



PUBLISHED SINCE 1948 FOR THE TOWN OF GLEN ECHO, MARYLAND ~ CHARTERED IN 1904 ~ MARCH 2025

## TOWN COUNCIL NOTES

The Mayor and all four Council Members met virtually on February 10. Town Manager Angie Zeidenberg was away. Two residents attended this relatively short meeting.

### Mayor and Council Updates

Council Member Wilson mentioned she saw an archeologist silting the soil at the Clara Barton House, looking for remains or artifacts (either from Red Cross era or from Native Americans). The Mayor said it was good something was happening since they need a contract for construction by October 2025 to realize \$12M in state funds.

Mayor Costello submitted a proclamation (page 3) honoring life-long resident Nancy Long, who died on February 1 at the age of 96 at a nearby memory care facility. There will be a celebration of her life at Town Hall sometime in March.

The variance hearing for 7316 University Avenue scheduled for this meeting needed to be rescheduled for the March meeting. Town residents need ten-day's notice for a variance hearing. In order for all the Council Members to attend, it was decided that the next Council meeting will be Tuesday, March 18, at 7:30 PM, and the variance hearing will happen at that meeting.

Mayor Costello asked Council Members to come to the March meeting with ideas about improvements to Town Hall that she should include in next year's budget. The Mayor reported that she continues to interview candidates for the open Town Manager

position and that the installation of the new elevator in Town Hall is still in progress.

### Traffic on Harvard

Harvard resident Tisha Anderson asked the Council to consider changing the traffic pattern on Harvard Avenue, specifically by making it one-way towards MacArthur Boulevard. She cited speeders down the hill at the top of Harvard, the large Postal Service truck that comes multiple times a day to the Post Office, and cars squeezing past each other, as making the street a perfect storm of dangerous traffic. She said that her family's cars have been hit three times in the past year, hit-and-runs that have cost them thousands of dollars, adding that cars regularly drive into yards and fences along Harvard. Her husband Blair Anderson,



SATURDAY, MARCH 8

formerly undersecretary of the Department of Transportation, has spent a lot of time thinking of possible fixes and has landed upon changing Harvard to one-way out of Town as the best solution.

Mayor Costello said she wants to run the idea by an engineer, and Council agreed although universally did not want to conduct a large-scale survey of the traffic on Harvard. Council agreed to run this specific idea by an engineer of the Mayor's choosing. The Council wants to know how this change would affect

# THE ECHO

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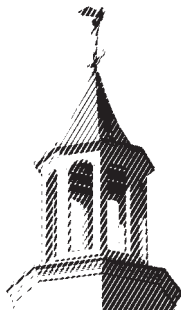
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Next Deadline: March 20, 2025

Letters to the editor are welcome. They must be signed.

Articles for publication are also solicited. Please send comments about *The Echo* to the editor, the Mayor, or any Council Member. Volunteer reporters are always needed.



## TOWN OF GLEN ECHO

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### MAYOR

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### TOWN MANAGER

Angie Zeidenberg ([townhall@glenecho.org](mailto:townhall@glenecho.org))

Next Council Meeting (virtual): March 18, 2025, 7:30 PM

traffic on other streets in Town. Council Member Spealman said that the installation of a few security cameras could help with identifying drivers in hit-and-run situations. Ms. Wilson asked if a smaller USPS truck could be used. Ms. Anderson pointed out that big trucks aren't even supposed to be on any streets but Oxford and University.

### Odds and Ends

Mayor Costello told Council that the Irish Inn is way behind in paying rent on the parking leased to them by the Town. She is considering raising the rent from \$300/month to \$500/month. No one on Council disagreed. This will be decided at the March meeting. The Mayor noted that the lot is in disrepair and no one is maintaining it.

The Town Manager is still collecting responses to a recent leaf pick up survey. A reminder will be sent out and responses will be incorporated into the

coming budget discussions. Council Member Tanner reiterated her position that there should be no leaf pick up in order to keep pollinator populations up. The Mayor noted a recent speaker event at Town Hall hosted by the Green Team and well attended by residents. She is considering giving the Green Team a small amount of money in the budget for speaker fees.

The Mayor hopes to have a meet-the-current-Council Members event at Town Hall in March as a kick off to the Town election season. The deadline for filing is April 15, and ballots will be created April 17. May 2 will be a meet-the-candidates event if there are more candidates than seats, and the election will be Monday, May 5, 2025.

### Town Expenses

In January, the Town paid \$3,653 to Key Sanitation, \$1,118 to Pepco, and \$1,050 to Marcelli Cleaning Services. —EMILY PARSONS



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## MAYORAL PROCLAMATION

*Honoring the Outstanding Lifetime Contributions of Nancy Long*

*WHEREAS, the community spirit of Glen Echo is built upon the dedication, service, and generosity of its residents; and*

*WHEREAS, Nancy Long demonstrated unwavering commitment to the betterment of our community through her exceptional service, leadership, and contributions; and*

*WHEREAS, Nancy Long played a vital role in her long term elected council member participation for 50 years; and*

*WHEREAS, her dedication to leading important program improvements at Glen Echo Park including the renovation and protection of the historic carousel, helping to establish the now renowned annual*

*Labor Day art show and a leader in establishing the Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture, and*

*WHEREAS, Nancy Long had deep commitment to being an attentive and proactive steward to the surrounding natural environment, especially the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, and*

*WHEREAS, the Town of Glen Echo recognizes and sincerely appreciates Nancy Long's dedication and commitment to making our town and the greater community a better place for all; and*

*WHEREAS, NOW, THEREFORE, I, Dia Costello, Mayor of Glen Echo, Maryland, do hereby proclaim it is fitting and proper that we publicly acknowledge and honor Nancy Long's lifetime outstanding achievements and invaluable service to the Town of Glen Echo*

DIA COSTELLO MAYOR,  
TOWN OF GLEN ECHO  
FEBRUARY 10, 2025

Long-time Glen Echo resident and Town Council member (1969–2019) Nancy Long died on February 1, 2025, at Cedar Glen Memory Care Home in Rockville. She was 96 years old. She resided in Glen Echo for most of her 96 years at her homes on Bryn Mawr Avenue and Wellesley Circle.

Many Town residents will remember Nancy

for her fifty years of service on the Town Council, where she was the Town's delegate to Glen Echo Park for which she cared deeply. She was also the Town's liaison with the

National Park Service, the C&O Canal National Historical Park, the Clara Barton Historic Site, and The George Washington Memorial Parkway. For years, Nancy also managed the rental of the Town Hall. I could also always count on her to accompany me to meetings with County, State, and Federal government representatives when Town issues were at stake. She was the Town's institutional memory and vigilant in the defense of its interests.

Nancy also served extensively on other boards and commissions, including the Potomac Valley League, the

## IN MEMORIAM

Montgomery County Committee of the Maryland Historical Trust, and the Potomac River Basin Consortium.

In 1970, Nancy organized and directed a successful fundraising campaign to save the Park's Dentzel Carousel, which remains a



beloved fixture in the Park to this day. She led the effort of like-minded citizens who raised \$80,000 within a few weeks to re-purchase the Carousel and, later, its Wurlitzer organ, from a west coast organization. She also inaugurated and curated the Glen Echo Labor Day Art Show for many years until her illness forced her to stop volunteering at the Park.

In 1975, Nancy was selected by then-Congressman Gilbert Gude as one of 25 individuals to travel the entire length of the C&O Canal to call attention to the Canal's importance and need for preservation. Nancy Long walked the 184-mile length of the Canal

four times, the latest trek occurring in the spring of 2000. She remained friends with Cathy Douglas, the widow of Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, who led the fight to save the Canal from being turned into a freeway in the 1950s.

Nancy's passions included the Town of Glen Echo, Glen Echo Park, the C&O Canal, and the environment. A vanishing

breed of liberal Republican, Nancy often could be found volunteering at the polls at Bannockburn Elementary School on election day. She was a great friend and supporter

of Sen. Charles ("Mac") Mathias, Rep. Gilbert Gude, and, of course, Rep. Connie Morella, who entered a tribute to Nancy into the Congressional Record on the occasion of her 72nd birthday. Nancy once told me that she was a Republican because they were the conservative party, and she was for "conservation."

Nancy was interred beside her mother at Cedar Hill Cemetery in Suitland, MD, on February 13, 2025. A celebration of her life will be held at the Town Hall on a date to be announced. Please join me and your neighbors in honoring her memory.

—DEBBIE BEERS

As signs of spring are just beginning, I like to peruse the catalogues and see what novel plants might grow successfully in my garden. I choose plants that should thrive here and are good for pollinators. New plants are simply fun to watch as they progress. The following are a few plants on my “must try” list this year:

**Monarch Magic Flossflower** *Ageratum houstonianum* ‘Monarch Magic’



This plant is an amazing, re-blooming annual that is a magnet for butterflies. It grows roughly 12 inches tall with a mounding habit that makes it ideal for both edging and containers. Plant them in sun and enjoy long-blooming abundant flowers that are a gorgeous periwinkle blue.

**Firefly Fuchsia yarrow** *Achillea* ‘Firefly Fuchsia’

This is a low maintenance perennial that will produce

## HOLLY IN THE IVY



vibrant, fuchsia-colored flowers. This stunning plant will tolerate drought and needs plenty of sun. The flowers will look great in the garden as well as in a vase or as a dried flower. The flattened flowers make a perfect landing spot for pollinators.

**Seashore Mallow** *Kosteletzkya virginica* (syn. *K. pentacarpos*)



These beauties, native to coastal areas, generally adapt well in gardens that have moist soil. Lovely pink, hibiscus-like flowers begin in mid-summer and are attractive to hummingbirds and butterflies. Plants grow 3–5 feet tall, prefer sun, and look great in rain gardens, naturalistic plantings, and even formal beds.

### American Dittany

*Cunila origanoides*

The American dittany is worthy of attention! This



charming small mint is not well known and is rarely seen in gardens.

It will grow about 1 foot tall, prefers sun and well-drained soil, and is native to the U.S. Its attractive flowers and foliage have a warm spicy scent that is like fresh culinary oregano. You can make tea from the leaves or use them to flavor food. An added delight is that they tend to form frost flowers which are ribbon-like eruptions of ice crystals that develop when the sap from the plant suddenly freezes and causes the stem of the plant to rupture.

**Powerball Panicle Hydrangea** *Hydrangea paniculata* ‘Powerball’

Panicle hydrangeas are easy to grow and adaptable, and the blooms are

gorgeous. Other names for this plant include Peegee hydrangeas and hardy hydrangeas. Powerball has large, dense rounded flowers on sturdy stems and is a strong grower. It will remain elegant throughout



the summer. Bloom color begins as lime green, moving into a muted

white, and followed by various shades of pink towards the end of the season. Plants grow 3–6 feet tall and wide.

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If you are interested in trying any of these plants, I recommend that you check local nurseries. If the plants are not available, I suggest you go online and track them down. Generally, they are available as seeds or plants and often at nurseries that are close by. Diversity of blooming times in your garden will extend the seasons and increase the variety of pollinators and birds that will visit.

—HOLLY SHIMIZU

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**A** week or so before the first crocuses brighten the front yards along University Avenue, before sunlight coaxes the snowdrops open in the gardens off Wellesley Circle, the skunk cabbages bloom. They are the first brave ones to shake off winter's grip. Every year, I pull on my boots and wander down the path to the backside of Minnehaha Creek. That's where I find them—odd, hooded blooms pushing up from the cold mud like stubborn little lanterns.

If you haven't noticed them before, you're not alone. These plants don't exactly compete with cherry blossoms for attention. But once you spot one, you'll start to see them everywhere—in the damp woods along the Cabin John Creek and the mucky low spots along the Potomac.

Botanists call the plant *Symplocarpus foetidus*. "Symplocarpus" means "connected fruit," for its odd seed clusters, and "foetidus" nods to its faint musky stink.

## IN YOUR BACKYARD

That smell gives the plant its unfortunate name, but it's not as bad as you'd think. I've come to love it. By early March, I start craving it—the earthy, mustard-garlic reek that says, "Spring is just around the corner."

I'm far from the only skunk cabbage fan. On March 16, 1860, Henry David Thoreau recorded that he had "examine[d] the skunk cabbage, now generally and abundantly in bloom. All that you see is a stout beaked



hood just rising above the dead brown grass ..." That hood, or "spathe," is the part we notice first. The spathes range from eggplant purple to streaked yellows and reds—swirls of color that always remind me of heirloom beans.

But skunk cabbage is more

than a colorful oddity. It is one of a rare few thermogenic plants. In late winter, when frost still crusts the ground, the air inside those hooded blooms can reach 70 degrees. That warmth melts the snow around it and lures in the only insects stirring—flies. They arrive, drawn by what they think is the scent of something dead. Instead, they find the plant's hidden flowers. While seeking shelter from the cold, they accidentally help pollinate.

It's a clever trick. And it works. By April, when the towpath begins buzzing with cyclists again, skunk cabbages enter their next act. They unfurl broad, bright green leaves—lush as any garden hosta, but untamed, carpeting the forest floor. Those leaves are toxic, filled with oxalic acid, so deer leave them alone (unlike those hostas). By late June, the leaves vanish,

seemingly overnight, melting into the soil.

"If you are afflicted with melancholy at this season," Thoreau advised, "go to the swamp and see the brave spears of skunk-cabbage buds already advanced toward a new year... Is it the winter of their discontent? Do they seem to have lain down to die, despairing of skunk-cabbagedom? 'Up and at 'em,' 'Give it to 'em,' 'Excelsior,' 'Put it through,'—these are their mottoes."

So, if this long winter has left you weary, take Thoreau's advice. Stroll down to Minnehaha Creek or take one of the trails off the towpath. Pause where the ground is damp and the air smells faintly of thawing earth. Look for those hooded blooms—those scrappy, heat-making, fly-fooling, winter-defying skunk cabbages. They're the first whisper that spring is coming. —**CHARLOTTE TAYLOR FRYAR**

*Charlotte's book Potomac Fever: Reflections On the Nation's River will be out this month.*

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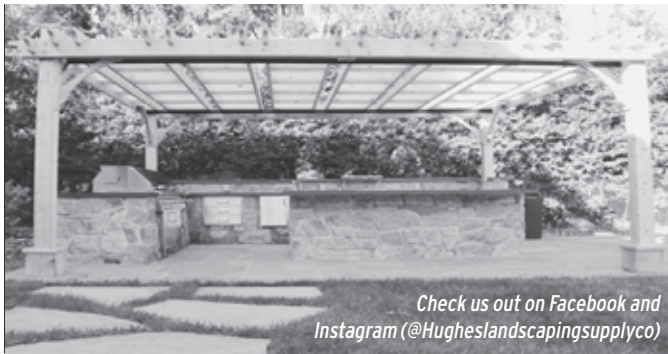
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The Oscars are here and ready for their red-carpet debut on Sunday, March 2, with Conan O'Brien bringing his quirky sensibilities to the Dolby Theater as host. And while there will be glamor and pomp and cheer, there will also be an undercurrent of sadness and solemnity due to the LA fires that so recently ravaged the city.

The Oscars have never been cancelled—not for war or Covid or any other reason. While there was some talk of cancelling this year because of the impact and immediacy of the fires, the consensus seems to be that the Academy Awards will provide an opportunity for the industry and the city to put their best foot forward, recognize the power of film to inspire in the face of tragedy, find some solace and celebration, and highlight the continued need to support the recovery. If you'd like to help in that effort, a good place to start is [www.enla.org](http://www.enla.org).

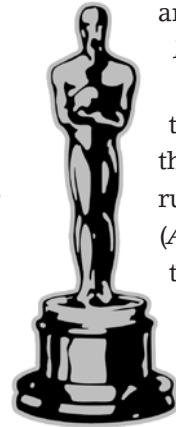
These Oscars will no doubt also have a high degree of political content. Many of us right here in Glen Echo have been dramatically affected by the actions of the new administration, and our democracy hangs by a thread at this point. Members of the film industry are known for their outspokenness and progressiveness, and so we

## THE CINEMANIAC



can expect a large number of jabs and impassioned speeches directed toward the president over the night.

This is especially true since many of the nominees include themes that are in direct opposition to this administration's policies, including: the machiavellian nature of the current office-holder (*The Apprentice*); demonization of those who are different (*Wicked*); misogyny (*The Substance*); the evils of authoritarianism (*I'm Still Here* and *The Man Who Could Not Remain Silent*); inclusivity vs hatred (*Conclave*); the bravery of our allies fighting for freedom in Ukraine who may soon be abandoned (*Porcelain War*); the mistreatment of the poor at the hands of the wealthy and powerful (*Anora* and *The Brutalist*); the importance of nature (*The Wild Robot*); the dangers of cults of personality (*Dune II*); assault against women (*Black Box Diaries*); the plight of Palestinians (*No Other Land*); state-sanctioned violence against minorities (both *Sugarcane* and *Nickelboys*); immoral government machinations (*Soundtrack to a Coup D'Etat*); the value of art (*Sing Sing*



and *Instruments of a Beating Heart*); school shootings (*Death by Numbers*); police shootings (*Incident*); historic and continued discrimination at work (*The Only Girl in the Orchestra* and *The Six Triple Eight*); the heartache of American families targeted by ICE (*A Lien*); the abuses of corporate rule of government (*Aliens: Romulus*); and the dignity and truth of transgender individuals (*Emilia Pérez*).

That last film seemed at one point to be the favorite for Best Picture but has since fallen a bit in the rankings thanks to controversies surrounding its star's online comments. It might still pull out a win, perhaps for the impressive performance of Zoe Saldana, but is now more a dark horse for Best Picture. The momentum seems to be behind *Anora*, with a number of important wins from other awards that lead up to the Oscars.

The creative force behind the film, Sean Baker, has a shot to be the first person since Walt Disney to win four Oscars in one night (for screenplay, editing, directing, and producing). As a well-known supporter of the transgender community, expect him to have something to say on that topic

if he gets to make one of those four trips to the podium. But *Anora* is not your typical Oscar-fare, so there are at least five or six nominees with credible claims to the title, including *Conclave* and my favorite from this year, *The Brutalist*. More than most years I can remember, it's a wide-open race, and almost anyone can win.

If you'll be tuning in to see it all go down, the ceremony will be broadcast at 7 PM on ABC and (for the first time) streaming on Hulu. You could even venture out to one of the live parties being hosted in the DMV. The DC Movie Club is holding a viewing at Penn Social on E Street, downtown (black tie encouraged). The more comprehensive program will be hosted by the DC Film Society, with contests, critic's observations, fundraisers for DC Filmfest, and more. It's scheduled to take place at a venue that's an old friend for movie lovers (even though it rarely shows films these days), the Arlington Drafthouse. In the past, I've often hosted an Oscar party myself, but just don't have the heart for it these days, given all that's going on. I'll be watching, though—trying to pick up a little hope and solidarity from the celebration of the filmmakers who are professionals at creating such feelings.  
—DAN SPEALMAN

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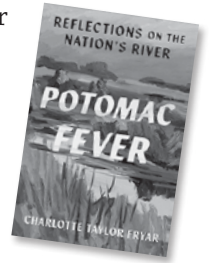
**HAVE YOU HEARD?**

Please join the Livable Town Committee at our annual **Winterlude!** March 8 (rain date March 9) from 5-9 PM outside the Town Hall on Harvard Avenue. We will have a judged chili cook off, hotdogs, s'mores, and mac and cheese, and plenty of fire pits to keep us warm. This event is to raise money for supplies for the Greentree Family Shelter in Bethesda. If you'd like to contribute, \$5 will purchase one of the 200 luminaries we need to line Harvard. Council Member **Dan Spealman** will make sure the contributions get to Greentree. Checks and cash are welcome. PayPal at paypal.me/dspeal; or Venmo using @Dan-Spealman. Text Dan with any questions at 202-560-2237. If you would like to enter the chili contest, please let **Julia Wilson** know (julia.wilson@me.com) by March 3 at the latest and specify whether the chili

will be meat or vegetarian.

**T**he Echo's newest columnist,

**Charlotte Taylor Fryar**, will be discussing her new book *Potomac Fever: Reflections On the Nation's River* at Lost City Books in DC on March 13 at 7 PM. Even if you can't attend, you can support her by buying a copy of her essays exploring the natural history and racial history of DC's waterways.



.....  
**A**s the Town gears up for an **election in May**, here are some important dates to remember. Yet to be scheduled is an event at Town Hall where residents can meet with current Council Members and the Mayor. Any Declaration of Candidacies are due to **Jan Shaut** by April 15, and *The Echo* requests candidate statements and photos

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be submitted by April 20 for the May issue. If there are more candidates than seats, there will be a Meet-the-Candidates event at Town Hall on May 2, which is also the deadline for any absentee ballots. The election will be held on May 5 from 5-9 PM, and results will be shared that night. Up for election this year is the Mayorship and Council seats held by **Dan Spealman** and **Matt Stiglitz**.

.....

**T**his is an extraordinary and stressful time for many of our residents who are affected by the new administration's actions. Often people intentionally move here to work in the Federal government and live in a closeknit community. We are fortunate to have always been a town that supports one another with kindness and compassion, especially during times of crisis. We need that now more than ever before.

Maryland is providing important information regarding unemployment and potential legal assistance. For those who may not have done so yet, the Maryland Department of Labor, Congressman Jamie Raskin, and Maryland Public Servants Resource websites have information and resources that may be helpful to you or someone you know.

I honor and respect those who have dedicated their career to government service. —**DIA COSTELLO**, mayor

.....

**W**ith our national politics making things feel so uncertain, consider doubling down on your membership in **this community!** Come to a Ladies Night, share a piece of happy news or a strange animal encounter with *The Echo*, participate in an upcoming Town event, or consider running for one of the Town Council seats up for election in May.

## NOW PLAYING

**I**n February, I went to Adventure Theatre and saw the play *Dragons Love Tacos*, based on the picture book. It was really funny and good for kids. I think people who love dragons would love this play. I would suggest it for people who are 4 to 8 years old. If you want to be a comedian, you should learn from the "guy in the suit" who pops out of the TV in the play. The set was neat because it went from being really clean to looking like it had been in an explosion. This play is showing until March 30, so if you are looking for something to do, go see it! —**LARA T EPANCHIN**, 4th grader



## GOINGS ON

### Town Hall Events

**March 5, 12, 19, 26** 8-10:30 PM, FSGW English Country Dance, Wednesdays, free to Town residents

**March 8** 5 PM, Winterlude, a celebration of lights and a charity fundraiser

### Local Events

**March 29** 1 PM, Celebration of Life for Reed Martin including jam session, Bethesda United Methodist Church



### Glen Echo Park Events

**March 1** 10 AM, 45-minute, ranger-led Civil Rights Tour starting at the carousel, free

**March 6, 13, 20, 27** 11 AM, kids story time at the Aquarium

**March 8** 9:30 AM, Ranger-guided tour of Glen Echo Park and the C&O Canal

**March 29-30** 10 AM-6 PM, #Dance Weekend, Folklore Society of Greater Washington

**The Puppet Co.** [www.thepuppetco.org](http://www.thepuppetco.org); 301-634-5380  
**Peter and the Wolf** through March 16

**The Magic of Hans Christian Andersen** March 29-April 27

**Tiny Tots** select Weds, Sats, and Sundays at 10 AM

### Adventure Theater MTC

[www.adventuretheater-mtc.org](http://www.adventuretheater-mtc.org); 301-634-2270

**Dragons Love Tacos** through March 30

THURSDAY, MARCH 13, AT 7:00 PM  
**LADIES NIGHT**  
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## They Say it's Your BIRTHDAY!

March 11, **Greta Hirsch**, 14

March 16, **Hudson Woodall**, 2

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