



INSIDE HILLCREST

CONNECTING NEIGHBORS TO NEIGHBORS

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JANUARY INSIDE HILLCREST

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WELCOME TO THE SEMI-ANNUAL WHIMSY ISSUE (Jokes & stories submitted by readers)

I agree with Colin Nissan, New Yorker magazine: "New Year's resolutions are those special little promises you make to be less like yourself and more like other, better, people."

If I could be like anyone, I would want to be more like Dave Barry. He is my favorite writer of all time AND the funniest man in the universe. I have been reading his stuff for years. He wrote for the Miami Herald from 1983 to 2005 and every year is featured in their New Years Day addition with his recap of the year before, month by month. For our email subscribers, I am attaching this year's review. You will laugh until you cry. He has also written many books of humor and has won several prestigious awards for his writing including the Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in Journalism in 2005. He is amazing. I love anyone who can find humor in anything without being mean.

HAPPY 2024

Hopefully, 2024 turns into a year of peace and kindness. I try to be nice to everyone, because in any situation where a lot of the same people are in the same place on a consistent basis, like a condo, it is important to maintain a pleasant, civil atmosphere. However, I also make it a point to only spend a lot of time with people who are intelligent, upbeat, and funny as hell. People who like to talk about experiences and ideas rather than other people. My friend Rosie and I can start with one line and riff on it until we get tears in our eyes from laughing. My partner in love and life is a hoot. In the end, making memories instead of money should be our main goal.

Maybe those of you who cannot have a 15-minute conversation without talking trash about other people, should go back and reread the first sentence. Start out slow. Try going 30 minutes.

RESIDENTIAL PREFERRED VENDOR LIST

If anyone has a GREAT carpet cleaner, I need one. With the January email issue, I am also

attaching what we have so far for the **Condo/ Homeowner Preferred Vendor** list. If you know a great business that does work for residents, please let me know. At the January HLC Meeting, your building leaders reviewed and updated the Condo Preferred Vendor list for building vendors. Details inside.

NEW ADVERTISER

Welcome **Alex and Cynthia Nelson, of Brice Financial Services**, recommended by **Sylvia Parnis**, of Hillcrest 26. Many of you remember Sylvia, she published the Hillcrest Hotline for years. This is what she had to say: "I have known Alex for many years, and he has always been an asset for my insurance needs. His prompt responses and attention to detail have always made me feel safe and secure in my insurance planning. Service with Alex is always timely and pleasant, and one could not ask for a better insurance broker!"

PRO SOLUTIONS BODY SHOP

I wrote about this body shop in the last issue. Just got this note from Brian Shiels, Hillcrest 27, who used Nelson's services.

"I recently had a car accident resulting in some front-end body damage to my car. I noticed an advert in Inside Hillcrest for **Pro Solutions Body Shop run by Nelson Hernandez** right up the street. I visited his workshop on Thursday and spoke to Nelson and he gave me what I thought was a very reasonable price. He told me "bring it in early Saturday morning and it will be ready by 5pm". I did this and when i went to collect the car, I found he had done a terrific job. I handed him the agreed price and he said no it did not cost that much. He said when he did the job, he found it did not take so long or need so much work. He then asked me for half the price he had quoted me. I was amazed that in his business there are still people who are so honest and customer friendly. Nelson is a credit to his profession. I highly recommend him for his work, reasonable prices, and integrity."

MORE SCAM CALLS

Charles Anderson from the Police Support Group – 239-423-9064 called and some guy from the Firefighters something-or-other called from 305-602-6470. I could hear the boiler-room activity in the background. THESE ARE SCAMS – HANG UP! I told "Charles" that he is a disgrace to humanity for misrepresenting people who put themselves in harm's way to protect us.

A VOTE IS NOT A VALENTINE, YOU AREN'T CONFESSING YOUR LOVE FOR THE CANDIDATE. IT'S A CHESS MOVE FOR THE WORLD (Condo or HOA) YOU WANT TO LIVE IN

This was the part of the cover story that I wrote some light-hearted stuff to fill up the page. But at the last HLC meeting, the topic turned to the building Hate Groups. Almost every building has one and I hear that this year they are out of control. These are the folks who stop you in the common areas to point out (usually erroneously) what the board is doing wrong. They make unsubstantiated claims and when accused of lying, they have the nerve to tell you that they are only repeating what they heard! They don't know that repeating a lie still makes one a liar. These people are unable to discuss issues; they much prefer personal attacks. Unfortunately, the newer residents are their targets and end up thinking, "Where the hell am I living?!" ASK FOR PROOF and you won't hear from them again.

Every building is suffering higher maintenance costs and/or assessments. A budget is a compilation of the costs of running a building CORRECTLY. The board has a fiduciary duty to maintain proper insurance coverage, cover escalating utility and service costs, and hire vendors who are competent and reliable, not necessarily the cheapest. Every building is supposed to have committees that unit owners can join so they can help. So, the next time a member of the hate group stops you to complain about your board, ask what they have done to contribute.

Finally, before you vote this year, be sure you know each candidate's background and how their skills can help the board. Do NOT vote for the building troublemakers. It will give them the credibility they haven't earned to undermine your board's efforts with their lies and gossip. Remember what Thomas Jefferson said: "The government you elect is the government that you deserve."



From Sacrifice to Stability: How Caregivers Can Safeguard Their Financial Future – David Treece



Don't flight attendants always tell you to place the oxygen mask on YOURSELF first before helping anyone else?

Well, this advice also applies if you are a primary caregiver. You can have the best care plan in place for your loved one, but what happens if you don't have a solid financial plan in place for the both of you? You may find yourself not being able to help your loved one OR yourself.

Caregiving can be financially draining as it often involves paying for medical bills, medications, and other related expenses. According to an AARP report, more than three-quarters of caregivers have out-of-pocket caregiving expenses. This can undermine your long-term financial security.

Advance planning is crucial to be prepared for the costs of caregiving—especially if you are underemployed, unemployed, or in retirement while serving as a caregiver.

How caregivers can show some love to their own future:

- **Assess your current financial situation:** Make a list of all your income sources, expenses, debts, and savings.
- **Estimate the cost of care:** Project the cost of the care you provide or plan to provide—including the value of the hours you dedicate to caregiving that may be lost income from sacrificing employment.
- **Create a budget:** Once you have a clear picture of your finances, develop a budget that includes caregiving expenses.
- **Explore financial assistance programs** that might ease the financial burden of caregiving, including offerings from government entities, non-profits, and community resources like National Alliance for Caregiving and Family Caregiving Alliance.

- **Consider long-term care options:** Caregiving can be a long-term commitment, so it's important to consider long-term financial planning. Developing a solid retirement plan, investing in hybrid long-term care insurance, establishing special needs trusts, and planning for end-of-life care are all integral components of robust planning.

The costs of caregiving take a toll on more than your money.

By creating a comprehensive financial plan, caregivers can better manage the costs of caregiving and avoid financial stress down the line. The stress of caregiving transcends financial implications; it's emotionally taxing, often leading to stress, anxiety, depression, and burnout. Caregiver statistics underscore the prevalence of these challenges, especially when dealing with conditions like dementia.

- An estimated 38 million people in the U.S., about 11.5% of the population, are taking care of loved ones.*
- That care will total nearly 36 billion hours with a value of nearly \$600 billion.*
- 30-40% of caregivers for people living with dementia experience depression while 44% have anxiety.*

With substantial time commitments, caregivers often find themselves balancing work and caregiving, impacting both their time and income. Many caregivers have to juggle caregiving responsibilities with work and other commitments. Income may go down due to reduced hours or time off of work.

Caregiving can also be physically demanding, especially for those caring for individuals with mobility issues or other physical disabilities. This can lead to injuries or health problems for the caregiver which can further impact finances and savings.

Overcoming care challenges with proactive planning and support

The emotional, physical, and financial toll of caregiving is real, but a proactive financial strategy can help ease these burdens. Caretaker vs caregiver distinctions blur in the face of these challenges, highlighting the need for self-care and reaching out for support.

Professional financial advisors, such as Treece Financial Group, can provide tailored guidance. With financial advice and advocacy, caregivers can navigate the intricacies of caregiving more effectively, ensuring stability and peace of mind.

Caregivers don't have to face these challenges alone. Having a trusted advocate can make all the difference.

We're here to help. Schedule a consultation with Team Treece by calling 305-751-8855.

* AARP's *Valuing the Invaluable 2023 Update: Strengthening Supports for Family Caregivers*

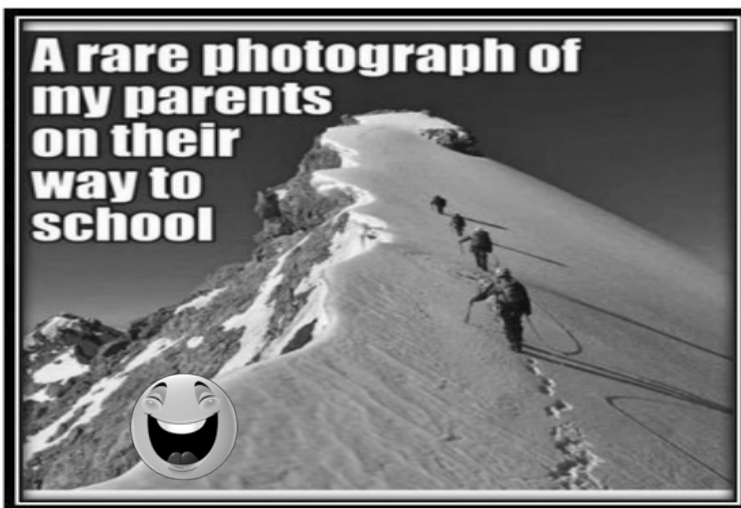


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BATTLE OF THE SEXES

I just read a book about marriage that says treat your wife like you treated her on your first date. So tonight, after dinner I'm dropping her off at her parent's house.

I relabeled all the jars in my wife's spice rack. I'm not in trouble yet, but the thyme is cumin.

Once, I went to my husband's office party. I didn't know most of the people there. A guy came up to us, turned to me, and said: "You must be his wife." I turned to my husband and said: "You have a wife?" Should've seen the guy's face!

Laughing at your mistakes can lengthen your life. Laughing at your wife's mistakes can shorten it.

Sometimes you meet someone, and you know from the first moment, that you want to spend your whole life without them.

When a man says he'll do anything for a woman, he means fight bad guys and slay dragon. Not vacuuming or washing dishes.

I have no problem admitting when I'm wrong. Like that one time I got married.

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THE DICK HARRISON CORNER

My neighbor knocked on my front door at 3 am. 3AM!!! Luckily, I was still up playing the bagpipes.

Me (talking to my husband's doctor): "He's complaining of chest pains, shortness of breath, cramps & dizziness. Do you sell earplugs?"

Most people are at an age where they are using their phones to document the good times in their lives. I'm at the age where I use my phone to take pictures of labels I can't read, then use my phone to enlarge the print so I can read it.

Fun Fact: Before the invention of crowbars, crows had to had to drink at home.

Woman: Shampoo for dry or damaged hair.
Men: 6 in 1 shampoo for hair, face, body, carpet, car, and dishes.

Sign of the Times: We do not have WIFI. Talk to each other. Pretend it's 1995.

WARNING: Retired person on premises. Knows everything and has plenty of time to tell it.

MOM: If a stranger came up to you and said: "I'm your mom's friend, and she asked me to pick you up." What would you say?

KID: I'd say "You're lying! My mom has no friends!"

MOM: "Not where I was going, but OK."

Your call is very important to us. Please enjoy this 40 minute flute solo.

Wife: I'll ignore him all day, so he knows I'm mad at him.

Husband: What a nice, quiet day.

My wife yelled from upstairs, and asked: "Do you ever get a shooting pain across your body, like someone's got a voodoo doll of you, and they're stabbing it?"

I replied: "No...." She responded: "How about now?"

There's a garden in England dedicated entirely to plants that are deadly and can kill you. It's called the Poison Garden. It's the most dangerous garden in the world. It holds over 100 killers, such as Hemlock, Strychnine and Nightshade. I wonder if they have a Gift Shop!

TIPS FOR A HAPPIER, HEALTHIER 2024
 – submitted by *Bridget D'Arco, Young Living*

1. Be purpose oriented. A purpose provides direction to your life. Without it, you live by somebody else's standards, following the crowd. You deserve to live up to your full potential. Any vision you create in your mind's eye can be the life you live. To get there, it helps to have a defined purpose – one that you chase passionately every day. Don't overthink this one!

2. Set your mood at the start of each day. Wake up earlier to stress a bit less if you need to. Dedicate that extra time to yourself! Maybe make your bed, get a workout in, diffuse essential oils, buy a \$4 coffee, choose a healthier breakfast, remember your vitamins – do whatever it is you need to make yourself feel ready to take on the day.

3. Embrace failure and try again – every time. Failure is not just a part of the process; it's a stepping stone. You actually need it to form the mental patterns of a successful and driven individual! Continue trying until you reach that goal and beyond. Rinse and repeat! You can do it!


4. Begin your day with positive affirmations. The power of your thoughts may astound you... Be aware of that voice in your head and use it to your advantage. Practice kind thoughts about others, as well as about YOURSELF. You might find that it becomes a habit to choose empowering words. It will feel kin to superpowers when you conquer this ability.

5. Take risks. Why not? Really, it's okay to take a risk! Stepping out of your comfort zone makes way for new experiences and new connections. You can't discover what's waiting on the other side if you don't first take the leap. At least you can say you tried and the very least you'll gain is experience. The famous saying goes, "Shoot for the Moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars".

And one more...

6. Let go of the past. If it's not making you stronger, let it go. You can't heal if you're still holding onto what hurt you. Cherish what you've learned and decide to grow from anything previously holding you down. You can't move forward by looking behind you, and it's critical that you not only look ahead, also but make plans for the next steps after that. Always look forward because tomorrow is a new day.





Denis Dobrochasov
 OUTSIDE SALES REPRESENTATIVE

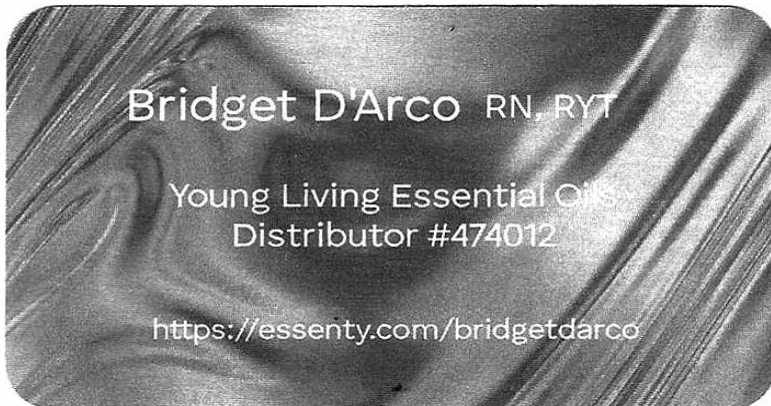
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THE IMPORTANCE OF EXERCISE

The fitness trainer asked me what kind of squat I was used to doing. I said "Diddly".

Walking can add minutes to your life. This enables you at 95 years old to spend an additional 5 months in a nursing home at \$7000 per month.

I like long walks, especially when they are taken by people who annoy me.

The only reason I would take up walking is so that I could hear heavy breathing again.

I have to walk early in the morning, before my brain figures out what I'm doing.

I joined a health club last year, spent about 400 bucks. Haven't lost a pound. Apparently, you have to go there.

Brain cells, hair cells, skin cells – they all seem to die constantly but freaking fat cells seem to have eternal life.

Every time I say the dirty word 'exercise', I have to wash my mouth out with chocolate.

The advantage of exercising every day is so when you die, they'll say, 'Well, she looks good doesn't she.'

I know I got a lot of exercise the last few years, just getting over the hill.

We all get heavier as we get older, because there's a lot more information in our heads. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

Every time I start thinking too much about how I look, I just find a Happy Hour and by the time I leave, I look just fine.

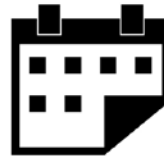
If a cookie falls on the floor, and you pick it up... that's a squat, right??

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JANUARY HLC MEETING – by Steve Schneider

When District 6 Commissioner **Idelma Quintana** opened the meeting, **Michelle Delvecchio**, President of Hillcrest 24 asked if she could officially thank Commissioner Quintana and the City of Hollywood staff for their neighborly and fast action after a broken water main left her residents without water over the New Year's Day weekend.

Commissioner Quintana sprang into action after a building leader notified her about the situation. Quintana worked with a Hollywood City supervisor and tried to get a part which was not available through regular channels during the holiday stretch. Unfortunately, the part did not work, and water was not restored until Jan. 2, the first workday after the New Year's break.

Quintana also contacted the Hollywood YMCA on nearby Taft Street so Hillcrest 24 residents could take free showers during their ordeal.

Next up was our monthly report from the HPD. Our Hollywood Police Neighborhood Liaison to Hillcrest, Officer **Amanda Maldonado**, was on assignment so **Officers O. Rebolledo** and **J. Guzman** attended the meeting. Officer Rebolledo reported scant criminal activity during the month of December. Most incidents involved automobiles. One stolen vehicle report turned out to be a civil matter concerning a rental car. And a reported burglary turned out to involve a former domestic partner returning to Hillcrest.

Hollywood Police also responded to concern about speeding cars on Hillcrest Drive. The leaders wanted to know more about the carjacking at gunpoint that was reported in our neighborhood. We had seen the video of the incident on the news and the technology used to apprehend the teenage thieves was interesting. Apparently, the carjackers were spotted on Washington and 56th and police deployed one of the department's newly received six Grappler devices, which wraps a net around the rear tires to bring a vehicle to a controlled stop. The HPD then apprehended the teenagers who were charged with armed carjacking.

This was the exciting part of the meeting; the leadership then got down to the business of updating the Hillcrest Preferred Vendor list

used by the building boards. Every year the HLC meeting is devoted to sharing businesses/vendors that have worked in our buildings and did a great job. Categories range from A/C maintenance to Plumbers and Reserve Study Appraisers to Water Pumps. The list is invaluable when getting bids or just knowing that the recommendation comes from a solid source. The building number is next to each preferred vendor in case a board member wants specific information.

The revised list will be available to every building after all the contact info is verified. Each vendor is contacted and told that they are on the Preferred Vendor list which also gives them an incentive to be very sure they do their best job for us.

Some leaders stayed behind to talk about the impact of the high insurance rates, rising utility bills as well as the new reserve requirements to some of our residents on fixed incomes. We discussed options to give those unit owners who are struggling. However, "shooting the messenger" was a problem in some buildings. Several building meetings almost got out of control. What the residents need to understand is that almost every condominium in Florida had a substantial increase in their monthly maintenance fees this year.

Unfortunately, In a couple of our buildings the unit owners decided on the "Pay me now or pay me later" strategy and kept the monthly maintenance fees low preferring to levy a sizeable assessment later in the year. Hopefully, these unit owners know that if their strategy is to hurry up an sell to duck the assessment, once it is in the building minutes, it must be disclosed to the potential buyer by the seller or by the board members who do the interview. Otherwise, the buyer can take legal action against the seller as well as the Association.

The next **HLC meeting will take place on FEBRUARY 8, 2024**. This is one of those rare occasions when the HLC meeting is scheduled for the 2nd Thursday of the month due to a scheduling conflict.



THE HEALING POWER OF LAUGHTER: WHY LAUGHTER IS GOOD FOR YOU - BY HELEN VELLA

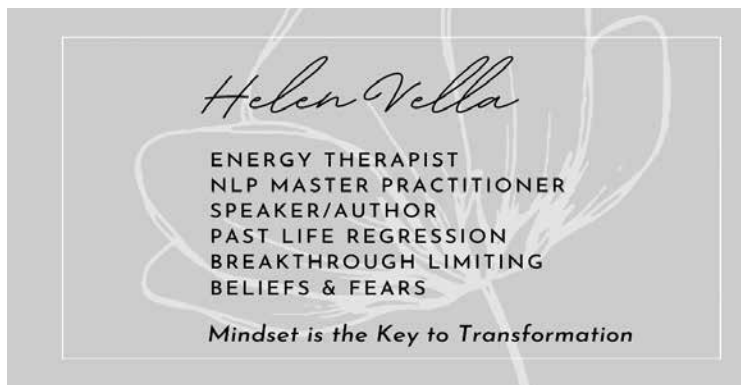
Laughter is a universal language but did you know that laughter also has numerous health benefits?

From boosting your mood to strengthening your immune system, the healing power of laughter is undeniable. When was the last time you had a good laugh

- 1. Stress Relief:** Laughter is nature's stress buster. When you laugh, your body releases endorphins, the feel-good hormones that reduce stress and promote relaxation. It helps to lower cortisol, the stress hormone, thereby easing tension and anxiety.
- 2. Physical Health:** Laughter is a natural workout for your body. It stimulates your cardiovascular system, increasing blood circulation and oxygen intake. Regular laughter can improve heart health, lower blood pressure, and even provide a mild form of exercise for your facial muscles.
- 3. Immune System Boost:** Laughing strengthens your immune system by increasing the production of antibodies and activating immune cells. It enhances your body's ability to fight off infections, reducing the risk of illness and promoting overall well-being.
- 4. Social Connection:** Laughter is a powerful social lubricant. It strengthens relationships, fosters a sense of belonging, and creates lasting bonds between individuals. Sharing laughter with others promotes empathy, understanding, and a positive social atmosphere.

So, let's embrace the joyous sound of laughter, seek out humor in our daily lives, watch the comedy movies and reap the countless benefits that come with it.

Remember, laughter truly is the best medicine!



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STATE OF THE COUNTY - County Commissioner Beam Furr - District 6



Greetings Hillcrest Residents,

Happy New Year! 2024 is set to be a crucially important year for our country – and for Broward County. This year will see a Presidential election, as well as critical elections up and down the ticket. The results of this election will have ramifications for generations to come, with lasting impacts on our environment, economy, and the very foundation of our democracy itself. With so much at stake, I hope we see record turnout this year in Broward County and throughout the State of Florida. While it may be a cliché to say this is the most important election of our lifetimes, the ramifications of the 2024 election make that truism feel like an essential statement of fact. During the 2024 Florida legislative session, bills have already been filed that can have an impact on the ability for our residents to vote-by-mail and exercise their right to vote in a free and fair election. To stay the most up-to-date on election law, your registration status, and where and how to vote, visit browardvotes.gov.

The importance of 2024 stretches beyond elections. This year is also shaping up to be an inflection point for many important projects here in Broward County. In 2024, I expect major progress to be made on long-term goals such as solid waste, transit, resilience, and much more. Our Solid Waste and Recyclable Materials Processing Authority is hard at work in creating a comprehensive system that will reduce waste and increase reuse. We are also working to bring commuter rail along the FEC tracks to our downtowns, including in Hollywood, and implementing the

PREMO Mobility Plan that is the fruit of our transportation surtax. This plan will reduce congestion and maximize transit options. As always, building resilience will be a primary focus, and I expect that 2024 will see significant steps in implementing electric vehicle infrastructure, building resilience along our coastline, and making needed improvements to our drainage. Broward County will also be focused on improving housing affordability, enhancing our cultural offerings, maximizing our Port and Airport, and much more. During such a landmark year, I am honored to serve as Vice Mayor this year along with my colleagues on the Broward County Commission. As always, never hesitate to reach out to my office with questions or a great idea!

Contact Us

Our District office is conveniently located within the lobby of the Hollywood Branch of the Broward County Public Library at 2600 Hollywood Blvd, next to Hollywood City Hall. My District office staff is available to you from 10 AM to 4 PM, Monday through Friday. My staff is also working from my office in Fort Lauderdale and from other locations within our District. The Fort Lauderdale office is open for your convenience Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 5 PM. If you would like to schedule an appointment, please call 954-357-7006/7790, or email me at bfurr@broward.org.

WISDOM OF THE AGED

The older I get, the more I understand why roosters just scream to start their day.

I am swift as a gazelle. An old one... with arthritis... run over by a Land Rover... seven days ago.

We celebrated last night with a couple of adult beverages – Metamucil and Ensure.

You know you’re over 40 when you have “upstairs” ibuprofen and “downstairs” ibuprofen.

One thing no one ever talks about, when it comes to being an older adult, is how much time we devote to keeping a cardboard box because it is, you know, it’s a really good box.

If you drop something when you were younger, you just picked it up. When you’re older and you drop something, you stare at it for just a bit, contemplating if you actually need it anymore.

I remember being able to get up without sound effects. Good times.

I woke up this morning determined to drink less, eat right, and exercise. But that was four hours ago when I was younger and full of hope.

Funny thing about getting older. Your eyesight gets weaker but your ability to see through people’s bullshit gets much better.

I’ve reached that age when my brain goes from “You probably shouldn’t say that”, to “What the hell. Let’s see what happens!”

I’m not losing my memory. I’m just really good at letting go of the past.

I got myself a Senior GPS. Not only does it tell me how to get to my destination, but it tells me why I wanted to go there.

I think the proper term for older women should be Queenagers. That is all. Carry on.





GOT BUGS?

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What's Happening In The Real Estate Market in Hillcrest and Hollywood?



Cindy Abraham



Brian Gaiefsky

The Hollywood Real estate market experienced a 6%+ increase in property values in 2023. Interest rates are declining a bit making home buying more affordable.

What does this mean to us? Homes are still out of reach for many. The next best thing is a townhome or large condo. As we all know, Hillcrest condos are known for their size and views. And Keller Williams A Team Florida are known as the Hillcrest experts which is why agents shopping Hillcrest look for our listings.



Looking to buy or sell? Let's talk. Or send us an email or text:

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PANIC SELLING – DON'T DO IT!

– by Cindy Abraham, Keller Williams Realty Professionals A Team Florida

We have gotten several calls lately from people who live in condos, especially on the beach. Many have been doing fine up until now. But the hike in maintenance fees as well as assessments in condos has made it impossible to make ends meet. IF you think you have no choice but to sell and move somewhere else, think again.

Number 1 – DO NOT be too proud to ask your family for financial help – especially your damn kids. I use the word “damn”, because if they were good kids, they would already know you are struggling and have offered to help already. Once you understand that, here are your other options.

A. If you have any equity at all in your property, go to your bank and see about getting a line of credit, preferably interest only. Then use that money to help you out as long as possible. If this bothers you because you are afraid you won't have anything to leave your family, see Number 1.

B. Some buildings may be approved for reverse mortgages. If your building is financially stable and passed the 40 and/or 50-year safety inspection, please contact **Lou Silvers of Mortgage Solutions** on page 5 to see how to start the process. If you are afraid that a reverse mortgage will greatly lessen the amount that your heirs will get when they sell after you pass, see Number 1.

C. Hard money loans are available. They run from between 8%-14% and you need to know what you are doing. If you do not have a trusted financial person, please call us at 8-HILLCREST and we will find someone who can advise you. Besides the interest rate, you need to make sure that the money will last as long as you live. If you are concerned that it will reduce the amount of money.... well, you know...

It is a fact that the vast majority of those with real estate licenses do very few deals. They use their license to make a few bucks on the side. These agents usually discount their commissions because they just want to make a few extra bucks. Every percent that they discount the

commission is equal to \$1000 per \$100,000 of the sales price. So, if you are selling a 500K property, you are only saving \$5000 which is 1%. If they aren't willing to fight for their own money, they will NOT fight for yours. I will tell you one more time about an agent that had a listing in my building, turned down an offer from one of OUR buyers and sold it to their own buyer for 5K LESS than our offer so they could keep both sides of the discounted commission. The seller thought she saved \$2000 on the commission.

You know Brian and I as trusted neighbors and GREAT Realtors with a stellar reputation of always putting our clients' best interests above our own. If you think you must sell, please talk to us first. That may not be the case. **Call 8-HILLCREST or 954-964-2559.**



Life is short...be the girl on the left...

DECEMBER 2023 HILLCREST STATE OF THE MARKET

by Cindy Abraham, Keller Williams Realty Professionals
A Team Florida



Wow, what a shift! One day in the beginning of 2023 we were down to 6 listings and now we are up to 40! In a balanced market we range from 60-80 listings. The highest I have ever seen in Hillcrest was during the market crash when we hit 200 for a day.

Days on the Market are still higher than in the recent past. Of the 40 active listings, 14 have been on the market 3-6 months or more. Only 8 have been on the market less than one month, but that just means they were recently listed. Of the 40 there are one 3-bedroom, thirty-one 2/2s and eight 1-bedroom units. During December, only 6 went under contract and 7 closed.

Rentals are still sluggish also. There are nine available rentals, from a one-bedroom listed at \$1699 that has been on the market for five months to a just listed 2/2 at \$2450. One 2/2 listed at \$1900 has been on the market for 299 days as of this writing. A larger 2/2 listed at \$2250 went under contract during December. Closed rentals are listed below with the closed sales. C stands for Corner Unit and R is a building that allows rentals. A unit that started out at 185K, lowered to 165K, only had 2 pictures in the listing and sat for 151 days The agent who had only 3 sales in all of 2023 recorded that it sold for \$135.00 instead of \$135,000. 'Nuff said.

HILLCREST CLOSED SALES DURING DECEMBER

Building	Unit #	B/B	SF	List Price	Sold Price	DOM
C-24	220	2/2	1284	318,000	310,000	67
C-27	902	2/2	1344	305,000	295,000	79
24	903	2/2	1132	259,000	240,000	64
21	502	2/2	1132	240,000	240,000	7
18	103	1/1/1	775	175,000	175,000	94
10	208	1/1/1	690	165,000	135.00 (?)	151
21	805	1/1/1	844	125,000	123,000	45

RENTED DURING DECEMBER

Building	Unit #	B/B	SF	List Price	Rented	DOM
C-16	401	2/2	992	2100	2100	57
17	509	2/2	992	2000	2000	44
20	608	1/1/1	830	1750	1750	157
20	708	1/1/1	830	1780	1780	28

PARKVIEW AT HILLCREST DECEMBER 2023



Curious as to how much equity you have built up in your Parkview home? Call us at 8-HILLCREST or email INFO@ATeamFlorida.com.

All still kind of quiet on the Hillcrest North, Hillcrest South, and Parkview at Hillcrest fronts. Ironically the original phrase "All quiet on the Western Front" doesn't apply. There is no Hillcrest West; the areas in our community fall under Hillcrest East, Hillcrest Country Club or one of the above.

Currently there are eight Active Sales Listings ranging from a 1421 SF townhome listed at 570K to a 5/3/1, 2502 SF single family home listed at \$1,490.00. Days on Market for homes and townhomes are significantly less than those of condominiums. There are also eight Active Rental Listings, ranging from a 1421 SF 3/2/1 townhome listed at \$3500 to a 2502 SF 5/3 home listed at \$7000.

During 2023, there were 15 sales of single-family homes, 22 townhomes and 126 condominiums according to the MLS. Since the Parkview Development was built, with a total of 645 homes and townhomes, 127 have been rented, 33 of them during 2023.

Anytime you read these market reports and have questions, please give us a call. We are here for our neighbors whether you use us for your real estate needs or not. Changing markets require adaptive strategies. And we have them. We can navigate just about everything a shifting market can throw at us. Whether you are buying, selling, or renting, give us a call at 8-HILLCREST. We are always here to help.



DECEMBER REAL ESTATE ACTIVITY:

DECEMBER PARKVIEW SALES: PENDING AND CLOSED SALES

ADDRESS	B/B	SF	LIST / SOLD PRICE	DOM
4375 Ficus	3/2/1	2220	929,000 / Pending	20
5182 Eucalyptus	3/2/1	1421	575,000 / 530,000	28
1040 Eucalyptus	3/2/1	1421	538,000 / 522,000	85

DECEMBER RENTALS

ADDRESS	STATUS	B/B	SF	RENTAL PRICE \$	DOM
4860 Eucalyptus	3/2/1	1561	3600	3600	74
5060 Eucalyptus	3/2/1	1421	3500	3500	100

January Kitchen Korner - by Cindy Abraham

At this time of year, many of us are hopeful for better things to come. A good life is one where you never stop learning. I learned something new just this past Holiday season. Does it ever seem to you that no matter how much you cook, there never seems to be enough dishes to do? If so, try baking.

My BFF Rosie shared two recipes with me that were out of this world and did not create a sink full of bowls and measuring spoons/cups. No, she didn't make them. She sent me the recipes and said, "You do it. I don't cook." Hey, that's what friends are for. And OMG they are both keepers. Then I realized the second one had too many empty carbs, so I tried healthizing it. Yes, I know that is not a word, but I bet you knew what I meant. Long story short, it turned out terrible SO if anyone out there knows where I can find readymade dough that has at least a 10:1 carb/fiber ratio per batch without me having to make it, let me know. Don't worry, both recipes on the next page are unhealthized. Don't thank me, thank Rosie.

January Inside Hillcrest starts the year so I thought printing tips to make things easier, safer, and more sanitary when cooking or baking would be apropos. COVID taught us to wash our hands often and got us used to wearing gloves. These are the two most important tips I can give you. Wearing gloves that fit snugly is the best thing you can do when dealing with raw meat/chicken/vegetables, etc. For one thing, it keeps your fingers out of your mouth. I went to dinner at a friend's years ago and he was constantly licking his fingers. I flat out told him I lost my appetite. And if you have a cold but still must prepare meals for family, wearing a mask is probably a good idea.

At the very least, have a spray bottle of isopropyl alcohol by the sink. After washing knives or pots and pans, give the handles a spritz. It is also the best way to wipe down the bases/outside of your blender, food processor, air fryer etc. The least sanitary part of the kitchen is usually the kitchen sink so have at it.

Here are some other tips:

Stone Crab season is here so we go down to a wholesaler in Miami and pick up 10 lbs. to ship to my sister in Wisconsin and get another 10 lbs. to share with friends. You can buy a crab cracker OR just use your kitchen meat tenderizer (or mallet or hammer). Always put the crab claws in a large plastic bag over a cutting board, so shell splinters don't go everywhere.

For a round cookie or biscuit cutter, you can use a cocktail shaker lid or the rim of a glass jar.

If you spill oil or raw eggs on the floor, douse it with salt. It absorbs the moisture for easier clean-up.

Seasoning a turkey or chicken is easier if you slice the cold butter and dip the slices in the seasoning before placing them under the skin.

Cleaning out a blender: put a few drops of dish soap and put a little warm water in it – no more than ¼ of the blender capacity. Turn it on. It will wash itself and all you do is rinse.

Spreading mayo, jam, or peanut butter with a knife makes no sense. Use the spoon to scoop it out and use the back of the spoon to spread it.

I used to train new managers for Tony Roma's including kitchen managers. Most had years of experience and knew a lot more than I did. I was just there to teach them our concept. One chef taught me to cook steaks from frozen and I have done that ever since. The surface browns while the cold inside takes longer to cook so you never overcook the meat.

Gruyere or Fontina shredded cheese makes any pasta dish better than using Parmesan or Mozzarella alone. Google says that these cheeses contain methanethiol, a compound that delivers a rich umami flavor. I also use prosciutto instead of bacon or pancetta for the same reason, plus it has less fat.

Tomato paste, anchovies and most herbs come in tubes now. I buy whichever ingredient I use the most. They last a long time in the fridge and are great in a pinch when I don't have fresh.

Corn starch is a must in any pantry. It makes silky gravies and adds crunch to shrimp and chicken dishes. Toss the shrimp or chicken with a little corn starch before putting the protein in a skillet with oil and they will come the meat comes out nicely browned and crispy. Great for shrimp scampi and chicken dishes.

The freezer is your friend. I freeze jalapenos, portions of cooked rice, basil leaves, frozen apple and orange juice cans, to name a few, so they are there when I need them. The best investment you can make is a vacuum sealer machine. I recently made a Beef Wellington with a chunk of beef tenderloin that I bought last year. Whole tenderloins are usually only on sale around Christmas, but you must buy the whole tenderloin, which is usually 5 or more pounds. I cut them into 1-2 lb. pieces and vacuum seal them. Because we rarely eat red meat, freezing steaks on sale as well as tenderloin is a great money saver in the long run.

GUEST CHEFS AND PEOPLE WHO TELL YOU WHAT TO DO

The Holidays are a time when friends share their special dishes with each other, and this Holiday was exceptional. **Maria Berry** dropped off the most delicious bread pudding, and **Isabelle Raymondo** gave us a big bowl of her Romanian Chicken Salad that is traditionally served at Christmas or Easter. It was meant to be a side dish, but we ended up eating the whole thing for dinner, it was that good.

MARIA BERRY'S BREAD PUDDING

1 lb. white sandwich bread torn into chunks
1 can evaporated milk
12 oz. regular milk, 4 oz. butter softened
5 eggs lightly beaten, 1 cup sugar
2 tsp vanilla extract, 2 tsp cinnamon
¼ cup brandy, 1 cup raisins
2/3 cup caramel sauce



Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Pour equal amounts of caramel sauce in the bottom of 2 large bread pans or five small bread pans. Place bread chunks into large bowl. Pour milk and evaporated milk over bread. Stir until moist. Add the rest of the ingredients into the bowl and stir well. Pour mixture into baking pans. Bake for 45 minutes to an hour until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Do not over bake.

ISABELLE RAYMONDO'S CHICKEN SALAD (serves 4)

1 lb. cooked chicken chunks (or beef or turkey)
1 lb. peeled potatoes
½ lb. peeled carrots
¾ cup chopped dill pickles (save 1 TBS pickle juice)
½ cup peas patted dry, ½ cup mayonnaise
2 TBS mustard, ¼ tsp each salt and pepper

Place potatoes and carrots in a pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil and cook until fork tender, about 15 minutes. Drain and cool slightly. Chop into small pieces, ¼" by ¼".

Put chicken, potatoes, carrots, pickles, and peas in a medium bowl. Add mayo, mustard, pickles, and peas and toss. Add pickle juice, salt and pepper and mix everything together. Salad may be served immediately or put in refrigerator to chill up to 5 days before serving. Do not freeze.



Continued on Pg. 13

Continued from Pg. 12



PROSCIUTTO, BRIE, AND SPINACH PUFF PASTRIES

- Submitted by Rosie

- 8 slices prosciutto, 8 slices Brie, 30-40 spinach leaves
- 8 puff pastry squares (4X4), Honey for drizzling
- 1 beaten egg
- Baking sheet lined with parchment paper

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Scrunch slices of prosciutto and place on baking sheet. Top with slices of Brie and overlap with 3-4 spinach leaves. Drizzle each mound with honey. Top with your puff pastry squares and press down on all sides to secure mound. Brush with egg wash. Bake for 15-20 minutes until puff pastry browns. Remove from oven. Carefully flip each pastry and return to oven for 5 more minutes until underside of puff pastry is brown. Remove from oven and serve.

CROISSANT EGG BAKE - submitted by Rosie

- Pkg of 8 croissants , 4 eggs
- ¼ tsp salt, 4 tsp each ground pepper, garlic powder, dried rosemary, dried thyme
- 4 long slices ham or turkey halved
- 2 slices Swiss cheese quartered
- ½ cup shredded mozzarella
- 3 TBS honey
- ¼ tsp each rosemary and thyme
- Spray casserole dish with butter flavored nonstick spray

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

In a medium bowl whisk eggs with salt, pepper, garlic powder, rosemary & thyme. Dip croissant pieces into egg wash and place in casserole dish. Tuck sliced meat (like flowers)



in between croissant pieces and top with slices of Swiss. Pour eggs over casserole dish. Sprinkle shredded mozzarella around sides and drizzle honey over everything. Bake for 20-25 minutes until croissants are brown and cheese is melted. You can switch to the broil setting for a browner, crisper top.

GOOD ONES FROM MY SISTER KATHY

- she is a hoot! She has to be, she lives in Kewaunee, Wisconsin

Waiting to see how long it takes this police sketch artist to realize I'm describing him.

It only takes one slow-walking person in the grocery store to destroy the illusion that I'm a nice person.

The correct term for glucose-free, sugarless, vegan brownies, is "compost".

So now, cocaine is legal in Oregon, but straws aren't. That must be frustrating!

I like to make lists. I also like to leave those lists laying on the kitchen counter, then try to guess what was on that list, while at store. Fun game!

Ruger is coming out with a new gun in honor of the Senate and the House of Representatives. It doesn't work and you can't fire it.

Billion-dollar idea: A smoke detector that shuts off when you yell "I'm just cooking!"

It's fine to eat a "test" grape in the produce section, but you take just one bite out of a rotisserie chicken, and it's all: "Ma'am, you need to leave."

Walmart had to remove 50,000 cartons of milk from their stores. The labels have to be changed from "Open Here" to "Open at Home".

By replacing your morning coffee with green tea, you can lose 87% of what little joy you have left in your life.

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HEARD THIS ONE? Tough, it's still funny.

I finally realized why I look so bad in pictures. It's my face.
Sorry that I'm late. I got here as soon as I wanted to.

A giraffe's coffee would be cold by the time it reached the bottom of its throat. Ever thought about that? No? That's because you only think about yourself.

I like to make lists. I also like to leave them laying on the kitchen counter, and then guess what's on the list when I am at the store.

I told my physical therapist that I broke my arm in two places. He told me to stop going to those places.

A guy walks into a lumberyard and asks for some 2x4s. The clerk asks, "How long do you need them?" The guy answers, "A long time. We're going to build a house."

Who knew that the hardest thing about being an adult is figuring out what to fix for dinner and doing it every single night for the rest of your life until you die?

Last night the internet stopped working so I spent a few hours with my family. They seem like nice people.



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MIND YOUR MIND

– by Aruna Ladva Brahma Kumaris, London, England, submitted by Etta Stevens

“Words are things. You must be careful, careful about a calling people out of their names, using racial, pejoratives and sexual pejoratives and all that ignorance. Don’t do that. Someday we’ll be able to measure the power of words. I think they are things. They get on the walls. They get in your wallpaper. They get in your rugs, in your upholstery, and your clothes, and finally into you.” – Maya Angelou

Maya Angelou understood the power of words and she knew that “words are things”. Anyone who came to Maya’s home who was abusive, swore or used racist language were shown the door and kindly asked to leave. She refused to entertain any negative type of language, she did not want that toxic energy to linger in her home and stick to her walls. Maya had witnessed first-hand the power of words in her childhood and Maya fully understood how destructive they could be. Words can mean the difference between life and death. **Maya reminds us that we should never underestimate the power of our words.**

In years gone by, we would not dream of polluting our own home, that sacred space in which we live. Sadly, look at how easily we pollute our own minds! **Words have a direct impact on our mind, other people, our environment and definitely our relationships, or should we say karmic accounts.** No wonder we are suffering on so many levels. The prevalence of “bad language” is such that we have normalized it as part of our daily speech, such that we do not even notice when we are using it! We have forgotten the value of sacred space, and the most sacred space is within our own minds. We become unaware of how the energy of subtle violence remains and acts upon us unchecked like some invisible gas.

Today we use words so casually, and in such a loose manner without giving any thought at all as to the true nature of their impact upon others and on ourselves too. We must realize that thoughts are energy manifested in the form of words and then the grossest form of all as actions. **When we fail to find the right words, we often become lazy and resort to swearing to express our emotions.** This is more than just a bad habit. Remember that **thoughts are the seeds of actions.** It is not just a matter of venting in the moment as we may think. But words are powerful tools. Anger and abusive words do more damage than we realize.

Truly if we were to ask ourselves: Did we express ourselves well? Was our point conveyed? Did the other soul understand us? We may have got a reaction, but not necessarily one that was useful. **A reaction from fear will create further problems in the future.** Swearing is again just another form of anger manifesting in words which we have expelled from our mind.

Words of abuse or oaths spoken are really the energy of anger in motion. How often do we raise our volume thinking that we will be heard more? Simply because we can shout the loudest will mean we have expressed our emotions but that does not mean that we have communicated well. In fact, we will often see a deterioration in the quality of our relationships because of such expression. Do we only want others to recognize our anger and see us? Yes, we are heard; but we are not understood or respected. If anything, we gain people’s attention but for all the wrong reasons. That attention would be based on fear, not love, respect, acceptance and understanding, these qualities are what the soul deeply desires and make for better relationships.

Mistakenly in this case, the ego mind will think it has gained a victory when, in reality, the mind has gone into loss and scored a home goal! We fall into this habit with words, of “expressing” ourselves, using expletives in our language with anger. This does not serve us. Still, **we remain under the illusion that anger and swearing come from a position of power and control.** In so doing we fail to see the subtle damage that our words are having on ourselves, for our health and in our relationships. This is a position of weakness for the soul, where we set ourselves on the path for further depletion of energy. We begin to react more with anger out of habit and the use of inappropriate words, we normalize this behavior and feel no guilt or shame. Indeed, we fail to even notice that we are using such language! Slowly we find ourselves trapped by our own reactive behavior, and we travel on a downward spiral of loss of power, and in the long run unhappiness and isolation. We may get a temporary ego kick but that will not last long.

Remember that the force of anger is destructive. The ego-mind loves to keep us in the grip of dis-empowerment. Anger works against us, it is

not a power, once that negative energy has built up then that anger will find an outlet anywhere that it can, and it becomes very difficult to control. The secret is to find a way to transform this energy early on.

“Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will always hurt me. Bones mend and become stronger in the very place they were broken and where they have knitted up; mental wounds can grind and ooze for decades and be re-opened by the quietest whisper.”
- Stephen Fry

Words of hurt take longer to heal because they scar the mind and memory. The physical pain can often be forgotten and healed. But what about those mental and emotional scars on the mind and heart? That emotional pain is held at the level of cellular memory. **Our bodies carry the memory of this pain and suffering for years.**

We must be more mindful of the words we use and understand the power that words have on our mind. Sometimes they influence us deeply and almost imperceptibly, like a silent arrow that hits its target, equally there is suffering, and sorrow experienced by the piercing of the arrow of words. Yes, **and how do we know that we have been hit?** Quite simply we are unhappy, we can feel burdened by the pressure and emotional pain of a mental and emotional wound.

Many people do take care of their living space and spend so much time, money, and energy on Feng Shui to get the right energy flow in their homes, making changes here and there. Then why do we neglect to do this with our minds? Our mind is the 24/7 living space for the soul. We must be careful what we put into that sacred space.

We need to pay attention to our language and take care of the following:

- Words
- Tone
- Volume
- Attitude
- Vibrational imprint
- Repetition – adds force to the words – whether good or bad
- Influences

Words form the basis of our language, but words also carry a powerful energy and vibration. You may have heard the story about the bow and arrow. **The lips are like the bow, the tongue is the arrow, and the words are the arrowhead. Who knows where those arrows will land and who will be hurt by them?** Once those arrows have been set free, we do not know what damage they will do. We need to be more mindful in our choice of words and the way in which we use words.

“Radiate an energy of serenity and peace so that you have an uplifting effect on those you come into contact with.” - Dr. Wayne Dyer

If you still think that these “swear” words, and unholy words are OK, then ask yourself: Would you be happy to say them in front of your children; parents; grandparents or boss? Would you feel a little uncomfortable that there might be some come back because of the language you have used? Even with yourself: Would you be happy to hear and receive such words directed at you? Probably not. Most of us would be either offended or feel disturbed or upset about them. Why? Because we know that words carry a force, an energy that makes an impact on our mind at a deep subconscious level. We are left with the feeling of having been hit by some energy force, and we feel hurt too.

And let us not forget the law of attraction, always at work... that law acts like a magnet. **What we send out, always comes back to us... like an arrow! It is Time...** to choose whether to bless or curse ourselves by the words that we use in our daily communication with other souls.

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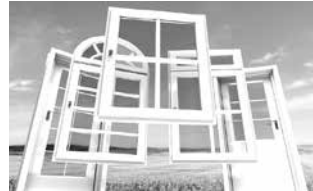
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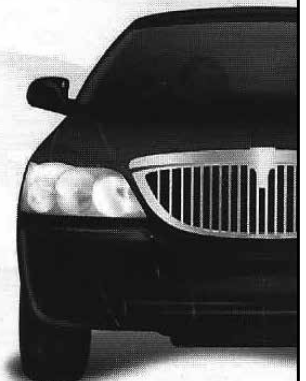
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