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School News

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Covering the Los Alamitos Unified School District



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April / May 2019

Robotics Team Shines at OC Competition



Los Alamitos High School Robotics Team Shines at OC Competition (please see page 8)

District Teacher of the Year



Dr. Sherry Kropp
Superintendent

Each year, we get to nominate one teacher as our District's Teacher of the Year, who will go on to compete at the county, state, and national levels. It gives me great pleasure to announce that Mrs. Nicole Walters, teacher at Los Alamitos Elementary School, has been selected as our 2019 Los Alamitos Unified School District Teacher of the Year! She is an exceptional teacher and does whatever it takes to help her students succeed and her families feel valued and important. She

brings joy to work, loves her colleagues, and makes all of us better. It is a privilege to have her on the Los Al Team.

Mrs. Walters started her career in Los Alamitos as a long-term substitute and was hired as a full time teacher in 2007. She has taught primarily first and second grade, but has also taught combination classes. Mrs. Walters has been a consistent life-long learner and collaborator and has been a COTSEN fellow. Presenting at staff meetings, as well as the CUE conference, Mrs. Walters has been trained in all of our signature practices and implements them with outstanding skill and expertise.

Nicole's classroom is always open, providing an inviting environment for all, while willingly sharing her resources with her fellow teachers. The greatest compliment to Nicole's teaching is the vast majority of teachers who routinely use their Instructional Networking time to observe her teaching. Nicole says, "We challenge each other to be the best educators we can be and really do what is best for kids." Nicole has a positive outlook and a belief in each and every student. She understands the art



Nicole with husband Mike, sons Mikey and Dylan, and parents Rick and Robin Schewecke.

of teaching, forms relationships with her students and families, and helps children succeed in a safe, nurturing environment.

Mrs. Nicole Walters graduated from CSULB with a Bachelor's Degree, a teaching credential, and a Master's Degree. While attending CSULB, Nicole met her husband Mike, now a teacher at Edison High School in Huntington Beach. When Nicole is not teaching, she enjoys spending time with her family, watching her two boys play football, going to the beach, and shopping.

"I love that Los Alamitos Elementary is truly like a family," stated Mrs. Walters, "I also love the closeness of the District and how everyone supports one another." Please join me in congratulating Mrs. Nicole Walters on this prestigious honor. All of us who know her love her, and we are thrilled that she will represent Los Alamitos Unified School District as our Teacher of the Year!



Nicole with her students, past and present.

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By Diana D. Hill, President

When our superintendent, Dr. Sherry Kropp, announced her retirement after a remarkable tenure of eight years leading the district, we on the school board were committed to finding a successor ready and able to continue and amplify her legacy. We have found that person.

Dr. Andrew Pulver has served our community for 20 years with grace and integrity in numerous leadership roles. He began his career with us as a teacher at McAuliffe Middle School and went on to be Assistant Principal at McAuliffe, Principal at Lee Elementary, and Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources for our District. In each of these roles, he has demonstrated compassion, dedication, and a commitment to students, families, staff, and the community. He is well respected across the state and Orange County for promoting a collaborative culture that supports ongoing learning, reflective practices, creativity and a spirit of excellence.

My fellow board members and I look forward to working with Dr. Pulver in continuing the tradition of improving student outcomes in academics, athletics, activities, and the arts while providing open communication with staff, parents, and the community.

I feel especially confident about Dr. Pulver's selection because of the extensive community involvement



Board President, Mrs. Diana D. Hill congratulates incoming Superintendent, Dr. Andrew Pulver.

preceding it. Leadership Associates, the executive search firm we hired to assist us in the hiring process, conducted a series of workshops and a survey soliciting input from a wide range of stakeholders: teachers, staff, students, families and other community members. They were asked to describe their expectations and the qualities they were looking for in a superintendent. The volume of responses was remarkable.

Based on these goals from our community, we began a national search for someone who embodies them. Our efforts elicited dozens of applicants from several states. We reviewed all of the candidates and narrowed the field down to a handful we interviewed. That group included Dr. Pulver.

After a day of interviewing the finalists, as a Board, we agreed that our next superintendent had emerged from this rigorous examination, Dr. Pulver was our clear first choice to meet the goals our community set for its new leader.

I know that I, my fellow board members, and the entire Los Alamitos Unified community are immensely grateful for the exemplary service and leadership Dr. Kropp has provided during her 34 years as part of our district family. I also know that our future is bright with Dr. Pulver, who possesses such profound knowledge of our schools, people, and community and cares so deeply about our students. Please join me in welcoming him into his new role, beginning April 19.

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Kay Coop
Founder/Publisher



Netragrednik

We would like to thank Superintendent Dr. Kropp for her many years of dedication to education. She has always been a pleasure to work with and responsive to deadlines as we publish the excellence from LAUSD under her leadership. We look forward to working with Dr. Pulver in the years ahead.

In this issue you will read topics about students helping wild fire victims, cybersafety, filmmakers, robotics, and much more.

If you are considering summer plans or preparing your child for college, we have lots of choices

beginning on page 13. Also, don't forget to enter our Word Search Contest on page 12.

Our next issue is May 15 just in time to congratulate the graduates.



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All About Calicos

By Murlyn E. Burkes, *Cat Committee Liaison*



Callie

Calico cats and kittens are well-known for their gorgeous, tricolor coats in hues of white, orange and black. According to folklore, calicos are known for their good luck.

Calicos are not a breed. Rather, *calico* refers to the color variations in a cat's coat. Orange, black and white are the most common colors, but some may have cream, bluish

black, red or chocolate brown in their coats. It is a fact that at least 99 percent of all calicos are female thanks to a unique chromosomal makeup that determines their color variations.

Sometimes, calicos are described as old souls, making these cats warmhearted, affectionate and wise. Callie, our feature cat, is all of the above. She once had a home but was left in a box near a Seal Beach school. She was rescued by a school nurse who immediately took her to the vet, and she then arrived at our shelter. She is estimated to be around 10 years old with lots of love to give. Callie is ready for a home...could it be yours?

Common Sense Media



Encouraging Teens to Read for Pleasure

The amount of time that teens spend reading for pleasure has declined a lot over the past few years. Whether this is due to time spent with screen media, or other factors is unknown.

Fortunately, we do know the way to encourage readers of any age: Keep books in the house, set aside daily reading time, and read yourself. For teens specifically, it may help to tap into whatever they're passionate about — if you can name it, there's a book about it. In a world filled with entertaining diversions, it can be difficult for teens to find reading material that really motivates them to read. Check our reviews (you can sort our book reviews by age, genre, and topic). Here are some more ideas:

Try an ereader. Ereaders offer your teen a bit more independence, flexibility, privacy — they're great for travel.

Consider humor. Some teens just need the funny.

Draw inspiration from pop culture. Late-night comedians, musicians, and even software developers (think Steve Jobs) are great subjects (or authors!) for teen reading because they're relevant to teens' lives.

Insist that they read the book before seeing the movie.

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Teachers See the Possibilities

During her first year teaching in her own classroom, Rene Engle discovered that reaching high-school learners means setting clear expectations while getting to know students' hearts and strengths. Growth happens together every day, she says—for both student and teacher.



Gladstone High School, 9th Grade English Class, Teacher: Rene Engle '16, Single Subject Teaching Credential '17

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Evelyn Garcia
Principal

Igniting Learning

Hopkinson Elementary School is cultivating 21st-century scholars. In our classrooms, teachers are igniting fires of thought, curiosity, and deep thinking and fostering an educational environment that encourages communication and collaboration, questioning students to drive critical thinking and creativity.

Our Huskies are excited about learning

as they are led to the discovery of knowledge through exploration and questioning. Students from Transitional Kindergarten through fifth grade use their knowledge to solve real-life problems. Teachers ensure that students demonstrate mastery of science concepts by providing hands-on, inquiry-based learning



experiences that incorporate science process skills and the scientific method.

In first grade, students are exploring how plants grow and survive by looking at the structures of plants and exploring how and why they are important. In third grade, students are using claim evidence reasoning in their environmental change unit. And in fifth grade, students are simulating oil spills and having lots of discussions about the water cycle and the earth.

Our Huskies are thriving!



Lee *Elementary*

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Amy Laughlin
Principal

Cybersafety and Cyberawareness

Lee Elementary School empowers students to confidently face safety challenges while living in this digital world. At the start of each school year, our students engage in an extensive digital-citizenship unit in which students in all grades learn to be smart, alert, kind and brave while online. Our lessons portray real challenges and digital dilemmas facing students today, teaching

skills they need to succeed as digital learners and citizens. Students learn their digital footprint—every post, upload or shared piece of personal information—is permanent, and they must consider possible harmful effects of oversharing. We also explore how to handle cyberbullying, as some may encounter hurtful online messages.

In February, Cyber Safety Cop Mike Woodroof held assemblies for our kindergarten through third grade on how to be safe and kind online. He walked students through how to tell a trusted adult if something they see online makes them feel sad, scared or confused. He made it clear to never share their names, addresses, ages or school with any person or website. Our fourth-and-fifth-grade assembly focused on the importance of having a

positive digital reputation and the long-term impact and consequences of cyberbullying.

Officer Woodroof described the importance of not letting strangers into their networks, reviewed the consequences of mean or threatening messages, and shared how to create a positive online experience for themselves and others.



4th graders with their Digital Footprint poster.

Los Alamitos *Elementary*

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Gary Willems
Principal

Leadership Club taking Leadership

Our LAE TIGERS are making Los Alamitos and California a better place!

Our student government's fourth- and fifth-grade Leadership Club was started this year, and it has been doing some amazing things to help both our local areas and other California communities that were affected by the recent wildfires.

So far this year our student government has raised money to help the Malibu fire

victims. They have also raised over 1,700 cans of food for Casa Youth Shelter, a local nonprofit dedicated to providing temporary shelter for runaways and youth in crisis in Los Alamitos. They are also currently running a book drive with the goal of getting 3,000 donated TK to fifth-grade books for those Paradise schools affected by the wildfires earlier this year.

Our student government has also run events for Red Ribbon Week that highlight the importance of being drug free. They have also helped with Peace Week and our Read Across America Day.



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Los Alamitos *High School*

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Dr. Gregg Stone
Principal

Robotics Team Shines at OC Competition

The 2019 Los Alamitos High School Robotics Team (Team Meme) kicked off its 2019 season on January 5th in preparation for competition held at the Orange County Fair Grounds February 28th through March 2nd. The First Robotics Competition (FRC) is a worldwide event which gives teams six weeks to design and build a robot to the given specifications.

Team Meme did an outstanding job of completing their robot within the timeline. The students exemplified teamwork, camaraderie and showed excellent engineering (mechanical, electrical, software) skills.

Competitors included teams from as far away as the Netherlands and China. After a slow start, Team Meme was able to climb in the standings and outperform many of their counterparts.

The Team Members: Kenneth Booth, Joey Melton, Matthew Choi, Vincent Ngo, Macaine Crawford, Brandon Paul, Cameron Hancock, John Pollard, Ashley (Jiwoo) Kim, Owen Ryan, Sean Lee, Brant Taga

McGaugh *Elementary*

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Roni Ellis
Principal

Honorary Service, Indeed!

McGaugh students and staff celebrated volunteerism and dedication to service when they recognized parents, a crossing guard and a local business owner at a school assembly. The McGaugh PTA annually recognizes parents who have gone above and beyond to provide support to the McGaugh staff and students.

This year, we were thrilled to honor, from left, Leanne Voigt with the Continuing Service Award and, receiving the Honorary Service Award, are

Elke Schreiner, Erica Keil, Carla Lemus, Toni Goldman, crossing guard Linda Price, and Pete Papageorges. These fine individuals are all heroes to our children because of their commitment and their service.

How many schools have two fabulous moms to run their copy center so that all teachers and their students get the materials they need? How fortunate are we that we have a crossing guard who decorates the street corner on every holiday? And to have members of our PTA that have skill sets that would make a Fortune 500 company proud! Yes, McGaugh is lucky...and oh, so grateful!





**Dr. Ryan
Weiss-Wright**
Principal

Lights, Camera, Kindness!

McAuliffe filmmakers are hard at work preparing for the first annual McAuliffe Film Festival: “Lights, Camera, Kindness!”

Students have embarked on a 6 week course of preparation and mentor sessions including: theme development, storyboarding, film acting, filming, and film editing.

Done in partnership with our CARES Summits, the McAuliffe Film Festival aims to portray student stories of kindness, inclusion, and compassion. The Film Festival event includes a red carpet arrival, popcorn bar, and student showcase. The winning film even has a live score performed by the McAuliffe Orchestra.

We are so proud of our McAuliffe students!





Erin Kominsky
Principal

Kindness Week

Oak Middle School kicked off Kindness Week on Monday, February 11th by starting everyone's day off with a smile!

Joined by the ASB, our Oak staff members greeted the students and parents as they arrived at school with encouraging signs, upbeat

music, and smiley buttons. The atmosphere was joyful as we encouraged our school community to pass the smiles along!

The week was filled with spirit days, collaborative activities at lunch, and reminders to practice "random acts of kindness" with each other. A school-wide assembly was also held on Valentine's Day to promote "Caring, Compassion, Action, Empathy, and Support."

Our keynote speaker, a Los Al alumni, shared his poignant story of perseverance and "paying it forward." In addition, the ASB did an amazing job of putting a positive message on every single student locker.



Throughout the week, students were given cards that promoted conversations and kindness. As they shared their cards with each other they helped to create an inclusive school environment where everyone felt welcome. Way to go, Oak Lions!





Amy Belsha
Principal

Reading is an Inspiration

Read Across America Week is a nationwide reading celebration that takes place each year! Rossmoor launched its week of celebration on Saturday, March 2nd (Dr. Seuss' birthday) with a fun-filled pancake breakfast.

Our PTA opened the first day of the Book Fair for our families. Although it was raining, it was quite a success! We even had fantastic Dr. Seuss-inspired characters visit and read to the families as they enjoyed their delicious breakfasts.

Each day during the week our students dressed up in Dr. Seuss-inspired themes to help us celebrate the spirit and magic of reading. Our amazing room parents also decorated each of the classroom doors with inspiring reading themes.

We finished Read Across America Week with the second-graders' special performance of *Seussical the Musical*. Lastly, our big and little buddies got to read on the Green together! What a great week of celebrating our love for reading at Rossmoor.



Happy Birthday Dr. Seuss



Weaver *Elementary*

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Rick Larsen
Interim Principal

C.A.R.E.S. Week

Weaver Elementary School is proud to partner with our fifth-grade leaders to celebrate C.A.R.E.S. Week! During C.A.R.E.S. Week, the scholars at Weaver learn how to be compassionate, take action, show responsibility, demonstrate empathy, and support one another. As a part of C.A.R.E.S. Week, the students have also been encouraged to wear pajamas, mismatch their clothes, and wear bright colors!

The C.A.R.E.S. lessons begin with a teacher-led activity in which the students watch a short video, engage in a discussion, and complete a short activity that help students understand the virtues of being a good, caring citizen. The students are then challenged to practice their new skills throughout the day with their classmates and within the community. Students are also encouraged to pass along an Act of Kindness Card, which helps to spread the message that we should all be mindful about being kind to each other in our community. This is Weaver's way of leaving a handprint on someone else's heart!



Appliances—Word Search Contest

Rules! One word in the list is NOT in the word search.

When you have completed the word search, one word will be left and that word you email to: Kay@schoolnewsrollcall.com Please put LAUSD in the subject line.

Entries must be received by May 15, 2019

From the correct entries one name will be drawn to win a \$20 gift card to Barnes & Noble

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Congratulations to Reagan Davis
Winner of our February Word Search Contest!

Keira's Book Nook



From Arctic Wolf to Loyal Companion

White Fang

By: Jack London

In this book, White Fang is raised by Grey Beaver and sold to a cruel and greedy man by the name of Beauty Smith who torments him and



makes him fight for money. When saved from an especially bad dog fight by Weeden Scott, White Fang has to learn to adapt to his sunny Californian surroundings. *White Fang* is a well written book full of background and details. Written from canine White Fang's view, the novel is filled with plot twists that mold White Fang into the wolf that he is! Having pets of my own, I found this book entertaining and meaningful. In addition, it is much easier to read than most classics. I was also fond of Jack London's writing style. I can't wait to read his other book, *The Call of the Wild*. I rate this book a five and recommend it to all animal lovers.

Keira is a 7th grader who loves to read. She also enjoys crafts, traveling, soccer and playing with her cats. Her reviews are rated from 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest.





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Lucy's Book Review



Lucy Davis

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their mouthwatering food videos. Saved and liked on every platform, *TASTY* shows you how to bake the perfect late-night snack or crowd-pleasing dessert. Now, the best of the best has been compiled into a step-by-step cookbook so you can easily get the plate off your screen and on your table. Grab your ingredients, and this book

I love this book for so many reasons! It is easy to follow, fun to look at, and the layout makes sure you can find your favorite recipe in a pinch. Four out of five bookworms.

Lucy is a 7th grade student. When she isn't immersed in a book, she loves musical theater, ballet, and singing. She enjoys stretching her imagination by writing short stories of her own. Lucy will rate the books 1 to 5 bookworms with 5 being the best.

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Sophie's Choice



Sophie O.

Tuesdays at the Castle

This book is the start of an amazing story written by Jessica Day George. In this book, there is an adventure, a little bit of mystery, danger, and stealthiness. Tuesdays at the Castle is based on the



Glower Family, who live in Castle Glower. Castle Glower is magical and every Tuesday a new room appears. Let me introduce you to the main characters, Lulath, Lilah, Rolf, Pogue, Celie, Bran, and Queen and King Glower. But, beware you might not want to put this book down. The King and Queen go to Bran's graduation, and on the way back they are thought to be killed! A funeral is taken place in which they meet some cruel and evil people, and find out that you can't trust everyone. This book definitely deserves a five-star review. Read this book and the whole series if you're curious to find out what will happen to the Glower Family.

Sophie O. is a 6th grader who loves to play soccer and bake. She's an avid reader and writer and is working on writing her first book. She hopes to be an architect one day

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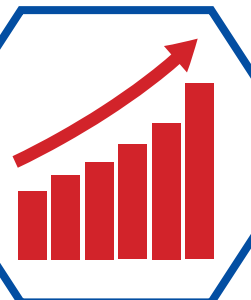
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Isabella's Book Review



Amazing Message

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens is an amazing book with a very complex person as its main character. Scrooge begins the book as a very mean cold hearted man. As the book goes on, Scrooge repents and tries to change.



The reason for this starts when his dead business partner, known as Marley, pays him a visit. During this visit, Marley prophesizes that 3 spirits will come.

The first spirit still comes that night. The Ghost of Christmas past shows Scrooge how happy he once was. It also shows him how he changed into the greedy person he is. Scrooge is sorry for what he has done and takes the first step to change. The next night, the Ghost of Christmas present shows Scrooge how poor his clerk is and how much he is suffering. Scrooge sees that his clerk's son is very sick and that the family does not have the money for treatment. The next night, Scrooge sees what will happen if he continues the way he is going.

I would rate this book a 5 out of 5 because it is very emotionally enticing and it has an amazing message.

Isabella is a 7th grader and just published her first short story in a school anthology of young authors after winning first prize with her work. She rates books on a 5 star scale.



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Semra Bilsel
Branch Manager

Exciting Library Programs

Decorate Your Eggs — Drop in between 10:00 am to 6:00 pm to decorate Eggs with colors, stickers, and other assorted decorations. Just bring your own hardboiled eggs and your creativity, the library will provide supplies and the clean-up! Also, bring an empty box so you can carry all your decorations back home. Ages 4 and up.
April 18th – 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

Preschool Storytime and Craft Time — Storytime is a simple and fun way to get your kids excited about books and reading. Parents/caretakers can chat with one another and make friends. Stay after and join us to take part in a craft activity! All supplies are available. Open to ages 2-6.
April 15th, 22nd, and 29th – 11:30 – 12:15 pm
May 6th, 13th and 20th – 11:30 – 12:15 pm

Baby and Toddler Storytime — Our youngest patrons, birth to 3 years, and caregiver can join in on Storytime fun. Books will be read with songs, rhymes, and activities to get started on the path to Early Literacy.
April 18th, and 25th – 11:30 – 11:50 am
May 2nd, 9th – 11:30 – 11:50 am

Sensory Play — Expand your child's learning through hands on activities that stimulate the senses! Open to ages birth to 5 years old, activities will be provided based on age range. April 18th, and 25th – 11:50 – 12: 15pm
May 2nd and 9th – 11:50 – 12: 15pm

Discovery Club — STEAM program for ages 5-10 where we get creative with fun projects. Supplies are limited so call to register spot at 562-430-1048 at least a week prior to each session. April 16th – 4:00 – 5:00 pm

Teen Book Club — Join us as we discuss the chosen book or whatever you're currently reading. Open to ages 13-18, books can be found at the service desk. Snacks will be provided. May 9th – 4:00 – 4:30 pm



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Traveling with Your Special Needs Child



Gary Feldman, M.D.,
medical director,
Stramski Children's
Developmental
Center,
MemorialCare
Miller Children's &
Women's Hospital
Long Beach

Spring kicks off the travel season, but for families who have a child with special needs, traveling can seem more like work than a vacation. This year, make a plan to prepare your child for a vacation that's fun and manageable.

Walk through your vacation step by step and determine what sights, processes or experiences might be new to your child. Then, explain that there will be a change in their routine. Do this verbally and visually, for example:

- Share photos of your destination
- Take out your suitcase and practice packing
- Explore your hotel online

If you're flying, there are extra steps you can take to help familiarize your child with the airport and flying process, including:

- Take a drive by your local airport
- Watch videos of the airport security process

Long road trips can present additional challenges. Before the drive, consider these tips:

- Practice distraction techniques before the trip
- For sensory issues, bring a pair of noise canceling head phones
- Build breaks into your route
- Pack snacks or plan stops for food
- Involve your child's siblings by preparing them for potential challenges and encouraging supportive behavior

No matter how much you prepare, it's unlikely that everything will go perfectly as planned. Just remember to take it one step at a time.

The Stramski Children's Developmental Center at MemorialCare Miller Children's & Women's Hospital Long Beach cares for children with behavioral and developmental conditions, such as autism, Down syndrome, and more. To learn more about our supportive care, visit millerchildrens.org/stramski.



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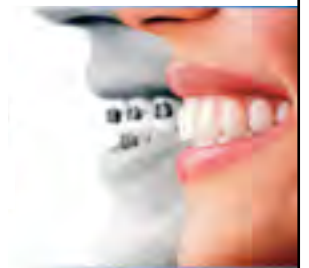
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