

# GREEN THUMB PRINTS

Gardening is our Passion ..... Education is our Purpose

April 2020



## Upcoming Events:

All programs, presentations and work for the Master Gardener organization have been cancelled at least through May 15th.

This excludes any planning work or other work highlighted by Karl in his March 22 email.

Karl will let us know when activities may resume.

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## *Coordinator's Corner*

Much as happened since we held our first seminar on March 7. But first, I would like to thank the Seminar Project Team for putting on a great seminar. It was very organized and everything seemed to go well during the day. Thanks for all the planning and effort that went into this event. With 90+ attending, some from quite a distance from Hancock County, it showed the topic was of interest. This could possibly have been the last engagement that went on before the speaking engagements within the state were suspended.

Everyone should have received an email from me regarding each of our projects. At that time, we were cancelling all activities through April 30. This has recently been extended to May 15. **Therefore, no planned Master Gardener events or activities should be conducted until May 15.**

Planning for future events may however take place. Our Ask-A-Gardener team should be in place to answer questions. Anything called into the office will be forwarded to this team to address. Time will tell whether we get more or fewer questions this year with the social distancing requirement in place.

The state has started to conduct webinars on various topics during our shutdown. You should have received emails from me about the topics and time of the meetings. If you are not able to watch during the schedule time, they will be posted on VMS for you to watch later. More details on this will be forthcoming. I encourage you to watch these as in my opinion the first one on the Spotted Lanternfly was very well done.

If you have any needs or questions, please feel free to call or email me and I will see if there is anyway to assist you. Please be safe and happy gardening in a social distancing way.

*Karl Farwig*

# ***Rambling Rose***

## ***April 2020***

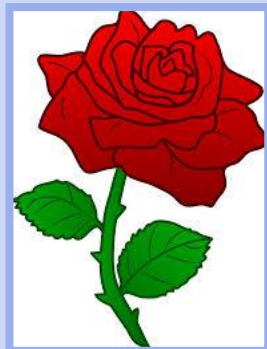
**Hello April and welcome to the new normal. As I look outside my window and see the greening of the world I am reminded that Spring is a time of nature and personal renewal.**

**As an organization, MGVS is following the OSU policies. Currently all activities are suspended through May 15. Thank you to all the Committees and project leaders who continue to plan for future events.**

**I have always taken life one day at a time and this outlook has proven even more valuable during these days. I am thankful for my love of gardening. Every day I look forward to just walking around my yard and seeing the growth surrounding me. I take every opportunity with the weather to dig, prune, clean up, and enjoy the smell of spring. Gardening is a solitary activity that helps us create beauty for all to see. We may not be able to visit one another but we can drive by and enjoy the view!**

**I thank everyone for the support and help everyday of the year. Please be safe, follow guidelines, and be healthy. I hope to see you by June but until then, find the joy in every day.**

***Rose***



## **Education Committee Updates**

**Submitted by Peggy Biolchini**

### ***Brown Bag***

The Brown Bag schedule has been changed due to the Covid-19 virus threat. When the Master Gardener Monthly Meeting resumes again we have two speakers ready and willing to present some very interesting material. Linda Finsel will do a presentation on roses and Jeri Wenger will do her presentation on bees. The exact month that the Brown Bag presentation will occur has yet to be determined. If you have something to share relating to gardening, please consider presenting it at one of our upcoming Brown Bag opportunities. The Brown Bag portion of our monthly meetings is a safe place to share your knowledge and expertise in any area of gardening. It does not need to be fancy with Power Point slides or handouts. It is also a great way for everyone to get to know you. Please contact Marlene Brunswick, Brown Bag Chairperson at 419-310-0882 or email her at rpbmdb@aol.com .

### ***Seminars***

The Spring Seminar was such a success that the Seminar team has been asked to do another one this fall. The Fall Seminar will be shorter in length, about 1 ½ hours, and it will be held during the evening. One of the objectives of the seminar is to promote the upcoming 2021 Master Gardener Class. Plans are being made now for this exciting event!

### ***Field Trips***

Mark your calendars for Saturday, June 13th as we will have a trip to Joe and Brenda Stearns of Fostoria to tour their uniquely landscaped gardens. Their multi-acre garden is divided into interesting sections interspersed with a collection of original art and sculptures. These areas include a peony garden, rose garden, Greek garden, white garden and a Japanese garden. The tour begins at 10:00 am and concludes with lunch on their spacious patio for a small donation. If they have any proceeds, they will donate them to the Master Gardener Community Garden project. Please sign up on the VMS system.

Directions: Take Route 199 north out of Fostoria, past Reineke Ford, go approximately 3.5 miles to Brandeberry Road (large oil storage tanks on the right side). You will then turn left (west) on Brandeberry Rd. and go approximately 2 miles, coming to a dead end at Baird road. Joe and Brenda live directly ahead, jogging to the right for the driveway. Address: 3521 Baird Road, Fostoria, OH 44830. The Field Trip committee has other field trips instore for everyone and more information will be coming

**Please see the March Green Thumbs Print  
for more information on future field trips.**



# Master Gardener Spotlight

## Judi Clymer

**1 Master Gardener Class:** Class of 2016

**2 Gardening Interests or Areas of Expertise:**

- \*Vegetable Gardening (Canning and Freezing)
- \*Fruit Trees
- \*Strawberries and Raspberries
- \*Landscaping (Bulbs, Annuals and Perennials)

**3 Hancock County Master Gardening Activities:**

- \*Education
- \*Let's Go Gardening
- \*Wreath Classes

**4 Community Activities:**

- \*Member of St. John Mennonite Church, Pandora
- \*Children's Leader for Bible Study Fellowship
- \*Teaches Awana-3-year olds
- \*Child Evangelism –On the board and helps with 5 Day Clubs
- \*Schedules walkers for Bluffton Weekday Christian Education
- \*Babysits for great granddaughters

**5 Other Interests or Interesting Information:**

Judi loves spending time with her family; traveling with her husband, Bud; hosting family dinners; sister days; visiting her brothers and cycling. She has 4 children-6 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

Judi graduated from Ayersville High School and then went on to receive her BA from Ohio Northern University in 1978 and her MA from BGSU in 1988. She spent 35 years teaching grades 1,2, and 3 at Cory-Rawson.

Her claim to fame is singing at Bob Hope's son's wedding. She is actually named after Bob Hope's daughter-in-law, Judith Elaine Richards Hope. While at the wedding Judi saw Lucile Ball and Danny Thomas.

## **Community Garden 2020**

Submitted by Brint Simmons

Community Gardens of Hancock County is a joint project of The Community Foundation and United Way. The foundation provides the land and United Way provides funding. The purpose of the community garden is to provide the opportunity for people to discover the joy of gardening, develop their gardening skills, and to grow their own fresh produce and flowers. The community garden is located on North Blanchard Street between The Family Center and Glenwood Village Apartments.

The garden consists of plots ranging from 10' x 20' to 40' x 40'. Several MGVs have personal gardens at the community garden. Hancock County Master Gardener Volunteers maintain a 70' x 50' plot on which we grow a wide variety of vegetables to be donated to agencies that serve people in need. This year we plan to grow cabbage, bell peppers, tomatoes, summer and winter squash, potatoes, onions, cucumbers, pumpkins, radishes, and some herbs.

Our community garden project is ambitious, labor intensive, but very rewarding. Your participation will help to make the project successful. If you desire to help, email me at [brintsimmons@sbcglobal.net](mailto:brintsimmons@sbcglobal.net) with your contact information. I will contact you when we are ready to plant and keep you posted with volunteer opportunities throughout the season.

### ***Websites Recommended By Hancock Co. Master Gardeners***

While we are social distancing you might have a little more time than normal to spend on the internet. If you have any websites you find especially interesting or helpful please send them to Lisa McClain for publication in the newsletter. As keeping within the OSU guidelines please make sure they are .edu, .gov or .org websites.

Plants Promoting/Protecting Good Bugs for Great Lakes Region.  
<https://xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/pollinator-friendly-plant-lists>

Ohio's List of Best Natives Compiled with Ohio Plant Growers and ODNR.  
<http://ohiodnr.gov/gonative>

**The Courier Article-March 21, 2020**

***Hellebores Herald Spring's Glorious Arrival***

**by Marilyn Beltz**

<http://findlaycourier.oh.newsmemory.com/?publink=10304dd99>



# SIMPLE & SUSTAINABLE SEMINAR SUMMARY

Submitted by Betsy DeFrancesco

Our timing was perfect! Our “Simple & Sustainable Landscapes, Go Native in Your Yard” seminar was completed before the Covid-19 restrictions were put into place. We had 90 attendees and only three no-shows.

The set-up committee had everything in place on Friday evening. Our incredible continental breakfast was received very well by our guests and choosing to order our box lunches from Main Street Deli was genius. They were able to accommodate all the special dietary needs that our guests requested. We received many thank yous from people who usually must bring their own food to events. We were also able to sell quite a few of Pam Bennett’s book “Garden-pedia”.



Our speakers were well received and gave us all so much to think about. Each speaker was well prepared and eager to share their knowledge. Door prizes were amazing and the winners were very grateful. Eventbrite.com was once again very easy to work with. All participants were asked to fill out an evaluation form before they headed for home. The comments were extremely positive (with a few negatives thrown in – did you know our chairs are uncomfortable?). Our first seminar was so successful that we will be expected to do many more in the future. Everyone pulled together and worked so well collectively.

**WAY TO GO!!!**



## RECIPE FOR GOING NATIVE

- Get rid of Invasive Plants
- Stop using Pesticides
- Slowly start replacing
  - Start Small but Start – Plant Some Native Plants
- Engage Neighbors and Promote

**Observe and Enjoy**

# Using Hot Beds and Cold Frames

**Submitted by Linda Casey**

A cold-frame is a protected plant bed that doesn't have artificial heat added. The temperature difference between the inside and outside of the frame is generally not more than 5 to 10 degrees. A mat or blanket may be placed over the frame on cold nights to conserve heat, but this increases temperature by only a few degrees. There are times, however, when a few degrees can be important.

A cold-frame is used to provide shelter for tender perennials, to "harden off" seedling plants, or to start cold-tolerant plants such as pansies, cabbage or lettuce earlier than they can be started in open soil. It also can be used to overwinter summer-rooted cuttings of woody plants.

A hotbed basically is a heated cold-frame. It is similar to a miniature greenhouse, providing the same benefits with limited space at minimal expense. It is a means for extending the growing season. It is most often used to give an early start to warm-season vegetables such as tomato, pepper or melon. It is also used to root cuttings of some woody plants.

## **Location**

To receive the maximum amount of sunlight, hotbeds and cold-frames should have a southern exposure. Using a north or northwest windbreak, such as a building, bales of hay or straw, tight board fence or evergreen hedge, can reduce the cost of heating. Windbreaks should not shade the bed. Provide good, natural drainage so there will not be excess moisture beneath the bed. If the hotbed is below ground level, drainage is essential to keep water from entering or accumulating during heavy rains. If natural drainage isn't adequate, use drainage tile or a thick layer of coarse gravel. If this is not practical, beds also may be built above ground level for proper drainage. However, there will be greater heat loss.

## **Constructing the bed**

Basically, the hotbed or cold-frame is a rectangular box with the back higher than the front, covered with a transparent roof. The size and complexity of the structure depend on needs or funds available. The sash available will determine the dimensions for the bed. Glass sash is the conventional frame covering and generally the best. Used window sash is satisfactory and less expensive, but the frame dimensions may have to be adjusted. Standard glass sash for cold-frames and hotbeds is 3 feet by 6 feet. When this is used, the bed should be about 5 feet 8 inches (front to back) by 3 feet or a multiple of 3 (6, 9, 12, 15 or more feet). Whatever the size, the slope from back to front should be one inch per foot. If glass sash is not available or considered too expensive, you can use clear polyethylene (4 or 6 mil) stretched on wooden frames. Polyethylene is lightweight and allows construction of many sizes of simple frames. These frames are lightweight and must be hinged or hooked down to prevent lifting during strong winds. Polyethylene films must be replaced yearly. Plastics lose heat rapidly; a double layer with air space between improves heat retention. Fiberglass may also be used as a covering. Use clear rather than colored sheets for better light transmittance.

## **Materials**

The sides of the structure may be wood, brick, masonry block, concrete or metal. Masonry block, concrete or brick make excellent permanent structures but are more costly than wood. Metal must be well insulated or heat loss is high.

The average home garden hotbed or cold-frame is constructed of wood. It is easy to work with and more temporary, but also more flexible if the bed needs to be enlarged or removed as needs and interests change. For longest durability, lumber should be treated with a preservative that is not toxic to plants. Lumber that has been CCA pressure treated is suitable for this use. Don't use wood treated with creosote or pentachlorophenol; accumulation of fumes from these materials in a closed frame can cause plant damage. Redwood and cedar are long-lasting woods.

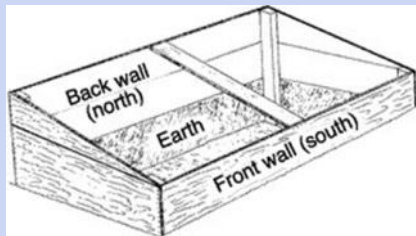
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## Using Hot Beds and Cold Frames (Continued)

If untreated wood is used, the frame can be painted with a white latex paint or white greenhouse paint for added light reflectiveness and protection.

One-inch thick lumber may be used for the frame, but 2-inch has greater durability and insulating qualities. The back wall (generally the north wall) should be at least 18 inches tall, measuring from the top of the heat source. The front wall (generally the south wall) should be about 12 inches tall for a 6-foot frame. Weather stripping at joints helps retain heat and makes the frame more efficient. Use 2 x 4 lumber for corner posts (Figure 1).



**Figure 1**  
General structure of a newly built frame

### Preparing the bed area

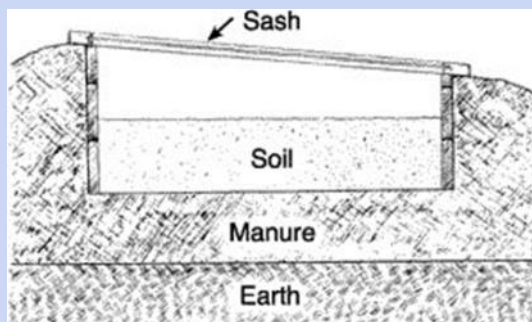
The area for the bed must be leveled. Although temporary frames may be set on the soil surface, excavation is required for more permanent structures. Most home hotbeds are heated with electric coils, but where fresh manure is available, it may be used. A deeper excavation is generally required for establishing a manure-heated bed. For electric heating, and where some drainage material is required, excavate to a depth of about 14 inches. Corner posts should extend to the base of the excavated area, but side walls need only be extended a few inches below the level of the heat cables. After the bed area has been excavated, place in it a layer of coarse gravel about 6 inches deep. Cover the gravel layer with screening or burlap to prevent sand and soil from sifting down into it. On this, place a 2-inch layer of sand. Sand makes leveling easy and provides a base for the heat coils. Remember that the 12-inch front and 18-inch back are measured from the level of the heating cables. At this point the bed is ready for laying the heating cable.

### Heating the hotbed

Methods for heating the beds include manure, electric cables, light bulbs, hot water and steam. Manure-heated beds are of interest as a means of conserving energy. Temperature control in manure-heated beds is more difficult than in electric, and therefore, we can normally expect to grow better plants in electrically heated beds. The manure-heated bed is suitable for only short periods in either spring or fall. The electrically heated bed can be used for any time period or even throughout the entire winter.

### Manure

In areas where fresh manure is available, it is a cheap and convenient heat source. Temporary hotbeds have been made by placing the board frames on top of a flat pile of manure 8 or 9 feet wide and 18 to 24 inches deep. Additional manure is banked around the sides of the frame for insulation and heat retention (Figure 2).

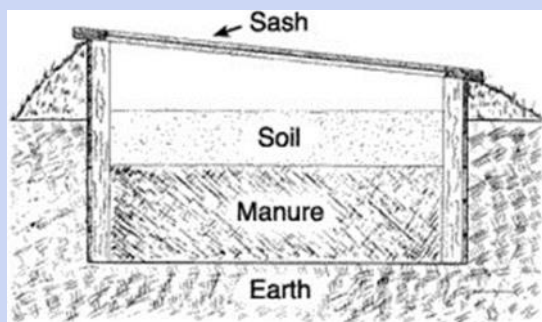


**Figure 2**  
Structure of hotbed built on a pile of manure.

(Continued)

## Using Hot Beds and Cold Frames (Continued)

Since this method requires large quantities of manure, it is not generally practical. Heat can be used from smaller amounts of manure packed in a pit beneath the frame. The manure-heated hotbed provides a means for starting plants several weeks earlier in the spring than they could be started outdoors. It is built exactly like any other frame except that the pit beneath is made 18 to 30 inches deep to hold the manure. If the manure layer becomes soaked with water, fermentation stops and no heat is produced. Fresh horse manure containing about one-third straw is excellent, but other manures may be used. To prepare for the manure-heated bed, collect the manure into a pile about 10 days before the bed is to be started. Compact and allow to remain until heat starts. Then re-pile, compact and allow it to remain undisturbed until heat is emitted for a second time. At that time, the manure will be ready to pack into the pit beneath the frame. Place the 6-inch layer of coarse gravel, if there are drainage problems, or run tile out of the pit to release any water as it enters. Tamp down the manure so the total depth of manure is 12 to 18 inches. Be sure to pack edges and corners as well. Next, cover the manure with a layer of good soil 4-to-6 inches deep (Figure 3). Allow to remain for several days. The soil temperature may reach well beyond 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Wait until soil temperature drops to about 85 degrees Fahrenheit before planting seeds or moving in plants. Use a soil thermometer. If temperatures start to rise, always open sash promptly.



**Figure 3**

Structure of hotbed built on a pile of manure

Since most gardeners do not have adequate amounts of fresh manure available, electric heating cables are the most convenient and dependable means for heating the hotbed. Lay the cable on loose, level soil or sand with the bed prepared as previously described. After the cable is positioned, cover with sand or fine soil. Over this, place half-inch-mesh hardware cloth. The hardware cloth protects the cable from damage when soil above it is being worked for planting. Over this, add the layer of soil for planting. A thermostat is necessary to maintain uniform temperatures. Light bulbs are less expensive but also less satisfactory as a heat source. However, they can provide a quick and easy means of adding supplementary heat on frosty nights of early spring. About four 25-watt bulbs should be adequate for a 3 x 6 foot frame if spaced around the sides. Use waterproof wiring and sockets. If more heat becomes necessary, these bulbs can easily be changed for larger wattage bulbs.

### **Operating the hotbed or cold-frame**

Regardless of the method of heating or type of construction used, the hotbed or cold-frame must have proper temperature control, ventilation and watering. A soil temperature in the hotbed between 70 and 75 degrees Fahrenheit is ideal for planting most seeds. In the manure-heated bed, seeds may be sown while the soil is slightly warmer, but once seedlings appear, good ventilation is necessary to keep the seedlings from becoming soft and weak if temperatures are still high.

Most seeds can be germinated in a soil at about 70 degrees Fahrenheit. The warm-season crops germinate a little better if the soil is about 75 degrees Fahrenheit, while the cool-season crops could be kept at 65 degrees Fahrenheit. Where this differential is not possible, the 70-degree temperature is a good compromise.

(Continued)

## Using Hot Beds and Cold Frames (Continued)

The more critical temperature period begins after seeds have germinated. Now air temperature becomes more important. Cool-season plants prefer an air temperature of 65 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit in the day, with 55 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit in the night. These plants will not be hurt by slightly lower temperatures. Warm-temperature plants should be kept at air temperatures between 65 and 75 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and not be exposed to lower than 60 degrees Fahrenheit at night.

In the cold-frame, little temperature control is possible. Covering the glass with pads or straw on exceptionally cold nights with careful daytime ventilation are the main methods for heat conservation and control. Remove pads or straw when weather clears and temperatures rise. Clean glass when straw is removed to provide maximum light.

### Ventilation

When ventilating the hotbed or cold-frame, raise the sash on the side opposite that from which the wind is blowing. This prevents wind burn on young, tender plants or lifting of the sash by strong winds. On warm sunny, days the sash may be opened wide or totally removed. A thermometer is the best guide to determine what width of opening will allow proper air movement for good temperature control.

### Watering

Proper watering promotes good growth and prevents disease buildup. Frames should not be widely opened for watering at any time when the temperature outside is below freezing. Watering should be done early enough in the day so that foliage dries before nightfall or before the frames are tightly closed.

In general, little watering is necessary while plants are small and temperatures are cool early in the season. As the season progresses, plants become larger and temperatures higher, so frames must be opened longer and wider. This means that frequency of watering must also be increased.

Always allow the soil surface to dry between watering, but do not allow wilting. Occasionally, after several cloudy days are followed by bright, sunny days and higher temperatures, these tender plants will wilt. This is not an indication that the plants need water unless the soil is obviously dry. If the condition is severe, misting over the foliage or providing temporary light shade may be beneficial.

### Pests

Your hotbed or cold-frame contains some of the most lush, soft plant growth available to insects in early spring. They are attracted to it. Therefore, keep a close watch for pests and apply appropriate controls before plants are seriously injured.

### Hardening plants

To harden the plants, gradually expose them to the sun and wind first by keeping the sash open wider and longer each day, as well as at night if nights are not too cool. Gradually the length of time and amount the sash is opened are extended until it is removed. However, be ready to return the sash in case of a sudden late spring freeze.

## Horticulture Lunch and Learn & Horticulture Happy Hour Webinars

Want a great way to get some continuing education hours?

Register for the Horticulture Lunch & Learn webinars held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:00-1:00 and the Horticulture Happy Hour webinars held on Wednesday from 4:00-5:00 on the state MGV website.

The ones presented so far have been excellent!!!

**<https://mastergardener.osu.edu/home>**



## IT'S Time To.....

### **HOME (Indoor plants and activities)**

- Begin fertilizing houseplants as new growth appears. Remove spent leaves and flowers to improve appearance and encourage more blooms.
- Start garden seeds indoors or in cold-frames/hotbeds for transplanting later in spring.
- Check stored bulbs and produce for decay; discard damaged items.
- Prune, repot, and clean houseplants as needed.

### **YARD (Lawns, woody ornamentals, and fruits)**

- Prune trees and shrubs (except those that bloom early in spring) while plants are still dormant. If you are concerned about winter injury, delay pruning until after dieback; you can assess desiccation injury as plants come out of dormancy.
- Plant new trees and shrubs as soon as the soil dries enough to be worked. Plant bare-root plants before they leaf out. Soils may be exceptionally wet as winter snows thaw.
- Fertilize woody plants if needed before new growth begins but after soil temperatures reach 40°F.
- Remove winter coverings from roses as soon as new growth begins. Prune out dead canes and fertilize as needed. Delay pruning into live canes until after you can assess winter injury.
- Apply superior oil spray to control scale insects and mites when the tips of leaves start to protrude from buds.

### **GARDEN (Flowers, vegetables, and small fruits)**

- Plant cool-season vegetables and flowers as soon as the ground has dried enough to work. Do not work the soil while it is wet; wait until it crumbles in your hand. If the soil forms a solid ball when you squeeze it, it's still too wet.
- Gradually harden-off transplants by setting them outdoors during the daytime for about a week before planting.
- Follow last fall's soil test recommendations for fertilizer and pH adjustment. It's not too late to test soil if you missed last year.
- Start the seeds of warm-season vegetables and flowers indoors. Wait until the end of March or early April. Transplant seedlings to the garden after the danger of frost has passed.
- Remove old foliage from ornamental grasses and perennial flowers.
- Watch for blooms of early spring bulbs, such as daffodils, crocus, dwarf iris, and snowdrops.
- Remove old asparagus and rhubarb tops, and side-dress the plants with nitrogen or manure. Plant or transplant asparagus, rhubarb, and small-fruit plants.
- Remove winter mulch from strawberry beds as soon as new growth begins but keep the mulch nearby to protect against frost and freezes.
- Remove weak, diseased, or damaged canes from raspberry plants before new growth begins. Remove old fruiting canes if you did not remove them last year, and shorten remaining canes if necessary.
- Prune grapevines after you can assess winter injury.



## THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
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### WHO ELSE LOVES THAT EARTHY SMELL WHEN RAIN HITS THE GROUND?



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