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BCCC's Virgie Williams:
A Story That Began 50 Years Ago



Virgie Williams is a walking “her-story” book. After graduating from Forest Park High School in 1968, Williams decided to attend BCCC, which was then known as Baltimore Junior College. Upon completing her studies at the school in 1970, she was offered a full-time position in the library. Nearly 50 years later, Williams still works in the library of her Alma Mater. She serves as Assistant Director and Head of Circulation of the Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) Library. She will retire from BCCC on January 1, 2020. (See article on page 16) Photo: Ursula V. Battle

Community Reinvestment Act changes expected to benefit low- and moderate-income communities

By Christopher G. Cox
Publisher and Managing Editor
www.realesavvy.com

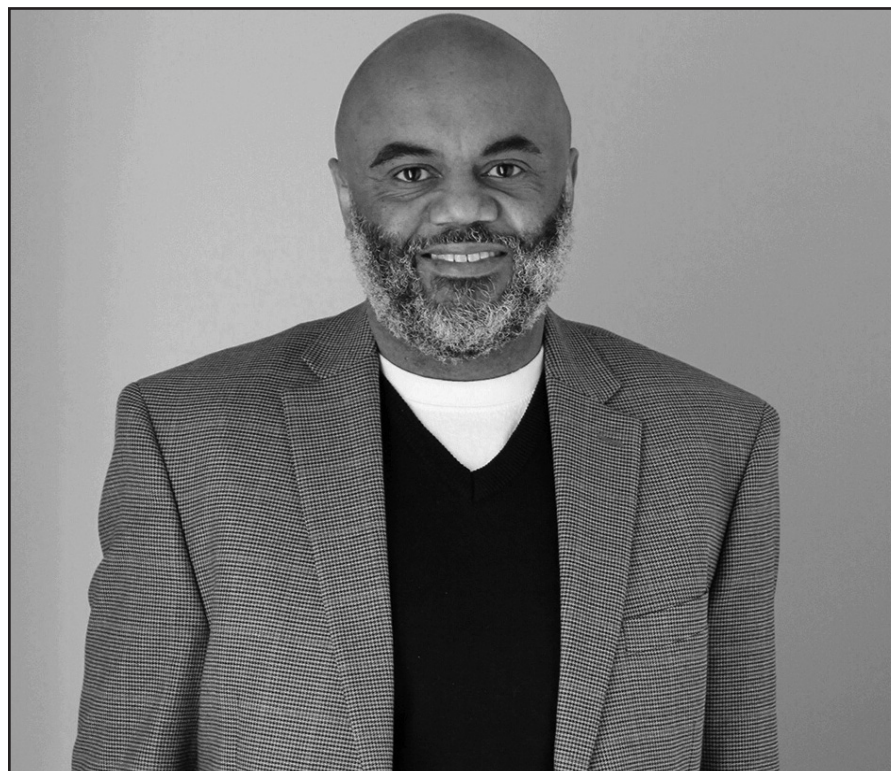
Proposed changes to the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) could lead to greatly enhanced investment in low- and moderate-income (LMI) communities around the country, according to Grovetta N. Gardineer, senior deputy comptroller for Bank Supervision Policy with the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC).

The OCC is soliciting comments on a proposal to modernize the CRA by clarifying what counts, updating where activity counts, measuring performance more objectively, and making reporting more timely and transparent.

“The CRA has a very noble goal of making sure banks meet their responsibility for lending, investing in and servicing communities where they do business, with a focus on low- and moderate-income individuals and areas,” Gardineer said. “The statute remains a noble goal, but the implementation is outdated and in many ways ineffective.”

The CRA was enacted in 1977 as a direct response to redlining, an unethical practice whereby banks and other lending institutions made it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for residents of poor, inner-city communities to borrow money, get a mortgage, take out insurance or access other financial services. Redlining did not take into consideration an individual’s qualifications or credit-worthiness.

Gardineer explains that a primary rea-



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Courtesy Photo

son the CRA needs updating is because the banking industry has changed fundamentally in the more than 40 years since it was implemented.

“Among other things,” Gardineer adds, “we did not have the Internet in 1977, and interstate branching was not available.”

“Banks were limited to where they had branches or where their home office was located, so they had a completely geo-

graphical approach,” she continued.

“With all of the tremendous technological advancements in recent years, banks now offer products and services across the country regardless of geography.”

The OCC hopes stakeholders will carefully review the proposed changes and submit comments so that a final rule can be issued in the first half of 2020.

Noting that the new CRA rules would fight displacement and harmful gentrifi-

cation—a high priority in many minority communities—Gardineer points out that the OCC is making a concerted effort to work closely with such organizations as the NAACP and the National Urban League.

To that end, OCC has invested the time to meet with thousands of concerned individuals “discussing the issues that need to be addressed.” Meetings are currently scheduled with Derrick Johnson, president and CEO of the NAACP, and Marc Morial, president and CEO of the National Urban League. Another recent outreach effort to solicit public input included an Atlanta bus tour with Ambassador Andrew Young.

There are still too many underserved communities in the U.S. that are “CRA desserts,” Gardineer notes. “No matter what their geographical footprint, we want banks to be able to offer a broad array of services to communities and individuals throughout the nation.

“Given the wide spectrum of individuals who we know will benefit from this rule making process,” Gardineer said, “it is particularly important to the Comptroller to make sure that we spread a wide net, that we make ourselves available and that we share our vision.

“We have really worked hard over the past two years,” she concluded, “closing a loophole that allowed wealthy people to get CRA credit for investing in LMI areas. That is not what CRA was ever intended to do. And that is being directly responsive to some of the feedback we have been receiving.”

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Guest Editorials/Commentary

Write Your Own Obituary. Your Life Depends on It.

By James A. Washington, Publisher, Dallas Weekly

My immediate reaction to a recent sermon I heard was to share it. Although this was not the topic of the message, the pastor's comment about life and death made me think about my own obituary.

It seems that the inventor of dynamite got an unusual chance to read his own obituary and was very irritated about what it said about him. The question that this little-known fact made me think about was, "How will God respond to mine?" Better yet, "How would I respond to my own obituary?"

I mean if you could design and write your own epitaph, wouldn't you want it to reflect in some way a life with God at the center of it?

I once heard that one's greatest enlightenment is to know the will of God. The greatest achievement is to do the will of God. If you could draft the truth about your life today and make sure that when people spoke at your funeral, they spoke of your service to the Lord, would you have to change course, or could you stay the course? What would you need to change or do differently?

In the case of Alfred Nobel (of the Nobel Prizes) he didn't want to be eulogized as the guy who invented wholesale slaughter for a profit. Because he supposedly read a premature obituary about himself, he established the Nobel Prize (in his will) to leave a gift to mankind that the world celebrates every year. That dynamite thing almost never comes up.

My point is if they wrote your obituary today, would it please you? Would it please God? If not, do you know why not?

In this instance, the thought of my own death prompted me to think, "What had I done for God lately that others might see and maybe appreciate?"

At a very personal level, I began to wonder how much I was doing simply out of the love for God, rather than the fear of monumental consequence. Do I follow the Lord out of faith in unconditional grace or because I'm afraid of what will happen to me if I don't? If you're talking about God's rules, that becomes a very interesting question. Is my obedience to God based on fear or is my obedience based on love?

You see whatever anyone says in my obituary, I'm pretty sure God will know the truth of it all. We all want to be remembered fondly. The thing that made me think about this was, the reality that new life, eternal life begins at death. The quality of that life might just begin with what your spiritual obituary says. If you know that then you also know you can start to rewrite your obit today, starting right now! I just thought that it might be a beneficial exercise to commit from today forward, to crafting a life that, when spoken of at its celebration, you would be proud to show it to God.

We all know we'll be held accountable for our new life as we conclude our old one: the physical one.

I'm reminded that I often refer to our ability to influence that dash; that thing between when we are physically born and when we physically die. We have, no say about the beginning and a little at the end but how we handle the dash in between will serve us well for eternity. It will be what makes up our obituaries.

Pay attention to your life. You cast a wider net than you could possibly know.

May God Bless and Keep you Always.

James A. Washington is a father, husband, Christian, writer, entrepreneur and the owner/publisher of the Dallas Weekly.

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Commentary

Christmas: Hold Tight

By Dr. Glenn Mollette

Make a mental decision that Christmas is going to be great. Our world exists in the space between our ears known as our brain. We can dread or hate something or just decide it's going to be wonderful.

Faking it is not always easy. We can fool people some of the time but we can't fool everyone all the time. The hardest person you actually have to fool is yourself.

Sometimes we can fool ourselves for a while and it's never fun fooling ourselves for a long period of time. Sometimes it's necessary to fool ourselves briefly if we need to convince ourselves of something in order to survive.

For example if you are going to be at a big gathering for Christmas there will probably be one or two obnoxious or ridiculous people in the crowd. You may already be dreading seeing them. Just convince yourself it's okay and that people are different, and no one is perfect. Just decide to let ungratefulness and weird or negative comments roll off your back. You can override stupidity with Christmas cheer for a day. Just remember this is only for a day or two.

Also, this Christmas will not bring

back any past Christmases. There will be an empty chair or maybe several empty chairs. It may be tough and depressing when we think about how Christmas was a few years back. Christmas will never be the same for those of us missing loved ones and tears often come. Go ahead and cry but determine you won't spend all Christmas day crying. As you remember the past remember what it is about that person or Christmas you miss and hold tight to that joyful remembrance.

Keep in mind that this Christmas is still special because you are here in the world to celebrate the occasion. Whomever the people are in your life today, hold them close and be merry together.

From the Old Testament the people of God were instructed by Joshua to "Hold tight to God, your God, just as you've done up to now." (Joshua 23:8) For all of us holding tight to our faith, our family and our friends, our life's focus is important any day and especially at Christmas.

Glenn Mollette is an author and syndicated columnist. To contact him, email: GMollette@aol.com or visit his website: www.glennmollette.com.

I was just thinking... Mama in the classroom

By Norma Adams-Wade
Founding member of NABJ

I Messenger Media welcomes veteran journalist Norma Adams-Wade. We hope you will enjoy her insightful, informative and entertaining columns.

I wrote my first column in 1988 for a local Dallas newspaper. I wrote about a beloved Dallas guidance counselor and teacher that most students called “Mama.” Chew on that for a minute. A teacher that students called “Mama.” There is so much meaning in that thought that I can hardly contain it. Many of you, some of you may remember her— Mable M. Jackson Chandler, better known as Mama Chandler.

She began teaching and counseling during World War II and did so for 39 years before she retired in 1980 and died some years later. She loved it when students called her Mama. She acted the part, but she wasn’t acting. She was real.

She cared. She disciplined with a look, a firm reprimand, a take-no-prisoners persona that commanded respect, with no need to demand it.

The funny thing is that with all of her “tough-guy” demeanor, I don’t remember any students who seemed to doubt that beneath that exterior was genuine love. So, I was just thinking... about Tiffani Lankford. She is the 32-year-old substitute teacher who was arrested earlier this month for fighting back after a 16-year-old student allegedly hit her in the face.

The encounter, which happened at Lehman High School in Kyle, Texas just outside of Austin, was caught on cell phone video recorded by another student. The video shows the teacher repeatedly punching the student, pulling her from the desk and slinging her to the floor where the teacher appears to stomp on the student’s head.

Initial news reports said there was no immediate information as to what prompted the encounter. The substitute teacher was arrested, fired and charged with aggravated assault— but back to Mama. I was just thinking— how would Mama Chandler have handled that situation? First of all, though, the thought seems inconceivable that any student during Mama’s time would ever have imagined hitting this maternal figure-head.

I remember quoting Mama’s explanation of how she got the endearing title, though she had no children of her own. She had said: “During the war years,



Mable M. Jackson Chandler, better known as Mama Chandler.
Photo Credit: ©The Black Academy of Arts and Letters

fathers were in service, mothers had to work. I told my students, ‘I’m your Mama now, while you’re here. You have a problem, come talk to me.’” So, how did we get here— from Mama Chandler to a fistfight?

Many people who commented on social media sided with the teacher. Commenters also described modern school systems as out-of-control with student violence, blatant disrespect and disdain for learning. There was once a popular 1950s television series, called ‘I Remember Mama,’ about a Norwegian immigrant family.

One reviewer described Mama, the main character, as “one of the warmest

characters ever to grace television.” You could not describe Mama Chandler as warm but she was certainly loved and respected. She also helped finance many students’ college education, and they floated her with cards, letters and visits over the years.

When asked the clue to her success, she answered: “Accepting other people’s children as my own.” So, it’s fair to say that those children, her students, could utter with conviction the television show’s familiar tagline: “I remember the big white house... my little sister...big brother...and Papa but most of all, I remember Mama.”

The Annapolis Times

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Annual Casey Cares Holiday Party for critically ill children and their families at Maryland Science Center

Baltimore— The Maryland Science Center once again hosted the annual holiday party for the Casey Cares Foundation on the morning of Saturday, December 14, 2019. Over 250 people attended the fun-filled event.

The festivities included breakfast, a visit from Santa, live music and an opportunity for families to explore the fascinating exhibits at the Maryland Science Center.

“I look forward to coming to the Maryland Science Center every year as it has become a Casey Cares tradition for our families to celebrate the holidays here,” said Casey Cares founder and executive director Casey Baynes. “For one morning, the critically ill children in our programs can put aside their doctor visits and hospital visits and enjoy being a kid and explore all the great exhibits at the Maryland Science Center.”

The event was generously sponsored by The Maryland Science Center; Nathanson Dental; PetSmart; Tom Reyes and Friends; Spectra by Comcast Spectacor; and Gil and Marianne Kuta.



(Left) Samia and Uriyah Ma'at; and Ji'Air Ford (right) attended the Annual Casey Cares Holiday Party at the Maryland Science Center on Saturday, December 14, 2019. The nonprofit provides little moments and lasting memories for families with critically ill children by organizing family-centric events in eight states and the District of Columbia.

Courtesy Photos/The Casey Cares Foundation

Founded in 2000, the Casey Cares Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit that provides little moments and lasting memories for families with critically ill

children by organizing family-centric events such as tickets to sporting events; concerts and museums; group parties; vacation getaways; birthday surprises

and more! The organization serves families in eight states and Washington, D.C. For more information, visit Casey-Cares.org.

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▼ Ravens Hall of Famer and UMB Foundation board member Ray Lewis holds Blair Pinnacle III, who participates in the youth programs at the UMB Community Engagement Center (CEC), during the CEC groundbreaking ceremony.



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The National Museum of African American Music seeking submissions of creative artwork from visual artists

Nashville, Tenn.— When the National Museum of African American Music (NMAAM) opens its doors to the public in the summer of 2020, the first-of-its-kind institution located in the heart of downtown Nashville will be home to more than 1,500 historical artifacts that reflects the development, influence, and impact of African Americans on more than 50 genres and sub-genres including country, jazz, blues, gospel, R&B and hip hop. With construction of the museum currently underway and the layouts of the five primary galleries completed, the NMAAM curatorial team is now looking at ways to fill some of the additional open spaces in the museum with relevant and engaging original public artwork.

NMAAM has issued a call for submissions to all visual artists to submit original artwork for consideration as permanent installations within the museum. The goal of this request is to include artwork within the 56,000 square-foot, facility that will enhance the appearance of three distinct areas within the building that are not occupied by other artifacts. The addition of original artwork will create a visual experience that aligns with the museum's content and blends well with the overall aesthetic of the accompanying galleries. Submitted artwork will be juried by an internal art selection committee with three selected artists being awarded between \$50,000 - \$70,000 for the creation and installation of their work.

"The [NMAAM] curatorial team is very excited about the opportunity to review art submissions from all around the world and we encourage artists to send us their best music-inspired work for consideration," said Dr. Dina Bennett, Curatorial Director at NMAAM. "As much as musical artists have their place in celebrating the contributions of African American music to the world, visual artists also play a pivotal role in



**NATIONAL MUSEUM OF
AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC**

One Nation Under A Groove

preserving the legacy and informing the culture. Our hope is that by opening space in the museum to visual artists, we can add some original pieces to our public spaces that will enhance the stories tell as well as share something visually dynamic for our guests to enjoy."

The NMAAM call for artwork is open to all emerging artists (18 and older) regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or race. No student art will be accepted and work should be professional in nature. Artwork submissions should be connected to the African American experience and musical in context aligning with the museum's mission and vision to provide a transformative, inspirational and educational experience for an international audience of museum guests. Artwork should also be durable, able to sustain various climate conditions, resistant to UV damage and safe for public interaction. Projected spaces within the museum where artwork will live include; the Grand Foyer which is the main entry point for the museum, the Lower Lobby which is a gathering space for ticket sales and large-scale public events and the Multi-purpose Rooms which will be used for a variety of educational classes and community programs.

Artists interested in submitting artwork will need to submit a completed application by Sunday, January 12, 2020 at 11:59 P.M. CST to the NMAAM Art Selection Committee via the NMAAM submission page at <http://NMAAM.org/ArtCall> For full details on the materials that should be included in the application packet, as well as complete competition rules, download the Request for Proposal for Public Art on the NMAAM website at www.NMAAM.org. Additional questions can also be sent to artcall@nmaam.org.

Energy is Currency

By Nikki Abraham, Nucleus Team Member, Positively Caviar, Inc.

In physics, energy can be described as the capacity to do work and currency, as we know is a medium of exchange for goods and services. So how do the two relate?

Think of your personal energy as value. This is the amount of effort you are capable of giving and the power you have within your mind and body to fulfill your priorities. Every second of your day is valuable and every moment you have should be distributed into anything that helps the greater good and most importantly helps you fulfill your purpose and your destiny. Be cognizant of the physical and mental strength you have to do what your mind and body wants you to do. When you are aware of your personal energy and view it as currency you are able to do more work, earn more and ultimately reach your goals and fulfill your purpose.

How many times do you get home after a long day of work and say, "I just don't have the energy to do XYZ." Pay attention to those feelings. Be aware of what ignites and depletes your personal energy. Remember that your time is valuable and the time you spend feeding into things that do not serve you is a waste of your energy.

Yes, everybody has bad days but we also have a choice to rise above, stay positive and not wallow in negativity. When you spend ample time directing your feelings and emotions to an undesirable space you end up using up energy that you can't afford to lose.

Energy is also contagious, surround yourself with people who focus on radiating positive energy and always allow your energy to inspire others. Personal energy levels are magnetic and can have an effect on the rooms that you enter and the spaces you are in.

Recognize whom you are with at the moments when you feel your best and the environments you are in when you feel drained. When you find people who match your energy trust that connection and guard it. You will virtually attract what you think about the most. Consistently, consciously and repetitiously see yourself living in abundant happiness, and you will attract it.



Nikki Abraham
Courtesy Photo

Always be aware that a simple shift can redirect your energy. If you feel yourself utilizing more negative energy than usual take a second to reevaluate. Clean up your thoughts and beliefs. You will be amazed by what you attract once you start believing in what you deserve. Feel the power that comes from focusing on what fuels you.

Our atom logo for Positively Caviar is extremely intentional as it is a direct representation of life. We are all made up of atoms: protons, electrons and neutrons. They are everywhere, virtually representing every facet of life. We as humans have our own electromagnetic fields and our energy flows out among everything and everyone that we come in contact with.

The foundation of everything that we are begins with an atom and a thought. Protons represent positive energy and electrons represent negative energy. Both are essential to the balance of life. Become the architect of your own life and take control by using the frequency and vibrations of your own thoughts.

Positively Caviar, Inc. (PCI) is a grassroots nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization focused on instilling mental resilience by way of positive thinking and optimism. Each month, a member of the Nucleus Team will feature a column focused on mental and physical health tips, scientific studies, nutrition facts and stories positive in nature to support a positive and healthy lifestyle. To learn more about how you can support, volunteer or donate to Positively Caviar, Inc. visit: staybasedandpositive.com.

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Worst holiday food mistakes are usually avoidable

By Stacy M. Brown

The holidays are upon us, which means dinner with family and friends and a strong desire to put together a memorable meal.

There are downsides when considering what to prepare, and foodies are warning professional and amateur chefs not to get too creative.

“The worst food mistake you can make for the holidays is to try a new recipe when entertaining family and friends,” said Nathan Grieve, founder of Project Hatch, a community website that features case studies from entrepreneurs who’ve created successful businesses and nonprofits so aspiring founders can learn from them. “There is a saying in the athletics community that needs to be applied more often on to cooking. It goes, ‘Nothing new on race day.’”

The entrepreneur spoke from experience.

“When I was younger, I would make macaroni and cheese every year. One year, I wanted the dish to look more festive, and so I added a gold-yellow food coloring,” Grieve said. “After mixing it in, the sauce went completely fluorescent yellow and looked radioactive. Just looking at it put my family off.”

Among the worst food mistakes is making sure not to undercook meat and other items, said Melissa Morris, a writer for EffortlessInsurance.com, who has degrees in exercise science and educational leadership.

“Two that come to mind are eating raw cookie dough and not using a food thermometer for cooking meats,” Morris said. “Raw cookie dough can cause foodborne illnesses like salmonella, because of the raw eggs and raw flour. Salmonella can cause vomiting, abdominal cramping, diarrhea, and dehydration.

“A food thermometer ensures that the food is cooked to a proper temperature and is safe to consume. Undercooked or raw meat can cause foodborne illness like E Coli and salmonella.”

Katie Heil, certified food safety professional with experience in the food mistakes people can make during the holidays, said five common mistakes are easily avoidable.

She lists them as thawing meat incorrectly; not cooking meat long enough; not taking steps to prevent



cross-contamination; not washing hands often enough, and leaving food out too long.

“Never thaw frozen meat on the counter. Room temperature is generally within the temperature danger zone— 41°F - 135°F— when bacteria grow the fastest,” Heil said.

When thawing meat in the refrigerator, cooks should plan on one day for every five pounds of meat. When thawing in water, fill a container with enough water to submerge the entire cut of meat and drop in the unopened package, according to Heil.

The water should be as close to 40°F as possible. The water should be changed every 30 minutes, and cooks should plan on 2.5 hours for every five pounds of meat.

“Raw meat can carry bacteria such as E. coli. To kill all the bacteria living on your meat, you must cook it to the FDA’s recommended temperature. Don’t guess at the temperature— use a food thermometer to measure the internal temperature of the food.

The temperatures recommended for three common holiday types of meat are Turkey - 165°F; Stuffing that includes meat - 165°F; and Ham - 145°F.

Heil notes that many people use the same utensils for preparing raw meat as they do for cooking it. This can cross-contaminate your food, even if you cook it to recommended temperatures. Keep your food safe by switching to clean plates and utensils for cooking.

“You should also clean and sanitize your food thermometer between uses. You should also clean and sanitize your utensils, including knives and cutting boards, after using them on raw meat,” she said.

Washing hands with soap and water before and after handling raw meat is essential.

“Don’t use hand sanitizer if you can help it; it’s not as effective as scrubbing with soap. Rewash your hands anytime you think they may have become contaminated,” Heil continued.

Finally, never leave food (cooked or uncooked) out longer than two hours because its temperature can quickly fall into the temperature danger zone when bacteria grow the fastest.

“After two hours, you should put meat and other perishable foods into the fridge or freezer. If any food is left out for four hours or more, throw it away,” she said.

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(Family Features)

When holiday gatherings turn into all-day events, having meals ready from morning to night becomes an important part of seasonal hosting. Starting with breakfast through the main course followed by a savory dessert, a full day of celebration calls for a variety of dishes.

To help keep your crowd fueled for a wide range of activities, consider these recipes for Hot Cocoa Pancakes to get your morning started, Browned Butter Smashed Potatoes with Butternut Squash to pair with a holiday ham and Black Forest Cake to end the festivities on a high note.

Find more holiday recipe inspiration at Culinary.net.

A Full Menu for Fun-Filled *Holiday Festivities*



Begin the Holiday with a Family Breakfast

With so many activities scheduled and places to be during the holidays, starting the morning with a filling breakfast can help set your family on the path to enjoyable moments with loved ones.

These Hot Cocoa Pancakes require little time in the kitchen, leaving you more time to spend with the family before hitting the road or working on decorations for seasonal gatherings. Made with Aunt Jemima pancake mix, containing no artificial coloring or flavors, this recipe makes it simple to put breakfast on the table quickly while still achieving a meal full of flavor.

Visit auntjemima.com for more family-friendly recipes.

Hot Cocoa Pancakes

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 2 minutes per pancake

Yield: 12 pancakes (3 per serving)

2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder

1 1/2 tablespoons sugar

1 cup 2% or non-fat milk

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

2 cups Aunt Jemima

Original Complete or Buttermilk Complete Pancake & Waffle Mix

1/4 cup water

marshmallow spread (optional)

chocolate syrup (optional)

Aunt Jemima Syrup (optional)

Heat skillet over medium-low heat or electric griddle to 375 F.

In microwave-safe bowl, mix cocoa powder, sugar, milk and vanilla until well combined. Heat in microwave 30 seconds, or until warm. Stir again to ensure mixture is combined.

Combine cocoa mixture, pancake mix and water. Stir until large lumps disappear (do not beat or over-mix). If batter is too thick, add additional 1-2 tablespoons water.

Pour slightly less than 1/4 cup batter onto lightly greased skillet or griddle. Cook 90 seconds, or until bubbles appear on surface. Turn and cook additional 30 seconds. Repeat with remaining batter. Top pancakes with marshmallow spread and drizzle chocolate syrup, or top with syrup.

Party-Perfect Potatoes

Almost every holiday meal calls for side dishes to complement the main course, and as one of the most versatile base ingredients available, potatoes often provide home chefs with a multitude of options.

Served mashed, fried, scalloped, sliced, diced, boiled, roasted or just about any style in-between, potatoes are ideal for matching with the centerpiece of your family meal. These Browned Butter Smashed Potatoes with Butternut Squash call for Wisconsin yellow-flesh potatoes to achieve a dense, creamy texture with their just-buttered appearance.

Find more dishes for your holiday gatherings at eatwisconsinpotatoes.com.

Browned Butter Smashed Potatoes with Butternut Squash

Prep time: 25 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

1 pound (3 medium) Wisconsin yellow-flesh potatoes, cut into 3/4-inch chunks

1 small butternut squash (about 1 pound), peeled, seeded and cut into 1-inch chunks water

1 teaspoon salt, plus additional, to taste, divided

3 tablespoons butter, divided

8-10 fresh (2-3-inch) sage leaves, stacked and cut into 1/4-inch strips

1/2 cup 1% milk

freshly ground black pepper, to taste



In 3-quart saucepan, cover potatoes and squash with water; add 1 teaspoon salt.

Bring to boil over high heat; reduce heat, cover and cook until tender, 12-15 minutes.

In small saucepan over medium heat, mix 2 tablespoons butter and sage. Tilting pan and watching closely, cook about 3 minutes, until butter foams and begins to brown; keep warm.

Thoroughly drain potatoes and squash, return to pan and shake 1-2 minutes over low heat. Using hand masher, roughly mash to create chunky mixture.

Over low heat, gently mix in remaining butter and milk.

Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Spoon into serving bowl and drizzle with brown butter and sage.

Serve Up a Savory Sweet

No holiday gathering is complete without dessert, and you can take your sweets to the next level with this rich, creamy Black Forest Cake recipe.

Tart cherries and whipped cream are combined with Domino Golden Sugar - a less processed option which is made from pure cane sugar and works cup-for-cup just like white sugar, but with a golden color and distinct hint of molasses flavor - for a contrasting profile to put a spin on a seasonal classic.

Find more holiday dessert ideas at dominosugar.com.

Black Forest Cake

Servings: 8

Cherry Filling

1/2 cup Domino Golden Sugar

1 tablespoon cornstarch

1/2 cup water or unsweetened cherry juice

2 cups fresh or frozen pitted tart (Montmorency) cherries

2 tablespoons cherry brandy (optional)

Cake:

1 2/3 cups all-purpose flour

2/3 cup cocoa powder

1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda

1 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup butter, softened

1 1/2 cups Domino Golden Sugar

2 eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 1/2 cups buttermilk

Stabilized Whipped Cream:

1 teaspoon unflavored gelatin

2 tablespoons cold water

2 cups (1 pint) heavy whipping cream

2 tablespoons Domino Golden Sugar
chocolate curls or shavings, for garnish
(optional)

To make cherry filling: In medium saucepot, whisk sugar and cornstarch with water or juice then bring to boil over medium heat. Stir in cherries and cherry brandy, if desired, and boil 2-3 minutes, stirring, until sauce is thick and translucent. Drain cherries from sauce and set both aside.

To make cake layers: Heat oven to 350 F.

Line bottoms of three 8-inch round cake pans with parchment paper. Grease and flour bottoms and sides.

In medium bowl, sift flour, cocoa powder, baking soda and salt.

In mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar 2 minutes on medium speed. Add eggs and

vanilla; beat 1 minute. Stir in flour mixture and buttermilk.

Pour batter evenly among cake pans and bake 20-22 minutes, or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Cool and remove layers from pans.

To make stabilized whipped cream: In small pan or microwaveable bowl, combine gelatin and cold water; allow gelatin to bloom. Heat until gelatin melts and dissolves; set aside.

In chilled bowl, whip cream with chilled beaters until soft peaks form. Add sugar and gelatin; beat until stiff.

Prick tops of two bottom layers with fork and brush cherry filling over layers. Sandwich bottom layers with a 1/4-inch-thick spread of stabilized whipped cream. Sandwich second and top layer with same whipped cream. Spread remaining whipped cream over top layer and sides.

Garnish with shaved chocolate, if desired, and decorate with any remaining whipped cream.



Delaying your loved one's addiction treatment over the holidays can be dangerous

Addiction treatment expert advises families to act now!

Baltimore— We all want to be festive and celebrate the holidays with family around us. However, alcohol and substance use disorders can ramp up over the holiday season resulting in a greater need for treatment.

An estimated 88,000 people die from alcohol-related causes annually according to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

In a study by Alcohol Monitoring Systems on alcohol consumption by high-risk drivers during the holiday season, violations jumped 33 percent compared to the rest of the year, and excessive drinking and increased rates of DUI injuries and deaths occurred even despite the drivers' knowledge that they were being monitored.

"If you have a loved one who needs to get help for an alcohol or drug addiction, the time to act is now and not after the holidays," according to Trish Caldwell, a family therapist for over 25 years and the corporate director of Family Services for Recovery Centers of America.

"There are so many triggers at this time of year that can push a person in active addiction into a downward spiral or a relapse that can be deadly. The pain of thinking about their loved one in treatment during the holidays can feel overwhelming, but for so many families the pain of their loved one being home can be even scarier if they continue to use. Getting the help they deserve now lets the family begin to heal and move towards creating meaningful lives in recovery well beyond the holidays."

Caldwell says that families delay



getting needed treatment for their loved ones because of:

1. Guilt and sadness of being without each other over the holidays.

The thought of not being together over the holidays or the thought of your loved one in treatment, can feel overwhelming. Guilt of being apart can lead to the hope that, just for the holidays, they can "stay sober." Unfortunately, that is not how a disease operates, and often times the symptoms worsen over the holidays. But your loved one and you having a safe and sober holiday can be so powerful and staying connected in treatment can be so rewarding. During the holidays RCA offers so many wonderful opportunities to stay connected and rebuild the hope needed to build a life of recovery.

2. The belief that their loved one "can do it on their own."

With addiction the brain's set points for pleasure

and reward have been changed by Substance Use Disorder, so loved ones cannot do it on their own. Without treatment— diseases progress, and this one is no different. Despite their genuine desire to want to remain sober during the holidays, it is a time that has the highest risk associated with use. It is important to know that those in active addiction will often say anything to continue their ability to use, and your loving support and encouragement for them to seek treatment may be exactly what they need to take the leap into their recovery.

3. Fear of being judged or misunderstood by family and friends.

Parents and spouses may want to hide their loved one's addiction and not have to "tell everyone where they are" when they miss a family tradition. Families may feel embarrassed or fear being judged by other family members who

don't understand that alcoholism or drug abuse are diseases that need treatment like other medical conditions.

"It's a tough decision for any parent or spouse but getting help is the right decision and could save your loved one's life," explained Caldwell. "That's the greatest gift you can give your family."

Additionally, Caldwell says that the holidays are an excellent time to utilize the services of an interventionist— these services are included in the cost of treatment at Recovery Centers of America.

"An interventionist can help immeasurably at this time of year by employing techniques that demonstrate to the person suffering from a substance use disorder and other members of the family that now is the time to get treatment," explained Caldwell. "The interventionist will provide needed support for handling the objections of family members who may be in denial about their loved ones' addiction by providing the tools to encourage the language or recovery and the importance of treatment."

The holidays can be a challenging and dangerous time for families with a loved one suffering from an addiction to drugs or alcohol. Celebrating a loved one's sobriety after the holidays by scheduling treatment now can often be the best gift of all for the entire family.

Trish Caldwell has 25 years of experience in family therapy, trauma, substance use disorders and the adolescent and young adult populations. For additional information and to speak to Trish Caldwell, contact Terri Malenfant at tmalenfant@recoverycoa.com.



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Golden Rules for Holiday Shopping

Joseph M. Jennings, Jr., CFA,
Senior Vice President and Managing
Director, PNC Wealth Management

It could cost a whopping \$38,993.59 for your “True Love” this holiday season. If you bought the gifts in the holiday classic, “The Twelve Days of Christmas,” it would cost a record \$38,993.59, according to the 36th annual PNC Christmas Price Index.

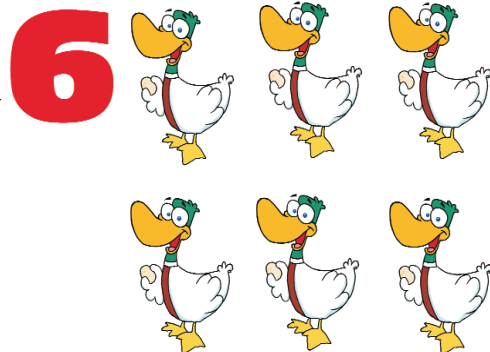
Few have a budget for all those birds and performers, but ‘tis the season to get carried away. Here are a few spending tips so you don’t overstuff the stockings—or your budget!

Holiday Spending Tips:

1. Be choosy— Identify your special partridge and pare down your list to those you’re actually close to. Don’t guilt-buy for those far-away relatives who will re-gift your tacky present anyways. If you can’t resist, create a funny e-card for free.

2. Create a budget— Don’t be one of the geese that lays a spending egg. Once you know who you’re buying for, decide how much you will spend per person. If \$15 is all you can afford per person, then spend \$15 – not \$17 or \$20. If that seems a bit Scrooge-like, tell your friends/family to set the same limits for you. Take advantage of online budgeting tools to set limits with text or email alerts to warn you.

3. Find the bargains— Be surfing while the swans are a swimming. Look for coupons and Groupons. When it comes to online shopping, there’s a cost



Six Geese a Laying...

for convenience. PNC calculates the online cost of the “The Twelve Days of Christmas” gifts is \$42,258.91, which is seven percent over the in-person approach. But you can save by watching for free shipping offers and no-hassle returns plus free shipping.

4. Get crafty— Handy drummers are drumming up their own gifts. Whip up a few dozen batches of your special cookies, cake pops or brownies, package in pretty baskets with a bow and call it a day. Who on your list wouldn’t love a homemade treat over a store-bought gift?

5. Pay smartly— Like the maids, milk the most out of your money. Pre-paid cards mean you only spend a set amount and are perfect for kids to learn how to buy for others and stay on budget. Cash in on your credit card reward points to buy gifts. When using credit, make sure you have a plan to pay off your balance. For online payments, look for security or privacy seals first before submitting information. The payment page should have a lock icon and the address should start with “https.”

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TOTAL
ESTIMATED
SAVINGS² = **\$5,627**



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-NATIONAL AVG. DEALER DISCOUNT \$2,839
-BONUS CASH \$9,780

TOTAL
ESTIMATED
SAVINGS³ = **\$12,619**



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Bon Secours Hospital renamed Grace Medical Center

Baltimore— LifeBridge Health announced a new name for Bon Secours Baltimore Hospital: Grace Medical Center.

“As we thought about a new name for the hospital, we wanted to honor the hospital’s 100-year history as well as reflect our ongoing commitment to ensuring that the people of West Baltimore have health services they need now and in the future. After consulting with many people, including staff, community members and the Sisters of Bon Secours, it was the spirit of the employees themselves, along with a desire to recognize and thank the Sisters of Bon Secours, that led us to the name Grace Medical Center,” said Neil Meltzer, LifeBridge Health president and CEO.

“We truly believe the name Grace Medical Center speaks to the character of those who work here as well as the type of care and investment LifeBridge Health will bring to the hospital,” added Rebecca Altman, vice president and chief integration officer at LifeBridge



Health, who oversaw the transition and now leads the team at Grace Medical Center.

LifeBridge Health took over operations of the West Baltimore hospital on November 1, 2019. Preliminary plans for the hospital include enhanced emergency services, on-site clinical and primary care, expanded specialty services (including pediatrics, ENT, ophthalmology and 3D mammography) as well as a small medical/surgical unit.

LifeBridge Health looks to complete renovations and new construction by the end of 2022.

“We are very excited about the future of Grace Medical Center and the positive impact we hope to bring to the health and wellbeing of the people of West Baltimore,” says Altman.

Bon Secours Baltimore Hospital was founded in 1919 by the Sisters of Bon Secours who came to the United States to provide care to the people of Baltimore. Today, the Sisters of Bon Secours continue their mission in West Baltimore through Bon Secours Community Works, which provides housing and other community initiatives.

LifeBridge Health and Bon Secours



Community Works continue to work together on community-focused programs to benefit the residents of West Baltimore.

LifeBridge Health is one of the largest, most comprehensive providers of health services in Maryland. LifeBridge Health includes Sinai Hospital of Baltimore, Northwest Hospital, Carroll Hospital, Levindale Hebrew Geriatric Center and Hospital, Grace Medical Center and related affiliates.

For more information, visit: www.lifebridgehealth.org

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A Story That Began 50 Years Ago

By Ursula V. Battle

After graduating from Forest Park High School in 1968, Virgie Williams knew she wanted to go to college. She recalled the factors that helped determine where she would further her education.

"I was nervous about going to a four-year college," recalled Williams. "I also wanted to attend a school that wasn't too far from where I lived. I decided to attend Baltimore Junior College. It was close to where I lived. The school was excellent and felt like home to me. I majored in Computer Science and was blessed to get a Work Study position working in the school's library.

I graduated in 1970. The exemplary education, mixed with all the fun times, blossomed into a job opportunity. I was hired as a full time Library Assistant."

She added, "At the time, they were transferring from manually checking out books to computers. We used punch cards."

Nearly 50 years later, Williams is still working at the college which is known as Baltimore City Community College (BCCC). She has seen the school change its name, new presidents take the helm, and much more. She even met her husband, Arnold Williams at the school. He is now a managing partner with the accounting firm Abrams, Foster, Nole & Williams.

"It just so happened that my girlfriend and I were in the cafeteria," recalled Williams. "I pointed Arnold out to my girlfriend, and said, 'that's the guy I'm going to marry. That was 47 years ago.'"

Williams will retire on January 1, 2020. June of next year would have marked 50 years at BCCC, which is located at 2901 Liberty Heights Ave. BCCC is the city's only community college, and Maryland's only state-sponsored community college.

"BCCC is a great institution," said Williams. "It's a diamond in the rough that specializes in workforce development. All students have to do is take advantage of the opportunities and resources that the school offers. You



"A Family Affair." Williams touches a brick on the BCCC Brick Wall of Recognition, which includes her name, along with the names of her husband and daughter. The three are all graduates of the school. Photos: Ursula V. Battle



Monet' Jones, Administrative Assistant II and Virgie Williams.

can't help but succeed. Some people downplay two-year colleges. But it's a good road to travel to be successful."

Williams is the Assistant Director and Head of Circulation of the BCCC Library.

"When I came to the campus, I was helped," said Williams recalling her college days. "Now I am helping students. I thank the Lord for the opportunity. This is the first place people stop on campus.

It's important for us at the front desk to set the example for the college. If someone comes to the desk and asks where a building is, I take them there, or get them as close to it as I can. I also tell them to call or come back to let me know they got what they needed."

She added, "We don't want anyone leaving and not getting what they need. If they get bad service, they will tell

other people and it doesn't look good for the college. Good communication skills and follow-through go a long way. We are here to help students reach their goals."

Williams, her husband, and their daughter Stacey are all graduates of BCCC, which she calls "A Family Affair." As a way of giving back to the college, the couple established the Arnold & Virgie Williams Endowed Scholarship.

Williams has served on numerous committees over her "storied" career at BCCC. She is a recipient of the BCCC Excellence Award for quality performance and outstanding contributions to the College. As Chair of the Bard Library/Bookstore Author's Series, Williams was instrumental in bringing several noted authors including Zane, Wes Moore, Omar Tyree, and Sonia Sanchez to the school.

She served 10 years as chairperson of the BCCC Faculty Affairs Committee, and currently serves as treasurer of the BCCC alumni board. She is a member of Southern Baptist Church, pastored by Dr. Donte' Hickman. Williams coordinated and co-wrote a grant for the partnership between BCCC and Southern Baptist Church to offer GED and Adult Basic Education at the church.

According to Williams, over 300 students were registered and nearly 70% of those enrollees successfully completed all course requirements and received their GED. Williams, who is also a graduate of the University of Baltimore (UB), is also a member of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women (NCBW).

Williams also owns a home-based baking business. With her retirement, she said she plans to spend more time baking. But retirement won't close the book on her service at BCCC.

"I would like to come back and volunteer," she said with a smile.

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What your pain is telling you and three things to do about it

News & Experts— Is that pain you feel in your back, neck or shoulders just a momentary twinge from strain you are putting on your body, perhaps with a new exercise regimen? Or is there something deeper and more serious at work? Either way, you ignore it at your peril.

“Pain is an alert system; it tells us that something is wrong,” says Bradford Butler, a chiropractor and author of *The Blueprint for Back Pain Relief: The Essential Guide to Nonsurgical Solutions* (www.drbradfordbutler.com).

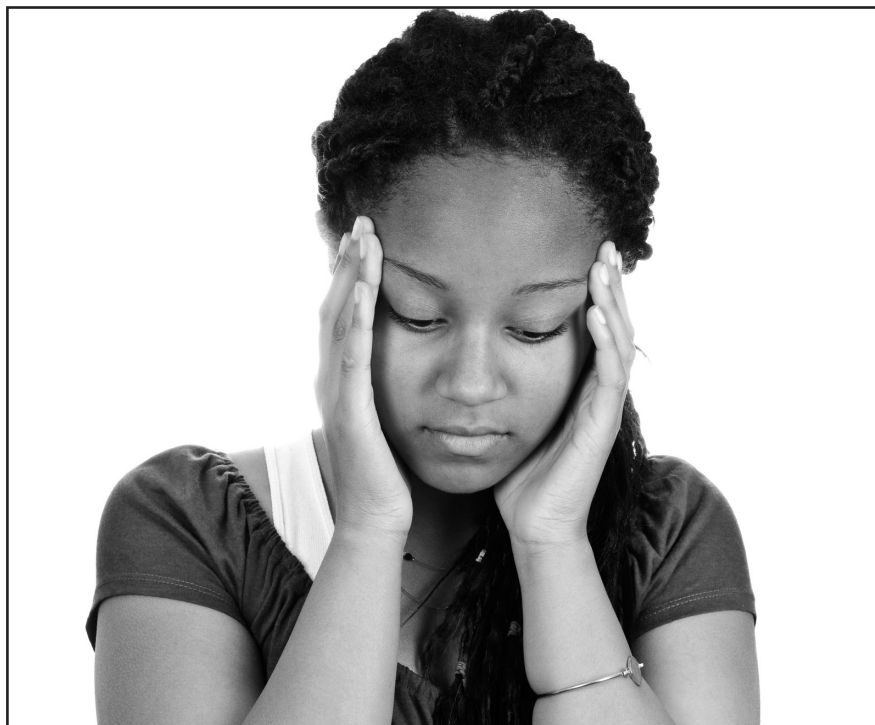
“Chronic pain goes a step further. It is telling you that a whole system in your body isn’t working right.”

For many people and their physicians, the first option for pain, and sometimes the second and third options as well, is to munch on some pain pills— over-the-counter or prescribed— and go on your way.

“That’s fine, except it doesn’t address the fundamental problem,” Butler says. “Too often, with back pain, shoulder pain, neck pain or other chronic pain, many doctors focus on reducing the pain rather than addressing the cause.”

He likens it to waking up with an excruciating toothache, and then visiting a dentist who discovers a huge cavity but, instead of repairing the cavity, just gives you a powerful drug for the pain and sends you home.

“Left untreated, the pain would get more debilitating and the damage to the tooth would worsen, leading to bigger



and more invasive and expensive procedures,” Butler says. “But that’s what happens when it comes to the American healthcare system and treatment for chronic pain.”

Butler offers these words of advice for those whose bodies are trying to warn them that something is amiss:

•**Choose your doctor wisely.** Blind faith in any doctor is not the answer, Butler says. Instead, ask yourself what the particular doctor you plan to visit is trained to do. In the primary care world, for example, doctors are trained to ana-

lyze and to treat symptoms, so they are more likely address the pain rather than its cause. Surgeons often will recommend surgery, because that’s their specialty. Yet, he says, medicine just masks symptoms and surgery isn’t always successful. “It’s your pain, so ultimately it’s up to you to do the research and find out what works, avoid what doesn’t, and find someone who will really help you with your problem,” Butler says.

•**Don’t let your body resetting its pain level fool you.** What happens when

you let the pain go? Your body adapts. “It can’t sound the alarm constantly, so it resets,” Butler says. “Where once the threshold for pain was X amount of damage, that threshold gets raised. What that means for you is that the pain goes away. You think the problem must be gone, when in reality, your body’s pain setting has been raised. Eventually, the only time you’re feeling pain is when you’re already in dire straits.”

•**Think in terms of prevention.** This is something dentistry definitely gets right, Butler says. Dental patients are encouraged to have regular checkups, whether they’re in pain or not, so the dentist can head off potential problems. “That’s the way it needs to be for neck and back pain,” he says. “Being free of symptoms doesn’t mean you don’t have major problems brewing. It just means that you don’t know they’re developing.”

“We need to listen to our pain and fix whatever is wrong as soon as possible,” Butler says. “You won’t get better— permanently better— until you find the cause of the problem.”

*Bradford Butler, a chiropractor and author of *The Blueprint for Back Pain Relief: The Essential Guide to Nonsurgical Solutions* is owner and director of Oakland Spine and Physical Therapy, which has three locations in northern New Jersey. For more information, visit: www.drbradfordbutler.com.*

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Reginald Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture Needs Volunteers

The museum is dedicated to serving the community by providing multifaceted support through meaningful interactions with history and material culture of Maryland African Americans. Volunteers are needed to assist at the Information Desk, as Docents, for Special Events, and more. There are ongoing opportunities on Saturdays and Sundays for assistance with greeting guests and patrons at the main entrance and to work with kid’s activities during public hours. The minimum age for volunteers is 14. Volunteering is open to adults, seniors, college, and high school students. Service learning credit hours can be earned by high school students. We are accepting applications for the following volunteer positions: Special Event Volunteer, Administrative Assistant, Curatorial Assistant, and Visitor Services. Contact Joy Hall at 443-263-1800 or email: hall@lewismuseum.org; or visit the website:

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