

# WIND OW

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ON THE WORLD

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## Partnering Across Cultures -by Randy Sizemore

“**Cross-cultural partnerships are on the rise.** They have become a primary method in which churches and organizations engage in global missions. Partners from different cultures and contexts start working together with the hope of accomplishing great things for the kingdom of God.”

(Mary T. Lederleitner, *Cross-Cultural Partnerships*, IVP 2010, Introduction).

**T**HE OTHER SIDE of this good news is that the globe is becoming littered with the wreckage of the ministries that fail to navigate and successfully land the complexities of true cross-cultural partnerships.

Most desk top dictionaries define partnership simply in terms of two or more parties sharing in some action or endeavor such as dance partners or a football team. The Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions however defines cross-cultural partnerships in

terms of two or more Christian bodies who have formed a trusting relationship and fulfill agreed upon expectations by sharing complementary strengths and resources to reach their mutual goal.

{ **Give** a man a fish  
and he will eat for a day.  
**Teach** a man to fish and  
he will eat for a lifetime. }

With this old adage in mind, Lederleitner discusses the true goal of partnership. “Many churches and mission agencies misunderstand the purpose of partnership. It is not just giving money or cutting a check. We need to go beyond that to the place where we help cross-cultural partners develop infrastructure and capacity so they are sustainable over the long haul. Each group we partner with should be stronger and better off than they were before we started working together” (p.132).

On the one hand we have this growing desire in our local churches to partner more directly with cross-cultural churches, schools, orphanages and a variety of other ministries. On the other hand our postmodern western culture is experiencing distrust for organized religion (denominations) and distaste for centralized administration

of missions (GMC). As a result of this dichotomy more and more local churches, pastors and well-meaning Christians have taken the initiative to launch cross-cultural partnerships on their own without the benefit of the understanding, experience and instruction of those who have been successfully navigating these complex issues for decades.

The bible does call for Christians to create complimentary partnerships that utilize the diversity of the Body of Christ while taking seriously the stewardship of human and material resources to create a more effective synergy and a more credible witness to the world. However, before we load this plane with passengers and taxi down the runway toward a cross-cultural partnership we must protect our precious cargo by completing the pre-flight safety procedures that ensure a pleasant flight, safe landing and many more return visits. Before taking off, cross-cultural partners must lay out a flight plan by negotiating a vision statement and by building the organizational structure to fulfill it. We must hammer out the agreed upon rules and ministry roles that foster complimentary participation. Who is going to be the pilot, co-pilot, mechanic, navigator, etc.? The last thing any ministry needs at 30,000 feet is

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confusion about who was supposed to put fuel in the tank and who is going to land the plane!

These pre-flight pre-partnership dialogues foster the trust fundamental to the success of any strategic partnership. Trust is formed when we humbly and honestly tackle the nitty-gritty details of a cross-cultural interaction. Details which include but are not limited to the following:

- *What are the mutual expectations?*
- *What are the cultural distinctives belonging to the parties involved?*
- *What language will we use?*
- *How will we resolve conflict when it arises?*
- *How will we handle the exchange of finances and other resources?*
- *How will we evaluate this partnership on an ongoing basis?*



- *What will be our agreed upon theological understanding and expression?*
- *How will we foster mutual accountability?*
- *How long will this partnership continue?*

- *If necessary, how will we end this partnership?*
- *Will we use a facilitator to foster this partnership?*

The Global Ministries Commission wants to facilitate true, mutually beneficial cross-cultural partnerships between and among our 600 local congregations located around the globe. However before we board these flights and fasten our seatbelts, I want to make sure we get this right for the sake of our precious cargo, the Church of Jesus Christ. At our last GMC meeting our commission members made a commitment to read the book, [Cross-Cultural Partnerships: Navigating The Complexities of Money and Mission](#),

by Mary T. Lederleitner and to form a task force charged with the responsibility to research and suggest healthy ways for GMC to facilitate cross-cultural partnerships which will be mutually beneficial to our entire global EC family. As we go forward with this important yet somewhat overwhelming task, you can help ensure our success in one or more of the following ways.

- *Pray for God's wisdom and leadership in this process.*
- *Volunteer for the Partnership Task Force: (substantial time/work required).*
- *Read Lederleitner's book and educate yourself/your sphere of influence.*
- *Being patient with us as we spend the time needed to get this right.*

May God continue to bless the Evangelical Congregational Church as we seek to form healthy partnerships to fulfill the Great Commission and build His Kingdom. 🙏

## Spend-A-Day Becomes Missionary Prayer Partners

-by Randy Sizemore

OF ALL THE WAYS the EC Church facilitates and encourages our missionaries, the "Spend-A-Day" prayer initiative always scores near the top with our missionaries! Beginning **January 1, 2012** the "Spend-A-Day" program will become **"Missionary Prayer Partners"**. The concept of connecting individuals and missionaries to mutually pray for each other on a specific date will remain the same but we will initiate a few changes to make this important ministry more accessible and user- friendly.

- Coordination of the Missionary Prayer Partners will be from the GMC office (Carla Sizemore).
- You will be able to select from the participating missionaries, available months and download the needed information from the GMC website or by calling the GMC office.
- We will no longer collect the \$1.00 donation with each participant's prayer slip.
- An informational/instructional brochure and DVD will be produced to guide interested participants through the new Missionary Prayer Partners program.

- We want to thank Cathy Jo Bast for her work as Spend-A-Day Coordinator over the years! Cathy Jo will be stepping down as Coordinator at this year's National Conference so by July 1, 2011 the remaining months of the original 2011 Spend-A-Day program will be handled by Carla Sizemore at the GMC office. We will do our best to navigate this transition smoothly but please do not hesitate to contact Carla with any questions or concerns. Our ultimate goal is to have even more of our members partnering in prayer with our EC missionaries! 🙏

## SHORT TERM MISSIONS EQUALS LONG TERM RESULTS

**C**reating Global Christians is listed as one of the major initiatives of the Global Ministries Commission. Recently the GMC Short Term Mission Committee decided to help with this initiative by sponsoring short term mission trips that are designed to inspire a “glocal” (global & local) mindset. The idea is relatively simple. We want to expose our youth to our EC missionaries and international EC churches while connecting them to each other within the United States. The end result should be a young person who sees the value of connecting with other ECer’s at home and abroad in order to fulfill the Great Commission. The GMC Short Term Mission Committee is organizing possible trips this summer to work with missionaries Joe Toy in Pennsylvania July 31-August 6, 2011 and a trip to Trinidad with the Waldman’s July 23-August 1, 2011. If you are interested and would like more details please contact Pat Strain at [pstrain@eccenter.com](mailto:pstrain@eccenter.com) or 717-866-7584. 🌐

# A New Season of Life

**J**IM AND BONNIE BOUND will be formally retiring from active missionary service with the EC Church as of June 30th of this year. The Bounds have served for almost 40 years as EC missionaries, starting in Montreal in 1972. They transitioned in 1984 when they relocated to Vermont. Jim focused on campus ministry with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship while Bonnie used her skills of Bible study and teaching that developed into weekly sessions at various locations. She also developed Women’s retreats and special leadership training weekends. Since 2007, Jim and Bonnie have served under the same mission agency, Learning to Lean Ministries, but continued in their respective ministries of specialized classroom ministry (Jim) and bible teaching/women’s retreats (Bonnie.)

The EC Church and Global Ministries wish to honor the Bounds for their many years of service, both as pastor and missionaries. Accordingly, the Global Ministries-sponsored luncheon at National Conference this year will be a time to thank Jim and Bonnie and to share memories with them. The luncheon will be held on Thursday, May 26th at noon at Messiah

College, Grantham, PA. The cost is \$12.50 per person. Reservations are necessary and MUST be made through Brenda Long, who handles National Conference registration. Her email is [blong@eccenter.com](mailto:blong@eccenter.com). You can find information and directions to Messiah College at the EC website, [www.eccenter.com](http://www.eccenter.com).



We also will be collecting donations to present to Jim and Bonnie as a token of appreciation for their years of service and sacrifice. Donations may be given to the Bounds in person at the luncheon, or sent through the Global Ministries office at Church Center. Please make checks payable to EC Church and mark them ‘Bound retirement gift’ in memo section. Whether or not you are able to attend the luncheon, we would encourage you to send cards of appreciation to Jim and Bonnie. Their home mailing address is 2474 Elmore Pond Road, Wolcott, VT 05680. While we do not work for the praise of men, it is right to acknowledge those who have steadfastly worked in service for the Lord on this side of eternity. Please help us to say thank you to Jim and Bonnie Bound for their many years of service to our Lord and the EC Church. 🌐



## SENIOR SAINT PROMOTED

**HELEN THEOBALD**, former president of the Western Branch Missionary Society, was called home to be with her Lord on February 23rd. Helen had a long history of service in missions, both at her home church of Hooppole, IL, and with the then-Western Conference missions program. She served in several different offices of the Western Branch, and never lost her heart for both the missionaries and those who needed to hear about Jesus. Helen was 93 years young when she went to her eternal home. 🌐



# Hope for Alcora

-by B.J. & Rachel Whitaker

A BIG PART OF THE STORY of how the Whitakers ended up as church planters in Alcora, Spain begins in 2004 when Església Bona Nova (the Good News Church) was planted in the town of Onda by fellow ECMI missionaries and a local Christian couple. As this congregation grew and matured (now with about 35 members), the Lord placed a burden on their hearts for the town of Alcora, about 10 miles away, and in 2008 they started a Bible study here in the home of a local couple. The church, along with this couple, began praying that the Lord would send them a couple to be able to develop the ministry in Alcora, and two years later, as we completed our year of intensive training, the Lord guided us to be an answer to that prayer.

So last May we moved to Alcora, a pueblo of 11,000 in the province of Castellón, about 50 miles north of Valencia in Eastern Spain. An essential aspect of our work and ministry during our first year here has simply been watching and observing the way these people think and act, and letting people watch us and begin to get to know us a bit. We've come to the conclusion that Alcora is a town of contrasts—let us explain what we mean.

## An Economic Contrast

The first contrast we learned about was the state of the economy here. The driving force of Alcora's economy is the azulejo, or ceramic tile industry, and up until about 3 years ago that industry

was booming, with people flocking here from all over Spain and even other parts of Europe because there was plenty of work to be found. One of our acquaintances explained to us that there were so many jobs in the factories that if you didn't like working in one, you simply went to another one, and you would never think about working for lower wages in the supermarket. Now anyone would love a job in the supermarket simply to have a steady income. Our downstairs neighbor, J.P., told us that he has been laid off for well over half a year. He's put his resume in at about 60 factories and has yet to hear anything back. He's just one example of the more than 25% of Alcorinos who find themselves unemployed. Most economists are saying that Spain will



only begin to rebound in late 2012 or 2013, and the locals here agree that the ceramic tile industry will never return to what it was. Before, Alcora was seen as a beacon of hope, but now people are realizing that it was a misplaced hope as they foreclose on their houses.

## A Town of Spiritual Contrasts

Spiritually, Alcora is known as a very traditional Catholic pueblo. There are three main Catholic churches here, with some smaller chapels and hermitage sites scattered around the nearby countryside. Even though there seems to be some deep-rooted Catholicism, the vast majority of Alcorinos are very nominally Catholic, participating in the

religious festivals and going to church only to marry and to bury. In fact, we sense a certain pride in many people about their nominal Catholicism, almost as if they feel they have liberated themselves from the bondage of the traditional Catholic Church.

B.J. has had a number of lively conversations with his barber who seems to believe in almost everything but Jesus. She opened up a bit as she said, "Sure, I'm a Catholic because I was baptized a Catholic, but I'm not so sure about God. I'm certain there's something more than we can see, and I know there's power in magic, but the whole idea of Jesus being God and dying on the cross...I'm not sure if I buy it. I actually like Moses and his 10 Commandments more than I like Jesus."

We saw this spiritual contradiction most clearly last August during Alcora's town fiestas, officially known as "Festes del Crist," or "The Festival in honor of Christ." Like any other Spanish town, Alcora's festivals include an exposition of bulls, which normally includes some locals teasing and taunting various toros, without any harm or bloodshed. Fairly innocent, right? During the break between bulls, however, there was a live intermission show with an obese Santa Claus-looking fella dancing to music on top of a car wearing nothing but a red thong. A friend of ours told us that normally it's two topless ladies, but this was a demonstration in mockery of the current economic crisis (apparently the ladies cost more). The very next day, after a lot of people had spent the night getting inebriated, there was the procession in honor of the Santísimo Cristo (the Most Holy Christ) in which

a good number of the same people turned out to throw flowers to, light candles to and show their “devotion” to Christ. From what we’ve heard those who don’t attend are actually looked down upon to a certain degree as less holy. We don’t have a strict party-pooper version of Jesus or Christianity (see John 2), but we couldn’t help but ask ourselves, “Do these people really understand who this Christ is and what it means to honor Him with their lives?!”



### God's at Work Here

Even in the midst of this economic and spiritual mess, we are seeing signs of hope. We know there are people here in whom God is at work. We met E. last year as B.J. was looking for someone to practice his Spanish with and she was looking for an opportunity to learn more English. She began coming over to our house every week, and through our conversations we discovered that E. is one of the few (perhaps the only) practicing Catholics in her age group (she’s in her twenties). We’ve had numerous opportunities to talk about Christ with her, and one afternoon she opened up to us about her own struggles with God, tears streaming down her cheeks as she described how she had tragically lost a close friend just a couple of years ago and had felt very distant from the Lord. Recently as she was preparing for some important exams in her English class, we noticed that she was quite anxious, so we offered to pray for her. After Rachel prayed, we saw tears in E.’s eyes again as if to say that no one had ever prayed with her before. We clearly sense a certain sensitivity to

the Lord in her heart, and although we can see how her view of God is not fully Biblical, we know that God is wooing her to Himself and He’s using our friendship to do that.

### Alcora Prayer Campaign

In addition to getting to know E. and other people from the town, we continue to host a Bible study with another family of believers here. Our desire is that this will form the core group of the future church we hope to plant. But, honestly, as new missionaries working in a new context on a new church planting initiative, the thought we have on our minds is “We want to share the hope of Jesus with these people, but where do we start?” The answer is actually quite simple: seek Jesus. Seek Him, seek His guidance and direction for the future of this ministry, seek Him on behalf of Alcorinos who don’t yet know Him, and seek Him together with others. So beginning in January we started the “Pray for Alcora” campaign. Our mother church is sending two prayer groups to Alcora each month (one is the youth group) to pray with us. We have a prayer group on Facebook and an email list (for those not on Facebook) who receive a monthly prayer bulletin. Also,

we are setting up prayer meetings on Skype for those who want to pray with us (almost) in person. We desperately need people to unite with us in prayer for our town, so please let us know on Facebook (“Prayer for Alcora”) or at [bj.whitaker@ecmi.org](mailto:bj.whitaker@ecmi.org) if you would like to join the campaign.

Speaking of prayer, here are some specific ways you can pray for us:

- ***That we will represent God well as a married couple, as parents and as a family.***
- ***That God will guide us (along with the Good News Church and our Bible study group) clearly, step by step, as we seek to develop this new church plant together, and that we’ll have ears to hear Him.***
- ***For protection from the enemy, from discouragement and from anything that would seek to harm us or distract us from God.***
- ***That God will help us continue developing relationships with people here and that they will turn to Jesus as their true hope.***
- ***For the concert we are planning in July as our first official event as an evangelical presence in Alcora. (Some other churches in the province are talking about helping us to do 2 or 3-day evangelistic campaign around the same time).***
- ***That in the midst of economically dismal times, Alcorinos will find the true, deep, eternal hope that only Jesus offers.***

Will you join us on this journey of hope for Alcora? 🌍



# INTERNATIONAL CHURCH UPDATES

## JAPAN:

The Fuchinobe Community EC church plant under the leadership of Rev. Tomoyuki and Jessica Abe is experiencing forward progress with new visitors to the services, activities and to their website. Speaking of “new”, Rev. Kenichiro Sudo was officially installed as the new senior pastor of Kyodo Grace on January 9, 2011, following the death of founding pastor Rev. John Masuda. Rev. Nobuo Abe reports that his transition to Field Director is going well and the program for young mothers at his church, Sagimahara Grace Chapel is producing positive results. Yoriyoshi Abe continues his studies at Evangelical Theological Seminary in Myerstown preparing for future ministry in the EC Church of Japan.



## COSTA RICA:

The 6 congregations comprising the EC Church of Costa Rica report a total 67 conversions and 52 baptisms in 2010. Director William Araya also reports three new works, each with about 25 people in attendance. DGM Randy Sizemore, committee chair Mike Reinders and Rev. Carlos Kelly will be visiting this mission conference March 19-26, 2011.

## INDIA:

We praise God for the participation of the EC Church of India in the work of

the EC Church of Liberia. Rev. Lalrosiem Songate, General Director (Bishop) of ECCI was a key part of the international team that visited Liberia's 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual

Conference January 21-February 1, 2011. Under the direction of Rev. L.B. Angam, the six conferences of the EC Church of India network together to deploy 147 missionaries to India, Nepal, Myanmar, Mongolia and Vietnam. These missionaries occupy 71 mission stations that minister to 20 different people groups among the major religions of Animism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Muslim and the Sanamahi. We are thankful to those who donated funds to complete the laptop computer project which will provide each of the 6 conference leaders with a laptop computer.

## NEPAL:

Recently Rev. Janga, the Director of the EC Church in Nepal sent a report detailing 85 conversions and celebrating 22 baptisms. He also set a goal of 5 new churches and 500 new converts for this year! At the bottom of his report was this testimony of a man with a severe medical need. His email has been slightly corrected so you can understand his English.

*Mr. Sobin Shrestha age 33 and married with one child, has been suffering from TB for many years. Even with medicine his TB has become more serious and lately he has no money for the medicine so he is coughing continuously to the point where the blood is coming out of his mouth. The Doctor*



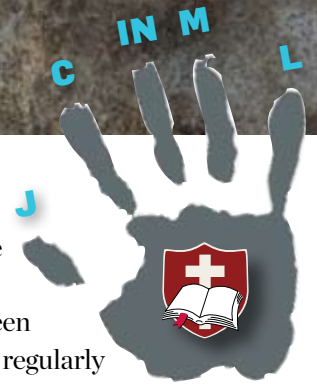
*said, he has TB in his blood so he has to change his blood (transfusion) but there is no way to change his blood according to them. Someone informed this man that there is Pastor in the area and if they call him, he will pray for you and you may be healed. So late*

*one night around 9 pm I was called to go there and pray for this man. I went with my wife and pray with tears asking the Lord to do a great miracle. Slowly he experienced something changing and the cough stopped within a few days. When he went to re-check with the doctor, they got him an X-ray and did not find anything in his blood. What a miraculous God we have and serve! Today he and his wife are attending the church. Praise God! Thank you Janga.*

Thanks to all who responded to the Nepal appeal letter sent in October, 2010. Your generosity was overwhelming as we received many large and small donations. We were able to send \$3,000 immediately to purchase a motorcycle for Rev. Janga's transportation needs and we will now be able to send regular quarterly support for 2011 and some of 2012. Randy is planning to visit the EC Church of Nepal in December of this year.



# Jesus Christ IN More Lives



## MEXICO:

The EC Church of Mexico continues to grow and mature under the leadership of Rev. Elias Martinez Osorio. At their Annual Conference in April 2010 Elias challenged the church to battle the drug wars and violence by investing in the youth of Mexico introducing them to Jesus Christ and allowing Him to change the country one life at a time. The church responded to his challenge and each congregation pledged to pay for 5 youth to attend their Youth Camp even if the church had no youth attending. Praise God that the attendance at their Youth Camp doubled and the country is being changed, one life at a time!

## LIBERIA:

On January 21, 2011 the team of international EC leaders traveled to Monrovia for the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference of the EC Church of Liberia. The team included Rev. Lalrosiem Songate, General Director (Bishop) of the EC Church of India, Rev. Elias Martinez Osorio, Field Superintendent of the EC Church of Mexico, Rev. Salvador Cardoso, pastor of Maranatha EC Church, Illinois and Rev. Randy Sizemore, Executive Director of Global Ministries. The purpose of the visit was to mark the completion of



the “Launch Liberia” project which involved church planting, sustainable development and micro pharmacies and to inaugurate the transition to the next strategic phase of ministry. While some aspects of the Launch Liberia project will continue, Field Superintendent Matthew Gueh’s vision and plan of intentional discipleship and leadership training has been endorsed by the GMC and is already underway. We had the privilege of graduating and commissioning two classes of disciples during the conference.

Along with deepening the spiritual roots of the existing church and new church plants through discipleship and leadership training, the next step for the EC Church of Liberia is to complete the necessary requirements to graduate from a mission conference to a National Conference. Rev. Songate has agreed to coach the leadership of ECCOL through the process using his own experience of leading the EC Church of India to National Conference status. Rev. Songate has also created a website for the EC Church of Liberia ([www.liberia.ecchurch.or.in](http://www.liberia.ecchurch.or.in)) and has already begun to raise prayer and financial support for

the EC Church of Liberia from within the EC Church of India. Rev. Osorio is also leading the EC Church of Mexico to partner with the EC Church of

Liberia. The members of the EC Church of Mexico have been praying for and regularly collecting finances for their brothers and sisters in Liberia. Rev. Osorio used the testimony of the forward progress in the EC Church of Mexico to encourage Liberian pastors to break free from the paralyzing mentality of total dependence on outsiders and to seek local resources for ministry. What a joy to see the EC Church of India, Mexico, USA and Liberia all working together for the common good!

Other highlights of this conference included the privilege of participating in the baptism of 20 new Christians, the ordination of pastors, a District Elder and the commissioning of many disciples. Lalrosiem, Elias, Salvador and Randy were made honorary members of the EC Church of Liberia soccer team for a game against the African Gospel League. Lalrosiem even scored a goal on a penalty kick to lead them to a victory! The ultimate experience of the time together was the closing service of conference where the leaders of the EC Church of India, Mexico, Liberia and the United States celebrated Holy Communion within the context of the colorful people, clothing, music and worship of a West African church service. We are rapidly becoming a true global EC Church! 🌍

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**THE GLOBAL MINISTRIES COMMISSION** is the international ministry arm of the Evangelical Congregational Church. With missionaries in twenty nations, over 400 churches in six countries, and several strategic initiatives, GMC is dedicated to mobilizing the worldwide Church into acts of love, service, and gospel proclamation.

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# Mission Minded Kids Talk About Jesus

-by Pat Strain



The old, old story was told and acted out in new and exciting ways recently with an enthusiastic crowd. The Mission Minded Kids Rally for Delaware & Susquehanna Regions was a huge success, with one of the highest attendances in recent history. Trinity E.C. Church in Boyertown hosted 108 children, plus dozens of helpers, workers, and MMK leaders on March 5th. The theme was “Tell Me the Story of Jesus”, and the children learned how it’s done in various places of the world: missionaries Brad and Maxine Waldman shared how they teach the Gospel message in the Caribbean; Jane Heck taught the children in Spanish and English using her experiences in Colombia, Peru and Belize; missionary candidates Dan and Melinda Moury shared how the Message is being told using multi-media; there was exotic food tasting, a room where the children could see how many languages already have Jesus’ story in print, and how many more there are that need to hear the story. GMC Director Rev. Randy Sizemore used a hand illustration to teach the children the names of our international EC Churches: Japan, Costa Rica, India & Nepal, Mexico, and Liberia = **Jesus Christ IN More Lives**. There were games, prizes, and more food. Most importantly, a seed was planted in the next generation of missionaries and mission leaders, as these children were taught how to share a simple Gospel message with others. If you would like to know more about the MMK program, contact Kathy Friedlund at [kathyfriedlund@yahoo.com](mailto:kathyfriedlund@yahoo.com).


## MEMORIAL FUNDS

We wish to thank the following people who donated funds to Global Ministries in loving memory of

**Anna Hoffer**, wife of Rev. Ken Hoffer:

- Dorothy Krieger
- Maxine Seifrit
- Robert and LaVonne Miller
- Linda Musser
- Mary Martin
- Violet Stauffer
- Mt. Culmen EC Church
- Dr. & Mrs. John Moyer

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- Margaret Kramer
- Henise Tire Service 

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