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New Orleans

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News Weekly

"The People's Paper"

Cicely Tyson
Film Maven & Fashion Icon




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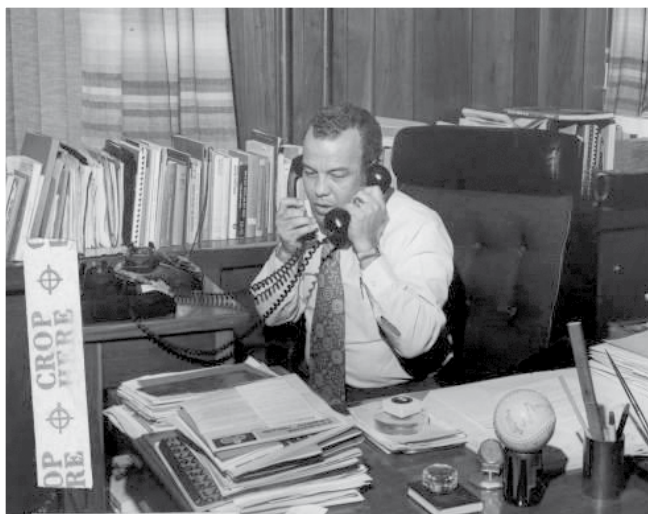
Re-Writing the History

Part 2

Norman C. Francis' Legacy Lives On with Parkway in His Name



Above: Dr. Norman C. Francis (Left) Meeting with Muhammad Ali at Mason's Las Vegas Strip in New Orleans.



Left: Dr. Norman C. Francis Answering Phones at His Desk While Serving as President of Xavier University.



Right: Dr. Norman C. Francis Greeting U.S. Representative Shirley Chisholm (D-NY) and Louisiana State Senator and New Orleans Mayor (1986-1994) Sidney J. Barthelemy.



Below: Dr. Norman C. Francis along with the Mayor LaToya Cantrell and other local officials cut the ribbon, officially renaming the South Jefferson Davis Parkway to Norman C. Francis Parkway. Photo: Brier Evans.

Brier Evans Data News Weekly Contributor

Trailblazers of the Civil Rights Era often end up in the history books, and most only collect their roses posthumously. But a few of them live long enough to see themselves honored in public spaces and at 89, Dr.

Norman C. Francis, the former President of Xavier University of Louisiana, saw his legacy immortalized through the Norman C. Francis Parkway.

"I heard what was said here, 'change is coming,' and what I say is, 'change is here.'" Francis said, reflecting on decades of civil rights work in New Orleans, of which he was a part. "It's on that sign. And the City of

New Orleans has taken this great step," he said.

The New Orleans City Council officially renamed South Jefferson Davis Parkway to South Norman C. Francis Parkway on Thursday, Jan. 28, 2021, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony to honor Francis. New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell and city officials masked up to commemorate Francis at the ceremony.

Photos courtesy of Xavier University of Louisiana, Archives & Special Collections.

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Cover Story, Continued from page 2.

"This was, I guess, my commission by the good Lord," Francis said of the life he has lived.

"I didn't want to be a lawyer ... I wanted to create a number of lawyers around the city ... The next time you see someone, stop them, and tell them, you know, you're good enough to be a teacher. The road to success and prosperity is education," Francis said of his career in higher education.

Francis integrated Loyola University New Orleans' Law School as the first African American to enroll there. He returned to his alma mater, Xavier, first serving as the Dean of Men, where he housed the Freedom Riders in the university's dorms. He then rose through the ranks to become president. He led a 40-year career at Xavier, retiring in 2015, as the longest serving university president in America. Throughout his presidency, Francis has been commemorated by many influential figures and leaders including Nelson Mandela, Bill Clinton, Jesse Jackson, Bill Gates, and Pope John Paul II. In 2006, he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President George W. Bush.

"Don't ever ask someone to do something ... if you're not willing to do it yourself," Francis said of his commitment to educating future leaders who would bring about social change.

Vice President Kamala Harris sent a letter to the New Orleans City Council in July 2020 in support of Francis and his work in fighting against social injustice.

"Streets named after confederate leaders celebrate men who fought for a divided America founded on racism and slavery," Harris wrote, and Cantrell read at the event. Jefferson Davis served as the President of the Confederate States from 1861 to 1865. "In contrast, streets named after Black role models who work to build up their community honor the values of justice and equality while inspiring generations to come," Harris wrote.

"The people of New Orleans deserve the opportunity to learn about this leader who is shaping their community for the better. The time for action and change is now," Harris said in her letter.

As University President, Francis taught and mentored countless university students



Dr. Norman C. Francis (Left) and Musician Lionel Hampton (Right) Looking Over the Model for the New Xavier University Academic/Science Complex.



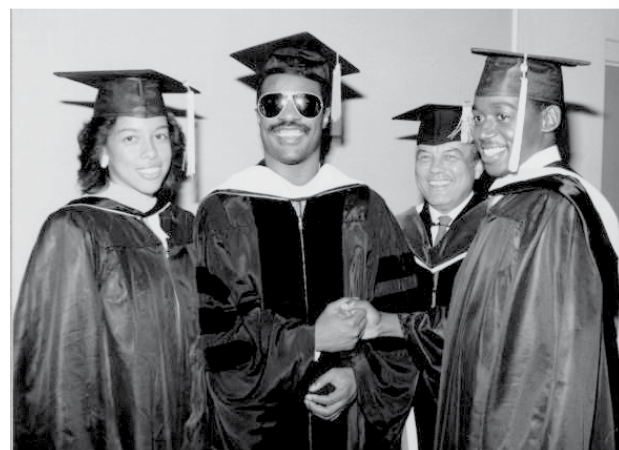
Dr. Norman C. Francis Speaking at Podium.



Dr. Norman C. Francis (Right) Meets with Singer Harry Belafonte (Center) and Father Thad Posey (Left).



Anthony Rachal (Far Left), Louise Rachal (2nd from Left), Blanche Francis (2nd from Right), and Dr. Norman C. Francis (Far Right) Attending the Presidential Inauguration Dinner at Xavier University of Louisiana.



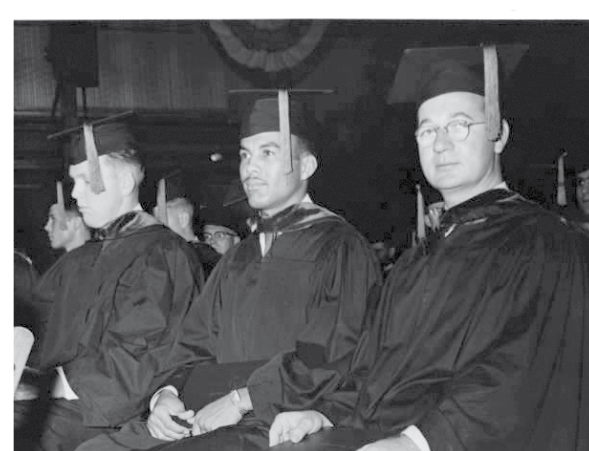
Dr. Norman C. Francis (2nd from Right) and Stevie Wonder (2nd from Left) Meet with Students Sophia Llorens (Far Left) and Lance Dunnings (Far Right) at the 1986 Xavier University Commencement.



Dr. Norman C. Francis Meets with Pope John Paul II and Archbishop Hannan During the Pope's Visit to New Orleans in 1987.



Dr. Norman C. Francis (Center) Meets with His Brother, Bishop Joseph Francis (Right), and Civil Rights Icon and former Atlanta Mayor, Andrew Young.



Dr. Norman C. Francis (Center) Graduating from Loyola University Law School in 1955. Loyola University President W. Patrick Donnelly, S.J. seated Right of Dr. Francis.

including the current Mayor of New Orleans – Cantrell, who awarded Francis with a Key to the City and a Medal on behalf of the City Council.

"It's hard to hold back the tears for admiring the man who has ensured that not only Xavier is on a national stage but countless African American men and women who were educated under his leadership," Cantrell said. "On campus, I recall coming to your office for advice and also for leniency, and I'm standing here today because it was granted," Cantrell joked.

Francis embodied the mission of Xavier, current University President Dr. Reynold Verret said. Over his 60 years of public service, Verret recalled that Francis put the city and Black institutions first.

"It's fitting that our gate, here, should be named after Norman C. Francis," Verret said. "This also allows us to think that the civil war is over. The civil war ended a long time ago, but it hasn't been over yet. It should be over now, it's over here," Verret said.

The Xavier board, which lobbied to rename the street, wanted the wider community to continue to fight for freedoms and justice that can easily be taken away.

"As we all know the pre-name of this street represented an individual who didn't have civil rights and civil liberties at the top of his priorities," said Justin Augustine, the Chair of Xavier's Board of Directors. "Dr. Francis has always fought very hard to ensure that civil rights and civil liberties were afforded to everyone," Augustine said.

Norman C. Francis Parkway is just one of the many street names in New Orleans that is undergoing a change. Mark Raymond Jr., the Vice-Chair of the New Orleans City Council Street Renaming Commission, said that there are 40 streets, parks, and public spaces that are recommended for new names.

"I wanted to bring about meaningful change within our community," Raymond said. "Seeing so many streets reflecting confederate soldiers and honoring the confederacy was disheartening, especially at this moment where we needed to be united, not divided," he said.

Francis called for this generation to continue the work that was started by a generation before them.

Cicely Tyson

Film Maven & Fashion Icon



Tracee Dundas
Fashion Stylist

Former President Barack Obama said it best; "In her long and extraordinary career, Cicely Tyson has not only exceeded as an actor, she shaped the course of history."

With a career that spanned for more than seven decades, Tyson has led the way as a trailblazer and continually breaking glass ceilings. Tyson is most renowned as an actress, taking on ground-breaking roles in Hollywood and on Broadway. Most are surprise to learn that before stepping into a glitzy Hollywood lifestyle, Tyson started her career as a fashion model. Although standing only 5'4, Tyson was discovered as a model by a

Photographer for Ebony Magazine. As a young Black woman trying to find her way in an industry that embraced blonde hair, blue-eye women or lighter complected Black females she never let that, or her height discourage her from stepping into the world of fashion and modeling.

A phenomenal woman that exudes grace, style and her love for fashion that radiated throughout her career. Her passion for fashion can be seen on and off the red-carpet.

Never shy about wearing bold fashions with vibrant colors, flair and head turning style. And she's been killing the game ever since. With the recent release of her memoir "Just as I Am", Tyson at 96 was prepared to promote and share her life story with the world.

It goes without saying that she lived an amazing life, and her legacy will be celebrated for years to come. We remember her beauty, style, and legacy with a tribute to some of her greatest fashion moments.



Cicely Tyson in long fur; circa 1973



Cicely Tyson wearing Designer B. Michael - Photo by Mickalene Thomas and Racquel Chevremont for Interview Magazine



Cicely Tyson Ebony Magazine Cover; circa 1979



Cicely Tyson wearing iconic braids and clock choker; circa 1970's



Cicely Tyson attends the 2018 TCM Classic Film Festival Photo by Dennis Oulds on Getty Images



Hollywood Legend Diva Cicely Tyson models Designer B Michael gown



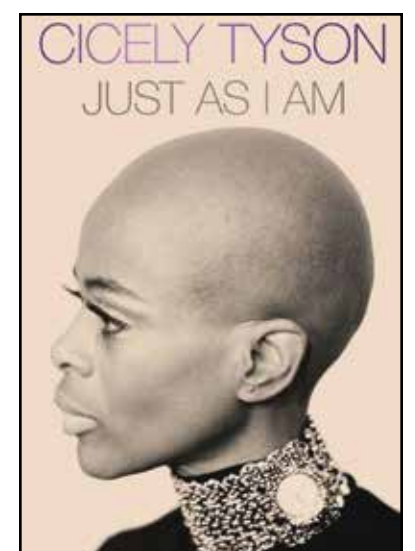
Cicely Tyson in leather pants & beret; circa 1971



Stylish Cicely Tyson with Designer B Michael



Cicely Tyson with James Earl Jones struts the runway; circa 1961



Cicely Tyson's memoir 'Just as I Am' recently released (Getty Images/HarperCollins)

Residents Substitute House Floats for Mardi Gras Parades

Story and Photos

By Brier Evans

Data News Weekly Contributor

This year, 2021, marks the first time in 32 years that Mardi Gras has been canceled. The annual celebration of colorful parades, marching bands, bright costumes, masked balls, and revelry took a back seat to the COVID-19 Pandemic which also saw carnival celebrations around the world muted. For many residents, a New Orleans without Mardi Gras is unthinkable. So, to keep the spirit alive, if not in a safe, socially distanced way, across the metro area, residents have transformed their homes into floats.

"The big thing about Mardi Gras and all the social organizations in New Orleans is the fraternization amongst members and friends and different walks of life," said Brian Lapeyrolerie, a Zulu member from Gentilly. Lapeyrolerie decorated his home with a bold show of purple and yellow and featured Black coconuts along the front of his home, in tribute to the Zulu parade.

"Everyone forgets their worries and what's going on and are enjoying that moment because life is so short," he said of the Mardi Gras season.

Like Lapeyrolerie, Mardi Gras for many residents is part of New Orleans' life. Decorating their homes was a source of comfort and joy after a long year of isolation and loss. It was also a way for many residents to fill the void of missing out on the festivities this year.

"My family and I started on the house during the middle of last month," said Yvonne Milton, a resident of Algiers Point. "I love the house. I love Mardi Gras. I'm really going to miss the carnival. Mardi Gras was the best, but it's gone now because of the coronavirus," Milton said.

Milton's home, like many others, has been recognized by Krewe of House Floats 2021, a local effort that started in Algiers Point. The organization began as a simple Facebook group made by Megan Joy Boudreaux, a Marine Insurance Claims Manager, and became popular overnight. Boudreaux has since gotten over 5,000 followers and has gained approval and support from the New Orleans City Council.

For those who love Mardi Gras for



Capturing the Weather, this Gentilly home captured the theme "Chilly In Gentilly" for its house float.



Brian Lapeyrolerie and his wife, Dawn Lapeyrolerie stand outside their Zulu-themed house float in Gentilly.



New Orleans native Yvonne Milton, waves outside her staycation paradise themed house float.



Ingrid Labat, an Emergency Room Physician stands outside her home in Lake Vista.



Celebrating the life of Ellis Marsalis, who died of complications from COVID-19 in early 2020, this Algiers Point home house float pays tribute to the music of Mardi Gras.

its intricate floats, the city council is hosting a "Floats in the Oaks" stationary parade in City Park. The parade will feature floats from 26 carnival parade organizations such as Zulu's King float, Bacchus Bacchawhop-

pa whale float, and Rex's Boeuf Gras float, among others. Visitors can even throw their own beads at the floats.

Despite COVID-19 canceling the traditional scheduled festivities of Mardi Gras, residents said the virus cannot

strip the city and its people of their culture.

"It's in our blood," said Ingrid Labat, an Emergency Room Physician, who designed a float in front her Lake Vista home. "Unfortunately, COVID is curtailing

a lot of our activities but if it's not Mardi Gras, it's Jazz Fest, it's French Quarter Fest, it's Essence Fest, football, and then back to Mardi Gras. It's a never-ending cycle. Mardi Gras is part of our culture," she said.

City Announces Restrictions for Upcoming Mardi Gras Weekend and Mardi Gras Day

City of New Orleans

NEW ORLEANS — The City announced regulations and enforcement procedures for the upcoming Mardi Gras weekend and Mardi Gras Day, in addition to enhanced enforcement this weekend.

“We’re doing this in response to the health crisis that we are in. There are consequences of not taking action, the costs are simply too high,” said Mayor LaToya Cantrell. “There are three new COVID strains out there which will have an impact on our City. We have to mitigate this virus the best way we can. It requires all of us to do the right thing.”

Beginning next Friday, Feb. 12, 2021 through Mardi Gras Day, Feb. 16, 2021 the following restrictions will be in effect:



In an attempt to stop potential super spreading of COVID-19 during Mardi Gras, New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell have taken measures that include closing all bars for indoor and outdoor dining Citywide from Friday, Feb. 12th through Mardi Gras Day, The City is also closing Bourbon St., Decatur St. and Frenchmen St. to pedestrians and vehicles from 7 p.m. - 3 a.m.

- All bars will be closed both indoor and outdoor citywide, including bars operating as restaurants with AR-Conditional permits
- There will be no package liquor sales in the French Quarter
- All sales of to-go drinks will be banned
- Bourbon St., Decatur St. and Frenchmen St. will be closed to pedestrians and vehicles from 7 p.m. - 3 a.m.
- Restaurants and retail stores can remain open and residents and visitors will have access
- There will be no loitering on Bourbon St.
- The Claiborne underpass and corridor will also be fenced off
- Large gatherings are banned and will not be tolerated — including activities that encourage people to congregate, like street vending and performing

State & Local News

New Trail Honors 1811 Slave Revolt in St. John Parish

Data News Weekly Staff Edited Report

The State of Louisiana has a long-storied history in the fight for freedom for African Americans. Recently, a historic trail was unveiled that pays homage to the largest slave revolts in American History.

Leaders from the River Parishes and the region’s tourist commission commemorated the 1811 Slave Revolt by dedicating a new 10-mile trail. It begins where the revolt began, at the 1811 Kid Ory Historic House in Laplace.

The trail ends at the Destrehan Plantation, where trials were held after the rebellion was put down. Back then, the 500 or so people who revolted were called slaves, but Rita Perrilloux described them as freedom fighters.

“We are not the descendants of slaves. We are the descendants of people who were enslaved. Are you hearing me? We are not the descendants of slaves, we are the descendants of people who were enslaved and have fought for their freedom from 1811 until today,”



“We are not the descendants of slaves. We are the descendants of people who were enslaved. Are you hearing me? We are not the descendants of slaves, we are the descendants of people who were enslaved and have fought for their freedom from 1811 until today,” said Perrilloux, the Historic Riverland’s Director.

said Perrilloux, the Historic Riverland’s Director.

On February 5, 2020, she and leaders from the River Parishes and the region’s tourist commission commemorated the 1811 Slave Revolt.

“Freedom or death? If you were in bondage and you had

to go through what they went through, that’s a viable choice,” said Perrilloux.

On the same soil where African Americans had no freedom two hundred years ago, a Black member of Louisiana’s River Parishes Tourist Commission spoke of the economic and educational value of

visiting plantations.

Tourism officials point out that during the time of the revolt, the River Parishes were home to millionaires. It was arguably one of the wealthiest times for Louisiana, but because of slavery, it was also one of the darkest chapters of America.

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Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

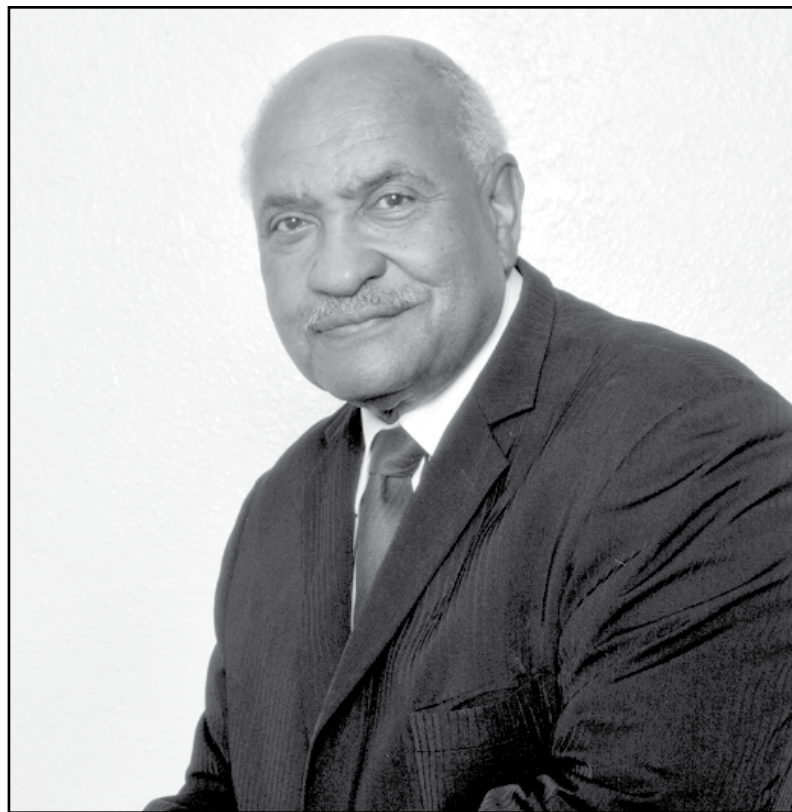
Superstars Stephanie Mills, Doug E. Fresh, Cupid, and Miki Howard put an exclamation mark on a successful, inspiring, and informative National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) Midwinter Training Conference.

The virtual event concluded Friday evening, Jan. 29th, with NNPA Chair Karen Carter Richards, and NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., honoring San Diego Voice & Viewpoint Publisher, Dr. John Warren, with the NNPA's Lifetime Achievement Award.

"I am deeply humbled with this award and what it represents coming from those I have grown to love and respect over these decades," Dr. Warren stated. "I see the Black Press as a sacred trust, and I am glad to be both a part of its 194-year history and future now being made."

For more than five decades, The San Diego Voice & Viewpoint has faithfully reported on news from an African American perspective and the Black communities of San Diego County, from small church gatherings to major political campaigns.

With the theme: "Black Press of America: Challenges, Responsibilities, and Opportunities Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic," the conference was backed by NNPA partners and



On Friday, Jan. 29th, the NNPA saluted the community leader and dedicated Publisher of the San Diego Voice and Viewpoint.

sponsors including: General Motors, Pfizer Rare Disease, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Reynolds American (RAI). Conference sponsors included AARP, Wells Fargo, American Petroleum Institute (API), Facebook, Zillow, Nissan, UAW and Zenger News.

Open to the public at no charge, the two-day virtual event kicked off on Thursday, Jan. 28th, with greetings from NNPA Chair and Houston Forward Times Publisher

Karen Carter Richards.

Terry Jones, the publisher of Data News Weekly in New Orleans and the NNPA Convention Planning Committee Chair, followed Carter Richards with remarks.

Wells Fargo presented a dynamic and informative session on "How to Adapt and Rebuild Your Small Business During COVID-19."

With Covid-19 still raging, conference attendees heard a vital message from Dr. Leandris Liburd, the

associated director of the Office of Minority Health and Health Equity for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

"The CDC is working hard to address increasing Covid-19 health disparities," Dr. Liburd proclaimed.

"The population health impact of Covid-19 has exposed decades, if not centuries, of inequities that have undermined the physical, social, material and emotional health of the racial minority population."

She added that long-standing systemic health and social inequities had put many from racial and ethnic minority groups at risk of dying from the coronavirus.

"Comprehensive interventions are needed that are tailored to address the unique circumstances of those at high risk," Dr. Liburd stated during a session titled "COVID-19 Pandemic and Black America."

The conference featured dynamic performances, including Doug E. Fresh, who performed an array of hits including

"The Show," and Cupid, who rocked out to "The Cupid Shuffle."

Hitmaker and songstress Stephanie Mills performed "Never Knew Love Like This Before," "The Power of Love," and "I Feel Good (All Over)," while Miki Howard closed out the entertainment with hits like "Love Under New Management," and "Come Share My Love."

View the conference at www.virtualnnpa2021.com.

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Job Opportunity

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Data News Weekly, "The People's Paper," is looking for freelance writers to join our team print and digital team. We want to hear from you if you are a working journalist, or an aspiring journalist who has 2 years or more of newspaper or PR writing experience. We need writers who can cover New Orleans news stories, ranging from local high school sports, community events, City Hall and entertainment. Experience in print is necessary, experience in digital and social media are encouraged.

Compensation is competitive and great story ideas will be appreciated.

If you are interested, please email your resume and 3 writing samples to: terrybjones@bellsouth.net and datanewseditor@bellsouth.net.

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