

The Jewish VOICE

Informing and Connecting Jews in El Paso-Las Cruces

NISAN/IYAR 5783
April 2023

ISRAEL: YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

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JEWISH EL PASO
CONNECTING EL PASO-LAS CRUCES

Chag Pesach Sameach



Dear El Paso and Las Cruces Community Members,

Pesach is here and we will once again gather with family and friends to read from the Haggadah. We will take time to reflect and partake in the elements of the Seder plate which is a representation of our painful journey towards liberation. However, we also take the time to celebrate our freedom, not just from Egypt, but from our enemies and our own personal journeys. Liberation brings about growth and new beginnings.

Our office has seen several

changes recently, and we look forward to our new Executive Director starting on May 1, 2023. We are beginning a new chapter in our Federation's journey and look forward to your continued support.

On behalf of the Leadership and Staff at Jewish El Paso/Las

Cruces, I wish all of you a most Happy Passover and peace in Eretz Israel for all people.

– Good Yontiv,
Monika Kimball
Interim Exec. Dir. Jewish
El Paso

Important Announcement



It gives me great pleasure to announce the Search Committee's and the Jewish El Paso Board's unanimous approval to hire Ms. Marla Cohen as its next Executive Director. The Board offered Ms. Cohen a three-year contract which she subsequently

accepted. Ms. Cohen will begin her tenure with Jewish El Paso on May 1, 2023, and looks forward to meeting each one of you.

Marla and husband Salvador are delighted to move to El Paso and connect with both the El Paso and Las Cruces communities.

– Shalom,
Monika Kimball
Interim Exec. Dir. Jewish
El Paso

Passover at the J

By Nancy Shiloff

The students of the J Center for Early Learning had so much fun celebrating Purim and can't wait to celebrate Passover together too. The transition from Purim to Passover happens very quickly - at The J much like at home! Our Judaics classes are now focused on all things Pesach. Each year, in rotation, the children make something they're able to use at the seder: seder plates, matzo covers, ten plagues finger puppets ... all while learning all about the story



of the exodus from Egypt and, of course, learning the four questions. Their studies culminate in a model Seder on the 29th - exactly one week before real first seder night. We can't wait to celebrate our next joyous holiday together.

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From the Head of Content

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JEWISH EL PASO
CONNECTING EL PASO-LAS CRUCES

The Jewish VOICE

A publication of Jewish El Paso

The Jewish Voice of El Paso, published ten times a year, is dedicated to informing, educating, and uniting the Jewish community by providing news items of local, national, Israeli and international concern.

The Jewish Voice will consider for publication any materials submitted that support the mission of Jewish El Paso and have relevance and appeal our Jewish community. Articles are subject to editing at the editor's discretion and are subject to space limitations. Letters cannot be longer than 150 words and articles must be kept to a maximum of 300 words.

Please email to thevoice@jewishelpaso.org

Opinions are those of individual writers and not necessarily those of Jewish El Paso. The Jewish Voice is not responsible for the kashrut of any product or eating establishment advertised herein.

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Sunday, April 30 | 3:30-7pm

@ Ardovino's Desert Crossing

Celebrate Israel's 75th birthday with your family and friends! This event is open to all and will include educational and celebratory programming to showcase Israel's achievements and contributions to the world. Childcare will be provided through our PJ Library Corner.

Ticket Prices:

Now-April 16, 2023:

Adult Ticket - \$18

Child Ticket - \$8

April 17-April 21, 2023:

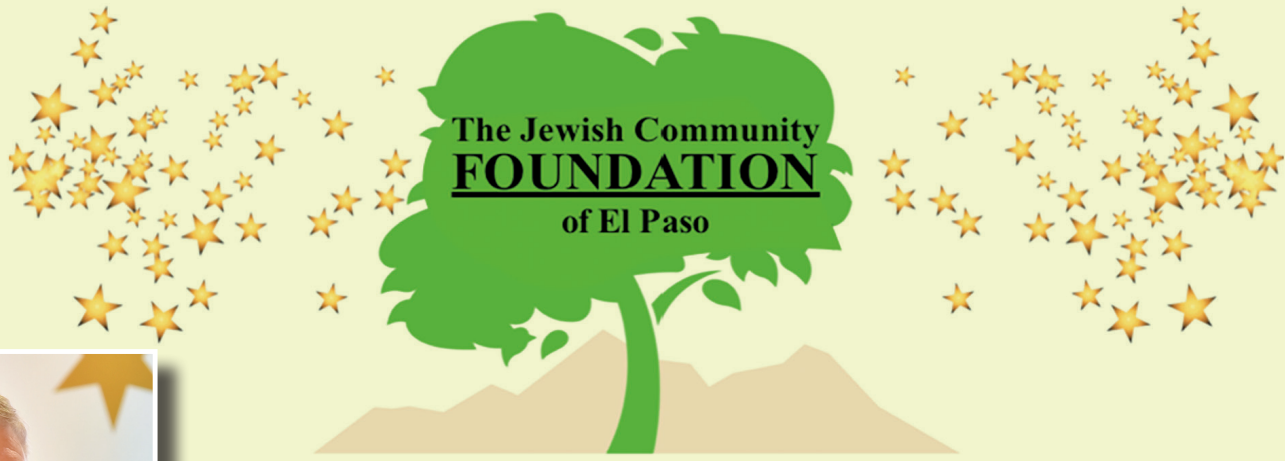
Adult Ticket - \$36

Child Ticket - \$16

*** Tickets are first come first served and are limited to 150 guests.**

To purchase tickets visit www.jewishelpaso.org

or email rmendez@jewishelpaso.org



20 Years



FACES & PLACES

Borderland's Cafe Europa - Purim Bash with Rabbi Evette Lutman



Rebecca Mendez, Program & Engagement Coordinator, attended United Way's Young Leaders Society's ENGAGE Summit 2023



JFNA: Israeli Government and Other Updates

*From the Office of Shira Hutt
Executive Vice President
Jewish Federations of North America*

Huge demonstrations against the Israeli government's proposals to overhaul the judicial system are not only continuing, but increasing in intensity. This week, the governing coalition advanced a plan to enable the government to control the process of naming judges to the Supreme Court, including the power to appoint the chief justice.

In his speech to the nation last night, Prime Minister Netanyahu reasserted his determination not to back down, despite a growing threat from military reservists that they will protest by reserving to serve. As Eric Fingarhut told NPR's Morning Edition on Tuesday, we remain steadfast in our efforts to promote a compromise.

In partnership with the Israel Democracy Institute (IDI), we held a webinar this week on the implications of the Israeli government's policies for the Jewish State's economy and

foreign relations. Prof. Karnit Flug, the first female governor of the Bank of Israel, appeared along with the Hon. Elliott Abrams, who advised three Republican presidents—Reagan, Bush, and Trump—on foreign policy.

Join us on Thursday, March 30 at 12:30 pm ET to learn about our iRep Initiative's response to concerns that the Israeli government's policies may affect sensitive issues around religious diversity in the Jewish State. Speakers are: iRep Chair Jen Leemis from Chicago, along with Dr. Shuki Friedman from the Jewish People's Policy Institute, Uri Keidar from Yisrael Hofsheet, and Efrat Shapira-Rosenberg from Ne'emanei Torah Va'Avodah.

Jewish Federations of North America are among the dozens of organizations and Federations that have signed on as supporters of the Foundation to Combat Antisemitism's "Blue Square" campaign, which launches on Monday, March 27 at 9:00 am ET. It will appear on billboards, web banners of major websites, and national media outlets, including The Voice,

Good Morning America, and The Today Show. We will share social media posts with the blue square hashtag (#□) that highlight our extensive work in this area.

Also this week, we joined Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Representative Grace Meng (D-Queens), and a bipartisan group of Members of Congress to implore the Justice Department to investigate why local police departments are withholding hate crime statistics in their reports to the FBI. The letter to the Justice Department follows the release of updated data from the FBI that indicate that hate crimes reached the highest number in decades in 2021.

We are endorsing another bipartisan letter being sent today by 83 House members to the leaders of the House Appropriations Committee that requests funding be increased in FY24 to \$2 million for the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism.

We also spoke out this week on yesterday's disturbing annual report

from the ADL that white supremacists are driving the huge spike in antisemitic incidents across the country, with their destructive propaganda more than doubling from 2021 to 2022.

Last year, Jewish Federations pressed the USDA to make more kosher food available at food pantries through the Emergency Food Assistance Program. In response, USDA has released a new fact sheet and will host a webinar in April to educate participating organizations on how to serve those in need of kosher (and halal) options. Click here to view the fact sheet. The webinar will take place on Thursday, April 27 from 2:30 to 4 pm ET.

FRD Leadership Mission: The FRD Leadership Mission has changed one of its destinations; it will now be traveling to Baku, Azerbaijan and Tbilisi, Georgia. The dates remain the same: Monday, July 10-Sunday, July 16. For more information and to register. Contact Amanda Goldstein with questions.

More Political Women?

Vote issues, not demographics. Support community-driven candidates.

By Kathleen Staudt, Professor Emerita of Political Science and Alison Westermann

When scholars published serious research decades ago about the severe underrepresentation of women in U.S. politics, some hoped that more women in elected offices would help democratize American politics for a truly representative government. The feminist movement of the late 1960s made visible women's near-exclusion along with the absence of "women's interests" in government (such as domestic violence and rape, health, unequal wages and employment opportunities). Hopes might still exist for deeper democracy, but the track record of increasing percentages of women in politics shows the importance of voting for candidates based on issues, not demographics, including for feminist men.

Only a half-century ago, a tiny percentage of U.S. women held elective office, most of them white. The late political scientist Jeane Kirkpatrick published *Political Woman* in 1974 based on in-depth interviews with women state legislators at a time when men held 94% of the state seats. Women ran after raising families and working in nonprofit organizations, perhaps broadening the political agenda to include women's issues. In those times, men's pathways to office came through careers in business and law. Political women faced obstacles raising campaign money and dealing with ugly stereotypes from the media and men who controlled party machinery.

Back then, people had high hopes for what diversifying leadership might do for representing all people. The

U.S. never elected a woman president though major parties recently ran women VP candidates Sarah Palin and Kamala Harris. Only in the mid-70s did the first woman governor win without using what political scientists called "the widow's route" such as what Texan Miriam A. "Ma" Ferguson did after her husband was impeached. Amazingly, the U.S. Supreme Court was male-only until Reagan appointed El Paso-born Sandra Day O'Connor. The late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg exemplified expertise in arguing cases well before her appointment that brought the 14th Amendment Equal Protection Clause to bear on gender equality. The newest Justice Amy Coney Barrett could not be more different than RBG.

Nowadays, women legislators at both state and national levels represent approximately a third of seats. In comparative terms, the Inter-Parliamentary Union's database of 193 countries ranks the U.S. #74 (<http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>). In over a hundred countries, women have served as chiefs of state (mainly presidents and prime ministers in the 20th century and beyond), but not the United States, with its deep-seated misogyny; stereotypes of female candidates have been routine. How do they dress? Do they project their voices well? Are they likeable? The non-issue-oriented questions seem endless during campaigns.

Hopes for a better democracy rest on many structural changes beyond the scope of this essay. But in this essay's spirit, first, people should focus on issues, not demographics, and avoid the wedge issues that so often address gender in these polarized times. Second, big money should be removed from elector-

al process. Finally, people should stay involved in public affairs in between elections, especially in community-based organizations where many wom-

en lead as do men. We should recruit more candidates from these community organizations, not rely on the millionaires' clubs.

Bea Weisz Memorial Scholarship Fund

Applications are now being accepted

Applications must be received on or before
May 15, for distribution by August 15, 2023.

It was the wish of Ms. Weisz that proceeds from the fund would be given to a needy and worthy Jewish college student(s) in El Paso to enable him or her to pursue his or her studies.



Applications are available online at
www.jewishelpaso.org

In July of 2001 the Beatrice L. Weisz Memorial Scholarship Fund was established.



An Open Letter to Prime Minister Netanyahu and Opposition Leader Yair Lapid

Dear Prime Minister Netanyahu, Opposition Leader Lapid:

The Jewish Federations of North America have a deep and abiding love for the State of Israel. We rejoice at its growth and accomplishments, we pray for its safety and success, and we have, from long before the birth of the state to this very day, done everything within our ability to assist its government and people. Our support for the State of Israel is unconditional and eternal.

It is because of this love and support that we have been following closely the increasingly acrimonious debate over the governing coalition's proposals to make fundamental changes in the relationship between the Knesset and the Supreme Court, especially the proposal to allow the Knesset to overturn decisions of the Supreme Court with a bare majority vote. We write to each of you, the leaders of the government and the opposition, for two reasons.

First, we urge you each to fully embrace the proposals set forth by the President of Israel, Isaac Herzog, to set a course for the consideration and resolution of these issues. President Herzog has the respect and admiration of Jews around the world, as do both of you. Whatever the final resolution of these issues, this process will ensure that the views of all stakeholders are fully considered.

Second, we urge you to make clear that a majority of just sixty one votes of the Knesset is not sufficient to override a decision of the Supreme Court. The essence of democracy is both majority rule and protection of minority rights. We recognize that any system of checks and balances will be different than those in our own countries, but such a dramatic change to the Israeli system of governance will have far-reaching consequences in North America, both within the Jewish community and in the broader society.

With best wishes for the continued flourishing of our beloved Jewish state. Am Yisrael chai!

CC:

President Isaac Herzog

Justice Minister Yariv Levin

Minister of Finance Bezalel Smotrich, Chair, Religious Zionism

Minister of Housing Yitzhak Goldknopf, Chair, UTJ

Minister of Internal Security Itamar Ben Gvir, Chair, Otzma Yehudit

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Member of Knesset Benny Gantz, Chair, National Unity Party

Member of Knesset Avigdor Liberman, Chair, Yisrael Beitenu

Member of Knesset Mansour Abbas, Chair, Ra'am

Member of Knesset Merav Michaeli, Chair, Labor

Hadassah-El Paso Celebrates Shabbat Zachor and 80th Anniversary

By Debra Cohen, Hadassah El Paso

On March 3rd, Hadassah-El Paso and Temple Mount Sinai (TMS) jointly celebrated Shabbat Zachor. Originally scheduled with Congregation B'nai Zion (CBZ), it was relocated a few hours before Shabbat due to a plumbing issue. We are extremely grateful for the extensive effort to transfer Hadassah's service accordingly.

Each of our spiritual homes was responsible for these mitzvot. CBZ demonstrated it through the initiation of this

process and transportation of our Oneg to TMS. The food was fabulous (as is always the case) with few leftovers!! Likewise, TMS welcomed us to the service and customized distributed prayer sheets.

In addition to our traditional program, Hadassah-El Paso also recognized its 80th Anniversary Year and the significant accomplishments of the national organization for 2022. Our local chapter originated with a few women and their desire to provide aid in Eu-

rope against Nazism. Likewise, Hadassah International was recognized for its advocacy and awarded the 2023 Genesis Prize (Israel's Nobel) with other non-governmental organizations. This was in response to the support provided to the Ukrainian people in the wake of the humanitarian crisis caused by the war

- Sent 15 medical delegations to Poland
- Set up and ran medical clinics on the Ukraine/Poland border
- Collaborated with the World Health

Organization and others to treat over 31,000 Ukrainian refugees

- Welcomed over 50 young refugees at our Youth Aliyah villages in Israel

Whether 80 years ago or today, Hadassah-El Paso continues to demonstrate "The Power of Women Who Do" to "Heal the World".

Thank you to all participants, attendees, CBZ, TMS and especially Rose Falcon for such a special Shabbat Zachor Service during our 80th Anniversary Year.

Texas Jewish Historical Society – Trip to Cuba

By Susan Zack Lewis, Parliamentarian, Texas Jewish Historical Society

The Texas Jewish Historical Society has made three trips to connect with Jewish Cuba and has a fourth trip planned for October. The visits in 2014, 2015, and 2017 focused on taking needed items, such as batteries and OTC medicines, that were not easily obtainable for Cuban citizens.

Approximately 100 travelers went on the three trips, meeting with President Adela Dworin of the Patronato, the largest synagogue, who shared her knowledge of Jewish history of Cuba, and welcomed TJHS as guests of the congregation for dinner and services on Friday night. Dworin later wrote

TJHS, "You touch us deeply and give us hope. With people like you our work will continue!" They also met leaders at the Sephardi Center and the Orthodox synagogue, Adat Israel, with needed goods and cash donations.

All three visits included the historic Jewish cemetery where the group recited Kaddish, and other Jewish and historical sites. One trip included a visit to the Jewish community in Cienfuegos.

In 2017, travel to Cuba became more complicated. The pandemic in 2020 put TJHS travel plans on hold. The mission will resume October 25-November 1, 2023. For more information and the itinerary, visit the designated website <https://tri.ps/7iNGo>



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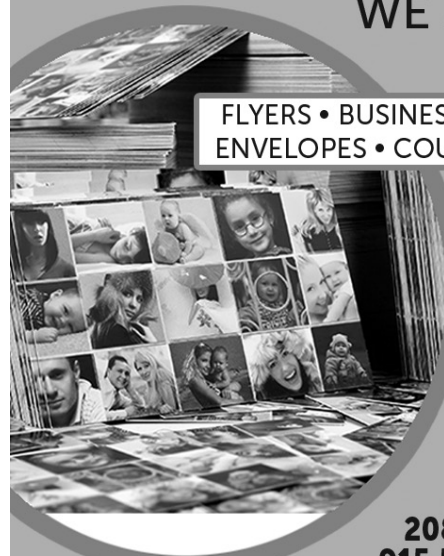
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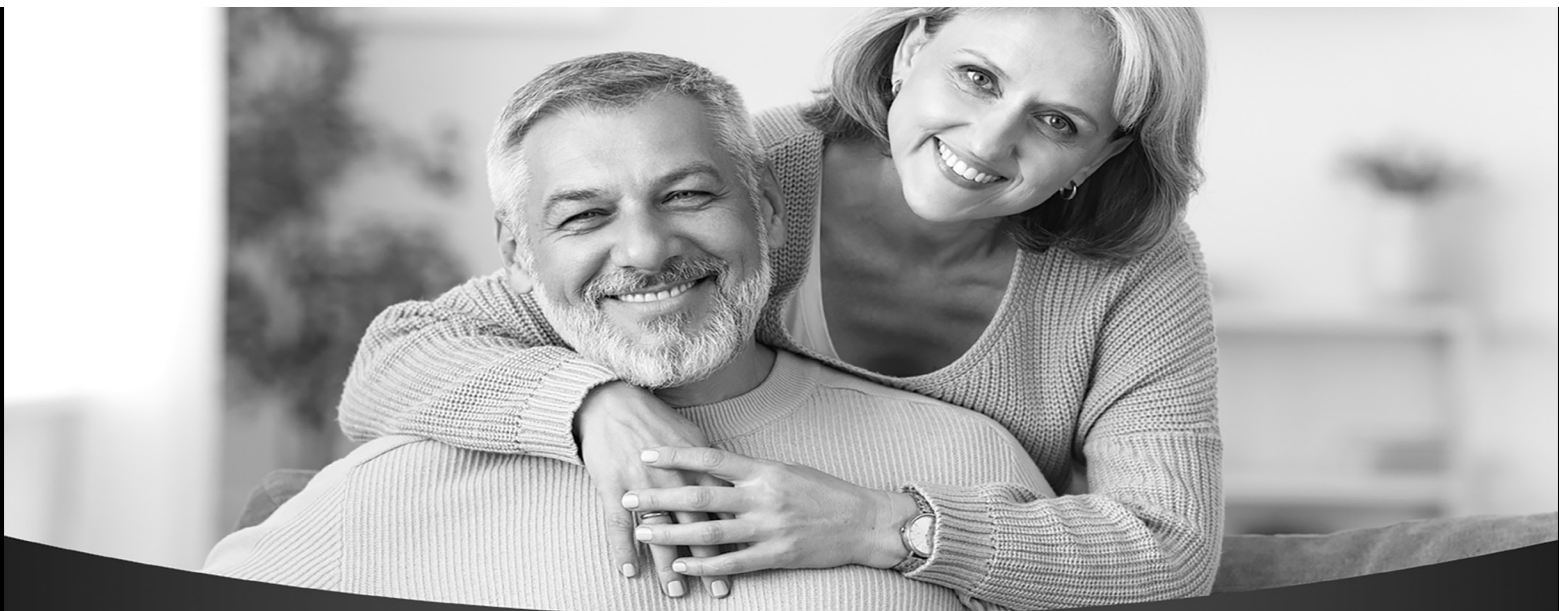
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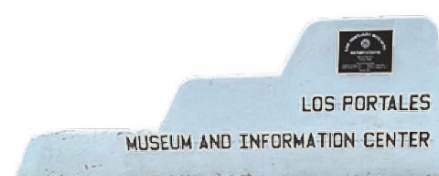
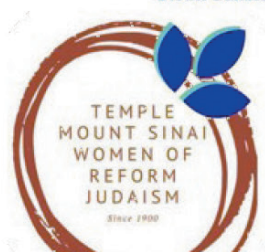
The Society for Crypto-Judaic Studies invites YOU
to their 33rd Annual Conference to be held in El Paso, Texas
August 13-15, 2023.

Open to any and all interested in Jewish history, genealogy, the Spanish Colonial era, and the Jewish history of the Borderlands, do not miss these two-and-half days of panels, lectures, and cultural enrichment.

Hosted by the City of El Paso Conference Center and the El Paso del Norte Hotel, event registration includes outstanding meals, a genealogy workshop, two films, and a concert by the renown Robyn Helzner, "Key to the Casa"; the Music of Jewish Sefarad."

Early registration encouraged as of March 15th.
For more information and details go to cryptojews.com

Thanks to our supporters and sponsors:





<https://www.hadassah.org/get-involved/israel-travel>



**Hadassah Yom Ha'Atzmaut
Celebrating Israel's 75th Anniversary:
From Dream to Reality**
Led by Marci Natan
Accompanied by Rhoda Smolow & Ellen Hershkin
April 18-28, 2023

Hadassah's Israel Through BG's Eyes
Led by Aileen Bormel
Accompanied by Barbara "BG" Goldstein
May 8-18, 2023



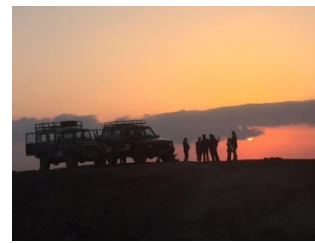
Hadassah Summer Family Tour to Israel
Led by Carol Rosenthal
June 21 - July 1, 2023

**Hadassah Israel Tour Through a Legal
Lens with Attorneys and Judges**
Led by Randa Maher
July 5-16, 2023



Hadassah Tour of Israel For First Timers
October 11-22, 2023

**Hadassah Israel Together:
Mothers, Daughters & Friends**
Led by Ellen Hershkin & Lisa Hershkin Roth
October 24 - November 3, 2023



**Hadassah Israel Cultural Curiosity
Music, Art & Cuisine**
Led by Peg Elefant & Valerie Lowenstein
November 5-15, 2023

Hadassah Keepers of the Gate Tour to Israel
Led by Linda Freedman Block & Roz Kantor
December 10-19, 2023



Hadassah Winter Family Tour to Israel
December 21-31, 2023



Yom Ha'atzmaut Lunch with Rabbi Scott Rosenberg

Wednesday, April 26 | 11:30am – 1:30pm | @ The Greenery

Registration required by Friday, April 21

Join us for a Yom Ha'atzmaut lunch with our special guest speaker, Rabbi Scott Rosenberg at The Greenery.

Transportation available from
Las Cruces @ 10:30am

Bus Departs from Temple Beth El at 10:45am, and returns to Temple Beth El by 2pm

NOTE: For registrant's who require a ride from Las Cruces there must be a required minimum of 10 attendees for a Shalom Shuttle Bus, if not met, attendees must find alternative transportation.

Please call Jewish El Paso to
arrange transportation via Shalom Shuttle
915-842-9554

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