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Write a message to your graduate in this space. You can write up to a maximum of 20 words.

Sender's name

Congratulate a 2019 grad!

Our annual Grad Tab high-lighting Pacific DODEA high schools and their graduating classes will appear in the May 30 edition of Stripes Okinawa.

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What you need:

- A photo of the graduate Graduate's first name
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- appear in print (e.g. "Suzy & Steve" or "Mom & Dad")
- · A congratulatory message of no more than 20 words
- The graduate's high school

Send info by May 20, 5 p.m. to PacificGrad@stripes. com and a Stripes representative will follow-up with you right

INSIDE INFO



GOLDEN WEEK GOES PLATINUM THIS YEAR PAGE 11



THE DRAGONS ARE COMING! PAGE 12







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Homeschool

One in a Military Child

Being a military child is...interesting. It gives one the opportunity to truly "know thyself." I have moved all around the world. I was born in Florida, but I have spent most of my life abroad. My travels (I have been to around 30 countries) have given me a rich childhood and a unique cultural upbringing. This is even reflected in the way I speak! My friend told me once that my accent sounds like a mixture between English and German accents (despite the fact that I have never lived in Germany, although I have been there numerous times). My military upbringing has allowed me the chance to eat Belgian waffles in Belgium, cheese in Holland, haggis in Scotland (which was delicious), schnitzel in Germany, beef tartare in France, and, of course, sushi in Japan.

Despite the fun experiences that I have mentioned above, being a military child is difficult. Almost any military child will share the difficulties of moving often. Moving (and leaving people) is painful. However, I wish to share specific difficulties that I face as a military kid who has mostly lived abroad. I love living abroad, but living most of my life overseas has created a disconnect between me and my home country. Whenever we go "home" to visit family in the States, I get culture shock. That's right, I get culture shock going to my own country. America is so big! It has so many restaurants that we don't have overseas (like Chikfil-A and Wendy's). Don't even get me started on Wal-Mart. Everything in America is so big, and it seems like there is almost too much of everything. It is a lot of fun, but at the same time makes visiting too impersonal. People take what they have for granted.

Would I trade being a military kid for having a "normal" upbringing? I would not. Despite the less-than-ideal aspects of being a "military brat," I am happy to have lived the life that I lived. As I said earlier I know myself better. Moving and travelling has given me the chance to figure out who I really am. Being a military child is great!

Ava Dalton

Check out more military children stories at: militarychild.stripes.com

是在美国的国际企业的国际企业

One in a Military Child

Being a military kid is good and bad some times. The good part about it is that you get to travel the world and learn new culture. And the bad thing about being a military kid is you have to leave your home and friends every three years. But you get to meet new friends and some times you meet your family again. The sad part about being a military kid your family again. The sad part about being a military kid is that your dad or mom deploys every now and then and is that your dad or mom deploys every now and then and you start to miss them a lot. My dad is a combat controller you start to miss them a lot. My dad is a combat controller and it is cool to know that he is ether teaching some one to save lives or he is saving lives go USA. I love being a military child!

Kadena Elementary School

Hi, I'm Matthew Hostetler, a 9-year-old boy who is proud to be a military child even though I sometimes have it rough. I like the school and my house, and my neighborhood is lush and full of action. I have many friends and moved a lot. All the places I've been, I was proud to be a military child. Now that I moved here, it doesn't change!

Being a military child can be rough at times, but it all works! You move a lot and have been through a lot, but you always push through. This can help you in many ways. You're used to insults so you can defend yourself. You also show a sign of leadership, and you can convince others to push through their own struggles.

When you support others, it doesn't mean you're attached to them forever, it just means you try your best to do what's right and support people. You can support people in vague ways if you'd like. Does this mean if it doesn't work you give up, quit, try to destroy that focus? No! You just try to change your point of focus! This gets people thinking, it shows a sign you're not to be messed with.

When someone picks on you, what do you do? Fight back, defend yourself, walk away, or do you just forget the whole thing? This provides the strength and courage to be a military child. If you are a military child, I hope this changed how you act, or maybe who you are.

Matthew Hostetler, 4th grade



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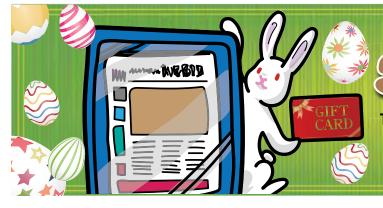
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This keepsake Grad Tab will be published May 30 (Okinawa & Korea) and May 31 (Japan & Guam).





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Amelia Earhart Intermediate School

Being a Military Brat is not easy. When I was moving to Okinawa there was a delay. So we went to New York and I went to school there. It seemed fine but after a little while it became worse. One day one of my friends got into a fight and a kid knocked out my friend's tooth! I remember walking him to the nurse. The other kid got sent to another school. But right after that we had to move. So, if you're a Military Brat don't be sad, just remember when you were friends and that other kids have the same feelings you have. Maybe we should just consider yourselves lucky.

- Vincent Arriaga

Awesome, smart Military Brats will always and forever live life for eternity. First of all, when moving you can get paranoid or sad, but it can be fun and exciting. When I first started moving to different places I would be annoyed with all the new places. I thought, "Why can't we just settle down and buy a place." Even moving away from family can be very hard. Second, PCSing can be hard with starting new schools. I don't like PCing because new friends, new schools, new rules, and new learning policies. The best of all, are all the different cultures with a lot of new stuff. I like the cultures because the food can be good, money could be different, different house styles, driving on different sides of roads, how people have fun, music, and behavior. Truly, being a Military Brat can't be so bad because you get to experience things not a lot of people can.

- Savannah Navarro

Military children have many troubles, it's just not easy. It's because your friends can come and go out of your life. I want to tell you a story about my best friend named Evan. He came to live here for a couple of years but left and I didn't even notice. This day is a day that I will remember forever. So one day I was playing video games with my friend Sam and I hadn't gone to Evans house in a long time to play. A few hours later some cats were fighting outside so I grabbed my cap gun and shot it. The cats scattered but I saw Evans house and right before I closed the window I was shocked to see that his car was gone, he left!!! I sprinted downstairs screaming where's Evan?!?! My mom said he left a couple days ago to Ohio. Now I call him almost every Sunday because he is one day behind. This is only one problem of being a military child but it's probably the hardest one to go through and write. This is the feeling of pain of being of a military child.

All Military Brats awesomely live life for the greater good. First, this is my experience with travel. I once had to say bye to my pet Princess. My family has moved to a cold place after a warm place. This happened when we moved from Georgia to Colorado. Also, when you start to get used to a place you have to move.

Second, this is my experience with PCSing. We have to say goodbye to old friends and hello to new friends. We never are in the same place for a long period of time. My family is usually only stationed to a place for three years before we move.

Lastly, this is my experience with the cultures. We almost always have to learn more languages and go into a new climate every move. There is a bad thing about moving. When you get used to a school you have to go to another school. In conclusion, being a Military Brat although there are some sad and bad times it has still made my life great.

- Daniel Smith

Amazing Military Brats travel all over the world. About three years ago, I had to leave Kwajalein Atoll. I was not happy at all when we said goodbye to everyone there. Everyone was very unhappy saying goodbye. When we got here to Okinawa, everything was different. But, everything was fine and I am so far having a great time here.

First, leaving your pet can make you really upset for a long time. When I left Washington State, we had three pets and had to leave one. So we decided to keep Stanley and Layla. I wish we could have kept all three of them, I wasn't very happy.

Secondly, airports can be super fun! One time we were at an airport and it was so cool! It was called Qatar airport It had a mini park and delicious food. That was the best airport ever.

Last of all, you can make a lot of new friends. I have made a lot of new friends during vacations, at Bali I made two friends. We played in the pool every day at the resort/hotel and it was so fun! In conclusion, being a Military Brat and seeing many new places is amazing and

- Leighton Botes

It is hard for Military Children to leave their friends and pets behind. First, it is hard leaving friends because I really like my friends. One of my close friends who had to leave was named William. Second, it is hard when one of your family members goes on a TDY because I love my family. Once, in Japan my dad said that he had to go on a TDY for about a year and he said he was going to miss my birthday but luckily they canceled the TDY. Third, it is hard when you have

It is hard being a Military Child.

- Luke Corbett

Young Military Brats live rough lives all around the world. When I was little my dad was in the military. We traveled back and forth from Okinawa and California. We met and made friends with all kinds of people. I am a mix of Japanese and American because my mom is Japanese and my dad is Jamaican American. Dad always had to travel out of America for very long period of time. One time my dad had to leave to Iraq for nine months. So, he gave a CD to my mom so I could get to know him when I was a baby. In the video he was reading

a book to me. First, when you travel bad and good stuff will happen at the same time. The bad thing is that you have to move away from your friends and your school. The good thing is that you can make friends at the school with the people in your class.

Second, military brats always have to go through tough obstacles. Just like when my dad had to stay in Iraq for 9 months. Military brats also face loneliness,

bullying, and making friends. Lastly, learning new cultures. I know about Okinawan, American and Japanese cultures. I know that Japanese traditional dessert is Mochi. I know that Goya is only grown in Okinawa. I also know that there are many kinds of foods in America. In conclusion, I think that Military Brats are special people.

- Kenzo McIntosh

Brave Military Brats live a long lasting, adventurous life. Being a Military Brat is hard and sad but exciting. Before moving to Okinawa I lived in New Jersey. It was hard leaving New Jersey because I had made so many friends and memories. Also, my school Evans Elementary was amazing and it would be the last time I would ever see the school. Even if I went back to New Jersey it would not be there because they were shutting the school down. There was a police officer at the school and I was best friends with her. We then moved to Okinawa and I'm still here and I love

First, leaving friends can be sad and difficult but exciting when you make new friends. When I left New Jersey I had to leave all my friends so I tried to make our last memories with them the best. Then when I moved to Okinawa I met many new friends.

Second, being a Military Brat means experiencing different cultures. One culture I have seen is the Japanese culture. They like eating on the floor at restaurants with a low table and they take their shoes off a lot. Also, there are a lot of limited edition items here in Okinawa.

Third, waiting can be difficult. When I moved to Okinawa I had to wait for a house and all my stuff. In conclusion, being a military brat is difficult and sad but exciting. It's all worth it in the end because you get to experience many things and cultures.

to give your pet away. Once, I had to give my cat away because we couldn't bring our cat on the flight. Another time, my dad had to leave about a month early to bring our dog to Japan. Awesome Military Brats always live amazing lives forever . My family moved to Okinawa, Japan in 2016 on November 4. On my first day there after the long flight my sponsors showed us to our T.L.F.(Temporary Lodging) and they were very nice. On my first day at school I was very nervous because I didn't know if they were going to be nice. But as soon as I walked in they were already super excited to see me. I met a new friend named Naokie and he was very nice to me. We were actually neighbors which was good. After that, then I knew I was going to have fun.
First, leaving friends and getting new friends can be hard. When I left

Arizona I had to leave a good friend named Sofie. She cried a lot and that made me feel bad for her. When I first moved to Okinawa I met a friend named Naokie who also went to my school, we become fast friends. Second, PCSing can be really hard because you have to leave your home.

Leaving a home can be very stressful because you have to pack everything and it can be difficult. Finding a new home can also be hard but at the same time it can be exciting.

Third, when you go to a new place it can be hard to learn the new language. However, traditions can be fun because you get to learn new stuff. Moving to Okinawa I learned about Shisha Dogs and that you should have a pair sitting outside your door. Lastly, what I like about being a Military Brat is that you get to go to a lot of new and cool places.

- Jordan Griego

Being a Military Brat can sometimes be a good thing and a bad thing. There are times when you feel happy and then there are times when you feel sad. First, PCSing to a new place can be shocking, scary and frustrating. Sometimes when the military moves you, you have to fly on an airplane. I always feel nervous when I fly on an airplane. You have to move way from were you made memories and that's what makes me sad.

Secondly, you have to say goodbye to really good friends. I don't like saying bye to my friends because I always want to play with them and when I can't it makes me sad. However, when I move to my new home I make new friends and I realize I have friends in

many places. Lastly, being a Military Brat forces you to leave family. I have not seen my family for a long time. I also have to sometimes say see you later to my dad who is in the military. I love my dad very much and having to say goodbye for weeks or months is very hard for me. In conclusion, being a Military Brat can be hard but at the same time can be a good thing because I get to travel and meet new friends.

- Manny Lennon

Third Culture Kids will always be awesome and amazing. Some will be very smart. Once I was having a sleepover with my friend because it was her last day in Okinawa. I woke up and got dressed so I could take her to the airport. I told my mom I was ready to go but my mom had already taken her and her family. I was crying on my bed. I called her and she cheered me up by making me laugh.

First, having friends is amazing but when they move it is not so good, it is hard and not fun. I had a REALLY good friend named Hadley Null. She was THE BEST even though I am older than her she was so fun. I had known her since I was four years old. When Hadley left I cried 5000 much. My best friend Nyla Benson was just like me because we loved the same things, liked the same food, drinks, games and more. When she left I was devastated because she made me so happy.

Second, PCSing is very hard because you sometimes have to move in the middle of the year. You are going to a new place and home where you get to try new foods get to know new friends. Moving to Japan was difficult because I didn't know the language or culture so I tried my best to fit in. Moving to North Carolina I don't really remember anything but I know that I was scared because I did not know anybody so I just tried to act like them.

Lastly, traveling is the most annoying because you are on like 50 million plane rides! Sometimes you have to sleep on the airport ground and fall asleep on the plane. The airport is tough because there is so many people passing through. My favorite places in the airport are the USO and the food court. The one thing I HATE are goodbyes because that is the time I get really emotional and start to cry. In the end, Third Culture Kids will always be great and they will always be very brave.

Military children are awesome, amazing, and cool. Ever since I was a kid I moved a lot. I stayed most places for three years. I lived in Hawaii, Oceanside, Temecula, San Diego, and now Japan. I would always fit in because I can stop being scared and I am very bold and confident. My teachers were Ms. Diosa, Ms. Jones, Mr. Insko, Mr. Winans, and Ms. Davis. Now I like moving from place to place.

First, I want to tell you about traveling it can be fun and boring. When I was a kid I moved a lot. I started to feel like home in the airport. Since I traveled and moved so much I started to love the airport.

Second , I want to tell you about PCSing. I don't do it a lot. PCSing can be hard on some people. I was one of them. It hurt me to leave my friends, have to change schools, and also to learn new routines.

Last, I want to tell you about languages. I speak Spanish and English. Languages can be hard to learn. I should know because right now I have to learn Japanese. Truly, Military Children can be brats but they can improve on anything that happens in life.

- Janiyah Milan-Houser

Third Culture Kids live amazing, brave, wonderful lives. First, I think it is cool that there are different ceremonies. When I was in California it is cool that there were ceremonies for new kids. It was fun. Second, my friends would always make me feel better. When I am sad my friends would take me to the park to play. Once my friends took me to get ice cream when my parents were fighting. Third, I get to travel a lot. My family would go to Las Vegas and New Mexico because it was not far. When we would go to California they had a big party and I loved it. So, from what I have explained you can see that being a Third Culture Kid is difficult but also exciting.

- Serenity Orozco

Third Culture Kids face a lot of challenges. First, let me tell you a story. My friend and I Gwen would babble trying to read a book but one day my dad got word that we would move in a week Gwen and I cried but we still had to go. First, when Third Culture Kids travel the world or when I PCSed to Alaska I met more friends. Then I had to move away again. Next, when Third Culture Kids explore the world some people feel scared like I did when I had to leave my family in Texas. Last, when I went to school in Okinawa I had friends that helped me and it made me feel good and their names are Izzy, Serenity, Sam, Saniyah, and Janiyah. All and all, Third Culture Kids are one of the most bravest kids in the world.

- Lily Quinones



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Celebrating Month of the Military Child! Tyeis Kemp



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school at an American military base. There are a variety of classes from which to choose from. These classes help guide me to seek my future major.

Being an LUJ student changed my perspective significantly. It certainly has shown me a diverse environment as the campus is located in the city of Tokyo and many opportunities are filled within this college. For example, there are temples and shrines to visit not too far from school. Also, the size of each class is quite small, which makes it easier to get individual help from the professors. There is nothing comparable with studying in a delightful locale in a beautiful country."



Lakeland University Japan Academic Program

My name is Quinn and growing up I lived mostly in America. I was thankful to not have to move very often because my dad was already close to serving 20 years in the military, at which point he retired. When I was 16 we moved to Australia, but I



had always been really interested in going to Japan. It started with meeting our neighbors, whose father was also in the military. They had just moved back from Japan and I became really good friends with their son, a half Japanese-American. Eventually, I went to Japan by myself when I was 18 because I really wanted to learn the language. I started at a language school and then was having trouble finding a university that even knew what the GI Bill was. That was when I found Lakeland University and talked with the Dean and was interviewed by staff. Once I was accepted after the interview, the school was very quick with starting me on the GI Bill from my father's service. I really do appreciate my father giving the GI Bill to his two kids. If it weren't for him, I wouldn't be able to attend this great school.

Bob Hope Primary School

Editor's Note: Take a look at the super work from Loida Howard's hard-charging students. Keep up the great work, kids!



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I like being a military allow I live in Jalan I like to visit countries. I am obsessed with ramen. I love Okina wa.



My name is Daviaughne.

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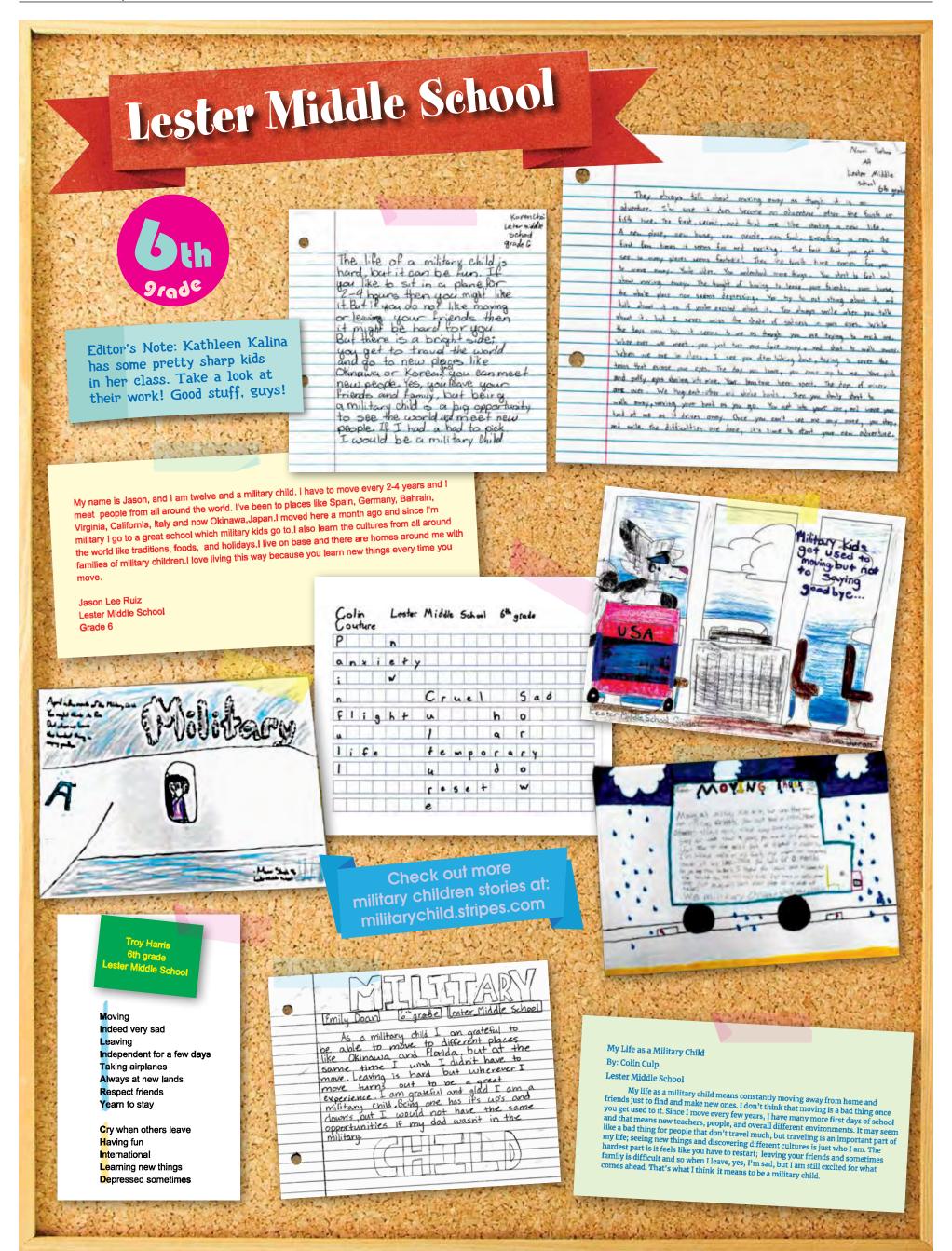
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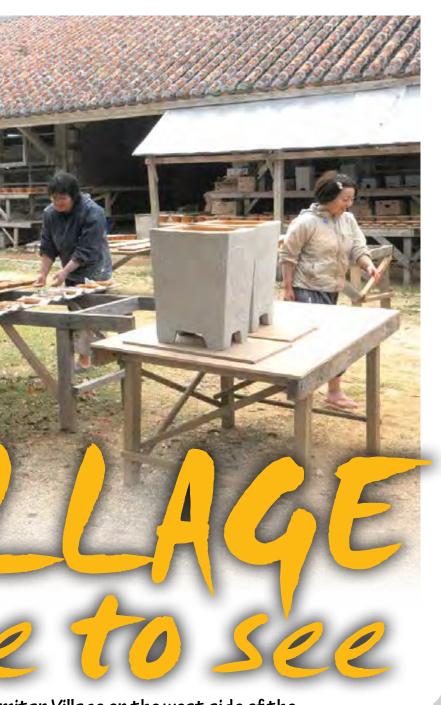
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′ SHOJI KUDAKA, NAWA

f old Okinawa, Yomis Yachimun no Sato is est on the island.

d-style buildings of pottery studios where the village's signaaft: "Yachimun," potialect.

Sato, which means a," is at the epicenter by to Yomitan Village's bere are 19 studios in

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no Sato is, first and site, the pottery

is gaining popularity making it a popular tourist spot in recent years.

The nostalgia of the area draws visitors and the vintage kilns, or "noborigama," still in use contribute to that nostalgia as well.

This type of kiln remains somewhat common around Japan and is typically installed on a slope with several chambers lined up in a way that makes them look like giant stairs. "Yuntanzan-gama" and "Kita-gama," are two of Yachimun no Sato's most famous kilns.

Visitors wanting to purchase pottery pieces can head to several shops adjacent to the studios where they can peruse the handmade cups and plates to shisa dogs which are displayed on shelves.

Today, Yomitan Village is widely recognized as a hot spot for Yachimun pottery, which has a lot to do with Yachimun

no Sato. But, this

GEE YACHIMUN ON PAGE 10



Zakimi Castle Ruins History and beauty flow on a hill

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA, STRIPES OKINAWA

ack in its heyday, Zakimi Castle in Okinawa was a stronghold for the Chuzan Kingdom in its defense from the north. Today, the ruins of the castle maintain this stronghold, but now it's over the dozens of tourists that visit for the stunning views every year.

It is because of its great vantage point up on a 120-meter-high hill that the castle was used during the Battle of Okinawa

in 1945, as a Japanese military anti-aircraft artillery position and, later, a U.S. Forces radar location until it reverted to the local village in the 1970s.

Yomitan Village

The castle was first constructed in the 15th century during the time of three kingdoms, Hokuzan (North), Chuzan (Central), and Nanzan (South). The Central kingdom used

this place as its fortress against the north. Today, only the walls and foundation of the castle, which were restored after World War II, remain.

At around 1.82 acres wide, Zakimi is smaller in comparison to other castles like Nakagusuku or Shuri. What it lacks in size, however, Zakimi makes up for in fame. It boasts a UNESCO World

Heritage Site designation since November 2000 and in 2017, it was picked as one of the Top 100 castles by the Japan Castle Foundation.

The castle, which is composed of two plazas and curving stonewalls, is thought to have a military functionality-oriented design, which makes sense given its history. Unlike other castles in Okinawa, Zakimi castle doesn't have a place of worship.

The castle has a subdued beauty which is hard to find at other locations in Okinawa. And

its views of the coastline in the west, forests and sugar cane fields around the area, and Naha or even Kerama, Kume and Ie islands, are incomparable.

The photogenic castle often hosts entertainment and other events as a "natural theater" location, according to the Yomitan Village Tourism Association.

When I visited, a Taiwanese couple was taking wedding photographs with

this historic castle and its picturesque vistas as the perfect backdrop. The area quickly filled up with curious tourists eager to catch a glimpse of what was happening.

Only a 10-minute drive from Torii Station or a 30-minute drive from Camp Foster, visit Zakimi Castle for its history but stay for the stunning views which will enchant you.





STRIPES OKINAWA

short drive from Murasaki Mura are two caves with historical significance:

Chibichiri Gama and Shimuku Gama.

These caves were used during World War II and now provide a glimpse into what happened in the early days of the Battle of Okinawa.

On April 1, 1945, as the U.S. military arrived on Yomitan Village's coast and the initial battle took place, the village saw a total of 740 casualties in that month alone, according to a report by the Okinawa Times.

Chibichiri Gama is a cave with a sad history. As American forces ap-

those, 83 died as a result of a mass suicide, according

they believed Americans were "kichiku" (Japanese for evil), they decided this was the only alternative to sur-

rendering.

After the war, a stone monument was erected to pay tribute to the deceased. The public can visit, but only the outer part of the cave as entry is prohibited.

The other cave, Shimuku Gama, also has a history, but one in which the fate of the villagers who sought shelter in this cave was quite differ-

According to an article by Okinawa Times, about 1,000 villagers took shelter in the cave like those in Chibichiri Gama. However, two Okinawans who had spent time in Hawaii, alerted the locals in the

proached, 140 villagers evacuated to the cave, and of cave that "Americans don't kill people," thus encouraging them to surrender.

GPS COORDINATES: N 26.405367, E 127.724061

Shimuku Gama

GPS COORDINATES: N 26.402432, E 127.731280

- *Chibibichiri Gama has a parking space nearby.
- *The inner part of Chibichiri Gama is off-limits.
- *Shimuku Gama is near a local residential area. No parking space is available.
- *Both caves have streams and when it rains, the water level can rise. Inside Shimuku Gama, it is advised to wear sports shoes and carry a flash light and gloves.

Visitors can enter Shimuku Gama but make sure to wear athletic shoes and exercise caution.

The difference between life and death marks these two similar caves as worlds apart and 74 years later, continue to serve as a reminder of a tragic time in our shared histories.

kudaka.shoji@stripes.com





Get ready for 10 days of traffic, closures and crowds

BY TAKAHIROTAKIGUCHI, STRIPES OKINAWA

f vou've spent time in Japan. you know cities clear out and airports, train stations and tourist traps are all abuzz from late April to early May. It's a time of year that presents "golden" opportunities to travel Japan - or to stick close to home and bask in an empty city free from the crowds and mayhem.

Usually, "Golden Week" is held from the last week of April to the first week of May during a string of four consecutive holidays: Showa Day (April 29), Constitution Memorial Day (May 3), Greenery Day (May 4) and Children's Day (May 5 - celebrated May 6). These national holidays along with the regular weekend make up of one of the longest holiday periods of the year.

This year will be a little different, however, as Japan celebrate will Crown Prince Naruhiro's enthronement on May 1, marking the occasion as a national holiday. Under Japan's holiday act, April 30 and May 2 will also become File photo holidays. This means Japanese workers and students will get 10 days off consecutively from April 27 to May 6, forming the longest Golden Week ever in the country's history. Consequently, due to the extra

days, the holiday will be "platinum" instead of "gold" this year.

With such a long public holiday, there are bound to be problems as almost all government buildings and facilities will be closed.

Expect post offices, city halls and other public services, along with daycare facilities for preschoolers and the elderly, to be closed. Most large hospitals will offer emergency services, but outpatient services will be closed. Garbage collection will continue according to normal schedule but check your ward

money but plan ahead as there will be an after-hour charge for the entire holiday. The Japanese media is already predicting confusion at banks and trading on the stock market before and after the holiday shutdown.

As for the crowds, business districts in Tokyo and other large cities are expected to be ghost towns during this period, but tourist attractions will be beyond busy. I would rather stay at home and watch TV, than get exhausted at extremely crowded attrac-

Where are the locals headed in the holidays?

According to Rakuten Travel website, the popular domestic tourist destinations for the coming holiday include Aichi, Tottori, Niigata, Okinawa and

> Hokkaido Prefectures. The top three most popular overseas

destinations are Hawaii, Taiwan and Vietnam, the site said.

Don't expect to book a room anywhere either, hotels are often fully booked throughout this time, even at the premium rates

If you're looking for some festival action, some of the more famous festivals for the season are Hamamatsu-Matsuri in Shizuoka; Kurayami-Matsuri in Tokyo; Naha Hari in Okinawa; Hakata Dontaku in Fukuoka;

set for the holiday.



mori; and Odawara Hojo Godai

the most crowded and expensive times to travel, staying within the city may be the best bet. But for those determined to take a road trip – beware!

Heavy traffic is common, both on expressways and general roads, as a result of people traveling to their hometowns or tourist attractions.

According to Japan Traffic Information Center, heavy traffic is expected to peak on various expressways around big cities April 27 and May 4 (outbound) and May 4 and 5 (inbound). For general roads, heavy traffic is expected to peak throughout the weekend.

The heaviest traffic for a gen-

Prefecture, which accesses the Izu Peninsula. These roads are known to have traffic jams that stretch more than 6 miles long every Golden Week.

So, if you are planning to travel during Golden Week, you better reserve accommodations and transportation before the beginning of period and check traffic information as frequently as pos-

Road Bureau traffic updates are available online.

Why is the holiday so long?

The abdication of Emperor Akihito on April 30 marks the end of the "Heisei" period. The following day, May 1, the new imperial period of "Reiwa" begins with Emperor Naruhito's enthronement. So, 2019 will be associated as both "Heisei 31" and "Reiwa 1" in the Japanese calendar.

The outgoing Emperor Akihito will receive the title of "Joko," or

Emperor Emeritus, upon his abdication, and his wife, Empress Michiko will become "Jokogo," or Empress Emerita.

The new emperor will promulgate his throne domestically and internationally by inviting heads of countries and distinguished guests during a ceremony of "Sokuirei Seiden-no-gi," or ceremony of enthronement, on Oct. 22, which is also designated as a holiday. On the day, a parade featuring the new emperor and empress, along with a reception with heads of countries and distinguished guests will be conducted.

Abdication and enthronement - Rare opportunity

The series of abdication and enthronement ceremonies, reception and parade are usually broadcast live. These are rare opportunities to take a glimpse at traditional imperial events of the Land of the Rising Sun. Check out what's in store:

1. Taiirei Seiden-no-gi (Ceremony of Abdication by ongoing **Emperor**)

Emperor Akihito declares his abdication **TIME**: April 30, 5 p.m.

LOCATION: Matsu-no-ma Hall in the im perial palace

PARTICIPANTS: Prime Minister, heads of three branches, local representatives and others (a total of 338 participants)

2. Kenjito Shokei-no-gi (Ceremony of succeeding symbols of imperial authority)

New Emperor will receive "three Sacred Treasures" (the sword, the crescent jewel and the mirror) and imperial stamp seal as symbol of imperial authority.

TIME: May 1, 10 a.m.

LOCATION: Matsu-no-ma Hall in the imperial palace

PARTICIPANTS: Prime Minister, heads of three branches, Diet Members and others (a total of 26 participants)

3. Sokuigo Choken-no-gi (Ceremony of new emperor's first

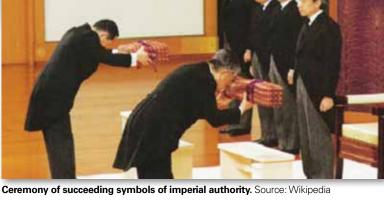
statement) New Emperor gives his first imperial statement to the people.

TIME: May 1, 11:10 a.m.

LOCATION: Matsu-no-ma Hall in the imperial palace

PARTICIPANTS: Prime Minister, heads of three branches, local representatives and others (a total of 338 participants)

takiguchi.takahiro@stripes.com



Hirosaki Sakura Matsuri in Ao-

Matsuri in Kanagawa. Road travelers, beware! Since Golden Week is one of

eral road will be Chita Road in Aichi Prefecture; Route 135 and Manazuru Road in Shizuoka

What are the holidays of 'Platinum Week'?

SUN WED THU MON TUE Normal weekend Day Constitution Memorial Day (Kenpo-kinenbi) - Honors (Midori-no-hi) Commemorates Crown Prince Noruhito is Japan's constitution, which Dedicated to the became law on this day

calendar if you live off base. ATMs will continue to dispense Children's Day (Kodomo-no-hi) Children's Day You'll see lots of carp File photo



STORY AND PHOTO BY SHOJI KUDAKA, STRIPES OKINAWA

t's time again for the famous Naha Dragon Boat Race! A highlight of Okinawa's Golden Week, this is the 45th installment of the race and will take place May 3-5.

Colorful boats made to look like dragons, each filled with 36 crewmembers, storm the Naha port to battle it out for the title of best rowers on the island. The three-day event draws around 200,000 people every year, with the excitement peaking on the final day. Many teams will compete, and some of the matchups will feature teams made up of U.S. servicemembers.

Even if you're not participating, spectators can enjoy many fun activities including music, fireworks, vendors and more.

This is one of the three major festivals of Naha city along with Naha Tug of War in October and Ryukyu Dynasty Festival Shuri in November.

The Dragon Boat Race, or "Hari" in Okinawa dialect, has a 600-year history and used to be a national event in the days of the Ryukyu Kingdom (1492-1879). After almost a century-long hiatus, it was brought back to life and has grown into an event that represents Okinawa just like in the old days.

What makes the Naha City race unique is that each boat is

Stuff to know

DATE: May 3, 4, 5 (Friday, Saturday, Sunday)

TIME: 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.

VENUE: Naha Port (GPS Coordinates: N 26.230106, E 127.680786)
*Dragon boat rides for visitors will be available between 11
a.m. and 4 p.m., May 4.

*Parking will not be available at the venue. It is advised to use coin-operated parking spaces in the neighboring area or using tours offered by organizations such as MCCS and Kadena ITT.

big enough to require 32 rowers, two steerers and two drummers. Normal dragon boats only take 10 rowers and 2 steerers.

According to Naha Haryusen Shinkokai (Naha Dragon Boat Promotion Association), the organizer of the event, seven teams from the U.S. military have signed up this year: men and women's teams each for the Air Force, Navy and Army, plus a team from Camp Kinser. The teams which win the first round, will then advance to the next round and have a chance to be the best on the island.

Didn't get a chance to sign up to race? Don't fret! On May 4, you, too, can also experience being on a dragon boat. On that day only, visitors are welcomed to get aboard and row a dragon boat on their own for free. Sign up at the venue on the day of the event, but get there early as this is a very popular activity.

Whether you head to Naha Port to root for your team in the competition or to enjoy the festivities, don't miss out on an opportunity to soak in some Okinawan culture.

kudaka.shoji@stripes.com



USO center manager inspires those on Okinawa

USO OKINAWA

SO Okinawa would like to thank Dr. Tamara Owens for her dedicated contributions to the USO and community as a center manager for the last several years.

Tamara's pleasant personality, innovative thinking, and approach to problem solving are a true testament to a great leader. She inspires everyone she meets, leads from the front and by example.

Dr. Owens made an incredible impact on the military community here on Okinawa. She touched the lives of so many service members and their families by carrying out the USO mission every day and delivering the mission of connecting service members to family, home and country. During her time with USO Okinawa, she influenced and made remarkable differences at USO Camp Foster, USO Kadena and AMC Terminal.

Her cheerful, friendly and reliable leadership will leave an imprint of all of those who had the pleasure of meeting her. The community and USO Okinawa will miss her valuable contributions.

The USO Okinawa Area Director, Phil VanEtten, stated, "Tamara is one of those once in a lifetime

people you meet. I knew within three minutes of meeting her that we needed her on the USO Okinawa team. During her time here, she did two major center renovations without closing the center, significantly increased innovative programs and center usage, completed her PhD, supported her active duty husband and was the mother of a great son. Always positive and full of energy, we will certainly miss her, but are better people for having served with and learned from her."

We are proud to call her our friend and colleague who inspired so many. We are certain she will continue to motivate and encourage others. With a grateful heart, we give thanks for all her hard work, dedication and passion to serve others with USO Okinawa.

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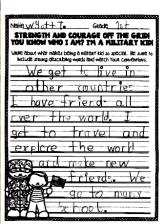
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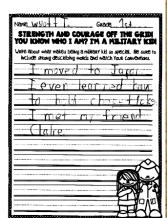
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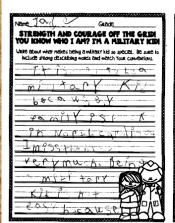
Editor's Note: Tracy Phillips is pretty proud of her youngsters. Take a look at their fabulous work.

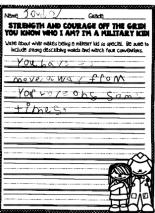
Great job, kiddos!

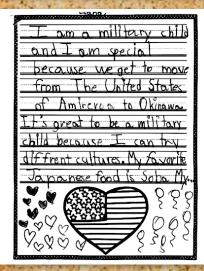


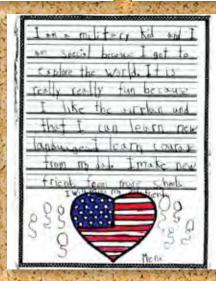


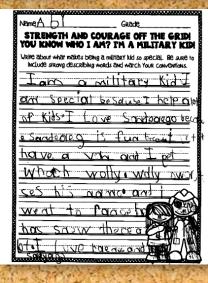
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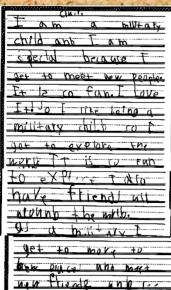


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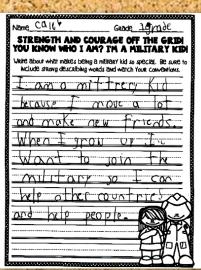
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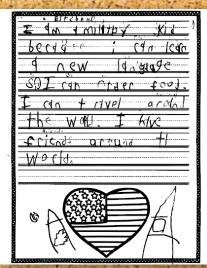
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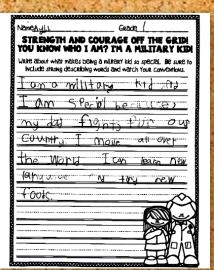
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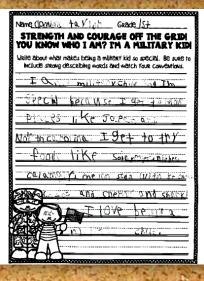


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Send your Month of the Military Child submission to MilitaryChild@stripes.com by April 30!

PERKS: Part of a diverse community

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

When I lived in the States, I lived in a city and went to a school with very little military presence. Most of the kids there knew next to nothing about being military life. Nearly every person had lived there since they were born, and the kids in high school had the same friends that they had in kindergarten.

While this may seem like the ideal situation, I think that the experiences of military children allow for outstanding character growth. For example, we get to go to school with people from all over the United States and the world. We get to learn about others' culture and traditions in the first-person. We get to be a part of a community that really could not be more diverse.

There are also many hard things that come with being a military brat. We have to move every couple of years and say goodbye to our friends that we had just made one or two years prior. We have to learn to get used to having a parent gone on deployment or TDY. We have to learn how to go with the flow. Although these things can be tremendous hardships, they too can build character. Personally, I think it is kind of nice to be pushed out of my comfort zone in order to talk to people that I don't know. Even though moving is scary, when we move into another military community, we are in the same boat as the other kids. In fact, making friends and meeting new people in a military community is much easier compared to a non-military community.

When it's all said and done, I don't think there is a more beneficial opportunity that a kid can have than being a military child. Most kids in the states will never get the chance to have the experiences that we do.

TRUE FILINDS

APART

MAYBEIN

Distance

BUT

IN HEART

Illustration by Robin Earnest, Lester Middle School

- Unknown



Illustration by Tate Oliver, Lester Middle School



Excewptional experience

BY ERIC HANSEN, KADENA HIGH SCHOOL

Being a military child is an exceptional experience. It is marvelous because it is a wonderful opportunity to make new friends and explore the world. I have already lived in different parts of the United States, Turkey, and Okinawa.

It isn't always satisfying though. Being a military child can be frustrating sometimes though because you may not know where you're moving for a long time. For example, at the time I am writing this, my family is waiting to find out where we are moving and won't know for another month. Then we will move there a few months later. It is frustrating because I am really excited to find out where we are going, yet we can't even prepare for it yet.

Another problem with moving to a new place can be annoying because there is nothing to do in a hotel room. I usually have to stay in the hotel room too because I don't know where to go. It can still be really great though.

However, even with all these drawbacks, being a military child is still a positive experience because I can see different parts of the world. This is the sort of thing that my parents really enjoy, but I still like it too. I can see how the Japanese people are, instead of just Americans. Being a military is a good experience with very slight struggles. I am still glad that I am a military child.

Special honor

BY CARLOS MESTRES, KADENA HIGH SCHOOL

Being a child among the military community is a special honor. There is no substitute for the experiences of living on a military base. There are no better experiences than living abroad, attending a military school and getting to see the operations of the military around you.

Going to a school with military children is a special experience for me, as I am a civilian. You get to see all new faces from around the world perfectly blended into one culture at school. Despite having to see friends come and go, you can look on the bright side and get to meet all new people every day.

Getting to see the daily things going on in the military is also one of the most fascinating things you get to see. Going to see the airplanes and the ships are unique experiences. Seeing our great American military work abroad is an experience that not everyone gets to see. Many people have dreams of joining the military and familiarizing themselves with the military can also help in joining.

The greatest experience about being in the military community is living abroad. You get to live in a foreign country and be a representation of the United States. You get to mix the American culture with cultures abroad and get to see all new places. Military communities are great in merging the cultures as they set up a great connection with the countries around us. You can imagine living abroad in many countries such as Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom and many more. Living abroad with the military is a great honor.

Living with the military community is a wonderful experience. There is nothing like the experiences found in the military communities abroad. If you live in a military community, you should cherish the great opportunity.

Stripes Sports Trivia

Who was the first player, after a record-breaking season in which he led his team to an NBA-record 73 wins and set an individual record of 402 three-pointers (smashing his own previous league record of 286 set the year before), in NBA history to be elected league MVP by a unanimous vote?

Answer

Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry.

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KNOW?

he three most important holidays in Japan are o-shogatsu (Jan. 1-3), o-bon (Aug. 13-15) and Golden Week (Apr. 29 - May 5). Traditionally, during these weeks, Japanese go back to their hometowns to spend some time with their relatives. This means even more people on the roads. So, consider this your warning, as traffic will be worse than usual during this time.

Kanji of the week



kyu or yasu (Rest/day off)

Language Lesson

Feel free.

Okigaru ni.

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by Margie E. Burke

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The Weekly Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Iron follower 5 On a trip, maybe
- 9 "Ghostbusters" goo
- 14 One of 24 15 Learned one
- 16 Pavarotti, e.g. 17 Make aware
- 19 Finish with 20 Visibly
- embarrassed
- 21 Protests 22 Title derived
- from Caesar 23 Gin's partner
- 24 Painful sound
- 27 "When pigs fly! 29 Hang in there
- 32 Duo quadrupled 34 Like many
- stadiums 36 Roof stuff
- 37 Falling-out
- 38 Party staple
- 39 Without warmth
- 41 Bud holder? 42 Like some milk
- 44 Windchime spot,
- often
- 45 Break in half 47 Tony or Hugo
- 49 Raven's haven
- 50 Rustic abode 52 Camera setting
- 54 Cloth shred
- 56 Asphyxiate
- 60 Upper crust
- **61** Aristocrat
- 62 Romantic one
- 63 Yours and mine
- 64 Dead against 65 Bad looks
- 66 Seemingly
- forever 67 Adam of
- "Batman" fame

DOWN

- 1 "Moonstruck"
- 2 Kind of wolf

- 3 Word sung on 12/31
- 4 Floating fish catcher
- 5 Depth charge, slangily
- 6 Like some drinks
- 7 Got mellower 8 Asian capital?
- 9 Ale holder
- 10 Soup legume
- **11** Signifying, with
- 12 Phobos, to Mars
- 13 Coastal raptors
- 18 Tank filler 21 Miffed
- 23 It's measured in
- degrees
- 24 Painting Grandma
- 25 Indian, for one
- 26 Good-looking
- 28 "Behold!" 30 Red tag events
- 31 Secret
- rendezvous

33 AAA service 54 Come clean

43 It'll grow on you

46 Pitter-

48 Coercion

51 Bar orders

53 Caps Lock

neighbor

- 35 Bite the dust 55 Natural soother 40 Vatican dogma
 - 56 Slimy garden
 - pest 57 Auctioneer's last
 - word
 - 58 A whole bunch
 - 59 Trim to fit, maybe

 - 61 Feathered stole

Answers to Last Week's Crossword:

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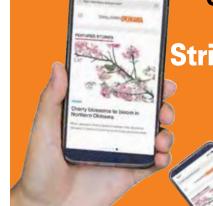
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SUDOKU Edited by Margie E. Burke **HOW TO SOLVE:** 6 3 8 9 Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and

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each set of 3 by 3 boxes must

9 5 6 7 8 1 4 3 2 1 3 7 2 5 4 6 8 9 2 8 4 6 3 9 7 5 1 4 1 5 3 7 2 9 6 8 8 2 9 4 6 5 3 1 7 6 7 3 1 9 8 5 2 4 3 4 2 5 1 7 8 9 6 7 6 8 9 2 3 1 4 5 5 9 1 8 4 6 2 7 3



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