



# Gen Dobry!

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\*\*\* WELCOME! \*\*\*

to the latest issue of *Gen Dobry!*, the e-zine of PolishRoots®. If you missed previous issues, you can find them here:

<<http://polishroots.org/GenDobry/tabid/60/Default.aspx>>

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## **\*\*\* WIESCO SUMMER 2016 IMMERSION ENGLISH PROGRAMS IN POLAND \*\*\***

*Editor*—We have printed information from Robert Pine about WIESCO programs in past issues of *Gen Dobry!*, and the response from our readers suggested many of you were interested. I wanted to pass this latest announcement along to you.

Since 1974, WIESCO, the Wisconsin International Educational Scientific Cultural Organization, an IRS 501c3 non-profit, has organized immersion English programs in Eastern Europe. WIESCO has a very long relationship with Poland.

The objective of a program is to immerse students in English through lessons, group activities, and discussions with their American teachers and classmates, giving them the opportunity to use and expand their ability in the language in real situations outside the formality of the classroom. They are also very excited to share their Polish culture and traditions with their American teachers, and learn more about America.

Since this is an immersion English program, all communication is in English. But if you know some Polish, it is a great opportunity for you to put it to the test.

### **Poznań – June 28 to July 9**

This will be the second year at a highly regarded high school located on the edge of the Old Town. The first Polish capital, Poznań, and Wielkopolska are considered the birthplace of Poland. It has a fine old town with a famous Renaissance City Hall at its center. It boasts a great collection of museums, churches and historic sites. The city is very walkable and possesses excellent tram and bus service. By train one can easily travel to the Baltic or the Tatras, or travel west into nearby Germany.

In addition to the youth program, we seek an individual to lead classes with teachers who are not English teachers, who possess various level of ability in English, and who wish to improve their skills in the language.

### **Bożków – June 27 to July 13, 2016**

This will be the fifth year at this school located in beautiful southwestern Poland, south of Wrocław, near the cities of Nowa Ruda and Kłodzko, and within five miles of the Czech Republic. Bożków, a small farming village among rolling hills with a neighboring chateau, is ideal for rural hiking and sightseeing. Swimming can be arranged at the local sports facility.

The school has a newly renovated and modern facility for teaching and accommodations. The energetic students include both high school and elementary levels.

**Details** – More information is available on the website:

<<http://www.wiesco.org>>.

Or contact Robert Pine at 630-279-5646 (Chicago area). Robert is a member of the Polish Genealogical Society of America, has submitted articles to *Rodziny*, and spoken on genealogy at PGSA meetings in Chicago. Over the years, several PGSA members have participated in WIESCO programs in Poland and Lithuania.

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**\*\*\* LETTERS TO THE EDITOR \*\*\***

Subject: A Polish American Immigrant story

*Editor*—Jerry Ceasar sent me this brief item in the hope that we could share it with our readers, who will surely find it interesting.

Those of you of Polish ancestry might be interested to know that Stephen Piscotty, one of the up and coming stars of the St. Louis baseball team and one of my second cousins, is the great-great-grandson of Jan and Jadwiga Pyskaty (later Americanized to Piscotty). Jan Pyskaty came to this country from Dębica in Galicia, and 18-year-old Jadwiga from outside of Kraków. They settled in Plymouth, Pennsylvania, where my maternal grandfather was a coal miner who came down with black lung. (The teachers in Plymouth would tell my aunts “Your name isn’t Piscotty, it’s Prescott).

The Piscottys’ grandkids have worked hard, earning college degrees and Ph.D’s and MD’s. Stephen Piscotty just completed his Stanford U. degree in energy and atmospheric engineering. All of us Piscottys scattered around the USA are big fans of Stephen and hope he becomes another Stan Musial.

Jerry Ceasar (Przyblowicz before my paternal grandfather, Paul Cezar Przybyłowicz Americanized his last name)

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Subject: IAJGS Records Access Alert Open to ALL

*Editor*—Jan Meisels Allen sent me this note on October 31, just a few minutes after I’d sent out the October issue of *Gen Dobry!* I wanted to be sure to include it this month because I think the alerts sent out are important. They don’t overwhelm you, filling your inbox. They just give you a chance to keep up with developments that can end up making a big difference to genealogists.

In February 2013, the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS), started a new announcement list, the IAJGS Records Access Alert. At that time it was decided to open the Alert only to subscribers that were members of IAJGS member societies and any

person subscribed to the JewishGen Discussion Group or Special Interest Group (SIG) hosted by or owned by JewishGen. At the IAJGS 2015 October Board meeting it was decided to open the registration to the Alert to anyone who is interested in records access. Registration and a listing of your organization affiliation (genealogy society, etc.) may now go to this page:

<<http://lists.iajgs.org/mailman/listinfo/records-access-alerts>>

You will receive an e-mail response that you have to reply to or the subscription will not be finalized.

For those who may wish to access the archives of the IAJGS Records Access Alerts, go here:

<<http://lists.iajgs.org/mailman/private/records-access-alerts/>>

You must be registered to access the archives.

As this is an announcement list, you may not post comments as you may on a discussion list. However, we do want to hear from the list subscribers worldwide if they know of public records access issues or have something relevant to add about the postings. Please send notices and comments to the following e-mail address: <[RecordsAccess@iajgs.org](mailto:RecordsAccess@iajgs.org)>. Where appropriate, the list owner will issue a posting. Alerts posted to this new service will be made only when there is something of an important nature regarding public records access; therefore, do not expect this alert on a routinely daily or weekly basis.

We look forward to having you subscribe.

Jan Meisels Allen  
Chairperson, IAJGS Public Records Access Monitoring Committee

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**\*\*\* AND GOD CREATED TO POLAND... \*\*\***

*Editor*—Rob Strybel posted this to the Polish Culture, Food and Traditions group on Facebook. I thought it was hilarious, and wanted to pass it along.

When God was creating the world He said: “Ah yes, the Poles -- I will give them a land of flowing with milk and honey, rich fields of grain, lush forests teeming with game, lakes and rivers full of fish, natural resources such as coal, copper, silver, and sulphur, scenic mountains, an impressive seacoast, rolling green meadows, beautiful flaxen-haired maidens and strong, hard-working lads for them to marry...”

A little angel witnessing this thought process suddenly piped up: “But aren’t the Poles getting too much of a good thing?”

To which God replies: “Not really. Just wait till you see who I give them for neighbors.”

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**\*\*\* MIRIAM WEINER HONORED \*\*\***

Among the various items I read this month, I was especially pleased to see that the Board for Certification of Genealogists had bestowed the honorary designation “Certified Genealogist Emeritus” on Miriam Weiner. In a note posted to JewishGen digest, Emily Garber wrote, “In doing so, the Board recognized her distinguished career and thirty-year certification. President Jeanne Larzalere Bloom recognized Miriam as the first Jewish genealogist to become certified by the BCG. To us, of course, she is known for her pioneering work in the archives of Eastern Europe and the Routes to Roots Foundation.”

This is the URL for the Routes to Roots Foundation:

<<http://www.rtrfoundation.org/index.shtml>>

Jonathan Shea and I had the pleasure of helping Miriam out with a few language-related items for her books *Jewish Roots in Poland* and *Jewish Roots in Ukraine and Moldova*. It was an honor to be allowed to contribute to these amazing works. Miriam has done pioneering work and deserves every bit of recognition she gets!

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**\*\*\* THE ROAD HOME: TRIP TO POLAND \*\*\***

**THE ROAD HOME**

A special tour of Poland to reconnect with your roots

with Jonathan Shea and Aleksandra Kacprzak

sponsored by the Polish American Foundation of CT

**May 10, 2016 through May 23, 2016**

The Road Home trip will leave from New York on 5/10/16 and return on 5/23/16.

The trip cost is \$2,995\* per person, double occupancy. There will be an additional \$350 fee for single occupancy. The cost includes airfare between New York JFK and Warsaw, hotels, three meals daily, professional tour guide, private tour bus, and admission for scheduled attractions.

You must sign up for the trip by January 2, 2016 and pay a \$200 deposit at that time. The balance of \$2,795 is due by February 2, 2016. Payment is nonrefundable. You must also include your completed pre-trip questionnaire with your payment.

You must have a valid passport for this trip.

If you are traveling alone, would you want a roommate and save the single supplement charge?

Please let us know if you would like a roommate and we will try to accommodate you.

***\*Price Subject to change due to change in exchange rates or airline fees.***

## INDIVIDUAL VILLAGE DAY TRIPS

There are a limited number of day trips available so you can travel to your ancestral village. There will be an additional cost for this service. The village must be within 75 miles of a city we are visiting. Requests must be submitted by January 2, 2016. We will notify you by January 20, 2016 if your trip is possible and the estimated cost for the trip. Payment for the village trip will happen the day of the trip in Poland.

## DAILY ITINERARY

Day 1 – May 10: Depart for Poland

Day 2 – May 11: Warsaw/Ostrołęka

The tour begins at the airport when we board our charter bus for a tour of the Old Town of Warsaw. After lunch at the Magat restaurant we will depart for Ostrołęka.

Day 3 – May 12: Kadzidło/Łomża/Drozdowo

We start the day off learning about the Kurpie culture in Kadzidło. We will visit an outdoor ethnographic museum and attend a workshop on making *wycinanki* (paper cutouts). After lunch we travel to Łomża for a tour of the city and the fort. On our way back to the hotel, we will stop at the nature museum, estate and the cemetery chapel of the Lutosławski family in Drozdowo.

Day 4 – May 13: Pułtusk /Ostrołęka

We start our day out with a visit to Pułtusk. We will tour the city and the local castle, and the archives. In the evening we will go to the Gospoda pod Jemiołami restaurant in Ostrołęka for a special, Kurpian-style festive dinner.

Village trips this day.

Day 5 – May 14: Tykocin/Białystok

We start our day with a visit to Tykocin with a tour of the town and a visit to the museum. We continue on to Białystok. Those interested in doing research at the Archdiocesan Archive can stay at the archive while the rest of the group will tour the city.

Village trips this day.

Day 6 – May 15: Suchowola/Augustów/Paniewo/Suwałki

Our day begins with a visit to Święta Woda and the Hill of Crosses. From there, we make a brief stop at Suchowola, the geographical center of Europe. We continue on to Augustów where we will tour the city and then embark on a boat tour down the Augustów canal.

Day 7 – May 16: Sejny/Wiżajny

Our first stop today is the Basilica in Sejny. From there, we go to the Wigry Monastery, originally built by the Camedulian monks but now open to the public. We finish our day at Wiżajny, the coldest spot in Poland. It is also the point where Russia, Poland, and Lithuania converge.

Village trips this day.

Day 8 – May 17: Giżycko/Olsztyn/Gdańsk

This day is a travel day to Gdańsk. We will make several stops along the way, including the cities of Giżycko and Olsztyn.

Day 9 – May 18: Gdańsk

We spend the entire day exploring the city of Gdańsk, home of the Solidarity movement. Sites we will visit include the Royal Route, Basilica of Saint Mary, Mariacka Street, Neptune Fountain, and the Oliwa Cathedral.

Village trips this day.

Day 10 – May 19: Szymbark/Malbork/Grudziądz

We start the day in Szymbark to visit the Upside Down House. We next go to Malbork Castle for a tour and a festive lunch in the Castle's restaurant. We end the day in Grudziądz, Aleksandra's hometown!

Day 11 – May 20: Toruń/Ciechocinek/Płock

A tour of the Gothic architecture of Toruń is today's first activity. After lunch, we spend the afternoon relaxing at a health spa in Ciechocinek. After dinner, we travel to Płock for the night.

Day 12 – May 21: Płock/Sierpc

The State Archives in Płock is our first stop followed by a city tour. After lunch, we visit the Ethnographic museum in Sierpc.

Village trips this day.

Day 13 – May 22: Warsaw

We spend the entire day exploring the sites of Warsaw. We spend the night at the hotel Atos.

Day 14 – May 23: Warsaw/New York

It is time to return home. After breakfast, we travel to the Warsaw airport for our return to New York.

See <<http://www.paf-ct.org>> for more details. To sign up or more questions e-mail: <[dorena726@yahoo.com](mailto:dorena726@yahoo.com)>.

Check us out on Facebook: The Road Home-Polish American Foundation.

POLISH AMERICAN FOUNDATION OF CONNECTICUT

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[I should add that when I contacted Jonathan Shea last month, there were only a few seats left. I could not get in touch with him today (November 30), so I don't know if there are any openings left. If you do want to reserve a place in this tour, please write [dorena726@yahoo.com](mailto:dorena726@yahoo.com) right away!]

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### \*\*\* AN OVERVIEW OF RECENT PERIODICALS \*\*\*

*Editor*—This is an ongoing feature, meant to inform you of articles published recently in newsletters and journals that may interest you.

***East European Genealogist, Fall 2015*** – East European Genealogy Society, <<http://www.eegsociety.org>>

- Canadian National Railway Immigrant Records, Pre-1937, Chris Bukoski
- EEGS Seminar 2015 – *Ancestral Evidence – Names, Places, and Documents*, Mavis Menzies
- More Highlights of the Past 25 Years of EEGS
- From the *Słownik geograficzny*: Majdan Sieniawski and Nearby Villages

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### \*\*\* UPCOMING EVENTS \*\*\*

***Note: see also*** <<http://www.eogn.com/calendar>> ***for a large selection of upcoming events in the world of genealogy.***



**March 19, 2016**

**UKRAINIAN HISTORICAL AND EDUCATIONAL CENTER OF NEW JERSEY  
SPRING WORKSHOP -- NASHI PREDKY/OUR ANCESTORS" SERIES**

**Location: Ukrainian Cultural Center, 135 Davidson Road, Somerset, NJ**

Time: TBA • Cost: TBA

The Ukrainian Historical and Educational Center of NJ is proud to announce their next event in the "Nashi Predky/Our Ancestors" series. The Spring Workshop will be held on Saturday, March 19, 2016 and will feature presentations by the staff members of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM). They will present information on wartime and post-war records related to Nazi persecution, forced laborers in Germany, and displaced persons.

As the USHMM has direct access to the database of the International Tracing Service (ITS), they will be bringing their computers so you will be able to do on-site research!

\*\*\* Details for the full-day program will be announced as soon as they are finalized. \*\*\*

International Tracing Service (ITS) Frequently Asked Questions:

<<http://tinyurl.com/o8yyxat>>

[From a post by Michelle Chubenko to the PolandBorderSurnames mailing list]

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**August 7 – 12, 2016**

**36TH IAJGS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON JEWISH GENEALOGY**

**Seattle Sheraton in Seattle, Washington**

The 36th annual IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy will be held in Seattle, Washington, August 7–12, 2016. The focus for the 2016 conference is *The Wandering Jew*. Registration will begin January 3, 2016, with early-bird discounts applying through April 30, 2016. Call for proposals is now open.

For more information visit the website:

<<http://www.iajgs2016.org/>>

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**August 31 – September 3, 2016**

**THE FGS 2016 CONFERENCE  
TIME TRAVEL: CENTURIES OF MEMORIES**

## A Conference for the Nation's Genealogists

### SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

FGS and local host the Illinois State Genealogical Society invite you to join genealogists and family historians from throughout the world for some innovative time traveling experiences in Springfield, IL! Learn from exceptional speakers, network with other researchers, stroll through a large exhibit hall filled to the brim with vendors, and take in the amazing sights and sounds of Illinois' capital city.

(The November 23, 2015 issue of *EOGN* included the announcement that hotel reservations are open for this event. For more information visit the FGS Website.)

<<http://www.fgsconference.org/>>

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### \*\*\* MORE USEFUL WEB ADDRESSES \*\*\*

<<https://familysearch.org/search/collection/2564996>>

The November 23rd issue of *EOGN* (Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter) included info on recent additions to FamilySearch's collections. This particular one is for "Poland Evangelical Church Books 1700-2005." The general notion of Poland is that every Pole has always been a Catholic, and these days it is largely true. But Poland in earlier times was the home to many Protestants. I feel sure some of our readers will find this collection of interest.

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<[http://www.nj.com/opinion/index.ssf/2015/11/think\\_your\\_immigrant\\_ancestors\\_came\\_legally\\_think.html](http://www.nj.com/opinion/index.ssf/2015/11/think_your_immigrant_ancestors_came_legally_think.html)>

The November 16th issue of *EOGN* included a link to this article. The author argues that it is absurd to think all our ancestors came here legally. He shows reasons why we should accept that what is true now has always been true: plenty of people did not bother with legal immigration. The author wrote this to contribute a few facts to the constant arguments over illegal immigration; but it's worth reading even if you have no interest in the political aspects of the argument — that is, if you're interested in truth rather than pious platitudes.

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<<http://gentod.com/A.mv?Y=8-23151&xz=EM1971-2>>

This link, from the November 22 issue of *Genealogy News*, takes you to an item from the "Genealogy Insider" column by Diane Haddad with the title "Resolution Rules of Thumb for Scanning Old Family Photos and Documents." I deal all the time with people who have scanned documents or photos and submit them to me for publication; and far too often, I have to explain that the resolution of the scans are simply not high enough. These rules of thumb are worth reading. In some cases, I think the recommended scan settings are a little high — but as the author rightly says, "You can always downsave a copy to a lower resolution, but you can't add image quality without re-scanning the original." When in doubt, live large!

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<<https://youtu.be/LGISOsz3UYk>>

A link in from the November 8 issue of *Genealogy News* led to a blog on Olive Tree Genealogy, “Join Me on a Cemetery Walk through Panna Maria, Texas.” The brief blog explains that Sonja Nishimoto provided 262 photographs of tombstones in Panna Maria, and they are the basis for this video clip, which runs a little over 18 minutes. If you love all things Polish, you’ll enjoy this unhurried look at the tombstones, which bear a lot of fine names from the first Polish settlement in the United States.

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<<http://www.sztetl.org.pl/en/article/krakow/5,history/?action=view>>

The November 15, 2015 issue of *Nu? What’s New?* included a note that the Polish-Jewish website Shtetl.org has posted a description of the history of Kraków’s Jews at this URL.

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<<http://galicia.polishorigins.com/>>

In addition to their other tours, PolishOrigins is planning a tour of Galicia September 11–2016. You can get all the info at the above URL. And you can learn about the other tours they offer at <[http://polishorigins.com/document/home\\_page](http://polishorigins.com/document/home_page)>.

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<<http://us11.campaign-archive1.com/?u=5f700fdc65a51d3813e67dab2&id=86b8f4ac88>>

This URL, which appeared in the November 29 issue of *Nu? What’s New?*, takes you to the third newsletter of Reclaim The Records, <<http://www.reclaimtherecords.org/>>. It’s a non-profit group of genealogists, historians, researchers, and open government advocates who believe in open records and are filing Freedom of Information requests to get public data released into the public domain. Their most recent success came in coordination with the New Jersey State Archives in Trenton: they acquired the microfilmed indices to approximately 445,000 vital records -- births, marriages, and deaths -- from the state of New Jersey. None of these have been available to anybody outside of the Archives building before. But Reclaim The Records is going to put them online, for free, in early 2016! Congratulations to this group, and thanks to Michelle Tucker Chubenko for the help she gave them in figuring out exactly what to ask for.

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<<http://familyhistorydaily.com/genealogy-resources/50-free-genealogy-sites/>>

A member of the LithGen mailing list, “lovetuscanson,” posted a note on that list to tell us about this page from FamilyHistoryDaily.com. It lists 50 free genealogy sites you can use to help you find material. The usual suspects are here, of course, FamilySearch, Cyndi’s List, Ellis Island, JewishGen, and so on. But there were quite a few I didn’t know about, but as soon as I saw them, I thought, “Oh, yeah, definitely!”

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<<http://www.upress.pitt.edu/BookDetails.aspx?bookId=36562>>

“Carol” posted a note to the Polish Genius mailing list suggesting members take a look at this page, with information on *Kaleidoscope of Poland: A Cultural Encyclopedia*, by Oscar

E. Swan with contributions from Ewa Kolaczek. It sells for \$39.95 from the publisher; Amazon.com also offers a chance to pre-order it (it will be released on 11 December 2015). Oscar Swan has an impressive reputation, and this sounds like a good investment for anyone with a deep interest in Poland – perhaps as a Christmas gift.

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<<http://tinyurl.com/p83co6b>>

Among the notices sent out by IAJGS Public Records Access Alert was the announcement that “The Library and Archives Canada (LAC) launched a new online database, Ukrainian Immigrants, 1891-1930. The database has over 14,700 references to names of Ukrainians who arrived in Canada and the United States between 1891 and 1930. The information was obtained from passenger lists held at the LAC for the following ports: Halifax, Nova Scotia; Montréal and Québec, Quebec; Saint John, New Brunswick; New York, New York; and Portland, Maine. Searching may be done by keyword, surname, given name(s), ship and year of immigration.” The above URL will take you to the search page.

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<<http://www.cosmopolitanreview.com>>

Maureen Mroczek Morris also posted a note to Polish Genius to let us know the latest issue of *Cosmopolitan Review* is out. This is a publication all Poles and Polish-Americans can be proud of—take a look!

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<<http://metryki.genealodzy.pl/metryki.php?op=ch>>

Julie Roberts Szczepankiewicz posted a note to Facebook’s Polish Genealogy about this page. She said, “I was recently reminded of a handy little tool offered by the Metryki. Genealodzy.pl site that hasn’t been mentioned here in a while. This allows you to input a surname and see where that surname is found in the indexed records of the Metryki.Genealodzy.pl database. Polish diacritics don’t matter with this search engine. The graphic presentation might make it easier to find some connections you overlooked before. Test drive it and see what you think!”

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<<http://www.visitrzeszow.com/underground-tourist-route>>

Valerie Warunek posted a note to Facebook’s Polish Culture, Food and Traditions group, saying “Hopefully, I can do this on my next trip to Poland. The Rzeszów Underground Tour sounds interesting.” This is the URL she gave.

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<<http://forebears.io>>

I somehow misplaced the information on where I read about this website, but it is an attempt to help researchers find data on surnames, especially information in how they are distributed throughout the world, and, in some cases, their meanings. The data is far from complete, of course; I would advise against regarding it as Gospel. But of course, you know better than to blindly accept any info from anyone as Gospel, right? You might find it worth a look, though. You never know what bit of info may prove helpful.

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