

SCÉAL ÉILE

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COOLEY-KEEGAN BRANCH OF COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN

Chairman's Section

As the year is drawing to a close, the SF Cooley-Keegan Branch would like to thank all those who have supported us during the year. We are looking for volunteers to help with the various activities of the Branch. Please contact any one of the Board members located on the calendar section of the newsletter, or talk to one of our members at dancing for more information.

We look forward to seeing you at the November Night and Christmas Céilí's. Bring a friend and a treat.

We would like to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Beannachtaí na Nollag dhaoibh! (The blessings of Christmas be with you!)

(Enjoy the holiday break...but remember, it won't be long before Kasey is rounding us up for the 2016 St.Patrick's Day parade!)

Holiday Events

November Night Céilí

Sunday, November 15, 2015 7-10pm

Christmas Céilí

Sunday, December 13, 2015, 7-10pm

Lilly Mac's Céilí - November 7th from 7-10pm at Lilly Mac's. Live music provided by Crooked Road. \$10 admisson. For more information contact Michael Murphy at 1-415-999-6062. This will be a set dancing Céilí.

Events this Month

Comhaltas Night with Live Irish Music - CCÉ typically hosts a night of dancing at the UICC on the third Saturday of the month. Contact: Michael Riemer at riemer@ce.berkeley.edu. **No Comhaltas Night for November or December due to the November Night and Christmas Céilí's.**

San Francisco - On Thursdays, CCÉ hosts classes at the UICC starting at 7:30pm followed by more dancing at the Plough & Stars until midnight -- except for the first Thursday of the month when there is no class, just dancing at the Plough & Stars from 8-11pm. \$5 donation suggested. Contact: Josephine Brogan at josephinebrogan@yahoo.com or 1-415-681-4803. **No class or Plough & Stars dancing on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve or New Years Eve.**

South Bay/ Peninsula - On Tuesdays (except for the third Tuesday of the month) we meet at Lilly Mac's in Sunnyvale. Lessons: 7:30pm; Dance to live music 8-10pm. \$5 donation suggested. Info: Michael Murphy at 1-415-999-6062. **No dancing on Tuesday of Thanksgiving week or the last three weeks of December.**

North Bay - Mary McDonagh and Micheal Minihane teach Set Dancing on the second and fourth Fridays of the month at Brosnan School of Irish Dance in San Anselmo from 7-9pm. There is a \$5 donation suggested for this class. New venue: Redwood Cafe in Cotati on select Wednesday nights from 7pm-9pm. Contact: Mary McDonagh at cladaghdancer@gmail.com or Micheal Minihane michealminihane@yahoo.com. **No dancing on New Years Day.**

East Bay - Starry Plough in Berkeley hosts céilí dancing on Mondays. Lessons from 7-9pm and dancing to live music from 9-11pm. Contact: John Slaymaker at john@starryploughceili.com

See calendar page for address, phone number and web page for all venues.



FOUNDED IN 1951, COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN IS IRELAND'S PREMIERE CULTURAL MOVEMENT. WHEN YOU JOIN COMHALTAS, YOU JOIN PEOPLE IN MORE THAN 400 BRANCHES WORLDWIDE IN SUPPORT OF THE TRADITIONAL IRISH ARTS OF MUSIC, DANCE AND LANGUAGE. WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS. PLEASE CONTACT THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY FOR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION OR VISIT US ON THE WEB AT [HTTP://SF.CCEWEST.ORG](http://sf.ccewest.org)



Special Events



West Region CCÉ Annual Meeting - The West Region Annual General Meeting, hosted by the SF Cooley-Keegan Branch will be held at the United Irish Cultural Center on Thursday, November 5th at 5.30 pm sharp. The SF Cooley-Keegan, Phoenix Four Peaks Irish Arts and Puget Sound CCÉ make up the U.S. West Region of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann. We meet once a year to discuss matters relevant to our branches in Comhaltas. This will be a no host dinner meeting. If you are interested in attending, please contact Josephine at josephinebrogan@yahoo.com or phone 1-415-681-4803.



Song and Storytelling



The next Singing and Storytelling Seisiún will be hosted by Ellen Auriti on November 6th

75 Vicente Road
Berkeley
510-981-0763
eauriti@gmail.com

The December seisiún will be on the 4th

Imelda White
275 Lassen Avenue
Mountain View
650-964-7643
imelda_white@yahoo.com

The January Seisiún is on the **second friday**, January 8th

Anne & John Hopkirk
145 Highland Ave.
San Carlos
650-593-0843
hopkirk@earthlink.net

Song seisiúns start at 7:30pm



Special Thanks



Thank you to all the dancers who generously donated money to the Hidden Valley family who lost everything in the "Valley Fire". I was able to raise \$468 in one evening which is amazing. They were so grateful. It allowed them to go out and buy badly needed clothes. The generosity of the CCÉ community never ceases to touch and amaze me.
Gratefully, Kasey



Wren Boys 2015



The annual Wren Boys trek will occur on Saturday December 26th. Meet at 5:30pm at the Murphy's house, 1959 17th Avenue between Ortega and Pacheco streets in San Francisco. (*Note the earlier meeting time*).

Dressed mostly like farmers in disguises of all kinds, we will be visiting houses and pubs, dancing sets and céilí dances and perhaps singing a chorus or two of Irish and/or Christmas songs. We will recite the Wren verse:

*The wren, the wren,
the king of all birds,
On St . Stephen's Day
was caught in the furze*

*From bush to bush
And tree to tree
On Donoughmore Cross
He broke his knee
We brought him here
To the holly bush
Holly and I are well set up
And the man of the house
Is in very good luck.*

*I have a little pot
Under me arm
A penny or two
Will do it no harm.
Up with the kettle
And down with the pan
Give us a penny
To bury the wren.*

For more information contact Michael Murphy at (415) 999-6062 or Maureen Murphy at moemurphy59@yahoo.com.



Irish Language Class



Adult class: A new 8-week class started on Saturday, October 3rd, 2015, at the Irish Cultural Center in San Francisco.

The next 8-week class semester will probably start early in the New Year. Please contact Josephine Brogan: 1-415-681-4803 or josephinebrogan@yahoo.com



Congratulations and best wishes to Martin Sirk and Janet Stephens on their recent wedding. We wish them a long and happy life together.

Congratulations and best wishes to James McAuliffe, son of Dan and Margaret on his recent engagement to Kristen.

Happy Birthday to Sylvia Haines on her 70th birthday. Sylvia and her friends celebrated in style in Petaluma, sharing good food, wine and dancing! Good health and all the best, Sylvia.

As many of you know, we have said our goodbyes to our longtime CCÉ friend and cheerleader Sheila Walsh. Sheila had until very recently attended Thursday night dancing, Ceilís and UICC nights where music, dancing and friends were found. Her can-do attitude was a tribute to her, as was her continued interest in attending classes, learning new computer skills or pursuing new interests. She indeed was 90 years young!!! Sheila's Spirit will no doubt follow us on our yearly Wren from "house to house" which she so enjoyed. Slán go fóill.

We were very sorry to hear of the passing of Robin Reynolds Gandara, niece of one of our original branch members, Paul Reynolds. Paul made the sad journey from Santa Rosa to Houston to meet his brother, John for Robin's funeral. We will remember Paul and all his family in our prayers.

We wish to remember our own Tim Sullivan's dear mother, Abigail Sullivan on her recent passing. Our Heartfelt Sympathy to you Tim and to your family. What a lovely lady! After reading your Mother's many accomplishments and activities, among the list a computer teacher, it's easy to see the path from your Mothers book called "Keyboard Success" to our own "Sceal Eile". Your friends in CCÉ hold you in our thoughts and prayers.



We send our very best wishes to Kitty Dillon after her recent illness. How can you go wrong with Margaret, Johnny, Sheila, Terri, Joe and all her friends for company and entertainment? In this case, laughter certainly is the best medicine!! Take care, Kitty.

While John Sherry is taking a little break from the fiddle, we want to wish him all the best. We miss you, John, and hope you will be striking up the tunes with the Shannon Ceili Band soon again.



Cúchulainn Foundation



On September 19, 2015, the Irish Community welcomed Seamus Whitney back home to the UICC and San Francisco. A warm reception awaited Seamus as he was greeted by so many friends and customers of the Irish Center. The statue of Cúchulainn which resides inside the north stairwell entrance of the Center, adjacent to the library was formally dedicated by Seamus, after a short parade led by the San Francisco Irish Pipers. Beneficiaries of the Cúchulainn Foundation, funded by Seamus, spoke of the tremendous impact to their organizations.



Hannah O'Connell, Seamus Whitney, Molly O'Connell

Laura O'Sullivan, Seamus Whitney, Mikey O'Sullivan

Comhaltas was proudly represented by Laura and Mikey O'Sullivan who played their tunes on the fiddle for Seamus, followed by Hannah and Molly O'Connell on the tin whistles and in song. We are indebted to Christy O'Connell, who supplied the sound system and accompanied Cormac Gannon (bodhran), Hannah and Molly in tunes and songs. Set dancers included Frank and Mary McDonagh, Moe Murphy, Michael Duffy, Michéal Minihane, Nellie Magee, Josephine Brogan and Dan McAuliffe. We appreciate all the CCÉ members who came along to support this homecoming for Seamus and to thank him. Tasty hors d'oeuvres and a carvery were provided by the Irish Center. Scrumptious baked goods were kindly provided by Katherine Scanlon, Jennifer Culhane, Bridget Shanley, Sheila McCarthy, Cathy Mibach, Connie Lynch, Moe Murphy and Josephine Brogan. Thank you all for generously contributing to a delightful evening.



The President of Ireland's Visit to the West Coast



President Michael Higgins and his wife, Mrs. Sabina Higgins made a visit to the West Coast last week, spending time with various Irish and Irish-American organization in Seattle and California. It was a fairly spur-of-the-moment trip, but the Irish Consul General's office did a wonderful job of planning and executing the visit. The delightful ambassadors visited with the Irish Immigration Pastoral Center Active Retirement group at the UICC on Sunday morning. The President and Sabina made their way around the St. Patrick's Room, shaking hands and chatting with everyone. They were entertained by the Irish Voices Choir. President Higgins, who was formerly the Minister for the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht had requested that singers in the Irish Language and members of Comhaltas participate in his visit. He has a strong belief in promoting the culture and history of Ireland and has had four books of his poems published. We were proud to have Vincey Keehan, Vinnie and Suzanne Cronin and Barry O'Connell playing on behalf of Comhaltas. In turn, they were happy to meet President Higgins and have a brief chat with him. (See Nikki's article in this edition.)

Earlier in the morning, President Higgins and Sabina met with members of various organizations in the Irish Community. This meet and greet was meant to give them an idea of the strength and unity of the Irish diaspora and Irish-American life here. Imelda White, Josephine Brogan, Cathy Mibach and Joannie O'Leary represented Comhaltas, while Connie Lynch joined representatives of the United Irish Societies.

Later that afternoon, Filoli House in Woodside (modeled after Muckross House in Killarney) opened its doors to President and Mrs. Higgins for another reception, including more members of the San Francisco and South Bay Irish Communities. Guests were delightfully entertained near the beautiful "sunken gardens" by the Irish singers ("Dance Around Molly") and at the other end of the massive garden, music flowed from the "Crooked Road" (Julie Horner, David Chadwick and Doug Lowder) throughout the afternoon. President Higgins addressed the crowd with a passionate speech about the importance of community, keeping our heritage strong, keeping ties with the homeland and opening doors to the young people and all who seek legal status in America.

As the week continued, the President and Sabina would visit Berkeley to thank the first responders of the J1 Student Tragedy and plant a tree in memory of them. Before leaving he also met with numerous tech companies, many Irish-owned or staffed by Irish from our community. We are thankful to all who made a tremendous effort to make this a warm and successful visit for this special couple.



Comhaltas representatives and the Crooked Road Ceili Band welcome the President and Sabina



Irish Singers Entertain President Higgins



During President Higgins' October 25, 2015 visit to the UICC, several of our members were asked to provide an Irish Language component to the morning's activities and entertainment. Galt Barber, Nikki Ragsdale, Janet Herman, and Audrey Nickel were happy to contribute in this way. They were introduced to the President during the socializing portion of the visit, spoke with him in Irish, and sang a song in Irish for him. During the song ('Mháire Bhruithneal), it was a delightful surprise when President Higgins joined in the singing. Following the morning's event, the singers picked up their instruments and went down to Filoli, where they were met by another member of their group (Dance Around Molly), Mike Long. The group participated in the Consulate's garden party for President Higgins at Filoli, playing traditional Irish music and singing lots more songs in Irish, as one of the three traditional music ensembles providing ambience around the garden during this wonderful occasion.



Singing for President Higgins: Along left edge of photo, from left to right: President Higgins, Galt Barber, Janet Herman, Nikki Ragsdale, Audrey Nickel.



Suzanne Cronin, Vinny Cronin, Barry O'Connell and Vincy Keehan entertain at the IIPC brunch at UICC for President Higgins



Sue Sweeney's 80th Birthday Party



Sue Sweeney had a grand celebration for her 80th birthday on Sunday, November 1st with family and friends. They came from far and wide to honor a wonderful lady who has been a stalwart supporter of Comhaltas from our early days.



CCÉ Membership



Membership Renewal for Everyone Due by Nov 10, 2015

Our Membership runs from January 1 to Dec 31st. Single Membership: \$40.00. Multi-membership (2 or more in household or a family): \$50.00. If you received your Scéal Eile by mail, a membership form is attached here for your convenience. Josephine will email those who received the Scéal by email. Here are the ways you can renew:

- Renew online through our website and remit payment through PayPal: sf.ccewest.org
- Renew on-line through our website and send your check to our PO Box (we do not bill);
- Complete your membership form and either give it to Josephine at dancing or mail it with your check to our PO Box.

If you have any questions, please contact Joannie at 415 664-6579 or joannieoleary@msn.com; or talk with Josephine at dancing. Thank you for your support.

Share the Joy Please Help with Member Outreach!

It's great to have new folks joining the dancing, but a lot of them don't even know that they could join CCE! If you are receiving and enjoying the Scéal Eile you are already a member -- think how much these newer folks would appreciate if you mentioned to them a little about CCE membership? Many don't know that CCE organizes and sponsors the dance lessons, the various dances at the UICC, the roster of callers at Thursday night dancing, the newsletter, classes and scholarships for kids, and much more. Please take a moment to mention CCE to the new folks at dance as we're sure they'd appreciate knowing how to get their own Scéal Eile! They can obtain membership forms online, or from Judy Forrest at dancing. Thanks!



Deireadh Seachtaine



The 2015 Deireadh Seachtaine Gaeltachta was a great success, with attendees from all over the country: Texas, Idaho, Wyoming, New York, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, and Hawaii were represented, along with Southern California, and our local Bay Area attendees. We had plenty of musicians and singers among the attendees for three fabulous evening music and singing sessions, too, and it was wonderful to hear the dulcet tones of Gaeilge flowing all through the UICC as enthusiastic students and teachers conversed, enjoying the opportunity to learn and use their Irish.



CCÉ has a facebook group where we can share photos, ask questions and generally discuss all things Irish music and dance. In the search field at the top of your facebook page enter **Cooley-Keegan Branch**, select it from the list of choices and join the group.

Or, you can enter the following URL:
facebook.com/groups/316504905030686



Another online group where events are planned is [meetup.com](https://meetup.com/irishdance) at the following URL:
meetup.com/irishdance



General Meetings



General Meetings of the membership - contact Josephine Brogan for information:
1-415-681-4803 josephinebrogan@yahoo.com.

SACBHAIN 2015

Óé Dómhnaigh SUNDAY	Óé Luan MONDAY	Óé Mairt TUESDAY	Óé Céadaoin WEDNESDAY	Óéardaoin THURSDAY	Óé h-Aoine FRIDAY	Óé Sathairn SATURDAY
Nov 1 <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	2 <u>Céilí dancing</u> Starry Plough	3 <u>Set Dancing</u> Lilly Mac's, Sunnysvale w/ Fox on the Town <u>Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars	4 <u>Set Dancing</u> Redwood Cafe Cotati	5 <u>Set Dancing</u> Plough & Stars w/ The Elderberries	6 <u>Song Seisiún</u> Ellen Auriti 75 Vicente Road Berkeley 510-981-0763	7 <u>Lilly Mac's Céilí</u> Sunnysvale 7-10pm w/ Crooked Road
8 <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	9 <u>Céilí dancing</u> Starry Plough	10 <u>Set Dancing</u> Lilly Mac's, Sunnysvale w/ Birds in the Bush <u>Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars	11	12 <u>Set Dancing</u> UICC for class Plough & Stars w/ Crooked Road	13 <u>Set Dancing</u> Bronsan Dance Studio San Anselmo	14
15 <u>November Night Céilí</u> UICC 7-10pm <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	16 <u>Céilí dancing</u> Starry Plough	17 <u>Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars	18 <u>Set Dancing</u> Redwood Cafe Cotati	19 <u>Set Dancing</u> UICC for class Plough & Stars w/ Emperor Norton Ceili Band	20	21
22 <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	23 <u>Céilí dancing</u> Starry Plough	24 <u>Song Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars	25 <u>Set Dancing</u> Redwood Cafe Cotati	26 Happy Thanksgiving	27 <u>Set Dancing</u> Bronsan Dance Studio San Anselmo	28
29 <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	30 <u>Céilí dancing</u> Starry Plough	Dec 1 <u>Set Dancing</u> Lilly Mac's, Sunnysvale w/ Fox on the Town <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	2	3 <u>Set Dancing</u> Plough & Stars w/ Shannon Céilí Band	4 <u>Song Seisiún</u> Imelda White 275 Lassen Avenue Mountain View 650-964-7643	5



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 YOUTH OFFICER: CERI GARFIELD

Nollaig 2015

DÉ DOMHNAIGH SUNDAY	DÉ LUAN MONDAY	DÉ MARICT TUESDAY	DÉ CÉADAOIN WEDNESDAY	DÉARDAOIN THURSDAY	DÉ h-AOINE FRIDAY	DÉ SATHAIRN SATURDAY
Nov 29 <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	30 <u>Céilí dancing</u> Starry Plough	1 <u>Set Dancing</u> Lilly Mac's, Sunnyvale w/ Fox on the Town <u>Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars	2	3 <u>Set Dancing</u> Plough & Stars w/ Shannon Céilí Band	4 <u>Song Seisiún</u> Imelda White 275 Lassen Avenue Mountain View 650-964-7643	5
6 <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	7 <u>Céilí dancing</u> Starry Plough	8 <u>Set Dancing</u> Lilly Mac's, Sunnyvale w/ Banish the Dog <u>Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars	9	10 <u>Set Dancing</u> UICC for class Plough & Stars w/ Emperor Norton Céilí Band	11 <u>Set Dancing</u> Bronsan Dance Studio San Anselmo	12
13 <u>Christmas Céilí</u> UICC 7-10pm <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	14 <u>Céilí dancing</u> Starry Plough	15 <u>Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars	16 <u>Set Dancing</u> Redwood Cafe Cotati	17 <u>Set Dancing</u> UICC for class Plough & Stars w/ Topsy House	18	19
20 <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	21 <u>Céilí dancing</u> Starry Plough	22 <u>Song Seisiún</u> Plough and Stars	23 <u>Set Dancing</u> Redwood Cafe Cotati	24	25 Merry Christmas	26
27 <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	28 <u>Céilí dancing</u> Starry Plough	29 <u>Seisiún</u> - Plough and Stars	30 <u>Set Dancing</u> Redwood Cafe Cotati	31	Jan 1 Happy New Year <i>Song Seisiún is on the 8th</i>	2

Brosnan School of Irish Dance - 11 Belle Avenue, Suite B, San Anselmo, Ca 94960 brosnanschool.com

Lilly Mac's - 187 S. Murphy Ave, Sunnyvale (between Washington and Evelyn Avenues) 1-408-732-0200 lillymacs.com

Plough and Stars - 116 Clement Ave. (Between 2nd and 3rd), San Francisco, 1-415-751-1122 theploughandstars.com

Redwood Cafe - 8240 Old Redwood Hwy, Cotati CA 94931 1-707-795-7868 redwoodcafe.com

UICC - United Irish Cultural Center - 2700 45th Ave. (At Sloat Blvd.), San Francisco, 1-415-661-2700 irishcentersf.org

Starry Plough - 3101 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley 1-510-841-2082 starryploughpub.com

You can also visit the following website for events:

San Francisco CCÉ - Cooley-Keegan Branch - sf.ccewest.org



COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN
THE COOLEY-KEEGAN BRANCH



CHRISTMAS CÉILÍ



JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF MUSIC, SINGING AND DANCING

- WHEN:** SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13TH, 2015
- WHERE:** UNITED IRISH CULTURAL CENTER
2700 45th Avenue/Sloat Blvd, San Francisco
- TIME:** 7.00 PM TO 10.00 PM
- LIVE MUSIC:** TBD
- ADMISSION:** Adults: \$10.00. Children: FREE when accompanied by an adult

*For Information, contact Josephine Brogan (415) 681-4803 or
josephinebrogan@yahoo.com*

Please visit our website at : <http://sf.ccewest.org>



COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN
THE COOLEY-KEEGAN BRANCH

NOVEMBER NIGHT CÉILÍ

(CELTIC NEW YEARS CÉILÍ)

- WHEN:** SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15TH, 2015
- WHERE:** UNITED IRISH CULTURAL CENTER
2700 45th Avenue/Sloat Blvd, San Francisco
- TIME:** 7.00 PM TO 10.00 PM
- LIVE MUSIC:** TBD
- ADMISSION:** Adults: \$10.00. Children: FREE when accompanied by an adult

For Information, contact Josephine Brogan (415) 681-4803 or josephinebrogan@yahoo.com

Please visit our website at : <http://sf.ccewest.org>



Set Dancing



Mondays:

- Starry Plough in Berkeley: Céilí dancing on Mondays. Lessons from 7-9pm and dancing to live music from 9-11pm. Contact: John Slaymaker.

Tuesdays:

- Lilly Mac's in Sunnyvale (except for the 3rd Tuesday). Lessons: 7:30pm; Dance to live music 8-10pm. \$5 suggested to support the live music. Contact: Michael Murply

1st Thursday: Plough and Stars in San Francisco at 8pm. Music by the Shannon Céilí Band. \$5 suggested to support the live music.

2nd through last Thursdays:

- Lessons at the United Irish Cultural Center (UICC) in San Francisco at 7:30pm in the bar area. Taped music:
- Plough and Stars in San Francisco at 9:30pm.
Live traditional music featuring Topsy House, Emperor Norton Céilí Band and other fine bands.
Dancers are encouraged to contribute \$5 to support the live music.

2nd and 4th Fridays:

- Brosnan School of Irish Dance in San Anselmo: From 7-9pm. There is a \$5 donation suggested for this class.
Contact: Mary McDonagh (cladaghdancer@gmail.com), Micheal Minihane (michealminihane@yahoo.com)

Occasional Wednesdays:

- Redwood Cafe .8240 Old Redwood Highway, Cotati, CA 94931 707-795-7868. Contact: Mary McDonagh or Micheal Minihane



Seisiún



Seisiún: - Sundays and Tuesdays starting at 8:30 at the Plough and Stars, various hosts.

Song and Storytelling Seisiún: Held on the first Friday of each month, See **Song and Storytelling** section for details..

COOLEY-KEEGAN BRANCH OF
COMHALTAS CEOLTÓIRÍ ÉIREANN
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