Hull's environmental newsletter. Published by Hull Friends of the Earth

www.hfoe.org.uk

Issue 27 November 2009

Diary Dates

Tues 3 Nov 7.30

7.30 HFoE meeting. **NEW VENUE:** Recycling Unlimited Café, 151 Newland Avenue.

Sat 14 Nov 2.15pm

Presentation of Food Chain postcards to Diana Johnson MP

Place to be finalised. Contact Sue (back page)

Sat 21 Nov

Green Fair, Spring Bank Community Centre. Stalls set up 10am. Open 11am.

Sun 29 Nov 1-2 pm

Tree planting: Barmston Drain/Stepney Lane (see page 6).

Tuesday 1 Dec 7.30

7.30 HFoE meeting.

Recycling Unlimited Café, 151 Newland Avenue.

Hull Council Waste Manager Doug Sharp to speak on new waste collection.

All welcome.

Sat 5 Dec

'The Wave' Climate Change demo in London. See www.the-wave.org.uk

Tues 5 Jan 7.30

7.30 HFoE meeting.

Recycling Unlimited Café, 151 Newland Avenue

Tues 2 Feb 7.30

7.30 HFoE meeting.

Recycling Unlimited Café, 151 Newland Avenue

Hull Transition

Meet 2nd Monday of each month at The Eagle, Coltman St, 7.30. Contact 07816 141169, email: lausannet@yahoo.co.uk

Beverley FoE

3rd Thursday each month at White Horse (Nellies) Beverley, 7.30.

Email: shan@voice-international.net

Yes — David really is an **Earthmover!**



Haris presents David with his Earthmover Award, the Beverley and Barmston at our October meeting, in Recycling Unlimited Drain to kick-start the

For the second year in succession, a Hull FoE member has won a national award from Friends of the Earth.

David Longthorn was awarded this year's Earthmover award at the FoE National Conference for his dedication and passion for his local environment.

Many ECO readers will know about David's tree planting and wildlife activities through his Wildlife Notes. If you haven't been to one of our barbeques however, you may not have seen the results of his hard work. In the wildlife garden he has created woodland, meadow, ponds, field margin areas, log piles for bugs and bird boxes. Work on this and the adjacent Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT) tree nursery has been an almost daily occupation.

At this year's barbeque on the HFoE wildlife allotment on 20 September we were able to see how the trees have now grown to give a real woodland feel. David was explaining how the establishment of the meadow is a long term project involving scything the hay at just the right time to allow wildflower seeds to establish. He is particularly pleased to have established alder buckthorn to encourage the brimstone butterflies.

In 2004, David arranged a tree planting scheme along the Beverley and Barmston Drain to kick-start the HEYwoods campaign to plant

more trees in Hull and East Yorkshire. He has been organising further community tree and wildlife planting efforts alongside the drain ever since; the latest will be on Sunday 29 November from 1-2pm.

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ECO CHIT CHAT

It's the Green Fair again on Saturday 21 November at Spring Bank Community Centre, and we will be looking forward to seeing friends old and new.

Please put up the poster enclosed with this ECO and contact us for more, or **print out copies from our website.** Personal recommendation is always the best way of involving people though, so do invite some friends along, or persuade people in other organisations that it is a good day out. Remember to tell them about the good food, music and activities for children and the interesting mix of crafts, environmental organisations and Fairtrade.

Traffic on Spring Bank is very congested at present, with roadworks at Princes Avenue corner having an effect on the side roads as well, another good reason for coming to the Green Fair by bus, cycle or on foot. If you have to use a car to bring stall items, allow yourself plenty of time. At the time of writing, there is still room for a few more stalls but they are going fast, so if you are meaning to book, contact Hilary (details back page) straight away. As ever, offers of help in the kitchen or on the Hull FoE stall are greatly appreciated, as are donations of home-made cakes!

Recycling Unlimited have made us very welcome at their café, 151 Newland Avenue, where we now hold our meetings. We are on the ground floor, so access should be easier. If you haven't been for a while (or ever!) why not give it a try.

You might want to come on Tuesday 1 December, 7.30pm to put some questions to Hull Waste Manager Doug Sharp about the new waste collection and recycling scheme. What happens to the stuff after it has been collected, I wonder?

Hull FoE members have been out this summer on stalls, visiting farms, seeing films and attending the FoE conference. Our stall at the Maritime Festival on 5 September attracted a great deal of attention, thanks to a very attractive display by Chrys, promoting the Marinet campaign.

On the same day other Hull FoE and Transition Hull members were at the Hessle Road Pram Race getting support for the Food Chain Campaign.

On 14 November we hope to be presenting Diana Johnson MP with Food Chain postcards from her constituents, and asking her to press for a commitment to planet-friendly farming within the Labour election manifesto. Look out for publicity involving a giant egg and spoon and a lot of cardboard chickens!

It was good to see that 'Age of Stupid', a thoughtprovoking film about how future generations will view our lack of action on climate change, was put on at Reel (Hull Screen) at the beginning of October, but it was not very well attended when I went. We need to look out for and support these films when they appear. Hull Transition intends to show 'End of Suburbia' at Boulevard Village Hall on Saturday 31 October at 3pm.

Hull United Nations Association hosted a well attended event on Climate Change and the lead up to Copenhagen, at the Guildhall on Saturday 24 October. John Prescott MP had scathing remarks to make about local councils who pass the buck on wind farms to the Planning Inspectorate, but also took some spirited questioning on the need for better leadership. Diana Sandy gave a good presentation on the Transition movement and how action can take place at local community level.

The Wave is being billed as the UK's biggest ever demonstration in support of action on climate change, taking place in London on Saturday 5 December. Of course, it makes sense to travel there as sustainably as possible, and there is a train being laid on from Bradford via Leeds and Doncaster. Five of us are going from Hull FoE with banner. Details from www.the-wave.org.uk. Wear blue!

The interests of building conservation and energy conservation sometimes appear to clash, especially when it comes to the subject of windows. The double-glazing industry is very pushy and seems to have considerable influence over the Building Regulations, but it does not make sense to take out sound timber windows for the sake of putting in double glazing when most of the heat loss is usually through draughts. One encouraging sign is that there are now local firms overhauling and draught-proofing timber sliding sash windows; I can supply details. For my house, I'm looking at secondary glazing and would be keen to hear of other people's experiences.

Please support local veg box schemes, farmers' markets and small independent traders in these difficult times. We were sorry to lose Chants Café, Hull's only organic café, but are pleased that Matt is keeping involved in local environmental groups.

Hilary

Earthmover Award. Continued from page 1

Working with the YWT, David has helped schoolchildren plant over 800 trees over the last three years. Recently, with the Sculcoates Neighbourhood Association, he has been managing the Sculcoates cemetery to enable access while enriching its biodiversity with wildflower planting.

All these activities have not only been a focus of local community and Hull FoE activity, they have also involved local business groups, residents, schools, councillors, volunteers from the local hospice and recently Community Payback workers. Clearly this has affected some volunteers as on odd occasions David has met people coming back to see how well their tree is doing!

The award judges said 'David stuck out as so dedicated and passionate about his local environment in all sorts of weathers and conditions he had to be the winner.'

Hilary

News from National Conference

For those who have never attended the FoE conference it's an almost 24 hour daily sprint dashing from registration to halls of residences, to the plenary sessions (this year three of them), to something called Open Spaces (whole conference interaction), to the motions debate, to the seminars, to the workshops, to the award ceremony—and to food. It is not for the flagging.

Below are a few of the highlights gleaned from my copious notes:

- We complimented ourselves on our role in making the Climate Change bill an exemplary one—with 149 local groups taking part in the Day of Action and 12,000 postcards sent to officials. For this and our other activities FoE won the "Advocacy Organization of the Year" award.
- We were also active on the international front with Shell forced to settle with locals suffering from their unsustainable gas flaring in Nigeria.
- We also had successes in opposing bypass schemes.
- In discussing the government's Department of Transport we suggested a re-name to the Department of Sustainable Transport and a corresponding re-think of their priorities as currently it could be called the Department for more Cars and Airplanes.
- We also suggested a campaign to reduce train prices as a comparison with the continent will show just how expensive we are.
- Our biofuels campaign has notified officials that their promotion of any and all biofuels is mistaken and should be promoting only biofuels from waste and not from displaced land.
- ▶ The conference requested national FoE to give more support to local groups campaigning on local issues and to initiate a clear debate about what locals need along with a proper Action Strategy. The demand is that local groups be listened to (current lack of communication).

- Sustainable Development is con sidered the bedrock of FoE.
- The Food Campaign's goal is the replacement of soya in animal foods since rain forests are being cleared to plant monoculture soya plantations to feed our animals. (Currently soya provides 40% of the protein in animal food.) Since the soya plantations are far away the threat is ignored by many people. But if action isn't taken now, by 2050 only 40% of the Amazon rainforest will remain with all the attendant damage connected to Climate Change. A consensus exists that CAP subsidies should go only to sustainable farms and not to huge agro-farms. A reform of CAP is scheduled for 2013 and that's not a minute too soon. Livestock help manage the land and should not be seen as merely food. And food waste should be fed to animals, not land filled. As individuals in the Food Campaign we are encouraged to eat less but better. For animals, modern farm, feeds have become dependent on soya high protein. But farmers can produce their own high protein food; for example, peas and beans. Traditional breeds should be encouraged because they are less dependent on soya. And grazing should be encouraged as this supplies animals with proteins.
- FoE is against emissions trading and countries being able to offset their own emissions by planting trees or supporting renewables in other countries. This lets us off the hook of controlling our own emissions which we are now required to reduce by 80% by 2050. With emissions trading, the polluter profits. We must stop trading and start cutting.
- A debate was held about FoE's relations with the British National Party. Right now we don't engage as they oppose the core values of FoE. Yet the conference voted in favour of engagement and also in favour of having a full consultation before such policies are adopted.

MARINET

The AGM of Marinet was held as a part of the conference. Some of the problems discussed were the intransigence of civil servants concerning putting the words "highly protected" in the Marine Bill. The Ministers are sometimes easier to deal with than the civil servants. Whatever the outcome of the Marine Bill Marinet will be represented on the 4 local boards whose job it is to engage the stakeholders and through consensus building decide where marine conservation zones should be located and whether they should be highly protected (no exploitative activities allowed). This is actually the only way to save our seas, obtain sustainability, promote biodiversity and replenish the fish.

Our local board member Anthony Rae was, months ago, asked to support Marinet on the board, but he just now is coming around to thinking that he should do so because Marinet's goals come under the heading of Biodiversity which is one of the 3 current campaigns.

Marinet had a stall at Hull's Maritime Festival organized by myself and Chrys Bavey who supplied wonderfully creative, original and colourful items for our stall. We were in a prime location and attracted lots of attention. The same occurred at the FoE conference where again we had a prime location and again displayed all the items we had on the stall at the Maritime Festival. Most of the delegates wore our stick-on labels reading "There are not many more fish in the sea.

Haris

NETGAIN — the North Sea Marine Conservation Zones Project

Launched at The Deep, 1 October 2009

This event, hosted by the Yorks and Humber Seafood group, was facilitated by The Deep and introduced by their director. He remarked upon the Deep's broader educational role for adults, which is not often known about by those enjoying it as a tourist attraction. Lead partners in this area are Natural England and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. The Deep is also one of the few organisations chosen to work with the Jacques Cousteau Foundation.

We were then introduced Jo Medhead, the newly appointed Project Officer, who told us about NETGAIN in our area.

The North Sea area, covering 113,000 square kilometers, is one of four regional projects set up around the English coast; the others cover the South-east, Southwest and Irish Sea areas. Their aims are to promote marine conservation and sustainable fisheries, and to set up marine conservation zones (MCZs) through stakeholder-led groups. By June 2011, the regional groups will have recommended candidate MCZs as an important part of the UK's commitment to an ecologically coherent network, which already includes SACs (habitat), Ramsar sites (wetlands) and SPAs (birds) as part of the NATURA 2000 network. The stakeholder groups will actually choose the candidate areas and will recommend their inclusion on the UK list of protected sites. The stakeholder groups will consist of about 35-40 people who will be nominated, and then be appointed under a formal selection process.

The groups will help to prepare the Regional Marine Profile, so that the strengths and weaknesses of the marine

Food Chain Campaign *Update*

Friends of the Earth is calling on each political party to include the following commitments in their manifestos:

- A new law to reduce the impact: measure and reduce the global environmental impacts of the UK's consumption of meat and dairy products.
- Sort out subsidies: make sure that European farming subsidies support sustainable, planet-friendly meat and dairy farming, and don't prop up intensive factory farms
- Protect farmers introduce a new watchdog to protect farmers from supermarket bullying. This is essential to make planet-friendly farming profitable.

For more information on the impacts of the global meat and dairy industry see Friends of the Earth's "What's feeding our food?" report: http://www.foe.co.uk/resource/briefings/livestock_impacts.pdf

environment can be identified and its issues and problems can be highlighted. They will also collate local activity data, especially from the inshore shallower seas. There will be a national Science Advisory Panel, who will screen suggested sites and advise on their scientific integrity.

A lot of hard work faces the project, not least the gathering together of all the available information about the region's marine environment, so that value judgements can be made about its health (or otherwise!). The overall aim is to conserve the marine environment, without overly 'discomforting the users' (and, it seems to me, in securing long-term benefits for them as well!) The event was attended on your behalf by a number of MARINET representatives from local/regional FoE groups, and they even managed to get their picture taken (with the exception of your scribe who was taking notes, and got forgotten!)

It will be very interesting to see how the stakeholder group and their suggestions for Marine Conservation Zones eventually pan out. I say eventually because it looks as though the Marine Conservation Act itself will now not be passed until early 2010. It will then have to be enacted (Regulations, Guidance etc), and the target date for the Protection Zones is not until 2011. However the hope is that the UK will be able to safeguard its marine habitats, flora and fauna, and geological/geomorphological features in due course. We should remember that at present we have precious little protection in the marine environment, especially for 'habitat'. If things do go 'pear-shaped' and fail (having listened to the commitment of some of the delegates), 'it won't be for the lack of trying'. Watch this space (....in about 2011?)

Jon Capel

STOP PRESS

Marinet—The tale of Amendment 3

The Marine Bill Report Stage 28 October, 2009

Monday 26 October saw the last debate in Parliament on the Marine Bill—and the last action (after eleven months of debate in both Houses), at 10 pm, was a division of the House on Amendment 3. This was aimed at giving power to the Secretary of State to designate a marine conservation zone for the protection of a whole ecosystem, not just specific species. The vote was lost (For 158, Against 246, Majority 88). Tories supported the amendment.

Bill Rigby of Marinet says'There were various amendments introduced by the government, and not voted on. So there will be a little time before we see the complete picture. It is clear from this that we may have lost the vote—but did not lose the argument.'

The new role of the Campaign will be addressed in a later post.

Watch this space...

Food - what do I know? (Part 1)

There's a lot of information about food out there. Some of it might even be true. Who knows?

Most of the information in the public domain—ie via the media—is the result of said media reacting to a press release from some research establishment. The media are not qualified to interpret the quality of the research or its potential for bias, influence or accuracy. (A recent edition of the Ecologist Magazine highlighted the media's interpretation of the FSA's research into current research projects relating to differences between organically and conventionally grown food. What the media reported was very misleading it seems.)

For someone who has spent a lifetime in the field of 'food issues', I've resorted to working things out from what I perceive as first principles. So far I have not been shown to be off course and find that others catch up in time.

My two 'first principles' are: Basic nutrition and The operational needs of living cells.

Basic Nutrition

Our understanding of nutrition stems from the huge volume of discoveries at the beginning of the 20th century. As the technology became available it was possible to find and identify the accessory food factors—vitamins. trace elements and lesser (in quantity) minerals—to add to an increasing understanding of proteins, carbohydrates and fats. At the same time knowledge of the way organs worked (metabolism), the production and interaction of enzymes and hormones added to an air of excitement and fulfilment.

It was possible at last to identify human nutritional needs, to explore them during World War 1 and put them fully into practice in World War 2. In the Domestic Science—later Home Economics—courses of the 50s and 60s sound basic nutrition could be taught, menus planned and cost effectiveness explored. Sadly such issues no longer feature in general courses in this country today as the establishment tends to find tablets and technology a more convenient and less fiddly approach to health and survival.

New nutrients have come to light, others modified and explored further. More is known about metabolic processes and work on the human genome has lessened the emphasis on the need for any understanding of basic nutrition.

Unfortunately, few people care enough or know enough to make a case for health to be maintained through food. Try breeding prize poodles, peonies or parrots and their nutrient needs will be at the top of the agenda. For human babies, it seems, it's all a bit of a lottery!

Most research nowadays is carried out at the behest of industry-in this case the food industry. Independent establishments are few and poorly funded. Research that is carried out here and elsewhere may not be published if the peer review process filters out useful work that does not meet certain criteria set by the 'peers'. It may have to find a home in an obscure, seemingly unrelated, journal or it may never see the light of day. This means that research can be duplicated unknowingly. Someone trying to review research will have to trawl through many journals of a number of different disciplines. (There are over 140 disciplines contributing to the 'Food Science' scene. Happily they do not all undertake research!) Many papers are produced at specialist conferences in all parts of the world, the proceedings of which are only available to participants.

There's a lot of opportunity for information to get lost. There's a lot of opportunity for those wanting to present a biased view to cherry pick the pros and bury the cons.

So...how to tell?

Diana Sandy

Part 2, Living Cells, in next issue

EAT well... STAY well

Some ground rules:

- Eat small meals regularly.
 (Try not to eat on the move);
- ◆ Choose foods which have undergone very little processing ie as near nature intended as possible in this day and age!
- In the main, buy foods which would normally grow locally;
- In the main buy foods in their normal season;
- Don't buy something when you can make it yourself.

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Wildlife Notes

In the cemetary

Rain at last! The perennial border and the wallflowers were looking a bit sad and using a drum of water several times a day was having no effect. This was the decorative planting done on the action day in Sculcoates Cemetery with the aim of making an attractive entrance for people and wildlife. Simple, nectar rich, colourful and hardy was the requirement, so let's see how it goes. The plan is to back it up with a plantation of decorative shrubs to provide some winter colour and spring flowers with a few berries thrown in. These will be allowed to grow and flower freely, largely unchecked by

the restraining hand of the (which word would you use?) gardener.

Secateurs are useful in the garden but they seem to bring out the 'don't know when to stop' tendency in some people. If recent observations are typical this is a very common syndrome and may need me to confiscate such tools before entry to wildlife areas. Metal detectors at the gate?

The management plan for the site has now been written with the advice of the Biodiversity Partnership. I see this as the start of a process to produce management plans for other sites in the city. The lozenge alongside the Withernsea cycle path and the railway

triangle near the KC Stadium are my priorities since these areas are both part of improvement zones which are undergoing public consultation.

The main tasks in the cemetery are the regular mowing of the grass alongside the main path, and the annual cut of the open grassland. The search is on for suitable contractors and funding for this work. There is also a programme of routine tasks for volunteers, Community Payback and civilian; the latter meet on the last Friday afternoon of each month, 1.00 to 3.00 pm. Future work includes the planting of trees, shrubs and wildflowers and the creation of paths around the site.

Meanwhile, don't miss the next tree planting on Barmston Drain near the bottom of Stepney Lane on Sunday, 29 November, 1.00 to 2.00 pm.

David

What exactly is Permaculture?

I'd been wondering that myself, so was glad of the opportunity to attend an event with that title organized by the Coop at Zoo Café on Newland Avenue on 17 July.

Certainly it is about growing food, but it's about more than that. Some of the definitions are a bit waffley and illustrations remind me of the 1960s self-sufficiency ideas, gently satirised in 'The Good Life', though there is much more of a community feel and a lot about

courses and learning from each other. These quotations from 'Permaculture Works' newsletter of the Permaculture Association seem to me to say it best:

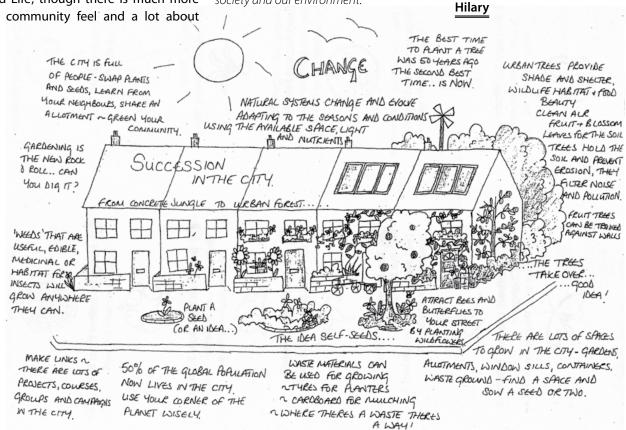
'Permaculture is working with nature to make a better world for all.'

'Permaculture design uses (natural) principles to develop integral systems to provide for our needs of food, water, shelter, energy and community in ways that are healthy and efficient. Through permaculture design we can improve the quality and productivity of our individual lives, our society and our environment.'

'The philosophy behind permaculture is one of ...looking at systems in all their functions, rather than just asking one yield of them.'

'The focus on design is one of the factors that distinguishes permaculture from other approaches to sustainability.'

Clearly there is a lot of overlap with the principles of organic growing, the ideas of the Transition Movement, and with Friends of the Earth. Perhaps some of those ideas from the 1960s are finding that their time has come.



How to be not so stupid

Twenty plus people gathered on Saturday 3 October at the Boulevard Village Hall to discuss the film 'The Age of Stupid' shown the previous week at Reel Cinema as part of the Hull Screen programme.

Many of us had seen the film and been affected by it. The sight of the Shell company in Nigeria burning off unwanted gas because they were only interested in extracting the oil was staggering. The effect of the industry on the local community there was also pretty appalling. Other locations in the film included India, where an entrepreneur was developing a new cheap airline; Chamonix, where glacier retreat was startlingly extreme; the UK, where an attempt at obtaining planning permission for a wind farm in Bedfordshire was turned down for no apparent good reason; New Orleans, where an oil worker living there was reflecting on his life and the floods; and a family from Iraq living as refugees in Jordan.

The people at our meeting to discuss the film were keen to 'do' things in response. There were three ideas which at the end of the meeting people offered to take forward. One was extending the **Love Local** event held recently in

Newland Avenue to other streets in the area. Another was to try and obtain empty premises from the council to organise a free-swap shop, along the lines of the venture which had been successful in Bean Street. Lastly, the idea of a **Letts** scheme, or a currency scheme with actual notes was discussed, and we were all enthusiastic about a currency based on 'the green tiger'.

If you are interested in finding out more about Hull Transition, contact numbers are given below. We meet in the side room of the Eagle on Anlaby Road on a regular basis. The open meetings are held on the second Monday of the month at 7.30pm. We have a showing of another film, 'The End of Suburbia' at the Boulevard Village Hall on Saturday 31 October, 2.45 for a 3pm start. It's a movie that discusses the dwindling supply of fossil fuels and the effect of this on society. Tea and cakes and discussion are on offer afterwards.

Lausanne

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E zeetoria@msn.com

From farm to fork



Coop, Transition Hull, and Hull FoE members visit a Coop farm near Goole.

The farm itself specialises in growing potatoes in conventional large fields, but an area is set aside for teaching children about growing food.

Visiting school classes get the opportunity to sow seeds, transplant and harvest a wide variety of vegetables, salad crops, fruit and cereals, and then cook pizzas and make bread.

More information on www.fromfarmtofork.co.uk

Cycle hub for Hull train station

Plans for £14m of investment to improve facilities for cyclists who use railway stations have been announced.

Ten stations in England will get "cycle hubs" which will provide storage facilities, repair services and bicycle hire schemes.

The hubs are planned for three London stations as well as Grimsby, **Hull**, Leeds, Liverpool, Scunthorpe, Sheffield and York stations.

Funding is also available for 10,000 bike parking spaces across the country.

'Green travel'

The government-led project is expected to take two years to complete. Network Rail, Cycling England and several rail operators are also involved.

Transport Secretary Andrew Adonis said: "More and more people are turning to cycling as a healthy, green and convenient way to travel. I want to encourage this choice. The aim of the programme is to boost the significant number of people cycling to catch their train. This will tackle congestion, promote rail travel and help people develop healthier lifestyles and protect the environment."

Of the £14m investment £5m will go towards the cycle hubs.

Another £3m will go to creating more than 4,500 additional cycle spaces at stations including Nottingham, Stevenage, Cambridge, Exeter, Scarborough, Sunderland, Barrow-in-Furness, Crewe and Middlesbrough.

www.bbc.co.uk

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Sue

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