

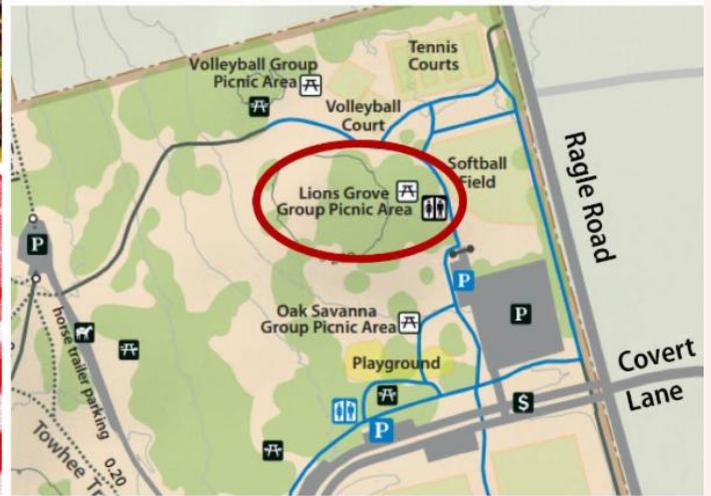


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EVENT: PICNIC





Join us for a
Potluck Community Picnic Lunch
in Ragle Ranch Park

[Reserve your place](#)

This picnic will be the perfect place for everyone to come together to share good food and get to know one another! We have a beautiful, shaded venue for us to enjoy one another's company and hopefully make new friends.

Please bring

- Your favorite **potluck dish to share**
- A plate, utensils and beverage cup (reusable, if possible)

We will provide drinking water.

We look forward to getting to know some more Slow Food enthusiasts!

Saturday, September 21, 2024

Ragle Ranch Park, Lions Grove Picnic Area

500 Ragle Road, Sebastopol, CA 95472

Parking is \$7 within the park or you can park outside Ragle Ranch and walk in

[Map of Ragle Ranch Park](#)

12:00 - 2:30 pm

There is no charge for this event.

[Reserve your place](#)



COMMUNITY APPLE PRESS



Off to a great start!

We got off to a great start at the press with a group of volunteers celebrating

the season while enjoying coffee, pastries, and being together. We thank

- Kathryn Nelson, NorCal Public Media 104.9, for her broadcast interviews
- Ezra Wallach from the *Sebastopol Times* for his article on the CAP

The Gravensteins, however, did not cooperate and many patrons had to reschedule their appointment for a later date. By the weekend of the 17th the apples were rolling in. Here's an excerpt from Paula Shatkin's team leader report:

From Paula Shatkin's team leader report:

Yesterday was an amazing day at the CAP....the stuff of Fellini movies and weird dreams! I arrived for the afternoon shift to find a large joyful messy crowd with lots of children, pressing.....overripe pears. Our team leader's glasses were covered with the spray of pear mush. Small children were sitting at the base of the press drinking pear juice endlessly, and one little one was dipping into the juice and pouring it on the ground joyfully. I asked a patron who had a lot of apples to press what he was doing with so much juice, and he said he gives it away. He fixes computers and gives every customer a quart of juice, and he gives some to the baker at Mom's Apple Pie. The shift pressed an amazing 120 gallons of apple juice – plus a few gallons of pear juice.

A place of joy

All of our team leaders and volunteers love being at the CAP, helping our patrons wash, press and pour their juice into their containers. Even if you don't have apples to press please drop by on Saturdays and Sundays 9-4, it's not only a beautiful spot at the Luther Burbank Experiment Gardens site, it's a place of joy and sharing. See you there.

Have extra apples?

[Farm to Pantry](#) gleans apples (and other fruits and vegetables). They always need more volunteers, the food helps to feed the hungry. We would love to organize collection sites where Farm to Pantry can pick up boxes of apples instead of having to pick the apples, they never have enough time or volunteers to pick all the apples in need of being picked. If you are interested in organizing this kind of project please contact us at applecore@slowfoodrr.org.

By Carole Flaherty

APPLE PRESS SCHOOL VISITS



School classes visit the Apple Press

We have a great season of school visits to the Community Apple Press ahead. So far we have 6 schools confirmed and one more with the date yet to be decided. We have a wonderful 3 part program for the kids: A nature walk around the Luther Burbank Experiment Gardens, apple washing and pressing, and an apple tasting where the children rate the apples on appearance and taste. Each child takes home a pint of apple juice.

Please consider volunteering to help with the kids at the press. We typically start at 8:30 am and finish around noon on Fridays. The children love this field trip and being part of our volunteer team is a rewarding experience.

By Carole Flaherty

PAULA'S PICKS





Thank you, Sebastopol!

For many years the City of Sebastopol regularly issued "Community Benefit Grants" until its recent financial woes. In 2014 we were able to open the first free Community Apple Press in the country when we received such a grant from our City, and we've operated it ever since.

We have often enjoyed Sebastopol City staff's company at our Community Apple Press. We thank Bob Burke who has informed the Council of our progress when requesting our grants, and we thank Bob, Paula Shatkin, and the late Paula Downing for sharing our stories at Council meetings.

Fortunately, our press was on a more secure financial footing with the help of small donations when the financial crunch forced the City to suspend the grant program in 2022. We know the City hopes to regain sound financial footing soon so they will be able to help other worthwhile community initiatives such as ours.

By Paula Shatkin

WINE UPDATE WITH PAUL





Top row: The harvest is in progress. *Bottom row:* Fermentation containers -- barrels, stainless steel tanks, cement eggs, cement tanks.

Harvest: Find your way to balance

Harvest has finally arrived, and I'd like to talk about the challenges for wineries during this dramatic conclusion to the season. The choices each winery makes when picking and processing the fruit, fermenting the juice and aging the wine will have an impact on how each wine expresses both the vineyard and the vintage. The unique flavors and characteristics that mark each vineyard and vintage will be more general in wines that are appellation-designated (such as Russian River Valley Pinot Noir or Sonoma County Chardonnay), and very specific in wines that are vineyard-designated. Here are some of the decisions being made that can either obscure or enhance the unique qualities of each

wine.

Picking

Picking fruit too early or too late can inhibit the true character of the site or vintage. Wines from grapes picked too early can taste green and simple, and can lack the flavor markers unique to each site. If grapes are picked too ripe, primary fruity flavors can overwhelm nuances. House styles and weather patterns leading up to harvest can also influence picking decisions. There is a broadly accepted range between “under-ripe” and “over-ripe” fruit. The level of ripeness at the time of picking has a profound effect on a wine’s flavor profile and mouthfeel. Some say the “pick date” is the most critical decision in wine production.

Processing

A lot happens to grapes before they ferment. White grapes are either unloaded directly into a press or sorted first. The grapes are pressed and the juice is pumped into stainless steel tanks where solids settle to the bottom. Red grapes are often sorted, destemmed entirely or partially or not at all, and put into tanks without being pressed. Before fermentation begins for both red and white wine, the juice is analyzed and adjusted. Better fruit requires fewer adjustments, as you would imagine. Adjustments, such as water, acid or yeast, are typically added directly to the juice. Adjusting every year’s juice to the same formula diminishes vintage variation, of course. Many winemakers add little to nothing at all. Others try to find a balance that preserves quality without sacrificing authenticity.

Fermenting

Wine is fermented in tank or barrel, though many are choosing alternative fermentation vessels for white wine like amphoras or cement eggs. Red grapes are almost always fermented in tanks (steel, concrete or wood) where they generate a cap of skins and seeds that are pushed up by the bubbling fermentation. That cap is usually punched down into the juice or the juice is pumped up and over the cap regularly to keep it moist and to help extract color and phenolics. Eventually, the cap will fall below the surface of the wine when fermentation is complete.

How long the grape skins and seeds soak in the juice before fermentation starts or after fermentation ends will impact color and phenolic extraction. Extraction can also be affected by the temperature of fermentation. Hot fermentations maximize extraction but may also produce off-flavors. Some wines can taste “over-extracted,” meaning they taste like concentrated caricatures of their true

nature. It takes experience and skill to extract enough color and phenolics but not so much that the resulting wine is out of balance.

Aging

At a chosen time, the red wine is drained off the skins entirely, and the skins are loaded into a press. Both the “free run” wine and the pressed wine are (usually) put into barrels to age. White wine is only occasionally aged in barrels. Wines that are aged in a high percentage of new oak barrels may taste more like barrels than fruit. “Neutral” barrels have been previously used for at least three vintages. They won’t impart much oak flavor but will still provide a controlled aerobic environment, which helps develop mouthfeel and synthesize flavors. The longer you age a wine in barrel, the more oxygen it gets, which could help improve some wines but may undercut intensity in others.

Keeping wine exclusively in tank before bottling may not allow some wines enough time or oxygen to unfold and fully express their true character, or it may preserve the fresh purity of the wines, particularly white wines. All of these decisions affect the accessibility of a wine’s flavors and how much a wine holds back for future development. The right balance between drinkability and ageability depends on your audience, your price point, and whether or not a wine is likely to improve with time.

Wine is both aesthetic and agricultural, so the tension between stylistic expression and essential fruit character affects every choice at every stage. Great winemakers will find a way to balance both.

By Paul Sequeira

SAVE OUR ORCHARDS NOW!





Will Manzana delay their move one year?

Good news?

It may be that Manzana's move will be delayed by as much as a year. If so, we will have until the 2026 Gravenstein season to find a way to process our apples. Stay tuned as we learn more.

Manzana plant tour

Ethan Brown, Administrative Director of the Economic Development Board (now the Economic Development Collaborative) invited a group of us to tour the Manzana plant on August 23rd to learn about what equipment will be left on the site and view the entirety of the property. There will be time to talk about what may be possible to do with the site. We have all been waiting for this opportunity, without having viewed the site and getting details about the sale we couldn't have constructive conversations about the future of the site. As many of you know, it's a large site and our some 8,000 to 8,500 tons of apples accounted for only about 15% of their business, the other 85% being shipped to Graton from Washington.

The questions before our community

1. How are we going to process our apples when Manzana departs?
2. Can the cannery in Graton be the solution?

We hope to have more information soon.

Gravenstein Fair outreach

I enjoyed talking to many people at the Gravenstein Fair as I passed out SAVE OUR ORCHARDS buttons, community support is important.

How can the public help?

- First, email or call [Lynda Hopkins](#) to let her know how important it is for Sonoma County to support our orchards.
- Second, email or call [Jared Huffman's](#) office to do the same.
- Third, join the .IO Forum that has been set up for the public to get involved, make comments, and share their ideas, [Sonoma Apple Orchards](#). New developments will be posted on that site. You are welcome to contact me at: applecore@slowfoodrr.org

By Carole Flaherty

EVENT REPORT BY RICK





Gravenstein Apple Fair, 2024

What connects thousands of happy people and covers you in sugary syrup? The Gravenstein Apple Fair!

With the help of 35 volunteers and a couple hundred children, we prepared, pressed, and delivered about 6,000 samples of organic Gravenstein apple juice to eager attendees. The Dutton family provided the apples, and Slow Food Russian River provided the elbow grease to keep the juices flowing.

On average, then, each volunteer produced juice for 171.4 Gravenstein Fair participants. Countless children helped us by lining up to help throw

apples into the grinder, spin the press, and taste the flowing juice.

But just as importantly, our team reminded thousands of people – adults and children alike – of the importance of our local agricultural roots, the importance of Good, Clean, and Fair food, the deliciousness of the Gravenstein apple, and the effectiveness of our Community Apple Press.

Alice Waters smiled approval as she swept by and enjoyed a sample.

The Community Apple Press we used at the Fair is open each weekend at the Luther Burbank Experimental Farm in Sebastopol through the end of October – so if you or anyone you know has apples (or pears) to press, don't forget to go to slowfoodrr.org to sign up for a weekend time slot. Seasonal appointments are filling fast!

By Rick Mead

CATHERINE'S TURKEY TALK



A busy summer

Well, who would be thinking about Thanksgiving in the summer? It has been ever present in the minds of the members of the Heritage Turkey Project! We're over halfway to that time when cooler weather and savory feasts draw us indoors to celebrate with family and friends.

It has been a busy summer! Our 4-H members have been engaged with county fairs, some fitting in summer school classes, specialty camps, and family vacations, but all the while the care and protection of their turkey flocks has needed to be a top priority to be integrated into their full summer schedules.

Throughout the summer we have been visiting each of our turkey families to check up on the health and welfare of their flocks, and to wingband their turkeys. If you have purchased one of our turkeys before, you may have noticed a small metal clip on the inside edge of the bird's wing web with some numbers on it. This enables us to record the hatch date and variety of each turkey, along with the youth that has grown that bird.

We had a fun time talking turkey with folks at the Gravenstein Apple Fair again this year. We took 2 pens of turkeys: a lively pair of Narragansetts and a stately pair of Bronze. We had lots of oohs and ahhs and even more questions. It's always fun to see people's reactions to the turkeys! The #1 favorite activity among fairgoers when interacting with turkeys is gobbling at said turkey to see if it will gobble back. (Top secret of this turkey exhibitor is that a turkey will gobble back at almost any sound...but don't tell anyone and ruin our fun of listening to people gobble all day long)!

By Catherine Thode

ISSUES





U.S. Rep. Mike Thompson joins opponents of Measure J at a No On J campaign kickoff event

NO on J

Sonoma County family farmers are under attack

Our position: In support of our farmers, animal husbandry and our agricultural way of life, Slow Food Russian River opposes Measure J, as do most agricultural and food advocacy organizations in Sonoma County. We do not believe that the measure will advance our objective of good, clean and fair food. Instead, it will push food production further from home and eliminate too many jobs in our already struggling agricultural industry. Here are some perspectives from people who share our position.

“Vote no on Measure J. If this passes, no more Liberty Duck, Straus or Clover. It affects our local eggs, milk, cheese, beef and poultry. Its real goal is to end animal agriculture here all together. In fact, it would leave us with only access to CAFO meat and dairy from elsewhere. It would change the face of Sonoma County ag. We would lose what I love about cooking here. Know the face that feeds you.”

— *Duskie Estes, Black Pig Meat Company, chef, farmer, rancher*

"I have spent 30 years fighting for a healthy, humane and just food system and the family farms that bring so much to Sonoma County's communities and environment. Measure J is a sledge hammer that will harm the ranchers, dairies, and farmers who help define our culture and cuisine. Everyone who actually knows and understands our county's agriculture is against Measure J."

— *Michael Dimock, Roots of Change*

"Measure J is a poorly written, confusing, misleading and unnecessary measure that if passed will decimate Sonoma County animal agriculture. Farming is already regulated by many governmental agencies and the organic farms, many in Sonoma County, have additional requirements. This measure does not in any way address environmental or animal husbandry issues. Measure J simply picks a size of farm from EPA guidelines and declares it to be big and bad without any proof of wrongdoing. Vote no on J."

— *Jim Reichardt, Sonoma County Poultry, Liberty Ducks*

[Learn More about Measure J](#)

EVENT REPORT WITH LYNDA





Singing Frogs Farm Tour

It was a great, sold-out event. The beautiful farm tour was packed with regenerative farming information from our entertaining and knowledgeable host and guide Paul Kaiser, co-owner with his wife Elizabeth.

Two of his focuses were soil biology and the importance of hedgerows, though he covered many relevant topics (such as compost and gophers) and gladly answered questions from tour members. After the tour we gathered for a picnic -- socializing, sharing food, and eating the large Caprese salad prepared for us with varieties of tomatoes grown on the farm.

Singing Frogs Farm, an award-winning, no-till, intensive farm, is not only a pioneer in regenerative farming but teaches its employees many or whom

come from university farming programs. Tim is proud that almost 20 of them have started regenerative farms of their own.

Thanks to Shari Figi for planning this event.

Learn more

- [Singing Frogs Farm](#) website
- [Video: Singing Frogs Virtual Farm Tour](#)
- [Singing Frogs Farm photo gallery](#)

By Lynda Banks



IN THE ORCHARD



Left: Unripe seed. Right: Mature seeds.

The most exciting time of the year

When to pick an apple

There are many fabulous fall varieties of apples, some that ripen even into late November. However, it's not always easy to know when to pick an apple. Here are some tips:

1. **Feel.** Reach up and feel how firmly the apple is attached to the branch, if it feels loose and comes off the tree easily with a gentle twist and lift motion it is ripe. To me there is nothing quite as satisfying as an apple that comes off the tree gently into my palm, saying "I'm ripe, I'm all yours, eat me."
2. **Taste.** Taste the apple; if it isn't ripe you won't enjoy eating it. A ripe apple should be sweet and have a pleasant, non-starchy mouthfeel.
3. **Examine the seeds.** If the seeds are hard and brown or black the apple is ripe. Seeds that are soft and white are not ready and the fruit isn't ripe. If you pick apples before the seeds are mature the fruit will not continue to ripen.

How to taste a large variety of apples grown in Sonoma County:

- Visit [Dave Hale's fruit stand](#) on Hwy 116 between Mill Station and Andy's. Dave has a large variety of apples (and a lot of pumpkins come Halloween season). He is happy to provide you with a list of his varieties and when he expects them to ripen and show up for sale at his stand. We are planning a tour of his orchard sometime this fall, watch for details.
- Visit Ted Richardson's [Bella Ridge Farm](#) booth at the Sebastopol, Luther Burbank and Santa Rosa farmer's markets mid-September through October. Ted grows 50 varieties of apples and 15 varieties of pears. He also sells his produce through [Feed Sonoma Cooperative](#), a food hub network of over 50 North Bay farms, supporting ecologically sustainable practices
- Attend an apple tasting event at [Gold Ridge Organic Farm](#) to taste a wide variety of heirloom apples and take a tour with owner Brooke Hazen through their heirloom apple orchard

Finally, a link to one of my favorite apple sites [Adam's Apples](#) where you will find a huge list of apples Adam has tasted and rated. It's a great site to visit if you're interested in apples.

By Carole Flaherty

PAULA'S PICKS



Garlic

Chester Aaron

About 20 years ago I was lucky enough to meet and know Chester Aaron, the famous Occidental garlic grower and author of many books including "Garlic is Life". What a history he had. Chester served in the army during World War II and was one of the liberators of Auschwitz. He was a passionate garlic farmer and made it his business to bring samples of garlic varieties back with him from Eastern Europe and from wherever he traveled. He was once the star of the Gilroy Garlic Festival and presided over what may have been the first garlic taste-off in history.

Chester grew 32 garlic varieties in his small backyard, fighting the gophers all the way. He shared his knowledge and 9 of his varieties with me and I

learned to fertilize my small bed with chicken manure every year and hang my garlic to dry for 3 weeks in the basement. For the first 10 years or so I carefully created 9 separate sections in my bed and labeled each one with the name of the variety. After about 10 years I discovered that I couldn't taste the difference, so now I plant the healthiest cloves wherever they fit, about 1 finger deep each Fall, and harvest them in June.

Video (2014): [Entertaining talk by Chester Aaron at Slow Food Russian River event](#)

Buy your garlic responsibly

Remember not to use Chinese garlic, but rather ask the place you buy your garlic where it comes from. Andy's and Oliver's tend to have good ones.

Scapes

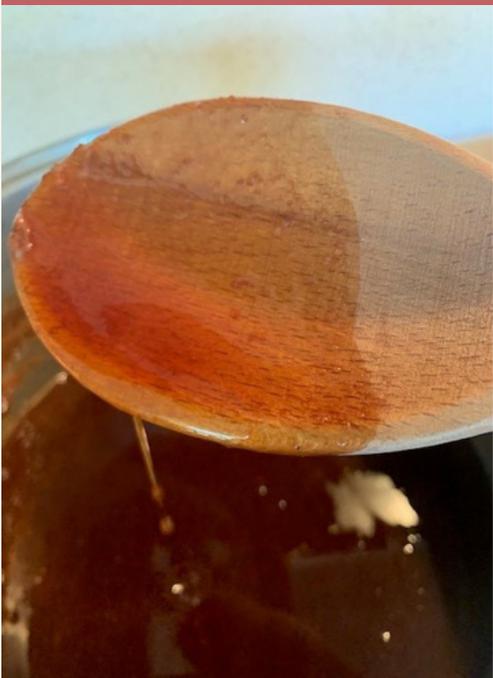
And don't forget to use the scapes! They come up before the garlic is ripe, and you need to cut them off when you see them. Use them in stir-fries... they are garlic too!

Video: [Harvesting Garlic Scapes, When, Why, and How](#)

By Paula Shatkin



APPLE RECIPE



Apple syrup

Got Juice?! Fall, when many freezers are bursting with newly pressed apple juice, is the perfect time to make this delicious, convenient, and long-lasting confection. Use it as you would maple or any other syrup – on pancakes, in desserts, or even in yeast breads.

Ingredient: Apple juice

Quantity to expect: 1 gallon of juice makes 1 pint of syrup, an 8:1 ratio

How to make the syrup: Evaporate juice by heating it either in a pot on the stove, a crock pot, or a pan in the oven. Leave the lid off so the water can evaporate. This isn't a quick process, so I cook mine in a big pot on the stove on a day when I'll be home. The juice can be left on a low simmer with only an occasional stir, it will not burn.

How to know when it's ready: This is the tricky part. Before you start, estimate how far down in your pot your syrup will be (the 8:1 ratio) so you have some idea of when to start watching it closely. When the syrup starts to coat a clean wooden spoon, you're close. Chill a saucer in the refrigerator. Test the thickness of the syrup by putting a dollop of it on the cold saucer and drawing your finger through it.

If the syrup does not fill in where you dragged your finger through, it's ready! I recommend testing **early** and **often**. If you get it a little too thick you can add more juice – but it can easily pass the point of no return. If that happens, you'll have one big, dense apple Sugar Daddy in the bottom of your pot!

If you need to leave it overnight and finish in the morning, just cover it. Apple syrup does not need to be refrigerated; it does not grow mold or ferment. Just bottle it and enjoy!

By Carole Flaherty



FROM SLOW FOOD USA



2024 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Your food movement. Our food future!

KEY DATES

- Tuesday, Sept. 3 through Monday, Sept. 30
- Give What You Can days:
Thursday, Sept. 12 and Thursday, Sept. 26



September membership drive

Your membership nurtures our network. Join to grow our education, biodiversity, and advocacy programs.

Give what you can days

There are two days to join Slow Food USA at a dollar amount that makes sense for your budget. For some, that means joining for \$5, \$10 or even less. For others, that means making a larger contribution beyond our standard membership rates to show your commitment to good, clean, and fair food for all. Put the YOU in Give What You Can. Join at the rate that fits you best.

Learn more: <https://slowfoodusa.org/become-a-member/>



FROM SF INTERNATIONAL





Decolonize Your Food campaign

Of all the biodiversity in the world, 80% is protected by indigenous communities, guardians of a precious heritage. With their traditional knowledge, they safeguard an extraordinary variety of plant and animal species, as well as traditions, languages and foods at risk of extinction.

Land grabbing, human rights violations, climate change, and unsustainable farming are just some of the most obvious threats to this rich diversity. But another, less visible menace is also putting biodiversity at risk: colonization through food. For example, many indigenous peoples are seeing traditional foods with valuable nutritional or medicinal properties appropriated without their consent and exploited for profit by corporations, with no recognition or benefit for them

Learn more: [Decolonize Your Food](#)

VOLUNTEER



Volunteer opportunities!

The SFRR Board can use some help with our

- Communications and Social Media (newsletter, emails, etc.)
- Event Planning (visits to farms? tours of wineries? cheese education? learning about soils?).

If you would like to support either of these activities, we would love to hear from you! Please email info@slowfoodrr.org.



SUGGESTIONS



What do you suggest for SFRR?

- What are your ideas about future SFRR events?
- About topics for this newsletter?
- Farms we should look into for possible tours?
- New food-related businesses we might support?
- Ecological challenges we should research and report on?
- People making a difference in Sonoma County agriculture and food?

Your ideas matter, so please let us know!

Email: Info@SlowFoodRR.org

We look forward to hearing from you!

COMMENTS?



Feedback on our Newsletter.

Most issues include events, reports on past events, tastings, updates, and info from both Slow Food International and Slow Food USA.

What are *your* thoughts?

Email to: Info@SlowFoodRR.org

OUR BOARD



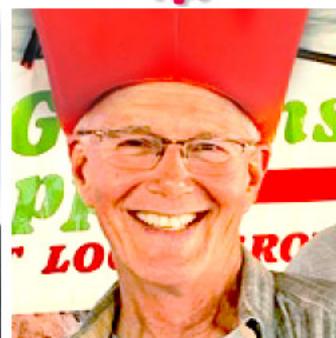
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Carole Flaherty



Peggy Myers Knopp



Rick Mead



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Paul Sequeira



Paula Shatkin



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