

# The CACOM Courier

## Warriors Battle at the Beach in Fort Story, Va

Civil affairs soldiers distinguish themselves at Beach Warrior 2013 352nd Civil Affairs Command

PAO Story by Jacob Boyer  
Monday, April 4, 2013

FORT STORY, Va. - Army Reserve Soldiers from Northern Virginia and Flint, Mich., earned the right to call themselves the 352nd Civil Affairs Command's best noncommissioned officer and junior enlisted Soldier, April 11, during Beach Warrior 2013 at Fort Story, Va.

Army Reserve Sgt. Mark Richards, a civil affairs team sergeant with the Company D, 450th Civil Affairs Command (Airborne), and Spc. Zachary Sharpe, a civil affairs specialist with Company A, 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, proved themselves against the top soldiers from each of the command's two brigades and eight battalions. The event, hosted by the 437th Civil Affairs Battalion, was a collaborative effort between the 352nd CACOM and the 2nd Psychological Operations Group.

"The 2013 iteration of the 352nd CACOM/2nd POG best warrior was an absolute success," said Command Sgt. Maj. Earl Rocca, the senior enlisted soldier in the 352nd CACOM. "The drive and determination of the soldiers was absolutely amazing. It reinforces and confirms that any bit of sacrifice that I thought I might have given in my 29-year career was worth it. That's exactly what it is with these soldiers."



**Army Reserve Spc. Zachary Sharpe, of the 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, raps his leg around his competitor's arms during a Modern Army Combatives tournament, April 9, at Beach Warrior 2013 at Fort Story, Va. Beach Warrior 2013 is a collaboration between the 352nd Civil Affairs Command and the 2nd Psychological Operations Group to choose each unit's best junior enlisted Soldier and noncommissioned officer. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Emilie Lenglain)**

Competitors and staff were drawn from each unit's ranks, and both units' winners will compete in the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operation Command (Airborne) Best Warrior Competition in May at Fort Bragg, N.C. Sgt. Maj. Wylie Jones, operations sergeant major for the 352nd CACOM and Beach Warrior 2013 noncommissioned officer-in-charge, said that while the impetus of the CACOM and 2nd POG working together on the event was to conserve resources, working together will reap other rewards.



### Inside this issue:

The 412th shares more highlights from NTC Rotation 3

Operation Southern Raider greets the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion with wintery mix - Full Story 5

A look Around the CACOM 6

Additional Notes from the 352nd 10

### Volume 1, Issue 3



"We connected the PSYOPs guys with the CA guys, shared the workload, and it turned out to be a better event that it would have been otherwise," Jones said. "We fall under the same major command, yet we never work or talk with each other. We're already talking about working together not only on 2014's best warrior competition, but we're also talking about our units that are located near each other working together on ranges, land navigation and air operations training. That's huge."

Richards, the command's Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, is relatively new to the U.S. Army, but he served more than a decade as a paratrooper in his native United Kingdom. The 39-year-old Northern Virginia resident joined the Army Reserve in 2011 as a combat medic and quickly transitioned to civil affairs after he earned U.S. citizenship. (Cont. on Page 2)



**U.S. Army Sgt. Mark Richards, with the 450th Civil Affairs Battalion, climbs over a log during an obstacle course at Beach Warrior 2013 in Fort Story, Va., April 9, 2013. Beach Warrior 2013 is a collaboration between the 352nd Civil Affairs Command and the 2nd Psychological Operations Group to choose each unit's best junior enlisted Soldier and Noncommissioned officer. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jacob Boyer/Released)**

"It's going to be one of those good memories for me. It was one of those days where I went through and I won all my fights," said Richards, who works as a crisis management consultant in his civilian career. "It was really hard, because they came thick and fast. It was one fight after another. At one point my forearm locked up. It took a long time to recover. It was fun but it was also the most challenging."

Sharpe, the command's Soldier of the Year was competing for the second consecutive year.

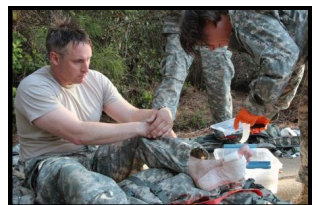
He said that the bond soldiers competing in best warrior events build was a big part of why he came back.

"I really like to challenge myself. I entered this event previously and I had a ton of fun," said the 21-year-old native of Davidson, Mich. "Even though it's a competition, it's great for camaraderie, and I really feel that camaraderie with people who have been under the same stress as me. It's a great experience and I've had a lot of fun here."

Sharpe, who works in his civilian career as an emergency medical technician in Flint, Mich., said the ruck march, a 12-kilometer trek that started at 7 a.m. after a sleepless first night of the competition and crossed nearly a full kilometer of Fort Story's beach, was the event he enjoyed most.

"You had to pace yourself for about seven miles and you know there's going to be rough terrain ahead," he said. the shore and walking right past the water.

(cont. page 3)



**U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Jeanine Meerscheidt, right, a combat medic with the 437th Civil Affairs Battalion, provides medical treatment for the blisters on Sgt. Mark Richards' foot, following a ruck march at Beach Warrior 2013, in Fort Story, Va., April 9, 2013. Beach Warrior 2013 is a collaboration between the 352nd Civil Affairs Command and the 2nd Psychological Operations Group to choose each unit's best junior enlisted Soldier and non-commissioned officer. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Matthew P. Siemion/Released)**





**"I really like to challenge myself. I entered this event previously and I had a ton of fun" -**

**Spc. Zachary Sharpe**

"When we got to the beach, I thought it was going to be terrible, but I actually got a second wind just seeing the waves lapping up on the shore and walking right past the water. That's where I made a lot of my gains in that event."

Tenacity is what carried the events 24 competitors through three tough days, and that tenacity is what Richards said he will take to USACAPOC(A)'s competition.

"I'm no longer the best guy at combatives. I'm no longer the fastest guy running around the nav lane, but I never give up. I just keep pushing," he said. "I know that it's going to be very challenging because it's going to be other people who are just like me. It's just going to depend on who pulls it out of the bag the most."

Rocca said he expects the command's best soldiers to represent themselves and their units well at the USACAPOC(A) Best Warrior Competition, which is scheduled to start April 28 at Fort Bragg, N.C.

"If they offer the same amount of drive and determination that they did here, they're going to place very well," he said. "It's going to be a tough field, but I think they'll do well."



**U.S. Army, Vulture Team, National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif. A HUMVEE at sunset in the Mohave Desert, Fort Irwin. Courtesy Photo**

## The 412th shares more highlights from NTC rotation

FORT IRWIN, Calif. – Soldiers benefit from pre-deployment training exercises, but NTC goes a step further than most because of its real-world training. When it comes to civil affairs, the National Training Center allows Soldiers to see operations from beginning to end: From the planning stages to the operational application of civil affairs in war-torn communities.

Civil Affairs deployments often involve CA Teams and Soldiers falling on missions and community relationships that already exist. Thus, they don't see or experience the entire gamut of civil-military

from beginning to end; from planning to key-leader engagements to approving funds used to construct improvements in villages.

The 412<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne) recently completed a grueling, month-long rotation at NTC, where they honed their real-world skills.

Staff Sgt. Leah Fitch, a veteran of multiple deployments, said, "NTC benefitted me more than other exercises because I got to experience the entire range of civil affairs. Especially beneficial was the planning phase and being on the ground as the operation was built from the ground up."

"Other mobilization exercises teach you how to run a FOB and do counter-insurgency,"

"Other mobilization exercises teach you how to run a FOB and do counter-insurgency," said 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Denver Stone. "NTC is direct action, a lot more hands-on, and more beneficial to deploying Soldiers."

Many 412<sup>th</sup> Soldiers stated what benefitted them the most was being involved in the planning of civil affairs missions, and working with the maneuver brigade commander, to offer advice and let him know how civil affairs teams can be a combat multiplier.

"Planning and being part of the scenario-building team was key," said Delta Company Commander, Maj. Ronnie Deweese. *(cont. page 4)*



U.S. Army Soldiers from the 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division rescue a simulated casualty from an M2 Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle during Decisive Action rotation at the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, Calif. The 412<sup>th</sup> conducted some joint training exercises with 3<sup>rd</sup> ABC Team Soldiers. Decisive Action rotations are geared toward an adaptive enemy in a complex environment (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Eric M. Garland II / Released)



412<sup>th</sup> Soldiers engage a local village during a scenario at the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, Ca. in January. U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Michelle Blesam



Staff Sgt. Leah Fitch conducts a key leader engagement during the 412<sup>th</sup>'s National Training Center rotation in January. U.S. Army Photo by Master Sgt. Dave Johnson

## 412th NTC Highlights Continued - January 2013

The 412<sup>th</sup> sent a planning team as an advanced party, two months prior to the rotation.

"Being involved from the beginning really helped ensure civil affairs would have maximum play in the rotation," said Deweese. "We were very involved in the entire operation."

The NTC rotation benefits include: maximizing unit interaction between civil affairs and the battalions that the Civil Affairs Teams (CAT) support, the Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC) cohesion and joint service co-operation.

"NTC gives CA Soldiers the chance to embed with maneuver elements and take over Key Leader Engagements with community," said Stone.

"That is a big plus in training CA Soldiers."

Doing an NTC rotation allowed the 412<sup>th</sup> Soldiers to experience doing key leader engagements in a conflict that begins with two nations going to war.

"NTC's benefits include CA Soldiers getting the full spectrum: mission training plans, execution of missions, CMOC operations, and how CA teams function," said Fitch.

"Soldiers experience all the frustrations of a year-long deployment in a few rigorous weeks of planned mishaps to teach Soldiers valuable lessons, said Delta Company's Supply NCO, Sgt. Randall Malone. "You get a year's worth of frustrations in a few weeks."

Malone expatiated on some of the built-in mishaps that NTC used. "Like losing communications and learning how to re-establish them, tear down tents and operations centers under hasty conditions, and set up operating areas in the dark."

The National Training Center's teams also coordinated efforts of expert advisors to work with the Soldiers "in the box" to improve their skills.

"NTC shows you where your tactical skills are lacking because NTC is more broad-based; more austere conditions in the field working with maneuver elements," said Fitch. "NTC is direct action. Other exercises I've completed, like JRTC, are stability and situational."

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## NTC Cont.

412<sup>th</sup> Soldiers learned what areas they need to improve, but they also taught Soldiers from maneuver elements how valuable civil affairs can be on the battlefield.

“Our Soldiers have so much experience and knowledge,” said Dewese. “The leaders involved in this NTC rotation were very impressed with the 412<sup>th</sup>. I heard so many positive comments about our Soldiers during all our after action reviews.”

The Soldiers were tired at the end of their NTC experience, but the training was well worth it.

“Doing an NTC rotation is beneficial to any unit getting ready to deploy,” said Stone.



Soldiers of Bravo Company, 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion based in Greensboro, N.C., and the 401st Civil Affairs Battalion based in Webster, N.Y., participate in Exercise Southern Raider with the 37th Canadian Brigade Group and Royal British Marine commandos March 6, 2013, at Fort Pickett, Va. Exercise Southern Raider is an annual training event conducted by the Reserve Component of the Canadian Army to test their proficiency of battle task standards for offensive operations in an urban environment. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Saska Ball, USACAPOC(A) PAO)

## Operation Southern Raider greets the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion with wintery mix in March - Full Story

FORT PICKETT, Va. — U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers from two civil affairs units, the 401st and 422nd Civil Affairs Battalions, got the opportunity to train with members of the Canadian Army Reserve and the Royal Marines Reserve commandos during a training event held here at Fort Pickett, Va., March 4-8, 2013.

The training event, Exercise Southern Raider 13,

is a scenario-based operation conducted in an enhanced training environment created using the most current operational doctrine executed by the United Nations and coalition forces.

Ex SR 13 marks the fifth time units from the 37 Canadian Brigade Group have participated in the event and the first for the Royal Marines British Commandos.

United States Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) civil affairs units have always provided support but this year was a first for these two specific units.

“We are taking one of our tactical companies, Bravo Company, and using them to directly support the 37 CBG and their mission,” said Lt. Col. Rob

Cooley, Commander of the 422, based in Greensboro, N.C. “We’ve been working with them over the past year to develop the scenarios and exercise.”

The role of the 401, located in Webster N.Y., is to provide Observer/Controller Trainers for the exercise. Ex SR 13 serves as the culmination training event for 2012/2013 training year for the 37 CBG,

evaluating them on their essential battle task standards for offensive operations in an urban environment, as well as evaluating the 422, on their mission essential task lists during their annual training.

Unlike the Canadian and U.S. troops attending the event for validation purposes, the three Marines — two sergeants

and one major — from the Royal Marines Reserve commandos have a different reason for being a part of this joint coalition exercise.

“We’re here to learn from the Canadians and Americans because our Civil Affairs is a fairly new organization,” said Sgt. Mark Conway, with the Royal

(cont. page 6)

## Southern Raiders Continued

Marines Reserves London.

"We're here to learn from the Canadians and Americans because our Civil Affairs is a fairly new organization," said Sgt. Mark Conway, with the Royal Marines Reserves London. "We've come on to see how they run their operations, their Civil Military Operations Center, and how they get on the ground and do their job."

During the daily operations Conway, along with CA teams from 422 are attached to an infantry unit. Their role is to serve as the cultural experts in a given area to mitigate civil interference while an operation is conducted in a populated area.

"Our specific mission today was that we were attached to an infantry group. We were to follow them in and play a supporting role to help them deal with all the civilians in the village so they could just move through, focusing on their mission," said Spc. Flint German, civil affairs specialist with B/422 CA Bn., "And also to advise them on certain white target lists, like churches, schools, stuff like that, to stay away from certain things in the village to minimize collateral damage."

Civil Affairs Soldiers are the field commander's link to the civil authorities in his area of operation, often specializing in public administration, health and welfare, public safety, and economics. They coordinate with a nation's people and local authorities to identify and fix an area's needs during war or natural disaster. The coordination the civil affairs teams do relieves the combatant commander of having to adjust his focus to non-kinetic objectives.

Acronyms and nomenclature may be different since there are representatives from three different countries involved in executing civil affairs activities yet there is very little difference in terms of gear, capabilities, organization, tactics, techniques and procedures. A common language is being spoken and understood by all for mission success.

"Two years ago I would have never believed we were at this point," said Canadian Warrant Officer Les Webber, an influence activity OC/T with the Land Forces Atlantic Area. "This exercise shows how three countries with very little notice can come together and fulfill the functions. If we had to go overseas in a multi-national combined unit, that everything we do is almost parallel to transition, whether we had a British lead, an American lead, or a Canadian lead, it doesn't matter. Everyone falls in, no egos are hurt."



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"Two years ago I would have never believed we were at this point," said Canadian Warrant Officer Les Webber.



## A look around the CACOM



Sgt. 1st Class Melinda Vorpahl, on assignment with the 352nd Civil Affairs Command, receives master rated jump wings from Brig. Gen. Ed Burley, CACOM commander, May 18 during the CACOM's dining out event here at Fort Meade. The Dining out event was done this year in recognition of the 10 year anniversary of the invasion of Iraq.



Col. William Carter, an operations officer with the 352nd Civil Affairs Command, reviews awards with Chief Warrant Officer Orlando Freeman, GI chief for the CACOM, May 18 before being presented during the CACOM's dining out event here at Fort Meade. The Dining out event was done this year in recognition of the 10 year anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Erick Yates

Brig. Gen. Ed Burley, commander 352nd Civil Affairs Command, slices the anniversary cake held by 1st Lt. Hau Nguyen, with a U.S. Army noncommissioned officers' sword May 18 during the CACOM's dining out event here at Fort Meade. The Dining out event was done this year in recognition of the 10 year anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Erick Yates

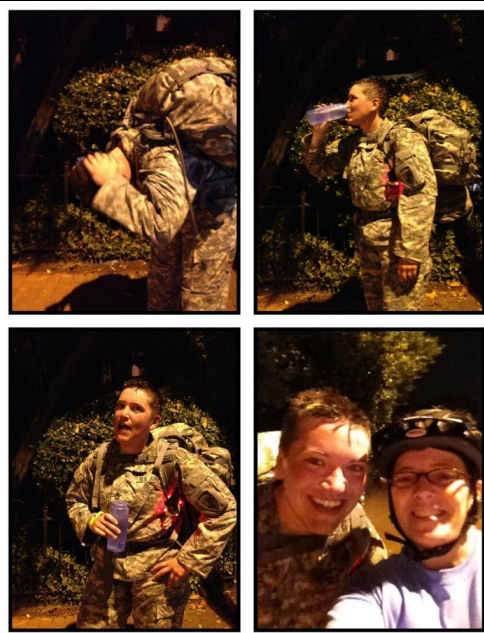


## A look around the CACOM

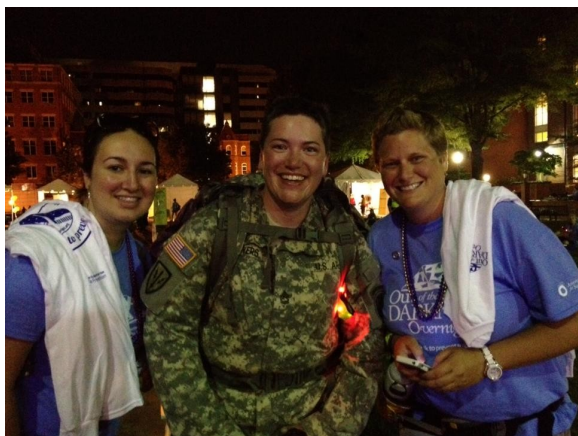
354th Civil Affairs Brigade Soldier Participates in the Out of Darkness Overnight Walk in Washington, D.C.



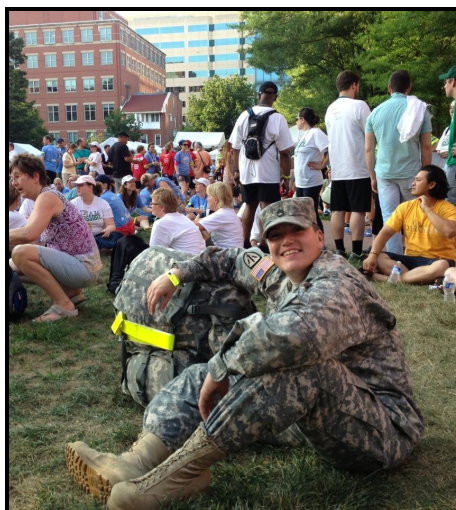
Sgt. 1st. Class Jennifer Powers, 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, takes a water break at the 8 mile mark during the Out of Darkness Overnight Walk June 1-2 in Washington, D.C. The event is held to help highlight the issues of suicide and depression with supporters participating in a 16-18 mile walk. Courtesy photo



Sgt. 1st. Class Jennifer Powers, 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, and other supporters begin the Out of Darkness Overnight Walk June 1-2 in Washington, D.C. The event is held to help highlight the issues of suicide and depression with supporters participating in a 16-18 mile walk over night. Cour-



Sgt. 1st. Class Jennifer Powers, 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, shares a candid moment with friends after completing the Out of Darkness Overnight Walk June 1-2 in Washington, D.C. Courtesy Photo



Sgt. 1st. Class Jennifer Powers, 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, gathers with other supporters during the Opening Ceremony of Out of Darkness Overnight Walk June 1-2 in Washington, D.C. (George Washington University). The event is held to help highlight the issues of suicide and depression with supporters participating in a 16-18 mile walk over night. Courtesy photo



# A look around the CACOM

## Celebrating Memorial Day at the National Memorial Day Parade in Washington D.C.



A member of the Military Order of World Wars and members of the Special Forces Association pose for a photo May 27 during the National Memorial Day Parade in Washington, D.C. U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Erick Yates



Volunteers show their support at the armed forces refreshment tent May 27 during the National Memorial Day Parade in Washington, D.C. U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Erick Yates



Actors Joe Mantegna and Gary Sinise, along with Washington Redskins Quarterback Robert Griffin III, pose with Soldiers May 27 during the National Memorial Day Parade in Washington, D.C. U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Erick Yates

Lt. Col. Stephen Ryan, with the 353<sup>rd</sup> Civil Affairs Command, talks with 352<sup>nd</sup> Civil Affairs Command Headquarters & Headquarters Company first sergeant, 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Hugh Carew, May 27 at the National Memorial Day Parade in Washington, D.C. Ryan is also a commandant with the Veteran Corps of Artillery. U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Erick Yates



# Additional Notes From the 352nd

**RESILIENCE CORNER:**  
**MSG Rawlings, Maria M.**  
**Master Resilience Trainer**



***Resilience is the overall ability to thrive in the face of challenges and bounce back from adversity. It is built through a set of core competencies that enable mental toughness, optimal performance, strong leadership and goal performance.***

## Upcoming 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Events:

Active Constructive Responding Training (ACR)  
Resilience Trainer Assistant 1 week Class (RTA)  
Future FY 14 Master Resilience Trainers nomination selection



## Resilience Tips:

1. Record 3 good things each day.
2. Write a reflection at least 1 sentence
  - why this good thing happened
  - what this good thing means to you
  - what you can do tomorrow to enable more of this good thing
  - what ways you or others contribute to the good thing



# Additional Notes From the 352nd



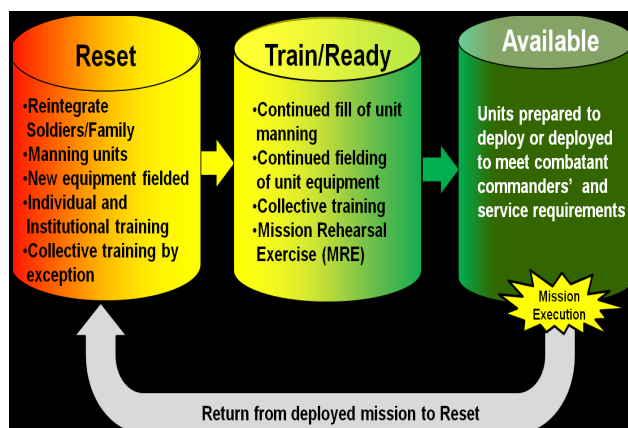
## Understanding The ARFORGEN Cycle



The ARFORGEN model will help reservists as well as their families and employers better prepare for deployments. **BG Gen Ed Burley**

The Army Force Generation Model or ARFORGEN provides employers hiring 352 CACOM Soldiers with much-needed information pertaining to their employee's deployment calendars. The ARFORGEN, is a means to provide a responsive and unique force comprised of Citizen-Soldiers to meet the security requirements of combatant commanders. **BG Gen Ed Burley**

ARFORGEN represents an agreement with the American people. It really says, If you'll give me your employee for a year to be a warrior, I'll give you back a better employee. **BG Gen Ed Burley**





352nd Civil Affairs Command

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# Where's My Unit?

The **CACOM Courier** runs stories and pictures of **Soldiers** and units throughout the **352nd Civil Affairs Command**, but the staff can't run material we don't have. Did your unit conduct some interesting or unusual training over battle assembly? Has someone in your company distinguished herself in either her military or civilian careers? Please submit stories and photos to **LTC Hutchinson**, or **SGT Yates** and we will do what we can to get them into the next issue! The **Courier** is a quarterly newsletter that runs in **March, June/July, September and December**, so please make submissions by the **15th** of the month prior to publication. Additionally, if you have stories that you would like us to try to tell, please submit requests for coverage using the attached form. We want to tell your story!



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