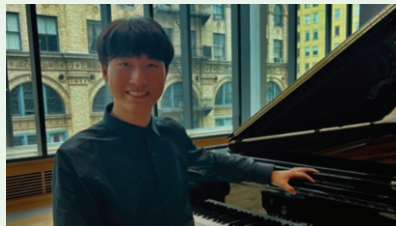


Philharmonic Orchestra's
2024-25 Spring Concert to
be held Saturday, March 8
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Diadem Of Destruction
– what is threatening
local bird populations?
SEE PAGE 9



MARCH 2025 ■ VOL. 34, NO. 3

Willow Glen Times

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Maren Sederquist signs into the Willow Glen High School office using the newly installed Raptor system in San Jose, California on Wednesday, February 12, 2025. (The identification was blurred to protect the subjects identity) (Maxwell Alexander/Mosaic)

SJ Unified turns to technology to boost school safety after campus security breaches

Parents ask for district-wide talks to improve safety at schools

By Antara Gangwal | Mosaic

After a series of security incidents on its campuses and feedback from parents, San Jose Unified School District has installed technology to electronically screen visitors at its 41 campuses.

The Raptor School Safety Suite includes a sign-in system that scans school visitor IDs and checks for registered sex offenders. And it is supposed to aid response to disasters, lockdowns and evacuations — an in-demand feature given that 67% of public schools experienced at least one violent incident during the 2021-22 school year, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

A 2024 Santa Clara Civil Grand Jury report said that San Jose Unified lacked consistency in both safety event preparedness and responses. The district experi-

See SECURITY, page 10

San Jose wants to retrieve thousands of abandoned shopping carts

By Vicente Vera
San José Spotlight

San Jose wants to “piggyback” off a partnership with Milpitas and a private company to tackle thousands of abandoned shopping carts.

The San Jose City Council voted 10-1, with Councilmember Pamela Campos voting no, to find an abandoned shopping cart retrieval service to recover about 2,000 carts citywide per year. Not only would a private company potentially help reunite retailers with their lost carts, it could also be integrated into the city’s 311 app to allow residents to report abandoned shopping carts. Campos, who opposed the idea, questioned if city workers would need to postpone their existing priorities in order to work on new efforts to address abandoned shopping carts.

City agencies such as BeautifySJ help identify abandoned shopping carts, which are then taken to Mabury Service Yard, but the site is nearing capacity.

Peter Hamilton, assistant to the city manager’s office, said San Jose’s proposal is modeled after Milpitas’ contract with shopping cart



San Jose has about 2,000 shopping carts that are abandoned citywide each year. Photo by B. Sakura Cannestra.

retrieval company Retail Marketing Services. The city manager’s office is set to come back to council before May with an agreement for review.

“There may be an opportunity for us to piggyback on that contract and start a small pilot program in the current fiscal year with (Retail Marketing Services),” he said at the meeting. “We would look to use existing funding sources in the realm of \$10,000 to \$20,000 to pilot it through the end of the current fiscal year.”

Related Stories

Tim James, spokesperson for the California Grocers Association, said the group supports San Jose’s proposal to bring in Retail Marketing Services, but has concerns about the city exploring penalties for people caught taking shopping carts from the premises of a business.

“Most cart thieves do not own a car, rely on public transportation, use the cart to safely cross streets with children, use the cart as walking aid and likely live within only a mile or two of the store location,” he said. “Carts are rarely stolen by the homeless as they tend to take a cart already stolen and hang onto that cart for a long period of time.”

Grocers are already fined for shopping carts through the San

Jose code enforcement abandoned shopping cart policy. Code enforcement officials said they collected about \$39,000 through 166 citations last year.

Mayor Matt Mahan said he doesn’t see how the city’s stormwater permit can be in good standing with the Clean Water Act while the city has an ongoing shopping cart crisis. He said it could cause San Jose to lose its permit and result in hefty fines.

“I don’t think we can change public perceptions of blight as long as we have 2,000 carts a year going missing and ending up all over the street,” Mahan said the meeting. “The situation out on the streets today is, frankly, unacceptable, and it’s contributing to a perception of disorder that’s much greater than the reality.”

City officials also want retailers to submit stronger abandoned cart prevention plans and implement effective loss prevention standards, such as wheel locking mechanisms or coin deposit for use.

Councilmember Michael Mulcahy said, as a commercial property owner, he knows shopping carts can be expensive losses for businesses.

“As an owner of shopping centers, we’ve always required an electronic shopping cart system be installed, and it’s written into leases that the stores are responsible to give their best efforts to keep those corralled,” he said. “Not all retailers have these systems. Not all landlords require them and many times both are not taking responsibility for keeping track.”



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*The Young Artist Competition is kindly sponsored by the San Jose Symphony Foundation. "San Jose Symphony" is a registered trademark of the San Jose Symphony Foundation, and its use in all its variations is by license.

New Ballet presents the 8th annual Fast Forward

New contemporary ballet featuring world premieres by seven choreographers March 21-22 at Hammer Theatre

New Ballet, the institution that Silicon Valley looks to for excellence in the art of ballet, announces today the 8th annual Fast Forward, two evenings of new contemporary ballet by seven choreographers, March 21 at 7 pm and March 22 at 2 pm at the Hammer Theatre Center.

Fast Forward provides the opportunity for emerging choreographers, both local and from around the country, to experiment. The program offers New Ballet Company Dancers the chance to perform work that has been created specifically for them, and to grow as artists and be part of the creative process. In addition, the choreographers provide the audience with a behind-the-scenes understanding of the new works by discussing the choreographic process and providing context and insight into their inspiration.

World Premieres by Seven Choreographers

- Julio Hong: Montreal-based



Photo by Tony Abello of Keon Saghari's work for the 2024 Production

choreographer, who trained at the National Ballet of Cuba and choreographs contemporary ballet, modern and Latin dance works; creating a new work to the music of Arturo Sandoval. This world premiere is underwritten by Snowflake Properties, LLC.

- James Kopecky: Former Company Dancer at Charlotte Ballet;

former dancer at Ballet San Jose

- Mariana Sobral: Director of eMotion Arts Dance Co and, former professional dancer
- Laura Burton: New Ballet Chief Operations Officer and contemporary dance choreographer; former lead choreographer for the Dance Company at Virginia Tech
- Deborah Le, New Ballet Stu-

dio Company Dancer

- Niamh Rollins, New Ballet Studio Company Dancer
- Dalia Rawson, New Ballet's Artistic Director

General Admission tickets are \$17-\$50 and Premium tickets are \$136. For more information, visit <https://newballet.com> or call 408-924-8501.

Premium Tickets include access to the Hammer Theatre Center's Curtain Call Lounge starting one hour before the show and at intermission, plus access to a post-performance Cast Party with the dancers, featuring sweet and savory bites and elegant wines.



Dalia Rawson, New Ballet's Artistic Director

Willow Glen Times

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\$25. Check or Cash. For more information contact Jeanne @408-425-5723

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We have a limited number of tickets to the latest Cirque Du Soleil show ECHO under the big top at the fairgrounds. Tickets are in section 203 and are \$90. cash or check. A 20% discount over individual tickets. Tickets are on sale in the ACC lobby, MWF 8-10am.

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The deadline for submitting audition applications is:
Sunday, March 23, 2025

QUESTIONS? Reach out to sjys@sjys.org.

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Philharmonic Orchestra's 2024-25 Spring Concert to be held Saturday, March 8

The Philharmonic Orchestra Performs Strauss, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Sarasate and Suk

The San Jose Youth Symphony's Philharmonic Orchestra, under the artistic leadership of Music Director and Conductor Yair Samet, presents its 2024-25 Spring Concert, featuring Young Artist Competition Winners, to be held on Saturday, March 8, 2025, 2 pm, at the California Theatre, 345 S. 1st Street, San Jose, CA.

The orchestra will open with Johann Strauss's Die Fledermaus Overture from his most famous operetta (meaning The Bat), along with Chopin's beautiful and sparkling Grand Valse Brillante. and close with Smetana's exciting Three Dances from The Bartered Bride.

This concert will also feature

two winners from the 2024 Young Artists' Competition, proudly sponsored by the San Jose Symphony Foundation*. Outstanding young soloists, Zijing (Zack) Zhang, pianist, and Joshua Kim, violinist, will perform Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto No. 1, and Sarasate's Zigeunerweisen for Violin and Orchestra, respectively. The orchestra will close the concert with Czech composer Suk's memorable Scherzo Fantastique.



Zijing (Zack) Zhang is a high school senior at Saratoga High School and has been a violinist

with the San Jose Youth Symphony since 2021 and is currently in his 4th year with the Philharmonic Orchestra. He traveled with the orchestra on their last International Tour to the Baltics in 2022.



Joshua Kim is also a senior, attending Valley Christian High School, and has been playing violin with the San Jose Youth Symphony since 2017, first joining the Prelude Ensemble. He has been a member of the Philharmonic Orchestra since 2021, and also traveled with the orchestra on their last International Tour to

the Baltics in 2022.

The San Jose Youth Symphony (SJYS) is one of the oldest and finest youth orchestras on the West Coast of the U.S. Founded over seven decades ago as part of the former San Jose Symphony, SJYS has a rich tradition of musical performance and education.

The musicians of SJYS, all school-age youth, are chosen from more than 650 applicants through our annual auditions. The SJYS comprises 13 distinct performing ensembles: two full orchestras, a chamber orchestra, two flute choirs, two string ensembles, as well as winds, brass, harp, saxophone, percussion, and jazz ensembles.

Ticket purchases now available online by visiting: <https://sjys.org/product-category/tickets>

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San Jose Youth Symphony to hold auditions for the 2025-26 Season

The San Jose Youth Symphony (SJYS) will be holding its annual general auditions for the 2025-2026 Season.

The auditions will be held on Thursday afternoons (March 27 and April 3) and Friday afternoons (March 28 and April 4) between the hours of 4-9 p.m. Saturday auditions will be held all day (March 29 and April 5).

All student musicians are welcome, ages 8 and up, who play orchestral instruments (woodwinds, brass, percussion and strings) or who are interested in performing jazz.

Marching Band musicians are welcome to apply for an audition now and then join after marching band season ends.

To submit an audition application, visit: www.sjys.org to join one of SJYS's 12 orchestras and instrumental ensembles. Your audition will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. The symphony will do its best to accommodate your date preferences you list in the application.

The deadline for submitting applications is March 23, 2024.

Questions? Reach out to sjys@sjys.org

About the San Jose Youth Symphony

The San Jose Youth Symphony is one of the oldest and finest youth orchestras on the West Coast of the US. Founded over 70 years ago as part of the former San Jose Symphony, SJYS has a rich tradition of musical performance and education.

SJYS member musicians, of ages 8 to 20, are selected from more than 650 applicants through our annual spring General Auditions. SJYS comprises 12 distinct performing ensembles: two full orchestras; a chamber orchestra; two flute choirs; concert winds, saxophone, percussion, jazz and harp ensembles; and two string ensembles. Each group rehearses weekly from September to May or early June and performs a scheduled series of concerts each season. In addition, member musicians participate in a week-long summer camp and receive special coaching and participate in masterclasses from professional and renowned musicians in the Bay Area.

The premier group of SJYS is its Philharmonic Orchestra, led by SJYS Music Director and Conductor, Yair Samet.

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Mary Louise Vanderbosch

100 years

Resident of Willow Glen

Mary Louise Vanderbosch, age 100, passed away peacefully in her home on January 21, 2025 in San Jose, California.

Born on January 14, 1925, in South Bend Indiana, she was the firstborn child of Kenneth and Dorothy Reiter and the oldest of 8 siblings. Mary Louise attended St Patrick's Elementary School and graduated from St. Joseph's Academy.

In 1952 she met her future husband, Thomas Vanderbosch on a blind date. They married on April 16, 1955, and shared a loving marriage of 62 years, raising six children together. Mary Louise dedicated her life to her family as a devoted mother and wife.

A long-time parishioner of St. Christopher's Catholic Church in San Jose for 58 years, Mary Louise was deeply rooted in her faith and community.

She is survived by her children: Tom of Denver Colorado; Patti, Beth, Sue, Jill and Jim, all of San Jose, California. She also leaves behind brothers John Reiter of South Bend, Indiana and David Reiter of San Diego, California and a sister Peggy Christian, of Fort Meyers, Florida. There are also nine grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren who brought her immense joy. Mary Louise was predeceased by her beloved husband Thomas, siblings Joanne Kavanaugh, Terry McKayley, Kathy Reiter, and Dennis Reiter; her grandson Noland Iseman and other cherished family members.

Mary Louise Vanderbosch's legacy lives on through the love she shared with her family and the memories treasured by those who knew her. May her memory bring comfort to all those who mourn her passing.

A memorial service was held at St. Christopher's Catholic Church.

Elaine Dorothy Kessler Baker

1944 -2024

Resident of Willow Glen

Elaine Dorothy Kessler Baker passed away on January 10, 2025, at the age of 79. Also affectionately known as "Heylady," Lainey, Crazy Generous Kook, Nature Lady, Super Trooper, and "Mimsey" by her children, and as "Mrs. Baker! Mrs.

Baker!" by 37 years of students she taught while working at her beloved Glider Elementary School.

Born in Long Beach, CA in 1944, then raised in AZ, she went to Washington High School in north Phoenix. She attended ASU and then finished her BA degree at the University of Oregon in Eugene. She moved to San Jose in 1969 and to Blossom Valley in 1975 where she lived the next 49 years.

She worked at Oak Grove School District for 37 years as Instructional Assistant, Homework Center Teacher, Mac Computer Lab Teacher, and then spent 15 years teaching 1st grade until she retired.

She had a deep love and connection with animals, wild and domestic. Her pets included dogs, cats, rabbits, and even a chinchilla. Her front and back yards served as welcoming reserves for a variety of wildlife. She delighted in the critters that would peep in her patio door window like possum, scrub jays, raccoons, ducks, red tailed hawks and the occasional snake. She loved hearing the coyotes and owls at night. She had neighborly honeybees nesting in her yard for 40 years.

Elaine's adventurous spirit extended beyond the classroom and her home. She travelled to destinations around the globe, including Mexico, China, Ireland, Scotland, England, and France. Closer to home, she loved day trips to the coast, truck rides around her brother's ranches in northern Arizona, visits with her son and two grandchildren in Prescott, and trips to see her children and grandchildren in Hawaii.



She delighted in watching spinner dolphins leap out of the water while aboard her daughter's dive boat off the Kona coast.

She loved being alive, and that helped her meet the heavier burdens of life like financial strain, death of loved ones, chronic conditions, and aging. She met her burdens with dignity and as much cheer as she could muster. Her doctors and nurses recount her enduring kindness and strength as inspirations to them. A recent excerpt from her gratitude journal... "Today I'm grateful for: my caring kids' messages, Melva & Lyn (caretakers), good sleep last night, no stomach ache today, the nice staff at the hospital, watching the opossum eat the pancake in the backyard, the rain, and See's Candy."

Elaine is survived by and dearly missed by Brother Alan Kessler; Children Sam, Mark and Cindi; Grandchildren Sophia, Jordyn, Jasmine and Eli; and of course her bees.

Donations in her honor can be made to The Stone Church of Willow Glen.

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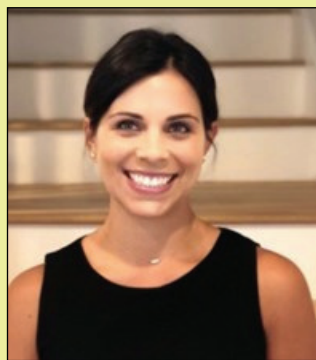
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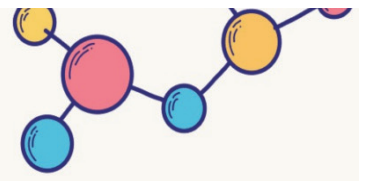
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Friday, March 7, 2025



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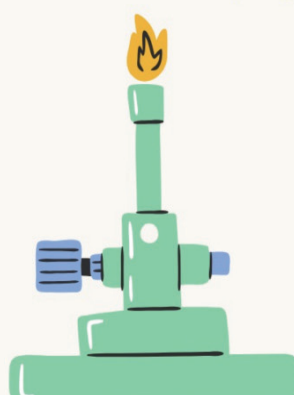
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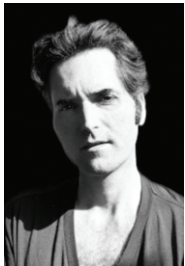
Times Local News

WATER-WISE

Diadem Of Destruction – A Commentary

By Matthew Frazier
Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper

In the resplendent landscapes of California, particularly within the sun-kissed confines of Santa Clara County, the white-crowned and golden-crowned sparrows have emerged despite some unwelcome intruders which are invading the local avian community.



These diminutive yet captivating birds, appearing as charming accents against the backdrop of sprawling skies and diverse flora, exhibit a length of approximately 6 to 7 inches. They are not only notable for their size. Still, they are also distinguished by their melodious, clear whistle call that gracefully reverberates through the atmosphere, adding a lyrical quality to the natural soundscape of the region.

The white-crowned sparrow, in particular, stands out due to its striking aesthetic appeal, with its bill displaying either a delicate pink or a warm yellowish tone that

contrasts elegantly with its refined gray throat and breast. A remarkable crown, artfully adorned with bold black and white streaks, lends an air of sophistication to its overall demeanor. This distinctive pattern provides a beautiful focal point, inviting observers to appreciate the artistry crafted by nature itself. With a posture that exudes confidence and a demeanor that suggests a delightful curiosity, these sparrows navigate their environment with undeniable grace. Their presence in the county's lush gardens and open fields underscores the diverse tapestry of life that flourishes in this vibrant ecosystem.

Furthermore, the Santa Clara Valley boasts an eclectic variety of avian inhabitants, each adding a unique charm to the area's natural beauty. Majestic Cooper's Hawks glide silently through the skies, their sharp eyes scanning for potential prey, while nimble American Kestrels dart with agility and precision in pursuit of insects. The industrious Downy and Nuttall's Woodpeckers can be seen busily pecking at tree trunks, their rhythmic drumming echoing through the forests. In the underbrush, spirited Yellow-rumped Warblers flit about, their bright plumage creating a splash of color against the greenery. Charming Anna's Hummingbirds zip from flower to flower, their iridescent feathers glimmering in the sunlight, while endearing Dark-eyed Juncos add a touch of wintery grace with their gentle presence.

As one wanders through this avian paradise, one cannot overlook the vivid West-



White-Crowned Sparrow

ern Bluebirds, their bright blue and orange plumage a striking contrast against the earthy tones of their surroundings. The small but resilient Pine Siskins weave gracefully through the branches, their lively chatter a reminder of the community that thrives among the trees. Together, these species create a bustling atmosphere teeming with life, often interacting in ways that showcase their unique behaviors and social structures.

However, amid this flourishing ecosystem, one must acknowledge the insidious threat that looms over the natural splendor of these avian species. The predominant human-induced peril to bird populations within the United States and Canada arises from the predatory behaviors of domestic cats, which become formidable hunters when permitted to roam outdoors. These cherished pets contribute to a staggering annual mortality rate of approximately 2.4 billion birds across the United States alone. This alarming statistic highlights the significant impact that

human behavior can have on wildlife and serves as a crucial reminder of our responsibilities as stewards of the environment.

Such dynamics threaten the fragile equilibrium of our ecosystems, underscoring the profound influence we wield over our avian companions. As we cultivate our gardens and enjoy the beauty of our surroundings, we must consider ways to mitigate these impacts—whether through responsible pet ownership, advocating for conservation efforts, or simply being mindful of the delicate balance of life around us. By fostering a greater understanding of the challenges these birds face, we can work towards ensuring a brighter future for the avian inhabitants of Santa Clara County and beyond, allowing them to thrive amidst the encroaching shadows of human activity.

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Times **Local News**



Security

Continued from page 1

enced swatting (false shooting threats) at Abraham Lincoln High School in 2022, gun threats from students at Willow Glen High School in 2023 and an intruder recording students in the girls' locker room at Bret Harte Middle School last October.

In response, administrators, teachers and parents have worked to make schools safer.

When San Jose High School recently issued a shelter-in-place order, the Raptor system quickly notified teachers and staff, said senior Gabriel Ruiz Flores, who is an alternate student member of the district school board. He said that the district is experimenting with Raptor in drills. The district did not respond to a request for a comment.

Nilomi Patel, a parent of a sixth grader at Bret Harte Middle School and a junior at Leland High School, applauds the new technology, because some schools do not have fences enclosing their campuses.

"After a false social media threat at Leland High School last semester, I remember thinking how easy it is to get onto campus," Patel said. "Given the world that we are living in now, safety is one of the biggest concerns as a parent."

Other students, like Pioneer High School senior Frankie Bowen, are hopeful but cautious about the new technology.

He said that on Feb. 7, a teacher accidentally triggered a shelter-in-place drill earlier than the scheduled time. "I hope we don't completely rely on Raptor and cut out other forms of communication, because technology isn't perfect," Bowen said.

At Leland High, sophomore Anderson Lin recalled a man with a knife entering campus from a parking lot last November. No one was harmed, and school officials contacted the police.

The man was not threatening anyone and may have been picking up cans for money, Lin said. "Since then, they've had staff on golf carts running the perimeter during lunch, and that helps. Hopefully, the Raptor system will prevent incidents like this from happening again."

Across the state, safety has emerged as a bargaining issue for teachers and school districts.

In January, the San Jose Teachers Association outlined school safety and safe working conditions for teachers as two of their three priorities.

"Employees and management are com-

ing together to improve systems and build safer environments," Melissa Urbain, the union vice president, said at the school board meeting.

Parents are also asking for broader safety discussions. That is an objective of the Why Wait Project, an initiative co-founded in 2023 by Trudi McCanna, parent of both a Abraham Lincoln High School graduate and a Willow Glen High School student. She wrote a letter signed by 300 parents asking the school board to put school safety on its agendas.

The Why Wait Project is pushing for a districtwide approach to school safety to replace the current system, based on California Education Code, where individual school site councils handle safety. Each site council — composed of students, staff, parents and administrators — develops its own safety plan to prepare for emergencies, natural disasters, hate crimes and harassment.

McCanna believes this school-by-school system can cause discrepancies.

"If every school is designing these things individually, it really doesn't make our whole community safer," she said.

The Why Wait Project recommends hiring a safety director, creating a districtwide safety task force and having safety discussed at district board meetings rather than at each school.

Maren Sederquist, chair of the Willow Glen High site council, also wants to see more communication and collaboration.

"If the district really wants all of the schools to be as safe as possible, it would benefit from hearing from all of us and we can all learn from each other," she said. "There will have to be variance at the different campuses, but there are so many things that apply to all of the schools."

Others disagree.

"There are so many different factors, layouts, and ways things can happen. So ultimately, I think it has to be decided from school to school. We get the people who know the school the best to really see what's the safest option for students," Flores said.

Why Wait Project cofounder McCanna cautions against quick solutions to a difficult problem. "What really keeps people safe is when communities are engaged in conversations about safety and working together."

Editor's Note: This article was written for Mosaic, an independent journalism training program for high school students who report and photograph stories under the guidance of professional journalists.

Antara Gangwal is a senior at Leland High School in San Jose.

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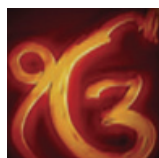
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