



The Service Line

Volleyball News from the MSU SideOut Club
Vol. XI No. 2
August 2005

Lots of Fun Ahead!

The Spartan volleyball team began practice on August 10 on the newly installed floor and the next few weeks will bring plenty of opportunities for fans to see them in action and to interact with the coaches and players. Mark your calendars now so as not to miss out on a minute of the fun.

On August 18, season ticket holders can stop by Jenison to pick out their seats for the season – which will feature seat backs this year for the first time! Fans are invited to drop in between 6:00 and 7:30 p.m. to watch the end of practice, select their seats and check out the newly realigned court.

Two days later, on Saturday, August 20, many old favorites will return when a team of alumni takes on the current squad at 7:00 p.m. Afterward, SideOut Club members are encouraged to stick around for snacks and to mingle with players past and present.

The Cathy George era will officially begin on August 27 when the Spartans kick off the 2005 campaign with a 7:00 p.m. home match against Kent State. That day will also include an 11:30 Coach's Luncheon at Damon's restaurant on Lake Lansing.

The Spartan Volleyball Classic will take place on September 1, 2 and 3, with MSU playing at 7:00 p.m. each evening. The tournament will feature a very competitive field of Wichita State, the University of South Florida and Ball State. The initial Chalk Talk will be held prior to the match on September 2 and is open to all SideOut Club members. The event will be held in the classroom just outside the volleyball offices on the second floor of Jenison from about 6:10 to 6:25.

The team will be on the road for the remainder of September with the exception of the rivalry match against Michigan on Wednesday the 21st. The season's second Chalk Talk will take place that evening prior to the Michigan match.

While the Spartans are on the road, be sure to follow John Kreger's live web broadcasts – the next best thing to being there! Also be sure that the SideOut Club has your e-mail address so that you can receive regular updates from the coaching staff on the team's progress.

RENEWAL TIME

Your renewal form for 2005-06 membership in the SideOut Club is enclosed with this mailing. Forms are also available at the SideOut Club website (<http://www.msusideout.org/>) and at the club's membership table at home games. The MSU Volleyball program and the SideOut Club greatly appreciate your continued support!

In addition to the benefits already enjoyed by members, we will be adding several exciting new benefits this year:

—exclusive "**Chalk Talks**" before five home matches at which Head Coach Cathy George will discuss strategy and provide fans with insight about what to watch for that week-end. These events will be held at Jenison from about 6:10 to 6:25 before the matches on September 2, September 21, October 7, October 21 and November 25.

—**e-mails from the road** from the coaching staff providing the inside scoop on what is going on with the team. Make sure the club has your current e-mail address so that you receive these updates, which are only available to club members.

—family members may receive **up to three copies of the newsletter**, sent to one or multiple addresses, at no extra charge. You must provide full details on your renewal form.

—a free **t-shirt** to all club members (two to family memberships)

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Meet the New Faces: Ashley Schatzle

The MSU roster features five new faces this season: transfers Ashley Schatzle and Nicole Colaluca and freshmen Erin Rice, Heather McDaniel and Melany Rarey. We begin our look at these players with Ashley Schatzle.



The Spartans received a big boost when 6'1" outside hitter Ashley Schatzle decided to follow Cathy George and the rest of her staff by transferring from Western Michigan. She will be eligible to play in the fall and has three years of eligibility remaining.

Ashley hails from Monroe and is the daughter of Ron and Cindy Schatzle, who also have two younger daughters, Megan (15) and Erin (13). She is very grateful to her parents for their support on all her endeavors, which was especially valuable in helping her work through the transfer process.

Ashley was an all-around athlete as a youngster, excelling in softball, track and field, basketball and volleyball. A growth spurt in eighth grade persuaded her to concentrate on the latter two sports by joining the highly regarded Toledo Volleyball Club and beginning to play AAU basketball in 2001.

When Ashley entered Monroe High School that same year, she decided that three sports were all she could handle and gave up softball. She remained a standout in all three. In track, she concentrated on shorter distances and was a regional qualifier in the 400-meter dash and the 1,600-meter relay in 2001. She was a three-year letter winner in volleyball, earning first-team all-conference honors, along with second-team all-state and first-team all-region recognition. On the basketball court, she became the first player in school history to score 1,000 points, while also setting school single-season records for blocked shots and free throws attempted and made.

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This left Ashley with another difficult choice when she began to think about college, as she is equally fond of volleyball and basketball. Her involvement with the Toledo Volleyball Club and the Junior Olympics tipped the balance in favor of volleyball, and her decision was reinforced when she received her first recruiting letter from a college coach as a sophomore – from Cathy George. While many other schools would pursue her, Ashley eventually chose to play for the coach who first expressed interest in her and who continued to watch avidly throughout her prep career.

As a freshman last season, she led Western Michigan with 355 kills and was named to the All-MAC Freshman Team. She also pitched in with 119 digs, 60 blocks and 12 service aces. One of the highlights of the season came on September 17, when the Broncos faced the then-undefeated University of Michigan squad in Ann Arbor. After dropping the first two games, Western fought back stubbornly to force a fifth game. The decisive game remained tight throughout, until Western held a match point at 15-14. At that crucial moment, a Michigan attacker went up for a kill and Ashley positioned herself to defend. The ball rocketed off her left shoulder and back over the net for the match-ending kill! (Longtime Spartan volleyball fans may remember Christie Landry ending a dramatic five-set victory over Wisconsin in similar fashion in 1998.)

Ashley is majoring in nursing with plans to become a nurse anesthetist, a demanding career path that requires four years of college to become an RN, followed by two years of work experience and then another two years of schooling. Learning that MSU is planning to become one of the few universities in Michigan to offer the additional schooling was one of the factors in her decision to transfer. Making such long-range plans requires both patience and maturity and in discussing her goals, Ashley Schatzle exhibits both characteristics.

She believes that volleyball is a valuable complement to her education because of the self-fulfillment it brings and the chance to keep in shape. She concedes that the sport is time-consuming, but points out that these constraints also have their benefits because they force her to develop good study habits and self-discipline. It is small wonder that Coach George comments that Ashley, “has the right attitude and focus to be a top-level player.”

More than anything, Ashley appreciates the opportunity that volleyball provides her to be always learning new things. When I asked her to elaborate, she explained that a seemingly instinctive decision on the court is often the result of scouting and video study by the coaches and players, pregame practice and analysis of the opponents' blocking schemes. Yet as soon as the point ends, the rotation and the match-ups change, which means that all of the analysis and the battle of wits begin again. Viewed from this perspective, volleyball resembles nothing so much as a chess match being simultaneously contested on six different boards! —cont on page 4

Spartan Profile: Megan Wallin



To outsiders, senior middle Megan Wallin's 2004 season was a lost year as a result of a torn anterior cruciate ligament in her right knee that occurred in the first match of the Big Ten season. But the year brought a very significant accomplishment, as she earned her bachelor's degree in merchandising management while rehabbing her knee and cheering her

teammates on from the sidelines. Now with her knee back to full strength and selected as a co-captain for the second consecutive year, while starting work on a master's degree in organizational communications, Megan is determined to make the most of her final season as a Spartan.

A native of Sarasota, Florida, Megan is the youngest of Tom and Linda Wallin's three children. With two older brothers to tag after, she became a self-described tomboy and joined them in a wide range of sports and outdoor pursuits. Passive activities such as watching television and playing video games were virtually unknown in her household. She recalls fondly that instead of wearing a hole in the couch, she and her brothers left their mark the family's garage door, which still features numerous dents from attempted dunks.

Her older brothers both eventually played college football, which was one endeavor in which Megan could not follow them. She opted instead to compete in other organized sports, including basketball, volleyball, track and soccer. When she was in eighth grade, her oldest brother entered the Coast Guard Academy and had a roommate from faraway Okemos, Michigan. The two families became close friends and the roommate's father, Dick Comar, gave Megan an MSU sweatshirt. She accepted it gracefully and thought to herself that there was no way she would ever voluntarily live in such a cold climate!

Until eighth grade, Megan was of average height, but that year she began a growth spurt that eventually saw her reach 6'3". This pushed her toward basketball and volleyball, but when she entered Cardinal Mooney High School, she also continued to compete in track and field. She lettered four times in all three sports and was voted the school's most athletic female all four years. She won the state high jump champion as a senior and also served as captain of the basketball and track squads.



Promising athletes are often urged to specialize in one sport, but Megan's coaches encouraged her to continue in all three. She believes that she benefited from following this advice in a couple of ways. For one thing, she found that the skills from the other sports translated well to volleyball, with lay-ups making it easier for her to master slides and the high jump teaching her how to quickly pick up speed and leap explosively. More importantly, playing three sports made it essential for her to develop good time management skills. This knack came in very handy, because in addition to all her athletic commitments, she served as class president all four years!

Megan first received recruiting letters for basketball, but she decided as a junior that volleyball was the sport for her and joined the White Sands Volleyball Club elite team. She explains that she "fell in love with volleyball" and that made it an easy decision. She still feels that way, and observes that volleyball becomes more complicated as a player gets better and plays against tougher competition. A superior athlete can often dominate at the high school level without having to push themselves, but at the college level, everyone is so good that success depends upon demanding the most of their talent.

Megan Wallin loves just such challenges, which is why she couldn't turn down the opportunity to play in the Big Ten Conference. It was of course a difficult decision to attend a university so far away, but she found that coming from a close-knit family actually made it easier. The decision for her to attend MSU was one that she and her family made together and they pledged that the miles would not make a difference and that they would run up as many long-distance charges as needed to maintain their close relationship.

The five years since have brought many challenges and considerable adversity, the most agonizing one coming when her father was stricken with throat cancer and Megan was forced to monitor his treatment helplessly from half a continent away. Fortunately he is now cancer-free.

A less serious transition has been adjusting to Michigan's weather, and Megan admits that she still is none too fond of Michigan winters. Yet when she is away from East Lansing, she now often finds herself thinking about getting home and then realizing that she has started to think of Michigan – snow and all – as home! Easing that transition has been the chance to become much closer to the Comars, who have become like a second mother and father to her.—cont. on p.4

. Photo: MSU Sports Information

Megan Wallin—continued from page 3

Time management is a major issue for any student-athlete, but the experience in high school of managing a jam-packed schedule has stood her in good stead. The best proof of that is that she has managed to graduate in four years and begin graduate school while fulfilling her commitment to the volleyball team. Megan confides that one of her secrets is making a point of sitting in the front of every classroom, communicating with her professors about her schedule conflicts and asking them questions. In return, she has received much valuable advice and several of her professors have come out to watch her matches.

Looking back on her five years at Michigan State, Megan says without hesitation that she would do it all again. She feels that being part of a team of 15 or 16 people has been a wonderful learning experience. As a freshman, she often found herself thinking that it would be easier if all of her teammates were more similar. Yet she soon realized that the variety of personalities and backgrounds made for much more fun and has taught her some valuable life lessons. In particular, she and the six other players (Diana Steplyk, Michaela Kopka, Kim Schram, Marley Bellwood, Mickey Davis and Brooke Langston) who came in together have become like sisters and she knows that they will remain close friends for the rest of their lives.

Megan vividly recalls Chuck Erbe gathering those seven players together and telling them that they were the future of the program and that their accomplishments would be shared by every player who has ever worn a Michigan State volleyball uniform. That is a responsibility that they have all taken to heart and tried to pass on to the players who will continue that legacy after they are gone.

Toward that end, she is determined to end her career on a high note. After aggressively rehabbing the knee, she was able to briefly return to action at the end of the spring season. By May, she was able to compete in the National Open Tournament in Denver on a team that featured such players as former Penn State great Terri Zemaitis-Bouman, Sara Moriega from the 2000 Olympic team, and setters Kele Eveland of Georgia Tech and Jackie Simpson of Wisconsin. She is now playing without a brace and feels the knee is as good as it was before the injury.

Megan is excited about playing for new coach Cathy George and learning a new, faster-paced system. She reports that the spring season brought many adjustments and anticipates that practices, which began on August 10th, will be another intense learning period. However, she has no doubt that the team will be ready for their first match on August 27th.

She is honored to have been selected as a co-captain again this season along with Katie Johnson. As captains, they will have many responsibilities, including helping out the coaching staff, encouraging their teammates, setting goals and establishing schedules. They also plan fun events, such as an annual

Scavenger Hunt, and this year they are introducing a Big Sister program that will pair upperclassmen with younger players to ease their adjustment to college life and Big Ten Volleyball. Megan is quick to add that the captaincy is made much easier by the fact that everyone on the team has great leadership skills.

Her teammates, however, appreciate the value of her leadership. Mickey Davis comments, "Megan is in every sense of the word classic. She is a woman whose features have shone brighter each year. Her competitive nature and leadership have spread to each teammate of hers over the years. Megan displayed great dedication when she worked so hard to come through rehab as quickly as she did. Not only is she an amazing teammate who pushes me every day, she is also a trusted friend."

Megan Wallin is also making plans for life after her career at Michigan State. After she completes one year of her Master's degree, she hopes to find a job in either California or Florida that will allow her to play professional beach volleyball while beginning a career in marketing. Eventually she would like to complete her Master's degree and manage a large marketing or human resources department. Ideally, she would like to work for a sporting goods firm and one of her dreams is to introduce a line of clothing especially designed for taller females. She explains that nobody makes such products as sweatpants that are tapered for long-legged women, with the result that the volleyball players have to borrow some of their workout gear from the football team.

Those are big goals but nobody who knows Megan Wallin's ability to thrive in a demanding environment has any doubt that she will be able to accomplish them.

Ashley Schatzle—cont from page 2

Her cerebral approach continues when Ashley soars into the air for an attack. She uses five basic shots – a line shot, a no-look line, thumb down, thumb up and a dink. Yet selecting a shot is a split-second decision that involves first sizing up the preparedness and positioning of the blockers. Then – while still hanging in the air – she scrutinizes the placement of the back row defenders and settles on her shot.

Kills are the highlight of an outside hitter's game, but Cathy George credits Ashley with possessing "a combined all-around game – defensive, passing and offensive skills." That is no accident, as Ashley probably works even harder on her defense than her offense and finds nothing more satisfying than a big dig.

Ashley had a capsular shift procedure done on her right shoulder in December to address a congenital double-jointedness. After keeping the shoulder in a sling for a month and going through rehab, she believes it is good enough to play with now but notes that she is still learning to trust it again. Spartan fans can't wait to see her in action!

President's Message

by Jenny Bond,
SOC President

Greetings to all members! I hope your summer has been a good one and that you are ready for MSU volleyball. The season promises to be an interesting one with many new faces as well as some familiar ones in new roles, including Mickey Davis as starting setter. The court will also be new, thanks in part to the \$8000 that the SideOut Club donated at the end of last season for it. You will see a new arrangement in Jenison (if you were not at the spring match) and, for the first time, season ticket holders will have seats with backs.

The seat backs story is a good example of how the SOC works for you. When a number of us attended the tournament several years ago at the University of Nebraska, we noticed that the booster club raised funds by renting seat backs at every match. The board started investigating the possibility of a similar fundraiser for the SOC in Jenison. We have received comments that a number of people who support women athletes at Breslin are unwilling to come to Jenison for VB because of the seating. When the board discussed this with Cathy George, we asked her to present the issue of seating to the athletic department administration. She must have been convincing. For the first time, season ticket holders will be assigned specific seats with backs in the special section, which Cathy tells us will be in the center. I encourage you to sign up for season tickets if you have not already done so. With the new court configuration in Jenison, there will not be as many seats available as there have been since 1996. A season ticket will be an excellent way of assuring a good seat at every match. The price is far less than buying tickets for each game and is even lower for seniors. Thank you Cathy for your efforts. Thank you Ron and Shelley for supporting volleyball in this way.

On a personal note, John and I had the opportunity to attend Jenny Rood's wedding in Grand Rapids and the reception afterwards. Many volleyball fans and players were there. Jenny made a beautiful and happy bride. And Fran and Jerry looked great all dressed up! We did think that Fran's outfit would have been enhanced with the SOC apron the club presented to her when she received the club's service award in 2003. She surely could have sold lots of 50-50 tickets at the reception.

I was able to spend some time with the Bellwood family at Sparrow Hospital when Marley underwent another procedure to address her problem with a sporadic fast heart rate. I told the family and Marley when she returned to a room that I was representing the SOC and brought best wishes from each of you. I also assured them that the club would continue to support the team.

Speaking of supporting the team, the SOC will need your continued support. Consider volunteering at the sales table, selling 50-50 tickets or stopping by the club's table to ask how you can help. If you are interested in serving on the board, please let me know so that I can give your name to the nominating committee. If you need information about what the board does and the time commitment, check with me or with any current member.

Julie Carmichael, who served on the board for a number of years and most recently as Vice President, resigned. Most of you will remember Julie as the VB team's unofficial head cheerleader, bus trip planner and contributor in numerous ways. Thank you, Julie, for all of your efforts. Julie and her husband Jack have agreed that they will continue to support the SOC and MSU volleyball. Pam Sievers was elected to complete Julie's term. Welcome, Pam.

I look forward to seeing you at the events that were outlined on the first page of this newsletter. I encourage you to continue to do your part to support MSU volleyball.

Go Green!



Coaching staff (from L to R): Volunteer Assistant Coach Mike Gawlik, Strength and Conditioning Coach Tim "Red" Wakeham, Assistant Coach Russ Carney, Head Trainer Lianna Hadden, Head Coach Cathy George, Director of Volleyball Operations Zakiya Pope, Assistant Coach Ron Arenz

Photo: MSU Sports Information

Roster

number, name	height	position	class year/eligibility year	hometown/last school
2 Jessica Hohl*	6-0	OH	SO/FR	Waterville, Ohio/Anthony Wayne
3 Melany Rarey	5-7	DS	FR/FR	Hartford City, Ind./Blackford
4 Caroline Belich	6-1	M/OH	SR/JR	Burr Ridge, Ill./Lyons Township
6 Heather McDaniel	5-11	MB/OH	FR/FR	Madison Heights, Mich./Lutheran Northwest
7 Brooke Langston	6-2	M	SR/SR	Germantown, Tenn./Evangelical Christian
8 Erin Rice	6-2	M	FR/FR	Burnham, Ill./Thornwood
10 Ashley Schatzle	6-1	OH	SO/SO	Monroe, Mich./Western Michigan University
11 Katie Johnson	6-3	OH	JR/SO	Brooklyn, Mich./Columbia Central
12 Mickey Davis	5-9	S	SR/SR	Villa Hills, Ky./Notre Dame Academy
13 Megan Wallin	6-3	M	SR/SR	Sarasota, Fla./Cardinal Mooney
16 Miken Trogdon	5-7	DS	SO/FR	Lisle, Ill./Wheaton St. Francis
17 Marley Bellwood	5-8	L/DS	SR/SR	Battle Creek, Mich./Lakeview
18 Nicole Colaluca	5-7	L	JR/JR	Naperville, Ill./St. John's University
19 Tracy Bellwood	5-8	DS	JR/SO	Battle Creek, Mich./Lakeview

Head Coach: Cathy George (First year)

Assistant Coaches: Russ Carney (First year), Ron Arenz (First year)

Big Ten Scheduling

Have you ever wondered how, with eleven teams in the Big Ten, each team plays two matches every week? Here's how it's done. Each year, the Big Ten designates five pairs of traveling partners and one unpaired team. The unpaired team rotates each season; last year it was Illinois and in 2005 it will be Indiana. Once the unpaired team is determined, the other schools are paired based on proximity. As a result, most pairs of traveling partners are the same every year.

Every weekend, two of the pairs of traveling partners host two of the other pairs (e.g., if the two Michigan schools are hosting Minnesota and Iowa, then whichever one plays in East Lansing on Friday will be in Ann Arbor on Saturday, and vice versa). That leaves one more pair and the unpaired team. The two traveling partners play each other on Wednesday, and then each of those teams plays the unpaired team: one on Friday and one on Saturday.

The traveling partners for 2005 will be: Iowa and Minnesota; Purdue and Illinois; Ohio State and Penn State; Wisconsin and Northwestern; Michigan and Michigan State.



Rule Changes

Fans will notice a couple of significant rule changes this season. The first is that all teams will be permitted to begin the regular season a week earlier, on the last full weekend in August. Michigan State is taking advantage by hosting Kent State on August 27 at 7 p.m. The second was an increase in the number of substitutions per game from 12 to 15, which will make it easier for teams to use back row substitutes throughout the game. The NCAA also approved an increase in the number of scholarships from 12 to 13, a change that will go into effect in 2006.

Co-captains 2005



Megan Wallin



Katie Johnson

photos copyright MSU Sports Information

Captain's Message

These year's team captains are Megan Wallin, a senior middle from Sarasota, Florida, and Katie Johnson, a sophomore outside hitter from Brooklyn, Michigan. Katie and Megan send along this message to SideOut Club members:

For the first time we were able to go home for the summer, giving us the opportunity to spend time with our families. The team made a promise to stay in close contact and to continue to do the MSU workouts during the summer. Although we are happy that summer volleyball camps are finished, we enjoyed coaching our younger fans. This year the team decided to implement a Big Sister/Little Sister program, where the upperclassmen will help mentor the underclassmen. We thought it was important to help the incoming freshmen adjust to college life as well as the intense Big-Ten season. Pre-season is drawing near and with that comes long-awaited excitement for the upcoming season. We'd like to thank all of our loyal fans for believing in our team.

See you in the Fall!!!

Sincerely,

Megan and Katie

Katie Johnson

Photo copyright MSU Sports Information



Marley Bellwood

(photo: MSU Sports Information)

Alumni News and Notes

Thanks to Kyla Smith for many of these updates. Kyla continues to work as an academic coordinator at Student-Athlete Support Services and has nearly finished her Master's degree.

Maren Witzel is now an assistant volleyball coach at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia

Michaela Kopka was selected as co-winner of the 2005 Bruce VerWest Award, which goes to the Outstanding Junior in Physics or Astrophysics at Michigan State. She recently took her MSATs and is mulling over where to attend medical school.

Diana Steplyk spent part of the summer in London, England, with the MSU Study Abroad program

Jenny Rood was married to Nathan Bedford on June 25 in a beautiful ceremony in Grand Rapids with many of her former teammates in attendance

Several former Spartan volleyballers earned their Bachelor's degrees this spring, including Sara Villwock, Emmy Miller and Jenny Rood, and so did one current player, Megan Wallin

Emmy Miller is doing an internship in Cardiac Rehab at Petoskey Hospital

Stephanie Knopp completed her student-teaching and recently accepted a teaching position in Michigan

Emily Engel works for Intel in Portland, Oregon, and recently purchased a house there

Nikki Colson and new husband Corey Harrington have relocated to Key West, Florida, where Nikki is working in real estate

FALL BIG TEN SCHEDULE

Day	Date	Opponent	Time
Wed	09/21/2005	MICHIGAN	7:00 PM
Fri	09/23/2005	@Indiana	7:00 PM
Fri	09/30/2005	@ Minnesota	7:00 PM
Sat	10/01/2005	@Iowa	7:00 PM
Fri	10/07/2005	PURDUE	7:00 PM
Sat	10/08/2005	ILLINOIS	7:00 PM
Fri	10/14/2005	@Ohio State	7:00 PM
Sat	10/15/2005	@Penn State	7:00 PM
Fri	10/21/2005	WISCONSIN	7:00 PM
Sat	10/22/2005	NORTHWESTERN	8:00 PM
Fri	10/28/2005	@Illinois	7:00 PM
Sat	10/29/2005	@Purdue	7:00 PM
Fri	11/04/2005	IOWA	7:00 PM
Sat	11/05/2005	MINNESOTA	7:00 PM
Wed	11/9/2005	@Michigan	7:00 PM
Sat	11/12/2005	INDIANA	8:00 PM
Fri	11/18/2005	@Northwestern	7:00 PM
Sat	11/19/2005	@Wisconsin	7:00 PM
Fri	11/25/2005	PENN STATE	7:00 PM
Sat	11/26/2005	OHIO STATE	7:00 PM

Non-Conference Schedule

Sat. 8/20—Alumni game—7:00pm—home

Sat. 8/27—Kent State—7:00pm—home

9/1-9/3 MSU Invitational—home**9/1 MSU vs Wichita State—7:00pm**

9/2 S. Florida vs Ball State—11:00am

9/2 Ball State vs Wichita State—4:30pm

9/2 MSU vs S. Florida—7:00pm

9/3 Wichita State vs S. Florida—4:30pm

9/3 MSU vs Ball State—7:00pm

9/9-9/10 @ University of Kansas Tournament

9/16-9/17 @ University of Miami (Florida) Orange and Green Challenge

NCAA tournament starts Dec. 1

NOTE: In the schedule at left, home games are in bold capital letters. All home games are at Jenison Fieldhouse.



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