



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

July, 2010 Newsletter

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Upcoming Events

July 15th - General Meeting- 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church
August 19th - General Meeting- 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

OUR MEETING ROOM HAS CHANGED

Our support group meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. Meetings are open to the parents, grandparents and older siblings of your loved one. We meet at the **First Baptist Church** downtown at 317 E. Kiowa. We understand your pain; won't you let us help you through your grief?

Next meeting will be July 15th, 2010.

It is often difficult to attend your first meeting, but those who do find an atmosphere of support from other parents who understand a parent's grief. Nothing is asked of you; there are no fees; you do not have to speak a word if you do not care to. If you are more comfortable bringing a friend or relative along with you, please do. Many find these meetings help them to heal; and together we learn to live with our loss. We learn that *[we need not walk alone](#)*.

We are now meeting in the Fellowship Hall downstairs. The Fellowship Hall is very private, comfortable and with its own restrooms. We will enter through the atrium doors just west of where we normally enter and, as usual, we will have our TCF sign outside in front of the door.

OUR TELEPHONE FRIENDS

Any of these members may be contacted to talk to you about your loss:

CHAPTER LEADER	LARAINÉ ANDERSON	351-7653
INFANT LOSS	COLLEEN & ART MANNON	535-9868
TODDLER / YOUNG CHILD LOSS	BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON	573-2743
LEUKEMIA	JANE & STEVE GABRIEL	282-1924
TEEN / YOUNG ADULT LOSS	BARB REYNOLDS	599-0772
SUICIDE	LARITA ARCHIBALD	596-2575
DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS	STEWART & LETA LEVETT	531-5488
SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT	RAYE WILSON	(303) 814-9478

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTACTS

TCF National Office
P.O. Box 3656
Oak Brook, IL 60522
630-990-0010 or toll free 877-969-0010

EMAIL: nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

WEBSITES: National - www.compassionatefriends.org

Get Well Wishes

We'd like to wish Laraine Anderson, our chapter leader, a speedy recovery and "Get Well Soon." Laraine was involved in an ATV accident this past month.

We are sure that the pain and suffering that she is enduring is no greater than her desire to get back to her regular routine.

As we have all experienced, you don't realize how much someone is missed until they're not there.

GET WELL & GET BACK SOON!



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Love Gift Donations

Our chapter exists entirely through your donations which are tax deductible. Love Gifts enable us to continue our outreach to bereaved parents through our many chapter activities. A Love Gift is money donated to the chapter in memory of your child who has died. If you feel a Love Gift is an appropriate way to honor the memory of your child, please consider a donation, large or small. Please fill out the form located in this newsletter and mail it to the address listed. All pictures submitted will be returned unless you specify for us to keep them and place them on our Child Remembered board displayed at monthly meetings.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

\$50 or more - Newsletter Sponsor. May include a full page for printing. Please remember to send your page "Copy Ready" as you would like to see it printed in the newsletter.

\$0 to \$50 - A picture, if available, and dedication to be listed in the newsletter.

These items must be received by the 10th of the month preceding the issue in which you would like them to appear. Love Gift donations should be sent directly to our treasurer, Frank Schager whose address is listed on the Love Gift Donation Form.



Tell us what you want. Is there something specific that you'd like to see? Perhaps more stories or articles on healing? Recommendations for books or poems written by other TCF members?

Do you have a poem or a prayer, story or picture that you would like to share? We also welcome your contributions to our newsletter whether original or something you may have read. If submitting something you've read or know is copyrighted material, you must obtain written permission from the author prior to us going to publication.

Please address any submissions to:

Stew Levett
160 El Dorado Lane
Colorado Springs, CO 80919

Or write to: Stewart@Archangelgifts.com

Submissions need to be received by the 10th of the month to be included in the following month's newsletter. Thank you.

LOVE GIFT DONATION

Your Name _____

Child's Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Anniversary Date _____

Dedication _____

Picture Enclosed: YES NO

Mail to:
Frank Schager
2235 McArthur Ave.
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Angel Eyes: Giving Comfort, Providing Hope

Our group offers bereavement services for parents, families, friends and caregivers who have been affected by the sudden unexpected loss of an infant or toddler. This group offers you a comfortable place to heal and learn how to live with your loss. Nothing is asked of you; you do not have to speak if you choose not to.

People who have received bereavement services report that it is very helpful for them to have people to talk to who can understand the grief of losing an infant or young child. This group is a safe place where you can talk about both your grief and the precious memories you have of your child. Each month we will begin with a particular topic, talk about how you might be affected and have time for general sharing.

The group is led by an ANGEL EYES social worker whose mission is to help families and others cope with the sudden, unexpected death of an infant or toddler throughout the state by providing a range of bereavement services. For additional help and information: **Angel Eyes 1-888-285-7437**

Web site: www.angeleyes.org

Meetings are held the 3rd Monday of the Month

Location: Colorado Springs Penrose Library, 20 N. Cascade Ave
Time: 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

There is no cost and parking is free at the meters after 6:00 p.m.



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Miriam & Jack Gentry in memory of

Joseph Gentry Richardson

DOB: April 6th - Anniversary: December 13th
"Love to our special Angel"

Carol & Don Manning in memory of

Kyle Joe Manning

DOB: July 7th - Anniversary: June 19th
"In Memory - We love and miss you"

"My Special Puzzle"

*Keith, I wrote this for The Compassionate Friends newsletter.
It is for you.*

Several years ago, 36 to be exact, I bought a puzzle from a lovely shop.

The man that sold it to me told me that it was a very special puzzle and to take good care of it.

I became busy with my family and put the puzzle away. One day I thought I would start to work on the special puzzle. I worked putting it together.

It looked good and as time went on it began to look better. Then finally it was finished. I stood back and admired my work. It was lovely and beautiful. I marveled that all the pieces fit so well together.

Then one day the table was accidentally bumped and the puzzle fell to the floor, and the pieces scattered all over.

I put aside my life and my work and set the rest of my family also aside.

Then I started picking up the pieces and trying to put them together.

Little by little I worked on it. All the pieces seemed to go back together, but something was wrong. It seemed to be missing a piece.

I could not figure out which piece was missing. For several years I went back to my puzzle, and looked for the missing piece.

I felt that I could not finish my puzzle.

Then one day I looked deep into my heart, and found the missing piece.

I turned it over so I could see what the missing piece was.

It was my Keith. With tears in my eyes, and a shattered heart, I gently, lovingly fitted the piece back into the puzzle.

I stood back and smiled that I was able to finish the puzzle.

Piece by Piece	For Keith
Step by Step	03-08-64
Day by Day	08-09-88
Someday	Love Mom "Ree"

Ree Barrett - Pikes Peak TCF

My Child Lives On in the Small Acts

Sara Moore

I fear my child will be forgotten. That his life will cease to have meaning to the world that he left far too early. At times, I worry I haven't done enough to keep my son's memory alive.

We are all familiar with public displays of honoring our children such as creating a website, planting a tree, or starting a scholarship. These are beautiful and important acknowledgements that allow their memories to live on. And yet, accomplishing these tasks can feel overwhelming.

Lately, I have been thinking about the little things I do to honor my child's memory:

- Each day that I get out of bed and head to my job to face 120 middle school children with a smile, I do so while remembering my child at that age.
- When I allow someone on the road to cut in, I'm honoring my son's generous side.
- When I attend a Compassionate Friends meeting and share how it feels to be 5 years down the grief road, I pass on a little of my boy's compassionate nature.
- When I write a poem or an article to share, his gift with words echoes in my mind.

You see, living the best life possible, after suffering the worst loss possible, is my way of honoring my child. I believe he lives on in me, and therefore I will strive to do his memory justice.

(Written as a small act of remembrance for Shawn)

Tucson, AZ TCF





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How long will the pain last?

"How long will the pain last?" a broken hearted mourner asked me.

"All the rest of your Life." I have to answer truthfully. We never quite forget. No matter how many years pass, we remember. The loss of a loved one is like a major operation. Part of us is removed, and we have a scar for the rest of our lives. As the years go by, we manage.

There are things to do, people to care for, tasks that call for full attention. But the pain is still there, not far below the surface. We see a face that looks familiar, hear a voice that echoes, see a photograph in someone's album, see a landscape that once we saw together, and it seems as though a knife were in the wound again. But not so painfully. And mixed with joy, too. Because remembering a happy time is not all sorrow, it brings back happiness with it.

How long will the pain last?

All the rest of your life. But the thing to remember is that not only will the pain will last, but the blessed memories as well. Tears are proof of life. The more love, the more tears. If this be true, then how could we ever ask that the pain cease altogether. For then the memory of love would go with it.

The pain of grief is the price we pay for love.

by Ginny Brancato (Fificat) - San Diego, CA TCF

Summer Thoughts

Summer is a time when things naturally slow down, a time when many are waiting for the orderly routine of their lives to begin again. For those of us in grief whose lives are already in limbo, it can seem endless if we let it. Seeing children, babies, and teenagers is not easy for us, and we see them everywhere from shopping centers to beaches. everyone is out living, loving, enjoying carefree activities with their children, and we want to scream, "it's not fair!" I was sitting on my patio one evening at dusk recently listening to the shouts of children playing, and I was crying as I remembered the sounds that my child used to make. I became very depressed as I thought what a long summer this was going to be.

In my reverie, I was reminded of a recent comment that I had heard at a TCF meeting: "My child was such a loving, giving person. He would not want me to waste my life being bitter." I also remembered a good friend telling me to "count my blessings" and naming all the things I had to be grateful for. I was furious at the time. Nothing that I had to be grateful for could compensate for the fact that my child was dead.

Now, sitting in the twilight of this early summer evening, I began to see things differently. I was determined that this summer would not be an eternity; I would not let it be. I decided first of all to stay busy. I know I can find plenty to do if I only take the time to look. I am also going to try to enjoy the simple things that used to give me so much pleasure, like working in my garden, and flowers. I then decided to try to be truly grateful for the blessings that I have, like my husband, my surviving children, my job, friends, etc. It has been almost five years for me, and I know that last year this would not have worked. Of course, I still have times of sadness. I know I always will, but I have decided that in the process of grieving, we close so many doors that the only way to recovery is to reopen them gradually at our own pace.

I know I will never be the same person I was before the death of my child but I hope eventually in some ways I will be a better person because suffering can be beneficial if we learn and grow through it. A year ago I didn't feel this way, and I know I still have a long way to go, but in the meantime, I know the greatest tribute to my child will be to enjoy this summer as he would have done.

Libby Gonzalez - TCF Huntsville, AL



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What Do I Do With My Child's Things?

This is a problem that faces all bereaved parents. We discuss it from time to time at our meetings.

Some of us keep the child's room just as it was before death.

We don't want anything touched or moved.

Some of us find solace in giving things away to close friends or relatives. Knowing someone we love is wearing our child's clothes or playing with his or her toys, brings us comfort.

Some of us find we can deal with only a few items at a time: clothes, one month, books, another; perhaps toys, a few months later.

Some of us find that, as time goes on and we would have gotten rid of the things anyway, it becomes easier.

For instance, after a while we realized that if the child were still alive, he or she would have outgrown the clothes. Then it's easier to give them away.

Or, he would have graduated from college this year, and therefore, would no longer use the study desk or clock radio. We give these things away in the normal time sequence.

The important thing is not to let others rush us into doing something before we are ready, and not to let ourselves feel guilty about the amount of time it takes us to make decisions.

When the time is right, and the decision is right for us, we'll know what to do.

TCF Honolulu, HI



Welcome Newcomer

Beneath the laughter and the smiles
Echoes the anguish of children gone.
Don't be misled by the superficial joy.
Our normal appearance belies our eternal grief.

We rush to meetings to share details of death.
In better days we would have changed the
channel to avoid the horror.
Priorities change.

Newcomers enter, confused and angry,
They wonder whether these laughing
parents have truly lost their minds.
They do NOT yet realize we do this
so as NOT to lose our minds.

Balloons of all colors decorate the room.
"Are we at a birthday party?"
Many are busy writing messages with their hearts.
Soon the balloons will rise to the heavens
symbolically touching our precious loves.

We know well this anger and confusion.
We remember believing we would never laugh
again.
Now, with newfound wisdom, we know
it is possible and necessary to be able
to laugh and cry through tears of grief.
Someday you will know this, too.

By Moe Bere, TCF Babylon Chapter, NY



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Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

<u>Child's Name</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>		
<u>Age at Death</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Parent / Friend</u>
Ryan Thompson 2 years	Jul 1 Sep 17	Swimming Pool accident	Yvette & Bob Thompson
Michael Jeffrey Waller 25 years	Jul 4 Mar 10	Army vehicle accident	Jeanie Young
Karen Sue Crawford 16 years	Jul 4 Jun 23	Cancer	Joy Andrews
Sean Thompson 24 years	Jul 5 Feb 26	Pedestrian-motor vehicle	Rick Korcsog & Frankie Thompson
Lisa Elaine Berns 2 months	Jul 6 Sep 6	SIDS	Robert (R.J.) & Lynn Berns
Kyle Joe Manning 11 years	Jul 7 Jun 19	Hurlers Syndrome	Carol & Don Manning
Blake Smith 1 year	Jul 8 Jul 17	Drowning	Brian Smith
Anthony James "Tony" Pisor 25 years	Jul 10 Jun 28	Surgery complications	Cynthia Pisor-Zapel
Cristoval Ornelas 1 day	Jul 13 Jul 13	Stillborn	Annette & Chris Ornelas
Travis Holappa 25 years	Jul 14 Jul 25	Kidnapping/Murder	Kim & Terry Packa
Sarah Katherine Stouber 6 days	Jul 18 Jul 24	Diaphragmatic hernia	JoAnn Labenberg
Katie Steckiel 1 year	Jul 19 Nov 8	Croup	Wendy Steckiel
Cris Cruz 23 years	Jul 19 Oct 29	Car accident	Henrietta Madrid
Ryan Sayers 20 years	Jul 20 Jun 16	Lightning strike	Tom & Kate Sayers
Tiffany Maxwell 34 years	Jul 20 Mar 7	Lung & heart failure	Diane Maxwell
Justin William Winner 13 years	Jul 21 Nov 5	Gunshot wound	Dale & Rosanne Winner
Brian Patrick Adair 13 years	Jul 21 Apr 4	Celiac disease	Duane & Mary Adair
Arthur Lipphardt Jr 24 years	Jul 23 Jun 15	Motorbike Accident	Art & Chris Lipphardt
Amanda Stocchero 15 years	Jul 24 Jul 19	Epilepsy	Sandy Stocchero



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Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

<u>Child's Name</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>		
<u>Age at Death</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Parent / Friend</u>
Craig Matthews	Jul 24		Cathy Genato
30 years	Feb 4		
Keltryn Lenae Brinkman	Jul 25	Cancer	Jim & Judy Brinkman
2 years	Mar 19		
Michael Williams Greist	Jul 28	Car/bike accident	Allan & Judy Greist
12 years	Nov 1		
Toby Ferrer	Jul 28		Maria Hymes
4 years	Apr 8		
Scott Michael Gerwatowski	Jul 28	Heart attack	Helen and Walter Rakocy
21 years	Feb 4		Linda Gerwatowski
Michelle Howie	Jul 31	Several Illnesses	Annette Howie
32 years	Jan 12		

Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

<u>Child's Name</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>		
<u>Age at Death</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Parent / Friend</u>
Andrew Paul Whiteman	Aug 27	Motorcycle accident	Lyle Whiteman
20 years	Jul 2		
Heidi Susanne Wolfe	Apr 6	Motorcycle accident	David & Karen Wolfe
20 years	Jul 3		
Adam Roy Hodges	Jan 3	Car accident	JoAnn Ewing
5 years	Jul 4		
Nicole Megan Yagi	Jan 6	Car accident	Jackie & Dennis Yagi
9 years	Jul 5		
Jay Aguanno	Feb 12	Accidental overdose	Jean Aguanno
19 years	Jul 7		
Shannon Diane McMahon	Nov 17	Vehicle accident	Robert & Jeanette McMahon
16 years	Jul 9		
Chance Tyler Nichols	Feb 19		Charlie Nichols
17 years	Jul 11		
Angela Gisela Martinez	May 5		Maria Hymes
34 years	Jul 11		
Jack C. Jefferson	Oct 8	Viral meningo-encephalitis	John & Dena Jefferson
5 years	Jul 11		
Christopher Skaggs	Oct 28	Suicide	Ernest & Tanya Skaggs
15 years	Jul 13		Carl, Annette & Felicia Cordova
Cristoval Ornelas	Jul 13	Stillborn	Annette & Chris Ornelas
1 day	Jul 13		



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Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

<u>Child's Name</u> <u>Age at Death</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u> <u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Parent / Friend</u>
Zachary Dean Glenn 3 years	Feb 18 Jul 14	Accidental strangulation	Janice Bren Kristin & Larry Glenn
Philip Dix 24 years	Sep 14 Jul 14	Sudden Heart Failure	Ann Dix
Kristopher Lohrmeyer 17 years	Dec 13 Jul 16	Murdered	Dan and Lori Lohrmeyer
Blake Smith 1 year	Jul 8 Jul 17	Drowning	Brian Smith
Jeanne Burroughs Widmar 33 years	Jun 20 Jul 18	Cancer	Arlene & Charles Burroughs
Roy Polhemus	Jul 18		Kathleen Landry Edward Pohlemus
Amanda Stocchero 15 years	Jul 24 Jul 19	Epilepsy	Sandy Stocchero

Yesterday ...

Today ...

Tomorrow

There are two days in every week about which we should not worry, two days which should be kept free from fear and apprehension.

One of these days is Yesterday with all its mistakes and cares, its faults and blunders, its aches and pains.

Yesterday has passed forever beyond our control. All the money in the world cannot bring back Yesterday.

We cannot undo a single act we performed; we cannot erase a single word we said. Yesterday is gone forever.

The other day we should not worry about is Tomorrow with all its possible adversities, its burdens, its large promise and its poor performance; Tomorrow is also beyond our immediate control. Tomorrow's sun will rise, either in splendor or behind a mask of clouds, but it will rise. Until it does, we have no stake in Tomorrow, for it is yet to be born.

This leaves only one day, Today.

Any person can fight the battle of just one day. It is when you and I add the burdens of those two awful eternities, Yesterday and Tomorrow, that we break down.

It is not the experience of Today that drives a person mad, it is the remorse or bitterness of something which happened Yesterday and the dread of what Tomorrow may bring.

Let us, therefore, Live but one day at a time.



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ANGER

Dear Compassionate Friends and Family Perhaps at our July meeting we could talk about anger..... Thinking about our train ride together, just a dad and his son Brian. Our dream was coming true. This was our train ride from Colorado to California, through the mountains, through the night, a journey, together. Why didn't I wake Brian as the sun struggled to attain its daily glory on the great western plains where Cowboys and Indians of long ago had their adventures? I went to the last car on the train, to the last and only window that permitted a direct view of where we had been. There was the ladder path of steel and wood that we floated on which marked our trail better than breadcrumbs. Out to where the sky met where we had been I saw nature's life giver nudge the stars and chase the darkness from view. Heaven birthed this sunrise and the angels were envious. I wished my son were beside me. When the sleep cycle ended Brian wanted to know that too, how could I have let him sleep? I never explained to him that it was because he looked so peaceful, life inside a little boy in his bed on a train sleeping to the redundant railroad sounds that would soothe as the car softly swayed on the tracks. He was in the great unknown where dreams are made and come true. I could not bring myself to intrude. I am so mad that I never explained that it was because I loved him so very much. I was so mad that I did not wake him, so mad at myself, so mad that this experience could only be relived in my mind, so mad at God, at everyone and everything. Why did this fatal accident have to happen to my son, to my Brian? This most grievous ordeal just made no sense and it made me mad that I was so incapable of understanding, forgiving, or letting go of my anger. Brian died too soon and there was blame to be distributed and wrath to be directed.

All the "if only's" and "what if's" in the world won't change the fact that disease, strangers, intended or inadvertent acts, inexplicable misfortune, mistakes, or even God allowed or directly contributed to the removal of this most valued life from our being. Someone or something was to blame. Someone or something had to pay. We go through the predictably inconsistent cycle of horror, disbelief, numbing pain, barely functioning, and hopelessness, to anger and back again. Logic would seem to dictate that this tragedy had to have happened for a reason. Is it our fault? Something we did? Something we didn't do? Something someone else did or did not do? Mad at God. Mad at the medical folks, law enforcement, or the lack of it. Mad at the messenger who is so indelibly etched in our memory as the poor soul that stabbed our heart with the deadly news. Mad at friends, life, mate, family, circumstance, the world, we feel some of it and we feel all of it. Mad at ourselves and for the briefest of moments, in our most quiet and private solitude, a gentle whisper that we may even be just a little bit mad at our beloved child for leaving much too soon as we choke the car's steering wheel. At the time, shortly after or years later the anger may still be overpowering. Plodding down our road of grief we carry all these stones of anger in our huge pockets. These clothing containers that once held our dreams now hold useless stones of separation, unspeakable loss, and stifling rage. These are our rocks of anger and sometimes we will not let go of them. Sometimes we carry this extra weight without acknowledging its presence. Other times we embrace it and allow its presence to define us, to define our child's memory. We have been mad before but this is the bitterest or even vengeful of rages. This feeling offers an odd sort of comfort. Anger may seem to help, it occupies our thoughts and prevents the penetration of deadly reality. At least we feel something and that may be good for a while. This emotion appears in disguise as Mother Nature's kiss that makes the hurt all better. The relief is brief and brings no peace.

Our fury demands and consumes enormous energy and ultimately returns nothing. It did not honor Brian's memory. The angry stones in the pockets had to be consciously, purposefully let go. They were all different sizes and shapes and colors, most wedged in so tight they could not be removed for weeks, months, or even years. The weight was holding back the forward movement through the valley of tears and exhausting the legs of emotion and smothering the Spiritual limbs in debilitating confusion and frustration. The square peg had been forced into the round hole. Healing progress never began or was constantly being slowed to snail speed. Recognition of the futility of this rage was perhaps the first step, the first stone thrown away. Surrendering to the admission that anger had a stifling strangle hold on life was another rock discarded. Brian would never walk through our door again was the boulder and the sole occupant of the pocket that covered the heart, keeping love out and allowing anger to roam uninhibited. Letting go of the boulder, the stones and rocks without letting go of Brian's memory became easier with practice and as the anger decreased the fond memories grew. Fond memories that nurtured the notion that Brian is ok and happy and we will someday see each other again. The journey has no end in sight but the hills aren't so steep and the weight that is carried is much less. Empty the pockets of anger and fill them with memories not of sunrises missed but of train rides taken. Fill your pockets with gentle remembrances of a child sleeping in perfection and peace. Easier said than done but ask the living proof that are at every Compassionate Friends table and discover that this possibility exists. Fond memories of our beloved children are more easily carried than pockets of pebbles.

Pat O'Donnell - Livonia, Michigan TCF

July 2010

The Compassionate Friends
Pikes Peak Chapter
P.O. Box 26239
Colorado Springs, CO 80936



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of the
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