

Antique Auto Mushers of Alaska

Tinkering Times



Volume 63, Number 4

www.antiqueautomushersak.org

April 5, 2023

Alaskan Aurora Borealis Signals the Coming Old Car Season

April Meeting

Our first Spring General Meeting of 2023 will be held on Wednesday April 12th at the Hope Community Resources Center at 6:30pm.

Our esteemed president, Linda Mattes-Golding, will lead us in discussion of coming events, not the least of which shall be our numerous imminent club drives, events and car shows, as we endeavor to take advantage of every waking minute of Spring & Summer sunshine ahead!

Running Board Reflections



President Linda Mattes-Golding is all smiles because the snow depth on her home's front deck has finally reduced in height to under a foot deep! Spring MUST be on the way!

Happy Spring!

Now that the days are lengthening and snow is melting, our thoughts are turning to driving our old cars once again.

As evidenced by the list in this edition of the Tinkering Times, the AAMA has a full slate of activities planned beginning in early May with the Adopt-A-Road and a visit to the Overly homestead in Chickaloon. There are Mother's Day and Father's Day events planned, along with July 4th celebrations across Southcentral Alaska. We are pursuing a joint meet with the Fairbanks club, and the Hope Retreat is back on the schedule after a three-year hiatus. We may also be asked to show our cars at the Aviation Museum as we have in the last two years.

For some of our scheduled activities, we still need volunteers to coordinate drives, meals, or full events. For instance, we will begin our "Rolling Meetings" after the May general meeting, and need

someone to organize a drive and choose a restaurant. The Father's Day Car Show at the Zoo will also need a chairperson. Dennis Allen will be happy to advise, but he and Diane are unlikely to attend.

As a volunteer myself, and with the support of a very active Board, I am asking all our members to step up. Many of these activities have been done before; you will find members who are willing to give you directions as well as assist or support you when taking on something new to you.

Since April is "Volunteer Appreciation Month" I am saying a HUGE thanks to our Board members, our newsletter editors, and those who have already signed up for duties. I am also saying thank you in advance to those of you who will take on an event. We are looking forward to a fun summer season of driving and camaraderie!

—Linda



2023 Officers

President:

Linda Mattes-Golding

907-351-3251

Vice President:

Brian Anderson 907-748-1698

Secretary:

Greg Carpenter 907-891-4988

Treasurer:

Louis Mestier 512-507-8028

Sergeant-at-Arms:

Dutch Overly 907-338-1789

Members at Large

Tamea Isham-907-688-3671

Donn Reese-907-245-7203

Darrell Krolick-907-229-9456

Past Presidents (10 years)

David Jensen (2019-21)

Gwyn Wiedmer (2017-18)

Brian Anderson (2015-16)

Mike Wiedmer (2013-14)

Howard Hansen (2012)

Donn Reese (2009-2011)

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The Tinkering Times is published monthly by Alaska's really neat classic and antique automobile club, Antique Auto Musters of Alaska, P.O. Box 232086, Anchorage AK 99523-2086.

Opinions expressed by authors of Tinkering Times—including references about how wonderful we are—are their own and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Antique Auto Musters of Alaska or any facsimile of reality, for that matter.

One Man's Treasures

Our ads are intended for members and others who wish to sell cars and related items. There is no charge, and the ad will run for three consecutive issues before being removed. To pull an ad, extend it or to place a new ad, contact Tom 694-7510.



For Sale: 4 each Michelin Harmony radial tires P205/60 R15 90S; less than 500 miles on them; \$50/each. Art Isham, (907) 227-2307.



For Sale: 4 each new steel rims; 15x6 4.75 BC; For GM products in the 60's through 80's; \$50/each Art Isham, 907-227-2307.

For Sale: 1972 Jaguar v-12; second owner; located at Culmination Motorsports off King Street at 91st Ave. Owner says he imported it from England 15 years ago. Contact Dave Catchpole, 907-868-3911.

Schedule of Events

- * April 12—6:30 General Meeting
- * May 6—May Adopt-A-Road 1 (Marcy Cresap)
- * May 7—BBQ Lunch at the Overly's house in Chickaloon (Dutch Overly)
- * May 10—6:30 Rolling General Meeting
- * May 13 & 14—Alaska Vintage Market & Car Show - Palmer (Linda Mattes-Golding)
- * May 20 & 21—AAMA Homer Car Show (Jim Fredenhagen)
- * June 14—6:30 Rolling General Meeting
- * June 18—Father's Day Car Show at The Alaska Zoo
- * June 21—Solstice Car Show at Mirror Lake
- * July 8—May Adopt-A-Road 2 (Marcy Cresap)
- * July 4—Anchorage and Chugiak Parades; Picnic at Cresap's
- * July 12—6:30 Rolling General Meeting
- * July 14-17—Hope Weekend (Howard Hansen, 907-440-1002)
- * July 22—Sutton Car Show (Jim Fredenhagen)
- * August 6—Jay Ofsthun Memorial Show and Shine
- * August 9—6:30 Rolling General Meeting
- * August 12—Hot Summer Nights Car Show in downtown Palmer
- * August 19—State Fair Parade & Show (Mark Graber)
- * August 19—Show and Shine at Kenai Senior Center with Kaknu Kruzers
- * Sept 2—Adopt-A-Road 3 (Marcy Cresap)
- * September 13—6:30 Rolling General Meeting
- * September 16—Dimond Center AAMA Car Show (Jim Fredenhagen)
- * September 30—Seward Fall Foliage Tour (Jim Fredenhagen)

For Sale: Flathead V-8, Model 99A, 1940's, totally rebuilt but stored for last 10 years, complete with 3 carbs, Edelbrock high comp heads, distrib, wiring, headers. \$4500, Al Engebretsen, 907-399-4895 Homer.



For Sale: Linda Piper, in Sterling, is selling John's Sport Coupe. It is very complete . . . the horn, yet to be installed, is on the workbench. I went there two weeks ago and it ran well.

It is equipped with a 12-volt conversion with alternator. It has Flat Head Ted brakes, new wiring harness and a new seat. \$14,000. Call me first for more info and appointment. Jim @ 907-351-3115, takecare@alaskan.com

Have You Paid Your Dues?

AACA-\$20.00

Make check payable to AAMA. Include your AACA member number in the memo line. Send your check to:
AAMA

P.O.Box 232086
Anchorage AK 99523-2086

AACA-\$45.00

Make check to AACA. Include your AACA number in memo. Antique Automobile Club of America
501 W. Governor Road
Hershey PA 17033

Annual AAMA Homer Car Show Promises to be a Big Event

by *Richard Golding*
Events Coordinator, Alaskan A's Club

This spring's annual Homer Car Show will be held at the Chamber of Commerce parking lot (same venue as last year) on Sunday May 21.

We will be driving our cars together as a group from Anchorage to Homer on Saturday morning (May 20). We will stage in the Carr's Huffman parking lot at approximately 8:45am and leave at 9:00am on Saturday morning, May 20.

We have arranged a special rate of \$109.00 per night, per room (plus Homer bed tax) at the Aspen Suites Hotel in Homer. The hotel is located at 91 Sterling Highway in Homer, and has lovely, modern accommodations and facilities. Although most of you will probably be coming down to Homer just for Saturday and Sunday (leaving for Anchorage on Monday), the special room rate is available to us Friday through Monday, the evenings of May 19 - May 22, should any of you wish to come a day early, or stay a day late.

You must reserve your room by calling the Aspen Suites in Homer directly at: 907-235-2351. Be sure to mention you are with the AAMA old car group. Give them the code: AAM523 to receive your special room rate of \$109.00 per night (plus Homer bed tax). There is a 24 hour cancellation policy on this rate, so if you cannot make it to Homer after you have made a reservation, don't forget to cancel with them more than a day before your reservation arrival date to receive a complete refund. This rate is available for reservations made on or before May 5th.

This is one of our group's premiere yearly events, and is highly anticipated by the locals in Homer. Last year saw over 50 vehicles exhibiting, along with large crowds

of happy spectators.

We have a lunch along the drive scheduled for noon on Saturday at The St. Elias Brewing Company restaurant in Soldotna, as well as a dinner banquet that same night at The Cannery in Homer at 6:30pm. Following its success at last year's event, on Sunday night there will be a large pizza, salad and desserts party along with our

customary showing of silent movies, all held in the conference room of the Aspen Suites Hotel in Homer.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the event, please contact Jim Fredenhagen at 907-351-3115 or Richard Golding at 907-227-2595.

We look forward to seeing everybody in Homer!

See you on the Spit,
 and at the Car Show!

Make your reservations
 early!

AAMA HOMER CAR SHOW
HOMER ALASKA • MAY 20 & 21

A remembrance of Our Club's 1990 Trip to Dawson City in the Yukon Territories of Canada

They Just Keep on Rollin':

Antiques From Alaska

by Jennifer Williams

Most visitors travel to Dawson by automobile but judging from people's stares when four Model A Fords cruised into town - some vehicles are more noteworthy than others.

Even in areas with milder climates it is rather unusual to see a 1931 Model A pick up, a 1930 Model A Town Sedan and two 1929 Model A's (one a Tudor sedan and the other a roadster) casually clustered together in a parking lot.

However the cars looked right at home in front of Dawson's historic buildings and the drivers seemed quite unperturbed by all the attention when they rolled into town on June 25th.

They and their families, an entourage which totalled 12 people and included one support van, began their 1000 mile round trip in Anchorage, stopping in roadhouses such as Gakona Lodge on the way. Although they hail from various regions in Alaska all the drivers are members of

the Antique Auto Musers of Alaska, a chapter of the Antique Auto Club of America.

The idea for the tour stemmed from a similar 'drive-about' that Ken and Peg Stout joined in Missouri last year. Driving a 1926 Model T Ford they were one of 60 antique cars that covered over 2000 miles in 17 days.

Despite the age of the vehicles there have been few mechanical difficulties as the convoy made its way along the Top of the World highway. The cars are well taken care of and a great deal of time went into preparing for the long drive.

Hank Raymond, the owner of a 1931 Model A pick up that used to belong to the Territorial Road Commission (before Alaska became a state), began working on his engine in February. Betty Dickenson, the person in charge of planning the itinerary, gently ribbed him about his last minute fine tuning.

The night before departure

Hank had yet to put a new roof on his prized auto but he assured Betty that the engine was "90% rebuilt". When the group arrived the next morning to pick him up Hank was holding the carburettor in his hand. Without a missing a beat he grinned at his friends' reminder and said, "You guys were late, what took you so long?"

An eclectic and fun-loving bunch with a variety of backgrounds (the group includes an airline pilot, a full-time homemaker, two teachers, retired military personnel, a State of Alaska Highway Dept. official and several students) they all agreed on two things; Dawson is a great place to visit and it is their qualified opinion (formed through hard earned experience) that Canadian roads are far better than their Alaskan counterparts.

In any case, in this day of cellular phones and air-conditioning its great to see people going the extra mile with historic authenticity.

Our member Jim Fredenhagen found this old newspaper clipping the other day, and wanted to share it with the rest of the club:

"I dug this Dawson newspaper article out today. Feel free to use it if you like.

In 1990 I had just joined our club after purchasing my 1929 Model A sedan. It was not ready for this trip, but I volunteered to drive the support van.

It was just a trip to Dawson and back but a very good time.

Ken/Peg Stout were definitely Model A'ers, and this trip really cemented my dedication to the A.

Fun to look back at the adventures we've had."

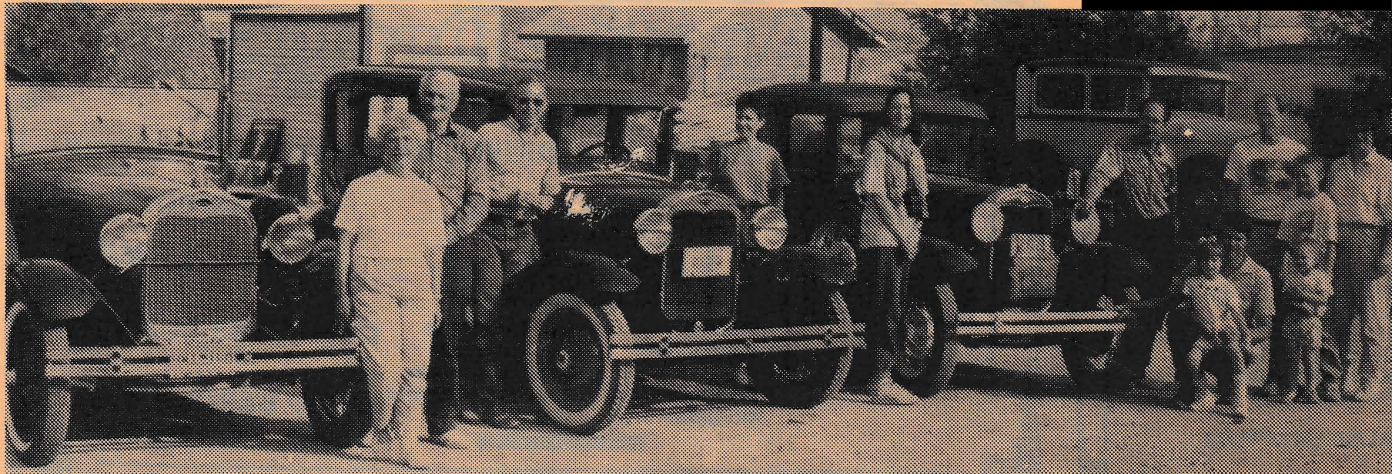


Photo by Jennifer Williams

AAMA Business Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2023

Location: Hope Community
Resources Learning Center
570 W. 53rd Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm by President Linda Mattes Golding. There were 27 members present and no guests. The minutes were approved from the February business meeting as published in the Tinkering Times. Louis Mestier provided the treasurers report.

Old Business

**Linda Mattes Golding thanked everyone involved with the Fur Rendezvous parade and car show at Bob's Services.

**Linda Mattes Golding talked about the 1947 Chevrolet Fleetmaster that Len Kelly wants to donate to the club. The board has decided to transfer the car to the Isham's house to get the vehicle in running order. The club will then have a sealed bid silent auction with a reserve price set for the car. Club members and friends interested in the vehicle will have an opportunity to view and inspect the car before placing a bid. A motion was brought forth to authorize up to \$200.00 to have the car towed from Len Kelly's house to the Isham's. The motion passed.

New Business

**Linda Mattes Golding talked about the board's decision to offer an honorary club membership to longtime AAMA members Bruce and Marl Campbell. The motion passed unanimously.

**ACA has had some issues with paid members being sent overdue payment notices. Linda Mattes Golding spoke with ACA and confirmed that everyone that sent in payment for membership is now up to date.

**Brian Anderson passed out a copy of the calendar to everyone and went over all the planned events for the year. A motion was made to approve the calendar and the motion passed.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

President Linda Mattes Golding announced birthdays and anniversaries for the month.

Split the Pot

Split the pot winner Roy Foster

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 7:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Greg Carpenter, Secretary

Irving – The Early Years

humor by Rich Golding

"This is just what I've been looking for all these years," I had bragged to my wife at home in Anchorage, some twenty years ago. I waived the printout of a Craigslist ad I had found in San Francisco. "This will be the last car I will ever own. I will take care of it, and in return it shall take care of me!"

"Uh-huh," responded Linda, rolling her eyes.

"No really! These cars were built to last a lifetime, if you take care of them. And that's exactly what I propose to do. Take good care of it. For the rest of my life!"

"Are you nuts?" My dearest wife shrieked. "Have you completely taken leave of your senses? You expect to buy an old car, sight unseen, all the way down in California, from some stupid ad you found online, then drive it all the way back, thousands of miles to Alaska in May, while there's still snow on the Alcan! And you don't think that's crazy?"

"Honey, I'm stuck in a rut. My life is one boring day after another. I need some challenge in my life. This will be an adventure!"

We had owned a similar car, a Volkswagen "Type 3," as it is known, decades earlier. It was actually a really good car, as I recall. I had always wanted another one. I had a lot of experience with VW's, having owned and rebuilt several

over the course of my life, and I felt that I had enough knowledge, and mechanical aptitude to pilot a 1971 car some 4000 miles up the West Coast and all the way into my driveway, on my own.

I mean . . . what could possibly go wrong?

...

The mechanic that was selling the car on San Francisco's Craigslist seemed eager to answer all my questions over the phone. His voice struck me as someone both competent and honest. Most of all, he seemed eager to sell me the car. So, after agreeing on a price, I bought a one-way plane ticket to the city by the bay. Accompanied by two huge rolling duffel bags stuffed with every tool I owned, as well as any and every VW part I might need to replace, my wife dropped me off at the airport in time to make the southbound red-eye.

She grabbed me in a huge bear hug, there at the departures curb, and planted a bone-crushing kiss on my lips. "Be careful. Call me when you get there. I can arrange a return ticket for you, if your "adventure" doesn't pan out the way you expect it to."

"I'll be fine, Silly. Hey, there's nothing to worry about. *It's ME!* I'll be okay. And in a week or two, I'll be home with a bright shiny red Squareback. You'll see!"

...

The seller I had talked to on the phone met me outside his mechanic's shop,

as my cab pulled up and deposited me and my duffel bags at the curb. He seemed rushed, as if he were in a hurry.

"Honestly, I had my doubts that you were really coming. –All the way from Alaska, huh?"

"That's right. I decided to do it after you told me about how great a shape the car is in, and how you're sure it will make it to Alaska, no problem."

"Uh . . . yeah," he responded under his breath. "You got the money, dontcha?"

"Sure. Can I see the car first?"

He led me to an area out back, behind the garage. There sat the car, all sun faded. Its red paint was covered in California acid rain spots. The vehicle was filthy inside and out. It hardly looked at all like the picture in the online ad.

"I got it cleaned up for you. And hey, I even cleaned off the glass, so's you can see through the windshield," he explained, pointing at a round area of the windshield directly in front of the driver's seat, about a foot in diameter, that had been wiped clear. Struggling a bit with a stuck hinge, he managed to open the front driver's door and plunked himself down on the driver's seat. "It starts right up," he said, turning the ignition key. After about ten tries, the old air-cooled flat four engine whimpered to life, puffing a huge cloud of white smoke out its tailpipe into the drizzly California sunshine.

"It hasn't been run much for the past five, er, ten years. You'll see, it'll run better

(See p. 7, "Irving-The Early Years")

("Irving-The Early Years" continued from p. 6)

after it warms up." He got out of the car, leaving the motor running. "Wanna take it for a spin?" He asked and invited me to take his place behind the wheel.

The car creaked and groaned as it heaved its way from around the shop and onto the street.

"Of course, it'll need a little tweaking here and there, but you've got your tools with you, right? These old VDubbers are a hearty lot. With a little bit of attention, you'll have her purring like a kitten in no time!" explained the Grease Monkey, as he wiped off his hands, and the seat of his pants, with a shop rag.

I pulled over to the curb after coaxing the car around the corner, well out of the mechanic's line of vision, and called Linda on my cell phone.

"How are you? So you made it down there in one piece, huh? Have you seen the car? Is it what you expected it would be?"

"Uh . . ." my voice shuddered and strained a bit. "Uh, I . . . I think . . ."

"What? What's wrong?" queried the wife.

"Uh . . . Linda . . . Sweetheart . . . I think I may have made a *B-I-G* mistake!" I went on to explain about the less than stellar condition of the car. How the paint didn't shine as it appeared in the picture on Craigslist. How the engine was puttering and smoking, and how the interior smelled like dead bugs. "I don't know if it will get a mile down the road, let alone four thousand. What should I do?"

I shall never forget the heartfelt and caring words of wisdom that was my beloved's response.

"You wanted an adventure! *Well, you've got one!* –Remember what I told you? –Remember what you said? This is going to be your last car. You will take care of it, and it will take care of you . . . for the rest of your life! So go ahead, and have your adventure. Just don't get killed along the way!"

A few minutes later the papers were signed, money had exchanged hands, and the single key that came along with the car (an ignition key - there were none to the door locks) was in my pocket. I climbed in behind the driver's seat and started the engine up again. I waved "good-bye" to the mechanic who was hastily locking his shop door whilst simultaneously placing a "closed" sign in the front window. His facial expression seemed one of incredulous relief. Mine

displayed a mask of steadfast determination.

• • •

My first stop was at a do-it-yourself car wash. I figured that before I started wrenching away on the car, it might as well be clean. The car wash's owner had come out of his office to ogle at the car. "I had one just like it, years ago!" he told me, (a phrase I would become quite accustomed to hearing over the course of the next two decades). I explained that I had just picked the vehicle up, down the road, and was driving it home - to Alaska. At first he laughed, but stopped short as soon as he realized I wasn't kidding.

"It's gonna take a whole lot of washing to clean this baby!" he exclaimed aloud. Between an extensive vacuuming of the interior, shampooing the carpet and mats and scrubbing the body down several times, I exhausted his change machine's entire supply of quarters.

He would check on my progress every few minutes as he tended to his other customers. I had come armed with a bottle of glass cleaner, several cans of upholstery cleanser, car wash detergent, a large bucket, and a number of sponges, as well as a package of those bright yellow Costco microfiber towels. I worked like the devil on the car for several hours. The car wash owner seemed shocked at just how clean and sparkly I was able to get the old warrior. We swapped stories over several bottles of soda pop. After wringing out all the aforementioned yellow towels, I draped them, still damp, over the front and rear black vinyl seats to dry in the California sun. The car wash owner recommended a scenic drive along the Pacific Coast Highway that would take me in the direction I needed to go. A handshake later, I was off.

My old Squareback shone like a new penny, inside and out! The sun had come out from behind the clouds, no doubt to get a good look at my VW, and suddenly life took a turn from hopelessness to the possible. The scenic route wound up and down alongside the blue Pacific, hugging the incredible coastline. I broke out my sunglasses, and rolled my driver's window all the way down. My hair was fluttering about in the breeze, and it felt good. The bright yellow towels covering the black vinyl seats drying themselves flapped in the warm breeze.

VW designed and implemented their first 'fresh-air' system into the Type 3's. To permit a flow of air throughout the

vehicle, one only need point the dashboard air vents at oneself and turn the knob in the middle of the dash from "off" to the "on" position.

Although the radio in the old car didn't work, that didn't keep me from belting out a "Baby You Can Drive My Car" out loud. With my left arm resting out the open driver's window, I reached with the other for the fresh air control knob, and rotated it to the "on" position.

Instantly the bright sunny California world turned black, and the song lyrics I had been singing out loud just seconds earlier ended in choking. I slammed on the brakes and pulled the car off onto the shoulder. Turning my glance to within the vehicle I wondered where all my yellow towels had vanished to, leaving only black upholstery exposed everywhere. I gazed into my rear view mirror only to see a reflection of me that was covered in a thick black layer of dead bugs. Thousands of them. They covered me like a thick coat of paint. Spitting their carcasses out of my mouth, and removing my sunglasses, I looked like Al Jolson when he made *The Jazz Singer*. Upon further investigation, I realized that all the yellow towels were, in actuality, still slung over the seats, but they were completely covered in bugs now, appearing as black as the black vinyl upholstery they had been sheathing only moments earlier. Everything in the Squareback had been thoroughly coated with years and years worth of emaciated bug carcasses having found their way into the fresh air system, only to perish.

I managed to hack up no less than a level cupful of dead insects that had filled my open mouth whilst I was singing aloud the *Best of the Beatles*. A moment later, after exiting the vehicle and surveying the situation, I made the necessary decision to turn around and head back to the car wash to facilitate cleansing the interior of my Volkswagen all over again. The owner looked quite surprised to see me back again so soon. It took him only a minute to assess and diagnose my dilemma.

"Wow! That's one for the books!" he exclaimed. You'll be telling the story of this car for some time, I suspect. You know, a vehicle such as this deserves a proper moniker!"

It was then and there that I determined absolutely and quite unequivocally that the red 1971 VW Squareback, my forever car, henceforth would and should be known by the name "Irving."



Rich Golding's 1966 VW Bus, Rocinante, parked outside the Homer Public Library in August of 1971. It is interesting to note that Homer's main street was still gravel and the library building was not much bigger than Rich's VW. One cannot help but wonder if perhaps all the books housed inside the tiny structure were printed in miniature?

April

Birthdays

Steve Petraitis—5th

Darrell Krolick—7th

Marcy Cresap—7th

Kathy Centoni—12th

Diane Allen—14th

Leonard Kelley—14th

Mike Stoddard—16th

Joanne Overly—20th

George Takei—20th

Anniversaries

Niki DeSanto & Alex

Roesch—1st

Valerie & Donnie Bell—26th



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