



WEST WALKER WIRE

JUNE 2025

www.westwalkercivic.org

IRVING PARK FOOD PANTRY RECEIVES \$1M+ GRANT TO DEVELOP FACILITY ON NORTHWEST SIDE



The **Irving Park Community Food Pantry** was one of ten organizations awarded a grant through the City of Chicago’s Community Development Grants program. The Pantry plans to use the **\$1,035,617** grant toward constructing a new facility to better serve neighbors in need of food assistance. Construction on the Pantry’s new facility is anticipated to begin in 2026 and will require additional funding through donations from supporters.

The Pantry currently operates out of the **Emanuel United Methodist Church** at 4256 N. Ridgeway. The new food pantry will be built on land owned by **Irving Park Lutheran Church**, which has partnered with the Pantry on this project and helped with the grant application. The Pantry, which last year celebrated its 40th anniversary, serves more than 120 clients each week and 550 in a month, with approximately 1,550 family members. For more about the Pantry’s programs, please visit www.irvingparkfoodpantry.org.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Saturday, June 7 • 9 am - 3 pm
North Mayfair Community Garage Sale & Plant Swap
Visit northmayfair.org/garagesale for more information

Sunday, June 8 • 2 - 4 pm
Blazing Star School
Open house for summer camps, 2025-26 school year, and weekly art classes
4042 N. Springfield Avenue
Visit www.blazingstarschool.com

Sunday, June 15 • 9 am - 12 pm
19th Annual Father’s Day Gourmet Pancake Breakfast
Independence Park Bungalow
3900 N. Hamlin Avenue
Visit gipna.org for more information

Wednesday, June 18 • 6:30 pm
17th District CAPS Meeting
17th District Station
4650 N. Pulaski Road

Sunday, June 22 • 9 am - 2 pm
Independence Park / GIPNA
Community Blood Drive
3945 N. Springfield Avenue

Wednesday, June 25 • 5 - 8 pm
Flavors of Albany Park Neighborhood Food Crawl
Four (4) different routes to choose from -
Visit northrivercommission.org

Friday, July 4 • 10 am - 12 pm
Independence Park Fourth of July Celebration

Sunday, July 20 • 12 - 4 pm
GIPNA Garden Walk
Visit gipna.org for more information

WITHIN THE WIRE...

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Dear Neighbor,

Another successful West Walker neighborhood garage sale is in the books! I'd like to thank the volunteers - **Jenni Kus, Julie Buchan, and Lori Goddard** - who created our map, hung up and took down signs, and the **forty (40) households** who participated. Mark your calendars for next year's garage sale on **May 16, 2026**.

If you will be around for the **Fourth of July**, please come by the West Walker Civic Association table at **Independence Park** for lemonade, water, and festive red, white, and blue items for the kids. West Walker has sponsored this table for many years and we are pleased to do it again.

With summer being here, this is our last issue until September. We look forward to bringing you all some exciting events this fall. Please stay tuned to our Facebook page during the summer.

Have a safe and happy summer!

Until the fall,
Erin Hunter
WWCA President



WEST WALKER CIVIC ASSOCIATION

West Walker Mission Statement

"The pursuit of the West Walker Civic Association is to make our diverse neighborhood the best it can be by securing the services, safeguards and improvements the West Walker community is entitled to have."

Celebrating over 100 years of service to the West Walker Community

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Kim Pecka

WEST WALKER EMAIL BLASTS

Brian Hunter

The West Walker Wire is published monthly September through June by the West Walker Civic Association.

All story ideas, articles and ads are due 7 days prior to the 1st of each month. Submit ideas and articles to the editor at west_walker_wire@yahoo.com.

Please include a phone number in case we need to follow up with you.

We reserve the right to edit all submissions for space and content.

For information on advertising, please contact Shannan Bunting at shannan@solsticepr.com.

DID YOU KNOW?

by Michael Kus



Who remembers growing up in Chicago and enjoying **Maurice Lenell** cookies?

I especially liked the pinwheels and the smell of fresh cookies baking anytime we were around Harlem/Irving Plaza. But, **did you know that Maurice Lenell started right here in West Walker back in 1925?**

Yep, their first bakery set up shop at 4349 N. Avers and the building is still standing. They moved out to Norridge in 1956 and continued until they closed down in 2008.





St. Edward School Events

What's happening at St. Edward School

Once the school year comes to an end on June

6, our doors re-open on **Monday, June 9**, for our **Big Red Summer Camp!** There's still space each week for your children if you're looking for an affordable and enjoyable summer camp. Sign up for the weeks you need - our camp is open to all children. It's a great way for new students to get to know our community and make new friends before the first day of school. There's still time to sign up - www.stedwardchicago.org.

If you're interested in a Faith based camp this summer, we will offer a one-week-only faith camp called **TOTUS TUUS**. This is a Latin phrase that translates to "Totally Yours" and was the motto of St. Pope John Paul II, referring to our Blessed Mother. This week-long camp is open to children entering grades 1 - 6 during the day from 9 am - 2:30 pm and for teens entering grades 7-12 in the evenings from 7 - 9 pm. Sign up for this camp by visiting our parish website, www.stedparish.org.

If you're still looking for a school to send your child to this fall, consider our award-winning school! We will be offering tours all summer, but come visit us soon as some classes are almost at capacity. To tour our school, visit our website at www.stedwardchicago.org.

Blazing Star School News

Blazing Star School is a self-directed learning center located right here in West Walker. Our school-year and summer programming focuses on exploration-based art, science, nature, and adventure, for ages 4-12! Visit www.blazingstarschool.com or email blazingstarschool@gmail.com for more info on any of our programs.

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Friday & Saturday 9-5 / Sunday 1-5

Adult Craft Club

Thursday, June 5 at 6:00 pm

Adults, try a craft project that you can keep.

Play Day For ages up to 5.

Mondays at 10:30 am

Bring a friend or meet a new one during our open and unstructured play group time.

Story Time For ages up to 5.

Wednesdays at 10:30 am

Talk, sing, read, write, and stay to play with us!

REMIX! For ages 5+

Tuesday, June 24 at 2:00 pm

Join our teen interns for some of our favorite programs.

West African Dance Class For ages 6+

Wednesday, June 25 at 11:00 am

Groove to live West African drumming with Ayodele Drum and Dance. *Register online*

Make Your Mark: Painting with Natural Dyes

Thursday, June 26 at 4:00 pm

What can be used for a natural dye?
Find out and use it to paint.

ABRA-KA-DABRA MAGIC SHOW For ages 3+

Saturday, June 28 at 3:00 pm

A fun and interactive magic show with Pocket Circus.

Group Singalong For ages 3+

Tuesday, July 15 at 6:00 pm

Join the Old Town School of Folk Music for a singalong.

Mending Stitch Sampler For adults

Wednesday, July 16th at 2:00 pm

Learn a variety of stitches to mend your clothing instead of replacing. *Register online*

Animal Encounter All ages

Thursday, July 17 at 1:00 pm

Learn what makes a different species special and bring a camera! *Register online*

**Jewelry Making
Workshop** For 6+
**Monday, July 28 at
1:00 pm**

Make your own
unique jewelry!
Register online

Plant Swap

**Saturday, August 2
from 10 am - 4 pm**

Bring a cutting or plant, take one - you don't have to bring one to take one!

Destress with Doggies All ages

Sunday, August 3 from 2:00 - 3:30 pm

These therapy pups are here to help.

READ AND RUN: Hunting for Frogs on Elston

Thursday, July 31 at 6:00 - 7:30 pm

Book-themed guided running route based on **Hunting for Frogs on Elston** by Jerry Sullivan. *Register online*

Community Cinema

Saturday, June 7

11 am: *The Lion King*, 1994, G

1 pm: *Mufasa: The Lion King*, 2024, PG

Saturday, June 14

11 am: *The Day The Earth Blew Up*, 2024, PG

1 pm: *Sonic the Hedgehog 3*, 2024, PG

Sunday, June 15

2 pm: *Annihilation*, 2018, R

Saturday, July 5

11 am: *Paddington in Peru*, 2024, PG

1 pm: *LOTR: The War of Rohirrim*, 2024, PG-13

Sunday, July 6

2 pm: *Jaws*, 1975, PG

Saturday, July 26

11 am: *Captain Underpants*, 2017, PG

1 pm: *Dog Man*, 2025, PG

Saturday, August 9

11 am: *Snow White*, 2025, G

1 pm: *Little Mermaid*, 2023, PG

Saturday, August 16

11 am: *A Minecraft Movie*, 2025, PG

1 pm: *Captain America: Brave New World*, 2025, PG-13

Sunday, August 17

2 pm: *The Cove*, 2009, PG-13

Questions? Contact Jessica Kimpel, Children's Librarian, at 312-744-1135 or jmccarney@chipublib.org, or visit the library at 4024 N. Elston Ave.





News and Events

A 501(c)(3) non-profit connecting

the Irving Park community with programs that enrich lives through education, culture, and service.

Fine Arts Concert Series Concludes 31st Season

Thank you to everyone who attended one of our concerts during the p-09' 31st season. The season concluded with our May 18 concert featuring **Flannau Duo**. We enjoyed a sharing a variety of music over the past twelve (12) months – from organ, to string, percussion, and a world-renowned blues musician. It is a delight to provide the community with high-quality music, free of charge.

Thank you to the Fine Arts Committee founder & artistic director, **Roger Bingman**, for his tireless efforts to bring some of Chicago's most talented professional musicians to the Irving Park neighborhood and to the entire Fine Arts Committee for their input and assistance with concerts. Planning will soon begin for the 25-26 season!

Magic After-School Place Finishes Another School Year!

Carlson's **Magic After-School Place** (MAP) will finish another successful school year on June 12, when the CPS school year ends! Students and staff will celebrate with a pizza party, home-made ice cream sandwiches, and awards. The 2024-2025 school year brought MAP it's highest enrollment since the COVID-19 pandemic, and the growth is expected to continue.

In addition to having a safe place to go at the end of the school day and structured homework help, students enjoyed regular enrichment programming in art, cooking, and STEM activities such as gardening, science, and engineering. Students thrive in the environment created by Magic After-School Place Director, **Rebecca Haneberg** and the MAP staff which includes **Laurie Paliga, Lillian Carter, and Francesca Patton**.

For 2025-26 enrollment information, please email mapdirector@carlsoncommunityservices.org.

Plant a Row for the Hungry with Three Brothers Garden

Three Brothers Garden will continue its "Plant a Row for the Hungry" program in 2025. If you are a home gardener with surplus vegetables or herbs, please bring them

to TBG! Starting in late June, leave your donation on the table inside the garden gate on **Tuesday** evenings before 6:00 p.m. Your donation will be delivered to the **Irving Park Community Food Pantry** on Wednesday morning for immediate distribution for pantry clients. The Three Brothers Garden is located at **4107 N. Pulaski Road**, at Pulaski & Belle Plaine.

Carlson Community Services connects the Irving Park community with programs that enrich lives through education, culture, and service. For more information, visit carlsoncommunityservices.org or contact Sara Yoest at sarayoest@carlsoncommunityservices.org.



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Irving Park Community Food Pantry News *text and photos by Craig Shutt, Publicity & Special Events Coordinator, unless noted*

Pantry Opens Herb Garden

The Irving Park Food Pantry has started its herb garden for the year. The garden allows us to offer clients a range of fresh herbs each week, including sage, basil, cilantro, parsley, mint, chives, thyme, and oregano. We also grow various kinds of peppers. Volunteers harvest the options each week and offer them to clients immediately.

We would like to receive plants to grow peppers and herbs of all kinds. If you have any left from your own garden, you can take plants to the **Big Helpers** store at 4184 N. Elston Ave. from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. or the front porch at 3912 N. Kenneth Ave. any time.

If you would like to donate to the garden's upkeep and expansion, please use the PayPal link at www.irvingparkfoodpantry.org or mail a check to Irving Park Food Pantry, 4256 N. Ridgeway Ave., Chicago, IL 60618 marked for "garden."

Pantry volunteers will be staffing a booth at the **Independence Park Farmers Market**, sponsored by the **Greater Independence Park Neighborhood Association** (GIPNA), during the last Sunday of each month this summer (**June 22, July 27, August 24, September 28** and **October 26**). Stop by to say hi, ask questions, learn about volunteering, or donate.

Thank you to everyone who donated time, money, items and assembled baskets to our spring program, which provided **354** baskets to clients' children 12 years old and younger. Some baskets were donated to students at **John B. Murphy Elementary School** and delivered to **Dr. Rebecca Shick**, the principal, by volunteer **Liz Drew**. The rest were given to families at the **Natal Intensive Care Unit at Prentice Women's Hospital** - the donation was facilitated by **Coby Hauser Puralewski**, who received the donation from volunteer **Lynne Anderson**.

The Pantry's registration team took part in a Chicago CityKey event held by the **Irving Park YMCA** in April. The event allowed many of our neighbors to get official ID cards, which also provide discounts and connect to Chicago Public Library and Ventra cards.

Thank you to **Kerry Brown Hasbrook** and **Radical Generosity**, who donated **57** birthday bags in April. The bags contain cake mix, frosting, candles, plates, napkins, utensils, streamers, games and other party items. We appreciate their ongoing support in so many ways!

The Irving Park Community Food Pantry is open on **Wednesday** mornings from **9 am - 12 pm** and on the **second Tuesday** of each month from **6 - 7 pm**. The Pantry is located at **4256 N. Ridgeway Ave.**

For more info about the pantry, contact **John Psiharis**, Executive Director, at info@irvingparkfoodpantry.org or visit www.irvingparkfoodpantry.org.



Dr. Rebecca Shick, principal at **Murphy Elementary School**, holds a basket that the Pantry donated to the students following its spring basket program. Photo by **Liz Drew**

Kerry Brown Hasbrook from **Radical Generosity** shows off the birthday bags her group put together with several organizations for our clients.



Boy Scouts from the **Pathway to Adventure Council** held a food drive for the Pantry, dropping off flyers in neighborhoods, and picking up the donations the next week. Photo by **John Psiharis**

Volunteer **Lisa Hendricks** is prepping our herb garden for planting and is still accepting seedlings, with extras to be given to our clients.



Irving Park Lutheran Church News & Events

A Public Welcome to Our Welcoming Church

Outdoor Worship & Church Picnic

Sunday, June 29 at 9:30 am

Independence Park

Irving Park Lutheran Church's annual outdoor worship and potluck brunch in **Independence Park** has become a great success! This year the event will be on June 29th, beginning with brunch at 9:30 am, followed by a 30-minute worship service, followed by more fellowship and games. As the final Sunday of Pride month, this year the day is also a chance for our church to publicly promote and celebrate welcome and inclusion.

Summer Worship Schedule

We've begun our summer schedule of worship at **9:30 am**, which continues through Labor Day weekend.

Celebrating Juneteenth

Juneteenth is a holiday that epitomizes the African American story. Juneteenth joyously celebrates when the last African Americans who were enslaved learned of the Emancipation Proclamation and were told they were free. In many cases, their freedom had been purposely delayed more than a year. Juneteenth honors the resilience and fortitude of African Americans and those truly committed to the vision of a free, more perfect union for our country. At IPLC, we celebrate Juneteenth with special litanies, prayers, music, and preaching. Join us **Sunday, June 22 at 9:30 am!**

Burgers, Bags, & Bonding

4th Sundays in the Summer from 5:00 - 7:00 pm

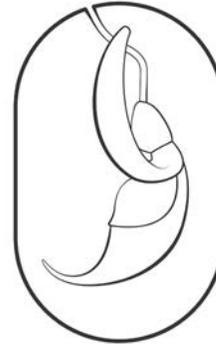
Come to the IPLC Gym (4057 North Harding) for fellowship and an easy dinner the 4th Sundays of the month this summer: **June 22, July 27, and August 24th from 5-7 pm**. We can play bags (also known as cornhole) as we visit and eat. We'll provide burgers, hot dogs, and condiments. You can bring a side and friends- or just come and be fed and make new friends!

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Tapestry Center Reopening News

by Mark Johnson

Tapestry would like to share with our community about the reopening of **Tapestry Center** on the first Sunday in June. Rolling openings for our community to see and experience the Center will occur throughout the summer and into the fall. The best way to connect with us is to come in and have a look. We welcome you into our home and our lives as we are here to serve you.

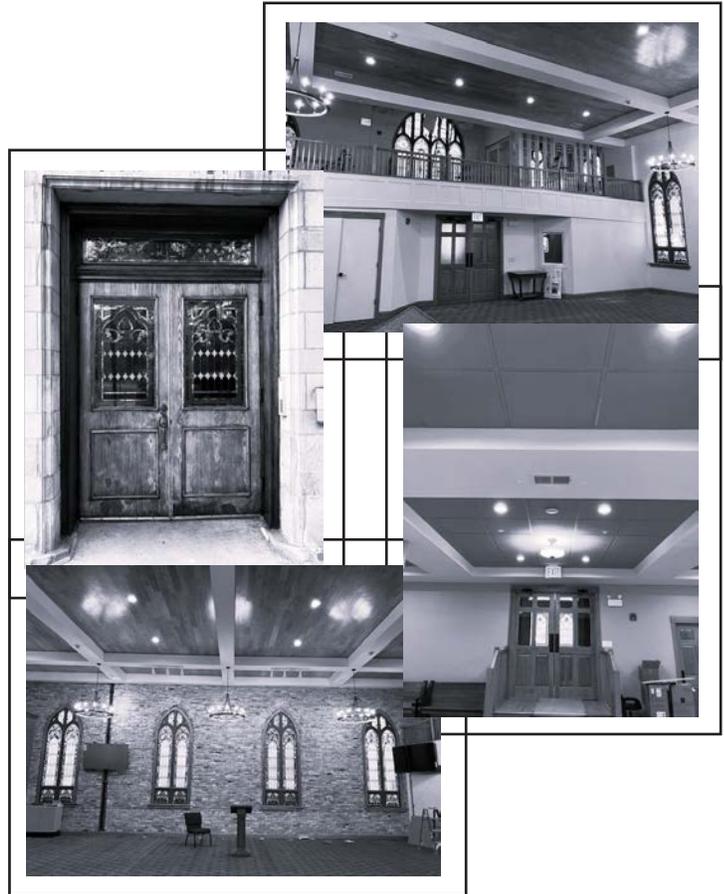
Tapestry Center and **Tapestry Fellowship** is reopening at **3824 W Irving Park** as a place to share hopes and dreams again. We have been meeting at 4003 Elston and Irving Park the last few months, due to a fire we experienced on December 22nd, 2023. We were grateful that no one was hurt and no one was in the building. It happened overnight so we are unaware fully how it happened. We awoke to a smoke-filled building that would take over seventeen (17) months to clean and restore.

We are appreciative of **Greystar Construction**, a team led by **John Graziano** and a host of artisans, who have labored since September to restore this 1911 building and serve both this Family Church and the Irving Park Community.

In the past, we have gathered on Sunday mornings around 10:30 am for coffee and fellowship. Throughout the week, we have been open for Arts events, "What's on Tap?" Blues Fridays, family events, anniversaries, weddings, birthdays, City Wide Gatherings for Prayer, Bible Discussions, 17th District Blue Sundays; Theater presentations, and Music performances. **City First** is our 501-c3 organization that will provide access if anyone wants to use The Center for community or family events. Contact us at city1stfoundation@gmail.com and visit tapestrycommunity.org.

Our main interest is to help our community grow in their daily walk spiritually and relationally. Small group Discovery groups, open times of meditation and prayer, and the use of our Cafe to build relationships and find a friendly place to relax, rest, and have an open dialogue to life's daily opportunities and challenges. We are here to "build people up" and provide tools to encourage family and community. We at Tapestry, are here to discover, learn, grow, and be a community that cares for each other.

"We are weaving our lives together in Christ."



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JENNI ON THE BLOCK

★ ★ NEIGHBOR SPOTLIGHT ★ ★
by Jenni Kus

I love meeting the people in our community and believe that a monthly neighbor spotlight would be beneficial and fun! This initiative provides an opportunity to learn about the remarkable individuals residing in our neighborhood. This month, we are pleased to introduce the **Baumgaertel family** from the North Avers!

Living across the alley from this wonderful family has made it an obvious choice to feature them in our inaugural neighbor spotlight. **Jessica** and **Adam** relocated to West Walker in February 2021 from nearby Spaulding/Irving Park. They were captivated by the house and the community, finding it ideal for raising their family.

Jessica and Adam have two sons, **Emmett** (3 years) and **Wyatt** (5 months). Following the birth of their first child, Jessica aspired to transition her career from working in Family Law. Her home bakery, established in June 2022, has since evolved into a full residential restaurant operating four (4) days a week at the **Long Room** in Ravenswood, offering breakfast and lunch from Monday to Thursday. Adam, a Senior Engineer with **Luminii**, a lighting company in Niles, enjoys engaging in home improvement projects during his "leisure" time (there is no true leisure time with little ones!).

The Baumgaertel family's weekends typically involve taking their children to various activities throughout the city. Jessica and Adam also appreciate spending time together attending shows, concerts, dining out to explore diverse cuisines in the area, or spending time with friends when the opportunity arises.

Their extended family is local and close knit, making their home a lively place. You will often see the family walking around the neighborhood. Jessica encourages anyone who sees them out and about to greet them and introduce themselves as they enjoy meeting new people in the community.

Please contact me if you would like to be the next neighbor spotlight or nominate a neighbor via jennikusbds@gmail.com.

WWCA Members

Have you renewed your membership yet for 2025?

WWCA Membership runs January 1 through December 31 annually. Your dues help fund a variety of items:

- Ten (10) issues per year of the *West Walker Wire*, delivered free to residences and businesses in West Walker
- The annual community garage sale
- Area non-profit groups like the Irving Park Community Food Pantry, Independence Park, and Independence Library
- Free email updates on neighborhood events, area crime, and a LOT MORE!

Thank you to renewing members:

Derya Ozyurt Family
Johanna & Eric Zorn
Marvin & Faye Weinstein

Welcome new members:

Jill & Denny Kellogg
Iman & TaraLynn Randhawa



*The Baumgaertel Family - Adam,
Jessica, Wyatt, and Emmett*



CAPS REPORT

BEAT 1723

by Jenni and Michael Kus

On June 28, from 9:00 AM-10:30 AM, the 39th Ward Alderman's office, State Rep **Mike Kelly**, and others are hosting a **Paper Shredding, Prescription Drug Take Back, and Electronic Recycling Event** for the community! The 17th District Community Policing Office will conduct outreach at the event for Domestic Violence Awareness, safety tips, crime awareness updates, and upcoming 17th District events. The event is located at **5106 N. La Crosse Ave** (Trinity Slovak Lutheran Church).

- The following information was taken from CPD CLEARMAP Source Data (<https://gis.chicagopolice.org/>):
- There were ten (10) incidents reported in West Walker between April 28 and May 14.
 - Of those, there was one (1) incident of Assault (aggravated) on April 28 with a knife at a gas station on the 4300 block of N. Pulaski
 - One (1) incident of Battery (simple), also April 28, on the 4100 block of N. Elston
 - Three (3) incidents of Theft - (\$500/under) May 1 in a driveway on the 4200 block of N. Ridgeway, (retail) May 6 in a grocery store on the 3600 block of W. Montrose, and (from a motor vehicle) May 7 on the 4300 block of N. Lawndale
 - One (1) incident of Robbery (armed/handgun) at a gas station on the 4300 block of N. Pulaski
 - One (1) incident of Criminal Sexual Abuse May 5 on the 3900 block of W. Montrose
 - One (1) incident of Deceptive Practice (fraud) at a residence May 9 on the 4100 block of N. Monticello
 - Two (2) incidents of Criminal Damage - (to property/restaurant) May 10 on the 3500 block of W. Montrose and (to vehicle) May 14 on the 4100 block of N. Elston.

In mid-May, gang graffiti was sprayed on an apartment building in the alley of 4100 block of N. Elston. At least one (1) 311 work order was created on the app, and the graffiti was removed quickly (within a day or two). This is one of many reasons to utilize our 311 services, either by phone or on the app. **if you see something, say something by reporting it, even if you think your neighbors already reported it!**

The next **CAPS Meeting** is on **June 18, 2025 at 6:30 pm**, 17th District Station (4650 N. Pulaski Rd). All members of the community are welcome to attend!

Independence Parka

by erica dreisbach





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