

the ESSENGER

American Baptist Churches of Nebraska



May 2002
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Ministry in
the Heartland

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ABMen in Nebraska Announce Coordinator for ABBoys & Young Men

Glen Sliter, President of ABMen in Nebraska, has announced the appointment of a Nebraska coordinator for ABBoys & Young Men. Steve Carlson of First Baptist, Kearney, will begin development of ABBoys programs in Nebraska.

In responding to the appointment, Carlson said, "I grew up with men in my church providing mentoring for boys and young men and I'd like to see this kind of support in ABC of Nebraska churches."

Carlson has worked for 25 years for Triad Safety Systems in Kearney providing residential fire safety equipment. He and his family are active in First Baptist, Kearney. Steve sings with a group, "His Call." He and his wife have two children.

Nationally, ABMen has developed curriculum and resources to help build connections between the men and boys in a church with the goal of bringing the youth to Christ and nurturing their faith to full maturity. ABBoys & YoungMen curriculum emphasizes Personal Faith, Personal Values, and Christian Discipleship and Ministry. ABBoys is for grades six and under; ABYoungMen is for grades seven through twelve. The national coordinator of ABBoys & Young Men is Timothy Schwartz of Devon, PA.

Women's Conference May 31—June 2

Women of the American Baptist churches in Nebraska are invited to attend a three day conference May 31-June 2, 2002 at Camp Moses Merrill. They are encouraged to join in the variety of opportunities to assist them in becoming spiritually fit and to fellowship with Christian women from across the state.

The theme for the conference is "Building A Strong Heart for Ministry." The event will feature outstanding speakers and workshop leaders, a bookstore, craft items from Guatemala, fellowship and great food.

A special feature of the conference this year is the opportunity to be present when Camp Director Clarence Reiss cuts the first tree down to begin construction of an outdoor amphitheatre near Weaver Hall.

A registration form can be found on page 8.

From the Executive Minister..... Susan Gillies

Thanks Be To God!

For nearly ten years, the denomination has been struggling to revise its budget covenant. This is the agreement between regions and national boards about how the mission dollars will be received and used. This has been an incredibly difficult process because there is more mission need than there is mission money. One committee after another would bring forward a proposal only to have it voted down. Finally two and a half years ago, we decided to try a different approach. The General Executive Council (GEC), made up of all the region executive ministers and representatives of the national program boards and the office of the General Secretary, would meet as a whole and work together. We used a process called, Collaborative Negotiation. Dr. Trish Jones of Temple University led the process. I believed an agreement was impossible. I didn't think we could all come to one mind.

After more than two years of work we came to the most critical part of the process. April 7-12 we gathered in San Diego to see if we could come to a final consensus.

Everything we did was infused with worship. We followed the model of worshipful work. The week began with worship led by the new General Secretary, Roy Medley. We washed each other's hands in preparation for communion. I washed the hands of someone with whom I have had the most intense disagreements and he washed my hands. Dr. John Townsend, retired pastor from FBC, Los Angeles, led us in worship every morning and evening. At one of the most difficult moments, we took 20 minutes of absolute silence to think and pray about what we could do to make the process work.

It was a week of very, very difficult work. We handled spreadsheet after spreadsheet. We crunched numbers from every possible direction.

I have been a member of the GEC for over ten years. Most of that time I represented National Ministries and now, of course, I represent the ABC of Nebraska. In all the time I have been at that table, I've never seen the group more committed to a task, more focused on the new possibilities of our mission for Jesus Christ, or more considerate of each other.

On Friday, April 12, at about 6 pm, we came to agreement. Thanks be to God!

Now, we will get to work on plans for implementation. Each region board and national program board will vote on the proposal. A 100% vote is required. I've always said that it would be impossible to get a 100% vote, but I'm not saying that anymore. I saw a miracle happen in the General Executive Council. I was reminded once again that with God, anything is possible.

FUNDRAISING vs. STEWARDSHIP

Don Gaines

"Stewardship is just a word the church uses to ask me for money" you say. Unfortunately, that is true in some churches. However, that is not the way it should be because "stewardship" is not a synonym for "fundraising". Let me see if I can explain the difference. Fundraising focuses on budgets and asking for money to meet the budget or complete a project, such as adding classrooms to a church building or replacing a furnace. Fundraising works because we want the church to be able to pay the bills or we understand the need for more classrooms or a new furnace. Fundraising is also used to get money to send a high school band to play at a music festival or purchase new uniforms for the football team. There is nothing

essentially Christian about fundraising, even for such worthy causes as meeting a church budget, building new classrooms, or replacing a furnace that is inefficient and no longer keeps the church building comfortable.

Stewardship is a word that recognizes God as the giver and owner of all that we are and all that we have. We are "stewards" of God's property, including the money in our purses, checking accounts and investments. Stewardship talks about the givers need to give for his or her spiritual benefit, not the need of the church to receive to pay bills. Instead of asking, "What does the church need to balance its budget?" ask, "What percentage of your income is God calling you to give?" Stewardship makes money a spiritual issue. Tithing (giving 10% of our income) and percentage giving are not a legalistic requirement but a

personal faith commitment. Stewardship also has to do with how we use the time and skills God has given to us. Properly understood and practiced, good stewardship can be an important means of significant spiritual growth.

"From These Roots" Caravan Continues Its Journey

The "From These Roots" Caravan continues its journey to the churches of Nebraska. In April, the caravan of region staff completed the third of its trips, visiting Riverside, Tekamah, Valley, York, Chapman, Fremont, Wayne and Norfolk. Four more trips are planned before the region convention in September.



MISSION EXPLORATION IN ARIZONA

October 7-14, 2002

This trip is planned to give you the opportunity to see personally how God is working through our ABC missionaries to impact the lives of people at the Valley Christian Centers in Phoenix, Rainbow Acres (a ranch for mentally handicapped adults) near Camp Verde, and the Hopi Indian churches and Mission School on the Hopi Reservation, *plus* a day at Grand Canyon.

The cost of the trip is \$875 for double occupancy, \$1,075 for single. We will fly between Lincoln and Phoenix, and then travel by van in Arizona. The price includes all transportation, lodging and meals.

Is It On Your Calendar?? “Discover Renewal”

The Annual Family Reunion/Region Convention will be September 20-22 at the Holiday Inn Convention Center in Kearney. The theme is “Discover Renewal.” The theme scripture is Isaiah 40:31 (NIV)

Just Some of the Great Things To Expect This Year:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Friday 9/20 | 4pm Meetings of Ministers Council and Pastors’ Wives 5:15 Two dinners – one for clergy& spouses, and one for laity 6:45 Evening Program |
| Saturday 9/21 | 7:15 Institutional Breakfast 8:30 Morning Program: mission speakers/ worship/business Noon ABWomen’s Ministries Lunch & ABMen’s Lunch 2:00 Great Workshops! 3:15 More Great Workshops! 6:30 Banquet including Recognition of new & retiring pastors |
| Sunday, 9/22 | 7:30 Fellowship Breakfast -- no program, just visiting 9:30 The Family Gathered – Convention Worship |

Great Speakers

Chuck & Ramona Shawver, Missionaries to Mexico
Harry Riggs, national renewal ministries

Children & Youth

Childcare – throughout convention
Children’s Program – Friday & Saturday
Youth Program – Friday & Saturday

Video Review:

Empowering Education

This seven-minute video shows the ministry of American Baptist missionary Ruth Mooney and her work with the churches of the Costa Rican Baptist Convention in the area of Christian education. Ruth and her team of educational leaders have been developing a new Sunday school curriculum contextualized for use in Latin America. Its aim is to help learners identify the issues and needs they face where they live, to study the Scriptures to see who God is and what God is doing in these situations, and apply what is learned to their own lives. By participating together in such learning experiences, students gain new understandings that transform ideas, feelings and actions.

To borrow this brief but informative video, call International Ministries at 1-800-222-3872, x2178.

Watch for the Pebble

Educational Ministries announces the publication of *The Pebble*, a new 8-page quarterly children’s ministry newsletter. The first issue, expected this spring, focuses on children in crisis and has articles by Ed Buchs, Senior Vice President of Central Baptist Children’s Home, and Bruce Main, Director of Urban Promise in Camden, NJ.

Each issue of *The Pebble* will provide news, information, and ideas regarding ministry with children (birth through age 12) and their families. Readers will learn about exciting ministries in American Baptist congregations, and get advice to make their own ministry and outreach with children more effective. In addition, *The Pebble* includes questions, making it a useful resource for training

sessions with children’s workers. Upcoming issues will focus on the church supporting families, children and worship, recruitment and nurture of children’s workers, and summer programs for children.

Editor of the newsletter is Wendy Morris who served for eleven years on the faculty of Northern Baptist Theological Seminary. Wendy is also the author of *Stop the Violence! Educating Ourselves to Protect Our Youth* (published by Judson Press). Managing Editor is Mayra Castañeda of Discipleship Ministries.

Each congregation will receive one complimentary copy of *The Pebble* each quarter.

Early Baptist Worship by Dave Lundholm

I was reading *Pastor* by William H. Willimon and came across an ancient order of Christian worship dating from about 90 AD. I was struck by how similar it was to the way the earliest Baptists in England structured their worship. Look at the two services.

| AD 90 | AD 1695 |
|---|--|
| The believers gather in one place | (Baptists gathered in homes) |
| The memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read | A Psalm is read. There is a prayer. Then Scripture is read. |
| The president in a discourse admonishes and invites people to practice these examples of virtue | Sermon(s) |
| We stand together and offer prayers | Prayer |
| Bread is presented and wine with water. The president offers up prayers and thanksgivings and the people assent by saying Amen. The elements are distributed. | Homily and Exhortation Blessing the Bread Words of Institution Receiving the bread Blessing the wine Words of institution Receiving the wine |
| Offering | Psalm (Hymn) |
| Elements are taken to those who are not able to attend. Offering is distributed to the needy. | Benediction |

Both worship structures are basically the same four fold structure that Dr. Webber taught us in his presentation a year and a half ago at the family reunion: Gathering; Word, Table, Sending. There is something about this way of structuring worship that historically has been meaningful for the church. As we seek to structure our Sunday gatherings into a time of encountering God, perhaps the answer is a structure that has been around from almost the beginning of the church.

Great Plans Underway for Older Adults

The Adult Ministries Conference will be held September 30 – October 3, 2002, at Camp Moses Merrill. The theme of the conference is "Bearing Fruit." The scripture is Jeremiah 17:7-8. Speakers include retired pastors Rev. John Dennert who will lead Bible study and Rev. Paul Kondy who will be the "thinking outside the box" discussion leader. The annual conference is known for its casual style and wonderful fellowship. There will be workshops and work projects for those interested. The conference will feature special music, a hymn sing, and a hayrack ride.



RESOURCE:

Keepers of the Faith, by Jeffrey D. Jones
Baptist Heritage

Reproducible pages for use in classes and as bulletin inserts tell stories of eighty important Baptists.

Judson Press - 1999

Price \$22. Available from Judson Press, 1-800-4-JUDSON, or order online at www.judsonpress.com

Preaching Seminar

The ABC of Nebraska will host a preaching seminar for pastors at Camp Moses Merrill in October. The seminar is specifically designed for the most effective preachers in Nebraska. All persons who wish to improve or enhance their preaching skills are also invited. The seminar will begin at noon on Monday, Oct 21, and conclude with the noon meal on Wednesday, Oct. 23.

Dr. Joe Kutter, senior pastor at First Baptist Church of Topeka, KS, will be the seminar leader.

The leadership of the ABC-NE Ministers Council and the region staff will work together on planning for the event.

For registration information, contact the office of the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska, 402/556-4730 sgillies@abcofne.omhcoxmail.com

Make a Note:

American Baptist Men are sponsoring a MegaRally in Kansas City November 2, 2002. Put it on your calendar!

Calvary Youth Heading for Youth Quest Week

The youth at Calvary in Omaha are busy raising money to attend Youth Quest Week at Green Lake June 16-23. The whole church is working to support the six youth who have signed up for the experience. Various fundraisers have included a chili cook-off, a Valentine luncheon sponsored by the youth for the whole church, a bake auction after church, and a Hire-A-Youth Day. The next fundraiser is a church-wide Rummage Sale Saturday, May 18th.



Camp Moses Merrill News

2849 Co. Rd. 31 Box 170A Linwood, NE 68036; Clarence Reiss, Director (402) 666-5639
E-mail: campmerrill@nntc.net Website: www.campmerrill.com Fax: (402)-666-5411

Family Camp May 25-27



Bring the family out to a wonderful time of fun and relaxation. Enjoy the outdoors with your family this Memorial Day weekend. Friday evening will be yours to enjoy on your own as campers get set up. Saturday there will be many options and activities such as swimming, horseback riding, hayrack ride, and sand volleyball. Saturday evening there will be a Family Talent night. On Sunday there will be an informal gathering for praise and worship out in the natural setting of Camp Moses Merrill. The weekend finishes up with the Memorial Day Festivities planned on Monday.



Rates (based on three nights, with restrooms and showers):

RV Camper (water, electric and sewer): \$50 for the weekend

Tents: \$40 for the weekend

Cabins: \$120 for the weekend (limited availability)

Meals are available, call camp for pricing.

Call (402) 666-5639 to register, or (402) 538-3061 for more information.

Memorial Day Festival

Monday May 27, 2002

Hamburger & Hot Dog Picnic

11:30-1:00 Palmyra

Donations Appreciated



Songfest

Praise Singing and Music at
the Palmyra Amphitheater
from 1:00 to 2:30



Memorial Service

11:00 am

Palmyra Amphitheater

Swimming

1:00-5:00



Trail Rides



Project Camp June 2-7 Anyone 14 years old through adult are welcome to come complete projects together at camp. Call Larry Lang for more information or questions: day (308) 532-6772 or eve. (308) 534-1758

Summer Cook Position Available: Camp Moses Merrill is currently seeking an afternoon cook to assist in preparation and serving of the camper meals. Call the camp if you are interested.

LOCAL CHURCH NEWS

by Darlene Rimpley

June Deadlines

May 3 or 4, 2002 - Print Copy

Home Town Editor

Darlene RIMPLEY

Rt. 1 Box 74 A

Arnold, NE 69120

May 10, 2002 - E-Mail

E-Editor

area.minister.ne@charter.net

Subject: Messenger

Home Town News:

Dear Correspondents: I truly appreciate the newsletters sent to me, as well as the written notes of news, and thank you for the kind comments. The state office has asked me to send my news to them at the very first of the month - so if I do not have your newsletters/news items by the 3rd or 4th at the latest, that news will be included in the next month's Messenger column. Thanks for your help.

JUNIATA COMMUNITY CHURCH:

The choir presented the cantata, "Coming Again," on April 7.

OMAHA, JUDSON BC: Pastor Walden preached two services on Easter and two new members were welcomed to the fold the first Sunday in April. The women of Judson are busy getting fittings of the clothes they will wear in the "Spring Fling" to be held on April 21. All the clothing comes from the Tip Top Thrift Shop, which helps support Uta Hallee Girls Village. Several members are trying to get things in order for the Mission Trip to New York, which will be led by our Associate Pastor Glenn Williamson. Plans are progressing on the purchase and installation of a baptistery and several candidates await its arrival. A series of television commercials announcing our new location were run and the response was encouraging.

HOLDREGE, FBC: The Church Council tithed to several mission projects in March. They included the Manna Resort, which is a Christian camp ministry, to send 30 to 40 boys who have family with drug or alcohol problems. Blake Rademaker received his "God and Family" Cub Scout award.

GIBBON, FBC: The Senior High Youth sponsored a Lock-In for the Junior High Youth on April 12-13. A potluck breakfast was held after the Sunrise Service on Easter.

LINCOLN, FBC: A Prayer Vigil for peace in the Middle East was held each day at noon from March 17-30. The Women's Ministries held a breakfast on April 20 with Arlene Deerson, former State ABW President, as speaker. Frank Paul celebrated his 80th birthday with a celebration at FBC. The High School group held a cookout and basketball game on April 13. The Middle School group painted their new meeting room.

BEATRICE, FBC: The graduates will be honored on May 5.

NORTH PLATTE, FBC: The FBC youth worked with the Student Ministry Network to hold a concert featuring Thousand Foot Krutch, Ace Troubleshooter, Nifty Tom Fifty and Justified on March 28. A "Catacomb Service" was held on March 30 to give an experience of the early church. The ABY held an Easter Sunrise Service.

FAIRBURY, FBC: Regan and Katie Stoops will serve as the summer youth ministers from May 15 to Aug. 15. They are seniors at William Jewell College. Pastor Robin Stoops took part in the Pulpit Exchange that Capitol Assoc. had on April 14. Pastor Robin filled the pulpit at Lincoln Second Baptist, and Rev. Charlene Morris-Quarells was at Fairbury FBC. The Capitol Assoc. Spring rally was held at FBC on April 21, Sandra Rippe of The American Red Cross, who helped with rescue at the World Trade Center, was speaker. The Love and Concern Circle hosted their annual "Table Treasures" dinner on April 29.

OMAHA, CALVARY BC: The church assisted fifty refugees who came from Myanmar Burma. The Adult Sunday School has focused on a new series "The Cross or the Crescent," a study on understanding Islam from a Christian perspective. On Easter Sunday children, youth and adults interacted together as we went through the last week of Christ's life using "The Resurrection Eggs." On March 23rd we had 57 attend our Easter Eggstravaganza for the church and community. We had many first time people from the neighborhood come and learn about Easter through coloring eggs, decorating cookies, making crafts, watching an Easter video, and having an egg hunt! We mourn the loss of two brothers in Christ; George Burns and Ed Cobb, a former member of Calvary who was living in Lincoln.

CHADRON, FBC: Forty-eight participants took part in the 30-Hour Famine. The students raised \$1,200 to go to World Vision to feed the hungry, which meant that three youth sponsors had to shave their legs and one had to shave his head.

GRAND ISLAND, FBC: "Variety Show" was held on April 14, exhibiting all kinds of church talent, followed by pie.

OMAHA, FBC: The Ottawa University Ringers, a five-octave bell choir, presented a concert on March 20. A "vision of ministry" planning is being held, which will include the congregation's thoughts. The computer center has been very successful. In January there were 81 people who attended computer classes ranging in age from 81 years down to three.

OMAHA, BENSON BC: Dr. Lawrence Lindley spoke at the church on April 9 to both the congregation and the youth group. Charles Steele celebrated his 80th birthday on April 13. Paul and Irene Martin observed their 60th wedding anniversary on April 18.

NORFOLK, FBC: AWANA Awards Night was held on April 17. The groups "Pennies for Missions Night" netted \$65.94, which will go to a local mission, "Young Life."

SUPERIOR, FBC: The Southern Union Association Meeting was held at FBC on April 7, which ended with a communion service.

FREMONT, FBC: Dr. Walter Hickman is serving as Interim Pastor at FBC. He had also served as the interim in 1998. FBC, along with Salem Lutheran, hosted the Symphonic Band of Northwestern College, Orange City, Iowa on April 12. Church family joined in for a highway clean up on April 20. The new church bus arrived.

OCTAVIA, COMMUNITY CHURCH: OCC hosted the York Assoc. Spring Meeting on April 14 with "Heartbeat of the Church" as the theme.

COLUMBUS, FBC: Dr. Larry Lindley spoke at the church. Camp Sunday was held April 14, with a "camp lunch" following. A Messianic Passover Seder was held for Maundy Thursday, March 28. It was the traditional Jewish

P a s s o v e r
H a g g a d a h
(recitation) with
Messianic additions.
Members of the
church prepared
traditional Passover
foods. The
ceremonial part of
the meal presented
what Jesus said
and did at various
parts of the
recitation, as well as
when what is now
communion was

first observed.

TECUMSEH, FBC: The annual Christina Education Appreciation Supper was held on April 14, for those who have served FBC in the past year. A teacher workshop was held on April 21. The ABW First Assoc. Meeting was held at FBC on April 18.

OMAHA, PARKSIDE: Children's Sunday was held on April 14. Each congregant was encouraged to "bring a child." Workday was held on April 21.

ALLIANCE, FBC: The State Staff Caravan met with Pastor Rowe and members of the church on March 21. The Church School children, youth and teachers participated in a special parade of palms during worship on March 24. The Maundy Thursday Seder meal and the Lord's Supper was celebrated by a good attendance on March 28.

LINCOLN, SECOND BAPTIST: The University of Sioux Falls Camerata performed a concert on Friday evening, March 22. Our Easter season activities included a reenactment of the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday, an Easter egg hunt for children age 2 through 2nd grade on Holy Saturday, a breakfast on Easter morning prepared by the ABY, and a performance during the Easter service by the choir of the Cantata, "Lamb of God." On April 2, the Senior Adult Ministries group traveled by bus to the Old Country Buffet for the evening meal and then on to the Lied Center to see "Ozark Mountain Jubilee." Special Interest Missionary, Rev. Dr. Lawrence Lindley, who is the Executive Director of the Edna Martin Christian Center in Indianapolis, IN. spoke to the ABWM and others following a luncheon on April 10. April 21 was Disabilities Awareness Sunday and our guest speakers were Nancy Comer, from Eastland Ministries, and Crystal Childers, Miss Wheelchair Nebraska 2001. The ABY held a spaghetti dinner and fundraiser on April 21. Funds will be used for their summer mission trip and Jr. High retreat.



Local Church News

MCCOOK, FBC: The church is collecting items for the food pantry.

ARNOLD, FBC: The senior high and 8th grade graduates were honored on April 28. Fellowship Groups, which will include every family in the church, began meeting in April. Six host homes will invite the church families to join them for a time of fellowship, bonding and, of course, eating.

SCOTTSBLUFF, FBC: A "Family Swim" was held for the church on April 6. The North Platte Youth Choir performed at FBC on April 14. The Northwest Assoc. Meeting was held at FBC on April 27.

NEW MEMBERS:

NORFOLK, FBC: Steve and Karleen Swanholm

OMAHA PARKSIDE: Gary Parker

LINCOLN, FBC: Adrian Allen and Josephine Foutz.

FAIRBURY, FBC: Christ Davis, Kathy Rhoades, Alicia Davis

Southwestern Nebraska Festival for Christ

The men of the Southern Union Association of ABC-NE hosted the Southwestern Nebraska Festival For Christ in Holdrege March 17-20 along with the ABC churches in Holbrook, Holdrege, Guide Rock, Superior, Hastings and Juniata.

Larry Taylor of Bandera, Texas, was the speaker. He has conducted over 1000 local church crusades and area wide revivals during the last 35 years. Music ministry during the festival was led by Christy Pelton of Orleans and Van Bradley of Kensington, KS.

According to Dale Whitson of Holbrook, "The message was a blessing to all those that were able to attend. The presence of the Lord could be felt throughout the festival. The crowd was small but the working of the Holy Spirit was still strong."

Anyone wishing more information about the event, the speaker or musicians can contact Dale at 308/493-5395.

American Baptist Women's Ministries of Nebraska
Annual Conference Registration
May 31 – June 2, 2002

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

First Time Attending: _____ Number of conferences attended _____

I have enclosed a check made payable to ABW Ministries:

- _____ \$10.00 Deposit _____ \$70.00 Full time: Includes 2 nights & 5 meals
- _____ \$20.00 Friday only: Includes 0 nights and 1 meal
- _____ \$45.00 Friday night and Saturday: Includes 1 night and 4 meals
- _____ \$30.00 Saturday only: Includes 0 nights and 3 meals
- _____ \$45.00 Saturday and Sunday: Includes 1 night and 4 meals

Registration Deadline is May 20.

A late fee of \$5.00 is added after this date.

Please check meals you will be eating:

___ Fri. Eve. ___ Sat. AM ___ Sat. Noon ___ Sat. Eve. ___ Sun. AM

Return this form and check to:

Denise Nutter, 8668 N. Birdwood Rd., Hershey, NE 69143-4474

**The Messenger Is Available
On-Line**

This newsletter is now available on-line on the ABC of Nebraska website abcnebraska.com. In the months to come, there will be an archive of recent issues as well as the current issue available. Hard copies will continue to be mailed but anyone wishing to stop receiving the hard copy by mail should contact the region office 402-556-4730

ABC of Nebraska staff

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- Office Manager & Asst Treasurer.Sylvia Huskey
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- Pastor to Pastors (W)Paul Kondy
- Pastor to Pastors (E)Dick Peterson

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