

update

A Newsletter for Amtrak Employees



VOLUME 2—ISSUE 16

November 15, 1973



president nixon signs amtrak bill; notes trains conserve energy

The Amtrak Improvement Act of 1973, covering federal financial assistance to Amtrak in fiscal year 1974 and several important amendments to the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970, was signed into public law by President Nixon November 3. In signing the bill, the President said it is in the national interest to encourage Americans to "choose a train when they make travel plans" because "railroads can carry more passengers over greater distances per gallon of fuel than automobiles or airlines are able to do, while adding few pollutants to the air."

The bill, a conference committee resolution of differences between House and Senate versions, increases the \$227 million authorization contained in the 1972 amendment to the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 to \$334.3 million. Besides this increase of \$107.3 million, the newly signed bill frees \$47 million of the 1972 authorization which had not been appropriated (actually received by Amtrak). This gives Amtrak a total of \$154.3 million in available federal funds. In addition, loan guarantee authority is increased from \$200 million to \$500 million.

Federal funds authorized under the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1973 are to be spent in accordance with spending plans approved by Congress at the time of appropriation and with general guidelines established annually by the Secretary of Transportation.

One significant amendment to the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 authorizes Amtrak to provide auto-ferry service as part of its basic pas-

senger services. In the future, any organization, with the exception of railroads outside the Amtrak system, wishing to establish auto-ferry service must be issued a certificate of approval by the Interstate Commerce Commission. Approval will be conditioned upon a finding by the ICC that there is a public need for such additional service and that institution of the service will not impair Amtrak's ability to reduce its losses or increase revenues. This provision does not apply to contracts for auto-ferry service entered into before October 30, 1970.

The newly signed bill makes it mandatory that Amtrak initiate at least one experimental route each year. The route or routes will be designated by the Secretary of Transportation and will be operated for a minimum of two years. Under the original 1970 act and its 1972 amendment, Amtrak was given the option of instituting additional service, within or outside of the basic system, based on the company's determination that such service was justified.

Both the 1970 act and its 1972 amendment left unanswered the question of who has preference in use of existing railroad tracks — freight or passenger trains. However, the Amtrak Improvement Act of 1973 states that passenger trains will have preference "in the use of any given line of track, junction or crossing" except in an emergency situation. A railroad may petition the Secretary of Transportation to consider particular circumstances.

(Continued on Page Two, Col., One)

amtrak invites skiers to "ski west"

This winter Amtrak's "Ski West" tour packages offer economy-priced vacations at six top Western ski areas: Colorado, Montana, Idaho, California, New Mexico and Utah.

All packages include lodging, round-trip coach accommodations, and transfers. Some also include meals, lift tickets and ski lessons. Groups can be organized on request.

The 13 Amtrak Western ski vacations for the '73/'74 season are sponsored in conjunction with Ski-America, Gentry Tour Ski-Pak, Travel '76, Wanderlust Travel, Inc. and American Rail Tours.

Colorado tour packages include 8-day vacations at Aspen/Snowmass, Vail, Steamboat, Winter Park, and Breckenridge.

In addition to "Ski West" vacation packages, Amtrak is offering a new, Saturday express bus service from Denver to Vail and Aspen. Reservations may be secured only with the purchase of a round-trip train ticket

Continued on page 2

amtrak bill

(Continued from Page 1)

Amtrak may also apply to the Secretary of Transportation for an order requiring a railroad to permit accelerated speeds on tracks used by passenger trains.

Another amendment establishes quality of service provided as a criteria in determining the amount of compensation Amtrak will pay to participating railroads.

Amtrak's board of directors was increased from 15 to 17 members, and consumer representatives from 1 to 3. In addition, vacancies on the board must be filled within 120 days.

amtrak invites skiers to "ski west"

Continued from page 1

to Denver. Cost of reserved seat round-trip bus ticket to Aspen is \$25; \$15 round-trip to Vail.

Montana ski areas include: Big Mountain, Red Lodge, Bridger Bowl, Missoula Snow Bowl, and Big Sky. Seven or eight day packages are available.

Ski groups to Snowbird, Powder Mountain, Snow Basin or any of the other well-known ski areas in Utah are now accessible via Amtrak. Groups of 30 or more from San Francisco are provided special "set-off" car arrangements at Ogden, Utah where charter buses operate direct to Ogden/Salt Lake City ski areas known as "the greatest snow on earth."

Amtrak's "Ski West" program also offers 8-day packages to Schweitzer Basin, Idaho and Taos Ski Valley, New Mexico and a 5-day Squaw Valley, California package.

In addition, Amtrak is offering a special 8-day rail/drive package. A skierized Dollar-A-Day car will be available upon arrival at Amtrak stops for any of these leading rocky Mountain ski areas: Aspen, Vail, Winter Park, Breckenridge, Steamboat Springs, Crested Butte, Snowmass, Reno, Purgatory, Telluride, Keystone, Copper Mountain and Taos, New Mexico. All Dollar-A-Day cars are equipped with ski racks, chains, and fully winterized.

The special 8-day rail/drive package includes a skierized sedan for 8 days with unlimited mileage (insurance and gas not included), seven nights' lodging at the lodge of your choice (when accommodations are available), six days' lift tickets, round-trip rail fare and all taxes. The skierized car may be rented without the lodging package when an Amtrak ticket is purchased from Ski-America. Cost is \$95, plus tax for 8 days.

Important notice to all Amtrak employees. Many of you will be receiving *white* Rail Travel Privilege Cards this month. This card does *not* supersede your present blue and white card. Keep your present card and send the new white card to the following address:

Amtrak Pass Bureau
955 L'Enfant Plaza North, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024

Please note that the *white* Rail Travel Card is still valid for *railroad* employees.

amtrak announces fall and winter schedules

Schedules on many Amtrak routes changed October 28 as the nation returned to standard time. Winter schedules for trains operating between the Northeast and Midwest and Florida will take effect December 14. Service improvements are also planned.

October 28 Changes

In the East, Metroliner service between New York and Washington increased from 14 roundtrips a day to 15.

This means that Amtrak now has hourly Metroliner service between New York and Washington from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. northbound and from 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. southbound. All northbound Metroliners leave Washington on the hour; southbound all Metroliners now depart New York on the half hour.

All Boston departures are now at 10 minutes past the hour during the day along the coastal route to New York except for the Merchants Limited.

The Merchants Limited, Southern Crescent and Senator have been significantly upgraded in quality, and all feature specialty cars for improved food service, bar cars and parlor cars. These trains are designed to supplement the Metroliners, especially for businessmen unable to get reservations on the popular Metroliners.

An additional New York-Washington Metroliner is operating on Sundays only, leaving New York at 9:45 p.m. and arriving in Washington at 12:45 a.m.

A new train, the Valley Forge, operates Monday through Friday between New York City and Harrisburg, Pa., to provide improved service and relieve the Broadway Limited of local traffic requirements. When the Valley Forge went into service October 28, the Broadway Limited ceased carrying local traffic between New York and Lancaster, Pa.

New York-Philadelphia trains have been spaced out to provide departures each half hour all day.

As summer traffic pressures have reduced, Amtrak is now able to operate some refurbished cars on all Boston-Washington trains and most other trains operating in that corridor.

Amtrak's popular Montrealer/Washingtonian now provides better arrival times at Vermont and New Hampshire ski areas. Additional equipment will be added on weekends for skiers.

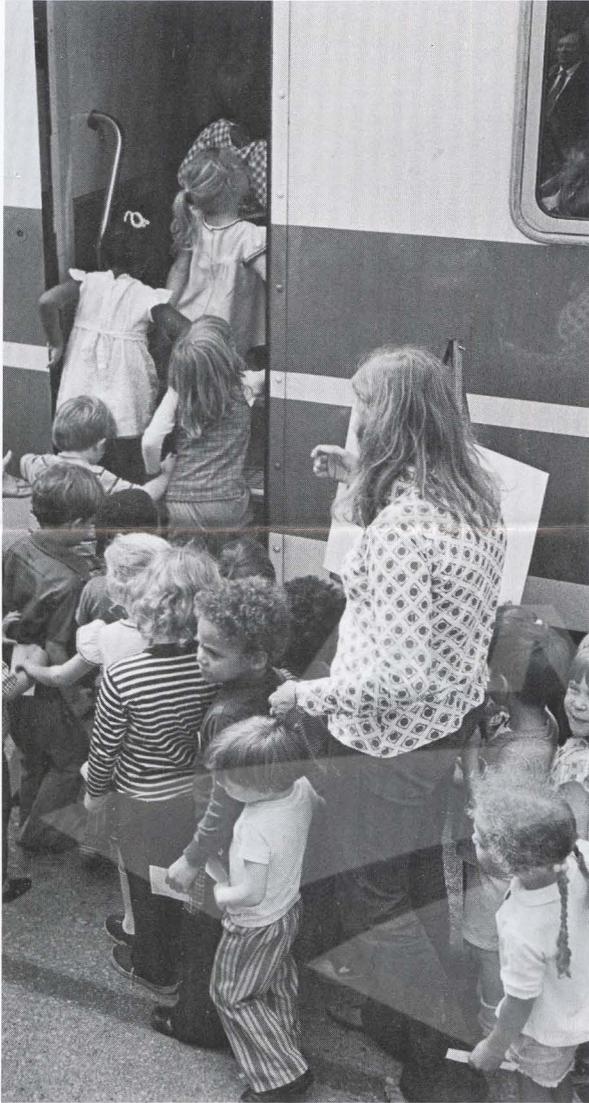
The Champion, Amtrak's Northeast-St. Petersburg, Fla. train, became a New York-St. Petersburg train via Orlando, Fla., home of Walt Disney World.

Although schedules remain the same on Amtrak's Empire Service, major changes in equipment are taking place. All of the passenger cars in service have been renovated, and round-end observation cars have been added to the New York-Buffalo trains.

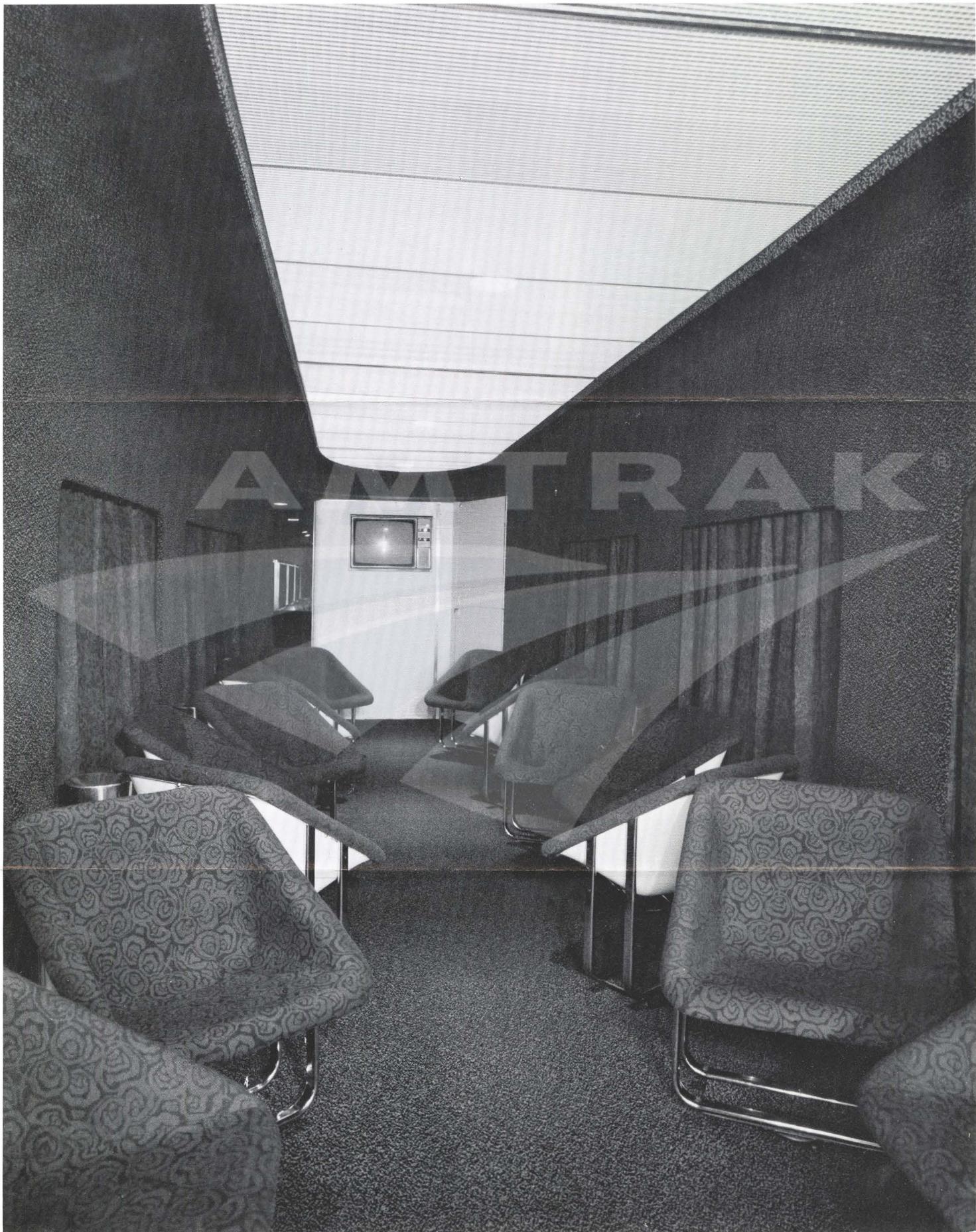
Beginning October 28, the San Francisco Zephyr stops at Truckee, California, gateway to Lake Tahoe and nearby winter and summer resort areas. Both the San Francisco Zephyr and the Coast Starlight continue to operate daily throughout the winter.

Continued on page 5

welcoming the french turbos



Top left: Springfield, Ill., pre-school children inspect Amtrak's new French-built turbo train. Top right: Chicago Mayor Richard A. Daley at the controls. Center: Charles Luna, member Amtrak's Board of Directors (far left); Harold Graham, Amtrak's Vice President-Marketing, and Philippe Olivier, French Consul General in Chicago, watch as Tippy Gillies christens the turbo. Bottom: Bloomington, Ill., residents greet the French turbo.



This Lounge/Entertainment Car currently in service on the Broadway Limited was designed for the entire family. It's a combination lounge/pub and children's playroom/theatre. The lounge/pub section (not shown) features an automatic liquor dispenser and snack service. The children's playroom/lounge (above) has rotating fiberglass seats and a convertible projection screen.

new equipment ordered

Amtrak recently placed new equipment orders totaling \$63.5 million—including one for 57 new Metroliner-type passenger cars for use in the densely populated Washington-Boston corridor.

The new cars will make it possible to increase daily Metroliner-type service almost 100% between New York and Washington and also extend such service to Boston.

Amtrak also ordered seventy 3,000 hp. diesel electric locomotives and eleven 6,000 hp. electric locomotives. The electrics will be manufactured by General Electric Company in Erie, Pa., while the diesels will come from the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors at La Grange, Ill. Delivery of the electrics will start in November of 1974, while the diesels will be delivered early next summer.

The Budd Company will build the 57 passenger cars at its Red Lion, Pa., plant with first deliveries slated to Amtrak within 15 months.

The new cars, capable of being pulled by either electric or diesel-electric locomotives, will have interiors similar to the current self-propelled Metroliner cars, including food service and electrical heating and air conditioning systems, but with improved ride characteristics. Like the present Metroliners, the trains will be capable of operating up to 120 miles per hour.

As to other new passenger car orders, proposals are due this month from two firms in competition to design a new generation of standard rail passenger cars. Once selection is made, requests for bids on an initial order of at least 100 new cars will go out. These cars would be used on all Amtrak non-corridor routes.

Earlier this year, Amtrak took delivery on 40 new diesel electric locomotives. They are now in use on Amtrak routes in Chicago, Houston and the West Coast. An additional 15 electric and 40 diesel electric locomotives are now being manufactured for summer 1974 delivery.

schedules

Continued from page 2

December 14 Schedule and Service Changes

Changes in schedules on Amtrak's Florida trains will coincide with on-board service improvements. Entertainment, special complimentary refreshments, and two dining cars or a diner and tavern-lounge will be featured on all five trains operating to and from Florida.

All Florida trains will also feature the following:

- An on-board service director and/or passenger service representative.
- Hospitality hours and champagne punch.
- Complimentary wake-up coffee and orange juice.
- Special entertainment hours in the evening.
- Complimentary morning and evening newspapers.

A winter season-only train, the Vacationer, returns to the rails December 14 between New York and Miami. The Vacationer will carry a 48-seat diner and bar-lounge diner, plus a lounge car. Popular, budget-priced slumbercoaches will be featured on the Vacationer, as well as the New York-St. Petersburg Champion and the Silver Star, which operates to both Florida coasts.

The Meteor and Champion will carry through cars to and from Boston, and the Silver Star will provide through service to and from Montreal in conjunction with the Montrealer/Washingtonian.

The Silver Meteor, Silver Star and Champion will continue their current schedules.

Amtrak's premier Florida train will once again be the New York-Miami Silver Meteor, which will carry two 48-seat diners, a recreation car and a lounge car. A passenger service representative will be aboard each train to act as hostess for movies, bingo and other games, a fashion show, and door and game prizes.

The Champion will carry a full dining car plus tavern-lounge cars featuring economy meal service.

The Silver Star will carry two dining cars and a tavern-lounge car and will have a passenger service representative aboard.

Continued on Page 6

HAVE YOU MOVED?????

Please let us know so that you can continue to receive UPDATE.

Name _____

Old Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

New Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Amtrak Employee? _____ Railroad Employee? _____

Railroad? _____

Mail to: **Amtrak Public Relations**

955 L'Enfant Plaza North, S.W., Wash., D.C. 20024

update

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Amtrak profile

Amtrak's lead ticket clerk in Seattle, Leon Amon, has been with the railroad for over a quarter of a century—with time out to pursue an opera career.

After military service during World War II, he heard the railroad needed help. He went down to apply, was hired and has been there ever since.

Leon started in the mail and baggage department in early 1947 when passenger trains were in their prime and Seattle's King Street Station was a scene of constant activity.

In 1951, Leon took a leave of absence from the railroad to sing with San Francisco's Opera Chorus for one season with his wife who is also a musician. He studied music in New York and has sung in numerous productions in Seattle. Despite his love for music, railroading was in the tenor's blood and he eventually returned to the Burlington Northern.

About a year ago Leon became an Amtrak employee. As lead ticket clerk he takes remittances, sells tickets, handles correspondence and supervises the ticket office.



He has found the overall reaction to Amtrak to be encouraging. "People really want to take the train and business is up" he says. Amtrak statistics bear out Leon's observation. Ridership on the all refurbished Coast Starlight/Daylight is estimated to be up 125 percent over last year which resulted in continued daily operation through the winter.

Mr. Amon says the scenery between Seattle and Los Angeles is among the most beautiful in the country. Since ridership has been so good and the train to Los Angeles so popular, Leon is hoping Amtrak will some day be able to increase the number of trains between the two cities.

schedules

(Continued from page 5)

For the first time, the Floridian will carry a full package of activities similar to those on the New York-Florida trains. A passenger service representative and service director will be aboard each Floridian and the train will carry two dome coaches and a full lounge car.

The Floridian will also feature full dining service, bingo and card games with prizes, a children's hour, and complimentary blankets for coach passengers and complimentary continental breakfast for all sleeping car passengers. A recreation car is scheduled to be added to the Floridian before the end of the winter season.

Also effective with the start of the winter season, the Floridian reverts to the traditional two days-and-a-night schedule, serving both Florida coasts.

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