I couldn't imagine what I was being recognized for. The answer came obliquely in a warmly personal congratulatory letter from New York State Senator Eric T. Schneiderman, who wrote: "Your efforts to spark conversation and dialogue on the Upper West Side have been, and continue to be, a great asset to our community." So, I concluded that the efforts of many of us at the Society to present unconventional and
(Continued on page 3)

Sunday Morning Meetings 10:30 AM—Ceremonial Hall—4th floor

July 3—Picnic in the Park

Informal bring-your-own-lunch event—meeting at Society Stairs.

July 10—Productive Retirement: Oxymoron or Opportunity?

Judith Wank, Assistant to the Leader

Join us for an alternately serious and light-hearted look at a challenging life cycle event. Having observed, endured, counseled, laughed with and experienced on my own some of the extraordinary highlights...and, yes...lowlights, let us come together in solidarity to explore our various perceptions. Whether you are young and exasperated (or perhaps amazed) at the elders in your lives; a younger older person; a marginalized, saddened elder seeking connections when expectations are compromised by care-giving, illness or loss,

(Continued on page 3)

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 Robert Liebeskind 116
 Kate Lovelady 107
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 Judy Wank 118

Ethical Culture: Who We Are

An Excerpt from “Some Characteristics of the American Ethical Movement” by Felix Adler (An address delivered in South Place Chapel, London, June 7, 1925)

Reprinted in Howard B. Radest, Ed., *Understanding Ethical Religion*, March 1997

“I cannot too strongly emphasize the fact that the movement did not start among the so-called intelligentsia, that it was not a rationalistic movement in its inception, that it was not negative in its attitude, that the people interested in it were not concerned with such questions as the authenticity of the Scriptures, or of miracles, or the reasonableness of the doctrine of the Trinity. Turning away from these matters, they asked with intense feeling, what consecrating influence shall we bring into our own lives, and particularly into the lives of our children? – indeed it was concern for the children even more than for themselves that led to the formation of these societies....

“This desire for a consecrating influence expressed itself in the initiation of Sunday Services, which were marked by great simplicity.... The conditions to which it is expected to conform, however difficult...are that the speaker...shall give his whole life to the problems of ethical living, he shall be steeped in the religious and ethical thought of the past, and that his object shall be to communicate light and heat to his hearers, that through their minds and hearts he shall endeavor to influence their will, shall quicken their highest aspirations, and thus seek to help them in the struggle toward spiritual freedom....

“Aristotle wisely says that ethical habits must precede the recognition of ethical principles. The principle of living in promoting the best life of others must likewise be grounded in habits. The Ethical Societies therefore, are educational societies intended to create those habits through which the light of ethical principles shimmers, out of which the pure elixir of principle may be distilled.”

Leader's Note

(Continued from page 1)

sometimes controversial programming aimed at the community at large were not in vain. Clearly, the Advocacy Forums proved to be the main fulcrum of our outward thrust. While pleased to have been a humanist member of the clergy so recognized, along with

With a new Senior Leader sooner or later to succeed me in the position I've been privileged to occupy for the past five years, the Society is truly poised for take-off!

a rabbi and a Lutheran minister, I nonetheless want to emphasize that the Awards ceremony, held this year at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine, attended by 300-400 people, and presided over by Howard J. Rubenstein as MC, was as much an honoring of our New York Society made possible by its supportive membership as it was a matter of personal recognition.

Congratulations and thanks to all of you—staff and members alike—are therefore very much in order. With a new Senior Leader sooner or later to succeed me in the position I've been privileged to occupy for the past five years, the Society is truly poised for take-off! (Incidentally, Judy Wank, Suzy Frazer, Marc Hofmaier, and Leigh McKay were present at the festivities.)

Sunday Morning Meetings

(Continued from page 1)

come along for an enlightening summer Sunday morning.

Judy Wank, a lifelong seeker, is an active member of the Northern Westchester, Westchester, and now New York Societies. She has been on staff at two and is again on staff at this Society, filling in for a staff member on leave.

In her professional career, Judy has been a senior caseworker for Westchester County; program director for the Putnam Association of Retarded

Citizens; director of an Enriched Housing model program in Westchester; program director of an information and referral agency; and case manager and eventually associate director of the

Alzheimer's Association of Westchester and Putnam Counties, from which she retired in December, 2000. She served as a crisis counselor for Project Liberty following 9/11 and retired again. Judy continues to lead support groups for adults and children at the Alzheimer's Association as a volunteer.

Judy is trying to figure out what she wants to be when she grows up!

July 17—An Ethical Look at Current Affairs

Mary Ellen Goodman, Society Member

July 24—Poetry and Ethics, Book Signing of *New York Poems*

Dr. D. H. Melhem

Dr. Melhem will discuss her immigrant parents' idealistic vision of the United States, and the increasingly harsh realities of the U.S. international role. Reading from her work, she will reveal her poetic concerns in the struggle for justice and peace.

D.H. has written the poetry collections *Rest in Love*, *Conversation with a Stonemason*, and *Country*, among others. She's also written *Blight*, a novel

distributed by Syracuse University Press. Her scholarly works include "Gwendolyn Brooks" and "Heroism" in the *New Black Poetry* (University Press of Kentucky); and she is the editor of two anthologies, including *A Different Path*, anthology of RAWI. She's had a musical drama produced in New York; developed a creative writing book; and written over 60 essays. *New York Poems*, just published by Syracuse, is her seventh poetry collection. *New York Poems* will be available for purchase and book-signing, along with a few copies of earlier works.

July 31—Compassion, the Root of All Ethics

Dr. Larry Yates, Society Member

Sunday Programs in Progress

Andra Miller

The Sunday Program Committee is gearing up for the fall series, and we will continue to try to schedule speakers and programs to appeal to all, with the hope that the majority of our programs please you.

We believe the charm of our Sunday afternoon programs has been their eclectic nature. We think a major portion of these should be artistic events, such as readings by the writing classes and others. And as the African American Art video event was such a big hit during Black History Month, we think we should feature more of the visual arts. We also want to plan programs spotlighting activism, one of the main tenets of Ethical Culture, so we're thinking of ways to feature action organizations in the afternoons, perhaps with panels of speakers from similar ecological, welfare, etc., non-profit groups to tell us about their work, and maybe a session or two with our own members talking about their activities

outside of the Society. We will also continue our discussion programs, such as Ethics in the News.

I and the committee wish to express our appreciation for the leadership of Carole Chamlin, who has served as the Sunday Program chairperson for five-or-so years and has now chosen, with the committee's approval, to pass the position on to me. Carole presided over the growth and strengthening of our committee and facilitated the presentation of a wonderful series of speakers. We are all grateful that she will continue to be a committee member. I am also thankful for her encouragement and guidance as I attempt to fill her shoes. And while I'm at it, I want to thank the other Sunday Program Committee members for all their help and support: Meg Chapman, Pat Debrovner, Suzy Frazer, Alan Gardner, Mary Ellen Goodman, Henryka Komanska, John Kreuttner, Barbara Levenson, Abe Markman, Joe Marvel, Jerry Ranck, and Christine Swann. You are welcome to share your ideas for early morning, main morning and afternoon Sunday programs with any of them and, of course, with me.

Anyone Can Sing!

For both current and new students—Thursdays, June 16–August 4 (no class June 30) 6:00-7:00 pm, Room 508.

If you can talk, you can sing. Phyllis Lynd, a noted singer, vocal teacher, and coach with a master's degree in voice, will quickly have you staying on key and hitting those high notes effortlessly. This course will also introduce you to a broad range of songs, including folk, popular, and some classical repertoire. Have fun in group and individual performances. Sing now! For information, call 212-874-5210 ext 113. Members: \$120. Non-members: \$150.

Summer School for Writers

Elaine Berman

A 10-week summer session of Ethical Culture's Thursday writing workshop, "The Joy of Personal Writing," will begin on July 7. The workshop, led by Elaine Berman, is for experienced writers and also people who would like to try writing. Members: \$100. Non-members: \$200. For information, please call Suzy Frazer at 212-874-5210 ext 113.

Ethical Humanist Award

Carol Nadell

On Monday, May 16, the 2005 Ethical Humanist Award was presented to David Kaczynski, for his courage in recognizing and identifying his brother, Ted Kaczynski, to authorities as the Unabomber, and for his continuing activism against the death penalty in New York State. It was an inspiring evening for all and one that reflected the essence of the meaning of Ethical Culture.

Dr. Joseph Chuman, Senior Leader of the Bergen Society, was our keynote speaker. Joe's passion and commitment to the cause and his respect and admiration for David gave his speech urgency and an emotional fervor that are not always experienced at the Society. Renny Cushing, founder of Murder Victims' Families for Human Rights, spoke of having witnessed the random shooting of his father and then finding compassion for the son of his father's killer. His story moved everyone in the audience. Renny's relationship with David also reflected the incredible bond that personal tragedy can create.

Our President, Michael Bogdanffy-Krieger, presented the award with

words that were heartfelt and very moving. In his talk, David Kaczynski recalled how his parents had taken him to the Ethical Culture Society in Chicago when he was a youngster. He credited Ethical Culture with giving him a foundation upon which to live. What particularly moved everyone was his recounting his trepidation about telling his mother that he was sure his brother, Ted, was the Unabomber and that it was right that he turn him in. David feared that if he did this, his mother would not love him anymore. Instead she hugged him and said, "What a terrible time you must have been having." There was not a dry eye in the house, and David received a standing ovation. After thanking the Society for the award, David concluded his remarks by saying, "My mom will like this Award."

The reception that followed was wonderful, thanks to caterer Jean Donnay and our Special Events Director, Leslie Doyle. But the evening was about David. We all left feeling proud to be part of Ethical Culture and inspired by our honoree.

Thanks to my wonderful committee: Muriel Berger, Jerry Chamlin, Maria Fridman, Mary Ellen Goodman, Barbara Levenson, Jirina Ribbens, and Michael Torres. A special thanks also to those who pitched in: Bonnie Bean, Robert Berger, Carole Chamlin, Christine Swann, and the Society's dedicated and supportive staff.

Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls at NYSEC

August 6-12. Volunteers Needed.

The Society is proud to be hosting the first annual Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls, a non-profit day camp for girls and young women (ages 8-18) of

all backgrounds and from all parts of New York City. The program offers the chance to learn how to play musical instruments, write songs, perform, and participate in team-building activities in a supportive environment that fosters self-esteem, self-confidence, creativity, tolerance, and collaboration. Volunteer opportunities for adults: musicians and non-musicians needed. Go to williamaerockcamp.org for more information.

Separation of Church and State

Carol Nadell

A man compounded of law and gospel is able to cheat a whole country with his religion and then destroy them under color of law.

—Benjamin Franklin

I flew back from Toledo, Ohio, on November 3, 2004 in a state of disbelief. Four more years of the Bush Administration. It somehow didn't seem real. My biggest fear, especially given the numbers of Fundamentalist Evangelicals who flocked to the polls, was the protection of the principle of "Separation of Church and State."

I have come to realize that I have a healthy reaction to bad news. I thrust myself into action rather than giving

in to despair. I immediately started researching the Internet looking for organizations in which I could become active. Lo and behold, I came across an article written twenty years ago by Ed Ericson, then Senior Leader of NYSEC. At that time, he was frightened by the ascendance of the moral major-

ity under the administration of Ronald Reagan. The article described how he joined forces with Rabbi Sherwin Wine to create Americans for Religious Liberty—and asked Edd Doerr to be the Executive Director.

I emailed Edd and asked if there was a New York Chapter. I also emailed Americans United for Separation of Church and State, having heard Barry Lynn speak at the first Advocacy Forum. Edd Doerr responded, "We experimented with chapters years ago and found that they did not work very well. So we are simply a national organization with members just about everywhere. We publish a newsletter and books, provide speakers for meetings and conferences, and work with other groups on litigation. We would be pleased to welcome you as a member."

Americans United responded, "We're only a chapter right now and don't have an office. Our meetings are all conducted 'at the other guy's place' or at a restaurant somewhere. The national organization, of course, has its own offices in DC and we usually direct that any mailings, etc., go directly to them. Their info is at their website at www.

I have come to realize that I have a healthy reaction to bad news. I thrust myself into action rather than giving in to despair.

www. au.org. We hope one day to have a permanent address, but it'll be a while into the future."

I then took two forms of action: I asked the Board if we could explore giving Americans United NYC a place to hold their monthly meetings, and I called Ed Ericson in Florida and asked for his advice. Ed suggested that we invite

Edd Doerr to speak to our Society on a Sunday. He felt that no one was better qualified to talk about the Separation of Church and State than Edd Doerr. Meanwhile, the Board approved letting Americans United have space for their monthly meetings.

On Sunday, May 8, Edd Doerr gave an eloquent talk. His topic: "Is Government in America Becoming Faith-Based?" A discussion followed concerning what we as citizens could do to counteract this growing trend. Edd felt that the way to start is local. He mentioned a very successful organization called The Texas Freedom Network, started by Ann Richards' daughter, that is doing remarkable things in Texas. He said this organization would be an excellent role model for us to follow.

On Thursday, May 19, Americans United for Separation of Church and State met at the Society along with Beth A. Corbin, the National Field Director. Beth suggested concrete actions that the local chapter of Americans United could begin taking. I asked about The Texas Freedom Network and she said it was an excellent organization, very similar to Americans United in its efforts.

It is my feeling that having Americans United in our home is a wonderful opportunity for our members to get involved and make a difference. The meetings are held every 3rd Thursday of the month in Room 514 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. The next meeting is July 21. I urge you all to attend. One of the things Edd said is that we need to reach out. One of the things Beth said is that we need to reach out. Let's make a difference. I believe we can.

P.S. I joined Americans for Religious Liberty and Americans United for Separation of Church and State. It gives me strength when I read the daily newspaper.

Fall Retreat

Suzy Frazer

Please note our upcoming **Retreat** to rustic Walker Valley, N.Y. – at the very beautiful, serene Jeronimo’s Resort. The dates are Friday afternoon September 30, to Sunday afternoon October 2. Sign up for this fun, stimulating, and rewarding weekend! Please call Suzy to reserve your spot 212-874-5210 ext 113.

Fall Benefit Concert

Ruth Cohen

The Music Committee for our Fall Benefit Concert for the Stained Glass Windows is pleased to announce our new and expanded format for the Concert. We are planning to have an exciting new program, presenting poetry, drums, and other musical performances. Mark your calendar for October 16, and join us in Ceremonial Hall at 2:00 pm. for a splendid fall afternoon of music and more! For information and to volunteer, please call 212-860-4096.

Membership Committee

Patricia Berens

The committee decided not to hold its monthly meeting in June, but to meet again on Wednesday, July 20 at 6:00 pm. We welcome members to join us with their thoughts and suggestions for projects in the new season.

Our Ethical Family

Suzy Frazer and Members

New Members

John Gurney has a PhD in philosophy and expertise in mechanical engineering and computer programming. His interests include linguistics, fishing,

and books. He is also a member of Amnesty International. A friend in the Washington Ethical Society recommended NYSEC to John.

Amira Reason works as a Child Protective Specialist. She has a Masters in Education and is also a bilingual teacher in Spanish. She enjoys swimming and tennis and is a member of the Charles D’Foucauld Catholic Society. Amira has joined NYSEC because of our humanist values. She also attends our “Anyone Can Sing” class.

Judith Wank has a long, impressive history with the Society. Since 1990 she has been an adjunct leader and has directed many facets of the Westchester Ethical Society, in addition to assisting several leaders here at NYSEC (currently Khoren Arisian) and leading bereavement groups. Judy has also been Associate Director of the Alzheimer’s Association. She says that her occupation is “trying” to retire! We’re happy she hasn’t yet succeeded.

Reinstated

Michael Gottlieb has asked to be reinstated as a member.

Resigned

Stephanie Rosenblatt. All our thanks for her superb work throughout the years.

News of Members

Diana Barth puts out a monthly newsletter of theatre and film reviews and other arts news, to which Society members are welcome. It is called *New Millennium* and is free of charge. Contact Diana at diabarth@juno.com or go onto her website, www.jordanaco.com/barth.html. Diana would be happy to have your feedback.

Valerie Leiman’s memoir, describing the 1968 Quaker International College Work Camp held on the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation in Montana with which she worked, will be pub-

lished in the August issue of *Friends Journal*.

Death

Elsbeth Miller, long-time member, died on June 3. Thanks to Stephanie Rosenblatt for informing us.

Highlights of the American Ethical Union Assembly, May 27-30, 2005

Judith D. Wallach

This year, the AEU Assembly was hosted by the Northern Virginia Ethical Society, and a wonderful affair it was! The Days Hotel & Conference Center, the well chosen venue for the Assembly in Herndon, Virginia, provided a variety of spaces for large and small activities. Kudos to Caro Romano, chair of the group that organized the Assembly, and to Sue Walton, who made the numerous arrangements with the hotel.

Our New York Society was well represented by Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh, Dahlia Cohen, Ruth Cohen, James Farer, Barbara Levenson, Kate Lovelady, Andra Miller, Carol Nadell, Christina Nargolwala, Carol Rost, Christine Swann, and Judith and Sylvan Wallach. This was an unusually large turnout, indicating our increased interest in the AEU and the national Ethical Movement.

Business meetings on Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon aroused enthusiastic and, at times, heated discussion but ended with considerable progress made. Highlights included welcoming the new Mid-Rivers Society and the following news: the Humanist Fellowship of North Texas has applied for membership in the AEU; Summer School II

is being developed for Summer School grads and others; there are plans to create a Virtual Society to accommodate all Members at Large; and Executive Director John Hartman is leaving on July 20 to attend an Episcopal seminary.

A new board of directors was elected, including: Ivo Antoniazzi (Long Island); Arnold Fishman (Philadelphia); Martha Gallahue (Brooklyn); Thomas Hoepfner (Chicago); Andra Miller (New York); Carl Romano (Member at Large); Jennifer Scates (Austin); Jackie Simms (Member at Large); Ronald Solomon (Baltimore); Harry Strickholm (Bergen); and Mary Wittry (St. Louis). There will also be two Leaders. Congrats to all, especially our own Andra Miller!

There were luncheons and dinners; a speech by Barry Lynn, Executive

Director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State; the Elliott-Black Award Presentation to Franklin Kameny, a long-time civil rights leader in the fight to end anti-gay discrimination; and excellent workshops, too numerous to detail more than a few here.

A series of workshops for current and future Assistant Leaders for Adjunct Services was offered. Joe Chuman, Bergen County Leader, gave a terrific workshop on the history and current crumbling of the wall of separation between church and state, ominously and appropriately entitled, "From Separation to Accommodation: The Theocratic Move in American Politics."

There were workshops on congregational growth and development,

religious education, congregational singing, personal relationships, the Humanist Institute, and Lay Leadership Summer School. Fred Edwords, Editorial Director of the American Humanist Association, led a provocative workshop entitled "Toward a More Publicly Effective Humanist Language," in which he emphasized the need to communicate the ideas of humanism to the world at large in ways that will be heard – and suggested ways of increasing our effectiveness.

The Assembly gave us a wonderful opportunity to visit with old and new friends from across the country, to learn what is happening in other Societies, and to revitalize our enthusiasm and energy for supporting humanism and the Ethical Movement.

Next year in Chicago!

<h1 style="margin: 0;">July 2005</h1> <p style="margin: 0;">Office hours for the month are: Monday-Thursday, 9:00 am – 6:00 pm Friday, 9:00 am – 1:30 pm</p>						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 No Supervised Visitation program today
3 10:30 am – Morning Meeting in Ceremonial Hall	4 Society Offices Closed 7:30 pm – Shelter	5 7:00 pm – Meditation Group 7:30 pm – Shelter	6 7:30 pm – Shelter	7 6:00 pm – Dr. Arisian's Retirement Party 6:00 pm – Singing Class 7:30 pm – Shelter	8	9 9:30 am – Supervised Visitation
10 10:30 am – Morning Meeting in Ceremonial Hall	11 6:00 pm – Board of Trustees 7:30 pm – Shelter	12 7:00 pm – Meditation Group 7:30 pm – Shelter	13 7:30 pm – Shelter	14 6:00 pm – Singing Class 7:00 pm – Writing Workshop 7:30 pm – Shelter	15	16 9:30 am – Supervised Visitation
17 10:30 am – Morning Meeting in Ceremonial Hall 1:00 pm – Orientation	18 6:30 pm – Social Service Board 7:30 pm – Shelter	19 7:00 pm – Meditation Group 7:30 pm – Shelter	20 7:30 pm – Shelter	21 6:00 pm – Singing Class 7:00 pm – Writing Workshop 7:30 pm – Shelter	22	23 9:30 am – Supervised Visitation
24 10:30 am – Morning Meeting in Ceremonial Hall	25 7:30 pm – Shelter	26 7:00 pm – Meditation Group 7:30 pm – Shelter	27 7:30 pm – Shelter	28 6:00 pm – Singing Class 7:00 pm – Writing Workshop 7:30 pm – Shelter	29	30 9:30 am – Supervised Visitation
31 10:30 am – Morning Meeting in Ceremonial Hall						

August 2005

Office hours for the month are:
 Monday-Thursday, 9:00 am – 6:00 pm
 Friday, 9:00 am – 1:30 pm

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 September 2005 Newsletter Deadline 7:30 pm – Shelter	2 7:30 pm – Shelter	3 7:30 pm – Shelter	4 6:00 pm – Singing Class 7:00 pm – Writing Worksho 7:30 pm – Shelter	5	6
7 10:30 am – Morning Meeting in Ceremonial Hall	8 8:30 am – Willie Mae Camp 7:30 pm – Shelter	9 8:30 am – Willie Mae Camp 7:30 pm – Shelter	10 8:30 am – Willie Mae Camp 7:30 pm – Shelter	11 8:30 am – Willie Mae Camp 7:00 pm – Writing Workshop 7:30 pm – Shelter	12 8:30 am – Willie Mae Camp	13 6:00 pm – Willie Mae Rock n' Roll Camp for Girls Showcase Concert
14 10:30 am – Morning Meeting in Ceremonial Hall	15 7:30 pm – Shelter	16 7:30 pm – Shelter	17 7:30 pm – Shelter	18 7:00 pm – Writing Workshop 7:30 pm – Shelter	19	20
21 10:30 am – Morning Meeting in Ceremonial Hall	22 7:30 pm – Shelter	23 7:30 pm – Shelter	24 7:30 pm – Shelter	25 7:00 pm – Writing Workshop 7:30 pm – Shelter	26	27
28 10:30 am – Morning Meeting in Ceremonial Hall	29 7:30 pm – Shelter	30 7:30 pm – Shelter	31 7:30 pm – Shelter			

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