



Lamorinda Weekly

Volume 16

Issue 19 Wednesday, November 9, 2022

Handyman discusses sink stoppers

... read on Page D4

# Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian **The musty, sweet smell ... it's fall**



Golden leaves of a red-branched Japanese Maple. Photos Cynthia Br

Photos Cynthia Brian You can almost smell the fall fragrance of this autumn orchard.

"Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away; Lengthen night and shorten day! Every leaf speaks bliss to me, Fluttering from the autumn tree..."~Emily Brontë

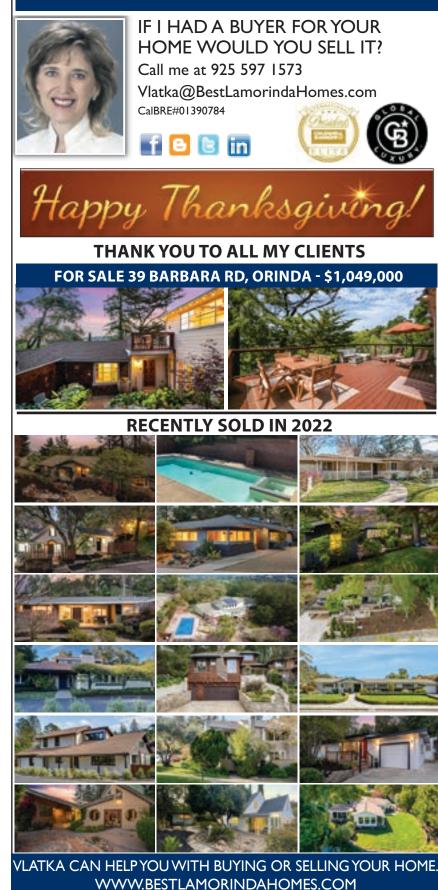
When it rained this past week, did you smell it? The scent of earth mixed with fallen leaves and decomposing plant matter signals the transition of the seasons. On the calendar, autumn began on Sept. 22, but it wasn't until November that I inhaled this intoxicating aroma that brought back childhood memories of the end of harvest, jumping in piles of leaves, and blazing bonfires.

In just a week, it seemed that so many trees changed their wardrobe from vibrant green to sunset colors of amber, gold, red, bronze and yellow. The "foliage show" is late here in California, yet it is glorious. As the leaves turn, they also drop, blanketing our landscapes with a marvelous source of nitrogen phosphorus, potassium, and nutrients that the soil craves. As much as you want to tidy your garden, refrain from raking the leaves into your green bin. Leave a layer of leaves on the ground to encourage the photosynthesis process in the natural circle of life. If leaves are too big, mow or cut them and add them to a compost pile with food scraps, lawn clippings, eggshells, coffee grounds, and other biodegradables. After a few months, you'll have a rich mulch filled with worms and beneficial microbes to add back into your garden at no cost to you. When you add organic materials to your soil, you are providing food for the organisms that improve soil aeration and drainage while reducing soil compaction. The nutrients will release over time

As we inhale the delicious flavors of fall and experience the cooler temperatures, it is also time to perform tasks in preparation for winter.

... continued on Page D10

### VLATKA BATHGATE



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# Lamorinda home sales recorded

City	Last reported	Lowest amount	Highest amount
LAFAYETTE	9	\$995,000	\$3,700,000
MORAGA	3	\$1,600,000	\$2,615,000
ORINDA	8	\$1,470,000	\$3,000,000

Home sales are compiled by Cal REsource, an Oakland real estate information company. Sale prices are computed from the county transfer tax information shown on the deeds that record at close of escrow and are published five to eight weeks after such recording. This information is obtained from public county records and is provided to us by California REsource. Neither Cal REsource nor this publication are liable for errors or omissions.

LAFAYETTE				
11 Almaden Court, \$1,879,000, 4 Bdrms, 1785 SqFt, 1964 YrBlt, 09-30-22, Previous Sale: \$711,000, 03-22-12				
939 Carol Lane, \$1,875,000, 4 Bdrms, 2569 SqFt, 1951 YrBlt, 09-19-22				
109 Castle Court, \$2,000,000, 3 Bdrms, 3662 SqFt, 1969 YrBlt, 09-28-22				
1000 Dewing Avenue #209, \$1,135,000, 2 Bdrms, 1328 SqFt,				
2017 YrBlt, 09-26-22				
16 Diablo Circle, \$2,150,000, 3 Bdrms, 1730 SqFt, 1953 YrBlt, 09-20-22,				
Previous Sale: \$1,605,000, 03-27-17				
3650 Happy Valley Road, \$3,250,000, 5 Bdrms, 2876 SqFt,				
1949 YrBlt, 09-29-22, Previous Sale: \$1,685,000, 09-05-07				
46 Knox Drive, \$1,695,000, 3 Bdrms, 1926 SqFt, 1968 YrBlt, 09-27-22,				
Previous Sale: \$1,300,000, 08-13-19				
3387 Moraga Boulevard, \$1,775,000, 4 Bdrms, 1646 SqFt,				
1963 YrBlt, 09-28-22, Previous Sale: \$108,000, 03-01-79				
3235 Mt Diablo Court #105, \$2,525,000, 2 Bdrms, 2452 SqFt,				
2019 YrBlt, 09-19-22, Previous Sale: \$2,300,000, 01-13-20				
482 Peacock Boulevard, \$1,410,000, 3 Bdrms, 1678 SqFt,				
1954 YrBlt, 09-26-22				
1631 Reliez Valley Road, \$1,758,000, 4 Bdrms, 2290 SqFt,				
1972 YrBlt, 09-23-22, Previous Sale: \$299,000, 06-01-88				
12 Springhill Lane, \$2,037,000, 4 Bdrms, 2631 SqFt, 1958 YrBlt, 09-30-22,				
Previous Sale: \$1,259,000, 09-02-04				
3109 Teigland Road, \$2,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 4824 SqFt, 1996 YrBlt, 09-29-22,				
Previous Sale: \$450,000, 05-11-98				
30 Woodbury Highlands Court #18, \$586,000, 2 Bdrms, 1200 SqFt,				
2021 YrBlt, 09-30-22				
continued on Page D10				

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510.912.5882 DRE# 013859346

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925.818.5500





925.381.7172 DRE# 01931711





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RUTH EDDY





•••



# Handyman tips to replace bathroom sink stoppers



**Pop-Up Drain** 

Photo Jim Hurley

### **By Jim Hurley**

How annoying is it when the sink stopper goes down and won't come back up? Is that worse than when it is just hanging loose, won't go up or down, in the drain of your bathroom sink? After previously advising you to call a specialist for your drainage problems, your bathroom sink stopper could be the exception.

If your sink stopper is working, my best advice to you is this: Don't pull up on that bar at the back of the faucet to close the stopper! Use your thumb instead to push the stopper down. Then push down on the bar at the back of the faucet to open it. Pulling up too vigorously is probably the most common cause of the drain stopper getting disconnected from the lever. Pulling up gently on the rod can work, but one hearty yank is all it takes to pull the thing out of place. Pushing the stopper down with your thumb will work every time.

Now if the stopper is not working, there may be a quick fix to the problem. Most older sink stoppers work with a lever bar to lift and lower the drain stopper. The lever is under the sink. You will find the lever about two inches below the basin where it is attached to the back of the drainpipe. (That piece of pipe connecting the sink to the P-Trap is called the "tailpiece"; I don't know why.) The lever bar has a Teflon ball attached to it and the nut on the tailpiece makes it pivot, like a teeter-totter, so that the stopper will go up and down when it is properly attached and adjusted.

Start with a little diagnosis. Gently lift the drain stopper: if it comes out of the pipe, the lever is not attached. Examine the stopper; there should be a ring at the bottom to attach to the lever. If the ring is there, it is time to reattach the stopper. Unscrew the nut that holds the lever to the back of the tailpiece, gently pull the lever a little way out of the tailpiece, then slip the tip of the lever back into the ring on the base of the stopper. This might take a few tries to get everything lined up, but when it's done correctly, rocking the lever up and down will make the stopper go up and down. Tighten the nut back in place: Use your fingers to screw the nut back on and gently tighten with a wrench. Then test the drain for leaks. The back end of the lever is attached by a piece of metal and a screw to the little rod at the back of the sink faucet. Sometimes that screw becomes loose and slips on the rod, so make sure it is tight.

If the ring is missing from the stopper, you will need to buy a replacement stopper. They are available at the hardware store and come in various widths and lengths, so take the old one with you to look for a match. Depending on the age of the sink, the lever may also be corroded and need replacement. Finding an exact replacement lever might be tricky unless you know the make and model of your sink faucet.

Before you go to look for replacement parts, you might consider replacing the whole drain with a "Pop-Up" drain stopper. It will replace the worn-out lever and stopper without having to find an exact match to the old pieces. I would especially recommend this if the stopper seat in the sink is worn or corroded. With a pop-up stopper you push down to close, and push again to open, kind of like clicking a ball point pen. While I have encountered some broken popup stoppers, (the works can wear out and need replacement), the good news is they are all one universal size (1-1/4 inch) – easy to find.

The best approach to installing a pop-up starts with emptying the cabinet under the sink. This gives you access to the plumbing and prevents any stray water from damaging what you store down there. If the cabinet doors are easy to remove, consider taking one or both off to give you more room to move around beneath the sink. Grab a small bucket or pot and some rags to catch drain water as you remove the P-Trap. It also helps to have adjustable, channel-lock pliers handy. Lastly, get yourself a work light or flashlight, no sense groping around in the dark.

If this sounds like more trouble than you were looking for, it's time to call your handyman. Be sure to push that working drain stopper down with your thumb and enjoy many years of maintenance-free drainage.

Jim Hurley is an independent handyman with over 25

years of experience in residential repairs. Hopefully this free advice is helpful to someone attempting Do-It-Yourself home repairs. The information presented is intended for informational purposes and for use by persons having appropriate technical skill, at their own discretion and risk.



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1351 Scenicview Dr. \$1.249.000 Fantastic 3BR/2BA home in sought after Bay-O-Vista is a remodeler's dream! Wonderful "retro chic" feel and panoramic view of the Bay, city skyline and Mt. Tam! Mary Beth MacLennan 925.324.6246 Mary Beth MacLennan 1351scenicviewDr.com Lic#01480008 4785TerraGranadaDr2a.com

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Happy Thanksgivin



**504 MCBRIDE DRIVE, LAFAYETTE** 4BR/2BA | 2790 sq.ft. | 2.69 acre lot Listed at \$1,875,000 Co-listed with Susan Schlicher

Wishing you and your loved ones a healthy, peaceful, joyful and bountiful Thanksgiving! My sincere gratitude for the exceptional people I've had the privilege of working with this year and for the beautiul properties I helped them buy and sell.

### PENDING

242 Paseo Bernal, Moraga

### SOLD

2001 Skycrest Drive #2, Rossmoor 1115 Pearl Street, Alameda 11 Redwood Circle, Lafayette 8 Dale Court, Lafayette 1304 Walden Road #242, Walnut Creek 137 Shadewell Drive, Danville 296 Birchwood Drive, Moraga 2655 Cherry Lane, Walnut Creek 1418 Los Vecinos, Walnut Creek 3335 Freeman Road, Lafayette 3172 Rohrer Drive, Lafayette 1 Twig Lane, Orinda



Call me if you have any questions or would like to chat about the real estate market. I'm here to help!

Soraya Golesorkhi 925.808.8390 sg@soraya4homes.com soraya4homes.com DRE #01771736





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LAFAYETTE 1268 Redwood Lane

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LAFAYETTE 6 Tofflemire Drive

5BD/4BA/2HfBA | 8,080 sq. ft. | 1.13 Acres \$5,500,000 | **6TofflemireDrive.com** 



ALAMO 335 Lakeview Place

5BD/4.5BA | 6,485 sq. ft. | 1.16 Acres \$8,499,000 **335Lakeview.com** 



orinda 74 Yarrow Valley Lane

5BD/4.5BA | 5,060 sq. ft. | .55 Acres \$3,999,999 | **74YarrowValley.com** 



ORINDA 407 Miner Road

3BD/3.5BA | 4,213 sq. ft. | 1.07 Acres \$3,675,000 | **407MinerRd.com** 



ORINDA 270 Lomas Cantadas

27.59 Acre Lot Listing \$2,999,999 | **270LomasCantadasOrinda.com** 



MORAGA 1125 Bollinger Canyon Road

4BD/4BA | 5,420 sq. ft. | 21.4 Acres \$2,999,000 | **1125BollingerCanyon.com** 

Why Sell With Ann? Ann has become the largest sales producer in the Golden Gate Sotheby's Lafayette office. In 2021 Ann represented the seller of a Happy Valley property in Lafayette, which produced one of the highest prices of any Lafayette sale ever reported on the Multiple Listing Service. In 2022 she has already surpassed \$75 million in sales. With Ann, you get the very best. Nothing Compares.



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# TERRI BATES WALKER





 $\aleph$ 

New listing 29 Sullivan Drive, Moraga \$2,080,000 29sullivan.com

Terri Bates Walker, Broker, J.D. 510-282-4420 terri@terribateswalker.com terribateswalker.com CalRE#01330081 COLDWELL BANKER REALTY

# Lamorinda home sales recorded

... continued from Page D2

#### MORAGA

1478 Camino Peral #B, \$658,000, 2 Bdrms, 1043 SqFt, 1970 YrBlt, 09-28-22, Previous Sale: \$425,000, 04-27-05 4008 Campolindo Drive, \$1,825,000, 3 Bdrms, 2290 SqFt, 1974 YrBlt, 09-23-22, Previous Sale: \$1,150,000, 03-06-06 7 Corte Pinto, \$1,600,000, 4 Bdrms, 2339 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 09-29-22, Previous Sale: \$975,000, 08-13-04 310 Glen Alpine Street, \$2,589,000, 5 Bdrms, 3098 SqFt, 1976 YrBlt, 09-23-22, Previous Sale: \$1,560,000, 08-09-13 8 Thune Avenue, \$1,350,000, 4 Bdrms, 1992 SqFt, 1960 YrBlt, 09-30-22

#### **ORINDA**

427 Dalewood Drive, \$2,625,000, 4 Bdrms, 2957 SqFt, 1971 YrBlt, 09-29-22 1 El Caminito, \$2,875,000, 4 Bdrms, 4114 SqFt, 1990 YrBlt, 09-19-22, Previous Sale: \$190,000, 07-01-87 11 Hall Drive, \$2,850,000, 5 Bdrms, 4177 SqFt, 1955 YrBlt, 09-27-22 55 Longridge Road, \$1,595,000, 3 Bdrms, 2580 SqFt, 1979 YrBlt, 09-21-22, Previous Sale: \$819,000, 07-09-03 28 Moraga Viax, \$2,000,000, 4 Bdrms, 2655 SqFt, 1965 YrBlt, 09-27-22, Previous Sale: \$609,500, 12-11-14 170 Overhill Road, \$2,888,000, 5 Bdrms, 3806 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 09-22-22, Previous Sale: \$673,500, 09-01-88 36 Valley View Drive, \$1,800,000, 4 Bdrms, 2829 SqFt, 1949 YrBlt, 09-22-22 22 Valley View Drive, \$1,650,000, 3 Bdrms, 1978 SqFt, 1950 YrBlt, 09-23-22, Previous Sale: \$345,000, 06-01-90



Tucked in the hills of Orinda amongst mature oaks, sits this architecturally significant Mid-Century retreat! The renowned architect, Richard Danskin, masterfully created this custom home to focus on the contemporary California style of the 60's incorporating glass, redwood, and soaring ceilings. Sophistication combines perfectly with casual elegance and a functional floor plan to create this modern home where walls of windows bring views of the lush exterior, virtually blurring the lines between indoors and outdoors. Contact me for more details and visit 589tahos.com

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# Is it a Good Time to Buy?

I believe the answer is unequivocally, YES. Most will say "Well you're a Realtor and we expect you to say that". However, I base my response on MLS data from central Contra Costa that I capture and analyze monthly.

Available, detached inventory in central Contra Costa at the end of Jan. was 195 and grew steadily to 739 by early Aug. Since then, it has been shrinking, currently at 520. Sales have decreased from 543 in May to 315 in Oct. Oct 2021 sales were 503.

With the number of sales shrinking, you would expect inventory to increase. This has not been the case. What has risen are days on market before a home goes Pending. Earlier in the year it was 8 to 9 days. Now it's just under 30 days on average.

Sellers are nervous, competitive bids are gone, and price reductions are the norm. Less buyers are looking because of mortgage rates. Some are waiting rates to drop next year. However, those buyers are likely to pay a huge price for waiting.

Many lenders and Fanny Mae expect rates to drop to the 4.5 - 4.7% level by late 2023. However, the trend of low inventory is likely to continue into next year. When interest rates start dropping and inventory is low, the law of supply and demand will kick in again, causing competitive bids and increased prices.

A solution is to buy now during the cooler market using yesterday's rates. This can be done with a 2/1 Buydown loan.

A 2/1 Buydown is for owner occupants. It allows them to 2 years of below-market rates (2pts. Year 1 and 1pt year 2), just enough time for rates to come down. It does require refinancing in a year or 2. But remember, prices are likely to go up as they have historically.

See my blogs at www.YourContraCostaRealtor.com



# Cary Amo,

REALTOR DRE #01104264 C: 925.818.0880 971 Dewing Ave. Lafayette cary@caryamo.com

www.YourContraCostaRealtor.com



# Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian **The musty, sweet smell ... it's fall**



Keep deadheading your roses to have beautiful bouquets for the holidays. Photo Cynthia Brian

... continued from Page D1

### **AUTUMN CHORES**

**CLEAN** patio furniture before storing or covering it for the season. It is especially critical to remove bird droppings left on your umbrellas, hammocks, or other furniture.

**TURN OFF** sprinkler systems. **CHECK** for any irrigation leaks.

**LEAVE** leaves where they fall, spread them around your garden, or add them to a compost

pile.

**FERTILIZE** grass, especially when it is going to rain.

**CONTACT EBMUD** if you are considering investing in long-term drought resilience by modernizing your garden with water-wise plants. EBMUD has increased rebates for lawn conversions up to \$2.50 a square foot. For more information visit www.ebmud.com/water/conservation-and-rebates/rebates

**REMOVE** debris, sticks, and weeds from garden beds.

**PLANT** cover crops to fix nitrogen. Fava beans, mustard, and clovers are excellent choices. **PICK** pumpkins, apples, guavas, squash, and any fruits or vegetables left hanging before frost and rain.

**DIVIDE** overgrown clumps of perennials such as daylilies, agapanthus, iris, or naked ladies. Move to other locations or share with fellow gardeners.



## Just Sold - \$5,600,000

### **10 DAYS ON THE MARKET**

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> COLDWELL BANKER REALTY

# Digging Deep with Goddess Gardener, Cynthia Brian **The musty, sweet smell ... it's fall**



Primroses add color to the garden throughout fall and winter.

Pick pumpkins now.

... continued from Page D12 a bountiful nitrogen. Si

**COVER** any exposed soil with straw, grass clippings, aged wood chips, pine needles, or even shredded newspaper to reduce weed growth, moderate soil temperatures, retain moisture, and reduce erosion over winter.

**BUY** six packs of perennials including columbine, carnations, penstemon, and coral bells.

**BRIGHTEN** your fall garden with pops of color from pansies, cyclamen, violas, Mums, stock, Iceland poppies, and primroses.

**FIND** favorite fall color trees to add to your landscape where selections are vast at your local nursery.

**SCATTER** California wildflower seeds including poppies and lupines and sow seeds of sweet Alyssum, bachelor buttons, forget-me-nots, and milkweed.

**DEADHEAD** roses for continued blooms during the holidays. **PRUNE** dead branches from trees and shrubs.

**BEWARE** hungry coyotes have been on a rampage killing poultry, cats, and small dogs. Keep your animals and small children safe. **ENJOY** the many colors of lantana blooming throughout fall in purple, orange, red, white, and yellow.

**GET READY** to plant bulbs towards the end of the month for a spring show.

### IN THE VEGETABLE GARDEN

During a cold winter, there is nothing better than knowing that you have organic, tasty, greens and vegetables growing right outside your door. Fall is the best time to get these nutritious edibles going for a bountiful harvest in the new year. Most of these plants prefer extra nitrogen. Side-dress them with a balanced fertilizer as they grow. Plant seeds or seedlings of:

Varieties of lettuce	Swiss Chard Chicory	Cabbage Radish	Cauliflower Kohlrabi
Asian greens	Kale	Broccoli	Peas
Spinach	Cress	Broccoli rabe	Turnips
Ārugula	Beets	Carrots	-

Make sure to plant shallots and garlic now to harvest next summer.

Although I don't like the darkness that descends so much earlier when I still have so many chores to complete, I am reveling in the cooler days that allow for laboring longer with less strain. Digging in the dirt in fall bequeaths the most luscious autumn aromas ... musty, musky, intoxicatingly earthy. I wish I could bottle it!

Thank you to so many readers who sent me notes of healing. You touched my heart and my spirit, and I am very appreciative. I am following my own advice. Each day anew ... and a wee bit slower!

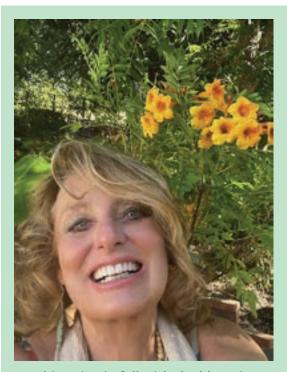
Go outside and breathe in the fragrance of fall and know that, as gardeners, we will be resting soon, along with Mother Nature.

Happy Gardening. Happy Growing!

### **NOT TO BE MISSED**

Saturday, Nov. 12 from 3 to 5 p.m., I'll be in-person reading, telling stories, and signing books from my new children's book, "No Barnyard Bullies," at Point Richmond Art Gallery, 145 West Richmond Ave., Point Richmond. Families with children are welcome. If you have purchased an NFT from www.StarStyleCommunity.com, you'll be given a gift.

Monday, Nov. 21 at 2 p.m., I'll be hosting a "Thanksgiving is Every Day" celebration via Zoom for members of the StarStyle® Community. Buy a StarStyle® NFT today that benefits Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3 charity and participate in numerous exclusive experiences designed for members only. www.StarStyleCommunity.com



Cynthia Brian in fall with the blooming Tecoma Chicklet Orange stock plant.

Raised in the vineyards of Napa County, Cynthia Brian is a New York Times best-selling author, actor, radio personality, speaker, media and writing coach as well as the Founder and Executive Director of Be the Star You Are!® 501 c3. Tune into Cynthia's StarStyle® Radio Broadcast at www.StarStyleRadio.com. Her newest children's picture book, "No Barnyard Bullies," from the series, Stella Bella's Barnyard Adventures is available now at www.cvnthiabrian.com/online-store For an invitation to hang out with Cynthia for fun virtual events, activities, conversations, and exclusive experiences, buy StarStyle® NFTs at https://StarStyleCommunity.com Hire Cynthia for writing projects, garden consults, and inspirational lectures. Cynthia@GoddessGardener.com https://www.GoddessGardener.com



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Lot

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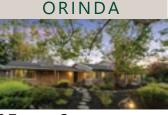
rated schools, downtown, regional

minutes from Hwy 24/BART, top

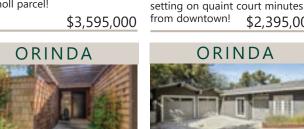
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