



Official Publication of the
West Allis Radio Amateur Club

Hamtrix

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Volume 73, Issue 8 August , 2024

AUGUST CLUB HAPPENINGS



NUT NET
3.985mhz
Monday-Saturday
8:15am CT

WARAC 4th Tuesday
Breakfast
At the Forum
Layton & Hyw 100 at
8:30am

The Milwaukee-Florida Net
time is:
7:15 – 8:00AM Central
8:15 – 9:00AM Eastern
Mon through Sat



August Monthly Meeting Pizza in the Park

Tuesday Aug 13th
6:00 PM to 8:00 PM



Lions Park

Picnic Shelter #2
14900 W Overland Trail
New Berlin, WI



Sendik's Grill fundraiser
September 7, 2024
11:00 to 4:00 pm
At the New Berlin store
Be there

Sign up at meeting

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WARAC 4th Tuesday Breakfast

NOTE NEW LOCATION

Several years ago there was talk among Nut Net members that we should get to meet each other. A breakfast get together idea was started. It was open to all hams, XYL/partners and anyone who wanted to learn about amateur radio. Even visiting OM/XYL couples joined us.

So, on the fourth Tuesday each month at 8:30 am we meet at **The Forum Restaurant, corner of HWY 100 and Layton, Greenfield, WI**. Looking forward to seeing you, mark your calendar.

Phil, W9NAW

WARAC

Find Us On The Air

VHF Simplex 146.55 Mhz

Looking for a Club Member to chat with? Fire up the VHF rig and give a shout out on the VHF Simplex Frequency 146.55. You'll be surprised how often someone is listening. Hit the PTT and say "Hello"

DMR - BM TG 3155 WI State

The WI State 3155 TG is available on all the local DMR Repeaters AND via your HotSpot. Put yourself monitoring and come find a Club Member

Nut Net - Mon to Sat on 3.985 Mhz @ 8:15 AM

Join The Nut Net on 80 Mtr SSB from 8:15 to 9:00 AM Mondays thru Saturdays. Check-ins are from all over WI. You'll be a Nut Netter regular in no time. This is a general discussion net that gets your day started out right.

Milw - Florida Net - Mon to Sat 14.290 Mhz 7:00 AM

Join Tom, K9BTQ, for this early morning Check In Net, Mon thru Sat on 20M from 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM. Get the news to get your day started out just right.

6 Meter Chat - Wed, Fri 50.160 Mhz @ 9:30 AM

Paul, W9PCS, hosts this informal 6m online get together on Wed and Fri starting at 9:30 AM. This is a round table discussion and everyone is welcome to drop by and join in.

WARAC General Meeting Minutes – July 9, 2024

Called to order by Mike Johnson WO9B @ 7:05pm.

Attendance: 26 – 25 Members, 1 Visitor.

Mike: – Did intro's.

June General Meeting Minutes: - Approved.

June Board Meeting Minutes: - Approved.

Treasury Report – Bill N9KPH: - Approved. Club budget is currently on track for the year.

New Berlin Outreach: Plans are to send the recreation department Pizza. A Thank you for the use of the meeting room.

Sendik's grill event Frank KA9FZR: Sat. Sept. 7th. 11Am to 4pm. Last one for the year.

Scholarship – Howard WA9AXQ: The ARRL has not listed the scholarship winners. ARRL say the endowment fund is on track to provide 2k of the \$3K scholarship. We will know after Dec. 31st.

WIQSO - Chuck W9WLX: All the plaques have been distributed. Chuck was able to personally hand deliver 3 of the plaques. WARAC was one of the 1st. clubs to allow self spotting.

Wednesday park Ops – Mike: 7/10 Greenfield park area #4, NW corner, 2pm.

Future meetings:

August: Pizza in the park. Lions park, just North of our meeting location. 6 – 8pm.

October: Elections. Think about running for a position.

November: Dues for 2025.

Field day: Club members talked about their experiences. Weather issues, setup problems, operating, and band conditions.

Presentation – Rich W9ABE: AllStarLink

Phone for the road. “*AllStarLink is a network of Amateur Radio repeaters, remote base stations and hot spots accessible to each other via Voice over Internet Protocol.*” () Ham AllStar is digital voice over the internet.

Can be used on vhf, uhf. You need to create an account with AllStar , buy or build your own node. To use you use the node access ID# of the node you want to connect to, through a hotspot with a radio, or computer (pc/ linux) or smartphone w/app(android - dvs switch). You can build or buy your node. AllStar hotspot.

Kits4Hams , or ClearNode by Node Ventures . The site for registering, documentation for setting up your node, getting started. List of nodes. Bubble chart of nodes. Node status.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:26 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Bill Dargis KD9BJZ

Secretary WARAC, July 9, 2024

WARAC Board Meeting Minutes – July 23, 2024

Board meeting called to order by Feroz Ghose WU9N @ 7:08PM.

Present: Feroz Ghose WU9N, Mike Johnson WO9B, Bill Dargis KD9BJZ, Bill Reed N9KPH, Frank Humpal KA9FZR, Pierre Porter KD9SSY.

Dick Strassburger from the MRAC club contacted Feroz about our club collaborating with there swapfest. What kind of help are they expecting from us. What would be the benefits be for our club. Not enough information was provide to make a decision at this time. Swapfest's are a lot of work. We need more information. What else could we collaborate on in the future, that would benefit both of our Clubs. Feroz will try to get more details.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:42PM.

Respectfully Submitted
Bill Dargis KD9BJZ
WARAC Secretary, July 23, 2024

Contest Corner and DX Report Michael Falk, AA9RK

Hot August nights and hot ham radio bands (assuming there aren't any X-class solar flares)...

I didn't get anything in last month's Hamtrix due to publication deadlines and my travel, but this month, I'm ready if you are.

There's a 48 hour CW contest on August 10th and 11th, if that's your thing. The Worked All Europe DX Contest, CW edition, will run on 80 through 10 meters. Much like in the CQ Worldwide contests, you get more points for contacts on the lower bands, so if you are able to make contacts on 40 or 80, it will help your score. August 10th and 11th also bring the an SKCC and a FISTS event (if WAE is not your thing), the Maryland/DC QSO Party, Kentucky State Parks on the Air, and the 6 Meter Fall Sprint (yes, it is VHF Sprint time again. Didn't we just do those?). As always, we'll hope for some propagation enhancement on 6 meters; otherwise it will just be awfully quiet.

On the 17th and 18th, there is a marquee phone event – the North American QSO Party, SSB – along with a VHF+ event (the ARRL 10 GHz contest), a CW/QRP event (the NJQRP Skeeter Hunt), a digital event (the SARTG WW RTTY Contest), and a bevy of other specialized events. Focusing on the QSO Party, though, try it if you never have. The contest runs for 12 hours (1 PM Saturday to 1 AM Sunday), It is an easy exchange (first name and state/province), there are tons of stations on the air (all bands, focusing on 15/20 in the afternoon and 40/80/160 after dark), and even modest stations can make many contacts.

August 24th and 25th bring several QSO Parties (Hawaii, US Islands, Ohio, and Kansas), an FT8/FT4 contest (the World Wide Digi DX Contest), and, for those of you with huge VHF+ arrays and az/el rotors, the ARRL EME Contest. If you are hoping for stations to be on the air to make moonbounce contacts, there's never a better time.

Labor Day Weekend is more of the same – QSO Parties (Colorado and Tennessee) and some other niche events (the Michigan QRP Labor Day CW Sprint, for one). I'm thinking of giving that Michigan event a try. When I'm doing POTA activations, even with a tiny station and a questionable antenna location, the Michigan stations come out in force and work me on many bands. I'm hoping to work a bunch of them this time, too.

Then, on September 8th/9th, there are several interesting events. There is a PSK31 contest (the PODXS 070 Club Jay Hudak Memorial), two big CW events (the CW Open and the North American Sprint, both QRQ events), several European phone events (RSGB SSB Field Day and the WAB 144 MHz QRO Phone, among others), and the 144 MHz Fall Sprint for the VHF+ ops. Especially the CW Open has grown in recent years. It is actually three separate 4-hour contests, and operates at a pretty high speed (25-35 WPM or maybe even a little more) but is very friendly and encourages team competition.

...

Here are your August Dxpeditons:

- St. Pierre and Miquelon, the French possession just off Newfoundland in eastern Canada, will be on the air twice soon. TO8FP will be activated by some Quebecois hams, 80-6 meters, analog and digital. The islands will also be activated as FP/DC8TM and FP/DF3TS on Labor Day weekend. They'll be on SSB and FT8, and also doing SOTA and POTA activations.
- The Maldives will be on the air, call sign 8Q7GG, August 3-13, SSB, CW, and FT8. Activity will mostly be during our morning and the op will be QRP, so you'll need some favorable propagation or giant antennas to make this QSO.
- Palmyra and Jarvis Islands are on the air as N5J, all HF bands and 6 meters, analog and digital modes, August 7-19 (though dates are subject to change).
- Tristan Da Cunha is pretty remote, but that's not stopping ZD9GJ. He'll just be on 6 meters, mostly EME, but may also work some SSB phone and some FT8. He'll be QRV August 23-September 30.
- The South Cook Islands are also pretty remote. They'll be QRV on 40-10 meters, CW and digital, with call sign E51WLG, between September 1 and 8.

See you next month,

-Michael AA9RK

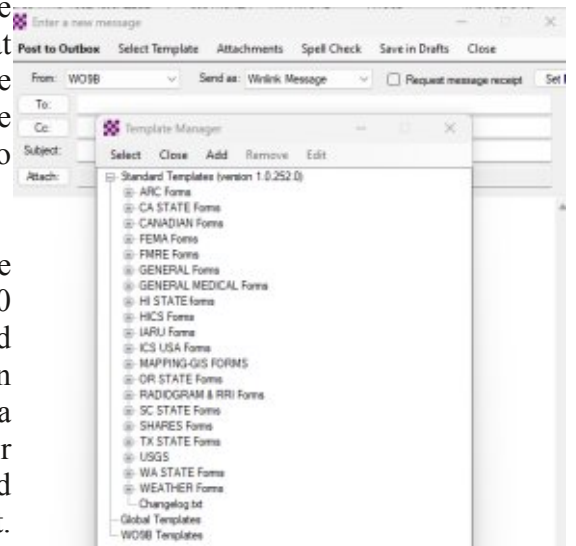


August 2024 * Hamtrix * By Michael Johnson, WO9B

Winlink Easter Egg's

My Winlink involvement is going on 3 years at this point. It started with the fascination of sending and receiving emails over HF. Not a lofty goal but certainly a fun one. After that is accomplished a couple of times, it is a short trip to proficiency. That, after all, is the charm of Winlink. It is not supposed to be on your top 10 list of strenuous accomplishments. It is just the opposite. Winlink, with a purposeful effort, should result in successful data communications. Emails can be sent with a bit more effort than typical emails. That is the basic core of EMCON systems and Winlink is one of their significant protocols.

For me, being a curious type of ham, it is only natural that once routine sets in that I start looking around the software to see what else is floating in all those menu's and icons. With the help of the SE Wisconsin Winlink Wednesday ARES exercise, I've had the chance to play around with some of those extras. I thought to share a couple of neat tricks.



Standard Forms: I've discussed this feature in the past, but the Select Template tab in the New Message offers up nearly 100 agency and organization templates to standardize information and data transfers. Some are very complicated as is appropriate when dealing with emergency government communications. It is also a relative snap to create custom forms for your personal use. For instance creating a form letter is a matter of typing it up and saving it to your Template folder, shown at the bottom of the list.

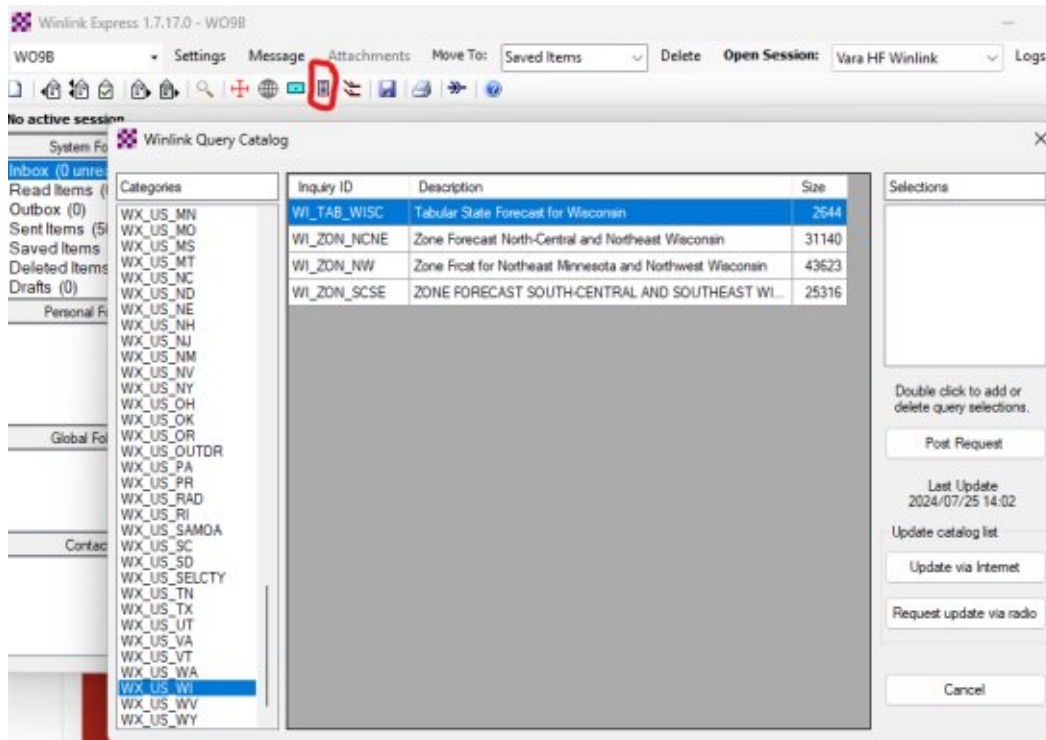
I used this for setting up a form letter to send out to station visitors at a special event station where I could demonstrate email / text messages over ham radio. My thought is how cool it would be to have their cell phone buzz with a quick easy message.

Winlink P2P Emails: What if there is no internet available? Winlink offers a Peer 2 Peer mode which allows emails and attachments to be exchanged directly between two stations. No internet is required. This is a bit complicated as both stations must be on the air at the same time in order for this mode to work. What is common for EMCOM networks is to have published Peer 2 Peer schedules delineating time and frequency. Testing this mode was impressive. Granted it was a VARA FM connection, but the simplicity was crazy easy. It was the same as transferring normal Winlink emails. Also the stations can be connected via digipeaters with a maximum of 2 hops. My VHF Peer 2 Peer session was made using my HT connected to my laptop. With a single hop digipeater the message was transferred across town. I also received a reply the same way. Kind of wild.

Tactical Addressing: For sending and receiving emails within the winlink.org domain, addressing emails is as simple as typing in the callsign of your intended recipient. Super easy. Also, each user can set up shortcut addresses, called Tactical Addresses, directly from the Winlink Express Client. For instance, if you are

running an event, it might be convenient to set up shortcut addresses: HQ, Remote1, Remote2, ect. This can be done on the fly. They don't need to be cleared with Winlink central or really anyone.

Catalog Requests: Winlink agglomerates batches of information in tabular format available on demand. They call this Catalog Information and is accessed via a Catalog Request. The information is primarily weather related and covers wide swatches of the globe, though there is also a smattering of EMCOM related topics as well. It is accessed via the menu button on the main Winlink screen highlighted below.



Catalog Requests are initiated by double-clicking the report you want and then clicking the Post Request button on the screen above. This generates an email request to the Winlink system which needs to be sent in the same way an email is sent. Wait a few minutes and then reconnect and you will be greeted with a response in your inbox.

Choosing to get Winlink active is really a lot of fun. It certainly has a learning curve, but it is not very steep. After a couple of weeks you get to know how the system works and what to expect. As with most things, practice makes you better. I found that participating in a weekly Winlink exercise has been very helpful. It takes only a few minutes each week but it keeps your skills fresh so you maintain your proficiency. They are a bit repetitive and short on excitement, but I think that is the nature of EMCOM. Train, train, train.

If you are interested in pursuing the EMCOM side of Winlink, start with the [WI ARES site](#) and go from there..

Swap Corner

If you have something ham related you are looking for or you would like to sell or give away. I would be happy to post them in Hamtrix

Editor

2024 Challenge for our membership. Have someone you meet, Ham or Ham wannabe come to a meeting this year!



W9XT Photo

**Award for WiQP "single op fixed"
was presented to Steve, K9WO by Chuck W9WLX**

NOTE

Although this is published in Hamtrix. This is not a "West Allis Radio Amateur Club" sanctioned event. Still looks like it would be fun I'm in Frank Editor of Hamtrix

So I commend the enjoyment of life... Tom Langer de KD9FPC

This article has been marinating in my brain for some time now. It is the result of conversations with my "twin son of different mothers" in the UK. It's like this. The conversation was about ham radio, like it frequently is and the subject of antennas. At one point I said that I hoped my vertical would live on because with my disability, if it quit, I was done. There is no way on God's earth that I could construct anything else.

Nige said back that he thought I should construct a "tree antenna". I replied, I can't climb anything anymore. He says, no, make the tree the antenna! At this point I figure Nige is yanking my leg. After that I commented that my grandkids know what happens if they are yanking my leg, or they are pulling my finger. Nuf said. Then he cites an article from the Radio Society of Great Britain discussing a variety of HOA antennas. Which sends me off researching the subject.

Before starting, my apologies to Frank and the rest of the WARAC board. I realized that I did not ask permission to do this, but here goes. If I don't read this in the next newsletter, I will know it is a crazy idea. And that's OK.

Assuming there are both hams in WARAC that like to have fun, and hams in WARAC that like to try unusual ham things, I challenge you to design the weirdest, strangest antenna that actually operates. Here are the rules of the challenge:

1. No ladders allowed. Only 2-step step stools if you really need one.
 2. At least 95% of the work must be done on the ground.
 3. No antenna launchers of any kind.
 4. Can, and likely should be, done with other hams.
 5. If you need to buy coax or connectors, that is OK. Wire is OK if you already have it.
 6. Keep track of the antenna's SWR, number of contacts made, call signs of those you contacted, a signal report and a basic drawing with some details about the antenna. These should all be sent to me at KD9FPC@yahoo.com or via mail to Tom Langer 2407 N. 93rd St. Tosa, 53226. Deadline is 10/31/24. Do put your call and name with your materials.
 7. Either HF, VHF/UHF or digital. CW and SSB.
 8. In November the results will be given to the Board to be reviewed at a meeting. The most unique, successful rig will get a \$5 coffee card from me. And another card to whomever makes the furthest distance. Should the board not wish to spend good meeting time at this, I can rig up some kind of email.
- So, with all of that said, I will help get you kick started with some examples I searched out, and some ideas from a variety of publications:

- Metal crutches lashed together
- Metal bed spring
- Bicycle rims
- Cable wire holding up a pole... no electric stuff
- Mylar blanket spread out
- Downspouts
- Car wheels
- Slinky
- A fence
- A tree. Two ideas, couple the antenna to the tree or drive a nail or screw into the tree and rely on the tree sap in the tree. I have watched this happen twice, it works.
- Create an antenna wrapped to a PVC form of some type. I even did this one, it works.
- Send up a helium balloon
- Create a “grass antenna”
- Unique flag pole idea

Enough hints. Please just get original and have fun with this. Who knows, we may find we have a club antenna design competition in the future. Or, maybe we could compete with another club. Possibilities are endless. But the stories and the effort are all in good fun. The stranger the antenna the better. It is assumed you will do this safely.

Well, if you are good to go, or even thinking about it, please let me know via email. If someone may wish to have some help, or is willing to offer another ham help, let me know and I'll work to create some teams. I will relay this to Frank. Truth is, I am a huge fan of the WARAC club. But due to the disabilities I am not able to serve on the Board or join in to help with activities. So, this is one way I am able to help out. I look forward to talking with, and maybe seeing, fellow members through this Antenna Competition. And if nothing else, you'll be all the talk at the next Field Days!

Here I must thank all of the many people, guides, YouTubes and everything else used in pulling this together. And, a special thank you and shout out to my UK Brother Nige. Go now, and have fun.

Ecclesiastes 8:15 (NIV): So I commend the enjoyment of life, because there is nothing better for a person under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad. Then joy will accompany them in their toil all the days of the life God has given them under the sun.

P.S. – be careful with that drink thing! Around here a big day is zero sugar soda.

ELMER

by Rich Regent, K9GDF



My “Better then nothing” antenna.

Frank KA9FZR

After going on a couple of bus tours (last August and early this January) I found I had to rethink my portable Ham Radio set up.

Back in the 1980’s I got my first QRP/portable radio a (Heathkit HW-8 kit). It went together and worked well. I used it to improve my CW for the general test. My Elmer (Ray W9ONN SK) was kind enough to get on most nights to practice, I did get my general!

Having the license and a rig I decided to take it out to Los Angeles to a factory school I was going to. I set up a schedule with Ray and much to our surprise we were able to make a contact using a 15 meter dipole set up in my room.

I tried to duplicate that contact at other places but didn’t have much luck. Tried various antennas. Usually wire ones hung up including slinky ones. After a while I dropped those experiments til I got back into Ham radio and bought a Yaesu FT-817. A big change from the HW-8

I still used wire antennas for the most part having some luck with them. The abundance of trees in Wisconsin made wire antennas a good choice.

The bus tours proved that approach did not work well at the places we stayed. Newer Hotels have trees so small if you strung a wire across them a tall motor vehicle would snag the wire!

Given all that, I needed a new approach. I decided to try was a vertical antenna. That would allow me to clamp it to a table that is usually available at a pool of many hotels. I found a collapsible one that gave me 10 feet of height and would still fit in a suitcase.

Next decision was how to match it to the radio. There are many options. I chose running a coax cable from the antenna to a QRP tuner. That allowed me to stay at the radio and change bands and added a 20 ft radial made of speaker wire.

Testing was next. Set up was easy! I used a c-clamp to clamp the antenna holder to a table on my patio. Screw the antenna to the holder, string the radial out, connect antenna to tuner and tuner to radio. Off you go.

I was able to hear well but at the time I was testing no contacts were made. Next try was some Reverse Beacon Network tests. Using the FT-891 at 20 watts worked! Good news. I also tried FT-8 and had some success again.

Last week we went up to see our daughter in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. She has a small yard with low trees and power lines. Perfect excuse to set up the



antenna for a test. Got a POTA in Maine on SSB with a report of 38. Happy with that. Not much time for any more but happy it works.

Final thoughts. Will this antenna allow you to contact everyone you hear? Not a chance. Will it allow you to play Ham radio easily, even if the site is not ideal, yes. With a 10 to 15 minute set up and requirements of a small table you can squish it in and have some fun. Some say life is to short for QRP. I think QRP allows more ham time if you want. At least for me each contact I had brings a big smile to my face. • _• _••

Vertical antenna
clamped to fence by
orange mark.



From the editor

Not a lot to report on the Ham Radio front. If the morning 80 meter Nut net is any indication propagation is a big variable from day to day and minute to minute this summer. This does give you a chance to use all the bells and whistles on your radio. Some work well, some not as much as I would like!

Notice we have two articles on antennas. My portable antenna and Tom Langer KD9FPC's challenge. Tom does present an interesting challenge. Who knows what will come out of this.

Otherwise not much else going on around here. For me still lots of CW practice just to see where I can go with it. Something to keep my brain occupied. HI HI

On a different note I get to set up my homemade tipi for the Heritage day they are having here in Hales Corners on August 24, 2024. I'm toying with setting up a portable ham radio station. No idea how or if. Would be a interesting mix of old and new.

DON'T KEY LIKE A PHONE MAN



SLOW SPEED CW QSO NET

Monday's - 8:00 PM - WBOAFB Repeater 147.045 + 127.3 Tone

CW Practice

One of the best and maybe the only way to get better at CW is practice. Having someone else who also wants to practice also helps. Just makes it more fun.

The West Allis Radio Club is going to try to help. We are running a CW practice net on Monday at 8pm The repeater is 147.045+ 127.3 the CW portion is on HF

Mike WO9B has been joining me and setting up some practice but we are open for suggestions on where to go with this. Come join us.

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Vice President
MikeJohnson WO9B

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Treasurer
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