

April 2023 - SP

Taxidermy In Focus

Quarterly Newsletter



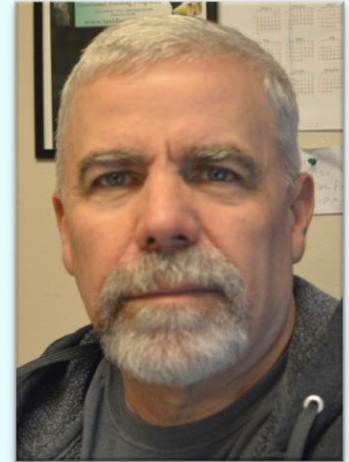
*Mounted By
Herb Foskey*

Taxidermy Tech

Vocational Training and Mentorship

Taxidermy In Focus

Back in 2019 I announced that in April of 2020 we would host a reunion event exclusively for our Alumni conducting all day seminars focused on reinforcement training and professional development. And then Covid happened which put our plans on hold. It took nearly 3 years to get back the confidence and the momentum to put it back on the calendar and after 3 polls to dial in a date we made it happen. On Saturday, March 18, 2023 we held our first annual Taxidermy Tech Reunion Event aptly themed “Next Level Training”.



Ken Darville

Training is only part of what I intended for Taxidermy Tech. From the very beginning I wanted to build more than a school. I wanted to build a network from our student base and give them an exclusive place to come back to continue their education. Mentorship has always been in the name but we had to be creative in how that is done particularly since everything after resident training is long distance. We have built and continue to grow a strong network of alumni, who everyday share of themselves, their Ideas and techniques on another one of our network resources...the Facebook Group Page... and our Newsletter which returned in January of 2022 after a 5 year hiatus, gets better and better each quarter (and harder and harder to get out on time!). But being able to host an annual training event as a next level event and deliver was pretty overwhelming ...not the event itself or pressure from our alumni but pressure as a direct result of everything we had to do in preparation during a very busy period. It was Important to me to make it worth it for everyone who made the trip.



Taxidermy In Focus

In the final days leading up to the big day we had 44 confirmations and I was beginning to worry that it might get a little tight in the building. We had shifted a lot of our unused and stored Items over to another unit and had really opened up quite a bit. I had even planned for 50 but the closer we got to that



TAXIDERMY TECH REUNION Next Level Training Event

We will host a free training event on Saturday, March 18, 2023 in Pensacola open to all Taxidermy Tech Alumni, families and all of our vendor friends and family. This will be an all day event...8 AM to 6 PM covering reinforcement and next level training across whitetails, small predators and birds.

Seminars Schedule

8:00 AM – 8:30 AM	Opening Brief
8:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Whitetail and Small Predator Eye Sets
10:30 AM – 11:30 AM	Ducks Heads with Pan Pastels (ongoing)
11:30 AM – 12:30 PM	Lunch
12:30 PM – 1:30 PM	Habitats – Water Scenes and Splashes
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Form alteration
3:30 PM – 5:00 PM	Earliners vs Bondo Method
5:30 PM to 6:00 PM	Whitetail ear rotation
6:00 PM – 6:30 PM	Questions Closeout

We will have food on site, BBQ, chips, water, soda, etc.

Bring your notepad, iPad, butt pad and any other pad you need and join us!

Please RSVP by March 1 2023 to learn@taxidermytech.com or text name and number of attendees in your party to 850-544-7865.

ccancellations and though I didn't get a final count the photos suggested that we had at least 33 in attendance, which is considerably more than I expected when we first started planning. If you were there you know that

everything did not go off without a hitch... the weather could have been better, the breaker tripped, the internet went out, the resin we needed to do one of our seminars was hard and it took us a while to get the heat regulated in the building. Things started off a little slow but we ended up cramming 20 hours of information into about 9 hours.



number the more concerned I got. Lesson learned and next year we might have to consider an alternate location off site. We did have a few last minute

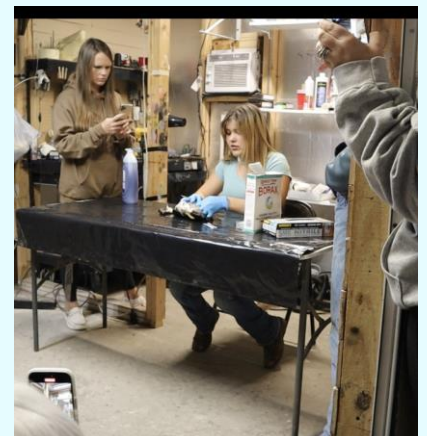
Taxidermy In Focus

The morning started off with a short recap of whitetail deer and small predator eye sets. The intent was to cover basic eye anatomy and to identify the most common issues related to basic eye shape... and then to share a couple of “quick-fix” techniques to help you to more accurately and consistently replicate the shape we see in our reference. The second seminar was conducted by Chloe Smith and covered the painting of artificial duck heads with Pan Pastels. Chloe is our resident expert on these Pastels and her techniques produce some of the most realistic looking bills I have ever seen. She painted several bills including an open mouth wood duck drake and both a mallard drake and a mallard hen all in the span of about an hour.

After a brief lunch break we picked up with habitats with Chloe and I covering quick basic woodland habitat bases using tinted two-part foam and peat moss and simulating ground moss utilizing fine green flocking and mod podge. I had Intended to also cover constructing a splash scene but the clear polyester resin I use and had purchased for the reunion had completely cured in the can. This is one I had really hoped to be able to cover as we have had a lot of requests for water habitat information.



Our next seminar began with Matt Harris mounting a whitetail ear using an ear liner after which I mounted the other ear using the bondo method. Matt uses earliners commercially and we use bondo commercially at Expressions of Wildlife. This seminar was not Intended to sway anyone one way or the other but rather to provide a real time view of the advantages and disadvantages associated with each method.



Taxidermy In Focus

We rounded out the day with a demonstration of form alteration. I used a resting Bobcat form and demonstrated how to break the form at a joint, reposition, foam in and reshape. There were a couple of other short sessions I had hoped to do but the day flew by and with 5 o'clock looming and many having several hours on the road ahead of them going home, I decided it best to call it a day.

In an effort to share as much as we can with our Taxidermy Tech Family we exposed our flaws and our weaknesses as well as our imperfect and sometimes disorganized nature. But as many were witness to, we do not try and hide it and in fact we work through it and even make light of it under the circumstances. Not one among us is perfect. Not even close. That's how you know you are amongst friends...when it's ok to just be who you are.

We learned a lot and already have a lot of information and really good "lessons learned" that we can use to make our next event better. Thank you everyone for your patience and again...I sincerely appreciate all of you for making this first Reunion Event a success. I look forward to doing it again next year.

Competition Techniques

Grey Fox Part 1 of 3 By Chloe Smith

Grey Fox Competition Piece Part 1 – The first of a multi-part series with Chloe Smith documenting (in progress) the design and construction of her competition grey fox from carcass casting the body to molding and casting the mouth, nose and earliners.

This year I am going to my first taxidermist convention and I am excited, but what is it that makes a taxidermy convention so important? I like that I get to meet other taxidermists, and see other peoples pieces and learn different techniques and ways to do things. I would like my work to be critiqued by a judge to help me refine my skills so I want to compete and I am hoping that the competitions will help get my name out there.

There Is a big difference between commercial quality and competition quality taxidermy work. Commercial quality is more routine where you do it the same every time. It is quick and efficient but is still keeping It true to the foundation of the animal. Competition quality requires you to analyze every small detail of the animal, things that you wouldn't even worry about on a commercial animal.



Chloe Smith is the Senior Staff Taxidermist and an Instructor at Taxidermy Tech. She is a very passionate and skilled artist with exceptional instructional skills. Her areas of specialty are Lifesize Mammals and Waterfowl but It is her all around capabilities that make her an irreplaceable asset at Expressions of Wildlife.

Chloe Is originally from Washington State and currently resides In Gulf Breeze Florida.

Taxidermy In Focus

There are many things that I think the judges look for in a competition piece that would not likely be in a commercial mount, like how much of the piece you have personally created, how closely it represents the actual animal and if its pose is natural to its behavior in the wild.

I wanted to do a pose that was simple but was unique in its expression. My show mount will be a gray fox climbing a tree to pilfer a nest of eggs. I will be constructing a circular pedestal base with a tree coming out of it. I am making the tree and will have an actual bird nest with eggs that I will be creating. The form of the fox, the open mouth jaw set and tongue, earliners and other parts will be hand crafted. I am using dental acrylics for the teeth and gumline and I am hoping that I will also have time to make the eyes.

I believe It is important to create your own parts rather than purchase them because doing taxidermy is more than putting skin on a form. It is important to know the anatomy and make-up of an animal to know the whole process from start to finish instead of having it already halfway done (which is fine for commercial work) but this shows you have taken time to experiment and learn and If you are going into the taxidermy business this is one of the main parts of taxidermy to know how to use materials to create different parts of the animal when or If needed. The more you create yourself the more you are able to gain in competition. It Is more favorable to the judges when you create your own.

2023 Alabama Convention & Competition

June 22-25, 2023

Clarion Hotel
Sheffield Alabama
4900 Hatch Blvd Sheffield, AL35660
256-381-4710

Hotel Link For Reservations: www.choicehotels.com/reservations/groups/VW63Q5

Reservations must be made by June 09 to get the ATA rate; \$78.00

Judges

Rick Carter - WT Deer, Mammals, & Gameheads
Rick Krane - Fish, Crustaceans, & Reptiles
Mike Nakielski - Birds (all)



Taxidermy In Focus

The fox specimen was in wonderful condition and was one of the largest grey foxes I have ever seen. I chose to skin it using the Ventricular Tubular technique which had the least amount of stitching and is the least noticeable. It was fully fleshed by hand using scalpel. It was tanned using Krowtan, a premixed tanning solution and soaked for a few days stirring a couple of times a day.



The intent of casting the full head was to have a complete jaw set and nose. Nose was in good condition but the lip line was a little dried out so I will have to use Apoxie Sculpt to fill it out.



The mold vessel was a card board tube hot glued and seals to a board around the head which was screwed into the board from the back with a two inch drywall screw..



Taxidermy In Focus



I used about 32 ounces of Smooth-On 14NV silicone rubber with its catalyst mixed at 10% by weight to make the mold. I used a urethane casting resin ...A and B mixed two equal parts to pour the cast. This will be the head I will use for the form. Why did you make another jaw set In this way? I wanted to get more intact teethe What did you use to mold It? I used sand and the same rubber stuff



I will be using dental acrylics for the teeth and the two part casting resin for the head. The intent is for the head to be cast around the dental acrylic jaw set. I did make another jaw set to get more Intact teeth but it is primarily a backup.

Taxidermy In Focus

For the form, I first set up the fox in a wood frame in the position I want him to be molded in. Wires are put into the back and then adjusted to where I wanted it to be. I then set the feet and drilled them into the wood. I froze it to keep it in the position that I created so that I could cut off the legs and make a mold from them and the torso in their position. Using this method you can create an animal form in any position you want.



I would recommend keeping it (pose) as natural to the species' actual movements as possible. Study your reference, know the species that you are working with and know their daily and natural movements and actions.



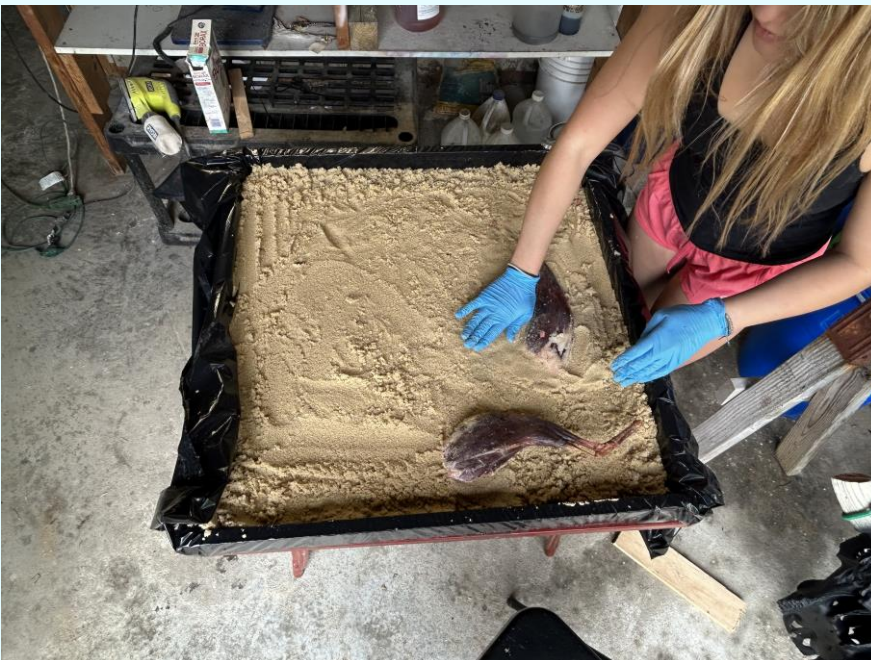
Taxidermy In Focus



Once frozen solid, I sawed off the legs from the body with a Sawzall so that I can use them to make a mold.

I used sand as bedding to cover them in plaster ,

I perfectly flattened the sand around each body part at a 90 degree angle and placed stock card an inch away from each body part all the way around.



I mixed plaster into a soupy consistency and poured over each part. Once it set, I flipped each one over and put a release sealer over it all and then did the whole process over again

Taxidermy In Focus



So far I think I am moving in the right direction and it is turning out nicely. I am learning a lot and very excited to see it coming together. I can't wait to see the finished product!

Next Issue... *Grey Fox Competition Piece Part 2* – The second of a multi-part series with Chloe Smith documenting the design and construction of her competition grey fox.



Taxidermy In Focus

I started hunting small game when I was very young and would skin them in order to keep the hides. I have always been intrigued by animals and started pursuing taxidermy as I got older in order to learn more skills to do things for myself and for my friends. The more I learned the more I realized that I would enjoy this as a profession.



Chloe Smith
Senior Staff Taxidermist
Expressions of Wildlife
Instructor
Taxidermy Tech

Likes and dislikes of my job? I love my boss! I love working with all the different animals, I love that it is not a stressful atmosphere and I love the fact that I have awesome mentorship. I have artistic freedom and I have so many opportunities to use the talents that God has blessed me with. I love all aspects of the taxidermy process. It is very challenging but there are so many different steps and aspects that I don't get bored. It is not monotonous work and it keeps my mind active. What I find difficult about the job at times is that it can make your brain tired from constantly trying to figure out how to work something or solve a problem.

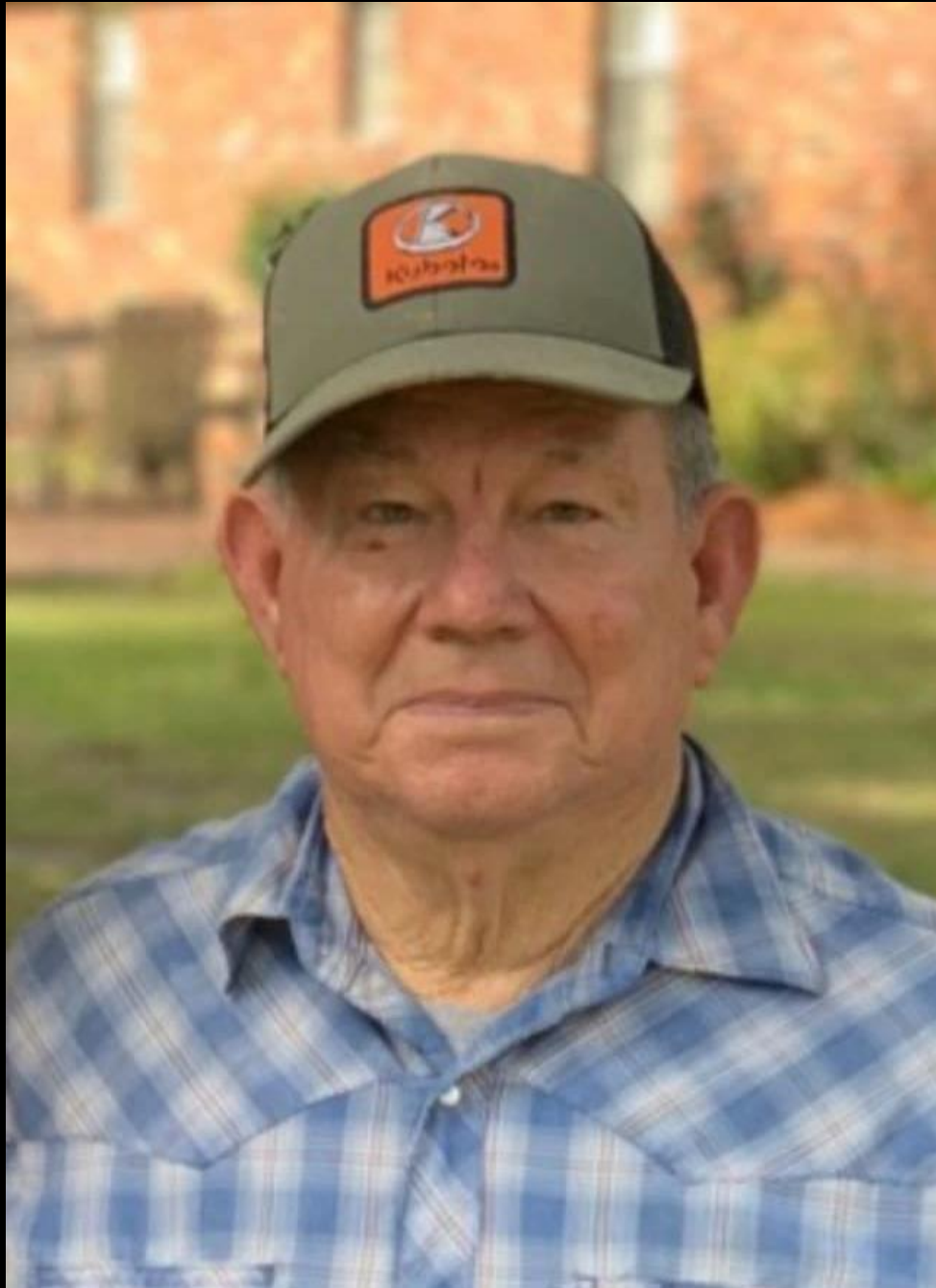
I get asked if there is a favorite animal that I like to work on and which is the most challenging. I don't have a favorite specific species but I really enjoy doing life size. It is the most rewarding when they are done. They are all equally challenging but in different ways. The challenge I enjoy is creating them to look as realistic as possible, so the most difficult thing for me is to not put too much time into one project.

My goal is to become the best at what I do so that I can inspire others. My five year career goal is to have my own form line. As to advice to others wanting to get into taxidermy as a profession, find a good mentor to work under and be willing to put the time in.

In Memorium

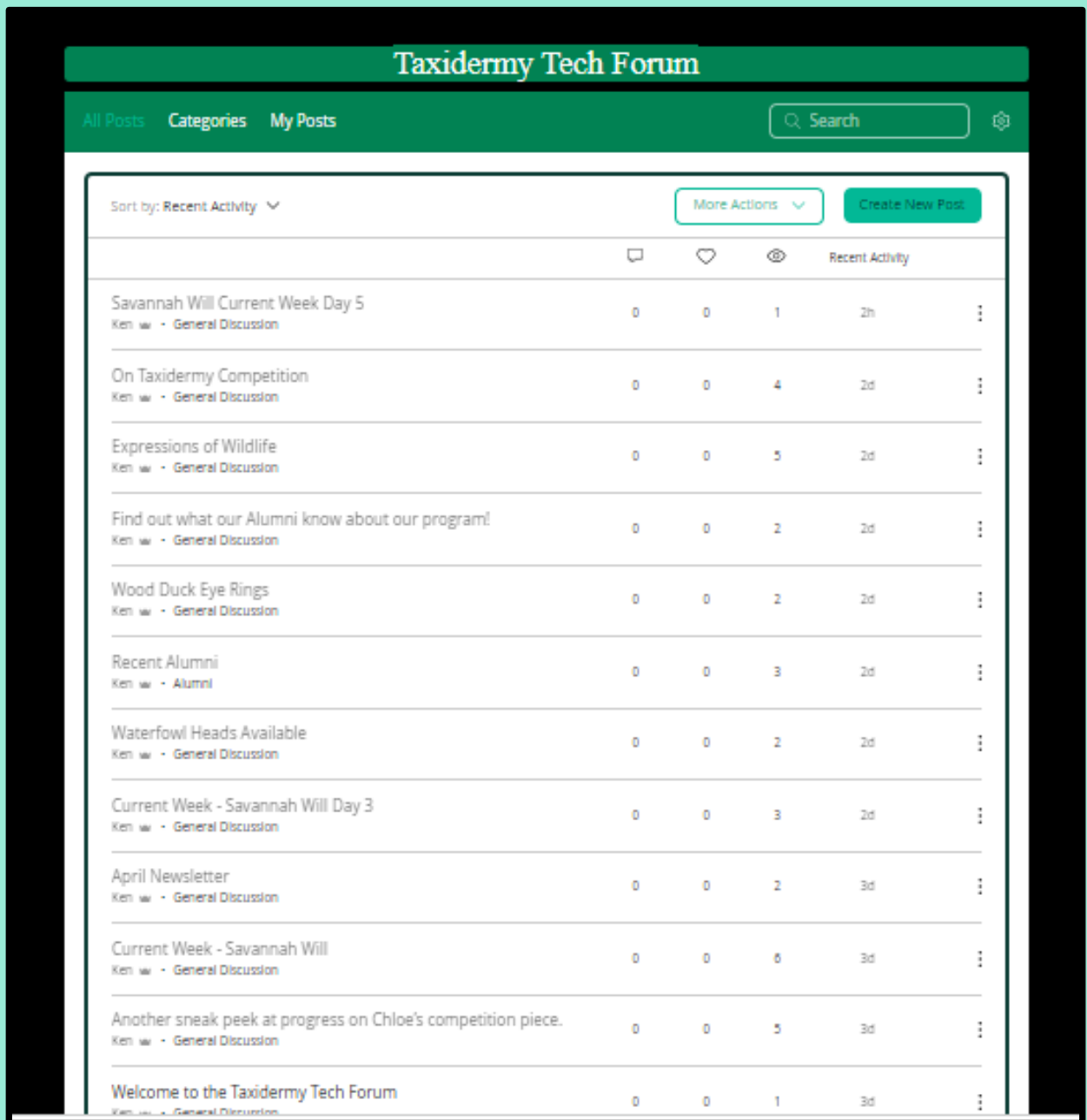
*Ronald Carter
Baxley Georgia*

October 21, 1941 ~ April 16, 2023



NEW!!! Taxidermy Tech Forum!
<https://www.taxidermytech.com/forum>

Created for those who are not on social media and the group page... but It is for all of us! Just another resource from Taxidermy Tech.



Tanning Principles

Preservation Methods of Today - The Good, The Bad and the Ugly

The question of how furbearer skins are preserved for mounting really comes down to this...to tan or not to tan, which is a pretty sensitive question that could potentially turn in to a fist fight at a taxidermy convention. It has long been an “us or them” kind of thing with both sides fiercely defending their honor. Truth is, there is an easy answer to the question that we can all agree to live with that says use whatever is working for you! For those who do not yet have decades of experience to defend in a fist fight, there is plenty of information out there that suggests there are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches.

So lets talk about some different methods within both sides starting with the “tan” side. First you have to know what tanning is. Tanning is the conversion of raw skin to leather through a chemical process. There are multiple different ways to tan, some longer or shorter than others most of them employing essentially the same chemicals and sequences but eliminating certain steps depending on the intended use of the hide. Most taxidermist tanning hides for life-size mammals or game heads prefer wet tanning which in its longer tradition methodology will



require no less than six separate and distinct individual chemical steps, with each predicated on the previous step...salting, rehydration, pickling, neutralizing, tanning and oiling at a minimum. Other variations that are considered less tradition such as Krowtan combine the chemicals to reduce the number of steps, casting doubt on the importance of the succession of steps associated with traditional tanning practices. In either case, the end result is essentially the same...true leather.

Tanning Principles

The main disadvantage for most taxidermists employing tanning is the time it takes, and the expense associated with it. But there are a couple of other issues that come to the surface a lot more with tanning than with non-tanning preservation methods. Any area that is compromised will be evident during or immediately after the process is complete. A tick bite that might not be visible on a non tanned skin may show up as a quarter sized section of missing hair on a tanned skin. Areas that had bacterial damage and on the verge of slipping prior to tanning can not be fixed through the tanning process. Tanned skins can have good stretch if properly tanned, thinned and oiled but will not have the elasticity of an untanned skin which can be difficult when fitting to a form especially with short incisions.

But the advantages tend to outweigh the disadvantages most notably in the limited shrinkage vs the untanned skin. Our tests consistently showed an average of an 85% memory factor on tanned skins... which means that they retained on average about 15% of the induced stretch which makes sense because the fibers of a tanned skin will break when stretched.

On the “not to tan” side of the house, there are also multiple methods as well but we have to define exactly what “untanned” means. This is a skin that has not been chemically altered and therefore remains in a raw state. It is dusted, soaked or treated with one of several common chemical products, the most common being borax based dry preservatives. Other processes include soaking in denatured alcohol, coating or spraying with various bacteriostats and some in combination with lubricating oils. Some of these methods, like tanning, actually incorporate initial curing or draining with sodium chloride or sodium sulfate.

The main advantage to using this approach is the reduced time it takes to get it ready to mount and the relatively low to no cost associated with it. There is almost always a lot of elasticity associated with skins prepared with any of these methods making it much easier to fit a skin to the form. The biggest disadvantage is the amount of shrinkage than can and often does occur, particularly in the areas of the lipline, eyes, the seam and the low lying details of the form. Initially, areas that might

Tanning Principles

have been compromised by bacteria may not be as evident but will likely become more obvious over time.

There are certain principles that when properly observed can and will reduce the risks of some of the disadvantages noted.

Properly prepared skin- whatever approach you take, follow the rules/directions. We can agree to disagree on what a properly prepared skin is but whatever it is for you do not short cut the process.

Thoroughly thinned skin- Tan or No Tan...an inadequately thinned skin will stretch less and shrink more.

Loose fitting skin- a tight skin is a recipe for drumming and pulling from the form, the eyes, the lipline and the seam. It can lead to cracking and hair loss. Keep it loose.

Correct Taxi of the Skin- Taxiing the skin toward the depressions of the form such as the leg pit on the inside of the leg next to the brisket, the lower neck area, the jawline, the muzzle and the eyes...This gives the skin plenty of excess to shrink without shifting.

Next Day Checks- Don't leave anything to chance. Each day for the first 3 to 4 days after mounting, conduct a workover to ensure that nothing is moving and everything is drying as expected.

The moral of the story here is that any of the most common methods in use today will get the job done. Will there be varying results? Perhaps, but it may well be a fact that one approach is no better than the other and that a little attention to a few time tested principles will level the playing field. It all comes down to personal preference and results.



PhotoRoom

The Business of Taxidermy

Estimating Costs and Pricing Your Work

It has taken me a lot of years to come to this eye raising conclusion...When it comes to the general public I can not do anyone any favors...because when it comes right down to it no one is going to do me any favors. The demographic of citizens that utilize our services will spend a fortune on recreating with their friends and family buying guns, trucks, boats, ATVs...by now you have seen the video and know the story I am telling. Bottom line...taxidermy is a luxury not a necessity. If a guy chooses to pay his taxidermy bill instead of his light bill then that's on him but It is not my responsibility to give him financial advice. If he wants that Bobcat mounted then he is going to have to pay half of a cool grand up front and the rest on completion. I don't feel bad about it because I know what my time and experience is worth...just like the mechanic, the plumber, the HVAC guy and every other professional service. But they want a bargain when they come to the taxidermist...with no Idea of the amount of time or effort or volume we have to work through to make a decent living.



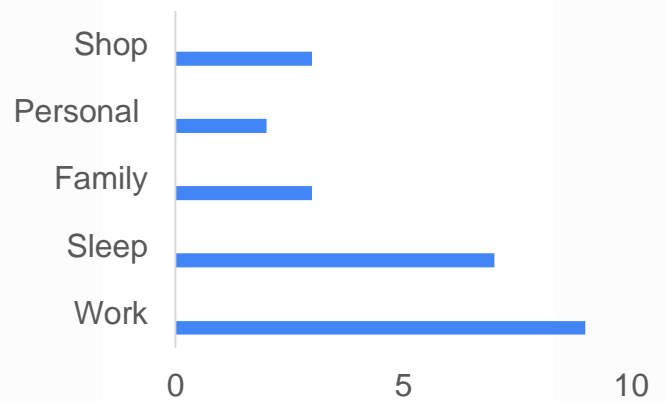
So nope...no favors here. If you think you are doing your customers a favor by keeping your prices dirt cheap then you probably are. But you are hurting yourself and you are hurting other taxidermists that are out there trying to make a good living...and not just a "part-time-to-pay-for-my-toys" living. It sets a bad precedent and It does not pay respect to the hard work involved. Anyone can overcome the effect of this by just doing good work, charging a good price that allows you to be profitable and treating your customers with respect. But It is often an uphill battle when someone nearby undervalues their own worth. .

The Business of Taxidermy

Pricing strategies for most taxidermists are not strategy at all...it is usually based on what the other guy is charging and is mostly centered around labor and material expense. But there is a lot more to it and you can bet that if you are not considering all of these factors then your business is not profiting and is destined to fail. If you are working yourself to death and not happy with the return on investment then you either do something about it or you will fail ...or in the very best case scenario you will realize that you have had enough.

Before you start putting prices on your work maybe you should start putting a value on your time. Between your day job, the kids baseball games, church services, family time, sleep and if possible a little time to do the things you love in life like hunting, fishing and taking a break from the pressures of life...you don't have much time left over. And what you do have left is invested into another job...one you claim to love yet or at least did at one point. It is a job that is not easy and that puts an enormous amount of pressure on you in the form of obligations, demands, timelines and hard work. And to what end? If you are not getting a return on the investment there is no purpose. The number one reason that taxidermy is a fast

Daily Life In Hours



revolving door for the vast majority of folks who get into it is this... They never learn to put a real value on their time that afford them an acceptable return.

What if you have employees? Employees are a direct cost. Taxidermy is very laborious and not as glamorous or exciting as many believe it to be coming in to it. There is a lot of monotonous and nasty repetition involved that can overshadow the more fulfilling aspects. If you are getting value out of your employees and you want to keep them invested and happy despite all of those other things, then you had better pay them well and develop them. You can't do that consistently if you yourself are scraping by. Again, it comes down to what the time is really worth....yours AND theirs.

Importing International Shipments

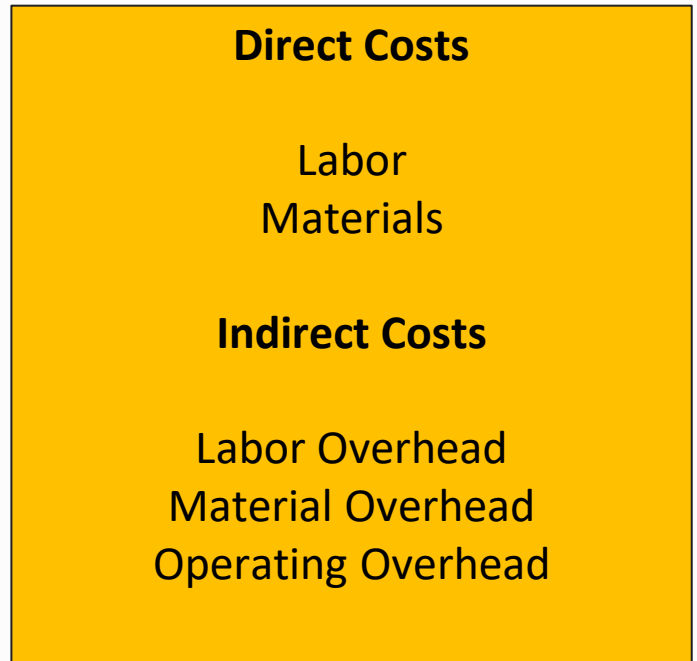
Figuring out material costs is pretty easy at face value. Although forms are not all priced the same it is pretty simple to determine direct costs on, for example, one deer (form, forms, eyes, earliners, etc). But most of you who are doing taxidermy for the public are not mounting one deer and if you are then before you begin accepting more work from the public you might want to educate yourself a little on a few factors that are often overlooked.

Shipping is a big one. No two shipments of forms and materials costs the same so it is a variable cost. Bringing some order and a system to how much and how often you order and from where you order are points that you have to consider in your pricing strategy. If you take in 20 deer but order your forms and direct materials at a rate of one at a time it will cost more per deer than if you ordered 5 or 10 at a time. I am not telling you that you have to buy 10 forms at a time if you can not swing it...What I am telling you is that you have to consider those costs when developing your pricing.

Indirect costs are almost always ignored in pricing. There are basically 3 indirect categories to consider...material overhead, labor overhead and operating costs. Yes...labor and materials also fall into the direct costs category (forms, eyes, earliners...your labor and any help you employ in the shop). But what we are talking about here is different...Indirect material overhead might include the things that you buy, use and consume on all of your work like bondo, clay, hide paste, apoxie sculpt, paint, etc . You don't buy it for every project but you are consuming it from stock quantities...So the consumption rates of those materials are important to track. If you know how much of each of these materials you use for each deer, fish, bird, etc, then you can determine the value of those individual quantities and apply it to each mount.

Importing International Shipments

Indirect labor overhead includes expenses that help to keep your business running whether it is full time, part time, home based or in a commercial location. If you pay a CPA, a web designer, someone to answer the phone, fix the plumbing or install new lighting, the money you pay is considered indirect labor overhead. It may or may not be a major expense depending on the size of your business but it is an expense that should be prorated to be covered by the total of your estimated workload.



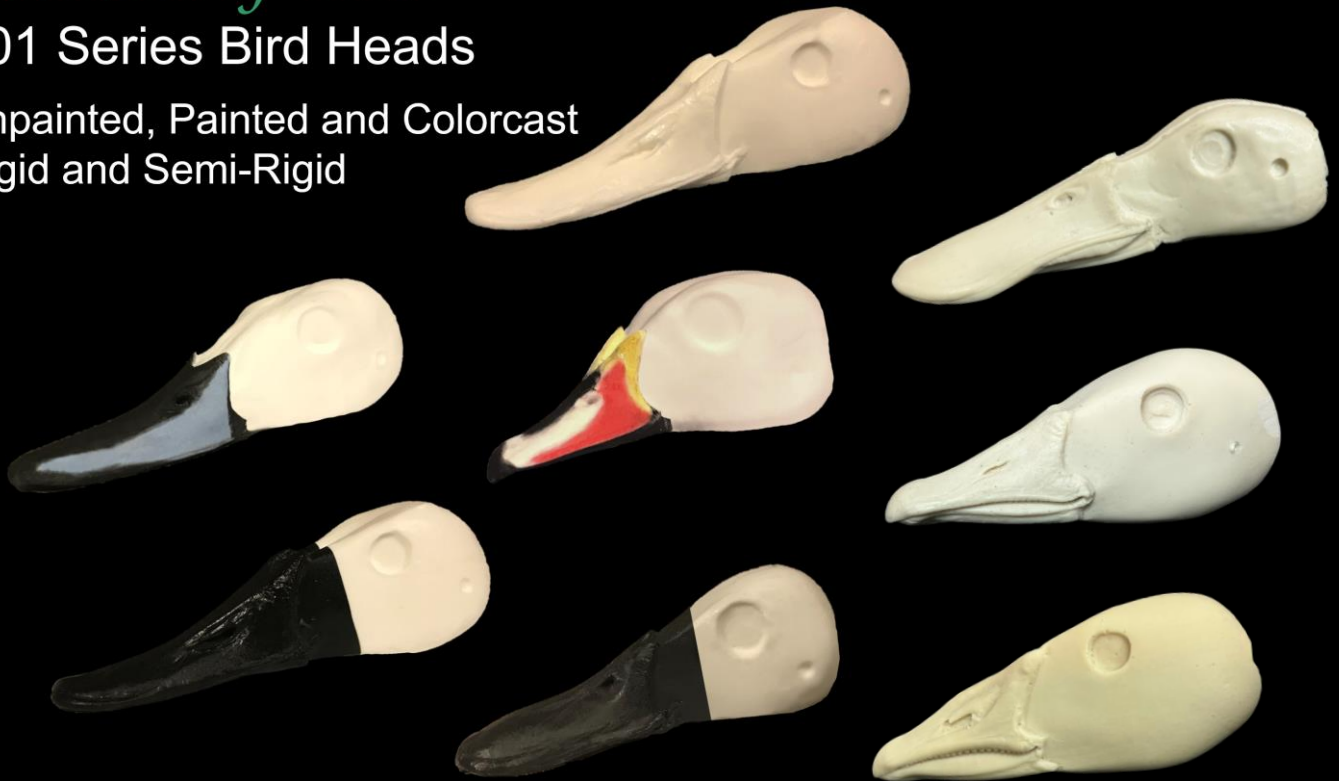
Operating costs associated with your work place to include utilities, insurance, rent or mortgage (business use), the computer(s) you use, the reference screen in your shop, etc...all of it cost you money...it is, was and continues to be an expense.

There is a lot to consider when trying to capture every expense that is involved directly or indirectly in the work we do. But it is important to put in the time and do the work...if not for you and your business, then for your family and your colleagues in the industry. In the end, a customer is only going to pay you to do their work if they believe that the value of what you are providing is greater than the amount that they are paying. They may huff and puff and whine but they pay it because they want it. It is in your interest to not forget that when you are placing value on your own time.

Taxidermy Tech

101 Series Bird Heads

Unpainted, Painted and Colorcast
Rigid and Semi-Rigid



Bufflehead
Green Wing Teal
Blue Wing Teal
Cinnamon Teal
Black Belly Whistling Duck
Widgeon
Goldeneye
Ringneck
Northern Shoveler
Wood Duck Drake
Wood Duck Drake Open Mouth
Wood Duck Hen

Mallard
Hooded Merganser
Hooded Merganser Open Mouth
Pintail
Redhead
Canvasback
Common Eider
Snow Goose Medium
Snow Goose Large
Speckled Belly Medium
Speckled Belly Large
Ross's Goose

Unpainted heads are \$9.50 . All painted heads are \$14.50.

Colorcast heads are \$10.50 and are currently only available In
BW Teal, Hooded Merganser and Canvasback.

Forms produced for sale by Taxidermy Tech are copyrighted .
Any reproduction or copying of the forms or any parts of the forms Is strictly prohibited.

Recent Alumni

February-March-April

Chase McClellan - Basic Whitetail
Jeremy Guerin – Basic Whitetail
Petra Venum – Basic Predator
Megan Marshall – Basic Waterfowl
Brannon Mobley – Basic Waterfowl
Savannah Will – Basic Fish

Future Alumni

May - July

Josh Moore - Basic Whitetail
Baylee Stafford – Basic Waterfowl
Scott Burke –Intermediate Predator
Erista Albritton- Basic Whitetail
Taylor Jay Kimrey- Basic Whitetail
Tyler Betts– Basic Waterfowl
Carl Nunley – Basic Waterfowl/Turkey
Nick Brumwell – Basic Waterfowl/ Turkey

Our Preferred Suppliers

[Foster Taxidermy Supply](#)

[Mears Whitetail Forms](#)

[Joe Coombs Taxidermy Supply](#)

[Dixie Classic Panels](#)

[Rocky Mountain Materials](#)

[Reynolds Advanced Materials](#)

[Pro-1 Performance Chemicals](#)

[Havalon \(Blades\)](#)

[Uline](#)

[FleshingMachines.com](#)

[Hobby Lobby](#)

[StickerBanners](#)

Habitat Design and Construction

Constructing a Splash

Part 1 of 3

Occasionally we will have a customer want a mount done with a habitat that includes water or snow. Replicating water and snow is a lot of fun but time consuming and pretty pricey so if you are going to do it for the public you will want to do some really thorough cost analysis to be sure you are pricing it adequately for the time and material cost you are putting into it.

Water scenes are most often done with waterfowl and fish and can really bring a high level of realism or transform a theme into a beautiful work of art...or It can completely ruin it if you don't pull it off very well.

The pictures on this page were from two of our industries best. I had an opportunity to see Kent Reedy's Best in World Blue Wing at the 1995 World Taxidermy Championships in Gainesville Georgia. Frank Newmeyer has long been regarded as being the top expert in composition and design in the taxidermy industry. These are good examples to get you motivated to try It but they are big ones so start small and work up from there.



Kent Reedy

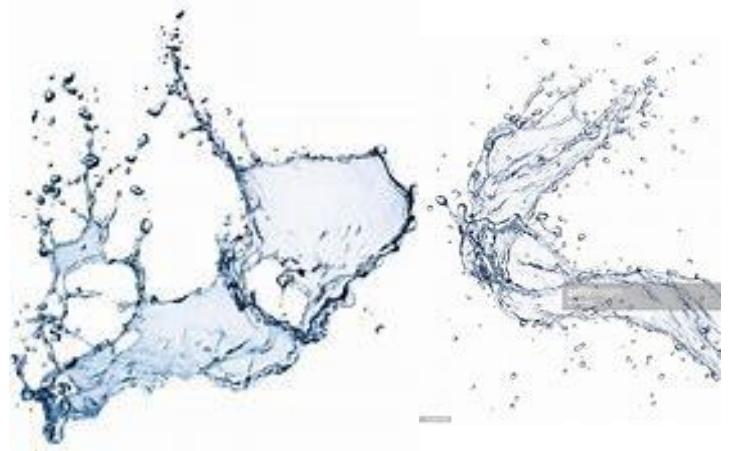


Frank Newmeyer

Habitat- Constructing a Splash

Back during our Reunion in March it was my intent to demonstrate some splash techniques and later add some additional parts to the newsletter. Unfortunately we had some difficulty with the clear polyester resin we use to simulate water ...it was completely cured in the can! This is what happens to polyester resin when it gets old and that can was probably very old. I bought it at Joanns and when I went to get another one as I was doing this article, the same thing occurred and I had to educate the management at Joanns. Fortunately, Michaels carried a bigger and better assortment and I was on track pretty quickly. This resin is basically fiberglass resin but is a clear high grade of it and works very well. You could use regular fiberglass resin but it will have a transparent auburn color. So the clear cast polyester resin is much better.

When you attempt to replicate something it is always important and helpful to look at good reference and splashed are no different.



As you are studying your reference you should deconstruct it...focusing on the elements that are farthest away from the core of the splash first. And this is where we will start in this issue.

Obviously we can not suspend the droplets of water so certain aspects

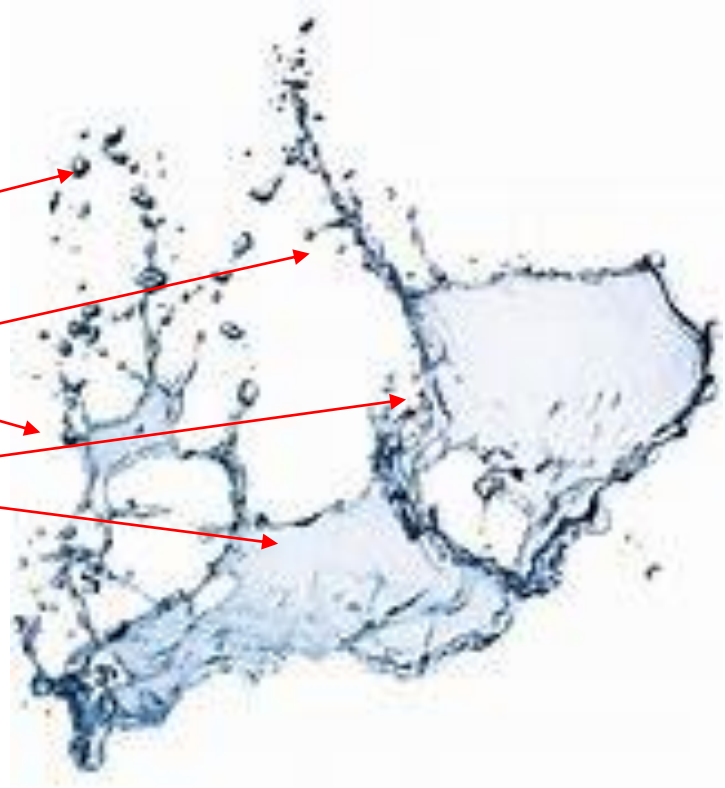
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are suggestive. Working back starting with the suspended droplets we get the tertiary, secondary and primary branches. The demonstration In this article is specific to the secondaries.

Tertiary

Secondary

Primary



The secondaries will often have additional branches that may branch off again and again.

Supplies needed:

Clear Polyester Casting resin

Roll of clear monofilament

Plastic Mixing vessel

Clear hot glue

Hot glue gun

Wood Craft Sticks



Supplies can be purchased online (Amazon) or at Michaels/Joanns or Hobby Lobby.

Check the back of the resin container for the scale...use the highest ration for splash building.



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Take a wax paper plate to work on...ball up some saran wrap to wrinkle it up and then open it back up on the plate. This can catch the resin drips and where you can pour the excess resin to make primary parts of your splash later on.

Take a piece of clear monofilament and cut it of about 5 or 6 inches. Roll it in half and tie a loop on the end. Cut the loop to create 2 separate branches. You will want your first loop to be long so you can repeat the process on each of the branches.

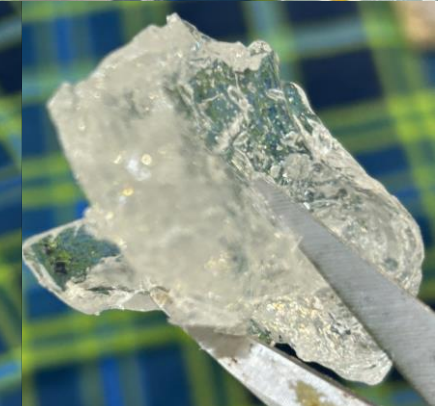
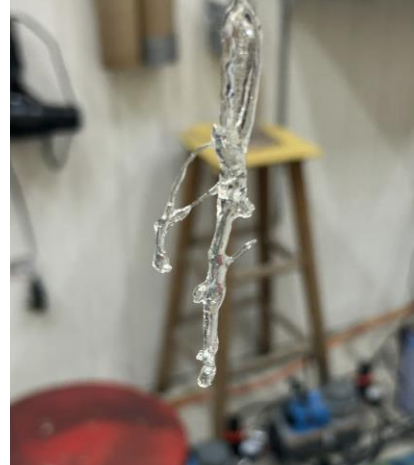
Next mix some resin...small quantities at a time...don't use foam or plastic cups. Use paper cups. It is ok to use wax coated paper cups. Mix about 1 to 2 ounces. Dip the monofilament in the resin then pull it out and hang it on an armature. The resin will run down the monofilament and collect on the knots and the tips. Use a

stir stick to coat the sting a few more times as it hangs. As the resin begins to cure (about 5 minutes) pour it out of the cup on to the saran wrap.



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You have several minutes of working time to manipulate the resin for shape. We will cover primary parts more in depth in the next newsletter. After the resins gels, mix up some more resin and repeat the process. It can take 3 to 5 dips to get good secondaries but the more you dip them the more realistic they become. Pour the unused resin another piece of saran wrap just as it is going into its initial gel. Again, you have some time to manipulate it for shape. After all of our secondaries and primaries are made we will begin hot gluing the parts together on the base using our reference as our guide. We then coat the entire splash with more resin to weld the parts together...but final construction is in part 3!



Reference Study



GREY FOX

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