

A young girl with dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt with a blue and red striped pattern, is smiling and holding a large orange pumpkin. She is standing in a field of many other pumpkins of various sizes, arranged in rows on a dirt surface. The background is filled with pumpkins stretching into the distance under bright sunlight.

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Shell-like overlooks are perched atop Observation Hill offering the best views of Santa Monica and the ocean.

Photo: Tim Street-Porter

Tongva Park: Santa Monica's Newest Treasure

By LIBBY MOTIKA
Palisades News Contributor

Tongva Park, overlooking Santa Monica Bay on Ocean Avenue in Santa Monica, is named for the rich culture and traditions of the indigenous people who lived in the L.A. area for thousands of years. The six-acre city garden walk opened in October 2013 and has matured into an urban landscape that is so compatible with the ecology of the region it's as if it had always existed.

In fact, the park appears to have burst out from under the former Rand Corpo-

ration parking lot, unearthing a California arroyo landscape of washes and ravines that defined the site during the Late Prehistoric period when the indigenous Tongva people inhabited the region.

Designed by James Corner Field Operations, best known for New York's High Line, the park redefines the center of Santa Monica and borders a triad of recreation destinations, including Palisades Park, the Santa Monica Pier and the Santa Monica Civic Center.

Corner's concept symbolically replicates the familiar geology of the coast with water coursing from the mountains to the sea,

originating in this case at Santa Monica City Hall's Ken Genser Square.

Starting as a gentle cascading fountain in front of City Hall, the water flows through the park, gaining in visual intensity as it nears the ocean. A garden pool and waterfall sequence announce the Main Street entrance.

The water continues west towards Ocean Avenue, carried in a single runnel that flows downhill, increasing in volume as it explodes in a dynamic water feature at the primary entrance. Water features use potable water and biological filtration within closed recirculating systems.

Topography and scale create a variety of experiences in the park. Alcoves are carved into the park's hillsides to shelter interior garden bays with seating for quiet reflection, while exterior bays allow for social seating for community comings and goings.

Whether you enter from Main Street or from Ocean Avenue, the park is easily accessible. There are neither stairs nor drive-ways to navigate.

The designers christened four main areas in the park:

Garden Hill features a series of seating alcoves and display gardens that showcase seasonally dynamic native and appropriated adapted Southern California plants.

Discovery Hill is reserved for the children's play area, which features a climbing wall, a playful water area and a jungle gym. Shaded seating and tables are close by. Kids get wet, so come prepared.

Observation Hill on the south side of the park rises to 18 feet above grade and offers the best views of the ocean. It sits atop a

bridge, which also conceals the public restroom under the hill.

Gathering Hill is the most public place, accommodating civic gatherings on its large lawn and seating terraces.

The site-specific sculpture "Weather Field No. 1" provides a locus in the park's center. The piece by Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle is composed of 49 telescoping stainless-steel poles aligned in a grid. The poles alternate in height, each supporting a weather vane and anemometer, intended to respond to prevailing winds.

The park differs from the conventional idea of a public park, offering more of an experience rather than specific recreational amenities. There are no ball fields, nor a recreation center. In fact, the designers made it a goal not to have any buildings on the site. The restrooms are tucked under the Observation Hill bridge. But the city sponsors a full calendar of events from May through October, including family Saturdays that may present a puppet workshop or Native American storytelling. In addition, swing dancing, salsa and even hip hop dance lessons

(Continued on Page 4)



A scooped-out bay along the central path of Tongva Park is the backdrop for this waterfall sequence.

Photo: Tim Street-Porter

On the Cover

Seven-year-old Nicole Nguyen, a student at Palisades Elementary, had a tough time making a selection at the Palisades-Malibu YMCA Pumpkin Patch. See page 11 for Patch hours.

Photo: Bart Bartholomew



The children's area offers a range of activities including slides, a climbing wall and playful water elements.

Photo: Tim Street-Porter

Tongva Park

(Continued from Page 3)

have taken place in the outdoor open areas.

As a component of the initial planning stages, the community was invited to participate in several "listening" workshops. Corner, a native of Great Britain whose projects and teaching have been primarily on the East Coast, planned these workshops to learn about the Southern California cultural and physical environment.

The descendants of the Tongva also

participated in these workshops and were honored by Santa Monica City Council, which described the new park as "a singular place on this planet which deserves a singular name."

The name Tongva has become increasingly preferred as a self-designation since the 1990s, although either "Gabrieleño" or "Gabrielino" is part of every official name. The Tribal Council of San Gabriel on its website says that Tongva means "people of the earth."

In assessing the mature park now two years later, Community and Cultural Serv-

El Niño Rains Most Likely To Begin in January

Scientists say that El Niño may be the strongest in recorded history. On October 8, Bill Patzert of the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory in La Cañada Flintridge, said "This definitely has the potential of being the Godzilla El Niño."

If scientists are correct and this proves to be one of the wettest winters since 1997, it is time for Palisades residents to clear rain gutters and make sure roof leaks are patched.

The question asked by many is—when will it start pouring? Although rain was predicted last week, most scientists agree that in prior El Niño years October has been

only slightly wetter. November has been nearly twice as wet and December has been drier than normal in all five strong El Niño winters (1957-58, 1965-66, 1972-73, 1982-83 and 1997-98).

January and February are typically the wettest months in California. Mike Halpert, the deputy director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Climate Prediction Center in College Park, Maryland said if the big storms come, they aren't likely to come any earlier than in a normal winter.

L.A. County has launched a website that will storm-related information in advance of and during the storms. Visit: lacounty.gov/elniño. The county will use the hashtag, #Larain, to communicate with residents who use social media websites, such as Twitter and Facebook.

Residents may also sign up for emergency alerts from the county: Lacounty.gov/emergency/alert-la/ and download the "Los Angeles County The Works" app available for Android and iPhones, or call 1 (888) 765-4357.

Another less technical way of preparing for El Niño is to purchase rain boots. Bentons the Sport Shop on Swarthmore usually has a nice selection.

ices Director Karen Ginsberg recalls her initial question. "At the beginning we were wondering if people would discover this park. This is not a neighborhood where parks are usually developed. Would children find this?"

Indeed, Tongva Park has become more than a one-time destination; adults and children have made it their neighborhood where they can stroll, slide and picnic. And the seasonal changes in flora help to remind visitors of the subtle shifts in our Mediterranean climate.

Tongva Park is open daily from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.

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Fire Hazard Signs Unveiled

By SUE PASCOE
Editor

Concern about fire safety in local brush areas led to the creation and unveiling of new signs prohibiting entry into some Pacific Palisades sites.

Eight signs, at a cost of \$300 each, were installed on October 7. Three were placed at the corner of Temescal and PCH, paid for by the Rotary Club and five on Palisades Drive were paid for by the Palisades Highlands Presidents Council (PHPC).

The signs read: "Restricted Entry, Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, Trespassing and Loitering Forbidden by Law, LAMC 57.4908.81. Fines up to \$1,000 + Penalty Assessments." They contain a new municipal code that is enforceable.

Councilman Mike Bonin attended the unveiling event and said: "LAPD will be here to enforce it. This is a practical solution for a unique situation."

When asked how this was different than a lawsuit that was brought against the City that allows the homeless to sleep on sidewalks, Bonin said, "Camping in a high fire-hazard zone is a safety risk. This is an area where a fire could result in hundreds of homes being destroyed."

These signs were spearheaded by Bruce Schwartz, a member of the Pacific Palisades Task Force on Homelessness, and LAFD In-

spector John Novela. "I worked brush inspection in Pacific Palisades five years, and this is a high fire-zone area," Novela said. "With this new signage we will have more authority."

LAFD Chief Patrick Butler said, "I just spent last month in Northern California. The entire town of Middleton was leveled—all that were left of homes were chimneys. From my experience, brush fires are a threat to public safety. This signage will help us keep the public safe. We don't condemn the homeless, but this helps keep them safe, too."

He also recounted that in the 2014 San Diego Poinsettia fire, a homeless person was killed. "You can't outrun a fire."

PHPC President David Dwyer said he thought the signs would be helpful because when he spoke to one of the homeless camped along Palisades Drive, the man was smoking, but pointed out, "I have a gallon of water handy in case of a fire."

The Rotarians paid for the Temescal signs because "The Rotary Club adopted the corner and worked to beautify it," said president Kevin Niles. Recently, the club planted new aloe plants near the fire hazard sign.

A second set of eight signs will be installed along Corona Del Mar and have been paid for by the Huntington Palisades Property Homeowners Corporation. If any other HOA is interested in ordering, contact Bruce Schwartz at PacPalHTF@gmail.com.



(Left to right) David Card, LAFD Inspector John Novela, Tom Welch, Will Shue (L.A. highway safety), LAFD Chief Patrick Butler, Richard Meyer and Kevin Niles gather for installation of signs that prohibit camping in fire hazard zones.

Replace Old Clothes Washers

Washers are the second largest water user in your home, according to the LADWP website. It is suggested that if a resident has an old washer, he/she should consider replacing it with an Energy Star certified-clothes washer. Those particular models use four times less energy than the ones manufactured before 1999.

Additionally, DWP is offering rebates, starting at \$85, on select products. There is a qualifying list of machines on the website, which also notes that the new machines can save about 14 gallons of water a day and that water savings can reach more than \$400 over the lifetime of the appliance.

To view appliance energy needs and seek rebates, DWP spokesperson Carol Tucker suggests visiting ladwp.com/ener-

gyefficiency. The Energy Star website also rates various appliances for energy use. Visit: energystar.gov.

Country Bazaar To Be Held at Methodist Church

The annual Country Bazaar will be held 7 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, November 5, and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Friday, November 6 at the Community United Methodist Church, 801 Via de la Paz. There will be handmade gifts, quilts, food and holiday items for sale. The \$5 admission on Thursday night includes desert. There is free admission on Friday, but lunch is \$15. RSVP (310) 454-5529.

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Dead redwood. In Southern California, the species has always been out of place, usually needing irrigation to survive. But with water at an all-time premium, it could mean the redwood's days are numbered in the region.

Saving Pacific Palisades Trees

By LIBBY MOTIKA
Palisades News Contributor
Photos courtesy Nick Mook

The ability of trees to store water, enrich the atmosphere with moisture, protect the soil, and cool the earth is a fundamental function of the forest in balancing the ecosystem and stabilizing climate.

This prescient assessment was written 200 years ago by Alexander von Humboldt, the 18th-century ecological visionary and explorer, who environmentalists like John Muir saw as their spiritual ancestor.

Trees today are no less essential to the health of our planet. History professor and author Jared Farmer (*Trees in Paradise*) elaborates a litany of their assets. "They serve us as oxygen makers, carbon sinks, pollution filters, air coolers, sound barriers, windbreaks, water collectors, soil stabilizers, habitat makers, boundary markers and property enhancers."

California was not always the horticultural paradise we see today. While the indigenous peoples developed deep relationships

with trees, particularly the acorn-bearing oak, the region was basically treeless before European colonization. Even the coastal ranges were more woody than wooded, dominated by chaparral and grasslands.

A major shift in California was prompted by the influx of immigrants from the East, some of whom were seeking their fortune in gold, and others who sought to capitalize on the region's exceptional sun and soil. With abundant water, nonnative flora thrived, allowing migrants to create shady parks, campuses and boulevards. They transformed grasslands and wetlands into fields, orchards and garden cities.

By the end of the 19th century, tree planting had become an obsession. Homeowners personalized their streets with their favorite plants whether or not the flora matched the look of the neighborhood or the semi-desert climate of Southern California. It was only after municipal street-tree divisions and neighborhood covenants were established that city treescapes became more conforming.

(Continued on Page 7)

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Mulching around this liquidambar keeps roots protected and helps ward off fungus.

Trees

(Continued from Page 6)

Now we are in the 21st century and presented with the stark reality of losing our precious tree canopy. While certain harmful tree husbandry methods—inept pruning and excessive leaf-blowing—contributes to this decline, the main threats to our trees are the persistent lack of rain and expedient irrigation cutbacks.

“It’s the quality of the irrigation water,” says ISA certified arborist Nick Mook. “Here in the L.A. Basin, soils are getting more sodic [excess salts]. With a historic drought—we’ve had just under 9 inches of rain so far this year—we are seeing excessive levels of sodium, which would normally be removed with a good rain.”

In addition, Mook says, municipal water systems are adding more chlorides and salt, so the irrigation water only makes the soil problems worse.

We are all hoping for abundant rainfall this winter with the forecast El Niño. Every good soaking would help. Nevertheless, we have to remember that we do live in a semi-desert and will have to adjust to higher temperatures, the new normal. We could benefit from some basic tree knowledge. Mook offers the following primer.

Trees have two types of roots: the anchoring roots hold up the tree and penetrate 12-18 inches deep; surface feeder roots pull up nutrients and water and help the

tree function. These sink about 6 inches below the surface.

Keeping this in mind, the goal now is deep and infrequent watering, penetrating down at least 8 inches.

Ideally, every gardener should have a soil probe to determine what and when and how irrigation should be applied. Certain signs of stress are obvious in local neighborhoods, affecting not only the deciduous trees, but also the pines and even trees that are more suited to our Mediterranean climate, such as the melaleuca, cork oak, California oak and arbutus.

Signs of trees in drought stress include wilting canopy, tip necrosis (browning) and tip dieback, which can be seen in a yellowing canopy.

Stressed trees become weak and open to pest infestation and disease to roots or branches.

The glassy-winged sharpshooter has spread the bacterium *Xylella fastidiosa* that has killed over 800,000 mature olive trees in Europe and has become a real threat to California’s wine industry.

In Los Angeles County, the polyphagous shot hole borer has been found to attack over 200 species of trees in the L.A. area. Thirty-three tree species have been confirmed as reproductive hosts, including the native riparian species coast live oak and California sycamore.

Facing the vulnerability of our trees, we can follow a few good maintenance guide-

(Continued on Page 8)

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Stressed liquidambar going into early drought-induced dormancy. This tree will go dormant earlier in the fall and leaf out later in the spring.

Trees

(Continued from Page 7)

lines, which will mean protecting our precious trees. Perennials are hard to replace.

The following are suggestions on watering and general garden care:

Good soil management:

Keep organic material, leaf litter, on the ground. Do not blow it away with a leaf blower. Organic material helps retain water and nutrients. Cleaning up the ground hardens the soil, desiccates the roots and prevents water retention.

Mulching (e.g., compost, pine needles, grass clippings, leaves) is the single most important practice. It keeps roots protected and helps ward off fungi.

Do not cultivate (dig up) the soil under

and around feeder roots. This damages feeder roots and impedes water from entering.

Watering tips:

Do not water the trunk. Start irrigation about three feet from the trunk and extend out to the drip line (outermost circumference of a tree canopy) in a concentric line.

Pruning tips:

Pruning is an invasive practice for tree care. You only want to prune for safety. If you prune too drastically, you remove the tree's ability to photosynthesize. Certified arborists will take into account the climate, the age of the tree, its health and the care the tree has had.

Visit the International Society of Arboriculture website, isa-arbor.com.

Woman's Club Will Give At Least \$10,000 in Grants

The Pacific Palisades Woman's Club (PPWC) will award at least \$10,000 in grants this coming year to community and charitable organizations that work in the areas of education, beautification, arts and recreation. All applications must be submitted in final form by November 15.

To be considered for a grant, applicant organizations must be based in Pacific Palisades and/or provide services that benefit the Palisades community.

The PPWC also offers an alternative to

the limited cash awards by providing a four-hour use of the clubhouse facility, forgoing the usual rental fee.

The PPWC's primary fundraiser for is the annual Home Tour (November 22) and Holiday Boutique (November 21 and 22), from which significant funds are raised, but repairs to the clubhouse will limit the total award allocation for this year.

If there are any questions regarding the application, please contact the Club Administrator, Roberta Donohue, at (310) 454-9012 or e-mail rdonohue@yahoo.com.

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Volunteers Needed to Host Barn Owls

(Editor's note: The following item was found in the Sullivan Canyon News.)

Barn owls are one of three owl species native to the Los Angeles area. Sullivan Canyon is the ideal environment for barn owls to nest.

Barn owls are a natural method of rodent control. One barn owl can consume up to 10,000 rats a year (and eat only rodents, so are not a threat to pets).

The more barn-owl nesting boxes placed in a community, the greater the odds owls will find and use them; second- and third-generation owls will return to the nesting cavities.

The owl is meant to replace commonly used poisons, so it is important to discontinue use of poisons and rodenticides, so as not to kill the owl if it eats a poisoned rodent.

A resident can host a barn-owl nesting box by making a donation to CLAW (Citizens for Los Angeles Wildlife). Visit: CLAWonline.com.



This single-family residence, under construction, is off Los Liones Drive in Pacific Palisades.

Residence Size Determines Energy Needs

Last week, a reader inquired in a letter if new construction could be blamed for the recent power outages in the Castellammare area.

LADWP spokesperson Carol Tucker responded to a query from the *Palisades News*: “Yes, new construction, as well as upgrading existing homes, contribute toward increased energy loads. Title 24 and Energy Star appliances contribute to an efficient installation, but added air conditioning and

appliances still require power.

“Additionally, even with efficient construction, if all customers turn on their appliances at the same time (such as when it is hot), the demand on the electric system can be substantial. LADWP considers neighborhood construction activities as part of its planning process and takes steps to assure reliable power.”

A story in the October 1 *L.A. Times* (“Energy-saving Efforts to Target Biggest

Users”) reported: “Wealthier neighborhoods use far more energy per capita than their low-income counterparts.” A new analysis of energy consumption from 2006 to 2010 noted, “Cities with the highest per capita residential energy consumption tended to be wealthy coastal cities. Buildings of 10,000 square feet or more constitute just 4.4 percent of properties in the city, but account for 47 percent of the energy used.”



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Artificial Turf May Harm Environment

By LAUREL BUSBY
Staff Writer

Artificial turf might seem like one way to have a green lawn and also reduce water use, but unfortunately, the product has many downsides, according to Paul Herzog, the Surfrider Foundation's national coordinator for its Ocean Friendly Gardens Program.

"Artificial turf heats up adjacent buildings," Herzog said. "The fibers break off, causing a lot more plastic in the ocean." Most importantly, he noted that artificial turf doesn't provide any of the benefits of soil. "What happens when you compact soil and put down plastic is you kill the life in soil and turn it to dirt. It's the soil and the life in soil that helps hold onto water, filter pollution and sequester carbon."

On Surfrider Foundation's ocean education web site (beachapedia.org), Herzog has written an article delineating some of the problems with artificial turf. The material increases the heat of its surroundings. For example, the surface temperature of artificial turf was up to 86 degrees higher than natural turf and 37 degrees more than asphalt in one Brigham Young University study. In addition, artificial turf is plastic, which eventually fades, requiring both the material's replacement and its disposal in a landfill.



Artificial turf may not be the best choice for landscaping, because it heats up adjacent buildings.

Photo: Laurie Rosenthal

However, Herzog told the *Palisades News* that the biggest problem with artificial turf stems from everything it doesn't do when compared to natural turf. It doesn't provide food or habitat for wildlife. Also, since it

can't soak up rainwater, it's another place that provides more runoff into the ocean, adding pollution to local waters ranging from animal waste to particles that float through the air and deposit eventually on

the ground, such as automobile exhaust. "People pay a lot of money to live by the coast. They want the ocean to be clean when they want to go in it," Herzog said.

(Continued on Page 11)

Woman's Club Halloween Window Painting Contest

The annual window painting contest, sponsored by the Woman's Club, runs from October 24 to 29. All store windows in the Village are eligible—with the owner's permission. Only washable tempera paint may be used and contestants must clean painted windows by November 3. Entry blanks are available at the Chamber of Commerce office, 15330 Antioch Ave.

Grade groups judged are: kindergarten and younger; grades 1 and 2; grades 3 and

4; and grades 5 and higher. Mixed-age groups compete with the grade group of the eldest child. Enter by uploading a photo of your window, and team information to Pacific Palisades Woman's Club on Facebook or e-mail to info@theppwc.org. Include first and last names, ages and location of the window.

Submitted photos will be judged and ribbons place on winning windows and results will also be posted on line.

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Artificial Turf

(Continued from Page 10)

Artificial turf can't provide an initial filter for any pollution that has settled, and it also can't hold onto water to help plants in dry months or provide a home for the soil's microbiology. Herzog said that soil interacts with plants to help filter the air of carbon dioxide (CO₂), which contributes to both global warming and also ocean acidification.

"Plants absorb carbon dioxide from the air," Herzog said. "Plants hold onto some of that carbon, but new research shows that the soil can lock up that carbon five times more than the plants."

Herzog said plants take the CO₂ from the air, release the oxygen, and use the carbon to build their structures, such as a tree's trunk and branches. In addition, the unused carbon is secreted through the roots, and the soil's microbiology eats this carbon

and secretes it back as available plant food. "Life is in soil," Herzog said. "It's the life in soil that gets you all these benefits. Artificial soil kills the life in soil."

Instead of artificial turf, Herzog recommends a specific method called the watershed approach to help filter and conserve rainwater. These types of landscapes conserve water by using local, climate-appropriate plants, create permeable, living soil and retain rainwater in the soil to irrigate plants, hydrate soil and recharge groundwater.

"We need every landscape to act like a sponge to absorb rainwater when it comes, because it is soil that soaks up that rainwater that plants tap into during the dry months," Herzog said. "Like a bank account, you want to bank that water."

Yards that employ this approach might place rocks around the base of a downspout from the home's gutter system to help slow it. Curvy shapes, ups and downs, mulch, and plants can "mimic a stream" by spread-

ing and sinking water from L.A.'s infrequent rains.

Herzog said people can attend free classes listed on watershedwisetraining.com to learn how to create such a landscape themselves or hire a professional versed in the watershed approach from a place like GreenGardensGroup.com to help them. If residents already use a landscape company they like, they can also refer them to watershedwisetraining.com to learn about the approach.

"The single largest land use in Los Angeles is single-family homes," Herzog said. "If everyone were to convert their landscapes, it would make a huge difference in water supply, water quality, flood control, reducing carbon dioxide, creating wildlife habitat and more."

For people who need a green lawn as part of their landscape, Herzog recommends using 1.) the lowest-water-using turf, such as buffalo grass developed by the University of California, 2.) aerating the soil by removing plugs periodically for reducing compaction and better airflow, 3.) using compost to fertilize and aid the soil's microbiology, 4.) providing edges to absorb any runoff and 5.) creating short watering times to ensure there is not runoff.

"At some point, we will see a fee for storm water running off property," said Herzog, who noted that some cities are considering these fees or are adopting them. "This is a good investment in not having to pay that fee."

YMCA Pumpkin Patch Offers Wide Variety

The Palisades-Malibu YMCA Pumpkin Patch, which opened on October 3, will run through October 31. There is a wide selection and varied sizes of pumpkins located at Simon Meadow, the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Temescal Canyon Road.

Hours are Monday through Friday from 3 to 6 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Thousands of Palisadians have fond memories of field trips to the Y Pumpkin Patch and proceeds benefit the local YMCA, nonprofit organization. To arrange a field trip, contact Oscar Rodriguez: os-carrodriquez@ymcla.org.

Volunteers Sought for Village Green Work Day

A Village Green "spruce up" is held from 9 to 11 a.m. on the third Saturday of every month at the triangular park located between Sunset Boulevard, Swarthmore Avenue and Antioch Street.

Residents, who have never volunteered before, are welcome to join the "regular" Village Green crew. Those participating are asked to bring clippers and gloves. High School students can receive community service hours.

N/E/X/T Garden Volunteers Needed

The N/E/X/T/Garden (aka native plant garden) in Temescal Canyon Park has volunteer opportunities to help with weeding, trimming, leaf raking and cleanup. On the last Saturday of every month a volunteer workday is held at the site, and people/kids can drop in any time between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.



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