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John E. Ross, KD8IDJ, Editor | June 18, 2026

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Register now for the 2026 ARRL National Convention hosted by the Huntsville Hamfest, August 21 - 23.

Step 1: Register for the National Convention Program on Friday, August 21.

[Register Now](#)

Step 2: Get your Huntsville Hamfest tickets for

Saturday & Sunday, August 22 – 23.

Young Ham Helps ARRL America250 WAS Award Seekers

While many teenagers spend their evenings playing video games or scrolling social media, 14-year-old Amateur Extra operator Micah Sandoval, KB4MPS, was busy this past week making radio contacts across the US. Sandoval participated as part of a W1AW/4 special event station supporting [ARRL America250 Worked All States \(WAS\) Award](#) program, a year-long operating event celebrating the 250th Anniversary of the United States.

Operating alongside his Elmer, or mentor, James Hooper, K9QJS, Sandoval logged over 150 contacts (QSOs) operating three hours a day from Sunday through Wednesday. The event has attracted the participation of operators from across the country, and even around the world.



Micah Sandoval, KB4MPS, with his Elmer (mentor), James Hooper, K9QJS, work a shift making QSOs as W1AW/4. [Photo courtesy of Carol Hooper]

Sandoval's amateur radio journey began when he was just nine years old. Inspired by his grandfather, Philip Wagner, WA6NER, who would bring a handheld radio during visits, Sandoval became fascinated by the hobby. That early interest turned into a passion for amateur radio when he earned his Technician Class license in October 2022, upgraded to

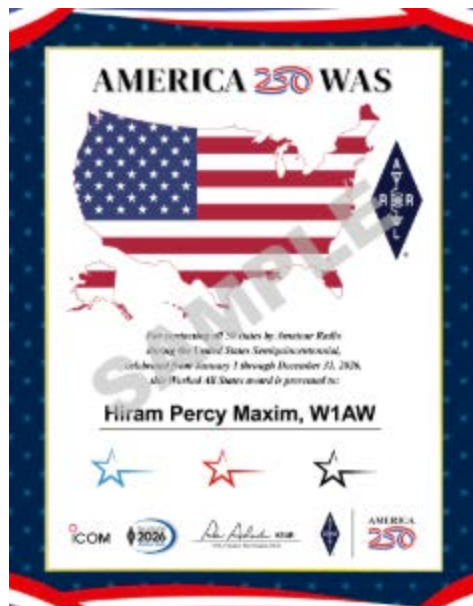
General Class in June 2025, and achieved the highest amateur radio license level, Amateur Extra, a month later at the age of 13.

Asked whether he encourages other young people to explore amateur radio, Sandoval said, “Yes, I do talk to them and recommend they at least look into it and the things it can teach you.”

Sandoval continues to learn about amateur radio, communications, public service, and emergency preparedness. He is also involved with a faith-based youth leadership and outdoor adventure program, teaching and inspiring the next generation about ham radio.

His work with the W1AW/4 activation showcased not only the technical side of amateur radio but also the value of mentorship. With guidance from his Elmer, Sandoval gained valuable operating experience while contributing to a successful special event activation.

The ARRL America250 WAS event runs through December 31. Participants can pursue the award by making contact with other amateurs in all 50 states and confirming QSOs through the Logbook of The World – LoTW. A process for ordering the award certificate and endorsements will be available soon.



An ARRL America250 WAS certificate will be available for ordering soon.

Three separate endorsements can be earned by confirming contacts with all 50 states on CW, phone and digital modes for a Triple Play; by contacting the W1AW/portable station activations in all 50 states, or by contacting ARRL Affiliated Club Call Signs in all 50 states.

Throughout 2026, the iconic W1AW call sign is being “loaned” to stations nationwide, activating each state twice during the year. Upcoming W1AW/x activations are listed in the [Announcements](#) below.

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Weekends Ahead Great for Amateur Radio Activity

ARRL Kids Day and ARRL Field Day, two of the most popular amateur radio activities, are getting ready to hit the air!

[ARRL Kids Day](#) gets underway this weekend, June 20, 2026, from 1800 to 2359 UTC (2:00 – 7:59 PM Eastern time). It's a lot of fun and a lot of learning combined for "kids" of all ages. Amateur radio operators get to set up their stations in public places, or stay at home, and spend the day sharing real hands-on operating, talking to stations locally, across the country and even around the world! It's a great way to show off amateur radio and to encourage young people to obtain an amateur license.

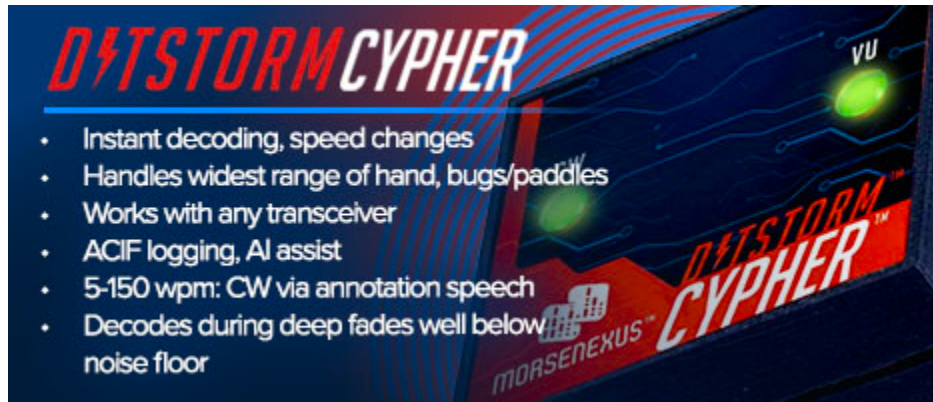
ARRL Kids Day is also a great "photo shoot" opportunity! Take as many photos as you can of the guest operators and share them with family, friends, and ARRL. Send your photos to contests@arrl.org with a signed [photo release form](#) for possible publication in *QST* and other ARRL publications. Tell us their story, tell us your story... all in pictures!

Up next weekend is ARRL Field Day...two great days of amateur radio held annually in the US and Canada. This year, ARRL Field Day is June 27 – 28 and runs from 1800 UTC Saturday through 2059 and the theme is "Amateur Radio: A National Resource." Combined with the [ARRL Year of the Club](#), it provides the perfect opportunity for radio clubs to set up stations in public places to demonstrate ham radio's science, skill, and service to our communities and our nation.

Many amateur operators and amateur radio clubs use Field Day as a chance to practice emergency communications and demonstrate ham radio to the public. No changes have been made to the rules in the past year but it's a good idea for hams to review the [ARRL Field Day 2026 Rules](#) to help keep their logs timely and accurate.

The [Field Day Locator Site](#) is easy to use and will show public Field Day sites that members of the public and media can visit.

The bottom line... ARRL Field Day is part picnic, campout, practice for emergencies, informal contest, and most of all, fun!



New Technician Question Pool Takes Effect July 1

On July 1, 2026, a new Element 2 Technician class question pool will take effect for license examinations. VECs and VEs must have new test designs available for use at exam sessions effective that date.



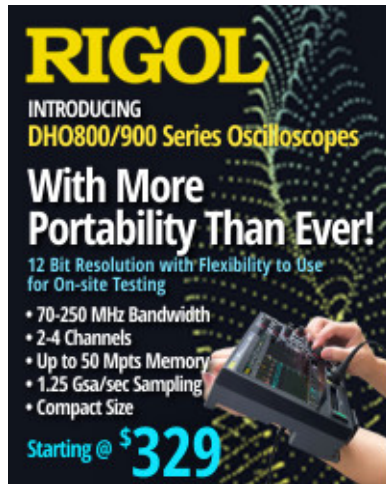
The newly revised pool, released in December 2025 (updated and re-released on February 19, 2026) by the Question Pool Committee (QPC) of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators (NCVEC), must be in use starting July 1. There are 409 questions in this pool, down slightly from 412 in the previous pool. The pool also includes three diagrams used for some of the questions. View all current question pools on the NCVEC website at www.ncvec.org.

ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM, advises that the [ExamTools](#) examination system will automatically switch to the new pool and exams on July 1. For ARRL-VEC VE teams using online exams at in-person sessions or for remote video-supervised sessions, no action is required.

“VE teams using paper exams must discard all older Technician tests and print new versions from ExamTools,” said Somma. “ARRL-supplied 2022 series Technician exam booklets and exams generated from the old pool are valid only through June 30; after that date, they are no longer valid.”

New editions of ARRL licensing publications for the 2026-2030 Technician pool, the 6th edition of *The ARRL Ham Radio License Manual*, the 9th edition of *ARRL Tech Q & A* and

11th edition of Gordon West's *Technician Class* study guide will be available starting this month, for exams taken on or after July 1, 2026.



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New ARRL Central Division Vice Director

ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR has appointed Robert Ronk, W9AP, of Winneconne, Wisconsin, as Vice Director for the ARRL Central Division. The appointment fills the vacancy created in April when former Vice Director Joshua Long, W9HT, assumed the office of Central Division Director. Ronk will complete a term that expires December 31, 2027.

The Central Division includes Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin.

Section Manager Elections; New Eastern Pennsylvania Section Manager



The nomination period for the 2026 summer season ARRL Section Manager election cycle concluded on Friday, June 5.

There will be one balloted election this summer in Southern Florida. ARRL members in the Southern Florida Section will receive ballots and candidate information via postal mail in July. Daniel Fisher, AI4GK, and incumbent Barry Porter, KB1PA, are the candidates running for a new term of office that starts October 1, 2026.

Eastern Pennsylvania now has a new Section Manager. Matthew Butch, KV3JGB, of Coatesville, was the only nominee to submit a petition during the re-solicitation period for nominations. Because the Section Manager position has been vacant since late January, ARRL appointed Butch to start his term of office early, on June 8.

Puerto Rico will have a new Section Manager starting on October 1, 2026. Osvaldo Soler, KP3N, of Carolina, was declared elected since he was the only nominee. He will follow the

term of office being completed by Carmen Greene Rodriguez, KP4QVQ, who has been Section Manager since October 2024.

The following incumbent Section Managers did not face opposition and were declared elected for their upcoming new terms of office beginning October 1, 2026: Douglas Sharafanowich, WA1SFH, Connecticut; Don Lynn, ND7L, Idaho; Ralph Fettig, NØRDF, North Dakota; Bret Stemen, KD8SCL, Ohio; Mark Kleine, N5HZR, Oklahoma; Heather Flewelling, AH7RF, Pacific; Scott Bauer, W2LC, Western New York.

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Amateur Radio in the News

[“Ham radio operators will be on the air at Calhoun County Fairgrounds for nationwide event June 27-28”](#) / [battelcreekshopper.com](#) (Michigan) June 11, 2026 -- *The Southern Michigan Amateur Radio Society is an ARRL Affiliated Club*

[“Commissioners approve HAM radio use”](#) / [Gainesville Daily Register](#) (Texas) June 11, 2026 -- *Cooke County Amateur Radio Repeater Association*

[“Struthers ROAR looks to connect with community at Field Day 2026”](#) / [WFMJ](#) (Ohio) June 16, 2026 -- *Regional Operators of Amateur Radio is an ARRL Affiliated Club*




ARRL Live Events and Podcasts



On the Air LIVE

Join ARRL's Education Specialist Wayne Greene, KB4DSF, as he compares the most popular portable antennas, including the ubiquitous end-fed half-wave, random wire, linked dipole, and the 17-foot vertical. We will compare performance and packing tradeoffs and deployment requirements. Whether you are headed to a park, going on a hike, paddling a canoe, or just your backyard, this session will help you choose an antenna that fits the operating conditions. The livestream will air on the ARRL's learning center, learn.arrl.org, June 23rd at 8pm Eastern. Preregistration is required and can be accomplished through the Learning Center.

 Date: June 23, 2026

 Time: 8 PM Eastern / 5 PM Pacific

 [Register Now](#) |  [Previously Recorded Sessions](#)



ARRL Audio News

Listen to [ARRL Audio News](#), available every Friday. ARRL Audio News is a summary of the week's top news stories in the world of amateur radio and ARRL, along with interviews and other features. [More info](#) | [Listen on Blubrry](#) | Also available on iTunes and Apple Podcasts.



On the Air

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Introduction to Digital Modes

ARRL Technical Editor Conrad Trautmann, N2YCH, joins the podcast to talk about what digital modes are, why it's worth it for hams of all classes to use them, and how to get started. [More info](#) | [Listen on Blubrry](#) | Also available on iTunes and Apple Podcasts.



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Announcements

The following America250 W1AW Portable Activations begin 0000z on Wednesdays, and end 2359z on Tuesdays (7 days total for each activation). See the complete schedule at www.arrl.org/america250-was.

06/17/2026 Arkansas W1AW/5 (host K5DB)

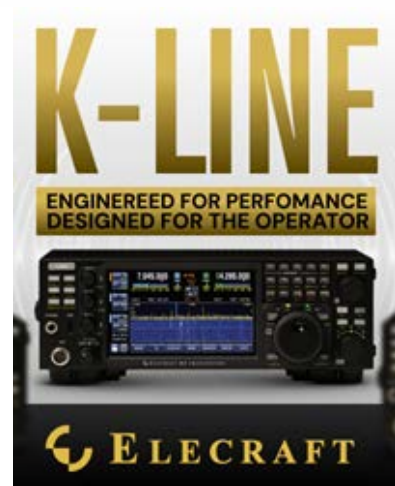
06/17/2026 Nebraska W1AW/Ø (host KAØBOJ)

06/24/2026 No activations...ARRL Field Day

07/08/2026 No activations... IARU HF Contest



SUPPORTING PARTNER



The 13 Colonies Special Event, now in its 18th year, will take place from July 1, 9:00 AM to July 7, Midnight, Eastern time (July 1, 1300 UTC to July 8, 0400 UTC). Amateur radio operators can make contacts with stations in each of the 13 colonies plus three bonus stations in Great Britain, France, and Philadelphia. This year, the event ties into the America250 celebration, with stations marking locations where the Declaration of Independence was first read. Across the original colonies, cities and towns are hosting events tied to pivotal moments in American history. Portsmouth, New Hampshire, commemorates its role in the 1774 Paul Revere ride. Lexington and Concord,

Massachusetts, are highlighting their locations as the birthplace of the Revolution, with reenactments and the Freedom Trail. Cities in other former colonies, including Augusta, Georgia, and Charleston, South Carolina, are also part of the national celebration, offering historic sites and authentic experiences. Information about call signs, frequencies, special certificates, and QSL cards can be found online at [The Annual 13 Colonies Special Event](#).



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The advertisement features a purple header with the product name and a white box with bullet points. Below the text is a QR code and a call to action. To the right, there is a line drawing of a fox and a photograph of the transmitter hardware. At the bottom right, there is a call sign logo for AI6YM.

On Independence Day weekend 2026, the [Radio Association of Western New York](#) will be on board the historic USS Little Rock at the Buffalo and Erie County Naval and Military Park to operate special event station W2D. The event celebrates America's 250 years of independence and the exciting arrival of a giant "Mama Duck and her son Timmy" at nearby Canalside. The world's largest rubber duck and her duckling will be visiting Buffalo's waterfront just steps from the Naval Park, creating a unique backdrop for this special event operation. Amateur radio operators should look for W2D on the air throughout the holiday weekend (Friday-Sunday, 1400-2000 UTC)! On-air activity will be spotted to pota.app as W2D at US-6532 Erie Canalway.



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The banner features a stylized illustration of the US Capitol dome on the left and a diamond-shaped logo on the right. The central text is enclosed in a red-bordered box.

Open Positions at ARRL

Come join the headquarters staff of ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio® ! We are currently seeking qualified applicants for the following positions:

Membership Manager

RFI Lab Engineer

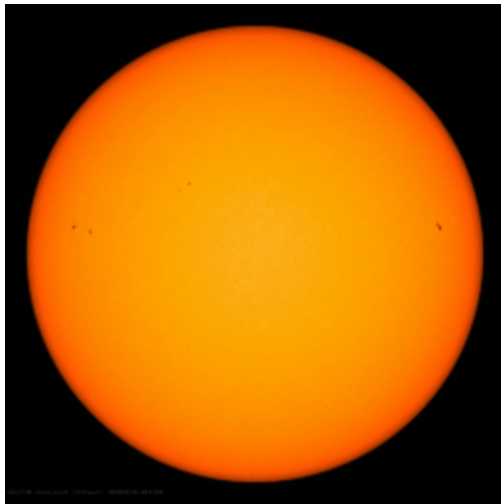
Public Relations and Outreach Manager

Full details may be found on the ARRL HR web page at www.arri.org/careers.

ARRL is an equal opportunity employer.



The ARRL Solar Report



Solar disk image courtesy of NASA/SDO,
June 18, 2026

ARRL Solar Report June 18, 2026

Solar activity has been low with only C-class solar flare activity. Region 4465 underwent some decay and only produced a low-level C-class flare. Region 4469 decayed further and was inactive. Region 4470 underwent some growth, but did not increase in magnetic complexity and was primarily inactive.

The largest solar flare of the period, a C2.5 on June 17, came from just beyond the west limb with the likely source being recently rotated out-of-view Region 4464.

A coronal mass ejection (CME) became visible in STEREO coronagraph imagery on June 17 and Compact Coronagraph (CCOR) imagery approximately 30 minutes later. This eruption was first determined to be far-sided due to SUVI 304 and 193 imagery; however, the backfilling of a SOHO LASCO data gap prompted a re-analysis and it has since concluded that there may be an Earth-directed component. Modeling is currently ongoing.

There was an additional, faster, eruption off the east limb close to the equator, with the resulting CME first appearing in LASCO C2 imagery on June 17. Due to its faintness, this CME is not visible in other coronagraphs. Modeling of this event is also ongoing, but a significant Earth-directed component is not anticipated.

Solar activity is likely to continue at low levels June 18 - 20, with a slight chance for M-class (R1-minor) solar flares due primarily to the combined flare probabilities of Regions 4465 and 4470.

Solar wind parameters were indicative of a weak disturbance in the interplanetary magnetic field (IMF), which was probably related to anticipated early-stage coronal hole high speed stream (CH HSS) influences. The phi angle was quite variable between sectors. Solar wind speed increased from 400 km/s to nearly 500 km/s before declining to about 450 km/s. Mild solar wind disturbances and enhancements are anticipated through June 20 due to weak positive polarity CH HSS effects.

The 10.7-centimeter flux: June 18, 138; June 19, 134; June 20, 143; June 21, 130; June 22, 146; June 23, 125; June 24, 149.

Predicted sunspot numbers: June 18, 103; June 19, 95; June 20, 107; June 21, 90; June 22, 111; June 23, 83; June 24, 116.

For more information concerning radio propagation, [visit](#) the ARRL Technical Information Service, read [A Quick Guide to HF Propagation Using Solar Indices](#), and check out the [Propagation Page of Carl Luetzelschwab, K9LA](#).

For customizable propagation charts, visit the [VOACAP Online for Ham Radio website](#).

Get Your 2026 Field Day Shirt



Just Ahead in Radiosport

- June 18 -- VHF - UHF FT8 Activity Contest-NA (digital)
- June 18 - 19 -- Walk for the Bacon QRP Contest (CW)
- June 18 -- NTC QSO Party (CW)
- June 20 -- Pajajaran Bogor DX Contest (phone)
- June 20 - 21 -- All Asian DX Contest (CW)
- June 20 - 21 -- SMIRK Contest (CW, phone, digital)
- June 20 - 21 -- SKCC QSO Party (CW)
- June 20 - 21 -- IARU Region 1 50 MHz Contest (CW, phone)
- June 20 - 21 -- LZ International 6-Meter Contest (CW, phone)
- June 20 - 21 -- Stew Perry Topband Challenge (CW)
- June 20 - 21 -- West Virginia QSO Party (CW, phone, digital)
- June 20 -- [ARRL Kids Day \(phone\)](#)

- June 21 -- WAB 50 MHz Phone (phone)
- June 21 - 22 -- Run for the Bacon QRP Contest (CW)
- June 24 -- SKCC Sprint (CW)
- June 27 -- UFT QRP Contest (CW)
- June 27 - 28 -- His Maj. King of Spain Contest, SSB (phone)
- June 27 - 28 -- [ARRL Field Day](#) (CW, phone, digital)

Remember to visit the [ARRL Contest Calendar](#) for more events and information.



Upcoming ARRL Conventions and Major Events

ARRL Section, State, and Division Conventions (next 60 days)

Search the ARRL Hamfest and Convention Database at www.arrl.org/hamfests to find events in your area.

June 19 – 20 | [Flagstaff HamFest](#), hosting the ARRL Arizona Section Convention, Flagstaff, Arizona

July 11 | [SVARC Hamfest](#), hosting the ARRL North Dakota Section Convention, Minot, North Dakota

July 17 – 19 | [Glacier Waterton Hamfest](#), hosting the ARRL Montana Section Convention, Essex, Montana

July 25 | [ARRL South Dakota State Convention](#), Sioux Falls, South Dakota

July 25 | [ARRL West Virginia State Convention](#), Sutton, West Virginia

August 1 | [ARRL Maine State Convention](#), August, Maine

August 7 – 8 | [Shreveport-Bossier Hamfest](#), hosting the ARRL Delta Division Convention, Shreveport, Louisiana

August 13 – 16 | [Northeast HamXposition](#), hosting the ARRL New England Division Convention, Marlborough, Massachusetts

August 15 | [Cincinnati Hamfest](#), hosting the ARRL Great Lakes Division Convention, Owensville, Ohio

Save the Date

Join ARRL at these Division Conventions and other major events throughout the year. Beginning in the fourth quarter, this list will also include significant events scheduled for the following year.

June 26 – 28, 2026 | [HAM RADIO](#), International Amateur Radio Exhibition, Friedrichshafen, Germany

August 7 – 8 | [Shreveport-Bossier Hamfest](#), hosting the ARRL Delta Division Convention, Shreveport, Louisiana

August 13 – 16 | [Northeast HamXposition](#), hosting the ARRL New England Division Convention, Marlborough, Massachusetts

August 15 | [Cincinnati Hamfest](#), hosting the ARRL Great Lakes Division Convention, Owensville, Ohio

August 21 – 23 | [Huntsville Hamfest](#), hosting the [2026 ARRL National Convention](#), Huntsville, Alabama

August 28 – 30 | [Wyoming HamCon](#), hosting the ARRL Rocky Mountain Division Convention, Casper, Wyoming

October 9 – 10 | [SPARK-CON 2026](#), hosting the ARRL Midwest Division Convention, Sedalia, Missouri

October 10 | [North Star Radio Convention](#), hosting the ARRL Dakota Division Convention, Brooklyn Park, Minnesota

October 16 – 18 | [Pacificon](#), hosting the ARRL Pacific Division Convention, San Ramon, California

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Have News for ARRL?

Submissions for the ARRL Letter and ARRL News can be sent to news@arrl.org. -- John E. Ross, KD8IDJ, [ARRL News Editor](#)



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Listen to [ARRL Audio News](#), available every Friday.

The *ARRL Letter* is available in an accessible format, posted weekly to the [Blind-hams Groups.io](#) email group. The group is dedicated to discussions about amateur radio as it concerns blind hams, plus related topics including ham radio use of adaptive technology.

[NCJ -- National Contest Journal](#). Published bimonthly, features articles by top contesters, letters, hints, statistics, scores, NA Sprints, and QSO parties.

[QEX -- A Forum for Communications Experimenters](#). Published bimonthly, features technical articles, construction projects, columns, and other items of interest to radio amateurs and communications professionals.

Free of charge to ARRL members...

[Subscribe](#) to the *ARES Letter* (monthly public service and emergency communications news), the *ARRL Contest Update* (biweekly contest newsletter), Division and Section news alerts, and much more!

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