



EPHPHETA

“be open”

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”

– 1 Thessalonians 5:11



www.jpc.org.au



admin@jpc.org.au



[JohnPierceCentre](https://www.facebook.com/JohnPierceCentre)



JOHN PIERCE CENTRE
Spirit of the Deaf Community

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MON - WED

9.30am to 3.30pm

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By Appointment Only

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Kim Kavanagh

Diane Backholer

Teresa Paulet

Tamara Dwyer

Executive Manager

Sophie Duncan

Chairperson JPC Board

Trevor Hughes

Board Members

Dean Sinclair (Treasurer)

Br Shane Wood (Minutes)

Evelyne Albrecht

Roshan Abraham

Gemma Cameron

Andrew Woods SC

Next Newsletter Deadline

NOVEMBER 2025

JPC would like to thank the community members for allowing us to use their photos in this publication and we acknowledge the use of images by rawpixel; renata.s; BiZkettE1; on freepik.

Dear Community,

I hope this newsletter reaches you in good spirits and keeping cosy in the final weeks of winter—it's certainly been a brisk winter but I look forward to the start of the Spring season!

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed to the Ephpheta Appeal. Your generosity during these uncertain times is truly appreciated. Every donation helps us continue our mission of supporting the Deaf community, and we are deeply grateful for your kindness and commitment.

We've recently been holding a series of Cyber Security workshops, and I hope those who attended found them useful and empowering. These sessions are designed to help keep our community safe online, offering practical tips to avoid scams, protect personal information, and use technology with confidence. We have more workshops coming up, so please keep an eye out for future dates.

I'd also like to take a moment to thank our incredible volunteers. Your kindness, dedication, and generosity of spirit are at the heart of everything we do. Whether you assist with events, programs, or individual support, your contributions make a real difference in the lives of our community members.

A special thank you to Sally Pilbeam for so generously stepping in while Diane Backholer was on leave—your support has been invaluable. And to our Men's Group: thank you for taking such great care of our Centre. From tidying the gardens and carrying out essential maintenance to giving the cubby house a fresh coat of paint, your efforts help keep our space welcoming, safe, and full of life.

We're always looking for more volunteers—especially those who can visit community members for a friendly chat in Auslan and offer companionship. If you're interested but unsure where to start, we provide all the training you'll need. It's a truly rewarding way to connect with others and brighten someone's week.

Your generosity continues to make a real impact. Every donation—big or small—helps us offer vital programs, events, and support for our community. Contributions are welcome year-round and directly help us maintain and grow the services so many rely on.

Warm regards,

Sophie Duncan

Executive Manager

John Pierce Centre



Ephpheta Appeal

JPC would like to say a huge thank you to all those that donated to our centre during the annual Ephpheta Appeal this year. It is ever humbling to see that so many people are ready and willing to dig deep to support our work. Your donation assists us in our work to support Deaf individuals and groups through pastoral care programs, group programs and tailored support.

Thank you!



It's never too late to give!

Please support the unique and valuable work of the John Pierce Centre. Scan the QR code



Father Wayne's Reflection.



EPHPHETA – BE OPEN

August at JPC is an important time of year. To celebrate Ephpheta, to be open, clear

God gives all unique ways of communication. Our voices, our hands, our bodies as language, demonstration. Our writing skills, the Technological tools we have at hand, we use.

Through these gifts we have been given, never to abuse.

We are called to use God's gifts in a good way.

To have the heart of Jesus at work in us, we will not sway

Ephpheta, to be open, to possibility and opportunity. As followers of Christ though struggles through at times, no liability

Rather the challenges we are given in this life for us and for all are blessings, reminding us of our responsibilities and acknowledging God's love for us all, we stand tall

We thank God the Father, Jesus His Son, and the Holy Spirit for what we have been given.

We share God's gifts with others in a way that acknowledges we have tired, striven

God bless you all.

All my love.

Fr Wayne Edwards

Chaplain to the Deaf

Community Award Winner Mark Backholer

Mark Backholer is a dedicated member of the community who has built a strong and meaningful connection with the John Pierce Centre (JPC), particularly in recent years. He embodies the values of the Centre through his welcoming attitude and his unwavering commitment to ensuring that all Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals feel included and valued.



Over the past three years, Mark has been instrumental in the reestablishment of the Deaf Men's Group. As a key leader, he takes initiative in organising group activities and gatherings, fostering a sense of camaraderie and support among participants. Beyond his leadership in the group, Mark consistently goes above and beyond to help maintain the Centre. Whether it's cleaning the outside areas, tending to the gardens, joining working bees or handling various odd jobs, Mark is always there, often volunteering his time without being asked.

JPC AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the John Pierce Centre was held on Sunday 18th of May. JPC continues to provide an important service to the Deaf community and operations are managed carefully to ensure our continued work.

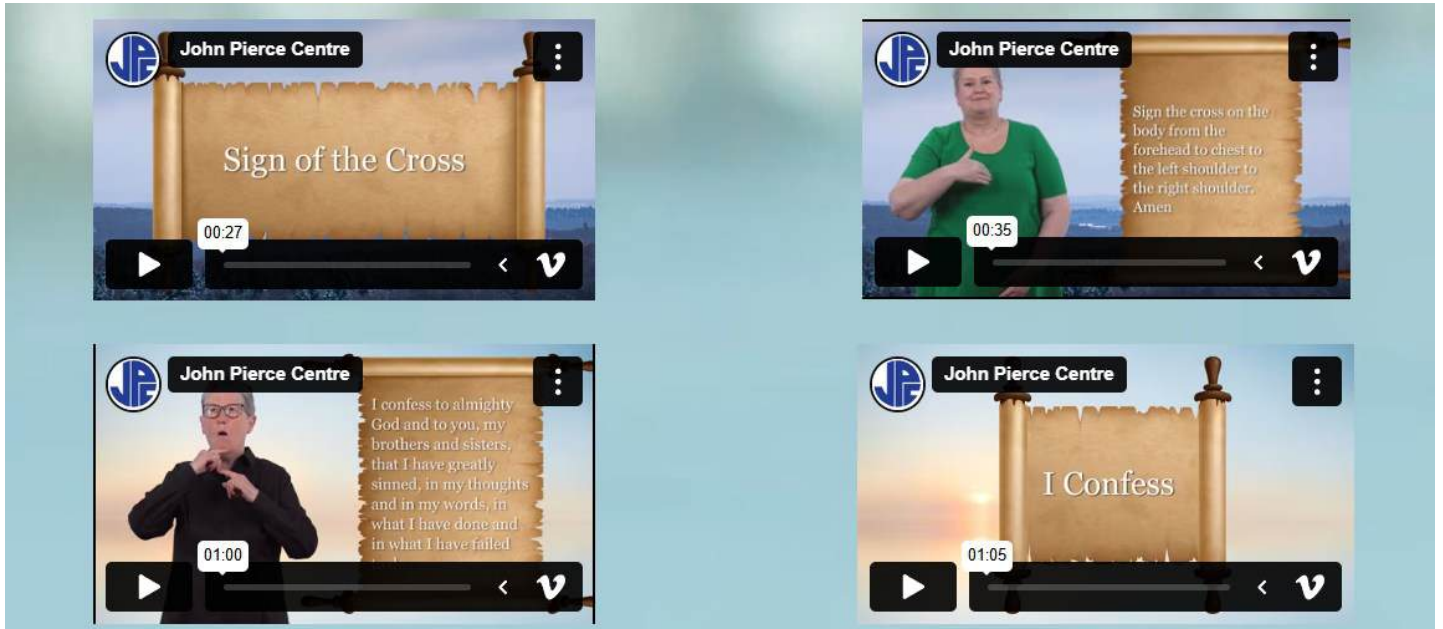
The team have worked hard to keep expenses to a minimum over the last year whilst still providing a high level of support and services at the centre.



Religious Signs Project

At the AGM in May, JPC launched the new video resources on our website. A collection of prayers and liturgy, translated into Auslan to support the faith development of the community, as well as a great resource for Interpreters and Auslan users. It preserves some of the rich history of the JPC and the Deaf catholic community language. All resources are freely accessible for the community to access at <https://www.jpc.org.au/jpc-library>.

Thank you to Teachers as Co-Learners: Education - Language for partnering on this project.



Story of Impact- JPC supporting our community!

Benny* (not his real name) was finding life hard – family issues, health issues, unemployed, owed people/ businesses money and was facing eviction. Recently his heater broke down which made his life harder as his house was so cold and he cannot afford someone to come in and fix the heater.

He had a support worker, supporting him with his health and NDIS. There was no one else to support Benny* with other areas of his life. JPC got involved via our pastoral care team.

Communication between Benny* and mainstream (hearing) services was never easy. The JPC pastoral care worker provided communication support and cultural bridging between both sides. This is important in making sure that Benny* and other service providers can work together well.

His JPC pastoral care worker supported Benny* through:

- his immediate family issues by working with the police and family services
- working through various debt issues with his financial counsellor
- stopping the eviction process by working with the body corporate and their legal representative and setting up a repayment schedule
- liaising with the employment agency over his goals in finding a full-time job so he can pay off his debts and be in a better financial position
- supporting with his Centrelink paperwork and communications at his local Centrelink office
- link him with a financial advisor in relation to superannuation
- liaise with his other support worker in health
- home and hospital visits
- giving him space to share his worries, frustration and what he would like to see happen

Benny* will need JPC's support until he is in a better place in life and not feeling overwhelmed and disempowered.

Benny* said ***"I do not want to lose you as you helped me a lot. You understand me"***.

Oh, the heating is now fixed, and Benny* feels warm in his house.

Cyber Scam Workshop –Kid Safety

JPC hosted a cyber safety workshop about kids safety online. Presented by Gene Reardon from VCD. It was an important workshop about keeping children safe online and the settings you can implement on devices to reduce the risk. As technology advances and children are very capable of using technology, as parents and grandparents, we need to know how to keep kids safe whilst they are using devices.



Cyber Scam Workshop –AI

JPC hosted a cyber safety workshop about Artificial Intelligence. Presented by Teresa Paulet. It was an important workshop about the uses and risks associated with Artificial Intelligence. There are many positives to using AI that can help us with our work but it is important that people can identify AI so as not to be scammed. Scams are becoming more sophisticated with the use of AI and the Deaf community need to be more vigilant.



Palliative Care: Advanced Care Planning Workshop

On Wednesday 20th August, JPC hosted a workshop about Advanced Care planning. Advanced Care Planning is about letting others know how we wish to be cared for in the future, in case we can't make our own decisions at the time.

Advance care planning in 3 steps

- Appoint someone**
- Communicate**
- Put it on paper**



***Congratulations to
Sr Bernadette Wallis MSS
on reaching her 60 year
anniversary of profession
into the Missionary Sisters
of Service.***



Sr Bernadette has worked at JPC and supported the Deaf community over many years. She continues to volunteer her time in our Archives team to collate and maintain the Catholic Deaf history in Victoria. We are deeply thankful for Sr Bernadette's commitment to our community. Congratulations on your 60 year anniversary!

From all of the board, staff and community at JPC.

Join the Board

No Experience Needed

Interested in joining the JPC Board or Board subcommittee to support the work of the John Pierce Centre?

Contact us today! No experience is necessary, just a passion for supporting the Deaf Community and the work of JPC.

Meetings are every two months so just 6 meetings a year.

Contact JPC for more information
manager@jpc.org.au



Signee tots

14 September
5 October
2 November
7 Dec—Christmas Break up

Deaf Art & Craft

29 August
5 September
12 September
19 September
10 October
17 October
24 October
31 October
7 November
14 November
21 November
28 November
5 December—Christmas Break Up

**Meets every Friday
during the school
term from 10am-2pm**

Signee Tots

Hello there, Signee Tots' families and friends,

Signee Tots runs on the first Sunday of each month and is a terrific place to meet new friends and families. It is a fun and safe place to play and talk about parenting. It is open to all families that have deaf parents or deaf children or anyone who uses Auslan to communicate.

If you want to join Signee Tots or want more information please email signeetots@jpc.org.au



2025 dates

SIGNEE TOTS PLAYGROUP

6 JULY
3 AUG
14 SEPT
5 OCT
2 NOV
7 DEC

10AM-12PM

at John Pierce Centre

Everyone is welcome!
This playgroup is Auslan only space and suitable for under 5 years old.
Please RSVP your attendance to @signeetots

Deaf Art and Craft

Term 3 at Deaf Arts & Crafts has been busy with many different and enjoyable and creative sessions.

If you are interested in joining us please contact the group Co-Ordinator Diane via email: d.backholer@jpc.org.au

A special thankyou to Sally Pilbeam for volunteering to coordinate the Arts group whilst Diane was away. It's great to see community members supporting our social groups for the benefit of others!

You must register to attend so please contact us to join this group



Remember!! For information on any community activities, please contact Katrina



Ladies Get Together



Co-ordinated by
Diane Backholer

What fun the Ladies
had recently at Artvo
at the Docklands!



If you would like to join the Ladies
Get Together please contact Diane
via email: d.backholer@jpc.org.au

Ladies' Get Together

- 27 August**—Outing
- 10 September**—Outing
- 8 October**—Outing
- 22 October** – JPC
- 5 November**—Outing
- 19 November**—JPC
- 3 December**—Christmas breakup



Deaf Men's Group

The Deaf Men's Group have been busy getting together to head out for activities or stay in at JPC for games and catching up. Recently they have been to the Jewish Museum and then the Greek Museum. They have also been helping out with maintenance at JPC and held a mental health workshop.

They look forward to some fun outings over the next few months so please get in touch if you would like to join.



Pankina

The Pankina group meets each fortnight on a Monday from 10am-3pm. There are always fun activities, including bingo and cards. This group welcomes all Deaf and hard of hearing community members. If you would like to attend please contact Katrina for more information.



Pankina

- 27 August** – Outing
- 17 September**—Outing
- 15 October** – Outing
- 19 November** – Break up lunch
- 1 September**—Cards
- 15 September**—Bingo. AFL footy dress up day
- 29 September**—Bingo
- 13 October**— Cards
- 27 October**—Bingo
- 10 November**—Movie Day at JPC
- 24 November**—Christmas lunch outing
- 8 December**—Christmas break up at JPC. Raffle



SMS: 0400 660 601 / [E: k.mynard@jpc.org.au](mailto:k.mynard@jpc.org.au)

JPC Volunteer Visitor Program

Do you have some spare time? Are you interested in giving back to the Deaf community? Perhaps volunteering is right for you. We are looking for Deaf people or people who use Auslan, who are interested in volunteering their time twice a month to visit the elderly Deaf in our community. Supporting the aging Deaf community is a priority for JPC.

We would provide the necessary training and ongoing support as needed and aim to find someone close to you to visit.

Also, if you are a Deaf senior or know someone who would benefit from having a volunteer to visit them please get in contact with JPC. We aim to find local volunteers to visit Deaf people in their home/nursing home/local café. Building a sense of connection with language and culture to those that are feeling lonely and isolated.

Contact us today at admin@jpc.org.au

Funeral Workshop for Interpreters

In July, JPC partnered with ASLITA (Australian Sign Language Interpreters and Translators Association) and Tobin Brothers Funerals to run a workshop aimed at preparing interpreters for work at funerals. These spaces can be overwhelming and intimidating and hence there are few interpreters who are comfortable with taking this work. In providing this workshop we are hoping to support interpreters to feel comfortable and willing to interpret for funerals as these events are very important for Deaf people to attend.



The Archbishops Campaign

Give to The Archbishops Campaign to support the work of the John Pierce Centre. We are one of the recipients of the campaign and we appreciate your financial support. JPC runs of the support of the community.

Thankyou

One major collection for the
Archdiocese of Melbourne

Archbishop's
Campaign
2025

Tax-
deductible
gifts
Archbishop's
Charitable Fund

Non-
deductible
gifts
Religious
Projects Fund

Corpus Christi College Building Fund

Priests Retirement Foundation

John Pierce Centre

Melbourne Overseas Missions

University of Divinity Building Fund

Annual grants to Catholic community agencies
and community service organisations

Archbishop's evangelisation initiatives

Seminarian education

Go out to
the whole world;
proclaim the
Good News
to all creation.

MARK 16:15

Donate today at
melbournecatholic.org/archbishopscampaign

THE
ARCHBISHOP'S
CAMPAIGN
2025



Calendar For Masses:

Sunday 7th September at St Patrick's Cathedral	11am at St Patrick's Cathedral 1 Cathedral Pl East Melbourne
Sunday 14th September at St Kilian's Church, Bendigo	10am at St Kilian's Catholic Church 161 McCrae Street Bendigo
Sunday 21st September Sunday Mass at JPC	11am at JPC and livestreamed on www.facebook.com/JohnPierceCentre
Sunday 5th October at St Patrick's Cathedral	11am at St Pat's East Melbourne
Sunday 19th October Sunday Mass at JPC	11am at JPC and livestreamed
Sunday 2nd November at St Patrick's Cathedral	11am at St Pat's East Melbourne
Sunday 16th November Memorial Mass at JPC	11am at JPC and livestreamed
Sunday 7th December at St Patrick's Cathedral	11am at St Pat's East Melbourne
Sunday 14th December JPC Christmas Rally	11am at JPC and livestreamed
Wednesday 24th December JPC Christmas Eve Mass 3pm	Online viewing only. No attendance at JPC
Wednesday 24th December St Patrick's Midnight Mass	11pm at St Pat's East Melbourne

Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral

St Patrick's Cathedral continues to provide Auslan Interpreters for Mass at 11am on the first Sunday of each month. It is aired on Channel 44 on digital TVs, or you can watch it online on Youtube.

John Pierce Centre is thankful for the wonderful partnership and commitment to ensuring access to faith and church by providing Auslan and Deaf Interpreters.

Interpreters will be provided for the **Christmas Eve Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral from 11:00pm.**

Please join us for Christmas carols and the midnight service.

Ephpheta Sunday Celebration and Lunch

Thank you to everyone that joined us for our Ephpheta Sunday Celebration Mass where we celebrate the Deaf community!



History – We honour our Catholic Deaf history. We thank God for the people involved in the early years and gave John Pierce Centre such a good foundation. We remember those who have given time, energy, and financial support throughout our history, especially Board members, staff and our dedicated volunteers.

Language – We appreciate our way of communication – sign language (Auslan). Sign language is so important in our lives – our families, in the workplace and socially. Today's readings invite us to open communication with people of all

languages. To communicate with an open mind, open heart, and open hands.

Community – We celebrate our community, especially here at John Pierce Centre. May the light, and colour, and warmth of this place continue to be a beacon that guides us with love and continued respect for each person who calls John Pierce Centre "home".



Memorial Mass—November

November marks a time of remembering those we have lost. Our loved ones and friends. On Sunday 16th November, JPC will hold a Memorial Mass at 11am where we will take time to reflect on community members that have passed away in the last 12 months.

If you have a family member or friend that you would like included in our Mass please email us with their name, a photo and their date of birth and death so that they can be added into our list.

At the end of the Mass we go outside to the memorial garden where we bless the new plaques that have been added onto the stone.

If you would like to have a plaque added to the memorial garden please get in contact with JPC for more details.

Ephpheta

Holy Gospel of Mark 7:31-37.

Jesus left the district of Tyre and went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, into the district of the Decapolis. And people brought to him a deaf man who had a speech impediment and begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him off by himself away from the crowd. He put his finger into the man's ears and, spitting, touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him, "Ephphatha!" (that is, "Be opened!") and immediately the man's ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly. He ordered them not to tell anyone. But the more he ordered them not to, the more they proclaimed it. They were exceedingly astonished and they said, "He has done all things well. He makes the deaf

"Be Open"

We remember always, those that have been a part of our lives, as their spirits are weaved through the story that is our Deaf community.

Rest in Peace

Donald Beech—30/05/2025 (husband of Margaret Beech)

Joan Haigh —03/06/2025 (mother of Chris Haigh. dec)

Gordon Elder—14/06/2025 (husband of Christine Elder)

Martin Webb—12/06/2026

Marie Gaunt—21/06/2025

Rhonda Quinn—23/06/2025

Alida Cairo—25/06/2025 (pupil of Glendonald School)

Diane Paulet—20/08/2025 (mother of Teresa Paulet)

Leave a bequest

By leaving a gift to John Pierce Centre in your Will, you will have a lasting impact, supporting our centre for years to come. It is a powerful reflection of the values and principles you treasure. It enables you to create a legacy of love and care for those in need.

For more information, please contact our office on 03 9525 1158 or email admin@jpc.org.au Thank you.

Welcome

Want to keep in touch with JPC?

You can always find more information about JPC on our Facebook page and on our Website. If there is something you would like to see more of...please tell us.



www.facebook.com/JohnPierceCentre



www.jpc.org.au



Coffee With A Cop Day at JPC



Details:

- Date: 6th October 2025
- Time: 10:30- 12:30
- Location: John Pierce Centre
25-35 High Street, Prahran

Morning Tea Provided BYO Lunch

About the Event

Come and have a friendly chat with local police officers over a coffee or tea. This is a chance to ask questions, share concerns, and get to know your local police in a relaxed setting. The goal is to build trust, break down barriers, and strengthen connections between police and the community.

Accessibility

Auslan interpreters will be available to support communication, answer questions, and make sure everyone feels included.

Contact Di Backholer, Katrina Mynard or Tamara Dwyer by email:
admin@jpc.org.au
for more information

Your contribution:

Help us to support Deaf people and their families throughout VIC by making a tax deductible donation today.



www.givenow.com.au/jpcdonations

Office Hours-

MON - Wed: 9:30am-3:30pm

Thurs-Fri: by appointment only

Please make contact via email at
admin@jpc.org.au

JPC would like to thank the following organisations for their support through grants and sponsorships...



Ephpheta Foundation Grant

Gorman Foundation Grant

Bendigo Mass & Lunch

- When: Sunday 14th September
- Time: 10:00am Mass
- Address: 161 McCrae Street, BENDIGO VIC
- LUNCH: The Bridge Hotel
- TIME: 11:30am-2:00pm
- Address: 49 Bridge Street, BENDIGO VIC



St Kilian's
Catholic Church

- Everyone is welcome to come for lunch, even if you don't come to church so, please bring a friend. People to pay for their own meals.

We have had a lot of success with our **Cyber Safety workshops** so far this year and we are continuing on with two more workshops this year to support the Deaf community in understanding how to be safe online. Join us for these exciting sessions. Thank you to the Community Grants Hub for their continued support of this important issue. See flyers below.



Australian Government

Community
Grants Hub

Improving your grant experience

Digital Safety

Learn how to protect yourself from scams online. Keep your devices safe.

Join us for this cyber safety workshop presented by Olivia Beasley

Wednesday 22nd October
at JPC 25-35 High St Prahran
10am-12pm

Morning tea and lunch provided

CYBER SAFETY

Multi Factor Authentication

Wednesday 19th November
at JPC 25-35 High St Prahran
10:30am-12:00pm

Morning tea and lunch provided



JPC Christmas Rally 2025

Join us for our popular end of year celebration!

Join us for Mass at 11am and then we will be serving a delicious two course meal from 12 noon!

When: Sunday 14th December 2025 at 11am

**Where: John Pierce Centre,
25 High Street Prahran**

Cost: \$45 per adult / \$20 per child

You can pay for your tickets any time between now and the RSVP date.

RSVP and pay by Friday 28 November

YOU CAN NOT BUY TICKETS ON THE DAY!

IF WE HAD NO WINTER THE
spring
WOULD NOT BE
SO PLEASANT

Office Open:

JPC is open to the community. If you have any urgent queries,
please contact Sophie Duncan: 0416 207 913

Please tick below:

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Free**

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Please print clearly

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\$15.00
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hard copy if we
have not received
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for your
understanding



JOHN PIERCE CENTRE NEWSLETTER
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SURFACE
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