



SPECIAL DELIVERY



A publication of the Postal A's Model A Ford Mail Truck Club

Winter 2014/2015

Volume XXIII Issue 1

Can you tour with a Model A Ford Mail Truck?



Yes you can!

Gerald Grizzard's Model A Mail Truck in front of the International Motorsports Hall of Fame, located at the Talladega Motor Speedway. See page 3 for the rest of the story...

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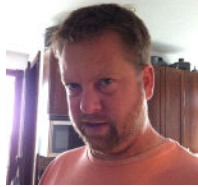
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The Postal A's

The Postal A's is a Special Interest Body Style Chapter of the Model A Ford Club of America (MAFCA) and a Special Region of the Model A Restorers Club (MARC), whose purpose is to aid its members in the authentic restoration, use and enjoyment of a limited production of commercial bodies built for the U.S. Postal Office Department and mounted on Ford Model A & AA chassis.

The Special Delivery

To assist in achievement of this purpose, The Special Delivery newsletter is published by the Postal A's. It is written, edited, and published on a volunteer basis by the newsletter staff. All signed materials are the responsibility of the author and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the newsletter staff or the Postal A's. Any unsigned material, facts, opinions or other information is the sole responsibility of the newsletter staff, is believed to be the most current and accurate information available on the Model A Mail Truck, but does not necessarily represent an official position of the Postal A's, MAFCA or MARC. Authorization to quote or reprint from the Postal A's Special Delivery is granted provided proper credit is given.

Postal A's Website

Additional assistance is available via the website @ www.postalasalas.org

Upcoming Events - 2015

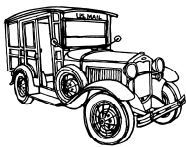
Future Postal A's meetings:

We will try to have a meeting of the Postal A's during the MARC National Meet in Niagara Falls Canada, the week of June 21st. At this time no official date has been established.

We will have a presence at Hershey again this year. You are always welcome to stop by our spaces in the North Chocolate Field (C3B 26-29) to rest, get something cold to drink, and leave those heavy parts you have been carrying around.

How can you help the Postal A's?

- Write the story of your mail truck.
- Provide restoration tips.
- Sources for mail truck parts.
- Sources for restoration materials.
- Revise the Newsletter Index.
- Revise the Model A Ford Mail Truck book index.



A special thanks for the Mail Truck drawings on our letterhead & newsletter by Lawrence Komp

Yes you can! continued from page 1.

Not only can you tour with your mail truck, but you can take it to the race track and turn it loose ... no governors allowed!

Pictured on the right is Gerald's MT on the Talladega Race Track.

This was the first destination on our tour.



YES, YOU CAN is the short answer. The Central Alabama Model A Ford Club hosted the Talladega Speedway Tour March 6th and 7th, 2015 in Oxford Alabama. Saturday morning sixty Model A Fords lined up in the Lone Star Restaurant parking lot for a 8 o'clock departure. The lead vehicle was none other than a 1931 Model A Mail Truck, owned and driven by Postal A's member Gerald Grizzard. Under police escort, we left the parking lot promptly at 8 o'clock, with Gerald maintaining a steady 45 MPH. A short 20 miles later and we were at the Talladega Speedway entrance. After a few laps around the speedway, again led by Gerald we headed to the Hall of Fame Museum. After visiting the museum, Gerald headed for Lincoln Alabama to R & B Bar-B-Q Restaurant. If the BBQ wasn't spectacular, the homemade cakes served for desert were. With our bellies full, Gerald led us to the Roy Frost Model A Ford Collection in Pell City, Alabama. Then we were either homeward bound or back to the hotel. It was a full day of activities with beautiful weather and a very nice Mail Truck leading the way. THANKS Gerald!



Lunch stop in Lincoln, Alabama at the Lincoln Station, for a very welcome and delicious BBQ meal.

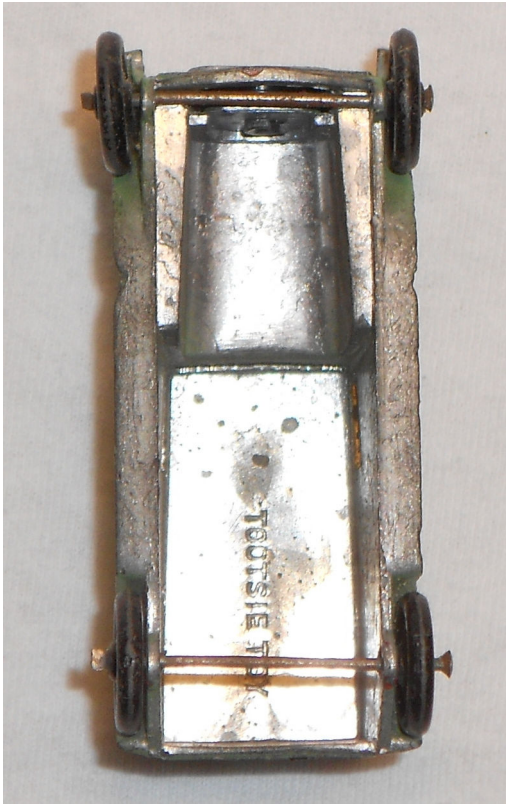
Children's Mail Truck Toys: Tootsie Toys

Although the Tootsie Toy mail van (their description) did not appear until 1931, the cowl is characteristic of the 1928 and 1929 Model A Ford Tudor Sedan and Coupe with the cowl pillar and lowered sun visor. The Model A Fords were fitted with new wheels, representing wire spokes, and were the first deviation from the disc wheels used on other vehicles. The mail van was never listed separately with its own number. In ads, it was shown in boxed sets containing five toys. Since the mail van was not available separately, it is among the rarer Tootsie Toys. It was either light green or dark green with "US MAIL" in raised letters on the side. These boxed sets sold wholesale for \$4.05 per dozen (the Model A cars sold for 75 cents/dozen)!



In the autumn of 1927, Henry Ford introduced the new Model A Ford, which was developed under the tightest wraps of secrecy. A few months later, Theodore S. Dowst introduced the Model A Ford coupe (# 4655) under the banner "The big secret of 1927 exposed". It was likely the toy scoop of the year. It was the first Tootsie Toy to be sold individually boxed, a practice later made standard by Dinky and most other major toy manufacturers. The boxes were in four colors, coinciding with the paint on the models enclosed, red, blue, green and khaki. The logo on the box read "IT'S A TOOTSIETOY Ford" or "The New Ford". The coupe was intended to represent the convertible roadster with top up, and had landau "S" irons on the rear quarters. Tootsie Toys are easily recognizable. Just turn them over, and on the inside of the roof will be the name, "Tootsie Toy".





In 1929 Tootsie Toys introduced the sedan (#4665), a four door sedan model with three side windows, with more rounded lines and a nice cast-on rear spare tire with “Ford” in script across the wheel cover. It also showed the gas cap in the center of the cowl, just in front of the windshield.

Note from the President:

Around the end of January, it became evident that the future of the Postal A’s Model A Ford Mail Truck Club was in danger. I sent out a letter in February to those members who have continued to remain loyal to the club explaining where the club was headed. I explained that it was necessary to raise the dues to remain solvent.

The response was exceptional. Many members responded by not only renewing their membership, but sent some extra dollars to help the cause. As one member put it, “take out the dues and put the rest in the club’s coffer”.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks for your support. I do believe that this club does fill an important need for the MT community.

Thanks for your support,

Dan Perla

Postal A's Meetings during 2014

Postal A's meeting at the MARC National Meet:

The Postal A's met on Friday June 27th at 5PM at the MARC National Meet in French Lick Indiana. Two members were present, Wayne Arnholt and Jim McPherson. Wayne brought his restored 1931 Model AA Mail Truck to the meet and displayed it with other Model AA commercial models. We met for about an hour, discussing the future of the Postal A's. We discussed ways to attract and retain members, the newsletter, club finances, and reprinting Aldie's book. Wayne is a strong supporter of the Postal A's, and we appreciate him bringing his Mail Truck to the meet.



Shown is Wayne's AA mail truck, one of 5 AA's he brought to the French Lick 2014 MARC Meet.

Your Ad could be here...

Postal A's meeting at the MAFCA National Meet:

The Postal A's met on Monday July 14th at 12 o'clock at the MAFCA National Meet in Puyallup Washington. Nine people were present, Postal A's members Leroy and Glorrian Nau and Jim McPherson, a couple who were interested in purchasing a Model A truck for their catering business (and thought a Mail Truck would be perfect), and four of their friends. A lively discussion of Model A trucks followed. We discussed the future of the Postal A's, content for the newsletter, upgrading the pictures in Aldie's book, and the club finances. Glorrian brought her 1929 Model A Mail Truck to the meet. It played a prominent role in the meet, serving as registration headquarters and housing the registration packets.



Postmasters are entitled to special privileges, including a license plate. Now retired Postmaster Glorrian Nau proudly displays hers on the front of her 1929 Mail Truck.

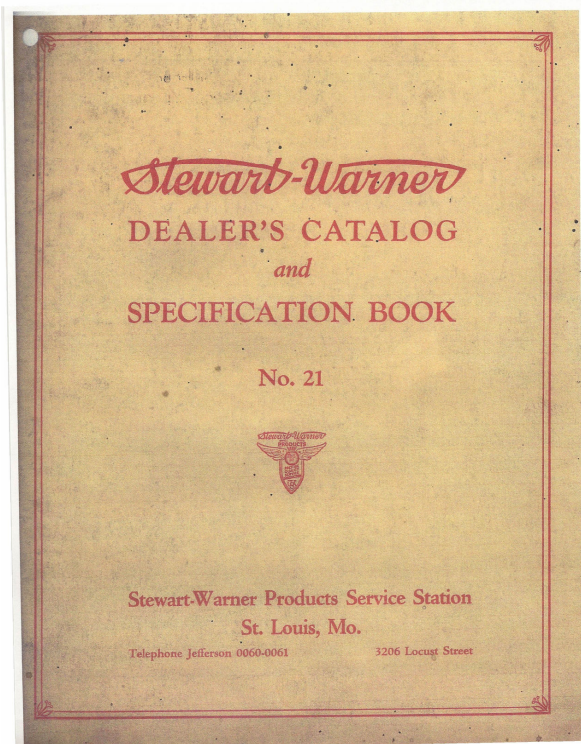
The Stewart-Warner windshield wiper
as used on the Model A & AA Ford Mail trucks
Article written by Steve Wastler

Since it appeared, only a brief amount of information has been written regarding the actual windshield wiper utilized on the Model A & AA mail trucks. I set out to shed some light on this seemingly elusive part.

The following are my findings of The Stewart Warner 495 wiper as supplied by the Post Office Department to the Postal Garages tasked with mating the bodies to chassis and associated parts.

My curiosity arouse upon reading The Model A Ford Mail Truck by one of our founding members Aldie Johnson Jr. and the Judging Standards and Restoration Guidelines published jointly by MAFCA & MARC. I had acquired copies of both publications well prior to actually owning my unrestored mail truck. There appeared to be conflicting information between the two publications with Aldie book published two years after the last revision of the Judging Standards.

I focused on the information contained in section 22 Windshield and Wipers pertaining to documentation uncovered by Aldie at the Postal Archives. The albeit brief, but repeated references pointed to the sole use of the Stewart Warner 495 wiper.



In the December 2, 1931 memorandum issued to the Regional Garages for the installation of wipers was included the only documented reference to the make of the wiper motors, namely, *'Stewart-Warner Model 495 vacuum windshield cleaners on 100 cubic foot bodies mounted on 1931 Model A Ford and Essex chassis, and 200 cubic foot Model AA 1931 Ford chassis.'*

{page 111 of the MT book}

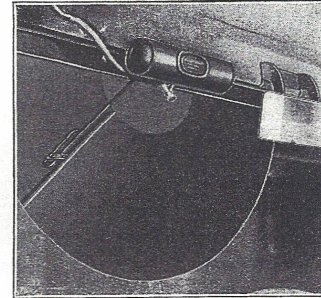
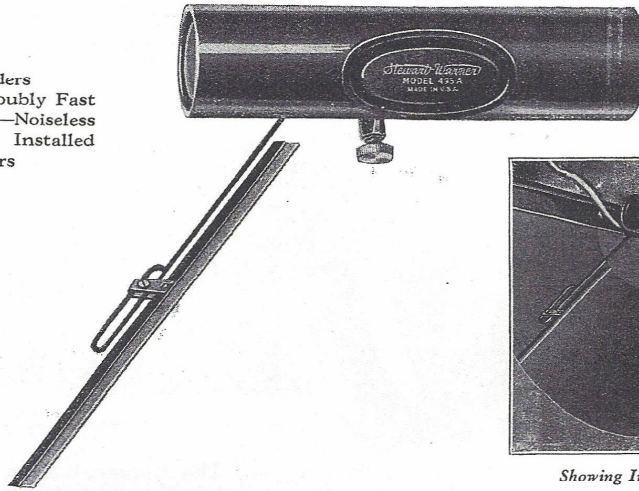
It strongly appears that the Trico wiper as previously thought and referred to in the RG & JS, was not used on the NEW mail trucks as assembled by the P.O.D., but in fact were only used as a service replacement when the Stewart Warner 495 wiper supply had been exhausted.

The first piece to my puzzle was to acquire an original copy of the 1927 Stewart Warner Catalog which introduced the 495 wiper.

THE STANDARD IS *Stewart-Warner* ON ACCESSORIES

Stewart-Warner Windshield Cleaner Vacuum Model 495

Two Cylinders
Double Power—Doubly Fast
Adjustable Speed—Noiseless
Compact—Easily Installed
For all cars



Showing Inside Installation

THIS new Stewart-Warner Cleaner represents as great an improvement over the ordinary vacuum windshield cleaner, as did the four-cylinder motor car over the old "two-lunger." In designing the Stewart-Warner, we harnessed the vacuum at **both** ends—giving a **double** impulse stroke as compared with present-day "one-lunger" cleaner models. The Stewart-Warner is **doubly** powerful.

Even Pressure of Rubber Swipe

Just turn the control button and the blade sweeps swiftly, steadily across the windshield, exerting an even pressure that cleans the glass crystal-clear—insuring perfect vision—and safety.

The Stewart-Warner Cleaner is noiseless in operation. The clicking and hissing, generally associated with vacuum windshield cleaners, have been eliminated. The mechanism is protected from dust and dirt by a special washer in the air vent.

Maximum Swipe Area

The wiper arm has a possible swing of 180 degrees—an unusual feature, which permits placing the arm out of the way on the windshield frame, beyond the

Model 495—Stewart-Warner Vacuum Windshield Cleaner, complete with fittings. Furnished in various models, for mounting on interior, exterior, elevating windshield glass, etc. Specify make, model and year of car when ordering. Available April 1, 1927.

Wiper Arm Assembly (including Arm and Wiper), No. G-35299. (See Price List.)

area of vision, and safe from damage when the windshield is being washed. A single small adjustment also shortens or lengthens the wiper arm to fit any size of windshield.

Adaptable for Installation On All Windshields

This Stewart-Warner Cleaner model is adaptable for installation on practically all sizes and types of windshields—and for either inside or outside mounting. The assembly and installation are very simple.

When shipped from the factory the mechanism of this cleaner is provided with a supply of special lubricant and requires no further attention after installation.

Neat in Appearance—Easily Installed

This Stewart-Warner Vacuum Windshield Cleaner is small and compact— $6\frac{3}{8}$ in. long by $1\frac{1}{16}$ inches in diameter—and presents a neat appearance when installed. It is connected by a special fitting to the vacuum tank—or on cars not equipped with a vacuum tank—directly to the intake manifold. Adaptable to all types of passenger cars and trucks.

WORLD'S LARGEST MANUFACTURERS OF AUTOMOBILE ACCESSORIES

My first observations between the Stewart-Warner catalog and the information and drawings in Aldie's book were there had been numerous variations of the 495 wiper depending on the specific application.

The excerpt on the previous page from the S.W. catalog shows the 495 wiper with an integral switch that was intended for an interior mounted wiper. The 495-E as shown by Aldie was intended for an exterior mounted wiper and would have needed an accessory interior mounted switch. It was surmised by Aldie, the 495-E wiper must have been used, due to the explanation of its use on the Ford Model A in the original installation literature supplied with an original wiper.

Being the P.O.D. was very frugal in its efforts to produce the lowest cost vehicle possible, it is highly probable they opted for the simplest example possible, a wiper that include an integral switch. There are also references to an outside mount wiper with a very short operating shaft (495-E) interfering with the opening of the windshield.

“The wipers should be installed inside of cab and attached to the wood windshield rail with the operating screws up.

A 5/16" diameter hole should be drilled in the wood rail for the oscillating shaft, the center of the hole to be 2 1/2" above the upper vision line of the glass in the windshield or just above and close to the 1/4" steel weatherstrip across the windshield header and approximately but not less than 12" from the left edge of the windshield glass.

Two holes should be drilled in the wood rail for the mounting studs.

The wiper arm rest, No. 35282, figure 3 in directions with cleaner, should be cut off where bent and used as a washer plate between the wiper and the inside of the wood windshield rail Plain round steel washers should be placed on the mounting studs under the nuts on the outside.

The wiper arms should be 8" long and the wiper rubbers approximately 8" long and adjustable on the rods.

When the cleaner is installed as outlined above, it will not interfere with the opening of the windshield. ”

{page 112 of the MT book}

In deciphering the Postal Archives records as noted by Aldie, they did in fact require an inside mounted wiper and there is no mention of a separate in-line switch in the routing description for the rubber tubing to supply the needed vacuum by the P.O.D.

“The rubber tubing for automatic windshield cleaner should be run from intake manifold through hole in dash, on the right side into cab, continue on between dash and gasoline tank to the left side of cowl, through holes in steel plate attached to left side of cowl A rubber grommet (Ford part A-17253) should be inserted in hole in dash and in each hole in steel plate through which the rubber tubing passes to windshield cleaner to prevent chafing. ”

{page 113 of the MT book}

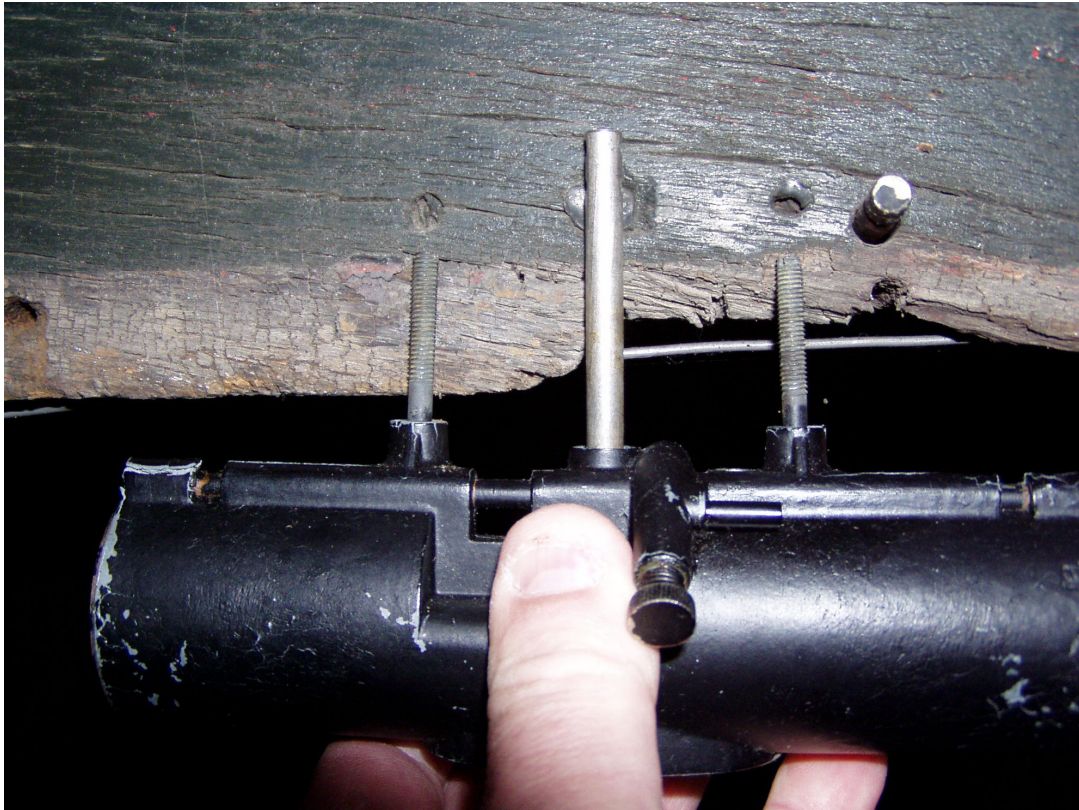
I have been unable at this point to determine if there were wiper models in between the 495-A and the 495-E.

I have been fortunate enough to find two N.O.S. 495-A wipers in original boxes.



These were supplied to me by Ficken Wiper Service. Both have been slightly dismantled with one missing a few small internal parts. In discussing the history with Rob Ficken, owner/operator of Ficken Wiper, it was relayed to me that these two wipers had been obtained by Rob's father in a Trico remaining stock and archives purchase. With Rob's interpretation of the Trico record, it seems these two wipers I now have were part of an investigation of patent infringement on the 'Tubular Wiper Patent' held by Trico. It goes undetermined if this is correct, but given the seemingly 'inspected' state and storage with Trico archives, this may be the reason these two N.O.S. units exist. (The original sales receipt was dated 1927)

Upon my examination of these two wipers, I noticed the placement of the mounting studs and the shaft to be quite close and narrow, much different than most vacuum wipers of the period. This aspect triggered a thought of the windshield header on my unrestored mail truck with the now abandoned and filled holes next to the existing upside down mounted Trico wiper. Upon my comparison of the S.W. 495 wiper to the abandoned holes in the windshield header, it is a perfect match of one to the other.



This brings me to the conclusion as with Aldie's, that at least the second and third procurements of mail trucks utilized the S.W. 495 wiper as most likely did the first 1929 procurement.

Member News & Updates

The Postal A's have gained several new members during the past year, and a potential member or two.

.....
David Morton of Lexington, KY sold his '31AA MT in the late summer/fall of 2014. It's my understanding that the new owner is Robin Hiatt who owns a Truck Museum in Stewart, VA.

.....
Rodney Revell of Monticello, FL - has purchased a 1929 Model A MT

.....
Talked with **Richmond Bell** the first week of Feb 2015 after receiving a letter from him asking about the club. After learning that he didn't know the URL (website address) of the Postal A's website, I provided him a link to the site. During our conversation, he told me a tidbit of information about his MT which he has owned for 50+ years. He told me that the postmaster of the office where the truck was in service said the truck was used every day and with an average of 100 miles per day. Base on his conversation with the postmaster, it was calculated that the MT had been driven about 600,000 miles during its service life with the Postal Department!
Richmond has been a loyal member of the Postal A's since the 70's.

.....
Jim Rantala, due to personal issues, had to sell his MT before getting a chance to do much work on it. He informed me that it went back down to the southern part of Michigan. He had acquired it near Grand Rapids and had taken it north near Traverse City to begin its restoration. Hopefully, its new owner will join the Postal A's.

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During 2014 **Charles Hilton**, of Edgefield, SC acquired a 1931 Model A MT from IL after talking with myself and Jim McPherson regarding locating one. Charles collects and restores unique body style trucks and decided that a MT would fit nicely into his collection. He now has a good restorable 1931 Model A MT that has much of the original hardware. He plans on getting it in good running order and not doing too much restoration at this time. He just wants to enjoy driving it!

.....
Robert Kiley of Medina, OH - has spent a great deal of effort looking for a Model A MT, but they seem to keep eluding him. We wish Bob all the best in his search.

.....
New member **David Cashbaugh, Jr.** of Muskegon, MI - in process on acquiring a 1931 Model A MT from KS.

Member News & Updates continued...

Gerald Grizzard of Oxford, AL sold his AA mail truck the first of March.

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Bruce Swirsky of Ravenna, MI - has purchased Jim Rantala's 1931 Model A MT in Cedar, MI and brought it back to southern Michigan, near where Jim had purchased it about a year ago. Still hoping Bruce will join the Postal A's.

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Just as I was finalizing this issue of the newsletter, I received a sad letter from Toni-Jo Birk. She informed me that her father-in-law, **Joseph "Norm" Birk** of Westhampton Beach, NY had passed away this past October. The Birk family sent the club a generous donation in his memory.

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Your article and photos could be here!