

EQ The Elizabeth Lofts

Quarterly Newsletter

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

THE GEEZER GALLERY

Bringing art back to the Elizabeth halls, is proving to be delightful for residents, but this group has much bigger goals. Their goal to provide exhibition for accomplished senior artists, is just the beginning of their vision.

ROLLIN' ON THE RIVER

Larry captures the sense of the Blues Festival, which returned to Portland this year!

PORTLAND ROSE CITY

Chris and Larry team up to bring us the historical background and current day garden pictures of the iconic Portland Rose Garden.

RICHARD MEEKER

Richard Meeker, a long-time Portland resident and Willamette Week owner, joins Steve Rose to discuss the world of print journalism.

HAPPENING IN and AROUND THE ELIZABETH

The latest on Elizabeth in-house community activities, and updated options for entertainment, education, and observation, locally accessible. Includes a Summer specials section.

July 2022

Editing by Denise Ambrosio and EQ team

Design & Layout by Michelle Heckman





NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

This marks our third-year anniversary and we want to say thank you to all the loyal readers and supporters. It's your vision and suggestions that keep us motivated. Just as our community is undergoing what we think are pleasant changes with art returning and Community Room gatherings we also have some changes to report.

One of our founding members Paula McGee is leaving The Elizabeth. She and husband Joe are going to try their hand at living in a residential house again. We wish them all the best as Paula served ably both on the HOA Board and as an EQ writer and editor par excellence. She treated all her interviewees with the utmost care and respect. And kept EQ on its toes chasing semi-colons and dangling sentences. She can't be replaced, but we are looking for people who want to try. Well done Paula and good luck in the future!

Some other changes. In order to honor our writers and staff we will be hosting a "wrap party" on a date to be determined soon after publication. Come join us in the Community Room for drinks and an informal round table with a behind the scenes look at our most recent publication's contributors. A flyer will be sent a few days before the event.

We are also happy to announce that EQ Talks is back. Sheldon Renan kicked this off with his talk on his time with Andy Warhol and the avant garde of the mid 1960s-you can [watch the talk here](https://youtu.be/ijTBIOp9oDk). (<https://youtu.be/ijTBIOp9oDk>)

Please remember the Board is looking to you to cast a vision on the best layout for the Community Room. Although this new look may take some time please respond and let us know your ideas. The Community Committee is handling aggregating the ideas and keeping a Vision Board current. Send ideas and pics to this email: community@elizabthlofts.org

Finally, our Community Room library will be undergoing a makeover as Bill Melcher takes the reins as librarian.

In this edition

Geezer Gallery

We interview Ray Massini and James Violette, the Curators behind our current art exhibition. They each have a story to tell. They have a gallery opening in South Waterfront, and count on seeing them around the building.

Rollin' on the River

Only Larry can make you feel like you had a front-row seat at the recent Blues Festival.

Portland Rose City

Chris gives us the inside scoop on the Rose Garden, and Larry adds his photography skills.

Richard Meeker from Willamette Week

Sits down with our own Steve Rose and we get to be part of that conversation.

Happenings In and Around The Elizabeth

One of my favorite columns, as we never lose sight of the city's beat; it is always playing. Here, there, and everywhere; you just need to listen.

Once again, we are deeply grateful to you for this opportunity to provide our Quarterly Newsletter.

Bob Garsha

for the EQ Staff

July 2022

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THE GEEZER GALLERY

By Bob Garsha

The Geezer Gallery is the art gallery that is currently on display in The Elizabeth lobby, halls and Community Room.

The Geezer Gallery Mission: The Gallery is a non-profit (501c3) arts organization that showcases Master level senior artists and provides therapeutic arts programs for the local community, giving voice to seniors in our community.

Opening mid-August at 3146 SW Moody Avenue, Portland 97239.

EQ sat down with Director/Curator Ray Massini and Curator James Violette. Here is a part of that interview.

EQ: Tell us about your start in the field of art.

Ray: We are both artists and that is probably one of the reasons why our relationship is as good as it is. We understand each other in our own artistic process and that bleeds into other aspects of our lives. I've always been an artist, a self-taught artist. To me art can come in many forms and varieties. I am a painter who really started as a pen and ink artist using stippling as my main form of expression. Now I am a painter of oil, acrylic, watercolor, and India inks, and I usually incorporate stippling into each piece.

James: Although there is a bit of artistry to what I create, I tend to refer to myself as more of a designer/craftsman. I'm constantly designing new lamps. It's easy enough to get the basic design on paper, but once I get to the point of turning it into a reality, the craft of the whole process really kicks in - everything from, how do I make the bulb accessible to how is the piece going to stand up without tipping over. Even though I am told regularly that I'm an artist, it hasn't really stuck yet.

EQ: What led you to the desire to curate an art gallery?

Ray: As an entertainer I've always had a desire to "put a show together." We have dinner parties and entertain at our home. I put together a menu, drink list, music and, depending on the time of year, colors in the way of flowers and even which serving dish to use. We are both very detail oriented so it's no surprise that we want to be in charge of "the way things look and are presented."

James: Who wouldn't want to curate a museum! I've always loved art. The process of being accepted into galleries can be a little unnerving. I can't tell you how many times I've said (and heard), "Man, I just wish I could curate my own work and not have to deal with this." That being said, the galleries I work with have been great. I do come into it with more of the perspective of an artist. I will always try to be sensitive to the concerns of the artists, and make more of an effort to treat them how I would expect to be treated during the process. It's hard for an artist to put their work out there to be judged and accepted - or not. It helps to understand that. Joining with The Geezer Gallery came pretty easily. We like what they stand



for and we all get along well. Once we met and developed more of a relationship, the curator position became available and we were in the right place at the right time.

EQ: How has your education helped you in your career?

Ray: Having no education beyond high school I like to say that I'm a self-taught street smart worldly kinda guy ... and I've done just fine for myself.

James: To be honest, it really hasn't. I was a terrible student. I had a terrible time in school. I really didn't gain much from school. Ironically, I failed woodworking class but I have been a successful woodworker my entire life.



EQ: What does the inspiration put forth by the founders of The Geezer Gallery mean to you?

Ray: Amy Henderson, the founder of The Geezer Gallery, had this clear vision after visiting friends and loved ones in nursing homes and realizing that these folks need stimulation. I find her vision so admirable - not only do we recognize the same issue but she actually took the steps to make sure it

happens. We are proud to be a part of her vision.

James: Well, I like that Amy Henderson, one of the main founders of The Geezer Gallery, is very passionate about it to this day. I'm sure she has sacrificed a lot over the years running a nonprofit, and it's still going strong.

EQ: How is it best applied?

Ray: The "Art As Therapy" classes are our best example of getting the senior population engaged in their inner artist. We have a program director, Candyce Scott, who creates programs, takes art supplies out to these people in our community, and teaches them a class. They get to create a piece of art and keep that piece of art.

James: I like what it provides to seniors as far as giving them the opportunity to express themselves through art. I think that is important for them mentally. What's good for seniors is good for their families and the community. The programs they have for seniors play an important part in keeping seniors active and happy.

EQ: How do you collaborate with other artists?

Ray: I have yet to collaborate with other artists although Jamey and I keep threatening to work together! One of these days you might just see a James Violette lamp with a Ray Massini shade on it.

James: Well, so far, I haven't collaborated with other artists in regards to producing art. I am open to it but haven't gone there yet.

EQ: What is the best piece of art you have ever curated?

Ray and James: I'm not sure about best piece but one of the best shows we have curated was in June of 2018. Jamey and I rented a studio space in The New York Building. We created specific pieces for a dual show we had together. We literally went in the morning of the show, moved furniture out, hung my art, displayed Jamey's lamps, and talked with guests. Then, once the show was over, we had to tear it down that night,



patch holes and paint, and finally put back the furniture. It was a lot of work but satisfying that it was truly one of our first "curating" gigs.

EQ: How can we connect to The Geezer Gallery?

Ray: The Geezer Gallery has a website www.geezergallery.com. It is under construction, but you can visit the site to learn more about our mission. We are also opening an actual retail space in The Emery Building in the South Waterfront neighborhood. We are hoping to have a grand opening in mid-August.

My website is www.raymassiniartwork.com. You can also find me on Facebook and Instagram under my name, Ray Massini. We always appreciate likes, follows, and shares!



The Geezer Gallery
A WHOLE NEW OLD

Mission: The Geezer Gallery is a non-profit (501c3) arts organization that showcases Master level senior artists and provides therapeutic arts programs for the local senior community, giving voice to seniors in our community.

Goal: The Geezer Gallery provides exhibition opportunities for juried senior artists (60 and above) in multiple venues, so they can achieve recognition and sales of their work, ultimately to share with the artists and The Geezer Gallery, helping to provide funds for evidence-based arts programs. We know through science and research that art increases brain health, self-mastery and social connections, and decreases depression, keeping our elders and our society healthier.

Vision: A future where seniors are redefined as valuable contributors, vital role models and worthy of acceptance and purpose. We aim to break down ageist stereotypes and change the perception of aging.

Additional information on collaborations & partnerships, subsidiaries and recognition on the Geezer Gallery card @ the Concierge desk.

We asked Elizabeth residents to share their thoughts on the art in the building – here's what we heard:



"I just returned. . . and saw the artwork. It is stunning, especially the piece in the lobby. Thanks so much for making this happen."

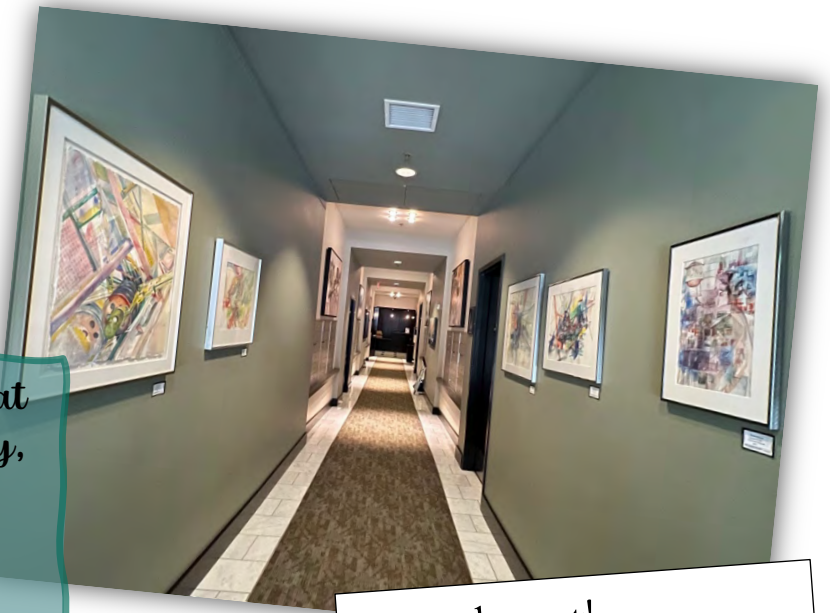
Love it!!!

"A positive addition.... However as with all things, the balance in between proper curation and displaying the full number of pieces is problematic, but overall pleasing. A good addition."

GREAT!

The art is a wonderful
adornment to the lobby!
Thanks

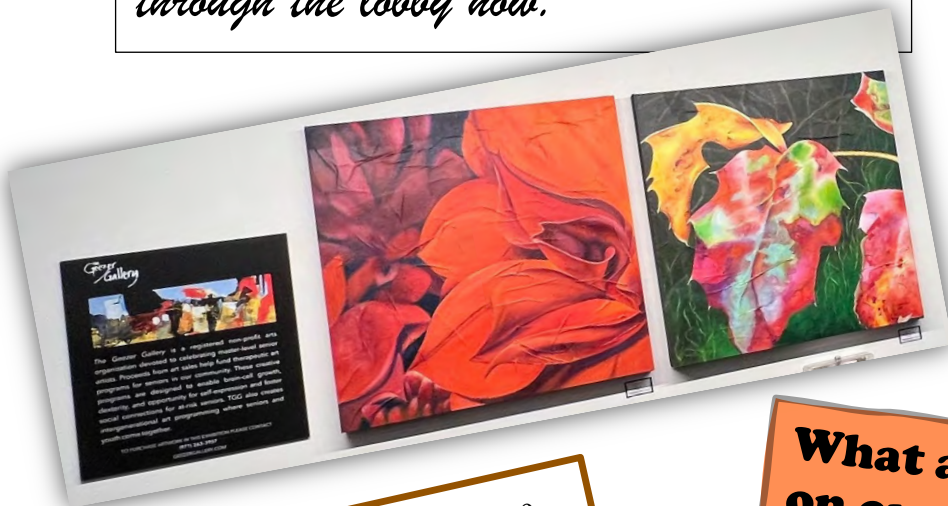
Academics of a certain sort, believe that
it stops with STEM (science, technology,
engineering, mathematics) but some
STEMs are 'weak' - they bend. . . art
gives a STEM energy - as in STEAm.
KEEP THE ARTS ALIVE!



Love the art!
Thank you so much.

*Thank you for the art! I love walking
through the lobby now.*

SO happy to see art
back on the walls--would
love to see us buy the
big red one for the
lobby!



The art is wonderful! Can we have
more light to shine on the pictures?

**What a gift to see this amazing art
on our walls! I've missed it. I'm
inspired each time I stop and look.
Thank you.**

The art is amazing!



EQ welcomes your comments on this article or the Issue: EQ@ElizabethLofts.org

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ROLLIN' ON THE RIVER

By Larry Rosenblum

The Waterfront Blues Festival is back! No masks. No Pods. Back in Tom McCall Park where it belongs. Running from July 1st to the 4th, the festival is the biggest in Oregon, a great bargain and this year it supports [Meals on Wheels](#) and the [Jeremy Wilson Foundation](#) (a health and services program for musicians). As anyone who has attended a blues festival knows, the term “blues festival” is a term of art.

You'll find R&B, jazz, zydeco, country and of course rock 'n roll. The festival spans four stages. **The Blues** and **South stages** border the large field. They alternate acts between stages so that musicians are performing continuously from noon to closing sometime after 10PM. Most people bring low rise chairs and/or blankets and plop down somewhere on the field. This is convenient and easy, but you will be farther from the stages and most likely watching the concert on a large screen and listening through very good mono speakers.



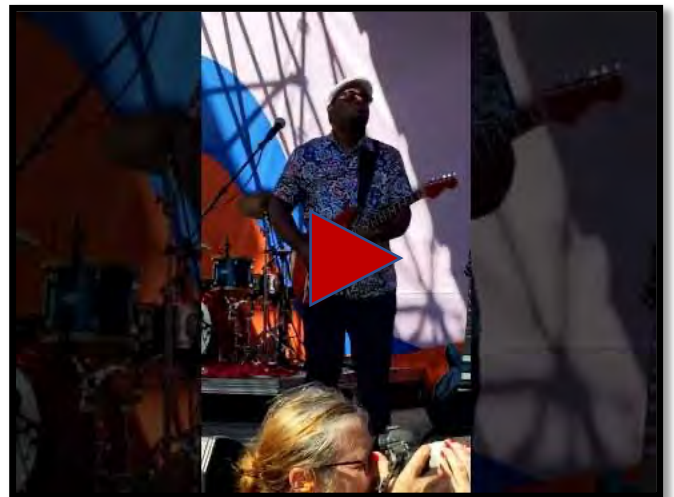
With a little planning, you can get within a few rows of the stage if you are willing to stand, especially before the 7PM shows. **The Front Porch** hosts New Orleans jazz, zydeco, Cajun/creole, country and other musical forms. Unlike the rest of festival, this stage has seats and tables, but what really makes it unique is the well-used dance floor. In between acts, there are dance lessons in swing, blues, ballroom, line dancing and other genres.



The Crossroads is the smallest and most intimate stage. Nestled in a line of trees, this stage tends to feature smaller bands and acoustic instruments. If you're looking for a Mississippi blues man like Stan Street, who has been playing since before you were born, this is where you will find him.

[Silent Partners](#) are three guys who served together in the army. They can be playful. Their opening song is titled “Post-Traumatic Blues Syndrome.” One of the guitarists literally played his instrument with his lips and another happily spun his full bass violin. Their music is full ahead blues. They performed a song about playing with B.B. King and followed it with B.B.'s “How Blue Can You Get.”

They also symbolize the blues fest style. That evening they played the late show at the Jack London Revue and backed Diunna Greenleaf at the festival the next day.



(https://youtu.be/udApO_vdMsM)



[Diunna Greenleaf](#) may come from a gospel tradition, but her performance was straight blues, no chaser. She has a powerful and colorful voice that is made for blues. She sang about men and a world that done her wrong with the notable exception of the well-received “Built for Comfort.”

The Robert Randolph Band were introduced as a “gospel influenced band.” When their first song was Cream’s “I Feel Free,” I knew somebody was confused. This night it was Robert

and just two of his brothers, but the [Robert Randolph and the Family Band](#) does have a different sound. Their music probably falls within rock ‘n roll, but the extended guitar riffs are heavily laced with the blues.



(<https://youtu.be/oaD7hSiBZiM>)

The tempo was high energy and even the one blues song was highly caffeinated. Robert Randolph played what appeared to be an electric dulcimer or perhaps a horizontal guitar. Given its smaller size, it is picked and not strummed. When he did pick up a guitar, he doesn’t grip it around the neck but rests his hand on top of the neck as you can see in this video.

The award for the strangest band name goes to [The War and Treaty](#). Fortunately, they may turn out to be the surprise star of the festival. Michael and Tanya Trotter front the band and their music defies classification. As Michael said, jazz, R&B, country and even gospel came from blues roots and their performance spans all these styles.

Michael’s powerful voice shined in a blues number and in another he vocalized a perfect imitation of a trumpet. They premiered a song that is pure country. And for the finale, Michael left the stage and joined an enthusiastic and welcoming audience.

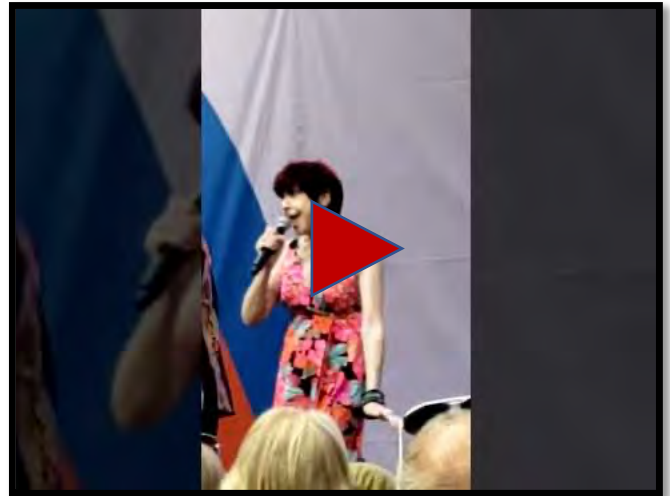


(<https://youtu.be/10Xw71PHU5M>)



It's a pleasure to listen to [Duffy Bishop](#). She has a confidence and presence that gives her space to both display her powerful voice and share her playful and impish personality. Whether it is a fun update of Muddy Waters' "19 Years Old" retitled "69 Years Old" or Leslie Gore's "You Don't Own Me" or a spiritual, the audience loved her performance. She knows how to put on a show and she also ventured out into the audience for her finale.

If you want a break, you can visit the Millennium Music booth. Not only will they have music from all of the bands, but you are practically guaranteed to see band members signing CDs and talking with fans.



(<https://youtu.be/MvdB6aPuKPw>)

You can score the newest iteration of the iconic festival T-shirt at the Merch Shop. There are more than a dozen options for food and drink. There are sponsor booths and reps from several local radio stations. And, of course, there are a number of vendors happy to separate you from your money.



My favorite is the Voodoo Catbox, a vintage poster shop. Or you can just sit back and enjoy watching the [Mystic Krewe](#) cakewalk through the festival.



[Big Monti](#) aka Monti Amundson plays rock 'n roll infused with blues. You can hear Johnny Winter and B.B. King in his music, but the influence of Stevie Ray Vaughn is unmistakable. [Ron Artis II's](#) brand of blues is colored with R&B. At a blues festival there are many amazing guitarists, but Ron can hold his own with the best of them. At one point in his set, he managed to play the guitar and keyboard simultaneously!



(<https://youtu.be/JDye661yjJs>)

[Curtis Salgado](#) has been a Portland institution since 1978 and



he has appeared at the festival many times. He never disappoints. With a nine-piece band and two back-up singers, he is a consummate performer. Talking and joking with the audience he performs his own brand of blues including "Walk a Mile in my Blues" and Carlos Santana's "Smooth." After his set, he walked over to the Blues Stage and sang a couple of songs with Lloyd Jones.

[Taj Mahal](#) celebrated his 80th birthday the week before the festival. It's comforting to know that at a certain age, a blues man can sing a set where he fondly remembers past loves and looks forward to new ones. His set included the fan favorite "Queen Bee," "Leaving Trunk" from his very first album, "She Caught the Katy" and "Hoochi Coochi Co," a song at home at a sock hop (ask your parents what a sock hop is). Because he was Sunday night's headliner, he was able to do an encore and performed "Corina."



When Taj Mahal won a Grammy for his album Phantom Blues, the band that backed him decided to step out on their own and became the [Phantom Blues Band](#). They backed Taj



during his performance at the festival and the next day they performed on their own. Introduced by the actor Jim Belushi, the members of the band have played with at least a dozen legends. It also turns out that several members of the band play with Jim Belushi and Dan Ackroyd as the Blues Brothers.

This performance highlighted their versatility. They demonstrated their blues chops on "Still Cookin'." The ballad "Still Be Friends" is a memorial to all those who have passed including band member Mike Finnegan. They got funky on the politically oriented "Get Involved" and another song had a hint of reggae.

Because the best cooking is always a mix of flavors, Curtis Salgado and Jim Belushi joined the band for the Fats Domino song "I'm Ready." The singing and music were fine, but Jim Belushi is ready for dance lessons.



[Andy Stokes](#) is a R&B and soul singer. Andy is a member of the Oregon Music Hall of Fame, but he is one of too many artists that took many years to become an overnight success. He had the audience hopping to "So Dangerous." He slowed things down with the ballad "I Don't Give a Damn," but the crowd was back on its feet and dancing for "Let's Have a Good Time." And by the time he performed "We on Da Flo" he had the crowd eating out of his hand for the call and response.



[Cedric Burnside](#) was not playing the blues before I was born (he is much younger than me), but he keeps the traditions alive. He first appeared on stage with nothing but an acoustic guitar and no back up. After a couple of songs, he switched to an electric guitar and a drummer joined him onstage. While an electric guitar had more energy than an acoustic, his original compositions still had a spare quality and narrow focus. Near the end of his set, he switched to another electric guitar and his songs had more color, but his music was still the most restrained of the festival.



(<https://youtu.be/dkKU9gbwZq8>)

[Lettuce](#) is the runner-up for weirdest band name at the festival. There's a corny story about its origin. Back when four band members were at the Berklee School of Music in Boston, they begged venues for a chance to play. They went hat in hand asking anyone to "let us play." Over time that refrain was concatenated into Lettuce.



Lettuce was Monday's headliner and the last performer of the festival. Their music is described as eclectic with jazz, R&B, rock and even psychedelic. This

night they were R&B with a sometime Latin beat. The band is primarily instrumental and the songs are long enough to give space for an instrument to shine or to take a musical journey including sudden shifts in direction that never return to where they started.

The finale was a completely transformed and if not for the vocal refrain an unrecognizable version of Tears for Fear's "Everybody Wants to Rule the World."



The other headliner of the night is the fireworks and the festival is the perfect venue because they are shot off from a boat in the Willamette opposite the park. The MC introduced them by saying "let's blow sh*t up!"

Rock music accompanied the fireworks and traditionally Jimi Hendrix's Star-Spangled Banner is played during the finale. Enjoy the video by clicking on the photo.

(<https://youtu.be/QdSEiD6EvYw>)

Hope this gives you a taste of the festival and maybe. . .
tempts you for next year!

In the meantime, the festival posted its [official 2022 playlist](#) on Spotify (you can sign up with the free version). Give it a listen because there were way more fine performances than I can cover. It's not the actual live performances, but the music is from the bands at the festival. Enjoy!

Four days of partying, now I need a rest.



EQ welcomes your comments on this article or the Issue: EQ@ElizabethLofts.org

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PORTLAND ROSE CITY

By Chris Steele

with photographs by Larry Rosenblum

The rose garden is in bloom. Originally established to serve as a testing ground for new hybrid rose varieties, the International Rose Test Garden has some 10,000 roses and more than 650 varieties, in bloom from May to September. On a clear day, there are beautiful views of downtown, Mt. Hood, and the Cascades. Portland is known as the Rose City, and the Test Garden supports this identity, but the name has an older history than the garden itself.



Roses were first popularized in Portland by Georgina Buron Pittock, wife of publisher Henry Pittock. In 1888, she invited friends and neighbors to exhibit their roses in a tent set up in her garden, and the Portland Rose Society was established.

The City of Roses....200 miles of rose lined streets!

Shortly thereafter, a new hybrid rose was developed in Europe, the Madame Caroline Testout rose, named after a French dressmaker of the time. By 1905, Portland had lined 200 miles of streets with this rose and as a result eventually became known as the City of Roses.

The Test Garden was the inspiration of Jesse A. Currey, a rose hobbyist and editor of the Oregon Journal who convinced the city that a test garden was required to serve as a haven for the hybrid roses developed in Europe endangered by World War I. The Portland Park Bureau approved this idea, and the garden was dedicated in June 1924. Curry was the garden's first rose curator until his death in 1927. Apart from one fertilization per year and sprinklers during the rare dry months in Portland, the roses are left to mother nature; there are no insecticides used and ladybugs are employed to handle aphids and other pests.

In 1912, the Order of the Royal Rosarians was founded. They are a civic group that serve as the official greeters and goodwill ambassadors for the city of Portland. Members are "knighted" into the organization under their chosen namesake rose variety. The Royal Rosarian Garden is part of the original design of the test garden and is home to the namesake roses of all past Prime Ministers of the Royal Rosarians.



Each Rose Queen is honored in the Royal Rosarian Garden

One of the most popular Rose-related events is the Rose Festival, with its parades, ceremonies and of course the Rose Queen and her court. The first festival was in 1907, but its roots go back to 1837 when the first rose bushes were imported into the city. The first Rose Queen was

crowned in 1907, when the festival was first held. There are plaques honoring each rose queen in the Royal Rosarian Garden. Each year a ceremony is held with a Royal Rosarian Honor Guard to witness the newly crowned queen place her plaque in a location of honor during the year of her reign.

Portland has a long history with roses. The [International Rose Test Garden](#) is the best example of this love affair with the rose, but the relationship began even before the garden was started. It is the best free attraction of the city and should not be missed. There are daily free tours at 1pm, and shuttles run to assist with the limited parking. For those more actively inclined, it is a 4-mile loop from Elizabeth Lofts, a pleasant morning stroll.



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RICHARD MEEKER

By Steve Rose

Steve Rose sits down with his long-time friend, Richard Meeker, to discuss *Willamette Week* and the state of journalism.



Richard is one of two owners of *Willamette Week*, a newspaper that first published in Portland in 1974. He served as its publisher from 1983 to 2015. He also created and supervises *Willamette Week's* Give!Guide, which in 2021 raised over \$7.8 million for 203 Portland area non-profits.

SR: Richard, what are you currently doing professionally?

RM: I continue to be one of the owners of *Willamette Week*. As such, I supervise our *Give!Guide*, oversee circulation, and participate in long-term planning. Because of my wife's job, I am no longer the publisher of the paper. I also run *The Reporter* in Santa Fe, as well as *INDY Week*, a media company I own by myself in the Triangle of North Carolina.



SR: Let's briefly segue, who is your wife?

RM: Ellen Rosenblum. She currently serves as Oregon's Attorney General.

SR: How many other alternative weeklies have you been involved with over the years?

RM: Just one other, in Boise. It's interesting. Ellen and I were there recently, and the design of the cover remains the same as what we created twenty years ago.

SR: Before we get more into your professional career, let's get into your background. Where were you born?

RM: Washington DC in 1949.

SR: And was your dad involved in government?

RM: Yes. He worked mostly in the State Department. Initially, he worked in Treasury and then in the Solicitor General's office with Archibald Cox before moving to the Legal Adviser's office at State.

SR: So how did you develop an interest in journalism?

RM: It's one of those things that grew over time. After St. Albans, I was active in my college newspaper during the second half of my junior year and the first half of my senior year. I got to law school at the time of Watergate. I found what Woodward and Bernstein did absolutely fascinating. I admired Bernstein's work considerably more than Woodward's because he was the more hard-nosed reporter and just amazingly knowledgeable about the District of Columbia. Woodward struck me as less of a sleuth. The choice of journalism has basically been my entire professional career, but I don't really know how — or why — I made it.

SR: Where did you go to college?

RM: Amherst. My plan was to go to law school.

"...it is much easier for one person to make a difference in Oregon"

SR: Where?

RM: I was going to go to Berkeley. I was admitted there in 1970. About that time, President Nixon created the draft lottery.

I received a high lottery number so I wanted to do some public service. I called Berkeley to see if I could take a year off to do some service, they said yes, and I became a schoolteacher on Ocracoke Island. Then, in October that year I got a letter from Berkeley asking me to explain why I was not there. I did not think that was a good sign. So I applied to the University of Oregon and was accepted. I was upset with the misunderstanding with Berkeley. There was a person my father had hired at the State Department, Hans Linde. He was a Constitutional Law professor at the University of Oregon and was teaching that year at Berkeley. So I wrote him a letter asking him where should I go to law school. He wrote back saying, if you want to make a difference in your community, you should go to Oregon because you will probably live where you go to school and it is much easier for one person to make a difference in Oregon.

SR: Did you enjoy your time in Eugene?



RM: I was just fascinated with Eugene. The oddest part is I had never had such good food in my life. Fresh squeezed orange juice - really. I found law school to be kind of boring. I made it a point to read one book a week that was not law related and take notes on it. I spent a lot of time at Duffy's, Taylor's and Max's, which were bars on 13th Avenue. I did not find the schoolwork very difficult.

SR: Upon graduation did you practice law?

RM: No, but while in school, I did take advantage of the second-year practice rule. The only law I practiced since is being second chair when *Willamette Week* gets sued for something. Back in 1973, I did apply to the Justice Department and got an offer to be in the honors program in the Civil Rights Division. It would have meant moving to Washington DC. Because Richard Nixon was president, doing any civil rights work in the South was discouraged. I did not take the job. I went back to the guy who was founding *Willamette Week* who had offered me a reporter's job on several occasions. I asked him to hire me. I was the last person he hired before the paper got started.

SR: And that person was Ron Buel. So you turned down the honors program at the AG's office to go to work for the *Willamette Week*?

RM: Yes. Great career decision! I was a reporter. I covered law in the courts, and health and medicine. Those were my beats. I became the investigative reporter, and in 1977 I became the editor. On the first day of 1980, I left, I thought for good. I was going to write a book, which I did. In 1983, circumstances came about that Mark Zusman and I were able to buy *Willamette Week*.

SR: When you did reporting, what articles did you write that you think are still interesting today?

RM: When I was first hired, the Chief Justice of the Oregon Supreme Court, Kevin O'Connell, invited me to come down to Salem to talk to him. He didn't give interviews but because I was a lawyer, he wanted to tell me how the court system in Oregon worked and how important it was to have reporting done correctly. As a result of that meeting, I ended up covering a lot more trials than I might have.

One of the more memorable ones was when a woman named Julie Christofferson sued the Church of Scientology. I also covered an antitrust case that a US attorney brought here in Oregon against the timber industry. I wrote a fair amount about microwave radiation in the West Hills.

(Editor's note: Richard subsequently indicated that he was most proud of a four-part series he wrote on PGE after the disaster at Three Mile Island. Through his reporting, he predicted PGE would succeed, despite the general opinion at the time that its investments in nuclear power and controversial dams would be its undoing.)

SR: You mentioned you left the paper in 1980 to write a book; is that correct?

RM: Yes. That was the fourth time I left the paper. I quit four times between 1974 and 1980.

SR: Why did you quit?

RM: I just kept getting frustrated by the way it was managed, and I did not enjoy the people I was working with very much.

SR: Take us to 1980.

RM: I left to write a book on S.I. Newhouse. Newhouse, in today's way of thinking about this sort of thing, was the first leveraged buyout expert in newspapers. He put together a chain of newspapers and magazines, newsprint manufacturing, and television and radio stations all over the country. He would run things with purely financial purposes in mind. He bought *The Oregonian* in the early 1950s, bought *The Oregon Journal* soon thereafter, and ultimately merged the two.



The book ended up taking two and a half years. I did not know what was next. When the Newhouse book was done, I sold a second project, a biography of Tom McCall, to Houghton Mifflin, the publisher of the Newhouse book. I was starting on that book when the possibility of buying *Willamette Week* occurred. I was never meant to be a writer of books.

SR: When you bought the *Willamette Week*, did it have much circulation?

RM: When we bought the paper, we were told the paid subscriber base was close to 17,000. I believe the real number was closer to 11,000. We took over in October 1983 and by the following January we went to free distribution.

SR: That soon? Once you went to free publication, what did you increase the size of the reader circulation to?

RM: Our largest circulation was 90,000 when we were print-only, and our monthly audience was 350,000. Now, with the internet, our print and digital audience exceeds one million.

SR: When you went to free, what was behind that decision?

RM: *The Washington Post* had a weekly national edition back then. I got in touch with the person who was in charge of it. I told him we were planning a circulation drive with a hefty budget to build audience and asked him what he thought of that. He said, you are choosing to spend more money for circulation in Portland than I am allowed to spend on a national publication. I don't think that is a very good idea. Other weekly newspapers around the country were free, and it became clear to me our only real choice was to be free. Being a paid publication just was not going to cut it.

SR: So all your income had to come from advertisers. Did your revenue increase or decrease?

RM: When the audience went up, the income went up. As the newspaper developed a better reputation, that also helped. Direct print advertising revenue today is about a third of what it was at our peak. We get a significant amount of digital revenue. We do special publications. We put on events. We have this thing called The Friends of Willamette Week which brings in hundreds of thousands of dollars from 7,000 people who pay us every month in donations.



From a journalist's perspective, Facebook and Google are as evil as any two companies can be. Most people single out Facebook as the Evil Empire, but I happen to think Google is worse because they showed the way. When Google began, it was designed as a search engine to help users. The customer was the user, and the product was the information they were getting through search. At a certain point, due to venture finance considerations in Silicon Valley, Google wasn't making any money and the investors were unhappy. Then someone came along and said, I can turn these consumers into your product. And we can sell them to advertisers. So all the improvements in search became designed to help sell advertising, rather than truly improve the search function. Both Google and Facebook to this day remain just rapacious in taking in every form of advertising they can get their hands on. Along the way, they steal all our journalism and give us nothing in return for it.

SR: How is the *Willamette Week* now in terms of solvency?

RM: We are in good shape. We are making money and we have more full-time reporters on the news side than we have had in twenty years.

SR: Let's talk about the reporters and the people who have worked at *Willamette Week*. You have had a number of people who have gone on to major accomplishments in their careers after working at the *Willamette Week*. Let's touch on some of the more notable people.

RM: Want me to list a few? Susan Orlean. She did that wonderful book, *The Orchid Thief*, and worked for the *New Yorker*. Her recent book about the Los Angeles library fire was a model of non-fiction writing. Anthony Bianco went to *Businessweek*, wrote a couple of books, and for several years was listed as one of the top business reporters in America. Phil Keisling went on to become Oregon's Secretary of State. Alan Weber went on the start *Fast Company* and is now the Mayor of Santa Fe, New Mexico. Katherine Dunn was a columnist. Her column was called The Slice and she also wrote about boxing. She went on to write a famous novel, *Geek Love*. Karen Brooks did her first food reviews in Portland for *Willamette Week*. This list leaves out all manner of other interesting, accomplished reporters, writers, reviewers, photographers, and artists.

SR: And *Willamette Week* has won one Pulitzer Prize?

RM: One Pulitzer Prize. First Pulitzer any weekly has won for investigative reporting and first Pulitzer for something originally published to the web.

SR: If my recollection is correct, the Pulitzer was for the Neil Goldschmidt story and Nigel Jaquiss was the author. Is that correct?

RM: Yes. Nigel was the key reporter and writer, but as with most great ventures, a lot of other people were involved.

SR: How did Nigel break the story on Goldschmidt?

RM: Well, the story was about how Neil Goldschmidt, who had been the mayor of Portland, the head of the Board of Education, and working at OHSU at the time, had raped a 13-year-old babysitter when he was mayor. There were long and difficult consequences for his victim and the story had been covered up for a number of years. We got a tip. This was of a needle-in-a-haystack variety. But Nigel is someone who works wonderfully with documents. Bit by bit, he figured out who the victim was and what had happened. We knew that there had been a settlement agreement between the victim and Goldschmidt. I knew the lawyer who did the agreement, so I talked to him. We also talked to the lawyer who had set up the trust that the money went into. The victim was working in Las Vegas at the time and we went to see her. She was under a confidentiality agreement.

All kinds of crazy things began happening. Before we published the story, Goldschmidt called me. He asked if Mark Zusman and I could meet him and his business partner Tom Imeson for lunch. It was clear to me what was on their minds, but they never brought it up. At the same time, we were getting threats from people that our business would be destroyed if we wrote this story. These were Goldschmidt's supporters, so word was getting around. We were not quite certain we had enough to publish such a damning story. But then I got a call from our Rabbi, who had called me several times in the past to berate me about stories we had written about his congregants. He urged us to write a story about any of the other women in Goldschmidt's life, just not this victim. That to me was the sufficient confirmation of our story. I went back to the office and assembled our team. I was not the leader of this operation, but I was the publisher. I got our attorney, our news editor, Mark, and Nigel together and told them what the Rabbi had told me. And I said I think we are ready to publish.

SR: To fill in context here, the rape of the victim was not a one-time event but occurred over a couple of years?

RM: Yes. Two years at least when she was 13 and 14. We thought we could easily be run out of business if we published the story. Yet the day we went ahead, *The Oregonian* followed up with a story on Goldschmidt and called what he had done an "affair" rather than a rape. Everybody was focused on how mistaken *The Oregonian* had been to use that. For some reason the pressure was very much off us. This story was published in 2005.



SR: Did you consider this the most consequential story that has been published by the *Willamette Week*?

RM: It's the one that has gotten the most attention. I think the single most consequential story we did was before that — when Enron was attempting to take over PGE. We got ahold of five huge books of planning materials that showed Enron would strip the utility to the bone, reduce customer service, and remake it into a horrible company where the people in charge would be screwed. We published that information and stopped the Enron takeover of PGE. This is probably the single most important thing we have ever done. That was also Nigel's story. Other important stories that I recall led to the unmasking of Michael Stoops, the firing of OLCC head Ken Underdahl, and the resignation of Governor Kitzhaber.



SR: Let's now turn to your feelings on the state of journalism today.

RM: The bigger picture is this: In the last twenty years, the number of real journalists in this country has declined by somewhere between 30 and 50 percent. And the number of people in the PR and lobbying world has increased by 30 to 50 percent. As a result, the quality of the information you get has diminished dramatically. And that doesn't have anything to do with social media. Mark Zusman and I and others often joke that this is the perfect time to be a corrupt public official.

SR: Is there any way journalism will improve in the future?

RM: There certainly is a need for it. Once something changes Google and Facebook's rapaciousness or they outlive their advertising model, then there will be money again for good journalism. Readers will be supportive.

"...it is kind of like what climate change is doing"

SR: What has been the ongoing effects of the Internet?



RM: Well, on the good side, our audience has dramatically increased. Our engagement with our readers is more direct, the timeliness of our reporting is greater. On the downside, it has shortened people's attention spans. Artificial intelligence increasingly provides people with information that is consistent with what they already believe and that makes their beliefs even more extreme. These algorithms that do that produce greater advertising profit. To me, it is kind of like what climate change is doing. Just as there are more extremes of weather, there are more extremes of views being posted to social media.

SR: Do you perceive that there will emerge a successful model for quality journalism going forward?

RM: I hope so. There are two parts to it. One, there needs to be much more local journalism. Two, there needs to be good national and international journalism.

SR: Does *The Oregonian* still retain investigative staff?

RM: The word to the Newhouse newspapers years ago was, use public records because people cannot sue you if it's in public records. Don't do investigative reporting, do numbers journalism. You will see that in *The Oregonian* all the time. They very rarely break an investigative story.

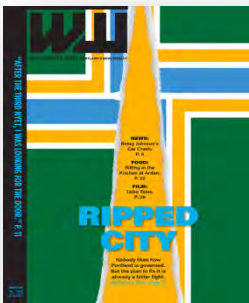
SR: You say the algorithms reinforce people on the extremes and reinforce what people want to hear. Is there any way to break that?

RM: So long as Google and Facebook - and now add Amazon - have 70 to 80 percent of all internet advertising going to their oligopolies or worse, I don't think you can break that.

SR: Let's sum this up with some of your observations about the city of Portland. *Willamette Week* is an institution here that has given you an intimate perspective.

RM: In two years, we will have been at this for 50 years — which, to me, is just crazy. I came here in my 20s. Back then the city government had tremendous support from the business community. Most important, the city had ambition. That was overall considerably beneficial to the city of Portland and its growth.

Then, as Portland became successful, outside money came in and bought up institutions. The relationship became less of a two-way street, as the business community was supping at the city government's trough. There was a palpable change in how city government ran. Today, you have a city government with zero ambition and no vision for Portland at all. There is a toxic relationship with the business community and an awful lot of outside money. We are at a moment of ill health for the city that exists on more levels than the average person can see. It is not just homeless people on the streets or empty store fronts. It is far worse. It is directionless because this is currently a pretty leaderless place.



Despite this, I remain optimistic about the city. I hope we can revise the charter sensibly. Having real professional management would make a difference. I think the council becoming more of a legislative body will give it more vision. But all this will require a competent mayor. That in turn involves both management skills and vision. For many years, Portland was almost kind of a playground for younger people. For at least the last ten years, I have worried that we were not being a serious city. Ultimately, I hope the recent tumult can have the effect of making us serious about what we want to become.

SR: Let's leave this on an optimistic note. Do you think in the next five years the city will be able to turn itself around? And I ask that fully keeping in mind what the nation is doing.

RM: Well, there are two kinds of questions. Is Democracy going to survive? What is going to happen to the economy? And then, what is going to happen to Oregon and Portland? Five years may be a little too soon. I would say five to ten years, we will be in a significantly better place.

SR: It's been a pleasure talking with you, Richard!



EQ welcomes your comments on this article or the Issue: EQ@ElizabethLofts.org

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HAPPENING IN and AROUND THE ELIZABETH

Compiled By Chris Steele and Larry Rosenblum

In the Elizabeth



Book Club – The [Elizabeth Book Club](https://www.elizabethlofts.org/community/elizabeth-book-club/) continues meeting on the second Monday of each month at 4:30, usually in the Elizabeth Community Room, but ZOOM had been an alternative. The book for August will be *A Pilgrimage to Eternity: From Canterbury to Rome in Search of Faith*, a memoir by Timothy Egan. Listings of past books, future reading plans and contact information can be found on the Elizabeth website.

<https://www.elizabethlofts.org/community/elizabeth-book-club/>

Welcome Committee – This recently formed group is still looking for volunteers to welcome new residents to the building and generally make The Elizabeth Lofts a more warm and friendly place. If this interests you, please contact Bob Garsha at welcome@elizabethlofts.org to offer your help.



Community Committee - They are residents just like you. Their passion is to establish a vibrant culture here at The Elizabeth. Connecting individuals through social activities is the essence of Community. They hope you join us as often as you can. You can reach them at community@elizabethlofts.org



July 23 @ 3:00 pm - a Pinot Noir wine tasting and education get-together in the Community Room. It will be hosted by our very own Bob Wolfe, an Oregon Wine Professional with over 30 years' experience in the industry. This will be limited to 12 attendees but don't worry, Bob Wolfe will be back with more of his wine and his perspectives. The cost is \$20 to cover the cost of the wine but you will need to RSVP.

First Thursday in the Elizabeth is now a monthly event. So mark your calendar!

EQ – The newsletter you are reading right now! Contributing to this publication is an opportunity to exercise your creative muscles. We need writers, photographers, editors and graphic designers and artists. Contact us at EQ@elizabethlofts.org to volunteer. We would love guest contributors as well, if you have something fun to share with neighbors.

ELEC – The Elizabeth Lofts Emergency Committee is a group of residents who have come together to make people and the building safer, more secure, and more resilient in the event of an emergency. We need volunteers to help us plan for disasters either in an ongoing capacity or as special advisors on issues like medical care or construction. We also need people who we know in advance are ready to help when need strikes. If you want to help, contact ELEC at elec.leads@elizabethlofts.org.

Community Room Bookshelves – We continue to collect a variety of reading options. If Covid and rain (or snow) are confining you indoors, check out what is available!



Events Websites to Check Out

Covid-19 attendance policies can vary and change at any time. It is advisable to check the venue instructions for the event of interest. Requirements may be determined by each performance.

[Portland's 5 Centers for the Arts](#) has a large variety of scheduled live events at local venues. This is a handy site for browsing entertainment opportunities throughout the area.

[Portland Center Stage at the Armory](#) has a variety of events on their schedule including dramatic and musical theater and they even offer some free events - check out the JAW New Play Festival - it's FREE!. Beginning [improvisation classes](#) are also available if one is looking for something more participatory. For those not yet ready for live performances, there are [recordings of virtual offerings](#) still available.



The [Portland Mercury](#) has listings of things to do around town, from free events and festivals to events supporting activism and social justice

[Oregon Festivals and Events](#) has a calendar full of future events if you are looking for something new to do. Check out a wide variety of [live concerts](#) coming to Portland.

For those more interested in classical music, [Chamber Music Northwest](#) is finishing out their 2022 Summer festival in addition to many other offerings including some [virtual choices](#).



Check out the [Oregon Symphony](#), including [Star Wars: Return of the Jedi in Concert](#) coming in September. Additionally, [livestream concert](#) tickets are also on sale for those not yet ready to go to an in-person event.

The [Oregon Ballet Theater](#) has subscription packages for the 2022-23 season on sale.

[Broadway](#) in Portland has some musical and non-musical productions coming this season.

Enjoy a mysteriously delightful dinner at the [Dinner Detective](#) at the Embassy Suites downtown. It is America's largest interactive comedy murder mystery dinner show; the menu looks enticing, and the event sounds hilarious.



Jazz lovers should check out events coming to the [Jack London Revue](#) or enjoy a relaxing evening of dinner and music at [Wilfs](#).

[First Thursday Street Gallery](#) – April through October, on 13th Ave. between Hoyt and Kearney

WILLAMETTE WEEK

Check out [Willamette Week](#) for lots of great music and fun things to do.

Ready for a Night at the Movies?

[Living Room Theater](#) (10th and Stark) and [Cinema 21](#) (616 NW 21st Ave.) offer more than the usual fare.

For a larger than life experience check out what there is to see on the IMAX screen at [OMSI](#).



Summer Fun Events

[Music on Main](#) – Wednesdays starting July 13th @ Main Street next to Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall—between Southwest Broadway and Park Avenue.

[Cathedral Park Jazz Festival](#) - July 15-17



[Bird Days of Summer](#) – bird watching at various locations and dates starting July 16th sponsored by Portland Audubon

Portland Art Museum [outdoor movie nights](#) – a series of movies beginning July 21st @ OMSI bridge lot

[The Original Practice Shakespeare Festival](#) – 4 different plays @ Irving Park July 21-24 + lots more in the summer.



[Sketch Comedy Festival](#) – July 21-22 @ the Siren Theater (315 NW Davis)

[Flix on the Brix](#) – various dates starting July 22nd at Pioneer Courthouse Square

[Oregon Brewers Festival](#) – July 28-30 @ Tom McCall Park

[Portland Flea Market](#) – Every Sunday @ 240 SE Clay St.

[Edgefield Concerts on the Lawn](#) – many acts throughout the summer including the Goo Goo Dolls, Robert Plant and Bonnie Raitt @ 2126 SW Halsey, Troutdale.

[Piano Push Play](#) – delightfully painted pianos in public places. Enjoy a spontaneous performance or give one yourself. Around town starting with Pioneer Courthouse Square



[Chamber Music Summer Festival](#) – through July 31st both in person and virtual.

[Mississippi Studios](#) has big acts and small in all kinds of music @ 3939 N Mississippi.

[Chinese Festival](#) – August 6 @ Pioneer Courthouse Square



Elizabeth Lofts Annual BBQ – Usually in August in the plaza, but date TBD

[Sunday Parkways](#) – bike rides around east Portland August 21st

Labor Day – September 5th. Fire up your barbeques!

The Pearl Party is back sponsored by the PDNA. It's September 16th 5-8:30 along NW 13th Avenue.

Portland is still confused about when Oktoberfest should be, but you still may want to check out the Oktoberfest at [Mt. Angel](#), September 15-18.



EQ welcomes your comments on this article or the Issue: EQ@ElizabethLofts.org

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