



# Anabaptist Network News

## 'The Eighth Day has Dawned'



On Monday 8 May, wrote Eleanor Kreider, at 8.08, Alan Kreider breathed his last. 'The eighth day has dawned', she declared. The above plaque had hung outside their home for many years, looking forward to the first day of the new creation. One of the founders of the Anabaptist Network, director of the London Mennonite Centre, for thirty years a mission worker in England, historian and author, inspiration, mentor and teacher to Christians in many places and from many traditions, Alan was 75 when he died. He had been ill since December but until recently there was hope that medical treatment would be effective. Two weeks before he died he had said farewell to members of his church.

On Tuesday 16 May, 350 people packed into the church building for a memorial service. This is available as a podcast: <http://www.prairiestreetmc.org/a-service-of-worship-thanksgiving-for-the-life-of-alan-kreider/> We are glad that Helen Roe and Ian Milligan were able to represent the Network there.



His pastor, Nelson Kraybill, wrote: 'Alan was remarkably joyful and full of faith to the end. We miss him keenly already. I am grateful beyond words for the impact he had on my vocation and faith. We have said farewell to a giant.' Many others have offered tributes to this much-loved friend – too many to include in this newsletter. His friend Will Newcomb has created a Facebook page dedicated to Alan's memory, on which tributes, photographs and other reminiscences can be posted: <https://www.facebook.com/AlanFetterKreider/>

The Network, in partnership with the Mennonite Trust and members of the former Wood Green Mennonite Church, is holding a thanksgiving service for Alan's life and ministry at Bloomsbury Baptist Church, London at 2.30pm on Tuesday 11 July. All welcome. Further details on the attached flyer.

A special issue of the *Mennonite Quarterly Review* will be devoted to Alan's legacy. Articles by scholars from various countries will interact with his writings and explore their impact. More information in a future newsletter. The Anabaptist theology forum is also planning to focus on Alan's legacy at its meeting in May 2018.

Please remember Eleanor Kreider, their son Andrew and the rest of the family in your prayers.

## Events

### July 11

Thanksgiving for Alan Kreider's life, London

### 24-29 September

Bridge Builders' course: 'Transforming Church Conflict', Hemel Hempstead

### 9-12 October

Bridge Builders' course: 'Leading with Emotional Maturity', Hemel Hempstead

### 20-21 October

Anabaptist theology forum, Bristol

### 4-5 November

Urban Expression 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary event, Shropshire

### 18-19 November

Crucible weekend, Birmingham

### 20-24 November

Block week, Centre for Anabaptist Studies, Bristol

### 21 November

Centre for Anabaptist Studies annual lecture, Bristol

## Networkers

The Anabaptist Network, in partnership with the Mennonite Trust, supports Alexandra Elish and Mike and Cheryl Nimz as development workers.

### Alexandra Elish

**Alexandra** writes: 'As well as the usual mix of meeting people curious about Anabaptism and peace-making, and travelling to meet others who are part of the Anabaptist family in Europe, I attended the Anabaptist Theology Forum for the first time this April. I was there as part of a small team which included Martin Parkes and Peter Atkins to host a discussion about what some Anabaptist 'common practices' might be. We shared two Anabaptist communion spaces and then chatted about our experiences of communion and how discovering (or stumbling into!) Anabaptism had shaped and formed our theology of communion.

'It was a lively discussion and we appreciated the Forum's willingness to engage in a different way with our "presentations". We hope to have similar conversations about common practices with Anabaptist study groups or Anabaptist collectives throughout the UK, particularly as we continue to discuss the potential of starting a dispersed intentional Anabaptist community. If your group would be interested in hosting a conversation around common practices, please do get in touch with me.

'In his papal encyclical, *Laudato si'*, Pope Francis comments that "Peace, justice and the preservation of creation are three absolutely interconnected themes, which cannot be separated and treated individually without once again falling into reductionism". As a Network, we have not as yet communally considered peace-making and justice in relation to climate change, water scarcity and environmental degradation. As a response to that, one of the things that I have invested a significant part of my time in over the past few months has been the Anabaptist Network and Green Christian conference on the environment: "Is religion costing us the earth?" originally planned for 3 June in Coventry.

'How might people committed to non-violence and peace reflect on questions concerning the environment? In what ways do our Anabaptist

core convictions (especially our conviction that "Spirituality and economics are inter-connected. In an individualist and consumerist culture and in a world where economic injustice is rife, we are committed to finding ways of living simply, sharing generously, caring for creation, and working for justice") inform our ethics, actions and behaviour in the light of the environmental and climate challenges that face us in the UK and communities in the two-thirds world?

'Unfortunately, due to a low response, we have decided to postpone the conference until later in the year or early next year. However, we think that it is important to have conversations about our individual and collective response to these environmental challenges. I would be interested to find out from members of the Network what issues in relation to the environment you would be interested in looking at. Was the timing or location of the conference inconvenient? Are you environment-ed-out?! I would appreciate your thoughts or comments, so please do email me at [alexandra@menno.org.uk](mailto:alexandra@menno.org.uk)'

### Mike and Cheryl Nimz

**Mike and Cheryl** write: 'The last few months have been busy for us. This is something that makes us happy. We have been busy meeting new people, and spending time with many that we have grown to know quite well.

'Over the last few months, we have had more and more opportunities to speak at churches. In April alone, we spoke at three different churches and two of them were churches that we had not spoken at before. We are gaining many of our new connections through the Fellowship of Churches of Christ (FCC) and also from contacts that we have made through other events, such as Church and Peace.

'Mike's time has also been filled with some of the ongoing events that he has loved being a part of. There have been events like the FCC annual general meeting. There was also time at the Anabaptist Theology Forum. And we were part of the Christian Peacemaker Teams' annual meeting in Leeds.

'One of the opportunities to meet new people came at the Nomad Podcast Live event. This was a weekend event held in Nottingham. It gave us the opportunity to meet people who are interested in finding a deeper understanding of their faith. We were able to connect with a

number of people who were familiar with Anabaptist theology and some were even familiar with the Anabaptist Network in the UK. This is promising in that it suggests that there is a growing understanding of Anabaptism in the UK. This will be something that we need to see if we can connect to in more meaningful ways.

'We are also working to get a new Anabaptist group started in Birmingham. We have only met twice, at this point. The two meetings have been well attended and have had some very vigorous discussions. We are hoping that this is something that will become self-sustaining and continue to reach people as well.'

'We have travelled up to Scotland to reconnect with Mennonites in Edinburgh, our Mosaic Church friends in Glasgow and Anabaptists on the Isle of Bute. It was a great time to hear stories, share what's on our hearts, share ideas and collaborate.'

'We feel encouraged and humbled that we get to be a part in so many people's lives.'

## Communities

### Developing the Network

**Martin Parkes**, who chairs the steering group of the Anabaptist Network, writes: 'Over the last few months, Andrew Francis has been phoning, emailing and visiting a number of the groups that currently make up the Anabaptist Network of Communities. The purpose, as we explained in the previous newsletter, was to understand what these groups value from their connection, and how, as a Network, we might better support and resource one another.'

'Andrew has now completed the task and has provided a report for the steering group and for those groups that took part. It was evident that the groups value the Network and were grateful for the opportunity to reflect on their connection to the wider community.'

'At a recent steering group meeting we reflected on the findings of this process and agreed to explore a number of ideas. Initially we will focus on two areas:

- How we can provide more resources for communities (and interested individuals)

to foster conversation and to stimulate thinking from an Anabaptist perspective. We hope to find ways for individuals from across the Network to share their reflections, studies or experiences with one another.

- How we can foster a great sense of community and 'connectedness' across the Network. One message we heard from Andrew was the value just in undertaking the exercise and, where it is wanted, we want to strengthen the Network and improve communication across it.

'Members of the steering group are exploring how we might achieve these; hopefully we will have more to report in the next newsletter. If you have any reflections, please contact Martin Parkes [admin@anabaptistnetwork.com](mailto:admin@anabaptistnetwork.com)

'Thank you to those groups and individuals that invited Andrew to join them, or shared their views via email or telephone. We also want to thank Andrew for voluntarily giving of his time to make the connections and travel up and down the country to engage with the various groups.'

### Study Groups

The new study group in **Birmingham** welcomes anyone living within reach of Selly Oak. Details of future meetings from Mike and Cheryl Nimz: [nimzcycles@gmail.com](mailto:nimzcycles@gmail.com)

There are plans to start a new group in **Devon**, probably in Exeter. If you are interested, contact Steve Jones: [steve@jonestribe.co.uk](mailto:steve@jonestribe.co.uk).

A group may also be starting in **Canterbury**: if you might be interested, contact Stuart Murray Williams: [stuart@murraywilliams.co.uk](mailto:stuart@murraywilliams.co.uk)

We are continuing to explore the possibility of starting a new **London** study group, but in the meantime, if you are in the London area, you might be interested in this message from Bob Allaway, a Baptist minister in North London and long-time member of the Anabaptist Network.

Bob writes: 'the Catholic Worker group nearby is starting a "Radical Reading Group", starting by studying *Christian Anarchism* by Alexandre Christoyannopoulos.' The first meeting was on 23 March. If you want to know more, contact Bob at [bob@rallaway.plus.com](mailto:bob@rallaway.plus.com)

## Anabaptist Theology Forum

**Linda Wilson** writes: 'The Forum will be having a conference next Spring as a tribute to Alan Krieder. Possible contributions might include a round-table discussion of one of Alan's books; a history of the development of the Network and Alan's role within it; and sessions on any topic of relevance to Anabaptism, post-Christendom church, etc.

'These could be presented by people who have been personally helped and inspired by Alan in their academic/theological/spiritual journeys, or by those whose subject of study was directly shaped by Alan's work. We might also welcome stories of Alan's help and inspiration to scholars of Anabaptism and other topics. Tentative dates for this are 11-12 April, but nothing is actually booked yet.

'We also have a 24-hour gathering at Bristol Baptist College in the autumn, 20-21 October, over a Friday and Saturday as an experiment to see how this timing suits people. Topics yet to be decided.'

If you are interested in attending or contributing to the Krieder forum, or just in being on the mailing list for future gatherings, please contact Linda at [linda.wilson@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:linda.wilson@blueyonder.co.uk)

## News and Events

### *'Is Religion Costing the Earth?'*

As mentioned in Alexandra's report, we were disappointed that we had to postpone this conference, which was due to take place on 3 June. Ticket sales were insufficient to make the event viable or affordable. We hope to arrange a new date for this in due course and will give more information in a future newsletter.

### *Charismatic Anabaptists?*

As mentioned before, there has been interest in an event that explores charismatic dimensions of early Anabaptism and the significance of the Anabaptist tradition for those whose spirituality and church experience has been influenced by the charismatic movement. No date or venue has yet been fixed for this event, but we would welcome expressions of interest.

## Article

### Beatitudes, not Platitudes

Blessed are those who refuse the lie that one life is worth more than any other, for theirs is the future of humanity.

Blessed are those who have stared long into the abyss, for theirs is honesty beyond grief.

Blessed are those who resist retaliation, for the earth will never be won by force.

Blessed are those who would rather die for truth than live with compromise, for the truth will outlive all lies.

Blessed are those who forgive the unforgivable, for they have seen the darkness of their own souls.

Blessed are those who know themselves truly, for they have seen themselves as God sees them.

Blessed are those who are provocatively nonviolent, for they are following the path of the son of God.

Blessed are those who choose to receive violence but not to give it, for the future is born out of such choices.

Blessed are you when you stand up for truth, and hell itself decides to try and destroy you. You're not the first and you won't be the last.

I'm telling you now, nothing makes any sense unless you learn to see it differently, and then choose to live that alternative into being.

**Simon Woodman** (London)

## Organisations

### Christian Peacemaker Teams

We are delighted to learn that CPT has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Details at [www.afsc.org/story/afsc-announces-nobel-nomination](http://www.afsc.org/story/afsc-announces-nobel-nomination)

We are also glad to report that the Mennonite Trust has agreed to employ outreach worker, **Ruth Wilde**, initially one day a week but moving to four days a week next year. Funding for this post has been secured from various sources. We hope that Ruth's work will enable CPT to become well-established in the UK.

Contact Ruth at 07794 659503 or [uk@cpt.org](mailto:uk@cpt.org)

## Urban Expression



This autumn Urban Expression is celebrating 20 years of pioneering ministry on the margins of church and culture in many urban communities. Self-funding teams have been involved in many different mission activities – evangelism, social action, community organising, church planting, inter-faith dialogue, environmental activism, etc. Our mandate continues to be to discover fresh ways of living out the gospel in these areas.

We are inviting former team members, trustees and many others who have been involved or supported us through the years to join us for a weekend of story-telling, reflection, thanksgiving and thinking about the future on 4-5 November.

We are also inviting financial contributions from supporters as we look to develop new initiatives – please contact us if this is something to which you might want to contribute.

For further information about opportunities, or to request newsletters or offer support, go to the website [www.urbanexpression.org.uk](http://www.urbanexpression.org.uk) or email [enquiries@urbanexpression.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@urbanexpression.org.uk)

## Peacemeal



**Noel Moules** writes: 'On the Workshop course we have championed the creative possibilities of Peacemeal since our inception in 1983. We have inspired many people to explore and

experiment with Peacemeal within their local groups, churches and communities. Since Anvil Trust began to look for fresh ways in which to share the Workshop experience more widely – including doing many more things online – we have been committed to setting up a website dedicated to Peacemeal. Finally, this March we launched our site: <http://peacemeal.co>

'We believe that Jesus only left us one physical thing with which to build church and community, and that is a table with food on. Nothing is more basic than our need for food, or more significant than sharing it with others. All food is filled with profound spiritual power. The Peacemeal – Jesus' gift to us – provides the opportunity to encounter this, and also to create spaces in which we can expect life-changing things to happen!

'The aim of our new Peacemeal website is to create a place where we can collect people's table-stories and experiences, and share them in the hope they will not only be examples of the many things are possible, but also inspire people to run Peacemeals themselves in their own neighbourhoods and communities.

'There are, of course, infinite possibilities as to how Peacemeal can be shared. To keep it simple, we have chosen 12 categories under which to collect the stories. Already we have posted stories in each category – with many from across the world. We would love to tell your story too. We have plenty of resources you are welcome to use free of charge, plus other background materials. If a conversation would help you plan a Peacemeal, feel free to email us ([office@anvil.org.uk](mailto:office@anvil.org.uk)) or ring 0114 288 8816. We would love to hear from you. Step one: check out the website!'

## Mennonite Trust

The trustees wish to record their thanks to our administrator, Vickie Schellert, who is moving to America in July. Although she has only worked with us for the past year, she has made a huge impact and has enabled the Trust to progress in many ways.

During March we welcomed applications for the upgraded post of 'office manager' (even though there is no actual office) and were delighted by the number and quality of applicants. Eventually we interviewed two of these and appointed **Ian Geere**.



Ian was until recently a Baptist minister. He is a chartered accountant, and is a member of the Anabaptist study group in Manchester. He has already taken up this position so that he can have an overlap period with Vickie.

The Trust has recently purchased a third house for members of an Urban Expression mission team – this time for the team in Brighton. These properties enable team members to live in their communities paying affordable rents. The Trust is pleased to be able to support pioneer ministry in this way.

Contact us at [administrator@menno.org.uk](mailto:administrator@menno.org.uk)

## Crucible



In November, the twelfth year of the Crucible course begins in its usual location in Selly Oak, Birmingham. Over 600 people have participated in this course over the years. Is this the year for you?

According to the brochure, the Crucible course is for Christians with courage and imagination, who suspect that:

- We need to operate as cross-cultural missionaries because we live in a cross-cultural mission context.
- We need to think creatively about incarnating the gospel and planting new kinds of churches in emerging and diverse cultures.
- We need to recover the biblical vision of shalom and reflect on how we live as followers of Jesus in light of this all-embracing vision.
- We need to pay particular attention to the margins, because we serve the God who frequently does new things there.

The 2017-18 brochure is attached with further details and information about how to book. Do pass this on to anyone who might be interested. Bursaries are available if needed.

For any enquiries, please contact Rachel Jay: [rachel@urbanexpression.org.uk](mailto:rachel@urbanexpression.org.uk)

## Centre for Anabaptist Studies

The Centre is offering the following modules in 2017-18:

- 20-24 November: Menno Simons' *Foundation of Christian Doctrine*
- 5-9 February: Anabaptist Origins and Distinctives
- 23-27 April: Anabaptist Ethics and Hermeneutics

You are welcome to participate in these block weeks at Bristol Baptist College, whether or not you want to study towards a qualification. All these modules are also available online and so can be studied anywhere and at your own pace.

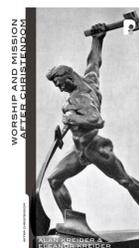
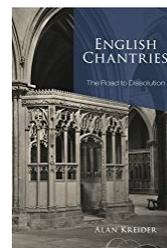
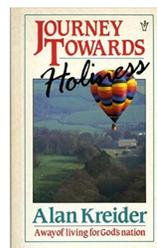
The annual lecture will take place on Tuesday 21 November 2017 at 7.30pm. The lecturer will be Dr Ian Randall, whose subject will be 'A Peace Witness under Pressure: The Bruderhof Community in England, 1936-1942'. Recordings of the previous annual lectures are available on request. Flyer attached about the 2017 lecture.

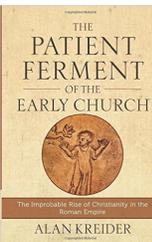
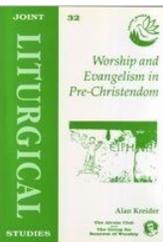
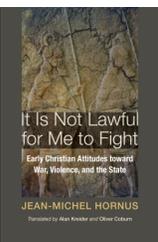
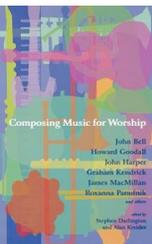
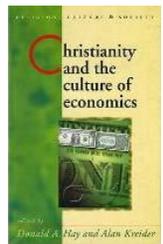
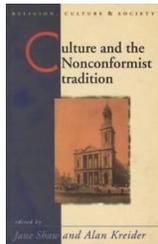
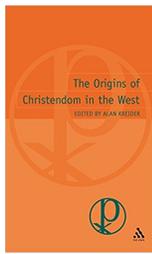
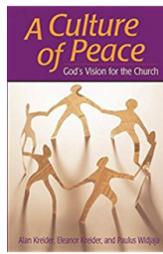
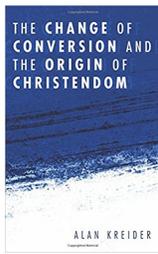
For further information about any aspect of the Centre, to receive information about lectures, webinars and other events, or to enquire about studying at the college, please contact: Stuart Murray Williams: Centre for Anabaptist Studies, Bristol Baptist College, The Promenade, Clifton Down, Bristol BS8 3NJ or email the Centre at [anabaptist@bristol-baptist.ac.uk](mailto:anabaptist@bristol-baptist.ac.uk)

## Books and Resources

### Books by Alan Kreider

Readers of this newsletter who are not familiar with Alan Kreider and unaware of his influence on the development of the Anabaptist Network and on the lives of many other people might be interested in seeing the range of books Alan wrote, edited, translated or co-authored:



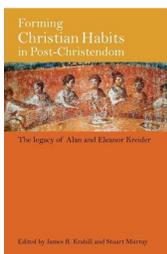


- Post-Christendom* £2.00
- Church after Christendom* £5.00
- Faith and Politics after Christendom* £3.00
- Youth Work after Christendom* £2.00
- Worship and Mission after Christendom* £3.00
- Reading the Bible after Christendom* £3.00
- Hospitality and Community after Christendom* £3.00
- God after Christendom?* £10.00
- Women and Men after Christendom* £10.00
- Atheism after Christendom* £10.00
- Relationships and Emotions after Christendom* £10.00

We are looking forward to the publication of a number of new titles in the series, which are under contract and are currently being written:

- Missional Discipleship after Christendom* by Dan Yarnell and Andy Hardy
- Theology after Christendom* by Joshua Searle
- Security after Christendom* by John Heathershaw
- Interpreting the Old Testament after Christendom* by Jeremy Thomson
- Singleness and Marriage after Christendom* by Lina Androviene

In 2011 numerous friends and colleagues from several nations contributed to *Forming Christian Habits in Post-Christendom: the legacy of Alan & Eleanor Kreider* (edited by James Krabill and Stuart Murray). This book contains a selection of writings by Alan and Eleanor with responses from those who had been influenced by their writings and by their lives.



Sections on mission, community and worship pick up key themes and passions from Alan's life. In post-Christendom the formation of Christian habits is essential, he believed. The book also lists his publications: articles, books and chapters in other books.

## 'After Christendom' series

As the series moves to a new publisher (Wipf & Stock), we have obtained copies of most books published by Paternoster at reduced prices. We can offer these books to you at these prices if you are interested in obtaining any of them. The list is below. Please let us know if you want to buy any of these books (while stocks last, postage extra).

A number of other titles are under discussion. If you have suggestions for further topics or might be interested in writing a future volume, please let us know.

Wipf & Stock have recently republished *God after Christendom?* by Brian Haymes and Kyle Gingerich Hiebert. They will shortly publish an updated version of *Post-Christendom* by Stuart Murray (the book that launched the series).

## Book Notes

You might be interested in the following books that have recently appeared or will soon:

David Weaver-Zercher: *Martyrs Mirror: A Social History* (John Hopkins University Press, 2016): an introduction to the context, history and significance of this famous Anabaptist collection.

John Wiley: *The Other Reformers: A Devotional History of the Anabaptists and Early Baptists* (Independently Published, 2016): an attempt to provide 'a historically-critical and spiritually-sensitive interpretation' of the Anabaptist and Baptist movements, with discussion questions for group study.

Andrew Ste. Marie: *March Forward with the Word!: The Life of Conrad Grebel* (Sermon on the Mount Publishing, 2016): intended for teenagers and young adults, a retelling of the story of one of the founders of Swiss Anabaptism.

Christopher MacKay: *False Prophets and Preachers: Henry Gresbeck's Account of the Anabaptist Kingdom of Munster* (Truman State University Press, 2016): a translation of the only eye-witness account by an escapee who surrendered to the besieging forces.

Rodney Hofer: *Hutterites in Romania: A Brief History and Guide* (CreateSpace, 2016): the story of their rescue by the Prince of Transylvania in 1622 to the invitation of Russian Field Marshal Rumiantsev in 1770 to establish their home on his Ukrainian estate.

Verlyn Hofer: *The Maverick Hutterite: The Journey of David Hofer* (CreateSpace, 2017): the story of a young boy who moved with his family from Russia to the first Hutterite colony in North America.

Greg Boyd: *The Crucifixion of the Warrior God* (Fortress Press, 2017): demonstrates how Scripture's violent images of God are reframed and their violence subverted when they are interpreted through the lens of the cross and resurrection.

*Amish Prayers: A Coloring Book* (Herald, 2017): an interactive and meditative colouring book of prayers from a centuries-old Amish prayer book.

Virginia Moffatt (ed.) *Reclaiming the Common Good: How Christians can help rebuild our broken world* (DTL, 2017). Simon Woodman has a chapter in this: 'Building a Vision for the Common Good'.

James Paul Lusk: *The Jesus Candidate* (Ekklesia, 2017): subtitled 'political religion in a secular age' and drawing on the Anabaptist tradition, an examination of hankerings after Christendom in the UK and USA and advocacy of a different approach.

Andrew Francis: *Oikos: God's Big Word for a Small Planet* (Cascade, 2017): a theology of economy, ecology and ecumeny.

Bruxy Cavey: *Reunion: The Good News of Jesus for Seekers, Saints, and Sinners* (Herald, 2017): 'the message of Jesus changed the world ... until the world changed the message' – a retelling of the gospel.

You might also be interested in a short series of talks on Anabaptism by Bruxy Cavey, pastor of 'The Meeting House' in Toronto. The first of these talks can be accessed on Youtube at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrykbPKyoro&t=66s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrykbPKyoro&t=66s) – and there are links from here to the others.

## New Website

The Network's website contains a large amount of information and many resources, but it is not as easy to navigate as we would like. So we have decided the time is right to commission a new website. We have invited several designers to bid for this and are currently reviewing what they can offer and what they will charge.

We hope the new website will be up and running by the end of the year. If there are any features you would like to see included, please let us know as soon as possible.

## Articles Wanted

We welcome articles on subjects that are likely to be of interest to readers. Please contact us in advance if you are unsure, or simply send in an article (up to 750 words) for consideration.

## Contact Us

For further information about anything you have read in this newsletter, please contact us using the address or email address below. And if you have information or news items you would like included in the next newsletter, please let us have these no later than **30 September 2017**.

Anabaptist Network Trust (registered charity 1021760)  
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