

Dakota Counsel

December 2017 ORGANIZING * RESEARCH * ADVOCACY * EDUCATION

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DRC Annual Meeting Celebrates Wins, Inspires, and Sets Course for the Future



Keynote speaker Melissa Gavin of RE-AMP presenting to DRC members at the 2017 Annual Meeting

At this year's annual meeting in Dickinson, regional affiliate Badlands Area Resource Council (BARC) served as host, welcoming folks at the Friday evening social and the next day's meeting.

The meeting brought together around 80 fellow DRC members to join in celebrating campaign wins and thoughtfully setting the organization on course for the coming year. New connections were made, and old ones were strengthened. The inspiring guest speaker addressed the importance of community organizing. Outstanding members and affiliates were recognized, and the generosity of members was

shown at the silent auction.

At the Friday evening social, BARC members spoke about how their work to relocate the Davis Refinery has brought critical local impacts to the decision-makers' attention. Linda Weiss said, "Meridian thought they'd be moving dirt by late 2017, but that won't happen because an adjudicative hearing was granted, and the hearing won't be before mid-January at the earliest." Members such as Marie Hoff of Bismarck were appalled at the thought of putting a refinery so close to Theodore Roosevelt National Park saying, "I just can't imagine anyone would think locating an oil refinery right next to a national park would be a good idea!"

"DRC members are the experts of our own lives!"

On Saturday morning, DRC Board Chair April Fairfield opened the meeting with an inspiring introduction and welcome. She emphasized the importance of DRC to North Dakota and how coming together to work on issues that matter makes our voices heard. (See page 2)

Melissa Gavin, Chief Network Officer for RE-AMP was this year's guest speaker. Melissa spoke about the importance of grassroots organizing to make change in our local communities. She talked about the imbalance of power in communities across the country and how to bring power back to communities by grassroots organizing. (Continued on page 3)

Our Legacy of Change



April Fairfield, DRC Board Chair

For the last few months, I have been honored to Chair Dakota Resource Council Board of Directors. DRC is an organization that has stayed steadfast to the values that DRC was founded on. That power comes from the bottom up and that our voices are stronger when we stand together.

Ya know, there isn't anybody else out there doing this in North Dakota, whose power and focus is derived solely by the members and the communities in which they live. That is so exciting, and a model of how change happens.

DRC believes that DRC members are the experts of our own lives and experiences and our concerns guide how we take action.

We are not beholden to politics, we are non-partisan, and we hold ALL our leaders accountable. We are grassroots. We come together in community, on issues that matter in our lives, and we stand together to have our voices heard.

I own a small farm in Stutsman County. It was my Grandfather's farm and it is precious to me. It was the soil he worked, and his father worked before him. He used to say that in all the land, in fact in all the universe, no matter where you go or what you do in your life, this place, this soil, represents home and family and who you are. He said to care for it as you would anything else that is precious, and it will sustain you. The land is the only thing that is constant.

That is how many of us feel about North Dakota. And why I think many of us have been drawn to the work that the members of DRC do. Because we understand that this place, this state is home.

And as DRC members, we envision a prosperous and healthy North Dakota. We respect our land, our people. And we CAN prosper and use this state's beautiful bounty AND have a healthy environment, a sustainable use of natural resources and fair markets.

So again, I say, "Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."

We are DRC and we are the change we seek.

ABOUT US

Dakota Resource Council believes that the most enduring change comes from the bottom up. DRC members organize to take actions to influence public opinion and shape public policy to advance DRC's mission and build people power.

As a non-partisan grassroots organization, DRC members organize on issues impacting our three focus areas of oil and gas, agriculture and food, and clean energy to bring long-term institutional change to communities across North Dakota.

Affiliates

Fort Berthold Protectors of Water & Earth Rights (POWER)

Lisa DeVile, Chair

Badlands Area Resource Council (BARC)

Linda Weiss, Chair

Mckenzie County Energies & Taxation Association (MCETA)

Donny Nelson, Chair

Missouri Valley Resource Council (MVRC)

Chair Vacancy

South Agassiz Resource Council (SARC)

Bette Stieglitz, Chair



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(Continued from page 1)

Melissa talked about how heroes in pop culture are usually super heroes who are “lone chosen restorers of justice” and how we need to disrupt that misconception of who true heroes are. She said, “Ordinary people like us are made to believe that we can’t take on the big guy. But, we are the heroes we’ve been waiting for...We restore our power by doing all of the important work that DRC is doing.”

To see Melissa’s presentation, go to the DRC website or click [HERE](#).

Awards

This year, DRC has had so many grassroots leaders that we wanted to recognize. Our members are the most credible voices working on issues that directly impact their everyday lives. They fight countless hours, attend public hearings, write letters to the editor, and do all they can to let others know about the imbalance of power in their communities.

There were several categories for awards this year: Badlands Area Resource Council received the Phoenix Award for rejuvenating the affiliate. Jeri Lynn Bakken and Todd Leake received the Keepin’ it goin’ Award for commitment to the Agriculture and Food Task Force. Curt Kralicek received the Rising Star award for continuous dedication to the mission of Dakota Resource Council.



BARC receives Phoenix Award



Fort Berthold POWER receives Link Award

Fort Berthold Protectors of Water & Earth Rights (POWER) was awarded the Arthur and Grace Link Volunteer Leadership award for insurmountable courage, unflinching dedication, and service to Dakota Resource Council and North Dakota for protection and justice, for land, water, air, and people.

Fort Berthold POWER led a national campaign for the Bureau of Land Management to limit methane waste in oil and gas production. Now, the three-year-old campaign is fighting against the Trump administration’s efforts to overturn the rules. POWER delivered two resolutions in support of the BLM Methane and Waste Prevention Rule from two tribal governments. The resolutions led to a defeat in the US Senate to repeal the rules.

The Business Meeting

The business meeting on Saturday was well attended by DRC members from across the state. This year DRC adopted a resolution to oppose swine CAFO’s. The membership also overwhelmingly approved changes to DRC’s by-laws after an energetic discussion. The changes came from a 2-year effort that included attorney recommendations and careful vetting by the By-laws Committee and the Board.

Before the meeting came to a close, members of DRC voted in the new Board of Directors to govern Dakota Resource Council in 2018. The new Board is an array of diverse members who are directly involved in DRC campaigns and issues. Continued page 4

Heartfelt thank yous to all those who dedicated time, donated auction items, and came to make the Annual Membership Meeting a hit.

Next year is DRC's 40th

This was the 39½ Annual Meeting in order to adjust our numbering. In 1978, the founding meeting and the end of year annual meeting were counted as 1 and 2. Now, we're looking to DRC's 40th Anniversary Year in 2018. If you have stories or ideas for celebrating this milestone, please let us know. We are strengthening to move forward into the next 40 years.

Newly Elected DRC Board Meets in November

The DRC Board of Directors met in Bismarck November 11. The board welcomed new members elected at the Annual Meeting or by a local affiliate. The new members to the Board are Secretary Jamie Stewart; At-Large Members Angie McGinness, Linda Kittilson, and Ben Lambrecht; and Fort Berthold POWER Representative Tom Abe.

Highlights of the meeting included: debriefed Annual Meeting and October member meet-ups, discussed protecting confidentiality of members' contact information and then approved motion to ask members' permission to release it to affiliates, approved outlines of roles and responsibilities, adopted policy on media spokespeople, discussed status of DRC staff in eastern part of the state, approved Preliminary 2018 Budget proposed by Finance Committee, and discussed CAFO and Farm Bill issues. Discussion of Just Transition was postponed until the next meeting. At the end of the meeting, Todd Leake informed the Board that Grand Forks County Citizens Coalition had decided to disaffiliate.

In addition to Board members, attending the meeting were three staff members.

Linda Weiss elected WORC Vice Chair



DRC Past Chair Linda Weiss of Belfield was elected Vice Chair of the Western Organization of Resource Council (WORC) Board of Directors at the December 2 meeting. She and Lisa DeVille of Mandaree are DRC's representatives to the WORC Board.



Keep up to date with DRC on Facebook @Dakota Resource Council



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CURRENT OFFICERS

April Fairfield, Chair
Curt Kralicek, Vice Chair
Linda Weiss, Past Chair
Jamie Stewart, Secretary
Lisa DeVille, Assistant Secretary
Cheryl Kary, Treasurer
Carol Jean Larsen, Assistant Treasurer

At-large

Angie McGinness
Linda Kittilson
Ben Lambrecht
Donny Nelson

AFFILIATE REPS

BARC: **Pat Hedstrup**, **Wayne Fisher**
FB POWER: **Theodora Bird Bear**, **Tom Abe**
MCETA: Vacant
MVRC: Vacant
SARC: **Bette Stieglitz**, **Lynn Wolff**

DRC STAFF

Don Morrison, Executive Director

don@drcinfo.com

Nicole Donaghy, Organizer/Communications
nicole@drcinfo.com

Liz Loos, Organizer
eloos@drcinfo.com

Liz Anderson, Organizer
liz@drcinfo.com

Tanner Herbert, Organizer
tanner@drcinfo.com

Sonda Sauers, Business Manager
sonda@drcinfo.com

Cecilia Montesdeoca, Training & Engagement Coordinator
cecilia@drcinfo.com

Andrew Larrivee, Administrative Assistant
andrew@drcinfo.com

Why do you love DRC?

In 2017, DRC members:

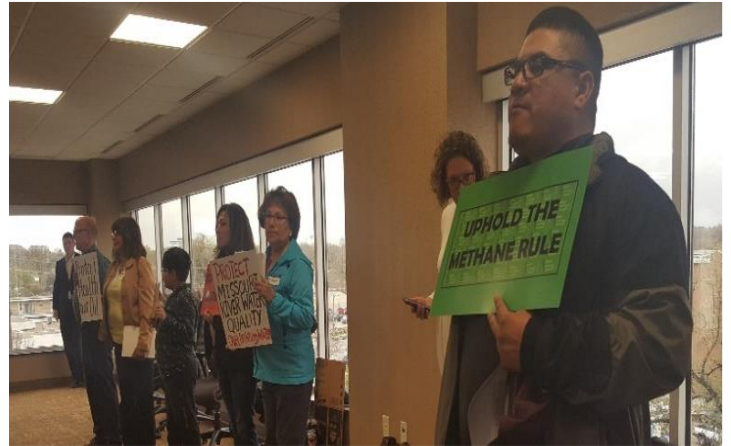
Delayed refinery development near
Theodore Roosevelt National Park



Organized citizens around the dangers of
CAFO's



Facilitated trainings on the principles of
organizing



Defeated the Bureau of Land Management's
decision to suspend federal clean air rules



Defended North Dakota's Anti-corporate
Farming Law to protect family farms



DRC is the only group building grassroots
power in North Dakota! Our members are
the heart of our who we are!

North Dakotans continue to fight Big Ag

North Dakota has a long, rich agricultural heritage. We have always held the qualities of self-reliance, courtesy, and land stewardship close to our hearts. It is these ideals that have led North Dakota to become one of the most agriculturally friendly and diverse states in the nation.

Our state-owned bank offers a variety of loans and bond programs for new and existing farmers and ranchers. Our state-owned mill and elevator provides a fair price and stability for our producers. Today, North Dakota provides half of the nation's hard red spring wheat and two thirds of the nation's durum. North Dakota also is the leading U.S. producer of sunflower, barley, dry edible beans, navy and pinto beans, canola, flax, oats, honey, lentils and dry peas. The state also is a major producer of sugar beets, potatoes, hay and specialty crops such as mustard seed, buckwheat and crambe. On top of producing massive quantities of food, it is important to note that a large portion of this food is graded for human consumption.

But, even with one of the most diverse agricultural markets in the nation, Big Ag corporations are pushing against the 76% of North Dakotans who voted against corporate farms and they are telling us that what our state needs most is more diversity. Specifically, they say we need more swine CAFOs and a devotion to growing feed crops like corn and soy. DRC members do not agree with these corporations.

In October, DRC organizers Nicole Donaghy and Tanner Herbert led a workshop aimed at helping members of Lake Region Concerned Citizens write strong letters to the editor. DRC member, Daril Rainesalo, wrote a [letter to the editor](#) that was published in several daily newspapers across the state. Daril addressed owners of the proposed CAFO:

Taylor Aasmundstad and Daniel Julson, owners of the proposed confined hog factory, do you realize what you're doing to the Lake Region community? Do you care about the impact this will have on future generations?

Lake Region Concerned Citizens is a grassroots group who opposes your proposed confined hog factory located north of Graham's Island State Park, one of the busiest parks in North Dakota. What is concerning are the potential impacts of our community and surrounding areas:

- *\$89 million in tourism per year that will be lost*
- *Decreased values of homes, land, and businesses*
- *Impact on the Lake from run off*
- *North Dakota also is the leading U.S. producer of sunflower, barley, dry edible beans, navy and pinto beans, canola, flax, oats, honey, lentils and dry peas. The state also is a major producer of sugar beets, potatoes, hay and specialty crops such as mustard seed, buckwheat and crambe.*
- *Inhumane conditions and treatment of animals*
- *Long-term impact of land used for waste sites*
- *Lake and well water contamination*
- *Negative health effects on people*
- *Poignant and noxious gases produced*
- *Division of families and neighbors*

EVERYONE that lives in this area should be concerned, because everyone will be affected if this confined hog factory is built. This is not just a problem for surrounding townships, this

problem belongs to us ALL. We should all care about OUR community, OUR land, OUR water, and OUR air. We're up against a state government that supported Grand Prairie Agriculture LLP with OUR taxpayer money to help them get started. This is a big business that isn't invested in this area, just their bottom dollar.

Are the benefits YOU gain from this confined hog factory worth the sacrifice of our community? Can anyone of good moral conscience build this factory and dump waste so close to a lake that has a history of flooding? The people of North Dakota voted against corporate farming by 76%...this is corporate farming! I invite these owners to publicly explain to us how this confined hog factory will benefit our community and not just your pocketbook.

A month later at a seminar in Devils Lake, Daril stood in front of the large group of people and informed them of the dangers their town will face should the CAFO be built.

You can help us with this fight by continuing to write letters to the editor in opposition to CAFOs coming into our state and, by contacting your local township officers and asking them to extend the easements regarding the placement of CAFOs. Contact Tanner at the DRC office for more information.

Coal

Gene Wirtz Goes to DC to support RECLAIM Act

Gene Wirtz, long time DRC leader from Underwood, traveled to Washington DC in early October to urge Congress to pass the RECLAIM Act, which would put people to work cleaning up abandoned coal mines.

Gene was part of a delegation from the Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC) and other states who visited congressional offices. WORC sent members from Colorado, Montana, and North Dakota.

Colin Lauderdale, WORC DC representative, said, "Our Western contingent was an awesome team who walked for miles around the Capitol, gave an earful to every Congressional staffer they met, got on message and stayed on message, talked to the press, and built relationships with all the other fly-in participants. Together, they spread support for and knowledge of the RECLAIM Act outside of Appalachian offices. Everyone had a story of how the changing energy market affects their homes, and how the RECLAIM Act would benefit their communities."

The six Western participants were part of a larger national group that included coal miners, community economic development practitioners, environmental activists, labor union members, wildlife advocates, Native Americans, county and state elected officials, and a farmer (Gene).

Gene said, "It was like a new leaf was turned in our energy community. Instead of negative impacts, we talked about jobs that could be created to remove the scars of old coal mining. Workers in our communities have the skills to reclaim those places. It's ugly how they used to mine and just leave the spoil piles before SMCRA (Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977). Now, the RECLAIM Act is another step forward so we don't just leave people in our community out in the cold without a way to transition." Continued page 8





The bipartisan bill would spend \$1 billion over five years to clean up pollution at old coal mines. If passed North Dakota would benefit from \$20 million. The current status of the bill is that it is out of committee and headed to the House floor.

Coal issues, especially reclamation, have always been important to DRC members. DRC was founded in 1978 largely by western North Dakotans to address impacts of rapid coal development.

Recently, Gene, Mark Trechock and several other members have been DRC's volunteer leaders in keeping DRC in the loop on coal issues while resources for more focused coal-related campaigns

have been scarce.

Efforts are underway to bring coal back into the DRC issue focus. If you are interested in helping DRC do that, please contact Don Morrison in the DRC office.

Oil and Gas



2017 OGTF in-person meeting in Killdeer

DRC's Oil and Gas Task Force Prepares for 2018

Members of the Oil and Gas Task Force (OGTF) held their annual in-person meeting in November in Killdeer. Linda Weiss was elected to continue as Chair and progress was made on updating campaign plans. The Task Force is focusing on upholding the BLM and EPA Methane Rules, protecting Theodore National Park from an oil refinery at its doorstep, and setting up the framework for a radioactive waste campaign.

The Task Force is putting statewide efforts behind two local affiliate campaigns. First is the effort to

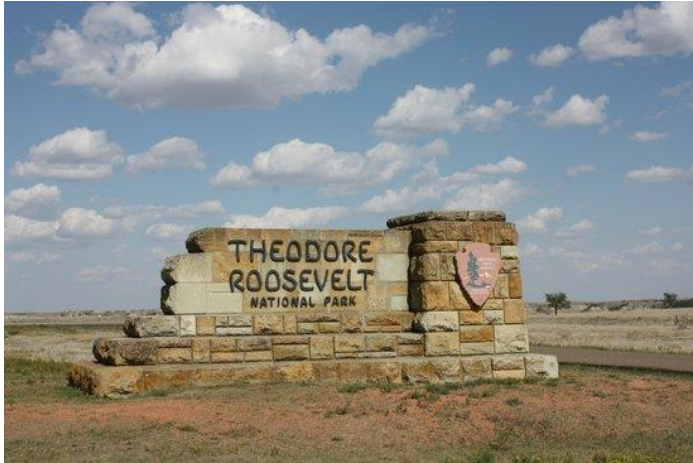
support Fort Berthold POWER's continuing fight to uphold the BLM Methane Rules. The most recent threat was the delay of the rule by Secretary Zinke, just a month before the compliance deadline of January 17, 2018. The OGTF has signed on to letters objecting to the delay and is working with other WORC member groups to let Secretary Zinke and the Trump administration know that many people in the West want the rules to remain intact.

Second, the Task Force supports BARC's work to relocate the Davis refinery from its proposed site of about three miles from the border of North Dakota's only national park. Currently, there is an open public comment period for the draft Air Permit and the Task Force has launched a major social media effort to increase awareness and to provide a way to submit comments to the North Dakota Department of Health. Also, the Task Force will soon launch a photo campaign on Facebook. The effort will include fundraising for research, experts, and other expenses.

These are critical actions because they show decision-makers how many people love and want to protect our national park.

BARC Prepares for Hearings and Comment Periods for Davis Refinery

BARC members continue to shine working hard to relocate the Meridian Energy Group's Davis refinery. As hosts of DRC's annual meeting BARC members Linda Weiss, Pat Hedstrup, and Ruth Molm spoke about the local issues surrounding the proposed refinery location. When summing up all the research she has been doing Pat said, "Meridian is endangering the homes and livelihoods of people who live nearby." She showed why nearby residents should be concerned about impacts to water, air, and land. Linda talked about how BARC members "have been following the permits online and have been to all the public meetings about the refinery." Members at the annual meeting asked for ways to become involved. Several important ways are to respond to action alert emails and to attend public hearings.



The public hearing on the Air Permit will be January 17 at Dickinson State University. DRC action alerts have been sent out and more are coming. The major issue is to tell North Dakota Department of Health to require a Major Source Air Permit rather than the Minor Source Permit that Meridian applied for. Meridian is trying to divide its plans into two phases, so it can get permits for a smaller refinery and avoid meeting the community protection standards for the larger operation is it actually planning. BARC and DRC hope as many members as possible will fill the hearing room and send in comments. The comment period ends January 26. DRC is coordinating with other groups that are fighting

to get a Major Source Permit required. The more people and groups speaking out about this, the stronger chance we have of getting a Major Source Permit required and if that happens, it is likely the refinery will have to be relocated much further away from the park.

The State Water Commission has granted "parties of record" an adjudicative hearing. This is a huge win for BARC and something "we haven't been granted by the North Dakota Department of Health in ten years" according to the attorney representing DRC at the adjudicative hearing. As you all know, in organizing one must celebrate wins and this is a great one to celebrate!

BARC continues to meet regularly and they have added to their numbers since the annual meeting. They are doing research to prepare for the upcoming comment periods. These members are showing their knowledge and passion, especially when it comes to speaking directly to the decision makers.

Fort Berthold POWER Challenges Zinke's Decision on Clean Air

A coalition of groups filed a lawsuit to challenge the Trump administration's suspension of the Bureau of Land Management's Waste Prevention Rule. Members of Fort Berthold POWER gave declarations that show irreparable harm that they have endured living in North Dakota's Bakken Oilfields.

Zinke's action is the latest in a series of unsuccessful attempts by the oil and gas industry and the Trump administration to block the rule, which went into effect in January 2017.

"Secretary Zinke rushed this attempt to suspend the BLM's waste prevention rule without giving tribal members a meaningful opportunity to comment," **said Lisa DeVille, president of the Fort Berthold Protectors of Water and Earth Rights** "We spent years working with BLM to finalize this rule to reduce wasteful gas flares. What this suspension means is more (Continued page 10)

flaring and degraded air quality on Fort Berthold. Secretary Zinke needs to start listening more to the people, rather than the oil and gas industry."

This is the second lawsuit that POWER has filed against the BLM and Trump administration. Read the complaint [HERE](#).

Training & Orientations

DRC Hosts Organizing Meetups to Strengthen Grassroots Narrative across the State

In October DRC hosted a series of Organizing Meetups to bring people together to talk about grassroots organizing and meet more people within our DRC community. The presentation walked through the new member booklet including our values, issue areas, key concepts of organizing, and ways to participate in DRC. During one of the Meetups a member stated, "I bet half of the people in this county are rooting for us. But they are too afraid to take a stance." This member's comment addressed something we are trying to emphasize in our DRC grassroots narrative: there are many ways to participate in DRC, and that every contribution helps advance our members organizing efforts.

POWER IN NUMBERS.
POWER IN PEOPLE.

Find your local
DRC Organizing Meetup



Mon. Oct. 9
6:30 - 7:30 PM
BisMan Co-Op
Bismarck

Tues. Oct. 10
12:00 - 1:00 PM
Dunn Brothers
Bismarck



Tues. Oct. 10
7:00 - 8:00 PM
Buckskin Grill
Killdeer



Wed. Oct. 11
12:00 - 1:00 PM
Perkins Rest.
Dickinson



Fri. Oct. 13
12:00 - 1:00 PM
Atomic Coffee
Fargo

DRC is a resource for communities to build their local power and strengthen their collective voice. We accomplish this by meeting members where they are at, and understanding how they want to participate in DRC and provide opportunities for skills building and leadership development.

We look forward to hosting similar events more frequently in the future as member orientations. In addition, we are strengthening how we welcome new members, so they can better understand what it means to be DRC members. We've started sending a welcome packet when people join or renew. The packet includes a welcome letter, brochure, latest newsletter, member booklet, and engagement survey. Strengthening our DRC narrative is part of initiatives geared to enhance members' knowledge of the organization, increase participation, and better advance DRC's mission.

Fort Berthold POWER Hosts Information Meeting and Organizing Workshop



Fort Berthold POWER has received national attention for their battle to uphold the BLM Methane Rule. In November, POWER hosted an informational meeting in New Town to connect with people in their local community on the issues that matter to them.

The meeting drew in people from different professions and walks of life who were not very familiar with what POWER does, but support what they stand for: a commitment to work toward a sustainable society with an awareness for all life.

The meeting highlighted how community organizing is a specific approach to securing short-term and long-term change. There was good discussion about how power dynamics are at the root of many forms of injustices and there is a need for active participation in the democratic decision-making practices to hold decision makers accountable.

The workshop consisted of multiple exercises that prompted how we think and act in a community organizing approach. Most of us are familiar with the phrase if you give a man a fish he eats for a day. If you teach a man to fish, he eats for life. The community organizing spin on this phrase is making sure we have access to the lake, that we have a seat at the table.

POWER is pleased to give a warm welcome to the new members who joined that day. Welcome to the DRC team!

Loos Assigned Eastern North Dakota

Organizer Liz Loos has been assigned to organize in eastern North Dakota. Liz has been setting up face to face meetings to identify grassroots interest, issues, and leadership. If you have time to sit down and visit with Liz, please call the DRC office to set up an appointment today!





*Happy Holidays and a prosperous
New Year from Dakota Resource
Council Staff!*

*Don, Nicole, Sonda, Cecilia,
Liz A, Liz L, Tanner, and Andrew*

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