

Schools of Thought

Newsletter of the Huntington School District

Summer 2007

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Class of 2007 Graduates

It was the perfect moment for the 249-member strong Huntington High School Class of 2007. The group, which includes an impressive array of scholars, athletes, musicians and artists, graduated in front of a capacity crowd of 2,500 that packed Blue Devil Field at the school's 146th annual commencement.

The event marked the end of a long journey for what many consider to be one of the most distinguished classes in recent memory. Wearing traditional blue and white robes, the students marched to their seats to a standing ovation.

Student Government President Rachel O'Connor offered classmates heartfelt words of advice. "As we graduate from high school today, it is my hope that you have taken all that you can learn from the people surrounding you," she said. "I also hope that as you enter the next chapter of your life that you not only continue learning, but that you continue giving as you have done these past years, because each of you has the exceptional ability to help others grow."

The graduates earned millions of dollars in scholarships and left a trail of academic greatness. The group took 282 Advanced Placement tests and gained acceptance into the top universities in the country, including Harvard, Yale, Cornell, Dartmouth, Brown and the University of Pennsylvania.

Superintendent John J. Finello asked graduates to look to the future. "Your choice of a career will fill a large part of your life," he said. "To find contentment, fulfillment and peace in your life's journey you must do what you believe is great work. The way to do great work is to love what you do. Keep looking until you find it. Do not settle. When the feelings of the heart and the thoughts of the mind merge, you will know that you have found it."

Principal Carmela Leonardi asked students to believe in themselves. "Set your goals and solidify your dreams and then act as if these were already a reality by devoting your energies to acquiring the skills that

are going to prepare you for the career of your choice."

Class of 2007 member Thomas Lee introduced his father, School Board President Robert T. Lee, who told graduates they would always be remembered as the class that shined. "Remember that no one is ever a success all by themselves," said. "Successful people always have a support network of teachers, parents, mentors and teams, all working toward a common goal."

Valedictorian Matthew Rienzo, who will attend Harvard, told classmates they are heading into uncharted personal waters. "At this time in our lives, we are pioneers, about to step fearlessly into the realm of the unknown," he said. "While there is much to look forward to in our future, this transition will be unlike anything we have ever experienced."

Salutatorian Hannah Payne, who will study science at Dartmouth in the fall, implored graduates to be grateful. "As we make our way to the top of the roller coaster, looking forward to the journey ahead, remember how we got here," she said. "Without our parents, teachers and friends, we would not be here today. On behalf of my classmates, thank you. And to the Class of 2007: Thanks for a great four years."



Valedictorian Challenges Classmates to Capitalize on their Opportunities

Class of 2007 valedictorian Matthew Rienzo is headed to Harvard University as one of the most accomplished and well-liked Huntington students ever. He offered classmates plenty to ponder during a poignant and well-received valedictory address.

“Yes, this is a good evening indeed, because at the end of this ceremony lies the hope of freedom for each one of us,” Mr. Rienzo said. “At this time in our lives, we are pioneers, about to step fearlessly into the realm of the unknown. While there is much to look forward to in our future, this transition will be unlike anything we have ever experienced. We all await the next chapter of this saga with anticipation, excitement and some terror. Some of us already know exactly where we will go and what we will do. Others have only a vague idea of what our futures hold. Whatever the case may be, enjoy the new freedom that awaits us.”

Among his after school activities, Mr. Rienzo was a member of the math team and the competitive marching band where he was a clarinet section leader. He was captain of the fencing team, a member of the National Honor Society, Math Honor Society and wind ensemble and a copy editor for the school newspaper, *The Dispatch*.

Mr. Rienzo was named a National Merit Scholarship Finalist and earned an AP Scholar with Distinction Award as well as winning Suffolk music, math and science honors. He was a semifinalist in the National Chemistry Olympiad and was chosen to participate in the national chemistry camp earlier this month in Colorado.

Despite an extremely challenging academic class load and significant after school commitments, Mr. Rienzo found the time to tutor fellow students several hours each week, volunteer at Huntington Hospital and work as a high school lab assistant.

In closing his valedictory address he gave his fellow students a bit of advice. “One day, each of us will find his or her niche, and flourish like a blooming sunflower,” Mr. Rienzo said. “But keep in mind that a sunflower, once it blooms, ceases to trace its daily arc across the sky. It remains motionless; beautiful, but static. So, do not squander these years of flexibility and youth. Try new things that interest you, meet new people, and keep an open mind to new opportunities that might come your way.”



Top of Class: 2007 valedictorian Matthew Rienzo (right) and salutatorian Hannah Payne each gave thoughtful and heartfelt addresses to classmates. The pair has excelled in every conceivable way.

Salutatorian Tells Classmates to Follow their Passion to Find Success

Class of 2007 salutatorian Hannah Payne likened graduates to a roller coaster that has been unleashed. “Today begins our upward ascent,” she said. “We now have the freedom to do what we want, when we want. As we approach the top of that roller coaster, however, we are faced with the question of what to do with all this potential energy. We have the potential to create good in the world, as well as bad. Happiness doesn’t come from success, success comes from happiness. Therefore, do what makes you happy. Follow your passion.”

Ms. Payne, who will attend Dartmouth College in the fall, has thrived in a highly competitive environment, including as a researcher in an elite high school program at the Cold Spring Harbor Lab.

“The world we are entering has many problems, and you have probably been told that the burden of fixing these problems rests on our shoulders,” she told classmates. “It seems like a daunting task. The energy crisis, global warming, war, and the enduring plagues of poverty and hunger. However, if each one of us uses all of our potential energy to live personally fulfilling lives, the world will be a better place because of it.”

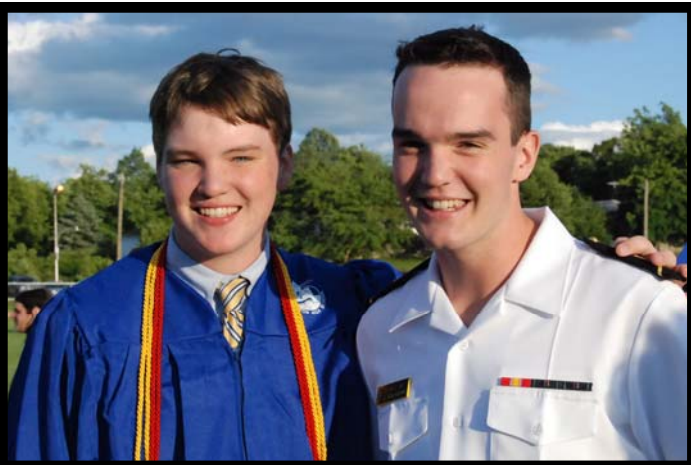
Ms. Payne leaves Huntington High School a better place than when she entered four years ago. An active participant in the school’s after school club and athletic programs, she has enjoyed remarkable academic and co-curricular success.



National Merit Scholarship Finalists

**Hannah Payne
Matthew Rienzo**

This was a special year for the Blue Devil athletic program. The boys' lacrosse team extended its consecutive game winning streak to 64 and won its third straight county and Long Island titles, girls' basketball and girls' lacrosse finished second in Suffolk, as did the football team and the boys' tennis squad took the league crown. Dozens of athletes won individual honors.



Alumni Brothers: Cornell-bound Class of 2007 member Tom Lee received congratulations from his brother, John, a member of Huntington's Class of 2006 and currently a Midshipman at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis. Tom plans to study in Cornell's School of Hotel Administration.

The Class of 2007 included many students who earned the prestigious designation of **Advanced Regent's Diploma with Honors** for their exceptional performance on a battery of state exams.

The honorees (and their college plans) include Kailene Abt (Notre Dame), Christopher Ambrosio (St. Joseph's Univ.), Vanessa Badalamenti (LaSalle Univ.), Elizabeth Barnett (Bucknell Univ.), Margaret Barone (George Washington Univ.), Jacqueline Bodnar (SUNY Cortland), Aaron Cohn (SUNY Binghamton), Chelsea Coneys, Samantha Coneys (Quinnipiac Univ.), Tessa Coneys (Providence College), Ryan Coughlan (SUNY Geneseo), Courtney deFeo (Yale Univ.), Denise Del Gaudio (Dickinson College), Elen DeOliveira (SUNY Geneseo), Kelly Doyle (Quinnipiac Univ.), Erin Fritts (Rhode Island School of Design), Justin Giani (Drexel Univ.), Rachel Hammel (Villanova Univ.), Zachary Howell (Duke Univ.), Ryan Jacobs (Univ. of Edinburgh), Ashley Johnson (Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State College), David Kaufman (Univ. of Connecticut), Connor Kiesel (Ohio Univ.), Ian Kirkpatrick (William & Mary), Liore Klein (Univ. of Pennsylvania), Christopher Kouttron (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute), Thomas Lee (Cornell Univ.), Aimee Lillienstein (Ithaca College), Megan Long (Univ. of Delaware), Melanie Malusa (Univ. of Delaware), Jessica Martinolich (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute), Cody McCann, Raymond McGale (Marist College), Tara McGoldrick (Wheaton College), Denise McGuigan (Boston Univ.), Rachel O'Connor (SUNY Geneseo), Brett Olson (Tufts Univ.), Michael Orlando (St. John's Univ.), Hannah Payne (Dartmouth College), Matthew Rienzo (Harvard Univ.), Samantha Rollins (Northwestern Univ.), Dana Silverberg (Connecticut College), Daniel Smilowitz (Univ. of Pittsburg), Sarah Smith (Boston College), Kerri Strub (CUNY John Jay), Akos Szekely (Univ. of North Carolina), Emily Taylor (SUNY Oneonta), Monica Thalla, Kathryn Weller (Penn State), Dinoe Wilson (Boston College).

National Merit Scholarship Commended Students

**Aaron Cohn Denise DelGaudio
Liore Klein Sarah Smith
Kathryn Weller**

Huntington High School 2007 Graduation Briefs

Superintendent of Schools John J. Finello, a 1968 Huntington High School alumnus, told graduates a new chapter in their lives is now set to begin and to roll up their sleeves and get busy.

“You have more to do,” he said. “There is more hard work ahead, more dreams to dream, more doors to open. There will be a joy and exhilaration in your new journey. There will be challenges. I encourage you to believe in yourself, to hold on to your values, to strengthen your convictions and to strive to do your best at whatever you choose.”

Mr. Finello told the graduates to never discount the individual contribution they have to make. “What you do does makes a difference,” he said. “If you give up, if you feel that you cannot make a difference, then the difference you make will be a negative one. If, however, you know that your actions and choices will have an effect, then your efforts will make positive, worthwhile and meaningful contributions to all. Believe that what you do today is important and will effect tomorrow.”

* * *

Master of Ceremonies Katy Nastro, who will attend Boston College in the fall, spoke of the “big transition” that now faces each of the graduates.

“Our individuality is the key to discovering our passion in life, and even though we all have been taught so well to think for ourselves, our common goal will always be to find happiness,” she said. “As cliché and as simple as it sounds, it is something people have to strive to achieve. You will come up against challenges in your life that will suspend your hope, but don’t stop trying. We would never be able to appreciate the good if we didn’t face the bad head on.”

Ms. Nastro said graduates will move forward with a respect for where they are coming from. “Now instead of walking the halls at Huntington, we now will walk the halls of life, taking one step into the future but always remembering with that one foot left behind.”

The Huntington School District’s official website (www.hufsd.edu) features news, sports, academic overviews and general information that can’t be found elsewhere . The site is updated daily and is a “must see” for members of the school community and local residents interested in their public schools.



Huntington Tradition: The Class of 2007 is a worthy predecessor to those who have come before it, stretching all the way back to the Civil War era when the district’s first graduates received their diplomas in a ceremony held on July 18, 1862 in the First Presbyterian Church on Main Street across from where the high school was then located in what is now Town Hall. Through wars, natural disasters, economic catastrophes and social unrest Huntington High School students have received an exceptional education and shined in every possible area. Then and now a Huntington diploma is synonymous with excellence and highly valued by all.



Advanced Placement Scholars of Distinction

**Michael Orlando Hannah Payne
Matthew Rienzo**

**Huntington School Board President
Robert T. Lee Tells Graduates it's
Time to Stand on their Own Two Feet**

Huntington School Board President Robert T. Lee told graduates their "individual and collective records are extremely impressive," in a folksy address that asked the Class of 2007 to reflect on those who helped them reach this point in their lives.

"Of course, it is particularly fitting to always be grateful to those who have positively influenced and supported you thus far on your journey, in particular, your parents and teachers," Mr. Lee said. "Although you may not have always agreed with them, and sometimes you may have even been frustrated with them, know that your teachers and your parents have given you what you need to succeed."

Mr. Lee quoted Mark Twain, who wrote: "When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant that I could hardly stand the old man around. But when I got to be 18, I was astonished at how much he had learned in four years."

"Hopefully, you have come to that same understanding about those who have helped get you where you are today," Mr. Lee said. "Now it is your turn to stand on your own two feet. Take the lessons you have learned, the values that have been instilled within you, and accept responsibility for creating the life that you want. Work hard, be grateful for what you have been given, and, as Spike Lee says, always try to do the right thing."

Recipients of 2007 Section XI Gold Key Awards for exceptional participation in athletics included Kailene Abt, Vanessa Badalamenti, Rhamel Bratton, Shamel Bratton, Gregory Brunner, Kashif Clark, Grace Fulton, Jimmie Garrett, Jillian Gaulke, Morgan Hughes, Ashley Johnson, Megan Long, Meghan Rhodes, Dana Silverberg, Sarah Smith and Regina Stropoli.

Advanced Placement Scholars

**Margaret Barone Aseem Das
Liore Klein Jessica Martinolich
Sarah Smith**

***Advanced Placement Scholars
with Honors***

**Ian Kirkpatrick Akos Szekely
Christopher Kouttron**

**Principal Carmela Leonardi Asks
Class of 2007 to Imagine Success in Life**

Huntington High School Principal Carmela Leonardi asked graduates to dream heady thoughts and to aim high in everything they do in life.

"Close your eyes and see yourself in that lab, in front of that class, in that office with the most impressive view or on that stage," she said. "Ask yourself: At what level do you need to perform? What do you need to be able to do in order to be the best in your field? Never lose sight of that vision and you will be able to stay the course."



Senior Athletic Awards

- Booster Club Female Scholar Athlete**
Samantha Rollins
- Booster Club Male Scholar Athlete**
Matt Rienzo
- William Class Memorial Scholarship**
Jacqueline Bodnar
- Fred Cambria Award**
Joe Grant,
Michael Tinari
- Ray Deren Memorial Scholarship**
Zachary Howell
- Michael McCarthy Memorial Award**
Justin Giani



Class of 2007 Senior Academic Awards

A.L.I.V.E. Outstanding Student Scholarship Natalia Santos

Associated Teachers of Huntington Scholarship Cheryl Woods

Alumni Cups Denise DelGaudio, Matthew Rienzo

Alumni Scholarship Aimee Lillienstein, Dinoe Wilson

American Legion Citizenship Award Zachary Howell,
Jessica Martinolich

American Legion Music Award Aimee Lillienstein,
Matthew Rienzo

Art Honor Society Award Jessica Kott

Attorney General's Triple C Award Kimberly Paredes,
Scott Shaw

Bausch & Lomb Science Award Matthew Rienzo

Carmela Santorsola Provenzano Scholarship Kerri Strub

Cold Spring Harbor Lab Research Award Hannah Payne

Cold Spring Harbor/Huntington Soccer Club Scholarships .
Kailene Abt, Maria Canino

Computer Graphics Award John Metz

Congressional Merit Award Margaret Barone

County Executive Award for Public Service Liore Klein

Daughters of American Revolution Award Aaron Cohn, Katy Nastro

Dorothea Waddel Award Cheryl Woods

Drawing & Painting Award Erin Fritts

E.C. McGaul Award of Huntington Fire Department Chantal Henry

Edna Van Wart Mathematics Award Hannah Payne,
Matthew Rienzo

Evelyn Daniels Memorial Award Aimee Lillienstein

Fashion Design Award Gabrielle Volano

Frances Bifulco Howley Memorial Scholarship Zachary Keddell

Frank Carino Award of Huntington Fire Department Zachary Howell

French Award Laura DeOleo

HARTE Scholarship Rachel O'Connor

Howard Munson Award of Huntington Fire Department ... Jose Saravia

Italian Award Matthew Rienzo

Jagoda Scholarship Ryan Jacobs

James Doty Memorial Scholarship Samantha Rollins

James Loebell Scholarship Denise DelGaudio,
Ashley Johnson

Jane Sullivan Award Melanie Malusa

Joan Jorgensen Scholarship Kerri Strub

Joel H. & Selma D. Cohen Scholarship Jose Saravia

John Philip Sousa Award Melanie Malusa

John F. Kellog Theatre Award Melanie Malusa

Joseph Somodi Theatre Arts Award Joseph Tacopina

Josten's Recognition Award Maritza Cazeau

Journalism Award Connor Kiesel, Aaron Cohn

Judi Gleicher Mathematics Award Amy Kalenderian

Kurt Schaefer Memorial Award Kelly Martine

Latin Award Karen Pacas

Lions' Club Scholarship Ashley Johnson

Linda Shoemaker Blue Devil Band Scholarship Allison Duggan

Long Island Blood Services Scholarship Jessica Martinolich, Denise DelGaudio

Louis Armstrong Jazz Award Melanie Malusa

Martin Schnittman Award for Physics ... Denise DelGaudio

National History Day Excellence in Research Denise DelGaudio

National School Marching Band Award Kathryn Weller

NYS Lottery Leaders of Tomorrow Award Tiffany Chang

Orchestra Parents Scholarship Cheryl Woods

Office of State Comptroller Hannah Payne

Parent Appreciation Award Chris Ambrosio,
Allison Duggan

Patrick Gilmore Band Award Jacqueline Bodnar

Photography Award Katelyn Farriella

Political Action Committee Liore Klein

Principal's Award Sarah Smith

Promising Young Writer Samantha Coneys

PTSA Scholarship Maria Canino,
Danah Jones, Katelyn Pearsall

Rensselaer Science Medal Jessica Martinolich

Robert Buchanan, Jr. Award Hannah Payne

Robert K. Toaz Memorial Prize Matthew Rienzo

Rotary Club Scholarship ... Denise DelGaudio, Aaron Cohn,
Jessica Martinolich, Roquez Jimenez

Sammis English Prize Denise DelGaudio

SCMEA Music Scholarship Vivian Porter

SEPTA Continuing Education Award Jessica DeVore,
Jimmie Garrett

Sons of the American Revolution Hannah Payne

Sons of Italy Italian Award Kean Ferin

Spanish Award David Kaufman, Kimberly Paredes

Spanish Honor Society Award Delmy Palmer,
Jose Saravia

Suffolk Highway Superintendent's Scholarship Ashley Johnson

Suffolk County Science Teacher Association Award Matthew Rienzo

T. Christopher Pettit Memorial Scholarship Zachary Howell, Michelle Orelli

Technology Department Award Christopher Kouttron

Teddy Roosevelt Renaissance American ... Scott Shaw

Tri M Music Leadership Award Aimee Lillienstein

Tri-Community & Youth Agency Liore Klein

U.S. Marine Corps Scholastic Excellence Award Dinoe Wilson

United Center of Healing Light Church Scholarship Dinoe Wilson

Video Award Leah Teplin

Woody Herman Jazz Award Ray McGale

York Iguchi Scholarship Katy Nastro

Class of 2007 College Acceptances

Adelphi University American University Arcadia University Art Institute of Boston Bard College Bates College Bellarmine University Bennington College Bentley College Berea College Berkeley College Bloomsburg University Boston College Boston University Bowling Green Brandeis University Briarcliffe College Brown University Bucknell University Butler University Cabrini College Catholic University of America Christopher Newport University Clark University Clemson University Clinton Community College Coastal Carolina College College of Mount Saint Vincent College of New Jersey College of Saint Rose College of William & Mary Connecticut College Cornell University CUNY Baruch College CUNY Brooklyn College CUNY City College CUNY Hunter College CUNY John Jay College CUNY Medgar Evers CUNY Queens College CUNY York College Dartmouth College Dean College Delaware Valley College Dickinson College Dowling College Drew University Drexel University Duke University Earlham College East Stroudsburg University Eastern Connecticut Eastern Kentucky Eckerd College Emerson College Emory University Eugene Lang College Fairfield University Finger Lakes Community College Five Towns College Fordham University Franklin Pierce College Frostburg State University George Mason University George Washington University Gettysburg College Goucher College Hampshire College Hartwick College Harvard University Haverford College Herkimer Community College Hobart & William Smith Colleges Hofstra University Indiana University Iona College Ithaca College Jacksonville University James Madison University Johnson & Wales University Kent State Kutztown University Laboratory Institute of Merchandising Lafayette College LaSalle University Lehigh University LeMoyne College Lesley College Limestone College Lock Haven University Long Island University—Brooklyn LIU—C.W. Post Loyola College—Maryland Loyola College—New Orleans Lynchburg College Manhattan College Manhattanville College Marist College Marlboro College Maryland Institute—College of Art Marymount Manhattan College Messiah College Miami University of Ohio Molloy College Montana State University Mount Saint Mary's University Muhlenberg College Murray State University Nassau Community College New Jersey Institute of Technology New York City Institute of Technology New York Institute of Technology New York University Nichols College North Carolina State University Northeastern University Northwestern University Ohio State University Ohio University Old Dominion University Pace University Parsons School of Design Paul Smith's College Penn State University Philadelphia University Pratt Institute Providence College Queens College Queensborough Community College Quinnipiac University Radford University Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Rhode Island School of Design Rochester Institute of Technology Roger Williams University Rutgers University Sacred Heart University Salisbury University Sarah Lawrence College Seton Hall University Shippensburg University Siena College Sorbonne University—Paris Southern Connecticut State University Springfield College St. John Fisher College St. John's University St. Joseph's College St. Joseph's University St. Leo University St. Mary's College—Maryland Stonehill College Suffolk Community College Sullivan Community College SUNY Alfred SUNY Binghamton SUNY Buffalo SUNY Canton SUNY Cobleskill SUNY Cortland SUNY Delhi SUNY Farmingdale SUNY Fashion Institute of Technology SUNY Fredonia SUNY Geneseo SUNY Maritime SUNY Morrisville SUNY New Paltz SUNY Old Westbury SUNY Oswego SUNY Plattsburgh SUNY Potsdam SUNY Purchase SUNY Stony Brook SUNY Upstate Medical Center Syracuse University Temple University Tompkins Cortland Community College Towson State Trinity College Troy University Tufts University Tulane University Union College Universal Technical Institute University of Arizona University of Bristol University of Colorado University of Connecticut University of Dayton University of Delaware University of Edinburgh University of Hartford University of Kansas University of Mary Washington University of Maryland University of Massachusetts—Amherst University of Michigan University of New England University of New Hampshire University of New Haven University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill University of Notre Dame University of Pennsylvania University of Pittsburgh University of Richmond University of Rochester University of Rhode Island University of Scranton University of South Florida University of Southern California University of Tampa University of Tennessee University of Toronto University of Vermont University of Virginia University of Wisconsin Ursinus College Villanova University Virginia Commonwealth Virginia State Virginia Tech Wagner College Wells College Wesley College Wesleyan University West Virginia University Westminster College Wheaton College William Patterson University Worcester Polytechnic Institute Yale University York College (PA)

About Huntington's College Office

The Huntington High School College Office processed 1,250 college applications this year. It offers students and parents many helpful services including application, essay and financial aid workshops, counseling, college searches and interest inventories, hundreds of individual college guidebooks and bulletins, high speed computers and internet connections to search for schools and even to file applications online and a place to meet with college recruiters. The office coordinates fall and spring college fairs and mini-college days throughout the year. To learn more about the College Office call 673-2131 during the school year.

Congratulations Graduates and Good Luck



Many thanks to all the local businesses and individuals who contributed to our school district clubs, teams and organizations this past school year!!!

Fall Sports Tryouts

Thursday, August 16—High school football at 8 a.m.
Monday, August 27—All other high school sports at 8 a.m.
Thursday, September 6—All Finley teams from 3—5 p.m.

Finley Sports Physicals

Tuesday, September 4 at 8 a.m. at Finley Middle School

For more information call 673-2018.

**Huntington Union Free School District
P.O. Box 1500
Huntington, New York 11743**

Board of Education

Elizabeth Black
Jill Collyer
Charles Forte, Jr.
Robert T. Lee
Richard McGrath
John P. Paci III
Emily Rogan

John J. Finello
Superintendent of Schools

Joseph Giani
Assistant Superintendent for General Administration and Personnel

David H. Grackin
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Michael J. O'Brien
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