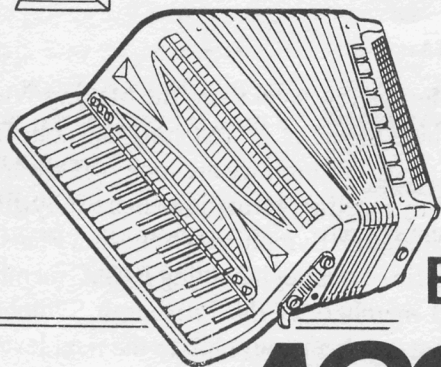


Newsletter of the

SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA U.S.A.



BAY AREA

ACCORDION CLUB



JUNE, 1996

Our July guest, HENRY DOKTORSKI

You won't want to miss the next general meeting, on Monday, the first of July. It will be our opportunity to meet and listen to Henry Doktorski, whom some of us know of and have spoken to, but who no BAAC member has ever met (as far as we've figured out....).

Henry is living in Pittsburgh. While he is finishing his Masters degree in Music at Duquesne University there, he is very busy making recordings, performing as a soloist with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, and promoting the accordion very broadly. Henry has won several awards including first place in the 1990 American Accordion Musico-logical Society's Virtuoso Solo Competition.

You'll hear him perform a wide variety of music both by himself and in combination with a few of Joe Smiell's recruits. It's sure to be a memorable evening; be there!

PICNIC TIME AGAIN

We hope you're all planning to be at BAAC's annual PICNIC, held this year on Sunday, July 7th at Swiss Park in Newark. Come early and stay all day — gates will open at 9:30, charcoal fires will be lighted early, and we can stay until dark if we wish!

Admission is \$5.00/per person, with children under 16 years free. Bring your own food and beverages!

Swiss Park is very close to the 880 Freeway at Newark. Specifically, exit at Mowry Avenue and go West. Look for the gas station about 1 block from the freeway exit and turn right. Swiss Park is immediately across from the gas station.

Mary-Alice, true to form, has lined up a wonderful batch of picnic entertainers. These include Herb Meier, Mike Zampiceni, Joe Simoni, Marjorie Konrad, Bob Berta, Max Tarmann, Bob Smith Lou Soper's Trio or Quartet or... and Frank Montoro.

See y'all there!!!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

July 1st, Monday. BAAC General Meeting. Featuring Jim Firpo & Leon Broussal, Peter Di Bono, Mike Zampiceni, and our very special guest, **Henry Doktorski**. Donworth Hall, 22nd & Eucalyptus, S.F., just north of Stonestown Shopping Center. 7 P.

July 3rd, Wed. BAAC Board Meeting, 7:30 PM at Val Kieser's, 3437 Crane Wy in Oakland. Guests welcome. Call Val at (510) 531-4836 for directions.

July 7th, Sunday. BAAC Picnic. Swiss Park in Newark. Mowry at 880. All Day!

July 8th, Monday 7:00 PM. BAAC Fun Band Practice, House of Parties. Call Domenic, (415) 587-7557.

July 10th & 24th, Wednesdays 7:00 PM. BAAC Ensemble Practice, House of Parties. Call Joe, 510-832-6938.

July 10th, Wed. Odile Lavault and her Baguette Quartette at Freight & Salvage, 1111 Addison, Berkeley, 8P.

July 11-15th. American Accordionists Association Festival honoring Myron Floren in Philadelphia. Call (516) 746-3100.

July 13th, Saturday. Festa Italiana, Lodi, at the Grape Festival Grounds, 413 E. Lockeford St. Featuring Dick Contino. Call (209) 931-3529.

July 18 - 21, Accordion Teachers Guild Festival. Arlington Hts. IL. For details, phone (319) 396-6443

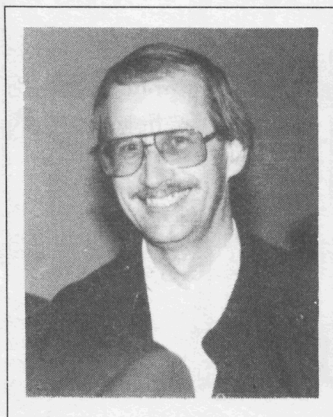
July 21-26th, Galla-Rini Accordion Camp, Silver Falls, OR. Call Accordion World, (503) 244-2545.

August 2nd, Friday. San Francisco Symphony Pops Concert features accordionists John Molinari, Peter Di Bono, Ron Borelli, Don Haas, Ron Sfarzo, Tony Quartuccio in

cont. on p. 7

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY BOB BERTA



Wow, what a busy but exciting period for our club. The last few weeks saw the Making Waves event which showcased our club in a big way. Our annual picnic is approaching as is our first, hopefully annual, dinner party at the Irish Cultural Center. In addition we are looking forward to an outstanding performance by Henry Doktorski at our July meeting. Henry is an incredibly gifted accordionist, organist, pianist and composer with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Plans are in the works to record a selection of classical music in a trio or quartet including BAAC members that may be included in a CD along with Henry and members of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. This promises to bring a measure of fame that will bring our club to the next level of greatness.

Future concerts by Stas Venglevski, (September) Ken Olendorf, (August) and the incredible Frederich Lips (November) will delight our members. I recently obtained the latest CD by Maestro Lips and was amazed at his virtuosity. He along with Viateslav Semyonov (who performed for us a couple of years ago) are arguably the greatest accordionists alive today.

Finally, I along with the new members of the BAAC board are looking forward to an even better year. I believe you have an outstanding group of board members who are committed to taking the BAAC to ever higher levels of excellence and service to the members.

RESERVE YOUR PLACE NOW FOR THE FIRST ANNUAL BAAC Inauguration of Officers and Presentation of Awards

on Sunday, August 18th.

To be held at the Irish Cultural Center, 2700 45th Avenue, San Francisco (near the Zoo)

Plenty of nearby parking

Doors open at 5:00; Dinner about 6:30

Choose from the following meals: Breast of Chicken Jerusalem, Roast Cross Ribs of Beef with Bordelaise Sauce, or Grillet Filet of Sole Almondine. Dinners include salad, potato or rice, vegetables, rolls, dessert. No host bar.

Don't forget to bring your dancing shoes for a post-dinner party.

Reserve soon: our limit is 100 persons.

Mail your reservation to: **Bob Smith 2300 St. Francis Drive, Palo Alto, CA 94303**

YES, sign me up for the BAAC celebration at the Irish Cultural Center on Sunday, August 18th.

	<i># of meals</i>	<i>Cost including 15% tip + 8 1/2% Gratuity</i>	
<i>Chicken</i>	_____	\$19.40	_____
<i>Beef</i>	_____	\$20.75	_____
<i>Fish</i>	_____	\$19.05	_____
	<i>Total Enclosed</i>		_____

(Signed) _____

(Phone) _____

Our Favorite Instrument in Two New Novels

by Cheri Thurston, Editor, CAPA TIMES

The Newsletter of Closet Accordion Players of America

Accordion Crimes. E. Annie Proulx won the Pulitzer Prize and four other major awards for her book *The Shipping News*, which was on *The New York Times* bestseller list for 48 weeks. *Accordion Crimes* is her new novel.

I was lucky enough to receive a preview copy of *Accordion Crimes* and spent several afternoons absorbed in the history-rich tales detailed in the book. In one sense, the main character is a little green accordion, an instrument hand-made by a Sicilian immigrant who studied his craft in the accordion factories of Castelfidardo. The book traces the history of the little green accordion from its arrival in New Orleans in 1890 with the Sicilian accordion maker, through its subsequent "lives" with Mexican, Polish, German, Cajun, Franco-Canadian and other immigrants, covering a period from the late 1800s to the present. The book highlights the harshness of the immigrant experience in the United States.

Accordion Crimes has dozens and dozens of characters, and we get to know all of them for only a short time before the story moves on to others. The Sicilian accordion-maker, for example, is murdered by an anti-Italian lynch mob. A black man saves the accordion, which winds up, eventually, in a lumberyard

office in South Dakota, where a German-American immigrant buys it for a dollar.

The story lingers for some time with the German and his family and community. Then it moves on to Abelardo Relampago Salazer, a Mexican immigrant who finds the little green accordion in a tiny Texas town. Years later, his son accidentally leaves the accordion in a taxi in Minneapolis.

The orphaned son of a French-Canadian immigrant finds the accordion in the taxi and takes it to Maine. Then it winds up back in Louisiana, then in Chicago, then in Montana, then in Minnesota. At each stop, we learn the story of another immigrant and his or her ancestors and descendants.

The book is rich with detail, making history come alive and instilling a new appreciation for everything our forefathers and foremothers endured. It also makes it clear that today's increasing intolerance for immigrants is nothing new. The only thing that has changed is the recipients of the prejudice. At one point in the book, a man fires a gun at a troupe of gypsies, hitting an old woman. His children are horrified, but the man reassures them: "Shut up! She ain't hurt — foreigners is animals, they don't feel no pain. She pretends so to make you feel sorry for them."

Proulx can create an image with the simplest turn of phrase. She describes a family that doesn't like to visit the grandmother, partly because of her "bitterly clean" home. At another point, she mentions that a man's "...pizza rinds lay on the chair arm like doughy smiles." She is a master at describing the accordion. For example, she has a French accordionist describe musette tuning, which I had never quite understood until I read this explanation: "The big chromatic enjoyed musette tuning: three reeds for each note, one tuned to pitch, another a slice above true

pitch, the third a cut below, so a note sounded in an aching tremble. It was silver-tongued, louder, better than any *diatonique*."

Proulx has obviously done an amazing amount of historical research for this book, as well as research about the accordion. Anyone reading the book, which features a different kind of accordion in each of its 8 sections, can't help but learn a lot about the instrument itself. I know I did.

A final note: *Accordion Crimes* is not for the squeamish. If you are offended by violence, coarse language or other realities of life, this is not a book I would recommend. However, if you appreciate excellent writing and gripping tales, the book is one that will stay in your mind for years to come.

Hoopi Shoopi Donna. Suzanne Strempek Shea's second novel gets its name from a Polish polka, "Hupaj Shupaj Dana." To the main character, a girl named Donna, the refrain sounds like "Hoopi Shoopi Donna." From the time she is a small child, Donna plays the accordion faithfully and joyously, much



Accordion Master Class Slated

An international master course for accordion will be held at the Hohner Konservatorium in Trossingen, Germany, October 14-18. The master course will include concerts and workshops led by outstanding accordion educators. Courses will include interpretation, musical vision, style, solo and group playing, original music from various times, baroque music and music from all cultural regions. For more information, write the Hohner Konservatorium Trossingen, Mr. Arnold Kutzli, Lohrstrasse 32, 78647 Trossingen, Germany.

Thank you for your interest in the Bay Area Accordion Club. We hold monthly meetings and schedule various accordion-related events, and we send this monthly newsletter to all members (currently 340). We encourage your continued interest and participation. Should you care to join us, membership is \$20/year. Make check payable to BAAC and send to 31 Aliso Way, Portola Valley, CA 94028

JUNE General Meeting

by Denny Huff

to the pride and delight of her devoted Polish-American father. Until she is in eighth grade, Donna is blissfully happy being the center of attention in her loving family.

Then her father's six-year-old niece from Poland comes to live with Donna's family. She is every child's nightmare — the perfect sister. Adorable, smart, lovable, grateful and good-natured, she is good at everything she tries. Because of her, an incident one day changes Donna's world forever, and in only an instant.

The repercussions are profound. For the rest of her childhood and well into adulthood, Donna is estranged from her father. Punishing him becomes the focus of her life. In the end, the key to her healing turns out to be her accordion.

Hoopi Shoopi Donna is a gem of a book, a delightfully rich and touching story that had me alternately chuckling out loud and crying as I read. Shea's sense of humor is evident in the voice of Donna. As her new sister stands in front of the garage door of her new home, her back to the family, Donna remarks that she "appeared waiting to be parked somewhere." The sister eats "like somebody was going to be handing out prizes at the end of the meal."

Although the book is humorous throughout, it has its share of pain. Donna's pain seems so real, in fact, that it almost hurts to read about it. I found myself caring very much about her and the other characters in *Hoopi Shoopi Donna*. It is an affecting, ultimately hopeful book about the powers of family, love, heritage and forgiveness.

President **Bob Berta** had a little business to transact at the beginning of the meeting. Elections were held, as previously announced, but they were a formality, since none of the offices was contested. **Bob** told us that **Bart Beninco**



Neil Wahlgren, John Molinari

had recently suffered a heart attack, and that although **Bart** is on the job giving piano and accordion lessons, he is scheduled for a valve replacement in July. Please wish him well...he'd appreciate it (332 Keokuk, Petaluma 94952). And finally we learned that **Domenic Saso** had left us for the week to cruise the high seas, leaving **Frank Panacci** to fill in as Master of Ceremonies. **Frank's** not a stranger to the job and handled it with his usual grace and charm.

Neil Wahlgren, a student of **John Molinari**, got the evening off to a great start. **Neil** is a tall young man who looked like he was going to get a lot taller and who partially reminded one of **Art Van Damme**. Both, being tall, have very long fingers, and it seemed as if they could reach the entire keyboard without the necessity of moving their hands. It's obviously just an illusion, but **Neil** did

have a long reach and knew how to use it. He started with *Sweet Sue*, which we "oldsters" all recognized and enjoyed. Then he moved to something contemporary, *Can You Feel the Love Tonight?* from the Lion King. His final number was a Magnante jazz arrangement of *Cherokee*. Art, no stranger to jazz, would have approved. We certainly did. Great job, Neil!

Every time I normally listen to **Steve Balich**, he's playing with his band. And that's always enjoyable — last year at Cotati they were a big hit in the Dance Tent. But it was especially nice to get to hear **Steve** playing "solo." He played mostly polkas and waltzes (not unsurprisingly) and finished with a tango to highlight his performance. It's

my favorite music, and I could have listened all night. Numbers included *Valse Allegro*, *Daj Daj*, *Let's Have a Party* (a



Steve Balich

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June General Meeting, cont.

Frankie Yankovic favorite) and *Bora Bora*. **Frank Panacci**, who knows **Steve** well, coaxed out a couple of encores...*Tick Tock Polka* and *Tango of the Roses*. **Steve** has recently been instrumental in the start up of the Accordion Club of the Redwoods, and he is perennially a strong Cotati supporter. Thanks for the music and your continual support, **Steve!**

When I grow up, I want to be a member of something like the South City Society and Dixieland Jazz Band featuring our own **Lou Casalnuovo**. Those fellows had a great time on stage, with their red vests and their megaphone for vocals and announcements. **Lou** was the token accordionist. Others were **Charlie McCarthy**, vocalist and trombone; **Buzz Wilks**, trumpet, **Ace Bullock**, soprano sax; **Al Cunningham**, banjo; **Bill Robinson**, tuba; and **Ted Moldenhauer**, drums. Their first number, appropriately, was *When the Saints Go Marching In*. Various players, including of course, **Lou**, were featured as the group continued with an offering of Dixieland music. They did a great job with *Muskrat Ramble*, *Tin Roof Blues* (featuring **Billy** on tuba), *Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans?*, *South, All of Me*, *Alexander's Ragtime Band*, and *Bourbon Street Parade*. **Charlie** used the megaphone to

provide vocal accompaniment for two additional numbers, *Bill Bailey* and *Jelly Roll*. These guys looked and sounded as though they should be sitting on the deck of a Mississippi steamboat, sometime around the turn of the century. They obviously enjoyed themselves, and they certainly put on a fun show.

Listening to our guest for the evening, **Bonnie Birch** from Seattle, is both a privilege and a pleasure — one which I've enjoyed now on several occasions. And each time I listen to a performance, I find myself, subconsciously, going through the same process. First I'm struck by how excellently **Bonnie** plays. Next, I really begin to enjoy the music. Finally, all of a sudden, I realize that this isn't about the accordion, but rather it's about outstanding music. Now I happen to like music that sounds like "accordion Music," but **Bonnie** takes accordion playing to an elevated level of musicianship which few of us reach. And that's what she offered us again tonight.

Her first number, *Core*

'Ngrato, was an excellent example. It was an operatic number, and I never once thought of the accordion. She followed with *Come Prima*, *Roman Garden Tango* and *La Danza*. Then followed a very wide selection of music — Irish, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, folk, dance, and contemporary. Titles included *Scarborough Fair*, *Follow Me Up to Carlow*, *Celito Lindo*, *Anema E Core*, *Estudiantina*, *Achtung Los*. I suspect **Bonnie** has a Swedish connection somewhere in her past, because she included two Swedish



Bonnie Birch

tunes, *Rullbandet* and *Samba for Me*. All done with precision and excellence.

Bonnie's talent couldn't be confined to the accordion, and she enjoys and participates in competitive ballroom dancing up in (sometimes rainy) Seattle. Appropriately, she played several selections which she has played for friends who are dancers. We were all "quick stepping to *What Is This Thing Called Love?* and gliding across the floor to the Italian rumba, *Amour*. Bonnie has an effervescent and multi-talented personality which is emitted personally and through her playing. We're very fortunate to have musicians of her level pay us a visit from time to time. Thanks for an excellent presentation, Bonnie. Hope to see you at Cotati!



l to r: Charlie McCarthy, trombone; Ace Bullock, Soprano Sax; Buzz Wilks, Trumpet; Ted Moldenhauer, Drums; Al Cunningham, Banjo; Bill Robinson, Tuba; and Lou Casalnuovo, Accordion

COTATI FESTIVAL, 1996

Most of you already know that the sixth annual Cotati Accordion Festival is coming up quickly. It's always held on the 4th weekend in August, so this year the dates are Aug. 24th and 25th.

As usual, it will feature two stages in La Plaza Park in downtown Cotati. There are two Cotati exits off 101; each lead directly into town (1 - 2 miles East of the freeway) and to the Plaza. In addition to the non-stop multi-cultural accordion music, you can find polka dancing on a wooden dance floor, accordion workshops at a local school, and more dance bands at the Inn of the Beginning a couple blocks away.

Gates will open at 9:30 AM both Saturday and Sunday; music begins at 10 and lasts till 6:30 or so. Door fees this year are \$7/day or \$12/both days.

The following is a TENTATIVE schedule of performers:

SATURDAY

Sev Garcia
 Die Eurotones
 Ron Zucca & Co.
 Jan Schallenberger
 Strictly Tango
 Reno Di Bono & the Italian Trio
 Sourdough Slim
 Jim Boggio & Sonoma Swamp Dogs
 The Vidergers
 Golden Bough
 Lyuba
 Motor Dude Zydeco

SUNDAY

Ken Chambers
 Joe Umeck, Jr.
 Stas & Margo
 The Gospel Accordion to Women
 The Arizona Button Accordion Band
 Ramon Trujillo and His Mariachi Jalisco
 Chuck Berger
 Polkacide
 Jim Boggio & Sonoma Swamp Dogs
 Sourdough Slim & the Saddle Pals
 Golden Bough
 Cobblestone
 Zydeco Flames

Ken Chambers in CABARET

Mary Alice has received a letter from Ken Chambers who says in part:

"I just thought I'd write a note and let you and other club members know that I will be appearing with "Cabaret" this summer at Santa Rosa Jr. College Summer Repertory Theater from July 10 thru August 2. This is located in Burbank Auditorium on the SRJC Campus at 1501 Mendocino Ave., Santa Rosa 95401. Box Office telephone is (707) 527-4307.

Anyone interested is more than welcome to attend. And if you do, be sure to make contact and say hello!

Theater performance is fun and always rewarding as it brings the accordion sound to literally thousands of people. Those I have worked with over the last twenty-six years in this medium always come away with a new understanding, awareness, appreciation and knowledge about my favorite instrument, the accordion!

Joe Saves the Day!!

by Josephine Hornbrook

Since all military bases in the Bay Area that had military bands have been closed, no music was available for the Memorial Day services at Golden Gate National Cemetery.

BAAC member **Joe Simoni** was asked by a member of the Avenue of Flags if he could play some patriotic music with his electronic accordion. Joe graciously accepted and played beautifully.

The Avenue of Flags Committee and the approximately 300 people in attendance were delighted with the unusual but highly appropriate Memorial Day music. Kudos to Joe!

Across the Editor's Desk.....

Dear BAAC,

My Dad and I were very pleased by your welcome to the Club in the May newsletter. In response to becoming acquainted, I am enclosing a photo of us playing together. Dad has played since he was a boy and lives in Fremont, CA., and I only for five years and live in Mi-Wuk. The picture illustrates the love of the accordion which we both share.

His accordion is a 1935 Frontalini which he purchased new and this one of mine a 1932 Virtuoso given to me by a friend who was at the purchase of that instrument in '32!

A little TLC can surely go a long way with accordions.

Respectfully,
 Joe Freitas



June Board Meeting

Synopsis

- Treasurer Algis Ratnikas reports \$6642 in our combined accounts. He circulated a preliminary statement of Income and Expenses which will be finalized and printed in an upcoming newsletter.
- We've gathered quite a few accordion groups and soloists to play in the Making Waves celebration on Friday, June 21st in downtown San Francisco. BAAC will donate a PA system for one of the stages in lieu of the \$100 previously approved by the Board.
- Membership renewals are coming in nicely, about 200 already having been received. Incoming Financial Secretary Bob Smith will mail reminders to those still unpaid in August.
- Upcoming events were discussed in detail, but no new decisions regarding them were made. Find news items about these events (Doktorski guest appearance 7/1, Picnic 7/8, Awards Dinner 8/18) elsewhere in this newsletter.

MK

NEWS RELEASE

Mel Bay Publications has signed Gary Dahl to arrange a series of accordion collections. The first collection to be published will be Jazz Accordion Solos. Following the Jazz collection will be collections for: Italian, German, Polkas, Hymns and Bk #2 of Jazz Accordion Solos. The requirement is to use all "public Domain" music (out of copyright). A CD recorded by the arranger will be included with each collection. The first collection should be released in late '96 or early '97.



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Mark Your Calendars, from p. 1.

Tchaikovsky's Suite #2 in C, Scherzo Burlesque. Emil de Cou, conductor.

August 5th, Monday. BAAC General meeting featuring special guest Ken Olendorf.

August 8 - 11th, Leavenworth Int'l Accordion Celebration, Leavenworth, WA. Competitions, Workshops, Jamming. Call Anne Koenig, (509) 548-5807.

August 18th, Sunday. BAAC Inauguration and Honors Dinner. Plan to attend! Reservation form on p. 2.

August 20 - 25th. AFNA (Accordion Federation of North America) Music Festival in Long Beach. Phone Sylvia Prior (818) 994-1249.

August 24th and 25th. Cotati Accordion Festival. See schedule of performers on p. 6. For more info, Festival phone # is (707) 664-0444.

September 9th (2nd Monday). BAAC General Meeting featuring Stas Venglevski.

November 4th, Monday. BAAC General Meeting with very special guest artist, world-known accordionist Frederich Lips.

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Ed Massolo	(415) 589-8409
Herb Meier	(415) 364-5398
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Please use these numbers to give ideas, reactions, suggestions to our Board.

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31 ALISO, PORTOLA VALLEY, 94028

The *Bay Area Accordion Club Newsletter* is published monthly .

Editor Marian Kelly
Editorial Assistant Denny Huff
Contributing Writers. Bob Berta, Denny Huff,
Photography Kathy Greenfield
Distribution Glenn McClelland

Send all newsletter-related communications to:

Marian Kelly
31 Aliso Way
Portola Valley, CA 94028

Deadline for each issue is the *second* Monday of the month.



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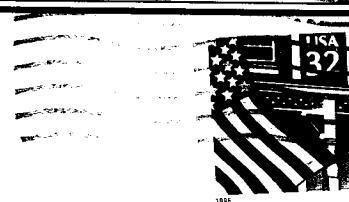
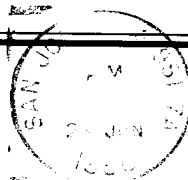
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**NEXT MEETING: MONDAY
JULY 1, 1996
7:00 PM**

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