



The Feedline



Upcoming Programs

Mark Volstad, AI4BJ, will demonstrate his solar-powered portable HF station at the **August** NKARC meeting. Weather permitting, we will try to make a few solar-powered contacts!

At the **September** meeting, Dave Core, K8WDA, will present a program on ESD (electrostatic discharge), and Dann Fox, KI4AVO, will show us how to make portable/backup batteries.

Member Profile: Bob Pentz, K4DMA

By Mark Volstad, AI4BJ

A couple of years ago, I received a phone call out of the blue from a stranger, asking if I might be able to give him a ride to that evening's NKARC meeting. That's how I first met my good friend Robert (Bob) Pentz, one of the longest-standing, and — at age 86 — oldest members of the Northern Kentucky Amateur Radio Club.

Riding back and forth from meetings

together, I have learned quite a bit about Bob and the history of the club. He recently invited me into his shack, where he filled in a few more details.

Bob earned a degree in Education from the University of Maryland. When Bob joined the Navy during World War II, he was given three choices for his posting: serving in the merchant marine,

See "K4DMA", page 6

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Dates to Remember:

- Aug 10 – NKARC Membership Meeting
- Aug 22 – Ohio QSO Party
- Sep 12 – Ohio State Parks on the Air (pg.9)
- Sep 14 – NKARC Membership Meeting

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Repeaters (K4CO): 147.255+ and 444.350+ Edgewood (PL 123.0), 147.375+ Walton, 146.895+ Highland Heights. The 147.255 repeater is a linked Echolink node, accessible via N4IJS-R.

NKARC Net: Tuesdays, 8:30 PM on the 147.255 repeater

VE Testing: Testing sessions are held by appointment only on the 2nd Monday of each month, prior to the NKARC membership meeting. Testing begins at 6:00 pm. To make an appointment, contact Lyle Hamilton at ab8sh@arrl.net or tel. 513-315-4032

NKARC Web Site: <http://www.k4co.org>

NKARC Membership Meetings: 2nd Monday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Hilltop Church of Christ, 5300 Taylor Mill Rd (Ky. 16), Taylor Mill, KY. Visitors are always welcome!

The Feedline is published monthly by and for the members of the Northern Kentucky Amateur Radio Club. It is distributed via direct email to current NKARC members. **If you are a member but are not receiving your copy, please notify the Feedline editor.** Permission is hereby granted to any non-profit amateur radio group to quote or reprint from this publication provided appropriate source credit is given. Submissions for the Septem-

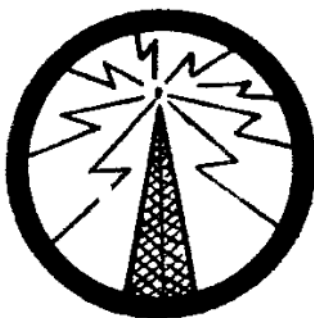
ber Feedline must be received no later than August 30. Submissions, address or call changes and circulation problems may be sent to the Feedline editor:

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Top of the Tower

Hello Everyone,

This year I have noticed that if you pick up a copy of QST magazine you just may find an article from one of our club members. In 2009 there have been 3 articles so far: Robert Kluck, N4IJS “Remote Control of the Amateur Station - Using Windows Remote Desktop” Jan 2009, then Robert Gulley, AK3Q “Amateur Radio and Public Education Make for a Bright Future” Feb 2009, and now Mark Volstad AI4BJ, “QRP From the Top of the Maritimes” Aug 2009. We’re proud to have these guys in our club. Thanks for making us look so good guys!



tree, getting it off the ground about 8 feet on one side and 10 on the other. During the night as people were working the GOTA station I was impressed by the contacts they were making on the little antenna such as Wisconsin and the Canadian Maritime Province.

Back at home I decided to use the dimensions of the Field Day antenna to build my own. I was soon on the air making contacts and checking into a 10 meter net (28.335 Sunday night at 8:00 pm) where a lot of local people were on 10 meters. It was a good place to see how the antenna was doing and get a few pointers.

With just having my Technician license the high frequencies bands have been off my radar. They are just something to look forward to when I get my General ticket or at Field Day. Getting started

with 10 meters has added some excitement, with antenna building and seeking out contacts. I recommend giving 10 meters a try if you have not used it yet or lately. It would be nice if the club came up with its own 10 meter call frequency.

73,

Dann, KI4AVO

TEN METERS FOR TECHS

It seems that 10 meters has always been an underdog when it comes to the different bands. It is never in the spotlight like 40 or 80 meters. During our last Field Day we decided to use 10 meters on the GOTA station. We used all of our resources for mast poles for the other antennas so there was not much hope for the 10 meter antenna. To get us on the air we attached one side to the shelter house and the other to a nearby

July Net Report

If you are interested in helping the club out and expanding your Amateur Radio skill set, please take a turn at running one of our weekly nets! This is a great way to hone your radio, net control, and message handling skills in a friendly environment. If you are interested, please contact Robert Kluck, N4IJS, at (859) 426-5588 or n4ijs@k4co.org

DATE	NCS	CHECKINS	TIME (MINS)	TRAFFIC
7/7/09	KG4SBG (Dennis)	8	20	0
7/14/09	KB4VKS (Mike)	9	29	0
7/21/09	N4IJS (Robert)	9	19	0
7/28/09	KG4SBG (Dennis)	8	28	0
TOTALS:		34	96	0

July Meeting Minutes

MINUTES OF THE JULY 13, 2009 MEETING OF THE NORTHERN KENTUCKY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

— Meeting opened 7:35 with Pledge of Allegiance

— Motion made and accepted to accept minutes as recorded in July Feedline

— Motion made and accepted to accept Treasurer's report by Dann Fox

— Old Business: Paddlefest and Field Day both successful, both events well attended; Donation of \$100 made to Hilltop Church as voted on at June meeting in appreciation for using facilities for meetings and antenna day, etc.

— New Business: Discussed our spare Repeater Cavity and request from Queen City Club to purchase it from us — decision made to allow Q.C. to continue using cavity until they are able to replace their unit, with the proviso that if needed we would have an understanding that our machine took priority — motion made and carried to write up an agreement between the two clubs to detail loan time and estimated value of repeater in case of damage to our unit ("not to exceed 8 months and subject to further review at that time" and to "replace in kind" should something happen; in a related item discussion was held regarding the need for a

current inventory list for all club equipment, including repeater parts, and their locations;

— Robert Kluck announced current leaders in the Club Net Contest with Mike Wagoner in the lead, noting that the contest seems to have generated more net participation

Business side of meeting adjourned approx. 8:15

Respectfully submitted by Robert Gulley, AK3Q

Stuart's First QSO

By Dan Romanchik, KB6NU

One of the great things about Field Day are the stories. Every year, I add a story or two to my repertoire. This year is no exception.

My best story from Field Day 2009 starts about 1:30 pm on Saturday. I was at my post at the public information table/GOTA station. We had been ready to rock and roll for at least a half hour, so a group of us were just sitting around chewing the fat when 13-year-old Stuart and his mother walked up to the table.

Her son was a little on the shy side, so his mother explained that Stuart had seen a listing of our Field Day

site on the Internet and had asked her to bring him out to see us. She mentioned that Stuart had been listening to ham radio operators on his little Yaesu handheld scanner for several years and was very excited to actually meet some ham radio operators and see ham radio in action.

Not only that, she said that he had taught himself Morse Code. A kid after my own heart! I quickly volunteered to give them a tour of our Field Day site. First, I showed him our VHF/UHF station, and he seemed really impressed with the five single-band radios.

Next, I took him into the 40m phone

station. I asked how fast he could copy Morse Code, and he said 30 words per minute. I cranked the receiver down into the CW portion of the band, and sure enough, he could copy anything that I tuned in.

At this point, it was still only 1:45 pm, so I told him, "Let's go over to one of the CW stations, and we'll see if we can make a contact." We marched over to the CW #2 station, and after getting clearance from the station captain, I tuned around for a clear frequency, then called CQ. Immediately, N5VV replied.

At this point, Stuart was so excited, he was shaking a little bit. Since the contest was just about ready to start,

I kept the contact short, but that didn't matter. Stuart had finally gotten to see ham radio in action.

Stuart's mother then inquired about taking the test. I explained that our Volunteer Examiners give the test every second Saturday of the month and gave her the URL of our website. She said that Stuart had been studying and was ready to take the test.

Unfortunately, they had to leave at that point. I told Stuart's mother that we'd be there through 2 pm Sunday and to come back any time. She said that they'd definitely be back the next day.

Stuart Makes His First Contact

Stuart and his mother returned about 1:30 pm on Sunday. He wanted to see the VHF/UHF station again, so that was our first stop. He took a couple of photos of the setup, and then I suggested we go over to the GOTA station. When we first got there, someone was at the mike, but shortly afterwards, they got up, and Stuart and I took the controls.

When we first sat down, I made a few contacts using my call to show him how to use the paddle. I noted that holding the levers down produces a series of dits or dahs, and that by tapping the other lever while holding down the first, you can produce a dit between dahs or a dah between dits.

Then, I asked him if he'd like to try it. He said yes, so just to see how it would go, I tuned up to above 7100 kHz. There was no

activity up there, so I set the keyer speed to 15 wpm and told him to send my callsign a few times. He reached over with his left hand and sent it perfectly. Now, remember, this is someone who'd never touched a paddle of any kind before. Not only that, he even sent the K (dah-di-dah) iambically! That is to say that he held the dah paddle while tapping the dit paddle to slip in a dit between the two dahs.

Then, I asked if he'd like to make some contacts. He said yes, so I said, "Let's switch seats." We switched seats, and I said, "OK, tune around a little and find a strong station calling CQ." We found K2ZR, and I coached him a little on how to reply. "Now, remember," I said, "we're going to use the W8PGW callsign." When I gave him the nod to send, he reached over with his RIGHT hand and sent W8PGW perfectly! When K2ZR replied with our call and the exchange, I coached him to reply with "4A MI." Not only did he do that, but he slipped in a "R" to denote that we'd copied the exchange. When K2ZR replied with a "TU," I showed him how to log the contact.

That's all the coaching I needed to do. After the first contact, I said, "OK. Now, tune around for another station calling CQ, and we'll make another contact." He was off to the races. As soon as he made a contact, he jumped up to type it into the log. His arms weren't long enough to reach the computer from where he was seated.

When we started, the keyer speed

was set to 15 wpm. After a couple of contacts, I asked if he might want to send faster. When he said OK, I bumped it up to 18 wpm. After a few QSOs with only a couple of mistakes, he asked if we could go faster, so I set it at 20 wpm. Again, only a couple of mistakes, so we bumped it up to 22 wpm. There, he started making more mistakes, but let me repeat, he never touched any kind of key before in his life. I have no doubt that with a little practice, he could easily do 30 wpm.

Overall, he made 12 contacts in the 21 minutes he operated the station. Not a bad rate for someone who'd never sent a character of Morse Code in his life, don't you think?

Unfortunately, Stuart was not able to take the test at our July VE session as he was at Boy Scout camp. Come the second week of August, though, he'll be a ham. He even has a vanity callsign picked out for himself. Listen for him—in the CW bands, of course.

Dan Romanchik, KB6NU, is the station manager for WA2HOM, the ham radio station at Ann Arbor's Hands-On Museum, and the ARRL MI Section's Training Manager. You can read more about his adventures in ham radio by going to www.kb6nu.com.

Editor's Note: You can read some great comments from hams who have read Dan's article here: <http://kb6nu.com/field-day-2009-stuart-makes-his-first-contact/#comments>

"K4DMA", continued from Cover

serving on a PT boat, or serving as an HF direction-finding (DF) operator on a destroyer in the Atlantic. These were all dangerous jobs, but he figured that the third option probably carried the best survival odds! He went to radio school in Groton Heights, Connecticut, then was assigned to the destroyer USS Schenck (DD-159), an older ship that had been commissioned at the end of World War I.

Bob's time on the Shenck included escorting convoys to North Africa (Casablanca), U-boat patrols along the east coast, and finally, serving as a torpedo target ship for aircraft!

While on leave in Baltimore during 1943, Bob took the FCC exam for the amateur radio General license, and passed. He would have to wait until after the war to use his new privileges however, as Congress had suspended all amateur radio operations for the duration of the war.

As teachers were still rather poorly paid at this time, when the war ended Bob went to work for the [B&O Railroad](#) in Baltimore. He worked in the office of the VP of Operations in a financial position until the B&O was taken over by the C&O Railway in the 1960s. At this point he transferred to the Detroit office. He stayed here for just one year, but it was at this time that he met and married his current wife, Marge. (Bob's first wife had died of cancer.)

In 1967, Bob made his final "big move", this time to Cincinnati, and he soon joined the Northern Kentucky Amateur Radio Club. While working downtown, he met the local director of the Red Cross disaster services. This gentleman was very interested in enlisting the support of NKARC, and offered the club the use of a Red Cross building for its meetings. In the summertime, the building was not available and meetings rotated between members' homes.

Bob remembers that the club went through

many changes of meeting locations over the next few years, including a second-story room above a bar! The club finally found a long-term meeting location at the Presbyterian church in Ft. Mitchell, where he thinks the club stayed for about ten years.

In 1977, Bob volunteered as chairman of the club's annual hamfest, which was to be held at the fairgrounds in Burlington. While getting ready for the hamfest, word came of a terrible fire at the [Beverly Hills Supper Club](#) in Southgate. Club members passed health & welfare traffic during this tragic event.

Bob recalls that twenty years later, the club was again called upon to assist during an emergency, this time during the [flooding](#) in Falmouth of 1997. (QST article can be found [here](#))

Over the years, Bob has served as Vice-President of NKARC, and has also helped to audit the club's financial records.

He retired in 1982 at the age of 59. Until recently, he and Marge have enjoyed exploring North America in a motor home. He has two sons and six grandchildren.

Osteoporosis and various other health issues are beginning to limit his ability to get around. Fortunately, he can use amateur radio to stay in touch with his friends via the Tin Can Sailors Net on Sunday afternoons on 20 meters, using his Kenwood TS-570D transceiver and a vertical antenna. Bob is a charter member of the net, holding membership ID #9.

The next time you sit down besides one of our "old-timers" at a club meeting, ask them how they became interested in amateur radio. You just might get an interesting story!

Weaver's Words

Jim Weaver, K8JE
Great Lakes Division Director, ARRL
E-mail: k8je@arrl.org; Tel.: 513-459-0142

Ohio QSO Party

The Ohio QSO Party (OQP) will be August 22. The emphasis in the Party is for out-of-state amateurs to contact Ohio amateurs. Ohio amateurs may contact other Ohio amateurs as well as out-of-state amateurs. Contacts may be made on 80 meters through 10 meters excluding the WARC bands. Entries are open to single operators as well as multiple operators.

The OQP being as 12 noon and ends at 12 midnight EDT. Entry categories include DX, US outside Ohio and inside Ohio, low-power, high-power and QRP, fixed and mobile, and single and multiple operations.

For further details on the rules as well as logging requirements, see www.ohqp.org. Winners in the 13 scoring categories in 2008 and prior Parties are also available at this site.

The OQP has been sponsored by the Mad River RC for several years.

When is it Inappropriate for Amateurs to Provide Communication?

ARRL is asked frequently if it is proper for amateurs to provide communication support to many, varied activities. Many questions appear to be related to ideas that have arisen following Hurricane Katrina and more recent emergency and disaster situations.

"Is it OK for my hospital to get its nurses licensed as hams so they can use ham radio in emergencies?" is just one example of these questions. Actually, this question appears to be relatively simple to answer. But, is it?

As a result of confusing situations and fine lines hams face these days, we on the ARRL Board instructed President Joel Harrison, W5ZN to appoint a special committee to study the issue. The committee is tasked with recommending examples of appropriate and inappropriate activities within 30 days. After being reviewed by the Board, guidelines to help each of us understand what according to FCC which activities are proper for us to support and which are improper, and why.



Monthly OO Activity Report

For many years, FCC did not provide feedback to ARRL on Official Observer reports it received. This has changed. Because of legal constraints, the feedback isn't very detailed, but it is being given.

In June there were a total of 692 Official Observers (OOs) in the US. During June, ARRL received 10 recommendations for hams to begin the process to become OOs. OOs are still needed in parts of the Great Lakes Division as well as the country. If you are interested in becoming an OO, please contact your Section Manager, your Official Observer Coordinator or another League official.

A few of the situations OOs reported in June include:

- Complaints about activities on or near 14.275 MHz; especially about the language used.

Reports from . . . Michigan regarding unlicensed

hunters using 2 meter simplex frequencies. Information has been forwarded to the FCC.

- Reports of boot-legged calls.
- A report of "numbers stations" (Spanish speaking stations transmitting numbers) on 30 meters. Another report was of transmissions of 5 letter code groups.

No official actions were added to the FCC listing during June; however, several reports were handled off the record. Summaries of many FCC actions can be found at <http://www.fcc.gov/eb/AmateurActions/Welcome.html>.

The June report concluded, "As always, we thank you all for your time and efforts involved with the Official Observer program and we invite you to let us know of problems you hear on the air and possible resolutions through your regular monthly reports and e-mails."

Division Symposium Update Updated

By now, many members know that the Great Lakes Division Symposium is on September 12 in Findlay, Ohio. But, I haven't talked about the specific site for this gala event. I don't know why I've neglected to mention the site of the Symposium for so long, but here is the scoop on it.

The Symposium will be at the Findlay Center for Business and Technology, 1700 Fostoria Ave., Findlay, Ohio. The Business Center has tremendous facilities for our symposium. It is only 1.9 miles from the site of the Findlay Hamfest the following day.

The Business Center is located on the corner of Fostoria Ave. (Ohio S.R. 12) at Plaza St. The Findlay Hamfest is at the Hancock County Fairgrounds, 1017 E. Sandusky St. in Findlay the fol-

lowing day, September 13.

H.R. 2160 Support

There is good news on the legislative front. H.R. 2160, the first step toward overriding anti-antenna codes, covenants and restrictions (CC&Rs) continues to receive new co-sponsors. With the US House planning to begin its summer break in early August, we now can number Rep. Don Young of Alaska as the 19th co-sponsor.

Our drive to gain still more co-sponsors continues. If you have not yet sent a letter to your US representative to encourage him/her to support H.R. 2160, please do this very soon. A boilerplate letter can be obtained at <http://www.arrl.org/news/stories/2009/05/12/10818>. Click on sample letter in paragraph three. Copy and save the letter. Once it is in your computer memory, modify it to personalize it for yourself.

The name and address of your US Representative can be found at the Member Only page of the ARRL web site. The name and address appears on the opening screen of Members Only.

Once you have printed and signed the letter, please send it or a signed copy of it to John Chwat, Chwat & Co., 625 Slaters Ln., Suite 103, Alexandria, VA 22314. John heads our congressional contact service. He will combine your letter with others going to your congressman and hand-deliver them to him. This will ensure the letters will receive the greatest attention possible.

GLD Member offers iPhone/iTouch Applications

Carlton Yaffey, K8NU of Columbus, Ohio has developed two apps that can be downloaded using itunes on a PC or Mac. The apps are a chart of the Amateur Radio bands and a grid square map.

The HamBands application displays the layout of the segments of the radio spectrum assigned to FCC-licensed US radio amateurs. The layouts indicate which portions of each band are for RTTY, CW and DATA and which are for PHONE and IMAGE. The layouts also indicate which portions are open to which license class.

The iGridSquare Amateur Radio application converts latitude and longitude into their 6-character grid square. Grid squares are often used to indicate a station's location, especially during contests or for obtaining awards.

Details of the apps are at:

<http://www.carl-yaffey.com/hambands.html>
and <http://www.carl-yaffey.com/igridsquare.html>.

Ohio State Parks on the Air

The Portage County (OH) ARS (PCARS) is sponsoring the Ohio State Parks on the Air operating event again. The second running of this contest will be from noon to 8 PM, EDT on Saturday, September 12. The objective is to put as many Ohio state parks on the air and to work as many of the parks as possible.

Prizes and awards are given for top finishers! Non-park stations in Ohio as well as outside of Ohio can also compete.

Complete information, including rules, forms and FAQ's are at <http://parks.portcars.org> or contact the contest chairman, Chuck, W8PT at w8pt@portcars.org. Check the web site for updates as the contest nears.

In case you wish to consider taking the family along or staying overnight, Information on park facilities is on Ohio Department of Natural Re-

sources web site,

<http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/default/tabid/80/Default.aspx>.

AMTOR & ASCII out; PSK31 & MFSK16 in at W1AW

As a result of a survey of W1AW listeners, W1AW will change two different digital modes on August 17. W1AW will replace its AMTOR and ASCII transmissions with PSK31 and MFSK16, respectively. RTTY (Baudot) will continue to be the first digital mode used in the transmission schedule.



Frequencies used by W1AW for its digital transmissions remain unchanged. All regular 6 PM and 9 PM Eastern Time digital transmissions will begin with RTTY. PSK31 and MFSK16 will be sent as time allows.

Tuesday and Friday Keplerian data bulletins will be sent using RTTY and PSK31.

The W1AW operating schedule — complete with times and frequencies — can be found at, <http://www.arrl.org/w1aw.html#w1awsked>.

The A-1 Operator Club

As described on the ARRL web site, “Only the best operators can qualify for the A-1 Operator Club, amateurs who have met the highest operating standards.” No one can apply for membership. One must be recommended independently by two amateurs who already belong to the Club. “Who knows? Fine-tune your operating skills, and one of these days you may be pleasantly surprised when the mailman delivers an A-1 Operator Club certificate.”

The A-1 Op Club is open for voice, CW, RTTY

and other modes. It is posted on the ARRL web site, it has been described in QST every now and then, but it isn't talked about by hams very much.

Information on the A-1 Operator Club, how new members are selected, who has received one nomination and is waiting for the second, and who is included among its 5386 members is available at <http://www.arrl.org/awards/#a1>.

In addition to receiving a nice certificate, A-1 Ops can also obtain a great looking pin!

Manuals Online

I believe most active amateurs realize the value of the Internet whether they use it for sending and receiving e-mail, for submitting QSO records to Logbook of the world (LoTW), spotting DX, getting help from a friend ... or finding a manual that's disappeared and is needed to repair a rig. During recent days, local club reflectors have listed two sites where manuals for rigs, rotators and other pieces of equipment can be found and downloaded at no cost. The web sites listed are <http://bama.sbc.edu/> and <http://www.radioamateur.eu/schemari.html>.

These seem to be active sites leading to many operating manuals and schematics. Being a cautious individual, there is one watch-out I will mention about sites such as this.

Most of these are not owned or operated by the manufacturers or sellers of the equipment related to the manuals they feature. This means that their posting online and offering them for downloading may likely violate copyright law. Unlikely though it may be, downloading copyrighted material without first obtaining permission from the copyright owner could result in legal action against the person who violates this law.

The fact that no fee is charged to download a copyrighted item does not make downloading and using the item legal.

As I mentioned above, this is just a watch-out.

Travel Schedule

The following is the travel schedule for Division staff for coming weeks. In addition to Vice Director Gary Johnson, KI4LA, Division Legislative Action Chair John Meyers, NB4K and 8th Area QSL Bureau Manager Jay Slough, K4ZLE will visit the events shown below.

Date.....	Event.....	Division Representative(s)
1 Aug:	Columbus, OH, Voice of Aladdin ARC -	- Gary
7 Aug:	Massillon ARC 75th Ann. ARRL Affiliation --	Jim
9 Aug:	Lawrenceburg, KY, Bluegrass ARS --	Gary
16 Aug:	Cortland, OH, Warren ARA --	Jim, John
12 Sep:	GLD Symposium, Findlay RC --	Gary, Jim, John
13 Sep:	Findlay Hamfest, Findlay RC --	Gary, Jim, John
19 Sep:	Reynoldsburg, OH, Ohio Sec. Conf. --	Jim
20 Sep:	Cincinnati Hamfest, Gr. Cincinnati ARA --	Gary, John, Jim
6 Oct:	Cincinnati, OH, OH-KY-IN ARRL Nite -	- Jim
17 Oct:	Holland, MI Hamfest, Holland ARC --	Gary, Jay
18 Oct:	Kalamazoo, MI Hamfest, Kalamazoo ARC & SMART --	Gary, Jay
25 Oct:	Massillon, OH, Hamfest, Massillon ARC --	Jim
31 Oct:	Hazard KY Hamfest, Kentucky Mountains ARC --	Gary
1 Nov:	Massillon OH Hamfest, Massillon ARC --	John, Jim

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