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JUNE 2026

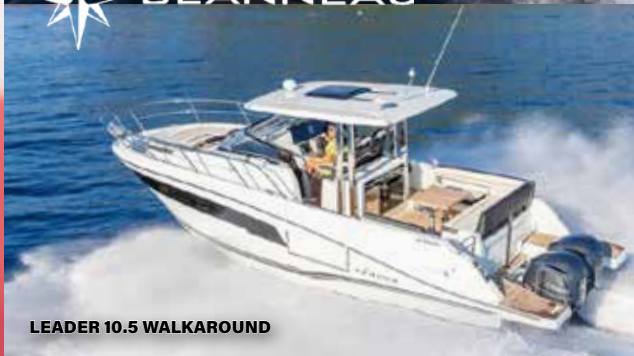


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Happy 25th America

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Marinating with Captain Jim High

HAPPY
250TH
America

And here we are, folks! The Summer of 2026 and the 250th anniversary of our Great Country. This summer is chock-full of amazing events. From Boat Parades on the C and D Canal, The Antique Wooden Boat Festival in Chesapeake City, to the Blue Angels and Operation Sail in Baltimore. Middle River is hosting its biggest fireworks display to date, and Chris Sack is returning with the Coral Reefers at Cult Classic Brewing on Kent Island. So, strap in, hold on, put your hands in the air, and enjoy the ride. The coaster is at the top of the hill -- everybody SCREAM!



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Spring on the Chesapeake
is all about Maximum Fun
with Zero Stress!

Over the years, I have written about my daughter Kammy J, my 11-year-old. She never fails to provide a "you can't make this shit up" story. Just before Mother's Day, she heads to her weekly Girl Scout Troop Meeting. That night, the girls are making door mats for their mamas to celebrate

Mother's Day! Each mat is to be personalized. Some girls make theirs say "Welcome Home," "Home is Where the Heart Is" Wipe Your Paws," "Beware of Dog," but not Kammy J! Nope, hers features margarita glasses and reads, "It's 5 O'clock Somewhere!"



We call this column Marinating, and that's because you can never tell what we are gonna be chatting about! For instance... "It's Five O'clock Somewhere"... A song introduced by Alan Jackson featuring Jimmy Buffett in June of 2003. Twenty-some years ago. A song about why day drinking, morning drinking, and late-night drinking are all acceptable because it is 5 p.m. somewhere in the world. The time Happy

Hour traditionally starts because workers get off work. We've bought flags, clocks, T-shirts, placards, and made door mats to remind all those around us not to be so predictable. Some of those clocks have nothing but 5s on them. Can you imagine the China Man gluing all 5's onto a clock and wondering what the heck??? Then getting off at midnight and heading out for a beer? Kenny Chesney's song "No Shirt, No Shoes, No Problem" came out a month earlier. However, at All American Burger, No Shoes, No Shirts, NO DICE! BTW... In Fast Times at Ridgemont High, Jeff Spicoli's theme song "I Don't Know" was written and performed by Jimmy Buffett! Coincidence? I think KNOT!



Last month, I made the pilgrimage down to Pasadena and visited someone who has been alive for more than 40 percent of the time this country has been around. Irv Koch, the legendary proprietor of Irv's Basement Bar, was born in August 1923. Irv's is located down in Pasadena off Fort Smallwood Road. The beer was cold and the people warm, but remember to bring cash!

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Summertime Sailing



By Wendy Gilbert
Contributing Editor



I was about 20 years old before I set off on my first sail.

Having grown up in an area that was more about horses and farms than boats and Bays, it was understandable.

When I received the invitation to spend the weekend aboard a friend's sailboat with some college chums, how could I refuse? I might not have been particularly savvy about sailing, but I certainly was at home on the water and eager to learn. Like any good college student, I did a little research ahead of time. By Saturday morning, I knew Port from Starboard and the bow from the stern. I packed a tote bag and climbed aboard.

Where we went from Perryville, I could not say. Obviously south, but how far south is anybody's guess. The captain on that trip has long passed. I can't think of a soul to ask, but let's guess it was in the general direction of Still Pond or perhaps Betterton.

All the predictable things happened on this miserably hot mid-summer week-

end. We made very slow progress, ran out of food (not that there was much to begin with), and I'd lost my sunglasses (or was it my "real" glasses?). It was all a little blurry.

Somewhere around midnight, the party died down and as there was no place to make "a beer run" we all got bored and decided to pass out. I'd never attempted to sleep on a fiberglass surface before (nor since), and my damp beach towel was a poor substitute indeed for a blanket. A few hours later, I woke up at dawn. Ravenous, I crept down to the galley to look for something – anything – to eat. Nada. The best I managed was a few maraschino cherries and a couple of cocktail olives. Not that I'm complaining, too much, my friends didn't even get that.

The captain assured the grumbling crew of 5 that a feast awaited us, and off we went.

By midafternoon, we'd arrived. We (the great unwashed and sunburnt) were greeted with some skepticism by the folks on the beach. The captains'

"friends" were not very friendly, and the only food we were offered was a few undercooked ears of corn, which we gratefully accepted as we were absolutely ravenous.

We didn't linger and made our way home under power, if you can call that miserable little motor "power". It was late Sunday night when I finally got home. My first order of business was a ham and cheese sandwich and the second was a shower.

I worked green aloe vera gel onto nearly every inch of my skin and crawled into my freshly made bed with unprecedented gratitude. I was peppered with questions the next morning over a hurried breakfast (first class of the day starts at 8 a.m.)

Did I have a good time on my first sail?

No.

Why?

Reference above.

Will you ever go again?

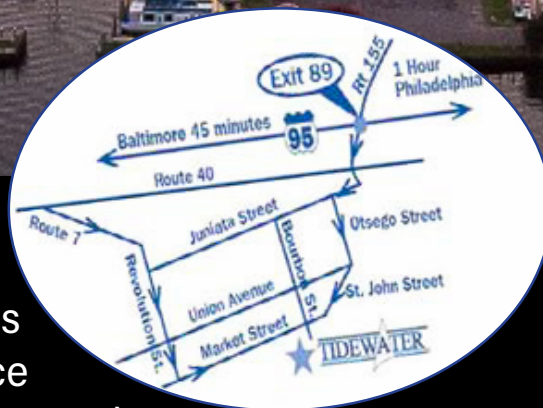
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Clunks To Take Over Clunks?

By Wendy Gilbert



Did you know that there are people whose job is all about packaging? Packaging engineers are an interesting subset of the engineering world. My husband is a mechanical engineer and can certainly package with the best of them. The more complicated the problem, the happier he is.

I am becoming increasingly plastic-phobic and insist on using glass wherever possible. I transfer my shopping purchases into Mason jars as soon as I get home. This drives the resident engineer crazy as the foodstuffs were already in packages “designed and engineered” for them. Perhaps.

Sadly, as I toss the original packaging and pour my treasures into the jars, I also toss aside instructions and nutritional information. You never know what I might start obsessing about next – carbs, protein, fiber? Fortunately, the Internet seldom fails to deliver on what could have been a problem.

All that plastic phobia must be put aside from time to time. Safety First! Wine in boxes was the perfect answer for boating for ages. And then came microplastics. Back to glass? Not so fast.

As I was perusing “The Boat” at Weaver’s recently (yes, I am a bargain hunter) I spied both a red and a white in what at first glance looked to be exhaustive packaging. Nope. It was wine in very pretty aluminum bottles. Seems

a bit 2030 somehow, doesn’t it? Not quite Jetsons and flying cars though. I did a bit of research and as it turns out the shift in wine packaging from heavy glass to sleek aluminum represents more than a logistical change; it is a fundamental reimagining of how we consume a centuries-old product. The traditional “clink” of glass is increasingly replaced by the quiet efficiency of metal. While the industry spent decades moving from glass to plastic-lined boxes, the current leap into 750ml aluminum bottles—designed to mirror the silhouette of a classic Bordeaux bottle—marks the true “third wave” of wine containment.

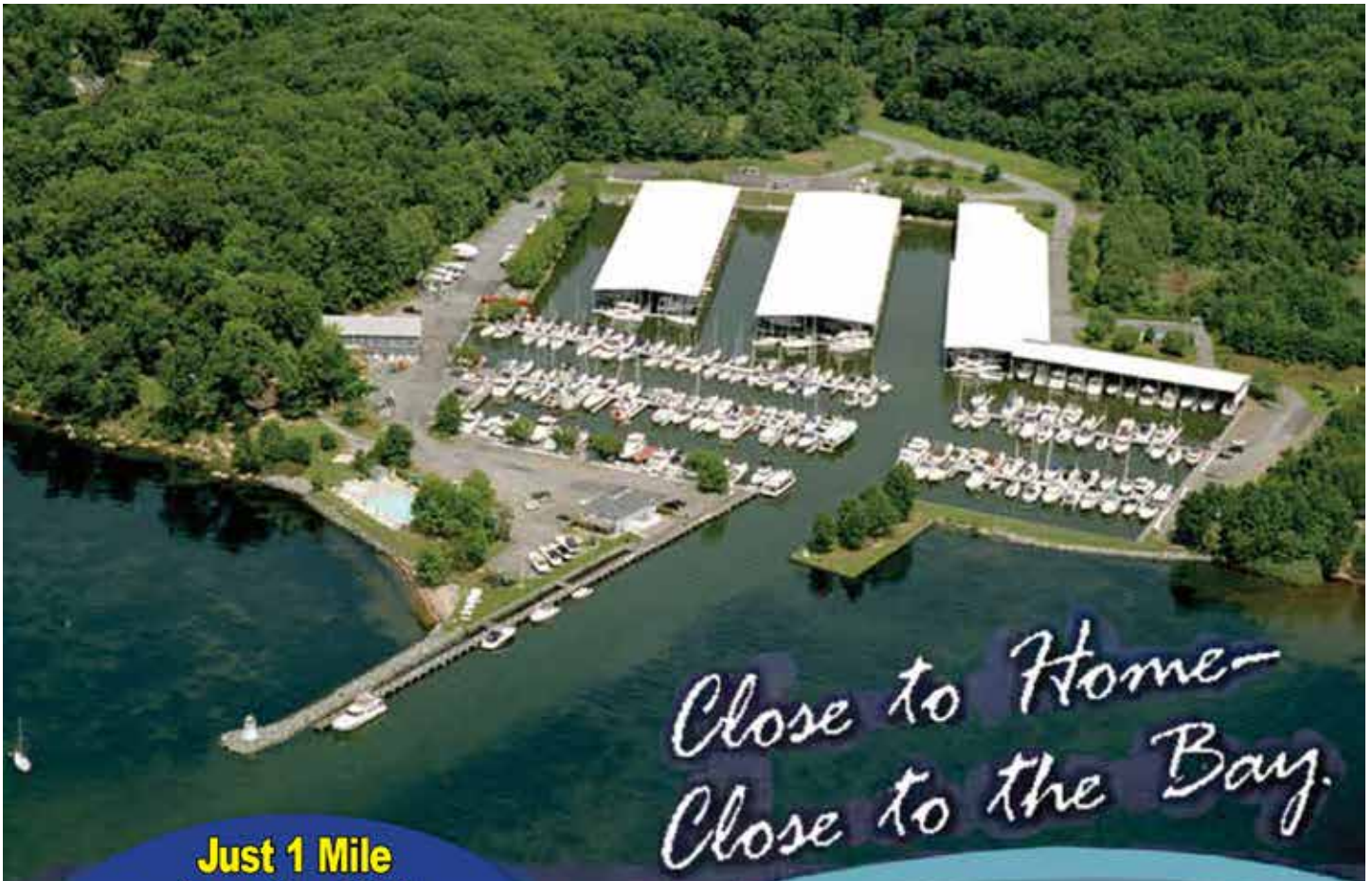
Leading this charge is the Element[AL] brand by Bogle Family Wine Collection, which recently debuted the 750ml aluminum format to solve the wine industry’s greatest environmental hurdle: the carbon footprint of heavy glass. Glass is energy-intensive to manufacture and notoriously heavy to ship, accounting for nearly half of a winery’s total carbon emissions. In contrast, these new aluminum bottles are 80 percent lighter and infinitely recyclable. Locally, Maryland’s own Old Westminster Winery acted as the regional herald for this shift, proving that high-quality, estate-grown wine could thrive in aluminum without losing its character.

The future of wine packaging is defined by “The Three R’s”: Resilience, Recep-

tivity, and Ruggedness. As we look toward the next decade, the “Ruggedness” of aluminum is its most immediate selling point. In recreation-heavy areas glass is often a liability or outright banned. The aluminum bottle allows decent wine to enter spaces previously reserved for beer and hard seltzers—poolsides, hiking trails, and boats—without the risk of shattered glass.

However, the true “future” lies in the industry’s ability to overcome “receptivity” barriers. Historically, wine has been shrouded in a “glass ceiling” of prestige; the weight of the bottle was often equated with the quality of the vintage. The next five to ten years will see a massive push to decouple “luxury” from “weight.” As younger Gen Z and Millennial consumers prioritize sustainability over ceremony, the 750ml aluminum bottle is poised to become the standard for “super-premium” everyday wine. We can expect to see integrated technology on these bottles, such as thermal-sensitive inks that change color when the wine reaches the perfect serving temperature—a feat much easier to achieve on metal than on thick glass.

They didn’t serve wine on any Jetsons episodes that I recall, but that does sound like something Mr. Spacely would have enjoyed.



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GUNPOWDER RIVER ULTIMATE FISHING ACCESS

By Tim Sherman



Through my years of fishing, I have spent a considerable amount of time both wading and boating. The river that is nearest to me, and in many ways dearest, is the Gunpowder. I've spent countless hours in both freshwater and tidal water portions of this incredible river. Species caught include: white perch, yellow perch, largemouth and smallmouth bass, chain pickerel, striped bass, long-eared sunfish, blue gills, hickory shad, channel and blue catfish, and one very lost croaker. Whether standing in Dundee Creek or on the deck of my boat at the mouth of the river; here, I have found plenty of joy.

As back then, access for land-bound and wading anglers, and those aboard small, powerless watercrafts, is quite limited in many areas these days. Quite often, boat launching facilities can be crowded and few and far between. The Gunpowder River, from its flowing freshwater to its brackish tide-waters, offers anglers many access points. You'll find two well-maintained launch ramps for power boats, and numerous areas on land for shore-bound, wading, and powerless watercraft anglers.

I am fortunate to have access to two areas of the freshwater river near my house. You will find parking lots at both Harford and Bel Air Road along the Gunpowder Falls State Park. There are trails along the river that lead you to openings in the tree line for access to the river's bounty of sunfish and bass.

Be forewarned that these areas fill up quickly on summertime weekends by those who like to picnic, and cool off in the river.

If you prefer fishing tidal water, Mariner Point Park has several areas along the canal's shoreline to cast a line. In recent years, the launch facility here has added a dedicated kayak/canoe launch. You can expect to catch sunfish, blue gills, white and yellow perch, largemouth bass, and snakeheads in the canal.

The Dundee Creek Fishing Area in the Gunpowder Falls State Park has parking for approximately 10 to 12 vehicles. There are three trails that lead to the creek. It's a short hike for shore-bound and wading fishermen. You will want to use portage wheels to get a kayak from the lot to any of the three creek entrances. Launching from any of these trails will allow you access to the farther reaches of Dundee and Saltpeter Creeks. It's a who's who of how many species you can catch. Catfish, perch, bass, stripers, and snakeheads are the expected species.

Dundee Creek Marina in the state park is a large facility that accommodates both power boats and kayaks. There is plenty of parking, and you can slide in your 'yak or canoe in a cove before you reach the ramps. Here, you will have access to the head of Dundee Creek and its lush grass beds that hold bass, perch, and sunfish species. Boating anglers have access to the entire upper Chesapeake, power and speed

considered. There is a \$10 ramp fee for power boaters.

The ramp in the Hammerman area of the state park offers access to the heart of Cunninghill Cove for paddling anglers. You can drive your vehicle down to the ramp to launch, but you will have to park your vehicle in a lot uphill from the ramp. This area features a long riprap shoreline on the left, heading to the Hammerman swimming area, and submerged pilings and more riprap as you make your way down the US Government shoreline to the east. Make sure you do not set foot on these well-marked banks. Along with the riprap and pilings, Cunninghill Cove also has ample grass beds. Bass and panfish are plentiful, and stripers show up in late summer through fall.

Mariner Point Park is a good launch and return spot of its own. The ramp is free, and there are 60 spots for boats and trailers. The canal leads out to the open river past the railroad bridge. As with the Dundee ramp, you can make a short run out into the river, or out to your favorite bay fishing spot. Fishermen with small draft boats can opt to head back into the marshes for bass, snakeheads, and crappies.

The Gunpowder River has a lot to offer. While many other bodies of water have few access points, this river offers several. Whether you are shore-bound, wading, paddling, or powered up to catch your favorite species, the Gunpowder has ultimate access for great fishing opportunities.


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SUMMER BAY BUCKET LIST

Don't Forget A Few Simple Summertime Pleasures

By Anne Sandbek

Summer is finally here! Many wait 9 months to take full advantage of this warm, fun-filled time of year. The green pollen waves are replaced by power boat wakes. As the humidity increases, we all crave relief—ironically, more water! Being in or on the water makes 80-90 percent humidity much more tolerable somehow. It's no surprise to any of us, but Marylanders tend to flock to the water now.

It's time to write your Summer Bay Bucket List. Before the summer schedule fills up - well, it probably already has - but there's always time for a little more summer fun!

Not a list of expensive charters or fancy hotel rooms - just some simple pleasures that make summer in Maryland one of a kind.

A controversial first item would be a sunrise. Many fishermen enjoy this experience regularly. If you don't, it's worth the early alarm. The water is quiet and smooth. The sun casts slanted light, painting the beginning of a new day on the Chesapeake. Some can enjoy it from their back deck or sailboat. If you're feeling energized, put the kayak in for an up-close view of the water reflecting the sun. The rest of us can pick up a coffee on the way to the local dock. No matter how you make it happen, enjoy the birds waking up while you do!

Now that you're caffeinated, it's time to try something new. There are over 600 water access sites available to the public in Maryland. Not to mention the private sites, your friends and family may have access to. Pick one you've never been to. It could be a few miles away or a few counties over. Head to a new restaurant by boat, paddle a new marsh, go tubing on a different creek, or walk a new boardwalk along a tributary. The Chesapeake Bay is full of beauty; make a plan to see some more of it this

summer.

Make it a family affair. Bring family and friends who may not have spent time on the Bay before. Share an evening cruise, go bow fishing, find a happy hour by boat, or brown bag it to a favorite spot. Whatever your favorite Bay activity is, find someone new(ish) to the Bay and share it with them.

There are also a few traditions to add to the list. Crabs and a cold one in the backyard. Snacking on ice cream at the end of a pier. Jet skiing or wakeboarding with friends. Spot a juvenile bald eagle. Catch a rockfish. Whatever makes summer, summer for you - add it to the list! Ask friends what they enjoy most, and you might find another item to add.

We all love the beauty of the Chesapeake Bay, so add an act of stewardship to your summer bucket list. Not as something you HAVE to do, but something to help keep your Bay clean, healthy, and more enjoyable. Snag trash at the ramp. Secure all gear so you don't lose it; the Bay really doesn't want another pair of sunglasses! Teach kids to leave beaches cleaner than when they got there. Every little bit helps when hundreds (or more) people are enjoying the Bay every day.

Finish off your list with a simple pleasure and see how many times you can enjoy it this summer. The warm sun hits your back as you head to the ramp. You make it to the dock before the rain hits. Talk to someone new. See an Osprey catch a fish. Take your kids or grandkids out for a ride.

Before you know it, it'll be Labor Day, and no one will know where the summer went. Use a bucket list to help slow down the fast summer days. Watch a sunrise or sunset. Enjoy an ice cream. Go somewhere new. Try something new. Make the most of this summer.

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Chesapeake Bay LOBSTER

By Montana Grant

Seafood is a wonderful part of Chesapeake Country menus. Maryland is famous for its tasty Blue Crabs, oysters, and finned fish. Rockfish is a great-eating fish that has thick, solid white meat. Lobsters are a wonderful seafood that are not caught in the Chesapeake Bay. Watermen do catch lobsters in the Atlantic Ocean, miles off Ocean City. Back in the day, lobsters and crabs were thought to be trash food that was cheap and not very good to eat. Poor folks were given lobsters to survive on. Pork ribs and livestock waste cuts were also considered food for the "poor folk".

The so-called poor folk were also great chefs and produced ways to make these poor meat cuts, and trash seafood tasty and desirable. Today, lobsters are considered a "top-shelf" luxury food. Pork trimmings have become desirable as brisket, scrapple, smoked ribs, and sausage, which are now premium meats.

The Bay is full of tasty fish. The Blue Catfish, rockfish, and other thick, white-fleshed fish can be made into "Mock Lobster". The fish can be processed and brined to make a tasty chunk of Poor Man's Lobster.



POOR MAN'S LOBSTER

Thawed or fresh filets. You can use any thick white meat fish, such as cod, bass, halibut, rockfish, etc.

Lemon, sliced or cut into pieces

1 cup of sugar

Lemon Pepper, dill seed, Old Bay seasoning, because it's Maryland.

Fill a large pot about ½ full of water and bring to a boil.

Add half of a lemon, cut into pieces. Add the sugar and stir until it dissolves.

Cut the cleaned filets into 1-inch chunks and add to the boiling water. do not stir. Try to be gentle with the chunks so they do not fall apart.

When the fish chunks begin bobbing and floating to the top, gently strain them out and set them on a wire rack or paper towel.

Sprinkle with spices to taste.

Serve with a melted butter side bowl. You can also serve with a cheese or tartar sauce, or on a roll as a faux Lobster Roll sandwich.

This recipe requires few ingredients and gear so it can be easily made in your boat's galley or as a shore lunch.

Now I know that these fish chunks are not the real lobster deal, but most anything dipped in butter can be a tasty dish. The fish chunks become textured more like crab or lobster meat. This dish makes for an amazing appetizer or seafood treat.

Enjoy feasting on fish!



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MINERAL SUNSCREENS

Aren't Just For Babies Anymore

By Wendy Gilbert

I've never been a fan of chemical sunscreens. Not just because they stain clothes, sting your eyes and kill coral reefs. But because, in my experience, they wash off easily, don't always "work" as advertised, and I am always deeply suspicious of chemicals on my skin. Cancer will do that to you.

I'm a hat-wearing, hide-under-the-Bimini, shade-seeking girl and proud of it. Not quite going for the lifeguard look with a white nose and floppy hat, but when the situation calls for that, I might be persuaded.

For years, young moms have protected their babes with mineral sunscreens like Blue Lizard and Aveeno. I have not been above snitching some for myself.

Current recommendations are shifting to mineral sunscreens for all of us. These mineral-based filters—specifically zinc oxide and titanium dioxide—are the gold standard for marine environments because they act as physical shields, reflecting UV rays away from your skin like tiny mirrors.

Unlike chemical filters that absorb UV radiation and convert it to heat inside your skin, mineral blocks sit entirely on top of the skin barrier. For boaters facing extreme sun, heavy wind, and water reflection, understanding how these minerals work is key to maximizing protection.

Zinc Oxide vs. Titanium Dioxide While both are natural minerals, they shield the skin differently:

Zinc Oxide (The Heavy Hitter): Provides true broad-spectrum protection. It is highly effective against both UVB rays (which cause surface burning) and UVA rays (the

deep-penetrating rays responsible for premature aging, wrinkles, and skin cancer). It is the single most critical ingredient for long days on open water.

Titanium Dioxide (The Booster): Exceptionally strong at blocking UVB rays but lacks complete coverage against long-wave UVA rays. In modern marine skincare, it is typically paired alongside zinc oxide to boost the total SPF rating without making the lotion too heavy.

Chemical sunscreens require 20 minutes to bind to your skin cells before working. Mineral filters shield you the exact second you rub them on, letting you step right onto the dock.

Heat Reduction: Because they reflect light rather than absorbing it, mineral blockers prevent the skin from overheating. This reduces the risk of heat rash and sun-induced flushing while on open water.

No Eye-Sting: Sweat and sea spray cause chemical sunscreens to run, leading to intense burning in your eyes. Pure mineral formulas do not blind or sting your eyes when you sweat or catch a wave.

Unmatched Photostability: Chemical filters break down and lose their strength after direct exposure to intense sunlight. Mineral filters are highly photostable, maintaining their protective structure much longer under intense glare.

Breakthrough 2026 Mineral Technologies

Historically, mineral sunscreens were chalky, thick, and left a ghostly white cast. Advanced formulations have completely solved this: **Compact & Micronized Particles:** High-end brands like the

newly launched SkinCeuticals Future Mineral UV Defense use ultra-compact mineral particles. This allows for a massive 15 percent zinc loading that rubs in entirely clear with zero heavy residue.

Iron Oxide Additions: Many modern marine sunscreens now incorporate iron oxides. These add a subtle, skin-matching tint that eliminates the white cast while providing vital protection against visible blue light, which intensifies dark spots when reflected off water.

Fluid & Primer Textures: Next-gen formulas like Ultra Violette Future Fluid behave like lightweight serums, using advanced coatings to make zinc glide onto the skin like water.

The Boater's Eco-Dilemma: "Reef-Safe" Realities

While mineral sunscreens are widely marketed as "reef-safe" compared to coral-bleaching chemical filters like oxybenzone, recent maritime studies highlight key nuances.

Non-Nano is Mandatory: You must choose Non-Nano Zinc Oxide. "Nano" particles are microscopic enough to be consumed by marine life, whereas non-nano particles are large enough to safely sink into sediment without harming coral reefs.

Concentration Matters: Emerging marine data from 2025/2026 indicates that extreme concentrations of zinc oxide wash-off can still temporarily stress confined aquatic zones. To counteract this, ocean-first brands like Raw Elements use heavy, wax-based natural binders (like beeswax) to ensure the minerals stay locked onto your skin instead of melting off into the water.

To get sunscreen out of clothes, act fast by pretreating with a grease-cutting dish soap (like Dawn) or liquid laundry detergent, rubbing it into the stain, and letting it sit for 10–15 minutes. Rinse with warm water and wash, avoiding hot water and the dryer until the stain is gone, as heat sets the oils.

Best Methods for Sunscreen Removal

Dish Soap Method (Best for Oils): Apply Dawn dish soap to the stain, rub gently, let sit for 10–15 minutes, then rinse.

Vinegar Soak (Best for Yellow/Orange Stains):

Mix equal parts white vinegar and water. Soak the garment for 30–60 minutes to break down rust-like mineral stains.

Degreaser/Spray Method: Spray with a degreaser (like Elbow Grease) or use a stain remover like Tide Ultra Stain Release to break down the sunscreen's hydrophobic barrier.

Oxygen Bleach Soak (Whites): Dissolve Oxi-Clean in warm water and soak for 1–2 hours.

Sun Drying: After washing, air dry the garment in the sun, as UV rays can act as a natural bleach for stubborn residual stains

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Just Another Day at the Office

By Captain Mark Galasso

There is an old saying that has recently had a profound impact on my life. "A little bit of knowledge can be dangerous!" Don't know who came up with it, but they surely were prophetic. As the cost of things skyrockets, charter boat operators are becoming more and more like farmers. We're part-time plumbers, part-time electricians, painters, carpenters, fiberglass guys, and even wanna be diesel mechanics. I'm sure this new trend is not limited to farmers and charter boat operators. Let me start out by defending those people that we all assume are making a lot of money off our misery and laziness. I was trying to replace an

alternator in my tractor the other day, and the companion fan belt. Seems simple enough. The problem is that since it's a Kubota, every bolt and nut is metric. I spent hours trying to dig through my tools and find the proper sockets and wrenches. I bought the alternator (Magneto) from Amazon to save myself \$150 and the belt from my local shop. After a greasy 2 hours and the realization that I was in over my head, I called the shop to come and pick up the tractor. And they were more than gracious and came and picked it up. They have the knowledge and the tools to do it right, and a lot quicker than I ever could. I

was successful in replacing my forward float switch the other day in the boat. I'm sure my mechanic could have done it in 30 minutes. It took me three hours, a little blood, and a lot of cursing. The only reason I tackled the job is my mechanic was busy, and the job seemed easy. What I failed to take into consideration was that the bilge pump and switch are under a little hatch in the cabin and share a very small space with enough wiring to build a destroyer and an inverter charger, as well as an 8D battery, you know, the ones that weigh a hundred pounds and are locked down.

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Schaefer's Canal House

By Kimberly Ann

For boaters making their way along the historic C&D Canal, few stops feel as rewarding as Schaefer's Canal House at 208 Bank Street, Chesapeake City. Perfectly positioned on one of the East Coast's most scenic waterways, this longtime favorite offers far more than a meal at the dock. It delivers the kind of waterfront experience that reminds you why cruising is as much about the stops as it is about the journey.

The setting alone is enough to draw a crowd. Overlooking the canal, Schaefer's patio offers breathtaking panoramic views of passing boat traffic, sparkling water, and some of the most beautiful sunsets on the Chesapeake corridor. It is the sort of place where captains linger over dinner just a little longer, and families naturally settle in to watch the light change across the canal. During the season, the outdoor Lighthouse Bar becomes a social hub, with live bands and entertainment adding energy to the waterfront atmosphere. Fire pits beside the bar make the evening scene even more inviting, creating a comfortable place to unwind after a day on the water.

What makes Schaefer's especially appealing to the boating community is

that it understands boaters' needs as well as it understands hospitality. The marina welcomes overnight guests and has the capacity to accommodate even mega yachts, with ample docking space and knowledgeable deckhands available to assist with loading and offloading. Adding the convenience of a fuel stop, Schaefer's becomes more than a restaurant destination; it becomes a practical and enjoyable port of call.

Of course, the real anchor here is the food. Schaefer's Canal House has built a reputation around scrumptious seafood dishes that fit the setting perfectly. One standout is Schaefer's Seafood Pasta, a generous plate featuring jumbo shrimp, lump crab, a 4-ounce lobster tail, and sea scallops tossed in either a creamy Alfredo or fresh basil tomato sauce over linguini. It is the kind of dish that feels celebratory without trying too hard. The C&D Jambalaya offers a bolder, heartier option, while the restaurant's famous Schaefer's Crab Cake Sandwich remains an Eastern Shore favorite and must-try for anyone wanting a classic taste of the region.

Schaefer's also offers thoughtful

flexibility for guests arriving by land or sea. A takeout service on the lower level makes it easy to bring dinner back to the boat or to enjoy a quiet evening at home. For larger gatherings, the property features a banquet room suitable for private celebrations or corporate events, with room for more than 200 guests. Supported by highly trained staff, the venue combines polished service with the easy charm of a true waterfront institution.

For those planning a visit, Schaefer's offers a virtual tour on its website, giving guests a preview of the views and layout before they arrive. But no online preview quite captures the full appeal of stepping off the dock, taking in the canal breeze, and settling in for sunset with a plate of seafood and a front-row seat to the passing parade of boats.

If your cruising plans include the C&D Canal, Schaefer's Canal House is the kind of stop that deserves a place on the itinerary.

And of course, when you go, let them know your friends at **Upper Bay Boating Magazine** sent you.

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FOURTH OF JULY ON THE CHESAPEAKE

Fireworks, Harbor Celebrations, and Waterfront Traditions

By Kimberly Ann

If there is one holiday that brings the Chesapeake region fully to life, it is the Fourth of July. From major harbor spectacles to classic hometown parades and waterfront concerts, the proposed 2026 Independence Day celebrations promise a full slate of patriotic events for boaters, families, and anyone looking to spend the holiday near the water. Leading the lineup this year is the Middle River Fireworks Extravaganza, a celebration set to capture special attention as part of America's 250th birthday.

The Middle River Fireworks Extravaganza, sponsored by MTABC, stands out as one of the most exciting events on the calendar. Scheduled for Saturday, July 4th, the celebration is promoted as featuring the highest-shooting fireworks in the state, making it a natural draw for spectators across the waterfront. The event is designed with the boating community in mind, with viewing expected from boats, marinas, yacht clubs, waterfront restaurants, and private homes throughout the area. A preshow begins at 8:30 p.m., with fireworks to follow, and one of the most modern touches is the use of the Pyrocast App, which allows spectators to synchronize a personal soundtrack to the fireworks display for an enhanced viewing experience on both land and water. With social media updates planned through Facebook

and Instagram, Middle River appears poised to deliver a high-energy, community-centered celebration with broad appeal.

Baltimore is once again expected to host a big Fourth of July event at the Baltimore Harbor. Centered at the Inner Harbor Amphitheater at Pratt and Light Street, the event combines live entertainment with a major fireworks presentation synchronized to patriotic and popular music. The U.S. Navy Band is scheduled, setting the stage for an evening that can be enjoyed from Federal Hill, Harbor East, Fells Point, and Canton. Visitors can also elevate the experience with a Deck Party aboard the USS Constellation or opt for one of the Spirit of Baltimore's July 4th cruises, both of which offer dramatic views of the harbor fireworks.

In Annapolis, tradition remains front and center. The city's renowned Independence Day Celebration begins with the parade winding from West Street through the historic downtown district to City Dock. With marching bands, antique vehicles, community groups, and a post-parade gathering, Annapolis offers the kind of civic celebration that feels deeply rooted in local heritage. The evening concludes with a fireworks display launched from a barge in Annapolis Harbor, with excellent viewing from City Dock, Spa Creek Bridge, or from the water itself.

Havre de Grace is planning an especially meaningful observance tied to the nation's semi-quincentennial. The city's celebration includes a parade through its historic streets, a waterfront concert, and fireworks over the Chesapeake Bay, creating a full-day patriotic program in one of Maryland's most scenic small cities. The area's parks, museums, and waterfront spaces should once again make it a favorite for visitors seeking a more classic community celebration.

Other Chesapeake destinations are also expected to add to the holiday energy. Chesapeake Beach plans its annual Fireworks Over the Bay, pairing family activities with a waterfront show visible from the beaches and boardwalk. Kent Narrows and Rock Hall Harbor are also part of the regional celebration mix, adding even more options for those planning a holiday cruise or waterfront getaway. North East's Salute to Veterans will be held on the 3rd. Taken together, these proposed 2026 celebrations reflect the best of a Chesapeake Fourth of July: strong community traditions, accessible waterfront viewing, and a festive atmosphere that feels equally at home on a boat dock, a town dock, or a harbor promenade. And with Middle River Fireworks Extravaganza leading the way, this year's holiday is shaping up to be one of the most memorable in recent memory.

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Captain John Ellis is an avid boating enthusiast with over 40 years of boating experience on the Sassafras River and Chesapeake Bay. Captain John, as he is known, was formerly with Reynolds Yacht Sales and has 15 years of experience as a yacht broker. While familiar with all types of vessels, he specializes in trawlers and Chesapeake Bay Deadrisers, having refit two of his own. Captain



Captain John Ellis

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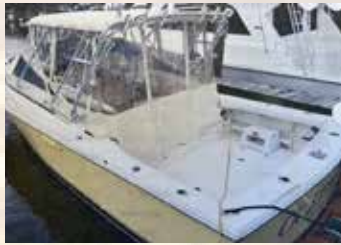
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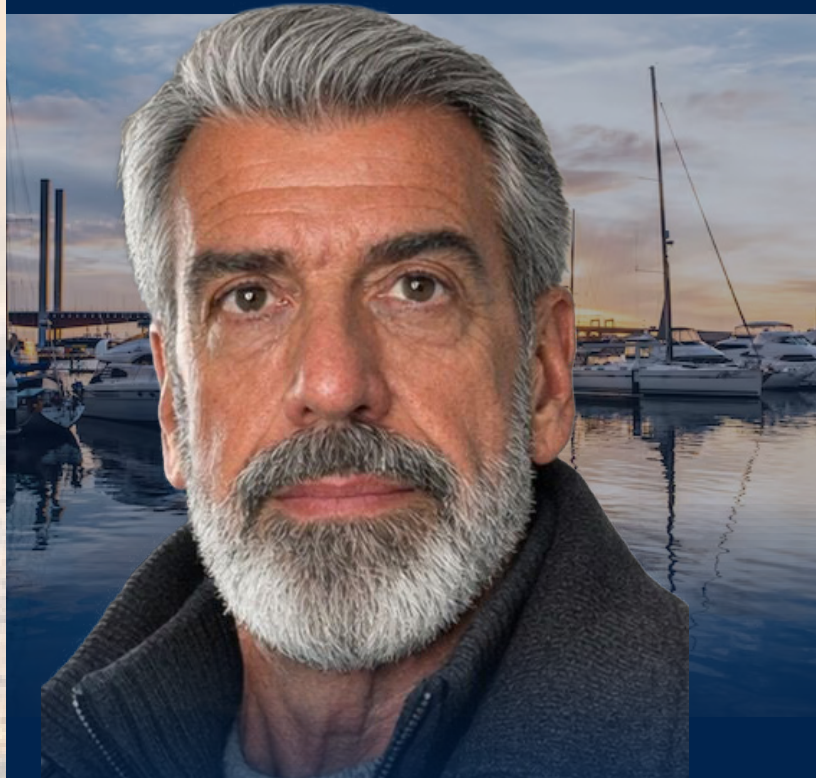
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says, "Not much. He made me sit in a chair for 45 minutes and then double-billed the insurance company."

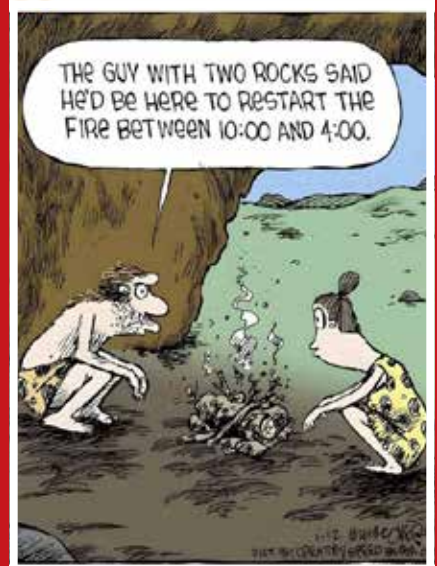


A pizza walks into a bar. The bartender says, "Sorry, we don't serve food here."

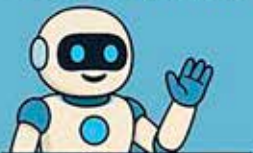


A woman was found guilty in court of a traffic violation, and when asked for her occupation, she said she was a school teacher. The judge rose from the bench and said, "Ma'am, I have waited years for a school teacher to appear before this court." "Why is that, Your Honor?" asked the teacher. The judge smiled with delight and said, "I'm

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Certificate of Boating Safety Education	✓ ¹	✓ ^{1,7}	✓ ^{1,7}
Certificate of Vessel Number on Board	✓	✓ ⁷	✓ ⁷
Registration Decals Displayed	✓	✓ ⁷	✓ ⁷
Wearable PFDs: Type I, II, III, or V	✓ ^{2,3}	✓ ³	✓ ³
Throwable PFD: Type IV			✓
Type B-I Fire Extinguisher	✓	✓ ⁷	✓ ⁷
Ignition Safety Switch	✓		
Backfire Flame Arrestor	✓	✓ ^{4,7}	✓ ^{4,7}
Ventilation System	✓	✓ ⁷	✓ ⁷
Muffler	✓	✓ ⁷	✓ ⁷
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Nighttime Visual Distress Signals	6	✓ ⁵	✓ ^{5,7}
Navigation Lights	6	✓	✓

1. Applicable if operator is born after July 1, 1972. See page 26 for more information.
2. Everyone onboard a PWC must *wear* a personal flotation device (PFD).
3. Children under 13 years of age must *wear* a PFD while underway on a vessel under 21 feet in length. There are additional requirements for PFDs on children under 4 years of age. See pages 29-30 for more information.
4. Required on board permanently installed gasoline engines.
5. Required when boating on federally controlled waters (see page 33).
6. Certain items are not applicable to PWCs because they are not allowed to operate between sunset and sunrise.
7. Except all non-motorized vessels.

Boating Safety Certificate: Anyone born on or after July 1, 1972, must carry a valid Certificate of Boating Safety Education when operating any mechanically propelled vessel.

Vessel Number Certificate: The physical pocket-sized registration card must be on board the vessel at all times.

Registration Decals: Current registration numbers and validation decals must be correctly displayed on both sides of the forward half of the hull.

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Children Under 13: Must **wear** a properly fitted life jacket at all times while underway on any vessel under 21 feet in length.

Children Under 4: Must wear a specialized PFD outfitted with a **headrest, high collar, web grab-handle, and a crotch strap**.

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Where are You?



by Captain Dale Plummer

Towing season is here, and our dispatchers asked me to share a few tips for finding and sharing your location. Your onboard GPS is best, but if the battery is dead or you're unsure how to use it, your phone can help.

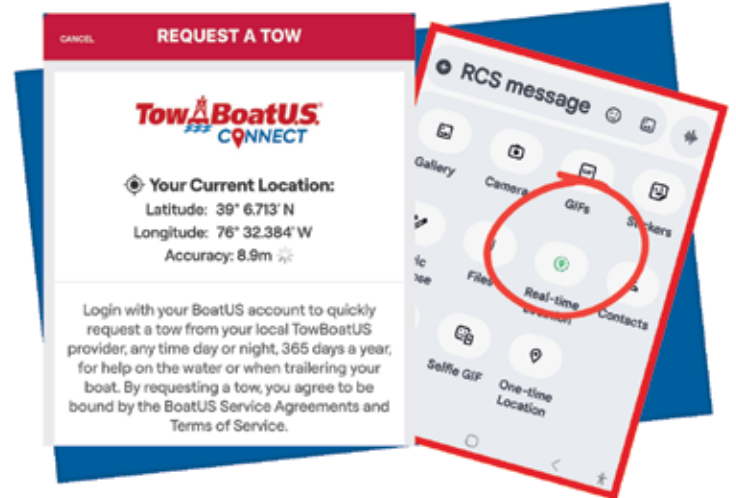
In recreational boating, coordinates are usually given in DDM (Degree Decimal Minute) format, such as 39°14.2147'N, 76°20.2731'W. Phones, however, often display coordinates in Decimal format instead. Reading the format incorrectly to dispatch can place you miles from your actual location. There are many BoatU.S. videos online that explain the difference.

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iPhone: Go to Settings > Privacy & Security > Location Services and turn it on.

To share your location, open a text message to the number provided. Tap the "+" symbol adjacent to the message field and choose Real-time Location (Android) or Location (iPhone). Send it.



You can also open Google Maps, tap and hold your location to drop a red pin, and share the coordinates shown at the top of the screen. Google Maps uses Decimal format, which we can convert to DDM.

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Boats, Bands, and Beverages

GUITARDOG

Bringing Waterfront Songs to Essex and Beyond

By Kimberly Ann



TJ Mullen aka @guitardog is an Essex, MD based singer-songwriter, live music curator and open mic host.

There is a certain kind of music that just belongs near the water. It sounds better with a breeze coming off the river, a pair of flip-flops by the dock, and a few boats rocking gently in the background. For Essex-based singer-songwriter

T. J. Mullen, better known as Guitardog, that feeling is not just a mood. It is the foundation of his music. Mullen writes songs about the place he knows best: life on the water by the Chesapeake Bay. His music is rooted in the waterfront

community he calls home, but he believes the themes reach much farther than his own backyard. Songs about simple pleasures, local places, good people, and the pull of the water have a way of connecting with anyone who has ever felt at home

near a shoreline. Before becoming Guitardog, Mullen got his start in music as a drummer in high school, playing in a contemporary Christian band. That experience eventually led to touring and exposed him to strong

Boats, Bands, and Beverages



songwriters who made a lasting impression. He learned early that a well-written song has power. It can move people, bring back memories, and create a sense of connection between the person singing and the people listening. Like many creative journeys, it is never a straight line, and after falling to the wayside for a bit, his musical journey rekindled during COVID. With extra time on his hands, Mullen picked up an old acoustic guitar and decided to learn to play. He started with YouTube lessons, then continued with formal instruction at Stages Music Arts in Cockeysville after restrictions lifted. What began as a personal challenge soon turned into something much more. As Mullen grew more

comfortable with the guitar, he began performing at open mic nights. Eventually, he approached Charly's Waterfront in Essex with an idea to start open mic events there. The nights quickly became a hit, drawing good crowds and giving new musicians a welcoming place to gain experience performing live. Mullen became the curator of Charly's Waterfront's live music scene and is proud of the community connections he has helped to rebuild after the isolation of COVID. Live music nights are just on a different level than online Zoom Jams. That community connection will continue this summer with Guitardog's residency at Charly's Waterfront, where he will be playing every first Thursday and second Wednesday from 5 to 7 p.m.

through the summer. It is the kind of setting that fits his music perfectly: waterfront views, familiar faces, cold drinks, and songs that feel made for the dock. Mullen describes his sound as a mix of Jimmy Buffett and Kenny Chesney vibes with a little bit of John Prine's storytelling, and that comparison makes sense. His songs carry a relaxed coastal energy, but they are also personal and local. His inspiration is right outside his door. Living on the water means he does not have to look far for ideas. The tides, boats, neighbors, sunsets, and everyday rhythm of waterfront life all find their way to his writing. One of his best-known songs, "Flip Flops Will Do," was recorded at Chuck DeFontes' studio and quickly became a favorite

among listeners. Today, it serves as the closing song for many of his live sets, often with people singing along. For Mullen, that is one of the best parts of performing. He especially loves playing from the back of his boat, watching paddleboarders and kayakers pull up to listen. It is a scene that feels like a perfect summary of Guitardog's music: local, relaxed, welcoming, and completely tied to life on the water. You can find Guitardog on Spotify at Guitardog, on Instagram at @guitardog, on Facebook at Guitardog Music, at Stages Music Arts where he's now the Open Mic host, and of course at Charly's Waterfront.



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 6/19 Samantha's Duo 7 - 11PM
 6/20 Sons of Pirates 1 - 5PM | Mark Bray & The Steel Soul Cowboys 7 - 11PM
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| FRI. 6/5 Cashed Chord 6-10pm | SAT. 6/20 Cooper Wade 1-5pm
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| SAT. 6/6 TBD 1-4pm
Ryzing Son 6-10pm | SUN. 6/21 Tim the Piano Man 1-5pm |
| SUN. 6/7 Heavy Soul 1-5pm | WED. 6/24 GG's 6-9pm |
| WED. 6/10 Nicky Stacy 6-9pm | THURS. 6/25 Wesley Spangler
Duo 6-9pm |
| THURS. 6/11 SILENT TALE 6-9pm | FRI. 6/26 Cool Change 6-10pm |
| FRI. 6/12 Ashley Marie Duo 6-10pm | SAT. 6/27 Brody TBD 1-5pm
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