



# neighbor to neighbor

News from  
 Freeport  
 Community  
 Services

SPRING 2018

## FCS with Goodwill Industries to host VISTA Members this summer

FCS will be partnering with Goodwill Industries of Northern New England to become a host site for their AmeriCorps VISTA program this summer. AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America) is a founding program of AmeriCorps. VISTAs are placed across the country to help local organizations increase their capacity to fight poverty in their local community.

This summer, FCS will host up to 4 VISTA Summer Associates who will be focusing on our food programs including our summer lunch program, community garden and our food pantry. Paula Paladino, Executive Director at FCS states "One of our goals is to create a healthier community by improving nutrition, as a whole, by increasing the access to health promoting foods especially for food insecure individuals and families in our community." "One in four Maine children are food insecure so our lunch program for children and youth is an important resource during the summer months" she adds. Thanks to many partnerships in the community, the FCS food pantry, is able to help over 400 people monthly, many of whom are struggling to make ends meet.

This year, the Summer Associates will focus on promoting our food programs to increase awareness of our food programs and they will build capacity for the FCS Community Garden by promoting it through education and outreach to attract more gardeners and volunteers. They will be responsible for several plots to grow food for distribution in our food pantry. Sarah Lundin, Community Services Coordinator states "We know that community gardens promote healthy communities and provide food security for many low-income persons. We are excited about our new partnership and are looking forward to increasing access to fresh and healthy food grown right here in our Community Garden for our food pantry customers."

If you are interested in signing up for a garden plot, please contact Sarah Lundin at 865-3985 x. 206 or if you would like to volunteer, please contact Debbie Daggett at 865-3985 x. 206.



Kathleen Meade and Bowdoin College students cleaning out the gardens during Bowdoin's Common Good Day event.

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## Mission Statement

To enrich lives, connect neighbors and help those in need in Freeport and Pownal.

## 2016-2017 Board Members

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Sarah Lundin  
*Community Services Coordinator*

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Nancy Trottier  
*Events & Comm. Coordinator*

## Dear Friends,

Hello and Happy Spring! I know I'm not alone this time of year to be happy doing anything outside without a hat and winter gloves! Now that it is spring, I've been thinking a lot about change these days.

Spring is a time for renewal, a season of new growth. The signs of change are all around us. Flowers smatter parks and lawns, the days are longer, brighter and warmer and our emotions are lifted by the extra light and raised temperature. Spring is a great time to envision possibilities and think about reinvention. It is a time for new celebrations and getting back to warm weather, outdoor activities, and making positive changes.

At FCS, spring represents a time for renewal, change, and the opportunity for improvement. So, it stands to reason that as we start to transition into the spring months, we're taking some time to focus on ourselves and ensure that our programs we offer are the best they can possibly be and to identify new opportunities to help our neighbors while enriching lives. 2018 promises to be another great year of growth and change.

Some of the activities we are planning for this year include an evaluation of our food pantry survey we conducted in the winter months with our customers to improve the services we offer, focusing on reenergizing our community garden, increasing the number of children and youth who access our camp scholarships and summer free lunches, fully implementing the Backpack Program for food insecure students over the weekends during the school year, and exploring "age-friendly" initiatives to help keep seniors home in our community. We plan to keep you informed throughout the year about our activities and welcome your involvement!

We are looking forward to another successful year in 2018. However, we couldn't do it without you. When you invest in FCS, you are making a commitment of time, money, resources that helps build a stronger community for all of us. The community support is truly remarkable. We could not provide services without you. Thank you for believing in us, believing in our community and supporting FCS.

We very much look forward to seeing you soon at our Community Center or an event and we look forward to the opportunities and challenges of 2018.

Wishing you and your loved ones a very happy Spring and a wonderful year of surprises, changes-and, yes, beginnings.

  
Paula  
*Executive Director*



## Programs update

What a busy winter we have had here at FCS! The generosity of our community never fails, and through your support, our neighbors in need had both a bountiful and special 2017 holiday season. Whether it was the Scouting for Food drive or gifts donated for our Holiday Helpline program, we, at FCS, continue to be amazed and humbled by the caring nature of so many in Freeport and Pownal. The 2017 holiday season provided over 100 meals for Thanksgiving and necessary gifts for 115 families through the Holiday Helpline. Thank you!

We are fortunate to be able to offer assistance through the generous donations from the community, with fuel to heat homes during the winter. This winter has proved to be extremely tough on folks, with over 100 requests fulfilled this season and we still a bit to go before warmer weather arrives.

Believe it, or not, we are now looking to the summer for upcoming programs and we are so ready for warmer weather. It is time for folks to be thinking about plans for their kids this summer whether it is summer camps or food resources while they are out during the school break. FCS is proud to help families in need afford the summer camp experience of their children. The pledge support for our camp scholarship program at the White Nights Gala in January will allow us to offer many scholarship opportunities, so we are excited. Additionally, we also will be providing lunch at multiple sites within Freeport throughout summer vacation and community gardens. These special programs offer multiple opportunities for people looking for help and to help. Please let us know if you are interested! To learn more about camp scholarships or summer lunches please contact Sarah Lundin, Community Services Coordinator at 865-3985 ext. 205 or slundin@fcsmaine.org



## volunteer spotlight

If you've had the happy opportunity of attending any of the 3rd Friday Free Community Lunch events at FCS, you know you can count on a delicious meal and the pleasure of lots of great friends to share it with. You also may have captured a glimpse of the two devoted chefs toiling at the restaurant-sized stove while volunteers running around, often serving "seconds" of the "comfort food" of the day. The meals are just that scrumptious!

Husband and wife team, Tam and Real, have been cooking up a storm for four years now, since signing up to volunteer as our resident culinary experts. Sharing the kitchen, working as true succinct partners, Tam and Real make meals for 60-80 guests every third Friday ten months a year, without fail. They are always regaled by applause and cheers for their efforts, Tam and Real are often forced by guests to take a bow, even though the limelight is no way near as comfortable for them as the steamy - hot kitchens.

Real and Tam are both professionals, directing their own businesses, but they always have time to volunteer and this is their fourth year doing the lunches. Here's their story:

"Cooking, or more accurately, food, has been a passion of ours for dozens of years. From growing and canning or freezing our own food in huge gardens to past lives as restaurant owners, we find great pleasure in preparing good eats.

"Volunteer Spotlight" continued on Pg. 10





## thrift shop update

The FCS Thrift Shop continues to be a special place for great shopping. We're gearing up for another busy Spring and Summer shopping season and our motto of "Fashion, Furniture and Fabulous Finds" still rings true. Every day is an adventure with new, and unexpected donations from the wonderful donors who support us. We make sure that our donations are put to good use and generate the best possible revenue.

Did you know that we work with several other non-profit agencies to assure that all donations are appreciated to their fullest potential? It's a great way for all donations to make the most impact. And we are all about getting the best pricing on unique and special items. Each sale helps generate revenue to support the FCS mission and support our programs.

Did you know that we often sell on Craigslist and have an eBay store? Check us out. We have some unique, one-of-a-kind items and collectables.

Did you know that we sell valuable donations at auction? The Thrift Shop works with a Maine auction house to help assess exceptional items' value and determine the best places to sell them. Some very special items are sold at auctions, which helps revenue. This expertise is invaluable, and we are constantly learning. The Thrift Shop constantly changes its staging and displays. We couldn't do this without continued volunteer support.

Did you know that we have 40 to 50 volunteers each week selling, sorting, hanging items and clothing, and helping to provide a unique shopping experience? We continue to be amazed and thankful for the wonderful donations. Stop by. There's always something you didn't know you needed!

## White Nights a huge success!

Our Annual White Nights on January 25th at the Hilton Garden Inn in Freeport was a huge success! A change in venue, theme, and day of the week was well received and these changes helped to re-energize our biggest annual fundraiser. The suggested changes from feedback and analysis will be laying the groundwork for next year. This year's event was a true community experience as many past and present FCS friends came to support us and be celebrate. This signature gala event provides critical operating funds for FCS, which provides direct services such as food, fuel and emergency services assistance to local residents.



We had approximately 220 people in attendance at the event. This year, there were 68 Host Committee members which was a significant increase from last year's number. We also had an increase in Business Sponsors and many attended the event. Approximately 120 donors supported the gala by

donating items such as stays, paintings and gift certificates.

This year's sponsors were L. L. Bean, Bath Savings Bank, State Farm/Catrina Milliman, Midcoast FCU, Kennebec Savings Bank, Walmart, Antonia's, Bates Mill Dermatology, Brown Goldsmiths, Curtis Thaxter, Maine Optometry, Pierce Atwood, Taggart Construction, Peter Warren and Warren Construction Group and Zachau Construction.

This year's auctioneer was John Bottero of Thomaston Auction Galleries who provided the expertise in guiding the attendees to "bid high, bid often." This year's focus was on our camp scholarship program and John also helped with the Camp Scholarship Pledge Rounds and raised \$12,000 for the camp scholarship program! We are thrilled to be able to help send more children to summer camp this year.

This event is truly reflective of FCS' philosophy of "Neighbor Helping Neighbor" and the all-around support from attendees, donors and sponsors speaks for itself. We are looking forward to next year's event with another exciting theme. See you then!



## Freeze Out fills the pantry

The 14th Annual Freeze out event was held throughout Freeport on Saturday, Feb 17th. FCS staff, board members and volunteers were outside in downtown Freeport for 8 hours, raising awareness of the poverty and hunger here in Maine, and the critical need for services for the most vulnerable residents of Freeport and Pownal and collected non-perishable food and personal care items, as well as financial gifts, during this event.

Donation boxes were also placed at a variety of businesses and organizations. Proceeds support vital programs for Freeport and Pownal residents, such as the food pantry, fuel assistance, and emergency services.

The FCS food pantry shelves are stocked through the generous donations of local grocery stores, natural & specialty food stores, farms, businesses, community organizations, civic groups, and individuals, along with various fundraisers. The food pantry serves almost 200 Freeport and Pownal households every month or approximately 400 individuals. Freeze Out helps support this need.

Volunteers were at the First Parish Church Congregational in Freeport and in locations throughout downtown Freeport including Bow Street Market. From 9am-2pm, volunteers were at Shaw's Supermarket in Freeport for our "Stuff the Bus" event supported by Shaw's Supermarket and the Freeport Rotary.

Also, new this year, Freeze Out included business and organization teams who were "Freezin' for a Reason" and for some a part of their community service and/or team building goals and a little friendly competition at the same time. They had fun, their support was appreciated, and we look forward to expanding this again next year.

This year's sponsors were: L. L. Bean, Bath Savings Bank, State Farm/Catrina Milliman, Midcoast FCU, Kennebec Savings Bank, Walmart, Freeport Woman's Club, Norway Savings Bank, Midcoast Hospital, Royal River Natural Foods and New Beginnings Consignment.

Next year is Freeze Out's 15th Anniversary. The need is always great, and we thank everyone who supported us that day.



## donor spotlight



## South Freeport Congregational Church

### How and why did you originally become involved with Freeport Community Services?

South Freeport Congregational Church has been connected with FCS since its inception in 1974. Suzie Harding and Vaughndella Curtis along with other members of the congregation were instrumental in the planning and startup of FCS. The church through monetary donations and volunteer efforts of many members has supported over the years the diverse services offered.

### What interests you most about FCS and its mission?

The church and our Mission Committee feel fortunate to be part of a community in which a successful functioning agency provides a wide range of needed social services. FCS provides the church with the security of knowing that our donations will be wisely and appropriately used. The interests of FCS and our church align very closely as we are deeply concerned with food, shelter, and social service needs in our wider community. We look forward to collaborating with the evolving FCS initiative to help elderly residents stay in their homes as they age.

### What are the church's priorities when giving?

We support programs and agencies that are in alignment with the interests of members and values of the church, and that are well respected and fiscally responsible organizations. A third factor is open communication

"Donotr Spotlight" continued on Pg. 10

*“The food pantry feeds my family and my soul. I NEVER dreamed I would be in this situation and I am soooooo grateful.”*

– A survey respondent for the FCS Food Pantry Survey conducted January, 2018

## Continued support addresses an ever growing need.

Donated food to our pantry is a vital need for our neighbors and through the various donations we are able to serve an average of 430 people monthly in our Food Pantry. Last year, we received approximately 187,579 pounds of food donated to our food pantry from local stores, the public and food drives. With an ever growing need, our Food Pantry is an important resource to our community and to those who depend on it.



Did you know that Maine has the 3rd highest rate of “very low food security” in the country? 20.4% of children in Cumberland County are food insecure. In Maine, seniors 60 and older suffer the highest rate of food insecurity in the nation, with nearly 17% experiencing the threat of hunger compared with the 15.75% national average. Despite these grave statistics, FCS is working to address this need.

To better understand what is going on in our community, in December, surveys were mailed out to 100 food pantry customers who were randomly selected from our TEFAP listing (commodities program) as they most accurately represented customers who had received food assistance within the last three months. While there was a limited number of surveys returned, their feedback does provide some interesting trends and information about the demographics of our customer base, their experiences with the pantry itself, feedback on customer services and general information on food and nutrition.

We believe we are part of the food insecurity solution in our community. We are proud of our partnerships with many providers and resources within the Greater Freeport area and the community is enriched by our combined efforts. We are very grateful for our partnerships by providing donations of fresh produce, bakery goods, canned goods,



specialty items, as well as meats and/or other foods for dietary issues. It is because of these partnerships with businesses, organizations and everyone one in the community that we can continue to support our neighbors in need.



## Our volunteers make our organization possible!

We know how important volunteer support is to the success of FCS. We’ve compiled our 2017 volunteer statistics and the numbers are just amazing to us! It’s because of the time and effort that our volunteers contribute that make our programs happen. From our Board of Directors to Thrift Shop and Food Pantry volunteers, to those who help just a few times a year for something special, when you look at the totals, every hour of support is a tremendous savings to the organization and is truly the best representation of our mission of “Neighbor Helping Neighbor.”



For 2017, the total volunteer hours was **27,638.5** and in dollar value our volunteers’ support equaled **\$597,267.99!** We couldn’t do it without them. Great work and Thank you!

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Debbie Daggett, Volunteer Coordinator. 865-3985 ext. 206 or [ddaggett@fcsmaine.org](mailto:ddaggett@fcsmaine.org)



## Our volunteers by the numbers...

Thrift Store: **10,730 hours**

Food Pantry: **6,300 hours**

BOD/ Fundraising (White Nights): **2,400 hours**

Holiday Support  
Holiday Helpline: **200 hours**  
Thanksgiving: **480 hours**

Transportation: **1,428 hours**

Special Events and Activities (Blood drives, Just Desserts, shoveling, garden and other special projects): **1,561 hours**

Youth (Read to Succeed program, summer lunches): **1,453 hours**

Community Services and Life Skills: **1,972 hours**

3rd Friday Free Lunch: **922 hours**

BackPack Program: **392 hours**

Chowder Challenge: **239 hours**

Community Day and Tent Sale: **119 hours**

Freeze Out: **118 hours**

Community Night: **24 hours**

# donor highlights

## Recognizing the need in our community.

We are fortunate to get such support for our mission in a variety of ways from folks who all truly believe in "neighbor helping neighbor."

**Please thank them as well!**



### LL Bean

Always supportive! Here are some photos from the L. L. Bean food drive that arrived in early January. Sarah Callender organized an amazing drive with her coworkers and they collected 1,521 pounds of food for our food pantry! They have done this for a couple of years now, each year the amount of food has increased and they are just such fun to work with! Thank you to our friends at L. L. Bean!



### Community of Christ

On February 10th, bassist James Lyden and saxophonist Tim O'Dell performed the jazz standards at the Concert for a Cause at Community of Christ congregation on Park St. All the proceeds for this concert supported FCS, and they raised \$305! Their support was music to our ears! Thank you!

### Buck's Naked BBQ

A huge thank you to Buck's Naked BBQ for donating \$1,010.00 to the Food Pantry! They had a wonderful New Year's Eve event at their Freeport Juke Joint with music etc to kick in the New Year with proceeds for the Food Pantry. They were delighted by the turnout and were pleased to donate this to us. Thank you to AI and Susan Brown and their staff for their efforts and support.



Susan Brown of Buck's with Laura Cyr, FCS Food Pantry Volunteer

### Atlantic Federal Credit Union

In December, Amanda Peacock, Branch Manager and Meridith Wilson, Head Teller of Atlantic Federal Credit Union in Freeport presented a check to Freeport Community Services to be used for the FCS Food Program. These funds are raised through the Ending Hunger Campaign with the Maine Credit Union League. In April, we again received another check.

Through a variety of employee driven activities they work toward ending hunger in Maine. They have also been supportive in adopting families for the Holiday Helpline and collecting food donations for the pantry. Atlantic FCU has been an active supporter of FCS for over 10 years and community service and philanthropy is part of their core mission.



L to R: Paula Paladino, Executive Director and Volunteer Kim accept a donation from Amanda Peacock, Branch Manager, Atlantic FCU in Freeport.

### Clark Insurance

Dave Nadeau, Account Executive at Clark Insurance presented a check in December for \$1,000 to Freeport Community Services' Executive Director, Paula Paladino and Sarah Lundin, Community Outreach Coordinator. Clark's Year-end contributions of more than \$40,000 was being delivered to help community groups with food, clothing, shelter, wellness and higher education. Clark Insurance is a strong supporter of FCS and we appreciate all they do for us.



Dave Nadeau of Clark Insurance, Paula Paladino and Sarah Lundin of Freeport Community Services



## Spend the day golfing for FCS!

Downeast Energy is proud to support two wonderful organizations at their 25th annual Downeast Energy Golf Classic this year on Monday June 4th at the Brunswick Golf Club.

Freeport Community Services will be one of this year's recipients of the proceeds, anticipated to be approximately \$10,000. We are thrilled to be a part of this event!

If you'd like to show your support, we'd love to have you join us in one of the following ways:

**Sign up a team.** Spend the day golfing for FCS!

**Sponsor a hole.** Sign up as a hole sponsor. Downeast Energy will proudly display a sign with their business logo at the event.

**Donate raffle items.** Each year Downeast Energy gathers close to 40 raffle items and provide several opportunities throughout the day for golfers to purchase tickets. Items of a \$50 value would be appreciated. Sporting event tickets (Red Sox, Patriots), overnight stays at local B&B's, golf passes, gift cards to local restaurants, are all great ideas.

For more information go to the [fcsmaine.org](http://fcsmaine.org) website or contact Nancy Trottier, Events & Communications Coordinator 865-3985 xt 220 or [ntrottier@fcsmaine.org](mailto:ntrottier@fcsmaine.org).



## How you can help

The gifts of money, time, food, clothing and many acts of kindness that come from individuals and businesses in Freeport and Pownal helps us meet our mission to provide services to our neighbors.

If you have something to offer — from time or money to your returnable bottles, extra food or produce from your garden — FCS would be happy to share it with those in need.

### Monetary Donations

Make a donation online via PayPal: [fcsmaine.org/how-to-help/donations](http://fcsmaine.org/how-to-help/donations)

Or mail a check:

**Freeport Community Services**  
**PO Box 119, Freeport Maine, 04032**

### Via Amazon

Are you an online shopper? Shop via Amazon Smile and they will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to FCS. Go to: [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com).

### Thrift Shop

Drop off donations at the Loading Dock at FCS 24/7 or in the building during business hours. Contact **Susan Dyche at 865-3985 x 216**. Or go to: [fcsmaine.org/what-we-do/thriftshop](http://fcsmaine.org/what-we-do/thriftshop) for a list of accepted items.

### Volunteer

The volunteer opportunities are endless here at FCS! Contact **Debbie Daggett at 865-3985 x 206**, or at [ddaggett@fcsmaine.org](mailto:ddaggett@fcsmaine.org). Visit our volunteer page and download the application at [fcsmaine.org/how-to-help/volunteer](http://fcsmaine.org/how-to-help/volunteer).

### Bottles

Returnables donated to FCS provide UP TO \$15,000 of annual income. Drop off your returnable bottles and cans at one of three conveniently located "Yellow Boxes" in Freeport.



## Honor a special woman in your life for Mother's Day

How many special women have touched your life? Your mother, grandmother, aunt, cousin, teacher, neighbor, best friend? Honor these special women through a gift to support Freeport Community Services.

Your gift will ensure that our mission of "neighbor helping neighbor" is alive and well in our community.

Giving is easy. Make a gift by check or credit or simply make your gift on-line at [www.fcsmaine.org](http://www.fcsmaine.org). Provide us with the name and address of the honoree and we will inform her of your thoughtfulness.



*"Donor Spotlight" continued from pg. 3*

between the church and the organization. Some other organizations the church has supported over the years include Mid Coast Hunger Prevention Program, Center for Grieving Children, Preble Street Resource Center, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

### What do you want your gifts to accomplish and why is that important to you?

We want our gifts to help provide the people of Freeport and Pownal with food, shelter, family support, and community fellowship at a local level because we are all neighbors.

### Does the church have any unique approaches to fundraising in support of the organizations you choose?

Yes. Each August we hold a Blueberry Festival with various activities (community meals, rummage/jewelry sale, children's activities, and more) to support the church budget which funds our donations. The annual Christmas Eve service collection is shared between two agencies. This past Christmas funds were divided between Oasis Health Care Services and the Kaplan Fuel Assistance Program. We recently initiated a successful venture, selling pies with all proceeds going directly to the Mission Committee. Both savory, meal type pies and dessert pies are sold weekly at the church. Most events are planned with the dual objectives of fellowship and raising funds for church missions.

*"Volunteer Spotlight" continued from pg 3*

**Our menus** at the old cafe read: "Interesting food and delicious conversation" and that's truly how we choose to live." Tam said.

"My parents told me to always fuel myself well, that if I ate I'd have strength to perform. Real's parents were farmers. His mother made it her life's work to prepare amazing food that could feed dozens at a time. When Real and I moved to Freeport in 2011 we knew we were settling in for the long haul. It was time for us to put down roots in a community, part of that meant giving back. Since we had read about the FCS program success we figured we should just inquire what the needed next. We knew that we wanted to fill a big need because we aren't people who can just hang around waiting for direction. We needed something we could run with. Deb Daggett and Sue Mack both smiled when we said we could cook. The rest is history!"

We so enjoy our time in the kitchen. What's really fun about Free Lunch Friday is the laughter and everyone who eats there seems genuinely grateful for the food whether it turned out tasty or not. It can get a little nerve wracking cooking for 60 people and not being sure about how much or how little seasoning something might need, so I'm always relieved when it gets quiet in the dining room because people are eating what we cooked."

## Thank you to our inkind donors for their continued support of FCS thank you!

- Azure Café
- Bell Farms
- Bow Street Market
- Farm Fresh
- Frosty's Donuts
- Good Shepherd Food Bank
- Hampton Inn
- Hannaford
- Pepperidge Farms
- Pineland Farms
- R. Belanger & Sons Farm
- Royal River Natural Foods
- Shaw's
- Simply Sized Homes
- Starbucks
- Wayside Food Program
- Wealden Farm
- When Pigs Fly Bakery
- Wolfe's Neck (Teen Ag.)



## save the date!

### Upcoming Activities

**Every month** 3rd Friday Free Lunch (unless noted)

**04/27** Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

**04/27** Fourth Friday Just Desserts

**05/16** Community Night

**05/25** Fourth Friday Just Desserts

**06/18** Summer Lunch Program begins

**07/04** 4th of July Parade

**08/17** Annual Community Day and Tent Sale

**10/06** 25th Anniversary Chowdah Challenge

**10/22** Annual Meeting

## How would you like to receive your newsletter?

We want you to stay up to date with FCS. How would you like to receive future newsletters?

Kindly select one - and please print:

Email it to me at \_\_\_\_\_  
Email address

Mail it to me at: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Street or PO Box Town State Zip

You may email the information to: Kim Hudak: [khudak@fcsmaine.org](mailto:khudak@fcsmaine.org) or call: 865-3985 x202

Or mail to: Freeport Community Services, PO Box 119, Freeport, ME 04032



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Donations Hotline Ext. 216

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 Check our Facebook page for latest news & information.

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A special thank you to these generous sponsors

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