Exoneree talks wrongful conviction

The documentary Central Park Five about the 1989 case was also screened

BY HEATHER GAST

Staff Writer

Xavier’s Criminal Justice Society hosted a screening of the documentary Central Park Five followed by a talk given by Yusef Salaam, one of the Central Park Five exonerees, this past Thursday. The 2012 documentary concerns the Central Park jogger case that earned national attention from media outlets.

Sarah Burns, one of the directors of the film, had previously worked in paralegal cases and was inspired to create the documentary because of her work on her undergraduate thesis dealing with racism in the media’s coverage of the case.

The case began on April 19, 1989, when a White woman who had been jogging through Central Park was raped and nearly beaten to death. In the days that followed, the Central Park police precinct detained and coerced false confessions from five Harlem teenagers: Anton McCray, Kevin Richardson, Raymond Santana, Korey Wise and Salaam.

The teenagers, later dubbed the “Central Park Five,” were part of or associated with a group of around 30 adolescents who had heckled and assaulted strangers in the park the night of the incident. Several were detained at the Central Park precinct, but many were released.

Detectives at the precinct interrogated each of members of the Central Park Five for anywhere between 14 and 30 hours without food or drink. They pressured and physically intimidated the teenagers into telling a fabricated account of the various crimes that night, including the assault of the jogger. None of the five knew each other prior to their sentencing, and their confessions contradicted each other as well as the known facts at the time. They were also the only detainees who included themselves in their accounts of the jogger’s assault.

The Central Park Jogger case was well followed in New York City and garnered national media attention, resulting in immense pressure to find and sentence a perpetrator.

While New York City was already notorious for extreme violence, the case caught the public’s attention because of the races of the victim and alleged perpetrators — the victim was White, four of the teenagers were Black and one was Hispanic. It played into not only the rampant racial narratives concerning gang and drug-related violence in African-American and Latinx neighborhoods but also the “super-predator scare” of the 90s.

Despite alibis and a lack of DNA evidence, the Central Park Five were found guilty and sentenced to five to 10 years and five to 15 years based solely on the coerced taped confessions.

The members of the Central Park Five served a range of six to 13 years before the true perpetrator, serial rapist Matias Reyes, turned himself in while serving a life sentence in 2002. DNA evidence identified him as the sole contributor of semen found on the victim’s body and confirmed his confession.

The Central Park Five’s sentences were vacated, but the damage had already been done. The five young men leveled a lawsuit against the state of New York that was settled in 2014.

The story of the Central Park Five’s wrongful convictions is not unique. The National Registry of Exonerations has 2,180 exonerations recorded between 1989 and 2018, 47 percent of which are African-American. Salaam shared that he and the four other exonerates feel that the documentary was able to give them back their lives that they had missed in their time in prison.

Criminal Justice Society President and senior Maddy Lancaster shared that the club decided to screen the documentary because of the racial element of the Central Park Five’s initial convictions.

“Racism is super, super relevant (to the criminal justice system),” Lancaster said. “If you aren’t directly involved in the system, you don’t realize that.”

Lancaster added that the documentary was especially relevant because of the involvement of President Donald Trump, who continues to state that the five men wrongfully convicted are guilty. Salaam argued in a 2016 Guardian article that the piece that secured the push for the public to blame the teenagers was the full-page ads in four of New York’s major newspapers calling for the executions of the teenaged defendants. These ads were purchased and signed by Trump in 1990.

“I think it says a lot about our climate right now. He says that they’re guilty despite the evidence, and people still listen to that,” Lancaster said.

In this issue...

Campus News, Page 2

International leaders visited campus for a summit on youth participation in politics

World News, Page 3

Jack Dunn catches you up after an eventful week on Pennysylvania Avenue

Sports, Page 6

The track and field team captured 14 top-10 finishes for a second consecutive week

Features, Page 8

Fight your end-of-the-semester stress by celebrating some unique holidays
The summit, organized by the U.S. State Department’s International Visitor Leader-
ship Program, is part of an ongoing effort to “build global understanding and promote
international awareness through education, information and exchange of people. In
formation to an invitation sent to part-
icipants.

The international leaders — including Beatriz Alvarez, a city council member for
the municipality of La Paz in Bol-
ivia, and Ramon Gurtman, gua-rava, governor of the Rura-
muri community in Mexico — have been
coming tours cities throughout
the United States to meet with local youth and minority leaders to “illustrate
strategies to engage youth, underserved, excluded and
minority populations in the U.S. society to increase their participation in political af-
fairs,” the invitation stated.

Their most recent stop was Cincinnati, where they spoke with a panel composed of
Xavier Republicans Presi-
dent Cole Branham and Vice President Lily Hukowski and Xavier Democrats Presi-
dent Aimee Boivin and Trea-
urer Sam Peters. The group
spoke about the work of their
clubs in promoting political
activity on campus, specifi-
cally in the areas of minority
involvement and youth par-
ticipation.

After the presentation, the panel opened up to a question-and-answer portion
intended to foster a cross-cultural dialogue about Amer-
ican politics. Venus Caballero, a transgender rights activist from
Nicaragua, called on the student leaders to be more outwardly inclusive towards
marginalized groups as they progress in politics.

“We have to step in their shoes and fight hard for those communities,” she
impressed through a translator.

The discussion was large-
ly open and honest with lit-
tle held back. At one point,
Maribel Caeiro, an Ecuadorian
activist, exploded at the
Republican representatives in
the room, lambasting conser-
vative American foreign pol-
icy toward Israel and the re-
cent military intervention in
Syria. Likewise, a Guatemalan
activist who asked not to be
identified because of political considerations, sharply crit-
ized the American pro-life
stance on abortion, calling it a
construct of White supremac-
cy and patriarchy.

After the summit, Hut-
kowski offered a response to
the critiques: “I know that we have some difference of opinion, but I think the most im-
portant thing is that we’re all passionate, and when people care about that’s the thing that can make
the biggest impact.”

During closing remarks, Samuel Samuels, a Panamanian
business adviser with Dell,
expressed frustration with the reluctance of young Amer-
icans to run for office and
impact meaningful change in
the political arena. “Don’t be afraid of what you can do,” he
advised the panel through an
interpreter.

“It gave me a lot of food for thought to think about for my
next steps, especially as I’m a senior and where I want to be
down the road,” Boivin said
when asked about the summit.

“What an inspiration for a group of people to travel
around the world to learn
more about the different polit-
ic systems and how all of us
can work together,” Branham said.

Peters added: “They weren’t afraid to ask the big
questions, and I liked that.
That’s something that politics tends to stay away from, get-
ting to the root of problems and
a lot of that was chal-
lenged in the room today.”

Xavier Theatre’s Cabaret was ‘Perfectly Marvelous’

By Hannah Paige Michel

Xavier Theatre’s Cabaret was the monumental production of the spring season. With
a theme that permeates the year’s events, the show is a testament to the power of theatre
in shaping our understanding of the world.

The show features a diverse cast of actors, from the boisterous Emcee to the
sensitive Sally Bowles. Each character brings their unique perspective to the
ensemble, creating a cohesive and captivating narrative.

The set design is exceptional, with a backdrop that transports the audience
to the seedy Kit Kat Klub. The lighting and sound effects are top-notch,
enhancing the dramatic impact of the performance.

The musical numbers are unforgettable, from the rousing “Frieda” to the
melancholy “To Be or Not To Be.” The cast delivers their performances with
nuanced emotion, bringing each character to life.

The story itself is a powerful one, exploring themes of identity, love,
and friendship in the face of adversity. It’s a story that resonates with
audience members on a personal level, making the show all the more
memorable.

The technical production is flawless, from the costumes to the
makeup and hair design. The attention to detail is impeccable,
making the show a visual delight.

Overall, Xavier Theatre’s Cabaret is a triumph of storytelling and
performance, capturing the spirit of the classic musical and
transporting the audience to a world of fiction, all the while
reminding us of the power of art and the human
desire to understand and connect with others.

Rating: ⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

Photo courtesy of Mikki Schaffner
President Donald Trump announced a missile strike targeting three Syrian chemical weapons production and storage facilities on April 13. The strike was in retaliation for the alleged use of banned chemical weapons.

BY JACK DUNN
Staff Writer

An anonymous White House official told the New York Times on Monday that President Donald Trump has decided not to impose additional economic sanctions on Russia in response to its support of the Syrian government.

This claim contradicts what U.N. Ambassador Nicki Haley told the CBS program "Face the Nation a day earlier.

This revelation capped off an eventful week in Washington, which began on April 7 with allegations against the Syrian government for its use of chemical weapons in an attack on the Damascus suburb Douma. Approximately 500 people in Douma have been suspected symptoms consistent with that of a chemical attack. These symptoms include burning eyes, difficulty breathing and foaming at the mouth. The World Health Organization reported 70 deaths, with 45 having signs of "being exposed to highly toxic chemicals."

Syrian Ambassador Bashar al-Assad said on Tuesday that "if the situation is sound than the fact-finding mission will begin its work in Douma tomorrow.

The Trump administration initially promised a response within 48 hours, saying that "all options are on the table."

Trump gave a glimpse of his administration's response on April 11, tweeting "Russia vows to shoot down any and all missiles fired at Syria. Get ready Russia, because you will be coming, nice and new & "smart!" You shouldn't be partners with a Gas Killing Animal who kills his people and enjoys it!" Trump didn't confirm if an attack was coming at all in a tweet early the next morning saying they "Could be very soon or not so soon at all!"

On the night of April 13, however, the United Kingdom and France joined the United States in airstrikes in Syria against the Syrian Government. More than 100 missiles were fired at three targets, which were facilities used to produce and store chemical weapons and equipment. The strikes aimed to destroy Syrian chemical weapons capabilities. The Pentagon stated in a briefing that it had "successfully hit every target" and that "the three facilities were fundamental components of the regimes chemical weapons warfare infrastructure."

Trump tweeted "Mission Accomplished," but the U.S. and its allies stand ready to strike again if Syria continues to use its chemical weapons. Russian President Vladimir Putin stated that no Russians were killed in the strike, but warned against further strikes. Iran called the strikes a crime against a sovereign government, but did not warn of any retaliatory strikes.

Besides the Syria situation, Trump also tweeted his displeasure over the FBI's investigation with his longtime personal lawyer, Michael Cohen.

The FBI raided the home, offices and hotel room of Cohen on April 9 after referral from special counsel Robert Mueller and approval from Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein. The raid's goal was believed to have been recovering records related to Cohen's payment to Stormy Daniels leading up to the 2016 election and communications Cohen had with Trump regarding the "Access Hollywood" tape.

This comes amid more turnover in the Trump administration. Current CIA Director Mike Pompeo still isn't approved by Congress as Trump's nominee for the vacant Secretary of State position. Pompeo lost the support Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) and with Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) home battling cancer, the GOP is just short with 49 votes. Trump and Pompeo have begun lobbying moderate Senate Democrats who are up for reelection in attempt to get a speedy confirmation.
As someone who has battled a voice disorder almost my entire life, I have always struggled to find my “voice.” I refer to the idea of “voice” in quotations quite often, because while I was in high school, I came to realize that the term “voice” does not have to refer solely to the sound that comes out of your mouth. After years of struggling to understand why I was given this burden to bear and how I was supposed to reach my goals when I felt so impeded by my lack of a physically strong voice, I realized that “voice” is so much more than diction. It is the vibrations that the vocal cords creating sound.

My first week at Xavier, I must have been asked more than ten times if I was sick because my voice is so raspy. I realize it is a natural response to hearing someone who sounds like they have lost their voice, but having that be one of the first impressions that people have always been a very discouraging thought. Luckily, I made some great friends who showed me kindness and compassion immediately upon meeting me. Those friends will always have a special place in my heart.

Even with the support of my newly found friends, I struggled a bit. I took out my freshman year and the first half of my sophomore year.

I found myself questioning the plan that I had thought about for years. Psychology had always been my subject of choice, and although I was enjoying my classes, I wasn’t satisfied. I had expected to find my “voice” within the vast world of psychology, but that just wasn’t the case.

I declared a criminal justice minor at the very beginning of the semester. I was figuring that the two subjects would go well together. It was not until the second semester of my freshman year that I was able to start my criminal justice course load.

I absolutely loved my Intro. to Criminal Justice class more than I could have ever imagined. Not only was I extremely invested in the subject matter, I found myself actively trying to pursue opportunities outside of the classroom to learn as much as I could about criminal justice.

The first semester of my criminal justice major called me to make a decision to Corrections with my favorite professor, Dr. Jonson. That class changed my life. I know it may seem drastic for me to say that, but as far as aspirations for my future, I truly feel that class completely changed my outlook on what I wanted to do with my life. I fell in love with the topic of our correctional system. I found myself fascinated by the passion for correctional policy and reform started to burn inside of me.

I changed my major to criminal justice after that semester of my sophomore year, and I will never forget the overwhelming feelings of satisfaction and fate that I felt afterward. I had found a home for my “voice” at Xavier.

There are a couple of reasons why I have chosen to share this journey as my senior op-ed, but because of the limited amount of space, I will only share the most important. The idea of having my “voice” in everything that I do is very important to me. Although I may not have as loud of a voice as others, I find my “voice” through the things and the people that I love. I found my “voice” in my studies of the criminal justice system, in the environment that I am surrounded by, in the people that I met through my criminal justice major and my psychology minor.

My advice to my fellow Xavier students is to realize that you always have a “voice.” That “voice” doesn’t have anything to do with the sound you create when speaking; instead, your “voice” is what you find happiness in and what you are passionate about. It is what you love and what you feel strong about within a person. Please always remember that your “voice” is important and it is beautiful.
Parting advice to all Xavier students: read

As myself and the other members of the Class of 2018 enter the last few weeks before we don our caps and gowns and bid adieu to our years as Xavier students, I find myself prone to reflecting on the successes and failures of my college career, as well as advice I would give my fellow soon-to-be-graduates and those who still have more time at Xavier. We as Xavier students are inclined to live — both now and throughout the rest of our lives — in ways that are meaningful, successful, happy and impactful. We want to live lives that will impact others and nurture our own selves. Of course, the world we will eventually enter remains a complicated place, and there is no one-size-fits-all way to reach these goals. Each of us will have his or her own unique path to follow. Nonetheless, despite this variety, I propose that there is one essential habit that makes this kind of life possible: reading.

If I had to give one piece of life advice to myself, to my fellow seniors, to other Xavier students and to pretty much anyone, it is this: read as much as you possibly can, and in a meaningful way. This is a habit that we as individuals leading fulfilling lives must cultivate. According to recent data from the Pew Research Center, nearly a quarter (24 percent) of American adults have not read a book in whole or in part in the last year. This percentage changes when broken down according to a variety of demographics and socio-economic factors but should nonetheless concern all of us.

Modern democratic societies, more than societies that came before them, are built upon and driven by an exchange of ideas. From entertainment to civic culture, competing ways of viewing the world and the way it works are the stuff of modern life. Many, indeed probably most, of these ideas are rich and full of nuance, so they are incapable of being represented in 290 characters, a blog post or even a short news article.

As the massive and wide-ranging historical impact of the printing revolution shows us, the written word is powerful indeed. However, its power grows when it is used in longer form to really engage rich ideas and competing conceptions of the human experience. As Xavier students, for example, we have all read Plato’s Republic, which takes up the question of what justice is. That theme of justice is just as relevant for us now as it was for the Ancient Greeks, yet such a fundamental issue could simply not receive the treatment it deserves in some other form than a dialogue like the Republic. My recommendation for all of us, then, is to build a lifelong habit of reading — and reading meaningful things. Making this kind of commitment does not require a significant amount of time. We all have many constraints on our time, but I think we can all fit in a little reading each day, even if it is only 15 minutes to help us fall asleep at night.

We all have many constraints on our time, but I think we can all fit in a little reading each day, even if it is only 15 minutes to help us fall asleep at night. I personally aim for 30 minutes per day, and it is quite manageable when I build it into my routine. And the benefits are worth it. Being an avid reader does not require a significant time commitment; it simply not just help one live a life of healthy intellectual activity. It helps one maintain a more objective view of the world, which in turn allows one not just to engage with the complex world and intellectual landscape in which we live, but to thrive in it. If we truly want to live as individuals who will make an impact on the world, we need to maintain our intellectual health after it is no longer constantly stimulated by the classroom. The best way to do that is to read, to read often and to read deeply.
The baseball team fell to 1-2 on the season and 2-4 in conference play after losing two of three games this weekend on the road to the Seton Hall Pirates in New Jersey.

On Friday, Xavier jumped out to a 1-0 lead when freshman outfielder Allbery Major crossed home on a groundout by senior catcher Nate Soria in the first inning. The Musketeers managed to push out two more in the third inning, when Joe Gellenbeck hit a two-run homer. However, senior starting pitcher Damien Richard allowed four runs on four hits, in just 4.2 innings pitched while striking out six batters. Though Major would pitch 5.1 innings of "scoreless relief" to keep Seton Hall at four runs, the offense was unable to get another run across, and the team took a 4-1 loss. Major was lights out in relief, striking out five batters while allowing just two hits in his appearance.

The Musketeers bounced back with a strong 5-2 win on Saturday in a back-and-forth game. Major doubled in the first inning to drive in Gellenbeck and give Xavier a 1-0 lead. Seton Hall responded with a run of its own in the bottom of the first to tie it. The Pirates scored again in the bottom of the third to take a 2-1 lead before sophomore catcher Natalie Morasch drove in sophomore third baseman Connor Grammies on a groundout to tie it at 2-2 in the top of the fourth. Xavier struck again in the top of the sixth, when freshman infielder Ryan Altenberger scored on a wild pitch to take a 3-2 lead. Junior infielder Chris Givin then used a bunt single to drive in Soria and extend the lead to 3-2. Seton Hall would answer with a run in the bottom of the sixth to close to gap to 3-4.

However, a solo homerun by junior first baseman Matt Warkentin in the top of the ninth sealed the game for Xavier, as it came away with a 5-3 victory. The winning pitcher was Matt Kent. The win set up a rubber match on Sunday to determine the winner of the series. Xavier got out to an early lead, scoring three runs in the top of the fourth. Gellenbeck drove in Givin to score the first run, and Warkentin’s two-run homer gave Xavier the early 3-0 lead.

The Pirates would get on the board with a run in the bottom of the inning to cut the deficit to 3-1. The Musketeers answered when Major hit a solo homerun to push the lead back to three runs at 4-1. Xavier would get another run across in the ninth, but it wasn’t enough as Seton Hall took the game and the series with a 5-6 win.

Xavier takes on Cincinnati today at 6:30 p.m. in a single game. This coming weekend, the Musketeers will be at home at Hayden Field to take on the Creighton Blue Jays in a Big East matchup.

BY DONNIE MENKE
Staff Writer

Junior first baseman Matt Warkentin now leads the team in home runs after he launched his eighth of the season against Seton Hall.

BY COLIN COOPER
Staff Writer

This past weekend, the Xavier track and field team traveled to Ball State University in Muncie, Ind., to compete in the Ball State Challenge.

For the second week in a row, the Musketeers strung together 14 top-10 finishes.

Entering the weekend, the team was looking to build on the previous week’s success from the Hilltopper Relays in Bowling Green on the season, and 2-4 in conference play after losing two of three games this weekend on the road to the Seton Hall Pirates in New Jersey.

Xavier also entered the weekend knowing it would be up against tough competition, going up against schools such as Grand Valley State, Northern Kentucky and Toledo.

On Friday, the meet’s strong contender did not deter the Musketeers.

"What I enjoyed the most about the meet was how we competed," lead coach Ryan Orner said. "Most track meets are about hitting a standard or time but the conditions forced our athletes to forget about all that and compete hard.”

Overall, the women’s track and field team saw the most success. Accounting for nine of the 14 top-10 finishes, the women performed well in both track and field events.

In the field, junior Alexa Deutsch placed second overall in javelin with a throw of 45.14 meters.

In track events, Xavier was able to post two more top-two finishes.

Freshman Anna Kostarelis had the best run of the weekend, placing second after running a 2:17.20 in the 800-meter run.

Freshman Jennifer Prial also placed second in the 5,000-meter steeplechase, running 11:26.98.

Other notable times came from freshman Jemma Clayworth, who placed third in the 1,500-meter run, (4:40.78), and freshman Abby Fioretti, who placed fourth in the 800-meter run (2:18.68).

The men tallied four top-10 finishes, all of which were also top-three finishes. Sophomore John Hautz placed second in the 3,000-meter run in 8:43.05, while junior Grayson Jenkins placed second in the 1,500-meter run in 4:01.67.

Freshman Connor Meehan had a strong performance in the 800-meter run, as he placed third in 1:55.68.

Freshman Brady Harless wrapped up the top scores for Xavier, as he placed third in the 5,000-meter steeplechase (11:01.36)," I think we made a lot of progress over the past two weeks, and I’m excited for the opportunities we have coming up,” Orner said.

"The Musketeers will look to build on this momentum as they split the team to compete in three separate events this weekend: the Bryan Clay Invitational and the Mt. SAC Relays in California in addition to the Pac-12 Relays and Invitational in Indiana.

Photo courtesy of gcoxavier.com

Wood, Jaramillo lead way for men’s golf team in Indiana

BY TIM KRASER
Staff Writer

Xavier men’s golf competed in the Boilermaker Invitational last weekend, finishing +12, He finished tied for 20th place.

"I’ve been encouraged with our improvement over the course of the spring, head coach Brian McNatts said. “I look forward to our tournament this year. I think we will factor in the Big East Championship.”

Wood had a quality out-regional last weekend, which can be very difficult for freshmen to do,” McNatts said. “We’ll certainly need both our returning and two remaining tournaments if we’re going to compete at our best.”

The men’s golf team will return to the course in its final tuneup in the Kepler Invitational beginning on Friday in Columbus. The Big East Championship is scheduled for April 29-May 1 at Callaway Island in Okatie, S.C.

BY DONNIE MENKE
Staff Writer

Freshman Garrett Wood led the pack of Musketeers in the Boilermaker Invitational last weekend, shooting +12. He finished tied for 20th place.

Freshman Garrett Wood paced Xavier with a 77 split in the top 18 holes.

"Garrett Wood and Martin Jaramillo have competed extremely well for us this year, which can be very difficult for freshmen to do,” McNatts said. “We’ll certainly need both our returning and two remaining tournaments if we’re going to compete at our best.”

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Interfaith Shabbat

Dinner Celebration

Friday, April 20th, 2018
6:00 PM
Hoff Dining Commons
All are Welcome!

Get ready for exam week with an amazing Sabbath eve dinner, and experience the traditions of the Jewish Sabbath meal.
How to Destress Before Finals

ELLEN SIEFKE
Managing Editor

With the semester winding down and crunch time officially beginning, finding moments to relax can feel like trying to find a wooden, burnt needle in a haystack that keeps catching on fire and warning you to back off. Trust me, we all feel it. But never fear, for the end of the semester also brings with it plenty of opportunities for celebration, including goofy holidays galore. Here are some ways to make sure the rest of the school week is dedicated to just as much play as work.

Today, April 18: International Day for Monuments and Sites
A holiday since 1983, today is devoted to celebrating all the monuments and sites that contribute to the world's history and heritage. Embrace the chance to celebrate Xavier’s heritage by exploring all of the monuments on campus. Take a selfie next to the statue of St. Francis Xavier, weigh the amount of homework you have left on the scales by Brockman or thank Coffee Emporium for getting you through these next few weeks by ad-libbing shots of coffee-making in action.

This year’s theme is Heritage for Generations, so do your part as a future leader of society and make sure Xavier’s monuments will be commemorated for years to come.

Thursday, April 19: Bicycle Day/National High Five Day
With Earth Day quickly approaching and Earth Week in full swing, do yourself and the planet a favor. Dust off them wheels and take your bike for a spin. Not only are you helping the environment, you’re also helping yourself. What could be more relaxing than a long bike ride through city streets whilst drivers galore stop, stare and honk because you dared to use the bike lane? But actually though, head out for a bike ride and enjoy the fresh spring air blowing in your face. Make your parents proud and show them you are a responsible adult by adding a flowery helmet for some springtime cheer.

If biking really isn’t your thing — or the spring air is reminding you that you’re allergic to maybe some good ‘ol blood, sweat and tears. But trust me, it will all be worth it, as you will instantly become the koolest kid around town. If you really don’t feel like doing anything, then just embrace your inner puffin. It’s the first day of summer in Iceland.

Friday, April 20: Lima Bean Respect Day
Forget that other green veggie everyone’s talking about today because lima beans are where it’s at. I mean, I don’t know about you, but I have many a fond memory of my mother serving these tiny green things that kind of look like jelly beans, only to discover that they were not, in fact, jelly beans, and they really didn’t taste like much but apparently were super good for me.

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