

 ORIGINAL

Transcript of

**Date:** June 4, 2007

**Case:**

v.

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A P P E A R A N C E S

ON BEHALF OF THE PLAINTIFF:

ON BEHALF OF THE DEFENDANT:

ALSO PRESENT:

Videographer

1	I N D E X	
2	Name of Witness	
3	DR.	
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1 . Would counsel please introduce  
2 themselves?

3 MS. : on behalf of the  
4 Plaintiff,

5 MR. And for the  
6 Defendant,

7 VIDEOGRAPHER: Would the court reporter  
8 please swear in the witness?

9 DR. ,  
10 duly been sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth,  
11 and nothing but the truth, testifies as follows:

12 E X A M I N A T I O N

13 BY MS.

14 Q. Good afternoon, Dr. . Can you  
15 tell us a little bit about your educational  
16 background, starting with where you went to medical  
17 school?

18 A. Yes. I graduated from University of  
19 Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey School of  
20 Osteopathic Medicine in 1986. Then I did a one-year  
21 rotating internship at John F. Kennedy Memorial

1 Hospital in southern New Jersey, Stratford, New  
2 Jersey, 1986 to '87. From '87 to 1990, I was in a  
3 residency program at Kessler Rehabilitation Center  
4 and University Hospital in Newark and East, East and  
5 West Orange, New Jersey. Following completion of  
6 that program, I took my board certification exam and  
7 board certified. I practiced in the Sarasota,  
8 Florida, area for 12 years and then came to Maryland  
9 in 2002 and have been in this area since.

10 Q. So how long have you been in private  
11 practice?

12 A. Since 1990, which would be approximately  
13 7, 17 years.

14 Q. And can you give us a brief summary of  
15 what your private practice has involved?

16 A. Yes. In between Florida and here, the  
17 specialty of physical medicine and rehabilitation,  
18 so I've dealt with a combination of physical  
19 injuries that people have sustained either through,  
20 through trauma or illnesses. My patient population  
21 would be patients that may have had automobile

1 accidents, suffered musculoskeletal injuries,  
2 strokes, amputations, head injuries, spinal cord  
3 injuries, and I would manage them either a  
4 combination in a rehabilitation center acutely and  
5 then in the office dealing with physical issues,  
6 pain management problems that, that the patients  
7 would have.

8 Q. And you mentioned that you were board  
9 certified?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. What specialty are you board certified in?

12 A. In physical medicine and rehabilitation.

13 Q. And are all doctors board certified?

14 A. If you complete a residency program in  
15 PM&R, you are board eligible and then you, you have  
16 the opportunity to take the board exams. They're,  
17 it's a two-part exam. There's a written exam, and  
18 then after I believe one year in private practice,  
19 you can sit for the oral exams.

20 Q. Okay. At this time, we would offer  
21 as an expert in the field of medicine



1 and specifically with osteopathic medicine and  
2 physical rehabilitation.

3 MR. : No questions.

4 Q. Doctor, before testifying here today, did  
5 you have a chance to review 's medical  
6 records and bills?

7 A. Yes, I have.

8 Q. And what records specifically did you  
9 review for ?

10 A. The records from Hospital,  
11 where he was taken immediately after his, his  
12 accident, then the, the records from  
13 Hospital where he came for acute rehabilitation  
14 following his accident, and then my office, my  
15 office notes and also some of the, the charges that  
16 were presented from Hospital, the  
17 prosthetic company and I believe also an outpatient  
18 therapy center that he attended.

19 Q. Would that have been  
20 Physical Therapy?

21 A. Yes, it would.

1 Q. Okay. And did you review those records as  
2 well in the chart in front of you?

3 A. I have, did review those briefly.

4 Q. Okay. And did you rely on the records  
5 that you reviewed in forming any opinions you hold  
6 here today?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Taking you back, Doctor, to September of  
9 2005, you mentioned initially that was  
10 seen at Hospital Center. When did  
11 you first meet ?

12 A. It was September 2005, when he  
13 was transferred to Hospital was my  
14 first visit with him.

15 Q. And what -- if you could just briefly  
16 summarize for the ladies and gentlemen of the jury  
17 what Hospital Center did before he  
18 came to Hospital, which is where you  
19 first encountered .

20 A. From, from the record and from talking  
21 with , he was driving a motorcycle that

1 was involved in an accident. He was struck by, by a  
2 motor vehicle and caused a severe trauma to his left  
3 leg. He was taken to the trauma center on September  
4 the date of the accident, 2005, where  
5 initially, he was stabilized due to massive blood  
6 loss and shock, and his, his wound was stabilized  
7 and then it was converted to a left above the knee  
8 amputation. Originally, the injury was to the, the  
9 upper portion of the lower leg. From the records,  
10 it said that the tibia and all the flesh was, you  
11 know, severely injured and mangled, so the first  
12 surgery was just to clean that up and stabilize the  
13 wound, but that was not a practical level for, for  
14 him to use a prosthesis, so it was eventually  
15 converted to an above the knee amputation.

16 Q. And why was he transferred from  
17 Hospital Center to Regional?

18 A. Regional has an acute, an acute  
19 rehabilitation unit on the fifth floor that I'm the  
20 medical director of. It's a CARF accredited or  
21 certified acute rehab facility, and after somebody

1 has a traumatic amputation, there, there is a series  
2 or a process that needs to occur for, you know, for  
3 them before they, you know, go back home before they  
4 can use a prosthesis, and we try to get them to the  
5 facility to educate them and to do additional  
6 medical management after their acute hospitalization  
7 is finished.

8 Q. Can you walk us through some of the  
9 education that the, that the patient needs to  
10 undergo before they can go home, some of the things  
11 they need to learn?

12 A. Yes, surely. Any, any person that comes  
13 in with, with an amputation, you know, there are  
14 several areas that need to be addressed. You know,  
15 first off is, you know, is pain control, you know,  
16 working on that, teaching the patient how to  
17 adequately view their residual limb with, with a  
18 mirror to make sure that the incision line is  
19 closed, that there's no, there, there are no signs  
20 of infection or drainage that might, you know, might  
21 be a complication.

1                   There's also a whole, you know,  
2   psychological issue that, that has to be dealt with  
3   frcm, you know, loss of body image, and the other,  
4   other issues are, are still medical, medical  
5   management, making sure that there's still not  
6   continued blood loss or, you know, that would  
7   require blood transfusion, and the patient would be  
8   seen by the therapy team, which would be physical  
9   therapy and occupational therapy. In his case,  
10  there's also speech therapy, but                   was not  
11  in need of that, and they, those therapists would  
12  work on teaching him how to properly wrap the  
13  residual limb with, with a bandage, to get it to  
14  shrink and to form properly, working on just, just  
15  basic skills, you know, learning how to transfer and  
16  to, and to walk with the walker. The person has one  
17  leg, so they're only going to be able to hop for  
18  short distances using a, using a walker. How to get  
19  in and out of a bathroom at a wheelchair level,  
20  show, show the person adaptive equipment that they  
21  could utilize to make their transition back to home

1 easier and certainly safer.

2 Q. You mentioned something about pain  
3 control, and I notice in reviewing your records and  
4 some other records, there's a lot of discussion  
5 about phantom pain. Can you describe for the ladies  
6 and gentlemen of the jury and for me what phantom  
7 pain is?

8 A. Yes. Phantom sensation or phantom pain  
9 occurs after a, an amputation occurs. What happens  
10 is the nerves going to the rest of the limb have to  
11 be cut, and in a, in a lower leg amputation, it's  
12 the, the sciatic nerve gets, gets transected and  
13 cut, so that is still giving information to the, to  
14 the brain regarding the ankle, the foot and the, and  
15 the lower leg. The brain has to eventually learn  
16 to, to shut that off, so sometimes for several days,  
17 weeks or even months, people can still have the  
18 sensation that the foot or the ankle, you know, is  
19 still there. Sometimes it can just be, you know, a  
20 minor, you know, annoyance that feels like the, the,  
21 the toe itches, or sometimes it can actually be

1 painful where they may describe that the foot feels  
2 like it's in a vice or, you know, somebody is, you  
3 know, you know, injuring the leg, but most of the  
4 time, it can be managed with a combination of  
5 medications to help minimize those sensations.

6 Q. And after [redacted] was discharged  
7 from [redacted] Hospital, did you continue to  
8 be involved in his care?

9 A. Yes, I have.

10 Q. Okay. After a person sustains an injury  
11 like this and they go through the acute rehab at  
12 [redacted] Hospital, what's, what's the next  
13 step?

14 A. Initially, after a traumatic amputation,  
15 it generally takes at least six weeks before a  
16 temporary prosthetic limb could be fit, and that is  
17 to give the, the initial surgical site a chance to  
18 heal, remove any sutures or staples, and I believe  
19 [redacted] also had a portion of the wound that had  
20 a little bit of a delayed closure to it, so that  
21 had, that took some extra time to finally heal up,

1 and the staples were removed. There actually were  
2 some staples that were retained that initially  
3 because of the swelling I didn't see but then  
4 removed those at a, at a later date, so, so the  
5 person will, you know, will go home without a  
6 prosthesis, and then when they are at approximately  
7 the six-week mark, if everything is healed up  
8 properly, I will then, you know, recommend that a  
9 temporary prosthesis be, be initiated through one of  
10 the local prosthetic companies.

11 Q. And was that done in this case?

12 A. Yes, it was.

13 Q. Okay. And Doctor, just referring you to,  
14 you know, your course of treatment with  
15 early on, about how often were you seeing  
16 him?

17 A. When he was in the hospital, he was being  
18 seen on a daily basis. After he went home, I was  
19 seeing him on a monthly basis, and then we've begun  
20 to stretch those out, and now, it's approximately  
21 every three months.



1           Q.    Okay.  And Doctor, directing your  
2   attention to your initial evaluation of  
3                    after he was discharged from  
4   Hospital, can you tell the ladies and gentlemen of  
5   the jury how he was doing on your first visit with  
6   him after he was discharged from  
7   Hospital?

8           A.    When, when he first, you know, came back,  
9   he, you know, appeared to be, you know, adapting,  
10   you know, fairly well, you know, with a good  
11   attitude, you know, considering the, the severity of  
12   his injury.  He did have very supportive family  
13   that, that was helping him.  Initially came back in  
14   with, in a wheelchair and a walker, and you know,  
15   that, that, you know, he transitioned out of that,  
16   you know, gradually as he got the prosthetic  
17   devices, and I saw him through his, his first and  
18   second prosthetic legs that had, that had pluses and  
19   minuses.  There were, there were some changes that  
20   needed to be made.  He needed a second leg as the  
21   residual limb began to shrink so his socket became

1       toc loose and he required another one.

2                       There were, you know, issues that he  
3       noticed that, you know, immediately weren't going to  
4       be, you know, known problems that he noticed when he  
5       was trying to walk up a hill or walk down a hill.  
6       You know, there, there were issues with being able  
7       to control the prosthesis appropriately, so these  
8       were, you know, various things that we, you know,  
9       discussed and tried to adapt his prosthetic device  
10      to that something that, you know, be as functional  
11      for him as possible.

12               Q.     And it looks like from the records that  
13      ultimately, you recommended that he get a C leg?

14               A.     Yes.

15               Q.     Can you describe for us what a C leg is  
16      and why he's an appropriate -- if he's an  
17      appropriate candidate for that, why?

18               A.     Yes, he is. A C leg is made by the  
19      Otto-Bach Company. It's a German prosthetic company  
20      that has been really on the forefront of prosthetics  
21      for, for many, many years. Essentially, it is a

1 computerized knee system that adjusts based on the,  
2 the type of angle the person is walking on, the, the  
3 speed that they're walking, so there, there  
4 essentially is a, a mini computer in this, in this  
5 knee, where some of the others, the other  
6 prosthetics are, you know, are more basic. They  
7 don't have the, the changing capabilities that, that  
8 a C leg would have.

9 Q. During the course of his treatment with  
10 you, he also attended outside physical therapy?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. And can you tell us why that's important  
13 to complete an outside physical therapy program?

14 A. Initially, when you get a prosthetic limb,  
15 it, it is difficult to, to start walking with it.  
16 It is not, it is not a simple procedure, and  
17 especially with a above the knee prosthetic device,  
18 you have a knee joint as well as an ankle joint that  
19 you have to learn how to, how to propel, how to use  
20 it, putting on the socket. Most sockets are suction  
21 suspension where there is not a, any kind of belts

1 or cable device that holds it on. It is just a,  
2 it's a very snug fit that, that keeps it on, and  
3 that's, that's is the most functional way, you know,  
4 for somebody to, to use it, but, you know, it takes  
5 time. You have to, you know, be with a therapist,  
6 learn how to adjust your body weight, shift your  
7 body weight. The, the knee can buckle on you if  
8 you're, if you're not positioned properly over it,  
9 so it's a process that often takes, you know,  
10 several weeks to several months, depending on the  
11 patient's mental and physical capabilities.

12 Q. Can you describe for me and the ladies and  
13 gentlemen of the jury how much energy it takes to,  
14 to walk with a prosthetic device vs. walking without  
15 a prosthetic device for --

16 A. Yes. Any time there is a lower extremity  
17 amputation, the, the energy requirements are  
18 increased. For a below the knee, it's approximately  
19 a 50 percent increase in, in energy requirements,  
20 and for an above the knee, it's approximately  
21 75 percent, 75 percent or higher. What this

1 translates into is the person getting tired, you  
2 know, easier. Where their, their walking ability  
3 maybe was for a mile, you know, or more before an  
4 amputation, it's significantly less after. It's  
5 something that you're, you're propelling the  
6 residual limb from just one point and the weight is  
7 not distributed properly, you know, for your body,  
8 so it leads to increased energy requirements, and  
9 since you do have to shift your weight, it does put  
10 more wear and tear on other joints on your opposite  
11 unaffected leg.

12 Q. Shifting gears a little bit, Doctor, when  
13 you first started treating \_\_\_\_\_ was, was  
14 it your understanding that he was working at the  
15 time or just before the accident?

16 A. Yes, I believe he was.

17 Q. Okay. And at some point after the  
18 accident, did you and \_\_\_\_\_ discuss what would be  
19 appropriate and when it would be appropriate for him  
20 to try and go back to work?

21 A. Yes, we did. I believe he was working as

1 an information technology computer person for one of  
2 the Federal government agencies, and initially, he  
3 was able to work at home, and then we discussed, you  
4 know, how he, how he could transition back into the  
5 workplace and what the physical requirements were  
6 going to be for the job.

7 Q. Are you familiar with what his initial  
8 work schedule was when he was going into the office  
9 vs. what it is now?

10 A. I believe he was going in two to three  
11 times per week initially, and now, I believe he's  
12 back at a, at a five day per week going into the  
13 office.

14 Q. And when was the last time you saw

15

16 A. The last visit with was on April  
17 2007.

18 Q. Okay. And you feel free, you can  
19 obviously review your own chart if you need to  
20 refresh your memory on anything, but can you tell  
21 the ladies and gentlemen of the jury how was

1 doing at about the one-year mark after his accident?  
2 I believe you saw him in September of 2006. If you  
3 could sort of take us, take us backwards a bit and  
4 let us know how he was doing approximately one year  
5 after the accident.

6 A. By the one-year mark, he had, he had  
7 obtained the C leg that was enabling him to be more  
8 functional from ambulating. He had been able to go  
9 off the medications that were being used to treat  
10 his chronic and phantom pain, so he, you know, he  
11 had definitely appeared to be, you know, improving,  
12 you know, nicely and, you know, having a very good  
13 attitude about the prosthesis and, you know, doing  
14 about as well as one, you know, could expect for a,  
15 a traumatic amputation.

16 Q. And how was he doing the last time you saw  
17 him on April of 2007?

18 A. Again, he seemed to be, you know, back to  
19 work, you know, doing very well. Again, and we did  
20 discuss some of the issues that, you know, that, you  
21 know, that always come up with a traumatic

1 amputation that once the, once he takes the leg off,  
2 you know, he once again, you know, becomes a person  
3 with an impairment. You know, he just can't, you  
4 know, pop out of the chair or, you know, out of bed  
5 in the middle of the night to get, you know, to get  
6 a glass of water. He is always conscious and  
7 cognizant of, of the fact that the leg is not there,  
8 and even when he, you know, he is walking, he is  
9 acutely aware of, you know, looking ahead, what the,  
10 what type of terrain it is, is there, you know, is  
11 the sidewalk even, is there a slope to it. You  
12 know, things that we take for granted, you know, he  
13 now has to think about almost, you know, constantly.

14 Q. Are you planning on seeing  
15 again in the future?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And how often is it that you expect you'll  
18 need to see over the course of the next year,  
19 over the course of the next five years? Will he  
20 need ongoing care with you?

21 A. Right now, we've been following up



1 approximately every three months, but you know, I  
2 would think that by the start of 2008, that could go  
3 to once every six months, and, and then probably  
4 after that, about once a year or, you know, or more  
5 frequently if necessary.

6 Q. Okay. And what are your average charges  
7 for an office visit?

8 A. Between \$75 to \$100.

9 Q. In addition to office visits with your  
10 office, do you expect that will require any  
11 ongoing medication?

12 A. It's possible, I mean, you know, over the  
13 years that things change, and after, you know, after  
14 wearing a prosthesis for, you know, for many years,  
15 there may be, you know, other problems that come up  
16 that are, you know, not immediately apparent, but as  
17 I mentioned, there can be wear and tear on other  
18 joints, and it, you know, may cause some other  
19 difficulties. I, I believe he, he had arthroscopic  
20 surgery to his right knee in the past, so, so there  
21 may be, you know, potentially some issues there as,

1 as time elapses.

2 MR. : Move to strike.

3 Q. And generally speaking, from the date of  
4 the accident up until today, is  
5 progress about what you would expect from a person  
6 that suffered from this kind of an injury?

7 A. Oh, yes, yeah. He definitely met my  
8 expectations and, and exceeded in several ways.

9 Q. And can you describe the ways that he  
10 exceeded your expectations?

11 A. The, the positive attitude that, that he  
12 had, the very supportive family, the fact that he  
13 was able to get back to his, his work and his job on  
14 pretty much a full-time basis and, you know, never  
15 a, you know, an attitude of negativity or feeling  
16 sorry for himself, so you know, accepted that this  
17 accident happened and he was just going to go  
18 forward and make the best of the situation.

19 Q. Okay. Doctor, I need to ask you a couple  
20 of legalese questions. You have to bear with me  
21 with the wording for a moment, but do you have an

1 opinion within a reasonable degree of medical  
2 certainty as to what the specific injury was that  
3 suffered from as a result of the  
4 September 2005, car crash?

5 A. Yes, I do.

6 Q. And what is that opinion?

7 A. The opinion is that as a traumatic event,  
8 his left leg was severely crushed and it required a  
9 left above the knee amputation to be performed.

10 Q. And do you have an opinion within a  
11 reasonable degree of medical certainty as whether or  
12 not according to the AMA guidelines he has a  
13 permanent injury?

14 A. Yes, he does.

15 Q. And do you have an opinion within a  
16 reasonable degree of medical certainty as to what  
17 ongoing medical care will need in the  
18 future, including visits to your office?

19 A. Yes, I believe I have.

20 Q. Okay. And your -- you have, you have an  
21 opinion on that issue?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And what is that opinion?

3 A. That he will continue to need ongoing care  
4 and, and follow-up services.

5 Q. Okay. Doctor, I'm going to show you  
6 what's been marked as Plaintiff's Exhibit A. That's  
7 a summary and index of past medical  
8 expenses to date, and I just want to kind of walk  
9 you through these one by one.

10 A. Uh-huh, yes.

11 Q. The total charges from his  
12 Hospital Center from September of 2005  
13 through September 2005 total \$21,646.28. In  
14 your opinion, are those charges fair, reasonable,  
15 necessary and causally related to the September  
16 2005, accident?

17 A. Yes, they are.

18 Q. Moving to Hospital where  
19 he was from September of 2005 through  
20 September 2005, those total bills are  
21 \$9891.54. Do you have an opinion as to whether or

1 nct that charge is fair, reasonable, necessary and  
2 causally related to the September 2005,  
3 accident?

4 A. Yes, they are.

5 Q. The Physical Therapy  
6 services from October 2005, through January  
7 2006, and that was for his outpatient  
8 therapy that he had?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Their total bill is \$2158. Are those  
11 charges fair, reasonable, necessary and causally  
12 related to the car crash of September 2005?

13 A. Yes, they are.

14 Q. And your bills, which go from October  
15 of 2005 through April 2007, in the amount of  
16 \$1086.18, are your charges fair, reasonable,  
17 causally related and necessary from the accident of  
18 September of 2005?

19 A. Well, yes.

20 Q. I've never gotten a no on that one before.  
21 The charges associated with Prosthetics for

1 the original prosthesis and then the revised  
2 prosthesis, those total charges are \$51,309. Are  
3 those charges fair, reasonable, necessary and  
4 causally related to the September 2005,  
5 accident as far as local prosthetics go?

6 A. As far as prosthetic costs go, that, that  
7 is reasonable and customary in my opinion.

8 Q. Okay. And the prescription medications of  
9 600 -- \$762.27, are those charges fair,  
10 reasonableness, necessary and causally related to  
11 the September 2005, accident?

12 A. Yes, they are.

13 Q. There's a charge for \$195 for travel  
14 crutches which were obtained by . Do you  
15 believe that that charge is fair, reasonable,  
16 necessary and causally related to the September  
17 2005, accident?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Okay. So the total past medical bills of  
20 \$87,048.27, in your opinion, is that total amount of  
21 past medical expenses fair, reasonable, causally

1 related and necessary as a result of the September  
2 2005, accident?

3 A. Yes, they are.

4 Q. Okay. And during the time period that  
5 was under your care for some, some  
6 portions of his care, did you advise him that he  
7 should not go back to work for some period of time?

8 A. Yes. Yeah, initially, that was impossible  
9 for him to do.

10 Q. Okay. Could we go off the record for a  
11 minute?

12 VIDEOGRAPHER: We're off the record at  
13 4:31 p.m.

14 (Brief recess.)

15 VIDEOGRAPHER: We're back on the record at  
16 4:32 p.m.

17 MS. : Thank you, . At  
18 this time, the Plaintiff would offer into  
19 evidence Plaintiff's Exhibit A.

20 MR. : Subject to the objection that I  
21 spoke about with respect to the wage claim, I

1           have no objection. Doctor -- are you finished?

2           MS.       : Yes.

3                           E X A M I N A T I O N

4 BY MR.       :

5           Q.     Doctor, I just have two questions, believe  
6 it or not. First of all, would you tell me what  
7 travel crutches are? It has something to do with  
8 travel, apparently?

9           A.     Yes. You know, they're, they're more  
10 portable types of crutches that would, that would  
11 be, you know, foldable, essentially --

12          Q.     Okay.

13          A.     -- so they could be packed away.

14          Q.     Okay. And the other question I have for  
15 you is with respect to the visit                   made to  
16 you I think it was on January           of this year,  
17 January           2007, if you have that report in front  
18 of you?

19          A.     Yes.

20          Q.     He indicated that he was increasing his  
21 exercise tolerance. Were there exercises that you



1 had recommended to him that he was doing?

2 A. When was, you know, was home, he was  
3 trying to get back into condition. You know, he had  
4 been, he had been hospitalized, and you know, you're  
5 getting, you're deconditioned from that, so he, you  
6 know, I think was trying to gradually improve at  
7 home what he could do to then, you know, translate  
8 that to what he, you know, hopefully could then do  
9 in the workplace.

10 Q. And what kind of exercises were those?

11 A. Well, you know, mostly, he had obtained,  
12 he had had a treadmill at home, so he was trying to  
13 see how long he could walk on that treadmill, so I  
14 believe at that time, he was up to about 10 to 15  
15 minutes of walking, so he was looking at that as  
16 from when he parked his car to, to getting into the  
17 office, you know, would that, you know, would he be  
18 able to then translate what he could do at home --

19 Q. Okay.

20 Q. -- into the workplace.

21 Q. So your note of January 2007 indicates

1 that at least one of the exercises he was doing was  
2 on a treadmill and he was averaging 10 to 15 minutes  
3 an evening on the treadmill; is that correct?

4 A. He said he was doing it about three times  
5 per week.

6 MR. : Okay. Thank you, sir. That's  
7 all I have.

8 MS. : Nothing based on that.

9 VIDEOGRAPHER: This concludes the video  
10 deposition at 4:34 p.m.

11 (The deposition concluded at 4:34 p.m.)

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