

INSIDE

September 2024

Vermilion County

**Danville Symphony Orchestra's
Matthew Sheppard & Kay Welch
excited for the 2024-25 Season**



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INSIDE

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September Issue:

Happy September! We hope you enjoy this month's issue celebrating Change in our community. You'll find an interesting Q&A with Mike Marron, Vermilion Advantage CEO, an introduction to the new YMCA Executive Director, a look at the ways Ireland Financial is expanding, updates from the City of Danville and Vermilion County and so much more.

On the Cover:

Danville Symphony Orchestra's Music Director Matthew Sheppard and Executive Director Kay Welch are excited for the 2024-25 Season. Photo by Rossi Studios Photography



Vermilion Advantage, through membership value, provides strategic leadership on critical large and small business issues - leading economic and workforce development, anticipating and responding to members' needs, addressing quality of life issues and providing a network of information and business contacts. Vermilion Advantage works regionally to bring opportunities to Danville and Vermilion County.

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Inside Vermilion County is a monthly publication created by Vermilion Advantage to showcase our members and share good news about Vermilion County. Each issue is mailed to all Vermilion Advantage members and over 1,000 copies are distributed throughout Vermilion County.

Christie Clinic: Investing in Vermilion County

In early 2023, Christie Clinic made a valuable investment in Vermilion County's future by opening a new facility at The Riverfront in Danville. This 20,000-square-foot center consolidates all Danville services under one roof, making it easier for patients to access the care they need. "Since opening the new facility, we can serve our patients under one roof and have had space to add additional specialty services," says Tara Hafner, R.T.(R), Christie Clinic's Clinical Services Manager.

Christie Clinic has long served the residents of Vermilion County, offering a comprehensive range of medical services. The clinic's team of 60 professionals includes 11 resident providers and 24 visiting specialists,

offering expertise in fields such as Cardiology, Dermatology, Family Medicine, Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, Radiology, General Surgery, Convenient Care and many others. "We provide primary care, specialty care, and walk-in convenient care to area residents," Hafner explains. The clinic's adaptability has been vital in keeping up with the evolving healthcare landscape, especially in the past few years.

Established in 1929, Christie Clinic has been a cornerstone of healthcare in East Central Illinois, providing personalized care through a unique blend of core values and a united vision. "We Listen. We Care." is more than just a mission statement; it's a commitment that drives every aspect of patient care.

One unique aspect of Christie Clinic's model is its physician ownership, which allows the clinic to prioritize patient care in a way that aligns with its mission. "Our providers and staff are known throughout the community for having a truly personal touch with patients," Hafner says. The clinic's ability to expand and innovate while remaining true to its values is a testament to the communities it serves.

The clinic has also expanded its reach beyond Vermilion County. In April 2023, the clinic welcomed Medical Hills Internists to its family, opening Christie Clinic at Medical Hills in Bloomington. This expansion reflects the clinic's dedication to meeting the region's growing needs.




Christie Clinic gives back to the community in a myriad of ways, including becoming a First Friday's sponsor. "Our team enjoys interacting with our community outside of the clinic setting," adds Hafner.

There are always opportunities available for those interested in joining the Christie Clinic team. "We're always looking to expand our team of dedicated members," Hafner notes. Job seekers can find more information on the Christie Clinic careers page at christieclinic.com/Careers.

To learn more about Christie Clinic and its services, visit christieclinic.com or connect with them on Facebook at [@christieclinic](https://www.facebook.com/christieclinic). Patients and prospective patients can also schedule appointments through the clinic's onlinescheduling.christieclinic.com.

YPN
"Off the Clock"
Events



September 21: Kickin' It Up a Notch with Kruger's ATA Martial Arts. Join us from 9-11am for Martial Arts & Self Defense training.

VERMILION ADVANTAGE
HUMAN RESOURCES AND SAFETY COUNCIL
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OSHA UPDATE SESSION

September 4, 2024
11:30-1:00pm
David S Palmer Arena
100 W. Main St. Danville

\$15 meeting fee includes lunch

A Few Minutes with MIKE MARRON

LAST MONTH, THE SOCIAL MEDIA VIDEO YOU SHARED ABOUT CHANGE IN THE COMMUNITY GENERATED A LOT OF INTEREST. WHAT WAS ON YOUR MIND AT THE TIME?

Everyone has heard and pretty much agrees with the saying that the definition of insanity is trying the same thing repeatedly and expecting a different result. Yet, we all are guilty of



repeating less-than-successful efforts. This County has been losing population for over 30 years, and nothing has reversed this trend. Everything we do needs to be on the table for a thorough evaluation of its effectiveness. We should be reevaluating everything - how we sell ourselves to the outside world, attract people to our community, and invest money to create an environment for businesses to succeed. We need to start truthfully acknowledging things that need fixing and finding ways to fix them, even if it is uncomfortable. For example, the unemployment rate is too high. We must acknowledge that our numbers are too high and completely unacceptable and then start doing something about it. We need to ask tough questions about how decisions are made and if there are beneficiaries of the status quo who use their influence to resist change. If things aren't changing for the better, then we must start asking why. Then, we need the intestinal fortitude to do something about it. It is the only way things will get better.

YOU HAVE A UNIQUE VANTAGE POINT - AS A LIFELONG RESIDENT, FARMER, FORMER VERMILION COUNTY BOARD CHAIR AND STATE OF ILLINOIS REPRESENTATIVE, AND CURRENT LEADER OF VERMILION ADVANTAGE. WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE COUNTY THAT MIGHT SURPRISE PEOPLE?

My perspective from my government experiences and seeing a large part of the world through my travels is that the challenges here aren't unique. Many communities around the country and the state have faced similar circumstances. Some have dealt with their circumstances more effectively, and others have not. We don't have to reinvent the wheel when we talk about fixing things. There are many examples of what to do and what not to do. We need the courage and foresight to learn from others who have already been down this road.

YOU OFTEN MENTION THE RESILIENCE OF AREA RESIDENTS, USUALLY WITH A GREAT RODEO ANALOGY. WHAT ADVANTAGES DOES RESILIENCE BRING?

Resiliency is just a fancier, more refined word for toughness. This may be the rodeo/John Wayne in me saying this, but toughness is one of the most admirable human qualities to me. It is going the extra mile when you don't think you can. It is getting knocked down time and time again, but refusing to stop getting up even though the pain of getting up is harsh. Toughness is a prerequisite for perseverance. That is why I believe so strongly in this community. No other community could weather the blows that this community has sustained over the last 30 years and stay in the fight. This community always closes ranks and unites, especially after bad news. We are tough, and I know we will persevere, but we must start moving in the right direction.

BEYOND RESILIENCE, WHAT OTHER ADVANTAGES DO VERMILION COUNTY RESIDENTS BRING AS EMPLOYEES, COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND NEIGHBORS?

Vermilion County residents are tremendously hard-working. They never fail to roll up their sleeves and get moving on a job or an important effort. Hard work will be required in the future, and it is a trait that can set us apart as a community. Vermilion County is also home to some of the most generous people I've ever met. Our people never fail to get behind a good effort. Even with our economic challenges, our community will hold its own in fundraising with much larger and more prosperous communities.

WITH THE QUAKER CLOSURE, VERMILION ADVANTAGE WAS PART OF THE RAPID RESPONSE TEAM TO HELP FORMER EMPLOYEES AND CHART A FUTURE PATH FOR THE QUAKER SITE. CAN YOU SHARE ANY UPDATES?

Just that I'm proud of all the partners in this process and how they've responded, there is also much more work to do. As expected, last month's unemployment numbers reflected the displaced Quaker workers and the numbers were not good. It isn't easy to replace these positions as they were at the very top of the pay scale in the County, but we have to continue to do everything we can to give these people, and all of our residents, options for the future. We want to keep them in our County.

THE COMMUNITY-WIDE RAPID RESPONSE EFFORT IS A PERFECT EXAMPLE OF THE INCREASING COLLABORATION TREND IN THE AREA. TELL US MORE ABOUT THIS RENEWED SPIRIT OF WORKING TOGETHER.

Working together will be critical to any successful efforts at fixing our problems. I am encouraged by the renewed spirit of cooperation, and there have been great examples of collaboration recently that give me hope, but there needs to be more of

this. For every example of groups and people working together there are still too many examples of people still not talking to one another to help solve problems. We all need each other because none of us have all the answers to our challenges, but together, we can get things figured out. If groups or organizations aren't willing to work together, they need to be called out. If elected officials from either party won't sit down together to figure out how to solve problems, then they need to be voted out. I am encouraged by the positive changes we've seen, but we need to see more.

WHAT ISSUES DO YOU SEE AS THE AREA'S TOP CONCERNS? WHAT CAN AREA RESIDENTS OR BUSINESS OWNERS DO TO TACKLE THOSE CONCERNS?

The top issues that need to be addressed are the high unemployment rate, a lack of ready utility infrastructure for industrial development, and a dearth of available trained workforce. Residents and businesses can help by supporting leaders and contributing to campaigns that acknowledge these problems and are committed to fixing them. Our leaders must be accountable for making needed upgrades to our infrastructure for us to be competitive with other communities to locate a major employer. Vermilion Advantage is committed, and we've spent much of our time recreating a workforce training program that accentuates the great assets we have at institutions like Danville Area Community College. Now, we need participation from our businesses. We need them involved in the program, and we will need help funding it. We are committed to solving this problem and are asking for that support from our members.

WHAT CHANGES ARE ALREADY OCCURRING THAT PEOPLE MIGHT NOT RECOGNIZE?

We are thoroughly reevaluating everything we are doing and gauging its effectiveness - how we invest money, why we do what we do, and

whether the tools in our toolbox are adequate. Vermilion Advantage is committed to utilizing the latest technology and arming ourselves with all the data available at our fingertips to be successful. We have already invested and will continue to invest in technology like AI, data analytics, and other tools to be more effective.

VERMILION ADVANTAGE HAS ALWAYS BEEN INVOLVED IN LEADING THE AREA INTO THE FUTURE. WHAT NEW THINGS ARE YOU AND YOUR TEAM WORKING ON RIGHT NOW?

We are currently working with the Federal Economic Development Agency to develop a sustainable, successful industrial redevelopment plan for the County that will hopefully be the blueprint for economic resurgence in the future. We are working on mapping out and bolstering our utility infrastructure where we can. That means efforts like partnering with telecommunications companies to build out our broadband network throughout the County. We are partnering with Vermilion County to recreate a land banking effort with the goal of blight removal and community redevelopment. We are working on a plan to aggressively market ourselves to communities outside of Vermilion County.

WHAT IS ONE THING AREA RESIDENTS CAN START OR STOP DOING TO MOVE VERMILION COUNTY INTO THE FUTURE?

The people of the County are critical to the success of this effort. The best thing they can do is to be supportive of these efforts. As I said earlier, real change isn't easy. It is very disruptive. That is why it rarely ever happens. I ask people to be objective and willing to support efforts that look different from past efforts. Real change may be hard, but it is what is required. The support of our people is critical. Likewise, people who are invested in the status quo or elected leaders who won't take the necessary steps to address these problems must be held accountable.

City of Danville Public Works: A Commitment to Innovation and Service

The City of Danville's Public Works Department is not just embracing change but leading it. With a focus on technology, improved processes, and future planning, the department has recently introduced innovations that are revolutionizing operations. These include cutting-edge technology that boosts productivity, accuracy, and cost tracking across all divisions. Director of Public Works David Ruwe says, "We have implemented a lot of technology in our everyday operations that has allowed us to more productively and accurately perform our work and track costs."

Public Works in Danville has three key divisions: Operations, Engineering, and Community Development. Each plays a vital role in maintaining and improving the City's infrastructure. The Operations Division handles maintaining the City's infrastructure, the discard of waste, and the removal of blight within the City. The Engineering Division oversees ongoing, larger-scale, and more long-term planning and projects that the City performs on its infrastructure, in collaboration with contractors and consultants. Community Development focuses on future city planning, develops the vision for what the City



will look like, and strategizes how to bring this vision to life.

The department's commitment to innovation is evident in several recent projects, including the construction of the Danville Aquatic Center at Garfield Park, Denmark Road Bridge over Lake Vermilion, Old Ottawa Improvements, the ongoing maintenance cycle of sealing roads, the installation of ADA sidewalk ramps across the City, and applying for and receiving grants that benefit the City, private homeowners

and small businesses. These projects enhance residents' quality of life and improve accessibility and safety. Looking ahead, the department is working on hiring a new City Engineer and implementing new software to better manage future operations. One of the most impactful projects on the horizon is the demolition of Bresee Tower, a necessary step to ensure pedestrian and motorist safety.

With 79 full-time employees and 51 part-time or seasonal workers, the Public Works Department is a significant force in maintaining Danville's infrastructure. The department also places a strong emphasis on community involvement and responsiveness. "Public Works cares about your concerns," says Ruwe, encouraging residents to report issues via the City's website. The Public Works team is always working publicly and behind the scenes, ensuring Danville is a well-maintained city for all its residents.



Vermilion County Recorder: Transforming Land Records for the Future

Thanks to the recent work of the Vermilion County Recorder's Office, access to land records has never been easier. The office's technological investments have streamlined operations and, more importantly, improved residents' access to records. One of the most notable changes has been the introduction of E-Recording, which has revolutionized how documents are submitted.

"Approximately 33% of our recordings now come in electronically, allowing people to submit their documents remotely rather than in person," says Crisi Walls, Vermilion County Recorder. This shift not only increases efficiency but also reduces the need for physical visits to the office, making the process more convenient.

The Recorder's Office is entrusted with preserving and providing access to vital land records that date back to the

county's founding in 1826. Walls describes her department's core duty as recording all documents pertaining to real estate, such as deeds, mortgages, liens, and easements, among others.

"Our main responsibility is to ensure that these documents become part of the public record, accessible to anyone who needs them," she says. The office records are frequently used by title companies, surveyors, attorneys, lenders, and municipalities, along with genealogist's or the public doing research.

Another significant development in the office is the new Condor service. Condor is responsible for back-indexing all the deeds in the county's records, a task previously done manually by the staff as time permitted. Walls is particularly proud of this achievement. "In a matter of weeks, the public will have access to every single deed recorded back to 1826

without having to come into the office in person and lug around huge old books," she says.

The Recorder's Office operates with a dedicated group of four staff members, each vital to the department's success. "We work

as a team and share the responsibilities of helping customers with whatever brings them into the office." This teamwork is essential in maintaining the office's focus on accuracy and efficiency.

Looking ahead, Walls envisions continued technological advancements in the Recorder's Office, with ongoing efforts to make the recording process more streamlined and accessible. She also highlights two additional programs being implemented: Citadel, which shields personal information for individuals in sensitive occupations, and Honor Rewards, a discount program for veterans. "These initiatives reflect our commitment to serving the community and ensuring that our records are accessible and secure," Walls adds.

All records can be accessed remotely through Fidlar Technologies. "We offer different subscription plans through Laredo or a pay as you go option through Tapestry," explains Walls. Visit Fidlar.com or contact Walls or Cindy Burton at the Recorder's Office for more information.

With the latest innovations and the team's dedication, Walls is transforming the Vermilion County Recorder's Office into a modern, customer-focused department while preserving the rich history embedded in the county's land records.



l-r: Karla Morgan, Crisi Walls, Annette McCrone, and Cindy Burton



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Danville Symphony Orchestra Filling the Community with Beautiful Music

With unforgettable melodies, exceptional musicianship, and the promise of something for everyone, change is definitely in the Vermilion County air as the Danville Symphony Orchestra (DSO) prepares for its 2024-25 season. The DSO's offerings will include an additional concert, a schedule filled with riveting concerts for young and old, and a new team of creative and visionary leaders at the helm.

After a nationwide search, the DSO was thrilled to name Matthew Sheppard as Music Director and Conductor. Sheppard replaced Jeremy Swerling, who served the DSO for over 25 years before his retirement. Executive Director Kay Welch leads the organization, along with Operations Manager Madeline Julian.

The DSO began in Danville in 1967, started by husband and wife Harry and Gail Adams, both Danville Area Community College professors.

There are typically about 60 players in a concert with a full orchestra. DSO musicians hail from across the Illinois region, especially Danville and Champaign-Urbana, as well as the Indiana cities of Bloomington, Terre Haute, Lafayette, and Indianapolis. "We typically have a full complement of woodwinds, brass, percussion, and strings, plus harp and keyboard," explains Sheppard. "This year, we do have one particularly unusual instrument from a guest artist: the harmonica as a soloist! Our soloist, Corky Siegel, has performed with orchestras across the world, and I can't wait for him to join us in Danville."



Welch Shares the 2024-25 Season Excitement

Saturday, September 21, 7:30 PM Dick Van Dyke Auditorium (DHS) *Earth, Wind, Water, Fire* with Guest Artist Trevor O'Riordan, clarinet.
"We're excited our opening night is a whole month early!"

Saturday, October 26, 7:30 PM DVD Auditorium (DHS) *Halloween Spooktacular* Family Friendly event featuring a side-by-side performance with DHS instrumentalists playing alongside DSO professionals, trick or treating and more.
"We're giving area students a chance to perform while seated next to a professional. It's a great opportunity for growth as a musician!"

Sunday, December 8, 2:00 PM DVD Auditorium (DHS) *Christmas at the Movies.*
"Matinee performance- you asked & we responded! The DSO will play LIVE, accompanying the animated feature, The Snowman and a video collage with excerpts from The Polar Express."

Saturday, March 22, 7:30 PM *Beethoven and the Blues* with Corky Siegel on blues harmonica.
"This evening will feature a guest harmonica player!"

Friday, May 9, 7:30 PM St. James United Methodist Church *Music of the Heavens.*
"This unique Friday performance features a change of venue with General Admission seating."



And Don't Miss.....Wednesday, March 26, Education Concerts will be held in the Dick Van Dyke Auditorium. This is a change from the usual May concert date to help teachers. "This year, it is entitled *Blueprints: Music by Design,*" says Welch. "Maestro Sheppard has prepared a fabulous Pre-concert Education Guide which teachers can use in the classroom to help prepare the students for what is,

for many of them, their very first live orchestral music concert.”

Last year’s education concert, *Storytellers of the Symphony*, was Maestro Sheppard’s brainchild. The concert explored how different composers can use the instruments of the orchestra to dramatic effect. “We explored six different pieces that showcased different types of storytelling through sound,” says Sheppard. “It was a blast. Teaching through metaphor can be especially valuable for young students who are experiencing the orchestra for the first time. Stay tuned for a new twist this season at our spring education concerts!”

For her part, Welch is excited for every concert but especially looks forward to *Christmas at the Movies*. “I don’t believe the DSO has ever accompanied a film before,” she says. This is a very popular trend in orchestral music, and I’m excited to see how the public receives it. We are making an effort to have more family-friendly events, and this is definitely one of those.”

Last Christmas, jazz/blues singer Shayna Steele brought down the house, with many patrons saying it was the best DSO concert in many years. Another highlight was trumpet player Brandon Ridenour, who came with *Beatles and Bach in May*. “His

performance was not only flawless but filled with sensitivity and feeling,” says Welch.

Get Involved

There are many ways to participate in the DSO season. Donating has never been easier—visit danvillesymphony.org and click the “donate” link, mail a check to the office, or stop by in person. The DSO Foundation works closely with donors who would like to endow a chair, include the symphony in an estate plan or make a larger gift.

This year, the symphony is planning a Christmas gift-wrapping service for donations. Community members are encouraged to stop by the office, grab a hot chocolate and cookie and let the DSO team wrap their gifts. Gift-wrapping volunteers and donations of wrapping supplies, cookies and hot chocolate are welcome.

Ushers for the concerts, including the daytime Education Concerts, are also always needed.

Sponsor

The DSO is currently selling program ads and seeking concert sponsors. This year’s sponsors will benefit from increased visibility with five concerts rather than four and more radio ads. The Halloween Spooktacular and the Music of the Heavens are available for sponsorship. To sponsor one of these

events, call the office at 217-443-5300 or email kay@danvillesymphony.org.

To learn more about the Danville Symphony Orchestra, volunteer or purchase tickets for the upcoming season, visit danvillesymphony.org or call the office at 217-443-5300. The organization can also be found on Facebook and Instagram.



“I want our community to know that the symphony is fun for everyone! The important thing is NOT what you wear or how you look. We want everyone to feel welcome to experience the incredible energy and JOY of seeing and hearing a live orchestra.” Kay Welch

Coffee Talk

September 10:
Danville Public Library,
319 N Vermilion St, Danville

October 8:
Country Financial, Amanda Galloway,
8 Southgate Dr., Unit B, Tilton



Welcome Matthew Sheppard, Music Director, Danville Symphony Orchestra

The community is thrilled to welcome Matthew Sheppard to his first season as DSO's Music Director. In his role, Sheppard collaborates with the administrative team and board to plan and execute the entire season of concerts.

What are your primary responsibilities? To program repertoire and conduct the orchestra in all rehearsals and concerts, helping make the music come alive off the page and into the hearts and minds of the audience.

Why did you choose your new role? I've known about the DSO for quite some time, having lived in Urbana for a few years studying for my doctorate in orchestral conducting. When I learned the DSO was searching for a music director, I researched to learn more about the orchestra, and it felt like it could be a great fit--and a homecoming of sorts.

Do you have any other ties to the community? Yes indeed! While living in Urbana, I had the pleasure of working with several DSO musicians. And, in a great example of how small the music world is, another orchestra member has a sibling with whom I worked when I lived back in Pennsylvania--and who has also performed with my wife, a professional violinist!

What do you hope to accomplish? I have two primary goals: to increase



the orchestra's artistic trajectory and integrate the DSO into the fabric of the Danville community as a cultural touchstone for all.

What do you love most about what you do? Communicating with others through the transformative power of music. "Others" can mean lots of people: the orchestra, the audience, school-age children, board members, and the community at large. At the end of the day, it's this communication through and by sound that makes orchestral music so powerful.

What would surprise people most about what you do? I think the biggest surprise is that we *are* actually doing something with our hands up there! From the audience perspective, it can sometimes seem inscrutable or mystical...but to a great orchestra like the DSO, every gesture has meaning, and it's the conductor's responsibility to transmit meaning through movement. Just as an instrumentalist can hear whether a note or phrase lands effectively, we conductors can feel whether or not our gestures are working.

How did your career begin? I was an undergraduate student studying music performance (violin) and music education at Penn State University and was required to take an intro course on conducting. From the first time on the podium, something clicked. Conducting was the perfect combination of teaching and performing, and I loved it. Having the opportunity to study new and different music, perform with multiple ensembles, and always be both performing and teaching is the joy of conducting. Once I realized that, I embarked on this career through graduate study and hands-on experience conducting dozens of ensembles over the past two decades.

What have you enjoyed most about Vermilion County? So far, I'd say three things, in this order: 1) the people, 2) the beautiful outdoor spaces, and 3) the food.

THANK YOU TO OUR GOLF OUTING SPONSORS!



We extend our thanks to all the generous sponsors who made this year's golf outing a huge success. Your support played a crucial role in the 32nd Annual Vermilion Advantage Golf Outing, and we look forward to continuing our partnership in the future.

Registration Area Sponsors:



Doug Ireland's Financial Business Growing into a Family Affair

We recently talked with Doug Ireland, Financial Advisor with Ireland Financial Partners, a part of the Prudential Advisors team, in Danville. He shared exciting business developments and wise words for anyone hesitant to seek financial advice.

First, tell us about Ireland Financial Partners. Ireland Financial Partners offers investments, life insurance, long-term care insurance, annuities, 401k plans, retirement planning and financial planning.

We understand you have expanded the business. Tell us about the new venture. I brought my wife, Stacey, on board with our Ireland Insurance and Accounting Group in August. This part of the business offers individual medical, dental and vision insurance, including Marketplace and Medicare and Medicare supplements. We also offer group benefits for businesses.

We specialize in commercial insurance as well as home and auto insurance options. A big thing I'm seeing right now is the need for cybersecurity insurance, which we also offer.

My goal was to create a family financial practice in Danville. Stacey also offers expertise in tax and accounting services. I think of us as an "all-inclusive" place for financial services.

Why did you decide to make the change? The company now better reflects all we do. We offer full financial planning services, much more than just insurance. We're still a part of the Prudential team and now provide the full range of financial services a person, family or business might need.

What is one thing you'd like people to know about your business? Stacey and I both love helping people! Our aim is to offer services that help as many people as possible. While we may not be able to assist everyone, we want to offer financial services in as many ways as possible.

What new things are happening in your industry? The biggest change I'm seeing is on the technology side of things. There are more opportunities for people to access their information online. In our financial planning business, as an example, you can get online and see everything as we create it.

What would surprise people most about your business? So often, people feel they need to have their finances in order to come speak to us. That is the biggest misconception. We know it can be a lot! We understand finances can be emotional and that's why we're here. We work with people, not to be perfect, no one ever is, but we'll work on your finances together. We are here to help people find their path. I know so many people who are great savers or money managers, but they might not know how to plan. I



help them see that maybe they can afford to retire, take the dream trip, or do something special for a grandchild.

Tell us about your upcoming events in Covington. I'm hosting *Coffee Connection with Doug Ireland* every third Thursday of the month. It's at 10 AM EST at Juli's Java on the square in Covington. This is a chance for anyone to come and ask me any financial or insurance-related questions. We won't get into deep or private details since it's a public space. But anyone with general questions can ask me. People don't need to feel obligated to do business with me while they are there. This is a place for people to have a cup of coffee and get their questions answered.

What are you most proud of related to your work? My biggest accomplishment is working with so many great people and being able to help them, especially with their retirement. My role is to help everyone have a better tomorrow.

Tell us about your community involvement. I've been here my whole life and being a part of the community is so important to me! My friends and family know if there is a need, I'm ready to help. I have been a member of Danville Sunrise Rotary Club and Danville AMBUCS. I have also participated in the Heartwalk, Relay for Life, and Kickapoo Rail Trail and coached youth baseball, hockey and basketball.

What do you see as Vermilion County's greatest strengths? The generosity of this community and the civic organizations is amazing. Vermilion County is beautiful and has so much to offer with our parks, outdoor recreation, local events and arts. There is always something to do here.

How can someone learn more about your business? Call or stop by Ireland Financial Partners, 28 W. North Street, Suite 101, Danville, IL 61832. Our phone number is 217-516-7778. Visit prudential.com/advisor/douglas-Ireland or email doug.ireland@prudential.com.

YMCA Names Laura Floyd as New CEO

When Laura Floyd stepped into her new role as the Chief Executive Officer of the YMCA in Vermilion County, IL, she brought with her a wealth of experience and a fresh perspective. After 35 years with the YMCA, starting from working at the front desk in Cleveland, Ohio, Laura brings excellent ideas into this new chapter. Transitioning into this role has been exciting for Laura. "I've always loved what the Y stands for—Youth Development, Healthy Living, and Social Responsibility—and now I have the opportunity to impact this community," she says.

Laura's journey with the YMCA began in middle school. Her friends spent their afternoons at the Y, and she longed to join them. "My mom didn't want us around water because she couldn't swim, and neither could we,"



Laura recalls. "I decided then that I would work at the Y when I grew up and also learn to swim." That determination led her to a lifelong career with the organization, rising through the ranks from the front desk to the CEO's office.

In her new role, Laura is focused on making a lasting impact in Vermilion County. "One of the major benefits of the Y is how we impact lives through

our youth programs, promoting healthy living, and fostering social responsibility," she says.

Though she's only been in Vermilion County for about a month, Laura is eager to build relationships and become deeply rooted in the community. "I like the family feeling you get in the Midwest," she says. "The warm welcome I've received from the Silver Sneakers participants, youth and teens, staff, board members, and all the members has been incredible. This Y feels like family."

Looking ahead, Laura has ambitious goals for the next three years. She aims to make the YMCA a financially thriving organization, expand programming for teens and youth, and open the doors for even more people to participate in the Y.

"The best advice I've ever received is to be my authentic self, and that hard work pays off," Laura shares. "I'm committed to helping others and ensuring everyone that comes through our doors has the opportunity to reach their fullest potential."

New Member Snapshot: Ceader's Collision & Dream on Restoration



The team: Joey White and a dedicated team of ten employees.

Years in business and location: Over 20 years @ 413 N. Walnut, Danville (with access and visibility from Vermilion Street).

What's new? New ownership, some new and familiar faces with the same quality craftsmanship.

Business Specialty: "Our knowledge in the industry. We offer restoration and a very high-end paint line by Axzo Nobel that no other shop in the area provides. We strive to exceed our customers' expectations."

What might surprise people? "What we do for our customers besides repair their vehicle. We take a stressful situation and make it a little easier and brighter!"

Big news: Named 2024 Small Business of the Year by the Small Business Development Center. State Senator Paul Paraci also recognized the company for small business success. "I was not expecting this at all. This award gave me the strength and the drive to push forward and keep everything moving in the direction of success. I want everyone to know my team played a significant part in this award. Above all, I owe it all to God - He made my dreams come true."

What is the best thing about Vermilion County? "The hometown vibe and the small-town backing."

Employment Needs: Looking for skilled autobody technicians.

What is the best way to reach you? Visit ceaderscollisionrepair.com, find us on Facebook or try the good old-fashioned way—stop in and see us!

Someone to Know: Don and Deanna Witzel

After 25 years serving the community as the co-owners and operators of the local McDonald's, Don and Deanna Witzel are stepping into their well-deserved next chapter as grateful retirees.

The couple has been with McDonalds for over 40 years. Don started at McDonald's as a crew member in 1980 in Las Vegas, NV. Deanna started at McDonald's as a crew member in 1982 in Peoria, IL and transferred to Las Vegas McDonald's in 1987, where she met Don. On July 1, 1999, they purchased four restaurants in Vermilion County—two in Danville, one in Hoopeston and one in Oakwood. Since then, they have opened locations in Georgetown, Main and Bowman in Danville and Covington.

"People are often surprised we started at minimum wage," says Don. "McDonald's is not a hamburger flipping dead-end job. It can be a very rewarding career."

Deanna says she started at McDonald's because she needed a high school job and stayed because she loved it. "It's the best place," she says. "I love the interaction with customers and employees, just the McDonald's magic."

The pair, whose official titles are now Papa and DeeDee, look forward to spending more time with family and traveling. What will stay the same is their commitment to helping make Vermilion County a better place.

The Witzels have long supported community causes, large and small, and have quietly given back behind the scenes in hundreds of ways. "My passion now is to help make dreams come true for other people and our community," says Deanna. "I'll stay involved with Step Up, Vermilion Advantage and the Danville Housing Authority. Don plans a simpler, more relaxed life - gardening and spending time at our family cabin. We also plan to do more traveling."

Don and Deanna are especially looking forward to spending more time with their children - Rob and Halley Witzel and Katie and Jason Spencer, all of Danville. They say the best part of retirement will include extra time with grandchildren Parker, 2½, Ellie, 18 months and a second granddaughter due early December. "They are the light of our lives!" adds Don.



5:00-7:00PM

October 10, 2024
Fischer Theatre

158 N Vermilion St., Danville

October 24, 2024

Fisher National Bank

2490 N Vermilion St., Danville

Please RSVP to Dana at
drowland@vermilionadvantage.com



11:30AM-1:00PM

September 18, 2024

"How 2 Series" Luncheon

Vermilion Hall at DACC, Room 302
How to Find Comfort in Public Speaking
with Jackie Vinson

October 16, 2024

"How 2 Series" Luncheon

Vermilion Hall at DACC, Room 302
How to Create Synergy: Collaboration and
Teamwork with Logan Cronk

Please RSVP to Dana at
drowland@vermilionadvantage.com



11:30AM-1:00PM

September 25, 2024

Speaker: TBD
Palmer Arena

October 23, 2024

Keynote Speaker: Doug Ireland
Palmer Arena

Please RSVP to Dana at
drowland@vermilionadvantage.com

ALL A's ACCOLADES, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, ACHIEVEMENTS

Don and Deanna Witzel, Owner/Operators of the Witzel Family McDonald's announce Employees, Students & Athletes of the Month



August Employee of the Month:

- Hometown Stars McDonald's.....Marrisa Perez
- Classic Rock-n-Roll.....Mauro Bautista
- Oakwood.....Anniyah Gray
- Georgetown.....Elizabeth Walls
- Hoopeston.....Natsuki Widdicombe
- Neighborhood McDonald's.....Rosa Angel
- Covington, IN.....Ruth Bell



Check out the news, flyers, and events our members have to share for May on our website! Just scan the QR code!



If you'd like your flyer posted to our website, please email it to drowland@vermilionadvantage.com by the 25th of the month.

Members of Vermilion Advantage, NFP In Good Standing by Level of Membership

ADVANTAGE DIAMOND DIRECTOR: (Level \$10,000+)

- Aqua Illinois, Inc.
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- Danville Sanitary District
- First Financial Bank
- Golden Nugget
- Iroquois Federal
- Old National Bank
- OSF HealthCare Sacred Heart Medical Center
- Owens Corning Danville
- Vermilion County Government

ADVANTAGE GOLD CROWN DIRECTOR: (Level \$6,000 - \$9,999)

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- Christie Clinic
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- Danville Country Club
- Danville Metal Stamping
- Danville School Dist. #118
- Hyster-Yale Group
- McLane Midwest
- Mervis Industries
- REG Danville, LLC
- Republic (formerly Allied Waste)

- thyssenKrupp Dynamic Components Danville, LLC
- Vermilion Development, Inc.
- Viscofan USA, Inc.
- Watchfire Signs
- Westwood Equity Partners

ADVANTAGE MILLENNIUM MEMBER: (Level \$2,500 - \$5,999)

- AmerenIP
- Bose Corporation
- Carle Hoopeston Regional Health Center
- City of Hoopeston
- CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP
- Curry Construction
- Double S Liquid Feed Service, Inc.
- Fisher National Bank
- Genpact
- Greenwood, Inc.
- Illini Radio Group
- Invenergy
- McDonald's c/o DND Witzel Enterprises, Inc.
- Village of Oakwood

ADVANTAGE EXECUTIVE MEMBER: (Level \$1,000 - \$2,499)

- Acton & Snyder, LLP
- Advanced Medical Transport East
- Anderson Electric, Inc.
- APPI Energy
- AT&T Illinois

- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois
- Bowman Estates
- Brainerd Chemical Midwest, LLC
- Chittick Family Eye Care
- County Markets / Niemann Foods
- Depke Gases & Welding Supplies
- EnvirOx, LLC
- Everside Health
- Express Employment Professionals
- Faulstich Printing Company
- First Farmers Bank & Trust
- First Savings Bank of Danville
- Flex-N-Gate Plastics
- Harrison Steel
- Heritage Development
- Heritage Health Therapy & Senior Care
- Hubner Industries, LLC
- IL Chapter Nat'l Electrical Contractor's Assoc.
- Julius W. Hegeler II Foundation
- Meijer
- Neuhoff Family Broadcasting
- Prospect Bank
- Right Way Roofing
- Rodriguez Cuts
- Runnings
- SIHF Healthcare
- The Sygma Network
- thyssenKrupp Crankshaft Company
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Members of Vermilion Advantage, NFP (continued)

Tractor Supply Co.
Village of Catlin
Voltus
WITY Illiana Communications, LLC

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(Level \$500 - \$999)**

112 Wine & Coffee
Adecco Employment Services
Alexander Concession & Catering
All Source
Allied Capital Title
Anthem Chevrolet
Arcadia Care of Danville
Arnold's Office Supply
Arrow Ambulance
Autumn Fields Adult Community of Hoopeston
AWEBCO
B & B Construction
Beltone Hearing Aid Service
Berns, Clancy, & Associates, P.C.
Big Thorn Farm & Brewery, LLC
Bill Smith Auto Parts
Boxcar Books & Vinyl
Bricks and Ivy Sports
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Ceader's Collision
Central States Distribution Service
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Classic Homes Realty
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Country Financial - Braxdyn Keeran
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CU Trade Services/Kuchefski Heating & Air
Custard Cup
D.I. Fire & Safety
Danville Area Board of Realtors
Danville Dans
Danville Gardens, Inc.
Danville Public Building Commission
Dawson Logistics
Dean Crandall – Morgan Stanley
Delanois Law, LLC
Dines Machine & Mfg.
Donohue & Associates, Inc.
Dougherty Group
DTI Office Solutions
Duncan Farms
DynaChem, Inc.
Eartrise Energy
East Central Building Trades
East Central IL Community Action Agency
Edward Jones (Marcus Provost)
Enel Green Power Salt Springs
EPIC Insurance Midwest
Exit 210 Saloon
Farnsworth Group
FLP Wealth Advisors of Raymond James
Full-Fill Industries, LLC

G & C Diagnostics
Gailey Eye Clinic
Gibson Teldata, Inc.
Greene Galvanized Stairs
Greenlight Landscaping
Hampton Inn & Suites
Health Alliance Medical Plans
Healthy Prep Meal Service
Heartland Properties, Inc.
Hefty Seed Company
Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites/Hampton Inn & Suites
Hoopeston Coin Laundry
Hoopeston Ford
Huber & Mudd, LLC
IBEW Local 538
Illini Castings, LLC
Illume Counseling and Wellness Center
Insurance Providers Group
International Greenhouse Co.- Danville
Jersey Mike's Subs
Jimmy Johns
Jocko's Depot / Diveley Development Corp.
Juke Gaming, LLC
Kick Me Shirts
Kickapoo Adventures
Kruger's ATA Martial Arts, Inc.
Kruger-Coan-Pape Funeral Home
Kurland Steel Co.
Landmark Credit Union
Leatherneck Hardware, Inc.
Lebanon Seaboard Corporation
Lisa L. Goodner Agency - Farmers Insurance
LMR Promotions
Local, The
Loman Ray Insurance Group - Hoopeston
Longview Bank & Trust
Love's Travel Stop
Merrell Pest Control
MH CPA, PLLC
Mini Mall Storage
Molly's Bar & Grill
Motley Food
Newton's Cleaning & Restoration, LLC
Norah's Smokehouse
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Park Electric Motor Service, Inc.
Portal Entertainment Group
Randal Ashton, DDS
Ray O'Herron Company
RE/Max Ultimate
Rector Solar
Ridge Plumbing Contractor
Robinson Chiropractic, Ltd. – Danville, Hoopeston, Westville
Russell Leigh & Associates
Rustic Charm/RC Boutique
Scanics
Scooter's Coffee
Second Church of Christ
Sentry Roofing, Inc.
Servicemaster
Seven Point
Sheridan's Appliance Center, LLC
Shore Wealth Management
Silgan Containers
Souza Financial Group
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Staff Management

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T.H. Snyder Co.- Architectural Woodwork Div.
Tee Pak Credit Union
Terminix Services, Inc.
The Jumpoff
The Pump
The Slotted Spoon
Thompson's T-Shirts
TownePlace Suites
Toyota of Danville
Treasured Roots
Tridan International, Inc
Trillium Staffing
Turtle Run Golf & Banquet Center
Two Roads Wellness Clinic
University of IL Community Credit Union
Venture Mechanical Contractors, Inc.
Vermilion Chevrolet
Vermilion County Conservation District
Vermilion County Title, Inc.
Vermilion Regional Airport Authority
Vermilion River Beer Company
Vermilion Valley Railroad
Veterans Affairs Illiana Health Care System
Village of Fithian
Village of Tilton
Visiting Angels Homecare Agency
WCIA Nexstar Broadcasting
Westville CUSD #2
WHPO 101 Country
WKZS/WSKL Radio
Wolf Creek Golf Club
Wright's Heating and Air
Zindars Property Management, LLC

**ADVANTAGE HONOR MEMBER
(Level \$300 - \$499)**

Aquality Solutions, LLC
Automation International, Inc.
AutoZone Distribution Center
B&K Investments, Inc. (Wendy's)
Bismarck-Henning CUSD #1
Brunswick Apartments
CDS Office Technologies
Central Illinois Family Practice
Cooper East Lake Animal Hospital
Croze Insurance
Crowder CPA's, Ltd
Culver's – T/Kat, Inc.
Cunningham, Inc.
Danville Housing Authority
Danville NECA-IBEW Electrical JATC
David S. Palmer Arena
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DP Supply, Inc. (formerly Danville Paper & Supply)
East Lynn Fertilizer
ERH Enterprises, Inc.
Fairchild Animal Hospital
Fancy That Bridal & Special Occasion
Fehr Graham
First Presbyterian Church
Georgetown Wood & Pallet Co., Inc.
Gibson Health of Hoopeston
Glesco Electric, Inc.
Hayley Siefert, Broker - Keller Williams Real Estate, TREC
Illinois Small Business Development Center
Jameson Steel Fabrication
Jenna Wirth State Farm

Members of Vermilion Advantage, NFP (continued)

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 Lakeview College of Nursing
 Liberty Village
 McDowell Builders, Inc.
 McLaughlin Asset Management
 Myers Carpet Weavers
 Newell Township Supervisor
 North Vermilion Family Dental
 Oakwood CUSD No. 76
 Olympic Hardware
 Rosecrance
 Servpro of Vermilion County
 Shortz Family Farms, Inc.
 Sleep Inn & Suites
 Sleepy Creek Vineyards
 Sunset Funeral Home, Memorial Park & Cremation Center
 Teasdale Foods
 The Myers Group at Morgan Stanley
 Vermilion County Health Department
 Vermilion Healthcare Foundation, Inc.
 Vermilion House
 Village of Bismarck
 Village of Henning
 Village of Potomac
 WhiteSmith Marketing Group, Inc.

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All Brands Appliance Repair Services
 All Vermilion Wrestling
 Allen Money Talks
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 American Legion Post #210
 Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite Bodies of the Valley of Danville
 Arts In The Park, Inc.
 Aunt Martha's Health & Wellness
 Baby Blessings Ultrasound Studio
 Balloons Over Vermilion, NFP
 Be Real Be Humble
 Berzerker's Grill & Catering
 Beside Still Waters
 Better Business Bureau – Central Illinois
 Birth To Five, Illinois
 Boys & Girls Club of Danville
 Briana's Creations
 Brown, Amy
 Bubbles & Bandanas Pet Grooming
 C.O.R.E. Re-Entry, INC.
 CASA of Vermilion County
 Casey Toler Creative
 Center Street Productions
 Central Christian Church
 Child Care Resource Service
 Community Development Institute/Head Start
 Community Foundation of East Central IL
 CRIS Healthy-Aging Center
 CRIS Rural Mass Transit
 Crosspoint Human Services
 DACC Foundation
 Danville Area Labor Management Council
 Danville Area Living - Shannon Schroeder
 Danville Area Visitors Bureau
 Danville Art League

Danville Boat Club
 Danville Christian Academy
 Danville Family YMCA
 Danville Farmer's Market
 Danville Library Foundation
 Danville Lions Club
 Danville Noon Rotary
 Danville Public Library
 Danville Public School Foundation
 Danville Sunrise Rotary
 Danville Symphony Orchestra
 Danville Technology Services
 Danville Tennis Center
 Davis Bookkeeping
 Deer Creek Manor
 Dicken, Josef "Joe Voiceover"
 DLO Musical Theatre (formerly Danville Light Opera)
 Downtown Danville, Inc.
 East Park Church of Christ
 Eastern Illinois Foodbank
 Edward J. Ryan, CPA
 Erickson, Gary C.
 Fair Hope Children's Ministry
 Fellowship of Christian Athletes
 Festival of Trees
 First Church of the Nazarene
 First Presbyterian Church of Hoopeston
 Fischer Theatre
 Friends of Kickapoo Rail Trail
 GAO Grotto / Denmark Park Corporation
 Gateway Family Services of Illinois
 Georgetown Fair
 Georgetown Ladies Community Club
 Gregory's Academy of the Arts
 Habitat for Humanity of Danville, Inc.
 Help Ministries d/b/a Women's Care Clinic
 Highland Gutters
 Hoopeston Multi Agency Service Center
 Hoopeston Public Library
 Humane Society of Danville
 Hussman, Danny
 Illiana Home Inspection, LLC
 Immanuel Lutheran Church
 Immanuel Manor, Inc. – Senior Residences
 Informed Decisions
 Ireland Financial Partners
 Iroquois Economic Development Association
 Jessica Hogue - Northwestern Mutual
 Julie's Specialty Shop
 Just Breathe Alternative Medical Solutions, LLC
 Keep Vermilion Co. Beautiful, Inc.
 Kiwanis Club of Danville
 Kruger Tuckpointing
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 Laura Lee Fellowship House Association
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 Love INC of Vermilion County
 MASH-C Farms Livestock, LLC
 Melt A Heart
 Midwest Print & Sign Specialists, LLC
 Monyok Leadership Coaching
 Mpower Counseling
 Muehl, Phil
 Mustard Seed Christian Daycare
 My Happy Place
 New Directions Treatment Center
 NuPush Weight Loss Clinic
 Oakwood Area Food Pantry, Inc.

Oakwood Public Library District
 Olympic Hardware
 Our Nations - Mine and Yours
 Patriot Pure Water Conditioning
 Prairielands Council – Boy Scouts of America
 Project Success of Vermilion Co., Inc.
 Red Mask Players, Inc.
 River Bottom Farms Topsoil
 Rob Lancaster - Lancaster Construction
 Roland Lim Photography
 Rossi Photo Studios
 Rossville Alvin CUSD #7
 Roxy's House at Blue Heron Ranch
 Salvation Army
 Save the Lorraine Foundation
 Schlarman Academy
 She Said Danville, LLC
 Snapped By Savannah
 Spotless Detail, LLC
 Spotlight Performing Arts
 SpotOn
 Spring Hill Cemetery
 St. James United Methodist Church
 STEP Recovery Center
 Stone Imagery
 Super Penguin Books
 Survivor Resource Center
 Tarquini's
 Teague, Tricia (The Trep School)
 The Vortex
 Transformation Health Coach
 Trinity Lutheran School
 Turner Virtual Solutions
 United Way of Danville Area
 University of IL Extension., Vermilion Co. Unit
 URE Home Daycare
 USI Insurance
 V.F.W. Jewell Whyte Post 728
 Vermilion Co. Conservation Dist. Foundation
 Vermilion Co. Fair and Expo
 Vermilion Co. Farm Bureau
 Vermilion Co. Museum Society
 Vermilion Co. War Museum
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 Vermilion Voles Vintage Baseball Club
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 Visit Downtown Hoopeston
 Westville American Legion Post 51
 WorkSource Enterprises

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Anderson, Jim
 Beynon, Mark
 Block, Gerald R.
 Drude, Charles (Bott's Locksmith)
 Fields, David L.
 Franklin, Susan (Franklin's Farm Blooms & Heirlooms)
 Lee, Todd
 Mulvaney, Jeanne
 Nicholls, Bill
 Resh, Gary (Resh Frame Shop)
 Rokosch, Donald (Retired M.D.)
 Spezia, John (Reach 1 Coach 1)
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 Swires, Bob
 Ward, Jacqueline
 Wood, Jim



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