



Kirkwood UNITE

Service Learning at Tillman

Tillman students have been hard at work completing many service learning projects:

1. **Veterans Day Celebrations:** To prepare for Veterans Day, all Tillman students watched a video and participated in discussions. In their buddy groups, the students then learned about Missouri USOs and how they support the soldiers. The students made cards for veterans, included a Hershey's bar, and sent them to the USO. On November 11th, the students participated in a school-wide Veterans Day assembly. Students with veterans as relatives made stars with names on them to decorate for the assembly. Veterans were invited to attend the assembly and each grade level sang songs to them. All veterans in attendance were honored and two were asked to speak. A reception was held after the assembly. Lisa Greenstein, Tillman's principal, received many positive emails from the veterans thanking the school for the recognition. Several veterans even said this made it easier to discuss these memories with their grandchildren.

2. **Community Garden** – Ross Stauder, 4th grade student, won a grant from the Botanical Garden for his design of a community garden. This sparked an interest among the parents to support the creation of the garden. They are working together with the Tillman Character Council. Tillman third graders are also



helping with the garden. As part of their science curriculum, the students learn about plants. They have visited Litzinger Road Ecology Center to learn about ecology and harvest seeds for the garden. The garden should be completed this spring.

3. **Canned Food Drive** – Tillman's Character Council, along with the 5th grade classes, held a school-wide canned food drive in December to benefit KirkCare. The students created and hung posters in the hallway to teach students about hunger, including many facts and statistics. They then had theme days, Crazy Hat Day, Crazy Sock Day, and Pajama Day. If a student brought in a can, then they could participate in the theme day.



4. **Shoeman Shoe Drive** - Shoeman Water Projects picks up donated used and new shoes year round from businesses, churches, schools, special events, and shoe drives. Once collected, the shoes are given a second life when the Shoeman exports the donated shoes to retailers in the developing world. The resale of shoes provides jobs and affordable footwear. All money raised then goes to purchase wells in the parts of Africa that are desperately in need of a nearby water supply. The Shoeman came to Tillman for a school-wide assembly and did an interactive presentation. The students are now collecting used shoes on an ongoing basis to support this program.

KHS Students Deliver Crafts to Our Little Haven

The KHS journalism program again teamed with Our Little Haven for their annual service project. The journalism students used the afternoon of the staff development day to give their time to make craft kits for the children of Our Little Haven. This year about 25 KHS students delivered 20 different crafts to the home. Each craft had 15-20 individual craft bags containing all the materials and directions for the craft. That comes out to 300-400 crafts that the Our Little Haven kids will get to complete!

Teacher, Mitch Eden says, "It's one of my favorite traditions in the journalism program. When we go to Our Little Haven, a representative speaks to the kids about the home and the kids. It's a chance for kids to reflect on how lucky we are and how we take the simple things in life for granted."

Trick-Or-Treat for UNICEF

NKMS students in Mrs. Omri's Hot Topics class decided to support UNICEF as part of their Model UN project. The Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF collection was a way in which the students could turn the theoretical U.N. resolutions they were writing into practical reality. The students helped educate the student body about poverty by creating powerful videos to show on the morning announcements. They then delivered collection boxes to each homeroom and collected/talked it up each day.



North Glendale Canned Food Drive

North Glendale Elementary took on Bristol Elementary for their fourth annual canned food drive the week of November 14th. Their goal was to not only collect more canned goods than their "rival" school in a week's time, but also come together as a community and help others who may not be as fortunate. The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade Student Council representatives developed questions and interviewed a representative from KirkCare (the recipient). The interview was then televised on the NGTV morning show. The 4th and 5th grade Student Council representatives were responsible for researching hunger statistics and developing a Keynote presentation that was aired throughout the school. All North Glendale cans were donated to KirkCare, who in turn delivers them to people/families in need within the Kirkwood community. Student Council representatives from each class were in charge of the daily totals. North Glendale and Bristol were neck and neck until the very end (Thursday at noon) when North Glendale came out ahead with 2407 canned goods to Bristol's 2201! Both schools were able to donate close to 4500 canned goods. Over the past 4 years of the friendly "competition," both schools combined have donated close to 19,000 canned goods!

KHS Students Are Completing Many UNITE Projects

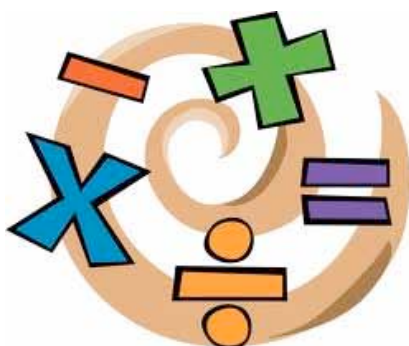
1) The MOTH project: In collaboration with Characters Unite and the USA network, numerous students submitted stories about being treated differently or surviving adversity and twelve were chosen to work with trainers to tell their stories in front of the students on Friday, December 2nd. These were videotaped and will be aired at some point in the future. Only five high schools in the country have been offered this opportunity, and KHS is now one of them!

2) We Are Kirkwood: The second round of "We Are Kirkwood" is now posted in the building and on the KHS webpage. Each quarter, as part of the KHS UNITE program, faculty are asked to nominate outstanding students who exemplify what it means to be a Kirkwood Pioneer. There is no set criteria – each faculty member chooses the person that they feel fits the bill. Criteria may include, but are not limited to, achievement, citizenship, school spirit, attendance, or modeling RESPECT 4.



3) The Big Return: KHS students have chosen to sell VAPUR water bottles and work with St. Patricks Center on a project for The Big Return.

4) LINK CREW: LINK CREW had a Cocoa and Cram to help freshmen study for finals. In addition, they have continued their work throughout the semester, with academic follow-ups in freshmen homerooms, and including them in tailgating before football games.



Pillowcases for Kids with Cancer

Students in the Apparel class at KHS spent a few days this semester using their sewing skills to help kids with cancer. They worked with an organization known as ConKerr Cancer. The organization



makes pillowcases for kids who have cancer, ages birth to eighteen. They brought the students the materials. The KHS students then sewed the pillowcases and signed a note wishing them a quick recovery. This is an ongoing project that the students really enjoy. If you are interested in helping the organization, feel free to email them at Cases4SmilesStl@hotmail.com

Sixth grade Problem Solvers take on Downtown Kirkwood!

Students in Mrs. Schowalter's sixth grade advanced problem solving class recently initiated a program designed to create a climate of academic excellence, respect, and safety for all students while in school and in the community. These inquisitive students identified a problem in the behavior displayed by some middle school students when they venture to downtown Kirkwood. In keeping with the school's Positive Behavior Intervention Support model, students enlisted the help of area business owners by asking them to notice and reward positive behaviors of Nipher students. The Kirkwood Taco Bell and McDonalds have both responded to this program by handing out Nipher "code" tickets when they see students practicing safety, respect, responsibility and self-control. These code tickets are then redeemed by students at Nipher for the chance to win recognition and small prizes. The problem solvers hope to get more participation from local businesses in the future and encourage all Nipher students to remember to practice the code!

52 Smiles from Westchester Kindergartners

Westchester kindergartners are spending a year delivering 52 smiles. The students are performing one small kindness each week. One example is each class took a day to help in the cafeteria after the last lunch shift. The kids wear a smile sticker home the day they do their service. Some of their other ideas for future "smiles" are raking leaves for neighbors, having a Grandparents' Day, celebrating their custodians, etc. The students are focusing on their school and family community.



Westchester Students Celebrate Veterans Day

Westchester kindergarten students hosted a Veterans Day event. The students invited their parents, any relatives who were veterans, and their buddy classes to join them for a patriotic concert in honor of the veterans. The children sang five patriotic songs and ended with inviting all veterans to the front of the stage where they were presented cards made by all the students at Westchester during Westchester family group time. Over twenty veterans were honored. Principal Chris Clay said, "It was very sweet and touching with our youngest students showing their patriotism and support of those who served our country."



Community Service Around the District

NKMS: Sixth grade students at North Kirkwood Middle School raised over \$5,200 as part of a school-wide math-a-thon for St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital. The students collected pledges and solved math problems out of a packet or online through the math-a-thon website.

Tillman: All Tillman staff and students participated in gathering items for A Soldier's Wish List, a volunteer group that provides soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan with some comforts while they are away from home and in service to our country. For the second year in a row, staff and students donated clothing, treats, and entertainment items (DVDs, puzzle books, sports equipment).

Nipher: Nipher students once again had an opportunity to take pictures with Tom the Turkey. The students helped to raise \$275 that was donated to the St. Patrick Center of St. Louis.



North Glendale: As part of their fall Book Fair, North Glendale participated in a program called One for Books (they have been doing this since 2006). The week before the Book Fair they collected spare change and dollars each day. Students received special privileges when they donated, like "Don a Hat for Dollars" and "Wear Crazy 'Dos (hair-dos) for Dimes." The money raised was split evenly between the teachers to buy books for their classrooms. Scholastic Book Fair then donated a book for every dollar raised to three national nonprofit organizations: Kids in Distressed Situations, Inc. (i.e. Hurricane Katrina), The National Center for Family Literacy, and Toys for Tots. The students raised money to provide 1,194 books in 2010 and 720 books in 2011. By working together they help connect kids with books.

KHS: Kirkwood Youth Service has completed many projects during the first semester. Just a few examples are packing food for local pets in need at the Bi-State Pet Food Pantry, tie dying t-shirts for the Greentree Festival, removing honeysuckle at Laumeier Sculpture Park, and helping at the Annual Run for Ovarian Cancer at Forest Park.

Robinson Service Learning

Veterans Day Assembly – Robinson students and staff participated in a Veterans Day Assembly on November 11, 2011. Honored guests were those family members who are veterans or currently serving in the armed forces. Kindergartners led the Pledge of the Allegiance, and students sang patriotic songs and listened to Lt. Commander Tom Appelbaum (Mrs. Appelbaum's husband) share stories and pictures of his time serving in the Air National Guard. Students also read a portion of the President's Veterans Day Proclamation.

Robinson received thank you letters from some of the veterans. Comments from veterans described the respectful group of students and one of the best recognitions they had ever received.

Following the assembly, students sent letters to veterans at the local VA hospitals. Over 400 letters, cards and pictures were mailed from Robinson students and staff.

Kirkcare Food Drive - Robinson students and staff collected 1592 food items for the Kirkwood community. Prior to the food drive, students read books about poverty and homelessness. Classroom discussions following the readings, focused on the root causes of poverty.

Several of the Robinson staff (Mrs. Frierdrich, Mrs. Uhles, Mrs. Jackson, Ms. Weidinger, Ms. Turken and Mrs. Morgan-Holland) helped distribute the food to families on Saturday, Dec. 10. The staff plans to continue to help Kirkcare distribute food to the families at their home once a month.



KHS Students Celebrated Veterans Day

Kirkwood High School students heard veterans speak in their social studies classes on Veterans Day. Teacher Frank Parini and Representative Rick Stream set up the day. With over 50 veterans in the building, every student was able to hear about three different experiences.

Service Learning at NKMS

Sixth Grade News:

So far this year, the sixth graders at NKMS have participated in Kids Helping Kids and Kids Helping Poverty and Homelessness. In their Kids Helping Kids rotation, the students walked and rode buses to other Kirkwood elementary schools in order to build relationships with the 5th graders, talking to them about what to expect in middle school. The 6th graders also created booklets with games, word searches, and mazes for the 5th graders.

In their Kids Helping Poverty and Homelessness rotation, the students made hygiene kits for The Shalom House, a women's shelter. A group of students also visited The Bridge (a homeless shelter) and performed a talent show. Students displayed a variety of talents including singing, dancing, juggling and playing musical instruments. At the end of the talent show, the students led the clients of The Bridge in line dancing. It was an incredible experience for all! Another group of students visited Kingdom House (a support for those living in poverty). Here, the 6th graders read stories to children about snowmen and decorated snowflakes to help brighten the kids' day. Finally, the 6th graders also knitted hats on a loom for babies and kids at The Kingdom House.

Seventh Grade News:

The 7th Grade Abilities Awareness group continues to learn about all of the unique abilities of people with disabilities. They had a presentation from members of the St. Louis Firing Squad Beep Ball Team, a baseball team for people with visual impairments. They also had a guest speaker, Mary Daniels, who is hearing impaired. She shared with the students her accomplishments in her life and education. In addition, the students continue to educate themselves about various disabilities in preparation for their Abilities Awareness Fair in the spring.

The 7th Grade Community Health Group has once again produced a very successful Blood Drive! They collected 116 usable pints, beating their goal of 115! They only had to turn away eleven

people, which is amazing. The kids did a fabulous job of helping to run the blood drive. They worked hard, took their responsibilities seriously, and did an all-around great job. Additionally, the rest of the group created decorations and cards for the holidays for kids at St. John's Children's Hospital.

The final 7th grade service learning group focuses on our veterans. They constructed neck gaiters and handmade greeting tags that they attached to the gaiters to thank the soldiers for their service. The gaiters will be sent to troops in Afghanistan. Another group created Public Service Announcements that will be broadcast to the school to honor troops and veterans. Students also updated and redesigned the NKMS Veterans display case. Current soldiers and veterans that attended NKMS are invited to send in their photo in uniform, as well as rank and branch of service to NKMS so they can be honored by the school for their sacrifice and service for America.

Finally, 57 care packages were constructed by another team of students in the veterans' service learning group. Students traveled to the Operation Homefront warehouse to deliver over 600 items they had collected during the "Care Package Supplies for the Troops" drive and then constructed care packages for the troops. They packed over 700 pounds of care package supplies.

Eighth Grade News:

One group of 8th grade students learned about hunger and poverty and then rolled up their sleeves to help KirkCare. They loaded flat beds after the canned food drive and packed boxes of food for local families in Kirkwood. Students worked together with students from a private school and retired citizens from the community.

Another group of students have been partnering with Angels' Arms to help children in foster care. Students began the project by doing some learning. They



selected one of three books, offered to learn more about foster care and related issues. Two books are memoirs: *I Beat the Odds* by Michael Oher and *Three Little Words* by Ashley Rhodes-Carter. The other is *Runaway*, which is fiction but captures the harsh realities of some kids' experiences in foster care. All of the books reveal the need for changes in the foster care system and why organizations like Angels' Arms are so important. Students

will continue to read the books throughout this school year and teacher, Melissa Banjak, even offered the books to the students' parents so

meaningful conversations can take place at home too. As part of the project, the kids made gifts for the children of Angels' Arms. Together, they created a beautiful holiday card for each family member, decorated and personalized a picture frame for each child, and assembled 24 gift "jars" with the ingredients for making rainbow soup, M&M cookies, and peppermint stick cocoa. (Each family will receive three.)

Students brought in over \$432 in gift cards/cash (along with one adorable Build-A-Bear)!



Nipher Students Celebrate Veterans Day

Nipher Middle School students participated in a Veterans Day celebration. Social studies teacher, Kerry Kew, had a student teacher who is a veteran. Phil Dunbar was willing to share his experiences as a Russian and Persian Farsi linguist in the Army with the 7th grade social studies classes. The students had many questions about his deployment to Iraq in 2003.

Nipher then hosted a breakfast for the students and their family members who served in the military. Students wrote letters to active duty military and veterans. Some of these letters were read during the morning announcements. A few of the letters were directly addressed to the students' family members that are currently serving over seas. Dr. Condon spoke to the students and their guest veterans and thanked them all for their service. Mr. Magruder, 6th grade social studies teacher, organized and hosted the reading of the letters.



KECC Helps with Hands On Kirkwood

For the past three years, classrooms at KECC have been hosting a day for our friends from the Educare Head Start Program to come for a visit. During each visit we have noticed that the children loved the sandboxes at KECC. This year we wanted to surprise the children from Educare with a sandbox. On

Saturday October 22nd, we had seven families with their children and staff members from KECC arrive at Educare and go to work on building the best sand box ever! The supplies to construct the sandbox were provided through a private donation and funds from KECC. The KECC children donated sand toys from their own playground and a container set out to collect additional ones. While the parents were constructing the sandbox and carrying the many bags of sand, the children were busy with Ms. Lillian and Mr. Terry. This group of talented artist were in charge of making the poster for Educare children, families, and staff. They

left arrows for everyone to follow to the "surprise." The children and staff from Educare were very surprised on the following Monday to see the new outside equipment. (story by Maria Crutcher)



Keysor First Graders Help Animals

The first grade team at Keysor has taken on animal protection and care as their year-long theme. During the months of October and November they focused on homeless animals and local shelters. They worked with the Humane Society of Missouri to lead a school-wide collection of items on their wish list (old blankets, towels, paper, and gently used toys for the shelter animals). They also made "doggie bandanas" to sell before school every Friday in October. Students bought them for their own pets, friends' pets and some donated the bandana back to an animal at the shelter to "dress up" a shelter animal for adoption. The students raised \$320 for the Humane Society of Missouri from their sales. Students took a field trip to the shelter to drop off the donations. They brought the money, Wish List items collected, and dog/cat cage toys they made. Students learned about responsible pet ownership on their field trip.

In November, they had a visit from Lisa Thess who ran a Humane Society Shelter in St. Charles County. She told the students about the work they did to rescue the animals from the flood of 1993 and how to make sure they keep their animals safe. The students also learned some of the Club Hope Curriculum during first semester to learn more about why it is important to take care of the environment and native animals. Next semester they are hoping to reach out to more organizations like the Wildlife Rescue Center to get a broader idea of how kids can really impact the welfare of the animals.



Kirkwood Students Team Up to Help Joplin

Many students from around the district teamed up with St. Lou Crew for Joplin to provide the children of Joplin with a special holiday season. NKMS students collected about 200 toys for the children, and KHS student, Lilly Karrer, worked on the collection at KHS. The Kirkwood Community also pitched in, dropping off numerous toys on the day of the drive. All together, about 500 toys were loaded into a truck on the NKMS parking lot.



In addition, the 6-east students at Nipher made items for the children. As part of their "following directions" unit, they made birdhouses, marshmallow shooters, ornaments, blankets, and snowy day and birthday boxes. The items were donated to a school counselor that works for Joplin

School District. She is going to use them to help boost the spirits of kids that are having a hard time or a bad day or just need a little pick-me-up.

Lilly Karrer was able to accompany the group to Joplin to deliver the gifts. They left at 5:00 AM. When they arrived, the group unloaded the toys and sorted them as to which age children should receive each one. They then spent hours wrapping the gifts, working through the night (but also singing carols, telling jokes and drinking hot chocolate). The next morning, the group set up the "Wonderland", complete with a visit from Santa! Lilly Karrer shares, "This whole trip inspired me and changed my life forever."



Keysor Student is Dedicated to Helping Hospitalized Children

The following story was written by Abbey Painter, 5th grade student at Keysor Elementary School:

Several years ago I went to the emergency room at Missouri Baptist Hospital because I was sick and was dehydrated. While I was there, I was bored and decided that kids in the ER needed something to do. A couple of years later, I called the hospital several times and arranged to have a book party with my friends so we could collect new books for kids to read at Missouri Baptist.

About a year later I was at Children's Hospital for an appointment and started asking questions about what happened at that hospital. I learned that many of the kids at Children's are there for a long time, so I decided they needed something to take their minds off of being sick. I contacted the hospital and asked if they could use a library on wheels for their patients. I did research online and worked with my dad's friend to design a mobile library book cart.

He built the cart for me and then I painted it with my mom. Then we threw an even bigger book party to collect new books. We donated the book cart to Children's Hospital.

Several months later my parents came home from a holiday party and said they had talked with someone who works to raise money for Children's Hospital. They throw a big gala every other year to raise money, and Mrs. Holley, whose husband was the principal at Kirkwood High School, was in charge of the party. She had heard about my book cart and asked if I would be involved with the gala. This year they were raising money for Healthy Kids Express, which is kind of like a big bus that goes to schools and helps kids get medical help if they need it.

I had lots of questions about Healthy Kids Express and was glad I got to visit the bus last summer. I heard that many of the kids who visit Healthy Kids Express don't have socks or have old socks with holes in them. Last year I worked with a classmate

and my REACH teacher at Keysor, Mr. Hayman, to start a group called Others First. I started to wonder if Others First might be able to collect new socks at school, which we could then donate to kids who visit Healthy Kids Express. Mr. Hayman thought it was a good idea, so we organized a sock drive called Box O'Sox last fall. I got lots of help from other kids, Mr. Hayman, and my fifth grade teacher, Mrs. McCoy. Thanks to Keysor kids and parents, we collected 878 new pairs of socks for Healthy Kids Express!

I did get to help with the fund-raising gala for Children's Hospital. I gave a speech on the stage at Fox Theater, telling all of the adults my story and how I had tried to help kids at the hospital. I have learned that not everyone is as lucky as we are and that there are really great programs out there that can help.

North Glendale Students Participate in Many Veterans Day Activities

The students of North Glendale took part in many different Veterans Day celebrations. Fifth grade teacher, Laura Sammon, was able to bring in her father, Carl Jones, to speak to the fifth grade students. The students also heard from two other veterans. Fourth grade students had Captain Pruitt visit their classrooms. He talked to the students about the history of the Army, their uniforms and how difficult it is for soldiers to be away from family. The third grade students made cards for the veterans for Veterans Day. They then continued to make cards for the next few weeks for the Holiday Mail for Heroes organization, which is a part of the American Red Cross, that were sent off on December 9th.



North Glendale First Graders Learn About Abilities

First Graders at North Glendale learned about Ability Awareness from Nancy Martin, a phenomenal woman, teacher, mother and friend. Nancy Martin told us what it was like growing up with cerebral palsy. She said instead of thinking about her disabilities, Nancy likes to talk about her abilities. Perhaps she cannot run or write her name, but she can drive her van and use a computer! Nancy reminded the students the importance of treating others with respect. She shared a story of when she was in first grade and was bullied because of how she looks and sounds. Her mom told her, "Maybe you didn't start it [bullying] but you CAN stop it." Nancy invited the "bully" over for a play date and the "bully" soon realized that they had more in common than appeared. They became friends and are still friends to this day. Nancy works as an administrator of the SSD Parent Education and Diversity Awareness Program. She is also an adjunct faculty member at Webster and Maryville Universities. During the Clinton administration, Nancy Martin served eight years as a White House Commissioner on Presidential Scholars and served four years as a St. Louis Civil Rights Commissioner. GO NANCY!!! (story by Elizabeth Stickley)

Kirkwood Students Participated in The Big Return

The Big Return is a campaign created by the St. Louis community to leverage the power of local youth to create big change in the world. Kirkwood students, along with over 100 hundred other St. Louis area schools, came together for a full day workshop to think creatively about social enterprises or projects they could launch to address the problems they see around them. Students and teachers from North Glendale, Westchester, Nipher, North Kirkwood Middle School and Kirkwood High School attended the event. Projects have been launched at each of the schools and will continue into next semester.



Nipher B-Leaves in the Power of Trees

What began as an awesome display of power by Mother Nature has manifested itself into a learning experience for Nipher students. In May 2011, a lightning strike made it necessary to remove several very old trees in the front of Nipher's building. Various Contact classes came together in October to launch an initiative to replace this important part of Nipher's landscape. Beginning with a school-wide broadcast of the "Lorax" in which students learned the power of conserving nature's resources, Nipher's student body was given the opportunity to purchase paper leaves to hang on a bulletin board tree in the student center. Collecting fifty cents to one dollar per leaf, the goal of \$175 was realized within three weeks. During this time the students broadcasted public service announcements via the Knightly News program, researched favorable growing conditions for various trees with Kirkwood grounds manager Jason Mueller, and planned the placement of five new trees. The digging and planting took place in the last weeks of November, and Nipher students reflected upon the importance of replenishing earth's life-sustaining resources.



Tillman Brownies Learn About Health and Poverty

Tillman 2nd grade Brownie Troop #2632, led by Jill Buchanan and Tracy Klebe, went to Kirkcare on Thursday, Dec. 1st. The girls brought food items with them and learned about how the organization works. The troop then broke into two groups and rotated to two different activities--

1. brainstorming places that they could reach out to the community and
 2. trying to shop for a family of four from the shelves of donated items.
- The girls had to stay within the credits that they were given and try to provide a healthy meal for the family. Prior to this outing, the girls had enjoyed making their own pizzas at Racanelli's and brainstorming about needs versus wants. This provided an interesting contrast to the food pantry visit.



Maria's Corner

UNITE strives to bring together all students in Kirkwood in the areas of service learning, character education and educational equity. I hope you have enjoyed service learning about the many amazing service learning projects that take place in the Kirkwood School District. I am so honored to get to work with the outstanding teachers and students who work so hard to serve others!

The Service Learning office in the Kirkwood School District is here to assist you! If your class or club has an interest in completing a service learning project and you need some help getting started, then call me! I can help you plan a project, find an organization to work with, make a contact, create meaningful reflections, or whatever else you need!

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