



IN OUR OWN WRITE
washington area / women's center

DECEMBER '77

THE LONGEST NIGHT

winter solstice dance

Winter Solstice, the longest night of the year, marks the end of the year's cycle and the beginning of another. The darkness of night predominates on this winter matriarchal holiday, but the days will lengthen from then on, awakening the knowledge that the light is reappearing with the promise of Spring.

In celebration of the coming Winter Solstice the Washington Area Women's Center will sponsor a dance on Saturday, December 17th at All Soul's Church (16th and Harvard Sts., NW), from 9 PM on.

The women's community in the D.C. area has made it through another year of struggle, conflict and growth--and we end this year with an increased sense of unity. The Women's Center staff hopes that the upcoming Winter Solstice dance will give area women the space to really celebrate our sense of community. Let's party together!

We are going to transform All Soul's into a darkened, warm and mellow atmosphere filled with taped women's music and disco. We will have a women's security patrol keeping the space free from violent invasion.

There will be apple juice, beer, and

soda on sale with free munchies---pretzels, popcorn and nuts. A "balloon dance" with prizes will punctuate the evening with some fun and games. Admission to the dance will cost \$3.00 for WAWC members (bring your membership card!), \$3.50 for non-members. Work exchange will be available for those who cannot afford the admission price.

If you would like to volunteer some of your time working on the dance or you would like the work exchange, please come to a "Dance Volunteers" meeting at the Women's Center (basement of Summer School, 17th and M sts. NW), Sat. Dec. 10, at 12 noon.

During the past year the Women's Center's services have grown remarkably--a reflection of the activity and the need for a central meeting space in the D. C. area women's community. The Center has been staying just above water in terms of finances--we have been surviving on memberships, donations, and infrequent fundraisers. So, we are holding this dance to raise money as well as to party! Your attendance at the dance would give the Washington Area Women's Center support which is sorely needed. Please join us!

BLACK WOMEN AND FEMINISM

Sisters:

I am a Black 33 yr. old feminist, married w/one daughter (age 14-non feminist), interested in meeting, talking and sharing experiences with Black Sisters (gay or straight) who believe that feminism and womyn's rights also belong to us.

I feel that we need to redefine our social values for ourselves as Black Womyn and Black Sisters. We need to redefine our goals; we need to see if there is a way to have freedom for ourselves as well as for our Black Brothers. We need to redefine the ways in which we want to raise our daughters and sons. We need to discover methods of raising healthy non-oppressive sons and more assertive daughters. We need sons who will not oppress their sisters, mothers and wives. Because regardless of the fact that the nuclear family is the greatest oppressor of Black Womyn, we still have families; what are we to do--abandon them? We, as Black Womyn, need to redefine our relationships with our Black men. We must find a way to show them that feminism will free them--NOT TAKE AWAY THEIR MANHOOD. I don't believe that open antagonism toward men will solve anything; besides, we don't have the tools for an open conflict. Our children can still be used against us. We haven't the money to go into the courts to fight for our children--courts that will want to take our children and place them in homes that are "normal".

I fervently believe that Black Womyn belong in the forefront of the battle against the white man; but we also need our men for this fight. Together we stand, divided we fall. Our black men can become more positively inclined; they can develop understanding. If it is too late for our husbands and fathers, let's not wait until it becomes too late for our daughters and sons. We must show the white male-dominated society that Black Womyn are no longer to be ignored during our struggle for freedom for ourselves, and for our daughters.

We must be stronger than ever before, in herstory. We must again fight -- only this time, for our daughters' freedom -- freedom to choose their own life styles and vocations.

I dream of a world peopled only with Womyn; but, alas, that day is nowhere near! Therefore we must deal with what is here now -- our confused and misinformed Black brothers, fathers, sons and husbands. But we must also show our daughters that they do not need men to define themselves as Womyn. We must show them that they are not appendages of their fathers or their husbands (if they so choose). We need to furnish them with the knowledge we hadn't a chance to obtain as teenagers -- that there IS more than motherhood, abuse, and strife in Amerika today. We must present the facts as they are -- that strife and heartaches and hardship will continue -- but that we now have a definable goal: FREEDOM FOR EACH SISTER IN THE WORLD. Regardless of race, there

are only two sexes; therefore sisters we must unite.

Yes we can! Yes we can!! Yes we can!!! Together we can accomplish much. We need to work toward cohesiveness as Womyn. Because, regardless of the issues (issues come and issues go), we remain Womyn. And, I believe that as Womyn, our primary goals should be toward ourselves as Womyn and Black Sisters. How can we help others if we can't effectively help ourselves?

Black Womyn, remove the apathy from your souls; let's become more aware of the injustices so skillfully plied against us all. We were the Foundation and backbone of the white U.S. family. We held their families together at the expense of our own families. We have been mis-aligned, misinformed and mis-used. I say mis-used because we can use things and people without abusing them (dishes and glasses, for instance). People do, in fact, use other people. We must, as Womyn, use our freedom, ONLY THOSE WHOSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES ARE CLOSELY SIMILAR TO OURS. To use something or someone we do not need or agree with is only going to hurt us. We must USE EACH OTHER for support and strength, for our strength lies in our numbers as Womyn.

Black sisters have been mis-used by our paler sisters. Sometimes out of indifference, apathy or naiveness. Regardless of the reasons, I believe the positive approach is to make our paler sisters aware of the injustices they are unknowingly inflicting upon us by raising our voices in unison and speaking of such things. We must be heard! No longer should we shake our heads in agreement with our white sisters when we have been part of the decision-making processes within our Womyn's groups and activities.

I know only too well of my Black Sisters' day-to-day struggles just to put food on the table for their children. But, in order to enrich our children's lives we must have some enrichment for ourselves.

If there are any Black Womyn out there, interested in forming a small group (5-8), I would be very happy to hear from you. Please feel free to call me at home after 6:30 p.m. (398-6757) or at work between 10 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. (457-7129) (NOTE: if you call me at home, please don't hang up if a man answers; it isn't a wrong number, it's my husband. In fact, if any of you have a husband you figure is worth the effort, maybe you could see if he would join us in a session later on.

Yours in Sisterhood

Shelia E. Brown

Dear Readers: The Women's Center received this letter and we decided to reprint it in full. We would appreciate feedback and suggestions from other black women.

WRENCHWOMAN

As most of us are still struggling to find meaningful ways of earning a living, it is comforting to know about local women who are succeeding in doing this. Sue Sasser and Valerie Mullen are the joint owners and managers of Wrenchwoman, an auto-repair shop located at 801 Virginia Avenue, S.E., in D.C. They have been at their present location since last February, both women working previously at another shop, the Grease Palace in Glen Echo. They received their for-profit incorporation status one year ago and although it is not equally owned, they share the duties and management. Both hope to make working at Wrenchwoman their long-term occupation.

Entering the shop, their five-dog security force meets you at the gate; inside, they have posted various news articles and leaflets of women's events. Sue and Valerie usually work a 12-hour day, from 8am to 8pm, six days a week. They pay themselves the usual 50% of the flat rate charges. Often swamped with work, they did manage to take a one week vacation since their opening. Women are hired at various times on a temporary basis, for around \$4 an hour. Helpers answer phones, order parts, and do odd jobs; answering phones requires some knowledge of auto repair and parts.

Wrenchwoman has had publicity in Working Woman, The Capitol Hill, US News and World Report, and has had a 10 minute interview on Channel 7's "7:30 Live". Sue has taught about 40 sessions in auto repair over the last few



years, totalling 250-300 students, 90% of which have been women. As there are not many places where women are well-received for training, these courses fill a definite need. The next course will be held in the spring, and will cost \$30 for 4 sessions, meeting 2½ hours on Saturday mornings. (Classes in auto repair for women are also held as a part of the Glen Echo Park Service.) Their customers are 60% women--working on both American and foreign cars, their prices vary, depending on the type of car. A major tune up runs between \$16-\$75 for labor and necessary parts, a lube job including checking transmission and rear-end oil is \$15-\$25, and checking and flushing the cooling system is \$20-\$25 plus antifreeze and replacement parts. Both women have NIASE (National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence) certification. If you are interested in their work, call them at 543-1550.

--sue lorentz

U. OF M. WOMEN'S CENTER FINALLY FUNDED

The U of Maryland Student Government Association finally approved a budget for the campus Women's Center during the week of Nov. 14th, after a summer and fall semester of stalling.

The budget was cut from \$3,000 to \$2,300 and the Center will not receive its funds until the Spring '78 semester. That means that the Center would still be without a phone for a few months more, but an area feminist, Ms. Pat Webbink, has donated a phone to the Center until

the funding is received.

The budget was passed not without much hassle and threats by the student government president, Louis Luna, to use his veto power to prevent funding the Center. According to Fran Patton (from the U of M Women's Center), Luna said he felt the Center was "too political" and that the Center was "giving the Student Government Association a bad name" because of negative publicity in the school paper regarding the actions of the SGA.

AT THE CENTER

rap group

The Women's Weekly Rap Group began in October, 1975 in the Arlington home of Angie Carrera, one of the project's three current coordinators. Within six months it moved physically into the centrally located facilities of the Washington Area Women's Center, where it has been meeting regularly ever since. It has gradually grown into the purpose foreseen by the initiators: to enable women of all persuasions and political beliefs to share ideas or just listen to each other in an informal, supportive atmosphere.

Like other Center activities, the rap group is a resource to be used, influenced, and changed by area women according to their interests and energies. A woman may come because a particular topic intrigues her. She may come regularly over a period of time as she works through a transition in her personal life. Or she may come simply because she values the time set aside for communicating with other women. For many the group serves as a "stepping stone" toward a deeper feminist consciousness or a lesbian lifestyle.

The Monday night sessions have become an essential method of introducing newcomers to the Women's Center, its facilities, services, and whatever volunteers are on hand for the evening. New participants have time to read the latest newsletter, check out the library and the current "Art on the Wall", and catch up with community events via the bulletin boards in the hall of Summer School basement. Suggestions for discussion topics are solicited and always welcomed; subjects for the current month are invariably listed on the "At the Center" page of each newsletter.

The Women's Weekly Rap Group meets every Monday at 8:00 p.m., excluding holidays, in the Women's Center lounge. Current coordinators are Angie Carrera, Jan Mosso, and Susanna Sturgis.

Topics for Dec. are: 5-Children's Liberation; 12-When I Grow Older...; 19-Expressing Creativity.

♀'s nite out

MOSAIC: A Women's Poetry Workshop, a group that started at the Women's Center and has been meeting regularly for almost a year, read at the September Women's Nite Out. Susan Sojourner read a poem entitled "mosaic" that said each of them grew poems. Susan and Nan Fry are published in *Rye Bread: Women Poets Rising*, an anthology of 80 local women poets. Each of the five women shared some of her poems with the small audience. Susan Valenza's selections included butterfly images, locks, spring and suicide. Shira Ehrlich drew

from her Jewish background and also read about JoAnn Little, Marilyn Monroe, and after Nixon resigned. Kate Martin read poems from the start and end of a relationship, anger, about her son and spring. Nan Fry read about women being used, her mother, her feelings around her father's death, and Greek goddesses. Susan Sojourner ended the evening talking about turning her journal entries into poetic form, responding to poems by Nikki Giovanni, a letter to a friend, and thoughts on her son.

The evening concluded with a discussion on how readers can get feedback to reduce frustration. Several women were asked to read parts of their poems, and each woman was asked to read a poem, but each reading right after the other. The audience indicated an interest for an open poetry reading, so the Dec. 3rd Women's Nite Out will feature **YOU**. The second half of the evening will be open for any woman present to read/share her poetry with the group. The evening will begin with Dorothy Allison returning to read selections from her yet unfinished lesbian novel as well as other erotic fiction pieces. The Women's Center will open at 8pm that evening for women wishing to come early and enjoy Art on the Wall or browse through the Center's library.

get your t-shirt now!

In the past, we have seen far too many women's organizations fold for lack of support. This is unfortunate! In order for "change" to come about, we must be united and supportive of each other. It appears that the kind of support most needed in the women's community is womenpower and money. As disgusting as it is, money is an essential part of any organization, and the Women's Center is no exception. Because we do not want to raise the membership fee, we have planned two fundraisers for the Center. First, the Winter Solstice Dance which will be held Dec. 17 at All Souls Church. Second, since September we have been receiving designs for the WAWC T-shirt contest. The collective agreed on a design by Cynthia Callan but we've had to delay in getting them because as stated previously, we need your financial support. The T-shirts will be on sale at the Solstice Dance. However, to help defray their cost and so you are sure of having a shirt, we are giving the membership this opportunity to order your shirts ahead of time. If you wish to take advantage of this opportunity, call the Center and we can get details from you. They will be selling for \$5 each and the design is a labrys (double-edged axe--symbol of matriarchy) with the saying, "Washington's Women Are Centered".

P.S. T-Shirts make great seasonal presents, as well as supporting your Women's Community!

art on the wall

During the month of December, the Women's Center is sponsoring an exhibit of photography by Beth Karbe. Says Beth about her work, "I photograph the world as I see it...from a political perspective. Much of the ugliness I capture is an ugliness created by the patriarchy, while the beauty and mystery I see is part of the strength and mysticism of womanness." The exhibit will run from December 1st through December 24th at the Women's Center, 17th and M Sts NW. Exhibit hours are from 5:30 to 9 pm., Monday through Thursday.

lesbian panel discussion

Planning is beginning for Sunday afternoon panel discussions, with potluck supper afterward, at the Women's Center.

Topics such as coming out; once you meet someone, what then; coming out over 30; relationships; sexuality; mothers and daughters; or special events like a play or candidates' afternoon will give us a chance to discuss matters close to our lives. Two or three women will talk briefly at the weekly panels, and then the rest will join in. Lesbians will have a chance to meet other lesbians, develop lesbian-feminist theory and just plain have a good time.

To set it up, meetings are being held at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, December 8 and December 15 at the Women's Center. Call Tayloe Ross, c/o the Center, to suggest programs you want, or come to the meetings. We need program coordinators to develop topics, and after the panels begin, good cooking and good friends.

Groups

A study group on socialism and feminism is currently being formed. We want to examine basic socialist theories (Marx, Engels, Lenin, Mao and the like) and works by socialist feminists, in order to see what ideas/goals of socialism are (or are not) useful and applicable to feminist theory. If you would like to join us, please leave a message for Sue or Wendy at the Center. Also, we would appreciate suggestions as to reading material, outline of study, good bibliographies, etc.

BEGINNING HATHA YOGA classes are being held at the Women's Center Saturdays at 10am and 11am; cost is \$25 for 12 sessions. Call Karen Pandratz at 338-4434.

Sports

WAWC VOLLEYBALL TEAM will play the NEW Rough Drafts at 7pm, Gordon Jr. High School, 35th & T Sts., NW (T St. Entrance), on Dec. 1st.

letters

Just a short note to let you know how much I enjoyed the Rape Speak Out 1977 conference on Sept. 24th. I found it highly informative, particularly the workshop on medical aspects of rape and what happens to a victim in a hospital. I was able to bring back a great deal which I expect to be quite useful for myself and other members of the F.A.C.T. (Families and Children in Trouble) hotline.

I know how much work must have been involved setting up the conference, and I commend you and the others involved for your tremendous success. Please let me know if you plan to sponsor other similar events.

Best wishes,

Nina Jaffe

c/o FACT Hotline, 1690 36th St, NW, DC 20007

Newsletter

THE WAWC NEWSLETTER STAFF is much in need of someone to do graphics for the newsletter. Please call the Center at 347-5078. We can also use help with typing, proofing, lay-out, coordinating announcements, calendar, etc.

workshops

A series of LEGAL WORKSHOPS is still being planned on the topics of: forms of organization--profit & non-profit; sex discrimination in employment; landlord-tenant disputes; divorce and separation; and others. The Feminist Law Collective has offered their services and the workshops are free to all WAWC members. Call the Center and leave your name & number if you are interested.

IN OUR OWN WRITE is the monthly newsletter of the Washington Area Women's Center. Contributions for the next issue are due by Dec. 15. Please send them to NEWSLETTER, Washington Area Women's Center, Summer School, 17th & M Sts., NW, Washington, DC 20036. This newsletter is brought to you by: Toni White, Wendy Chick, Sue Lorentz, Bentley Kennedy, Anne Runyan, Cynthia Callan, Angie Carrera, and Tina Lunson (printer). The Women's Center does not necessarily support opinions expressed in articles, announcements, or inserts.

s m t w t f s

Women's Open House, D.C.
Lilli's Open House, Arlington,
Rap Group for Women, D.C.
Women's Coffeehouse, UMD.
Student Union, Rm. 0124

347-5078
671-3762
347-5078
Dec. 2, 9

DECEMBER

Art on the Wall Features Beth Karbe, photography		IWY DELEGATES To Houston... will meet this month- call WWAC 332-2121 for details		1 WAWC- 7P.M. Volleyball Team Gordon JHS 35th + T NW 673-7647	CHRISTMAS CRAFT SHOW- 5P.M. The Acting Studio Washington Women's Art Center- Poetry Reading U.M. de la Cruz coffeehouse 8P.M.	CHRISTMAS CRAFTS SHOW- 5P.M. Nite Out- Poetry Workshop 8P.M. Hysteria Concert 8P.M. 16T Congressional Church OOB OPEN HOUSE 2-5P.M.
4 Community Mtg- Hysteria 8P.M. N.O.W. Capitol Hill meeting- 2P.M. CHRISTMAS CRAFT SHOW- 8-6P.M.	5 Joan Rich, one-woman show George Meany Center, Silver Spring 9A.M. - 6P.M. WAWC RAP GROUP Children's Liberation 8P.M.	6	7 Open House - Arlington, Va. 671-3762	8 Lesbian Panel + Potluck Supper planning mtg. 7:30 CHRISTMAS CRAFT SHOW 5-9P.M.	9 Poetry Reading Washington Women's Art Center CHRISTMAS CRAFT SHOW 5-9P.M.	10 CHRISTMAS CRAFT SHOW- 10-6P.M. WAWC DANCE MEETING 12-5P.M. Jean Mackey-Penny Robb, Wasserman, Zucka + Luci Murphy 7:30P.M.
11	12 WAWC - RAP GROUP WHEN I GROW OLDER... 8P.M.	13.	14 So. P.D. Co. N.O.W. mtg 8P.M. OPEN HOUSE Arlington, Va. 671-3762 Feminist alliance mtg. 7P.M.	15 Panel + Potluck Supper Planning Mtg. 7:30 WAWC.	16.	17 Montgomery Co. N.O.W. mtg 10A.M. WAWC WINTER SOLSTICE DANCE ALL SOUL'S CHURCH 9P.M.
18	19 WAWC - rap group: Expressing Creativity 8P.M.	20.	21. OPEN HOUSE Arlington, Va. 671-3762	22.	23.	24.
25. Holiday	26 no rap group	27.	28 open house Arlington, Va. 671-3762	29.	30.	31.

Announcements !

social events

JEAN MACKEY, PENNY ROSENWASSER, with LUCHA and LUCI MURPHY in concert Sat. Dec. 10th, 7:30pm at 1st Cong. Church, 945 G St. NW. Childcare provided & signing for the deaf. Tickets are \$3.50 at the door, \$3.00 in advance, on sale at Lammas, Bread & Roses, Miya Gallery and Sala Hispanic Theatre. Call 234-6589 for info.

The gay women's caucus of the U of Maryland gay alliance is sponsoring a women's coffeehouse on Dec. 2nd & 9th at the student union bldg., rm. 0124, beginning at 8pm. On the 2nd will be an art exhibit & dance. On the 9th Linda Talbot will sing from 8 to 7:30, and a holiday party will follow her performance. For further info call 454-5830.

OFF OUR BACKS is having an open house Sat. Dec. 3rd from 2-5pm at their office on 1724 20th St., NW. See the collective 'demistify' before your very eyes. OOB is also interested in recruiting more collective members, so this is an opportunity to come over and get acquainted. Visit chicken lady's coop...refreshments will be served.

HYSTERIA in concert Dec. 3rd, 8pm at the 1st Congregational Church, 945 G. St. NW. Tickets are \$5 and are available at Lammas, Bread & Roses, & the Women's Center. For childcare, work exchange and ticket sponsorship, call 667-2026.

meetings and workshops

DELEGATES TO THE IWY CONFERENCE in Houston will be meeting at WWAC sometime this month to give a first-hand report of what went on there. They will be showing slides of women's art from "Art-space", which was provided by the national conference to give women an opportunity to view slides of women's artwork from around the country. Call WWAC, 332-2121, for details.

U. of M. Women's Center will have meetings on Dec. 9 & 29 at 4pm in the student union bldg. rm. 1103. New members are welcome.

The FEMINIST ALLIANCE will meet Dec. 14, 7pm, at the Women's Center. **CHILDCARE WILL BE PROVIDED.**

HYSTERIA COMMUNITY MEETING 2-5pm, Dec. 4th at the Women's Center.

NOW

SOUTHERN P.G. COUNTY meeting-8pm.

MONTGOMERY CO. CHAPTER will hold a general meeting Dec. 17, 10am, at the Unitarian Church in Rockville. It will be a legislative workshop on topics such as marriage and divorce, domestic violence, & abortion. Md. State delegates Charles Gilchrist, Helen Koss, & David Scull will participate in the workshop.

CAPITOL HILL CHAPTER meets Dec. 4 at 2pm in the Capitol Hill Hospital Conference Rm., 8th & Mass Ave. NE. Subject of the meeting is crime on the Hill. In February a series on psychology & women is planned; for suggestions, ideas on speakers, contact Julie at 547-6133.

arts & crafts

THE ACTING STUDIO (formerly Earth Onion) is continuing its series of workshops in the Acting Process, Improvisation, Scene Study, Mask & Clay Work for the Actor, and the Performance Piece (Audition Required). Also, special series of weekend workshops--6 hours of concentrated exploration into the acting process. Call the studio at 667-3785 for information.

MOON WORKS is having a Christmas show, featuring crafts by women at Earth Onion Theater. There will be Christmas ornaments, toys, bells, prints, pottery, leather, jewelry, cards, and wind chimes. Dec. 2nd-4th & 8th -11th; weekday nights 5-9pm, Sat. 10-6pm and Sun. 12-6pm.

WASHINGTON WOMEN'S ART CENTER has two poetry readings scheduled for Dec. Mae Miller Sullivan & Evelyn Burrell will read on Fri., Dec. 2, Elizabeth Brunazzi and Barbara Lefcowitz on Dec. 9th. This will conclude the fall season of readings at the Center. If you have questions or suggestions for future events of the WWAC literary program, contact Barbara Berman:332-2121.

ARTS FOR GIFTS SAKE, an arts/crafts exhibit and sale will be held at the WWAC Nov. 27th through Dec. 23rd. The shows feature work by more than 30 Center artists, and includes pottery, batik, prints, calendars. WWAC is located at 1821 Q St. NW, & hours of the show are Tu-Sun 11-4pm.

JOAN SPIELBERG RICH is having a one-person show of her paintings in the Gallery Lounge of the George Meany Center for Labor Studies, 10000 New Hampshire Ave., Silver Spring, Md. Dec. 4-Jan. 26, 9am-6pm.

THE WAWC NEWSLETTER STAFF is much in need of someone to do graphics for the newsletter. Please call the Center at 347-5078.

(Announcements continued on back page)

Announcements Cont'd

misc.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN TASK FORCE of the D.C. Area Feminist Alliance will meet December 13, 6 pm at the Women's Center. New members welcome

MASSAGE for women on a sliding fee basis, Appt. only, call Lenora Trussell at 234-4167.

THE COMMUNITY FOR CREATIVE NON-VIOLENCE, Luther Place Church, and Sojourners Fellowship are offering overnight hospitality to the homeless this winter. On Nov. 14 they opened separate facilities for women and men and urgently need volunteers to staff the shelters nightly from 9pm-8am, as well as donations of food and blanket. The women's shelter is being staffed by women only. If you can help, please contact Carol Fennelly at 232-9533.

A COLLECTION OF LESBIAN LOVE-LETTERS is being compiled by some women in New York. For info, write: LLL, POB 621, Old Chelsea Station, N.Y., N.Y. 10011, or call the Women's Center.

MATHEMATICS TUTORING--All levels--Call Pilar, 337-0077.

THE GREASY GORGON GARAGE, a lesbian-run garage and training center in western Massachusetts, is seeking donations from women to get them through critical times and onto a solid economic footing. To contribute or for more information write them at POB 73, Hatfield, Mass. 01038.



RISING WOMEN COFFEEHOUSE

SPACE
needed
now
call us

Looking for space to rent on Fri. or Sat. nite starting March 1. Would like to share with other Q's group(s). We need room for kitchen set-up, childcare, large main room and small annex room with option to leave equipment safely. Please call Lee at 362-4149



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