# ORNWALL CHRONIC

**VOLUME 10: NUMBER 10** 

**NOVEMBER 2000** 

Our One-Man Public Utility

In the late 1980s the Nestlé Company of chocolate fame, operating a bottled water business nationally and a water utility locally from a spring-fed well in Cornwall Bridge, decided to sell its Cornwall holdings. Asking price-one million dollars. There were no takers at that price, however, and Nestlé, after a dignified period of time, began moving its decimal point to the left. When the dust had settled, Rick Stone, who was looking for a site to start a bottled water business of his own, bought the Nestlé spring for one dollar. What a deal!

Well, not exactly. First, the Department of Health had mandated replacement of the 1,400 feet of ancient pipe delivering water to homes in the area, and with a customer base of fewer than fifteen homes, the utility end of the business was scarcely a profit center for a national company. (In fact Nestlé hadn't even bothered to charge the local citizens who had tapped into its then-unmonitored line.) The final straw for Nestlé, though, was when P&Z limited the company to sending one bottling-plant truck per day into the rural setting of the spring.

The history of the Cornwall Bridge spring goes back to the late 1700s, when Francis Waterbury first used it to supply water to his Red Mill Iron Works.

Today, coming on the historic spring in

the middle of the woods at the end of a slippery side-hill path is something of a surprise. Rick has rebuilt two sturdy buildings that look more like hunting lodges than utility plants. Inside one, a swimming-pool-sized cistern contains the spring. The pumping station, an 800-gallon pressure tank and a laboratory-sized bottling rig reside in the lower "lodge." TLC is evident to the viewer in both construction and maintenance. Rick says he logs the water output for his reports to the Department of Health once a day, and checks on the spring once a week. The Department of Health mandates complete laboratory analyses several times a year. Although his company is essentially a one-man operation, too small to fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Utility Control (DPUC), he has to comply with the same health and procedural regulations as do his reservoir-sized, multi-employee peers.

According to Rick, the Cornwall Water Company (a.k.a. Mr. Stone) is close to launching the bottled water business he had in mind when he first bought the spring. A burgeoning market for the product is obviously there. (Definition of a yuppie—a cool cat with a cell phone in one hand and a bottle of designer water in the other.) But the launching pad for his plans rests on his unique utility service. Recently the price per

user—\$628 a year—has been questioned by a few of his customers and the DPUC has been called in to assess his rates, taking into consideration his considerable investment in piping, equipment, lab tests, and building plus his ongoing supervision of the operation. Although the DPUC has no actual jurisdiction here, its findings, which are expected to be issued within a month or two, will no doubt carry a good bit of weight with both consumers and supplier. -Scoville D. Soulé

# A Less Costly Plan

After Herculean labors that included 93 hours of meetings, the School Building Committee formally ratified a renovation plan at a special meeting on October 12.

The project entails a total cost of \$4.7 million; the town's share, after state reimbursement, is \$3.9 million.

The school project anointed by the building committee resulted from a concerted push by the committee to squeeze out expenses. A scheme discussed at a September information meeting would have cost \$5.1 million, with the town responsible for \$4.4 million. These numbers made many-including some selectmen and finance board members-question the project's affordability.

Building committee Co-Chair Phil Hart felt his group had to "show the Board of Fi-

(continued on page 2)

#### WEDNESDAY **SUNDAY** MONDAY **THURSDAY FRIDAY** SATURDAY 3 4 Preschool-K Story Hour 10 A.M. Cornwall Library School Building Comm. Play Group, 10-11:30 A.M. TA "Choices"—Everybody St. Peter's Church 7:30 P.M. CCS Sings and Yoga, Every Friday (p.4) ELECTION DAY 5 7 Polls Open 6 a.m.-8 p.m. Soup Lunch 12–2 p.m. UCC Parish House (p.3) 10 11 VETERANS DAY Last Day to Order Play Group, 10-11:30 A.M. Preschool-K Story Hour Poetry Slam 4 P.M. Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 p.m. Town Hall Thanksgiving Pies (p.4) Cornwall Child Center St. Peter's Church 10 A.M. Cornwall Library Cornwall Library Early Dismissal: CCS 1 P.M. (p.4) Open House 1:30-4 р.м. (р.4) Early Dismissal: CCS 1 P.M. Early Dismissal: CCS 1 P.M. CCS Not in Session Community Profile First Tai Chi Class CCS (p.4) (p.4)Reunion Potluck 5:30 P.N UCC Parish House (p.4) (p.4)Park and Rec. 7:30 P.M. W. C. Firehouse Cornwall Child Center 7:15 p.m. CCC Inland Wetlands 7:30 p.m. Town Office\* 15 Deadline: December Cornwall Assn. Annual Meeting 9 A.M. Town Hall 12 16 13 Chronicle Copy 14 CCS Tour 9-10 a.m. (p.4) Preschool-K Story Hour Tour of CCS 9-10 a.m. (p.4) Bd. of Ed. 5 p.m. CCS Play Group, 10–11:30 а.м St. Peter's Church riends of Cornwall Library 10 A.M. Cornwall Library Park and Rec. Babysitting Course 9 A.M.—3:30 P.M. UCC Parish House (p.4) Library **Blood Pressure Screening** 4 р.м. Library KIndergarten Thanksgiving 3-4 P.M. UCC Parish House Democratic Town Comm. Soup Lunch 11:30 A.M. Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. Dinner for Parents & 7:30 р.м. Town Hall P.M. UCC Day Room (р.3) **CCS Library** P&Z Special Permits Hearings Special Town Meeting on School Renovation 7:30 p.m. CCS (pp. 1-2) Grandoarents Film: Rules of the Game 7:30 P.M. Library Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 p.m. Town Hall 7:30 P.M. CCS Library Noon, CCS (p.4) 19 20 21 22 23 THANKSGIVING DAY 24 25 Bd. of Selectmen 9 a.m. Town Hall Play Group, 10-11:30 A.M. Cornwall Talent Show R.R.Crossings Public Hearing 7 P.M. Town Hall 7:30-9 P.M. UCC St. Peter's Church (p.3)CCS PTA 3 p.m. (see insert) Early Dismissal: CCS 1 P.M. Region One Bd. of Ed. School Building Comm. Green Party 7 р.м. HVRHS Library 7:30 P.M. CCS Library 7:30 P.M. Town Hall 28 29 30 26 Note: December 2 Play Group, 10-11:30 A.M. St. Peter's Church Classes Resume at CCS Red Cross Blood Drive Christmas Fair 2-7 P.M. UCC Parish House after Thanksgiving Recess 10 a.m.-3 p.m. UCC (p.4) Soup Lunch 11:30 A.M. (p.3)Р.м. UCC Day Room (р.3) A Day in the City (p.4) ZBA 7:30 P.M. Town Hall \* Cornwall Vol. Fire Dept. 8 р.м. W. C. Firehouse

(continued from page 1)

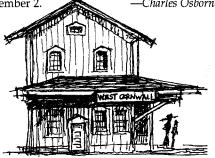
nance we are flexible." In that spirit, the committee acted to delete two classrooms and decided not to augment parking space by moving Cream Hill Road.

"If we cut any more," said Co-Chair Anne Kosciusko, "we would be taking away from school programs." She emphasized that the main expense is the new gym.

That structure includes a movable stage, a new music room, a good-sized kitchen, and expanded bathrooms. An important element is a multi-purpose room, with its own entrance, suitable for community-related meetings. The existing gym will encompass three new classrooms, one an art room. A science lab will take over the current art room, the existing music room will become office space. School Principal Peter Coope feels the plan "is adequate given our present population."

The committee planned to report the school project to the October 27 annual Town Meeting. The Boards of Selectmen and Finance will vote on a resolution authorizing the project on November 6. A final Town Meeting will address the plan on November 18 at 7:30 P.M. at CCS, with a referendum December 2.

—Charles Osborne



# **Curbing Government**

In case you haven't visited the Town Hall/Library lately, be advised it has a new and handsome granite curb. Hey, you can say what you want (see *Letters* column), but I think it's handsome and I'm writing this piece!

Here are the facts: the selectmen felt that the lawn was eroding because cars were frequently digging into its edge. So, under the leadership of Jack Preston, they decided to solve the problem with a granite curb. The stone, purchased through Gary Heaney, proprietor of the Cornwall Bridge Granite Co., was shipped from Vermont in 11 lengths totaling 100 feet and weighing 10,000-plus pounds. The granite, which is five inches wide and 16 inches deep, was set in place by Dan Gracey, using his forklift, ten inches below the ground atop a layer of concrete. The curb, which runs parallel to the building, cost \$3,525—\$3,200 for the stone, including shipping, and \$325 for Dan's work. The funds, according to First Selectman Gordon Ridgway, came from road-repair \$\$ left over from the 1999 budget.

Opinions of the new addition vary: "waste of money," "works great with the stone building," "makes the place look citified," "good place for weekend city kids to practice parallel parking," "makes me want to move to Sharon," "it's comforting," and here's still another personal opinion: it will

provide a neat line of front-row seats at the 2001 Memorial Day parade. So, enjoy!

–John Miller

# **Adoption Agency Comes to Town**

Cornwall Bridge is now home to the office of the Welcome Home Adoption program of Pearl S. Buck International, Inc., founded by the Nobel and Pulitzer prize-winning author. As Adoption Coordinator, Cornwall's Bethany Lyon Thompson will be providing international adoption services throughout Connecticut.

Pearl S. Buck International, Inc. is a nonprofit, non-sectarian organization whose mission is to work with families and communities to improve the lives of children who have been denied educational, social, or civil rights.

Bethany has five years of experience as an adoption social worker. She has a strong connection to adoption, as she was adopted from Korea at the age of ten months by her parents, Bill and Adriane Lyon of Cornwall, and as she in 1998 adopted her oldest son, R. J.

—Peg Keskinen

### When We're 64

None of us likes to see our friends leave town because they cannot find affordable services, transportation, or housing.

Members of the Cornwall Housing Corporation, noting that a third of the Kugeman Village tenants were elderly and that other older neighbors were having to leave Cornwall, decided to investigate the matter, and sent out 500 questionnaires to Cornwallians over 55; 150 were returned.

Being asked about "senior housing" touched a raw nerve in some: "I am NOT interested, and hope I die before I need such stuff." However, others eagerly tried to imagine what forms "such stuff" might take. Here are some of their ideas.

About half want to stay in Cornwall when they get older, if appropriate services, particularly transportation, exist. If they couldn't, or didn't, want to stay at home any longer, most people wanted an affordable one- or two-bedroom ground floor apartment or cottage, designed for privacy, where they could keep pets and possibly have a garden. Others hoped that occasional housekeeping and meals could be provided. (A few people mentioned Templeton Farm in Kent, situated on flat land near the town center, as a good model.) Most important to respondents was the ability to continue to be independent members of the community.

Many would like some sort of senior center, not as "storage for old people," but a community center with a "cafe for all ages"—"a hub of activities for all." Or as another put it, "I prefer to be around young people. It keeps me young."

Forty respondents have offered to work on these ideas and tailor them to Cornwall's unique needs. Join us, if you wish, to ensure that our long-time neighbors can stay in town.

—Ella Clark

# Good-bye to a Friend

Trevyn (Terry) Gonzales

# Congratulations

Nancy Margolis to Thomas King

## **Land Transfers**

Frederick J. and Elizabeth Laser to Cornwall Leasehold LLC, 7 Railroad Street for \$190,000.

Estate of Nicholas A. Rondinone to Kathleen A. Roche, 279 Great Hollow Road for \$717,000.

Estate of Richard W. Simons to Robert B. and Nell H. Nicholas, house and 6 acres on Bolton Hill Road for \$495,000.

# What to Do with Clark Road

Carlos and Diane Dominguez, of C&D Farms LLC, are the new owners of the Clark homestead, East Cornwall land at the foot of Mohawk Mountain. C&D also recently purchased from Stephen Fitch two lots further up Clark Road. These two parcels, which cost \$1.1 million, bring the total of the Dominguez Cornwall holdings to 132.8 acres.

Since George Clark bought the land in 1810, eight generations of Clarks have lived there, the last being Harriet, who died in 1997 at the age of 102.

The new owners plan to establish a horsebreeding operation on the property. They will build a new residence on the mountainside. The old house and barns will be demolished in order to make room for a large modern horse barn.

In September, C&D petitioned the Board of Selectmen to discontinue Clark Road at a point about 1,200 feet in from Great Hill Road, where their property begins. A turnaround and gate at that point would convert the road beyond to a private road, giving them full control of the traffic. However, all the land to the north of the road, for about one-quarter mile, is part of the Mohawk State Forest and is open for public use.

A petition has been circulated for a non-vehicular recreational easement up to the point where the road leaves state land and enters Dominguez property so that the public would continue to have access to the public land. So far, the petition has 281 signatures.

The selectmen must bring any proposal to close a road to a Town Meeting. The board has said that it is sympathetic to the petition.

C&D has also approached P&Z with its request for closure, but legal technicalities prevent P&Z from agreeing to a legal discontinuance. No Town Meeting on this issue can be held until the regulations are reformulated.

As the Chronicle goes to press, Charles Reed, the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Director of the Division of Land Acquisition and Management, has written to the first selectman that the DEP wishes Clark Road to remain open from Great Hill Road to the point where state land ends. Citing a statute that protects landowners from

being denied access to their land, the state claims the right to keep the road public.

In recent years, the section of the road above the farm has fallen into disuse, and it is not clear at this writing whether the town has legally abandoned that part of the road. Meanwhile, the town must maintain the lower segment. If a portion of Clark Road is discontinued, "the State and its invitees" (i. e., the public) will have a right of way—as the petitioners are requesting—over the discontinued segment.

Gordon Ridgway wants to involve all concerned parties in the resolution of these questions: the Dominguez family, which wants privacy; the town, which would like to give up maintaining at least part of Clark Road; the state, which requires access to its properties on that road; and the public, which wants to continue to have recreational access. The whole question will be on the Board of Selectmen's public agenda until all issues have been resolved. —Ann Schillinger

# **House Tour Draws 258**

The second Prime Time Cornwall House Tour took place on October 7, opening to visitors the homes of the Magers, Vizcarrondos, Melchers, Chubb/Nauts, Moores, and Sams/ Rashbaum, plus a Japanese Tea House. The event raised \$14,915 for Prime Time House, which sends thanks to owners and volunteers, and to the Berkshire Country Store, the Café by the Bridge, the Cornwall Inn, and River Grille for sponsoring the event, and to St. Peter's Lutheran Church and the Wish House for allowing tents to be put up on their property. –Amy Cady



# CHC Elects New Members

Having established term limits for all its officers, the Cornwall Housing Corporation has now changed its board membership. Leaving the board (or taking a break) after 14 years of service are Pat Blakey and Ken Keskinen, who, along with current board members Tim Prentice and Peter Hammond, were part of the original 1986 Housing Task Force.

Other long-time members are Maggie Cooley, now president; Ella Clark, vice president; Bee Simont, secretary; and advisor Betsey Reid of the parent New Samaritan Corporation. New to the board are Gerald Blakey, treasurer; Joe Gwazdauskas, Hector Prud'homme, and Wayde Wolfe-all of whom bring special knowledge and experiLetters to the Chronicle

#### BRUCKNER 7, BEARS 0

For over a year now, we've been not so quietly tolerating annoying visits from our hilltop family of bears. Finally, Jim figured out a foolproof, environmentally friendly solution. Open windows facing visitation site, turn on the Hi-Fi set close to those open windows, turn volume to loudest level, begin first movement of Bruckner's Symphony Number 7. While the initial double-bass sounds are practically inaudible to aging ears such as ours, the bears have no trouble detecting that there is a new presence in their range, loud, large, and unfamiliar. The bears will stop, look, and listen and, if they react as ours have, will make a fast retreat. We've never met a bear yet that liked Bruckner. –Carol Goodfriend

#### "GREAT WALL" COPS

The "Great Walls of Cornwall" article in the Chronicle's September issue made reference to "cops standing in the midst of things chatting and now and them gesturing casually to the waiting motorists." I know the feeling. I had been noticing the behavior of the officers at the site for some time, but one morning, while driving east on Route 4 into a blinding sun, I was suddenly confronted by a truck on my side of the road. I stopped in time to avoid a collision. Once my lane was free again, I was able to see two officers of the law chatting with each other half way through the construction zone. I stopped to suggest they would be more useful at either end of the zone but they were unmoved by my suggestion.

I then wrote State Representative Andrew Roraback, who told me that state police directing traffic are doing so on their own time and are

paid by the utilities doing the work. He also said he had a letter from the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation telling him that the DOT "requires all individuals who perform traffic control services on any of the Department's construction projects to be either a police officer or a certified flagger. Certified flaggers are individuals who have successfully completed flagger training from an approved training program. Flaggers must wear appropriate high-visibility vests and headgear identifying them as Traffic Control and use a STOP/SLOW paddle mounted on a post." In other words you can have someone who knows how to do the job or an untrained, unequipped police officer.

-Christopher L. Webber

#### **BOOK BORROWERS BEWARE**

The Cornwall Library's new \$3,525 granite curb to keep cars from being mired in the mud is a two-edged sword. Beware when exiting the south driveway of the Library because the sharp point of the curb slashed a four-inch wedge from the sidewall of my right rear tire, proving that invisible hazards exist even in Cornwall.

—Judy Bronner

ence to the board.

The CHC, says Maggie Cooley, reaffirms its commitment to provide affordable housing in Cornwall. Under consideration are units for all age groups, an expanded parcel program, and assistance in remodeling existing structures to improve and increase the number of living units.

-John Zinsser

# Painting the Town

The bright yellows and reds of the trees on October 8, a glorious fall day, were mirrored in many of the paintings that covered the walls of Cheryl Evans' new gallery on Railroad Street in West Cornwall. There were many Wet Paint signs beneath views of the town as the Paint the Town celebration came to a close.

The ages and the styles of the artists varied—as I left, several kids carried in a huge, boldly painted mural called Cornwall Bridge Beauty. Other paintings were small with an air of stillness. The silent auction at the end of the day brought in a thousand dollars for the benefit of Extras for Kids.

-Anne Zinsser

### **Events & Announcements**

Election Day Soup Lunch (bring your own mug) sponsored by Cornwall's Community Center Committee. Homemade soups will be served from noon until 2 P.M. on November 7 in the UCC Parish House. And in the Day Room each Wednesday, beginning November 15 (except November 22) soup will be offered from 11:30 A.M. to 1 P.M. Bring your own sandwich. A documentary will be shown. Transportation available. Call Anne Zinsser, 672-6400.

A Red Cross Blood Drive in the UCC Parish House will take place on November 27 from 2 to 7 р.м. The holiday season is a time of year when blood supplies are critically low. New donors are especially welcome. Please call the church office at 672-6840 or call (800) GIVE-LIFE for an appointment. Walk-ins are welcome.

Crossing Guards on the Railroad: There will be a public hearing in the Town Hall on Monday, November 20, at 7 P.M. concerning the installation of crossing guards on the railroad in West Cornwall at Chapel Street and Pine Street (north of Chapel Street) crossings.

Community Profile Reunion Potluck: The Cornwall Association invites you to come celebrate our town. The five committees spawned by the Profile will give reports, and Cornwall's 17 volunteer groups will be there to share their experiences. This evening of community exchange and potluck supper will be on Saturday, November 11, at 5:30 P.M. at the UCC Parish House. We would like a head count so please let us know who is coming. Contacts are: Lori Welles, 672-0281, E-mail-theballyhack@earthlink.net; Ann Schillinger, 672-6862, E-maildawntreader@snet.net.

PTA "Choices" Projects coming up at CCS: 1. Everybody Sings! with Josh Perlstein. Songs from folk to baroque. For third-grade to adult. Fridays from 3 to 4 P.M. Contact David Samson at 672-0616. Free. 2. Yoga for Fun and a Healthy Body with Anna

Dolan. Gentle stretching and strengthening for the old, the lazy, the infirm, and the under-motivated. Special attention paid to those with chronic neck and back pain. Bring loose clothing and two blankets or a pad. For adults, Fridays from 5:30 to 6:45 P.M.. Contact David Samson at 672-0616. Fee: \$3 per class. 3. Tai Chi Chuan: an ancient Chinese martial art, which is both healing and strengthening to the mind, body, and spirit. For new students of all ages. Beginners, Tuesdays from 6:45 to 7:45 P.M. The experienced, 7:45 to 9 P.M. Starts November 7. Contact Leslie Elias, 672-0286. Fee: \$5 per class (first class free and sliding scale).

Two CCS Tours: As a way to introduce himself to members of the community, Peter Coope, our new principal, will lead two tours of the school and its facilities on Monday, November 13, and Tuesday, November 14, from 9 to 10 A.M. Please call the office (672-6617) to let him know which day you would like to come.

Thanksgiving Pie Sale: The CCS eighth grade is taking orders for Freund's Farm pies-apple or pumpkin or Fruits of the Forest (rhubarb and berry) at \$10 each. All orders must be received by November 9. Please call Patience Lindholm at 672-0609. Proceeds will benefit the eighth grade class trip. Questions? Ask any eighth grader.

# Unfuzzy Math

Send us money. We'll spend it all on bringing you the news and views from Cornwall. If only all decisions were that simple. Don't forget to vote!

Good News for Cornwall Artists: Cheryl Evans has bought the building at 7 Railroad Street in West Cornwall and in the area vacated by the angler's shop she is opening a gallery for sculpture, pottery, and painting. She is naming the gallery Cornwall Arts Collection. Besides the gallery, there is another commercial site as well as two apartments.

Big Success at Book Sale: The fall season opened at the Cornwall Library with the most successful Columbus Day weekend

> book sale ever, sponsored by the Friends of the Library. Over 25 volunteers worked to raise \$2,600 for the Library's operating

A Baby Sitter Awareness Course will be given on Saturday, November 18, 9 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. at the UCC Parish House, taught by Elaine Hazelton, EMTI, First Aid and CPR instructor trainer. Enrollment is lim-

ited to 12 students, ages 12 to 16. The course includes pediatric care, police and fire safety, CPR, and choking management. Students will receive a certification of completion, and CPR certification. Snack and juice will be provided, but students must bring their own lunch. Call Brian Leonard at 672-4070 for more information and registration. Cost is \$15-sponsored by Park and Rec.

Art in Cornwall: At the Cornwall Library, Duncan Hannah's show of evocative drawings will continue through November 5. Beginning November 7, the Library is honored to host an exhibit of drawings by Marc Simont. At the National Iron Bank, Nick Jacobs' show of photographs and oil paintings will continue through November.

A Day in the City: Our bus leaves at 8 A.M. on Saturday, December 2, from CCS, and departs from New York City at 4:30 P.M. You can see the Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center, have lunch at the Central Park Zoo, shop at Macy's, and more. Those who wish to see A Christmas Carol at the theater at Madison Square Garden, or go to Radio City, must purchase tickets separately. Cost is \$14 round trip. Call Brian Leonard at 672-4070 for reservations and information. Sponsored by Park and Rec.

Blessed is how the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department feels for having just been given an anonymous \$50,000 gift. The news came in as the Chronicle was going to press. The full story next month.

Thanksgiving: For the past 28 years, children in Mrs. Wadhams' Kindergarten/Transition class have recreated the first Thanksgiving by preparing, serving, and eating an entire Thanksgiving dinner. This feast will take place on Friday, November 17, at noon. The children, dressed as pilgrims and Indians, are always delighted to share this day with parents, grandparents, and friends.

Open House at the Cornwall Child Center will be held on Sunday, November 5, from 1:30 to 4 р.м. to celebrate the Center's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Alumni/ae, past parents, grandparents, children, parents, staff, friends, and supporters will be there. All are invited to see the Center and share refreshments and memories.

A Christmas Fair will be held Saturday, December 2, from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. at UCC. In the Parish House, there will be crafts by local artists, evergreen wreaths and decorations, and a room for children to shop for and wrap presents for the family. A soup and sandwich lunch and holiday foods will be available in the Day Room of the church. To reserve wreaths, which must be ordered in advance, call Joan Edler at 672-6789.

Early Dismissal: Students at Cornwall Consolidated School will be dismissed on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, November 7, 8, and 9 at 1 P.M. because of Parent/Teacher Conferences on those days.

School Holidays: CCS will not be in session Friday, November 10, Veterans Day. Thanksgiving recess will begin with students' dismissal at 1 р.м. on Wednesday, November 22. Classes will resume Tuesday, November 28. (On Monday, November 27, teachers will be attending workshops.)



#### CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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