

December 2018

# THE MONITOR

*Published Monthly for Shenandoah Valley Amateur Radio Operators — Members of MARA, VARA, and PVARC*

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## TOP HEADLINES

### **MARA and VARA Annual Christmas Banquets**

The **VARA Christmas Banquet** this year will be held at the Waynesboro Golden Corral, on the normal meeting night, December 4, but starting at 7:00 p.m. **NOTE THE TIME AND LOCATION CHANGE.** The restaurant offers a 10% discount as compensation for the heating system problem last year, so inform the cashier as you enter. Bring a small (\$5 or less) wrapped (and anonymous) gift — either gag or real — if you wish to participate in the Yankee Gift Swap.

The **MARA Christmas Banquet** will be held at the normal meeting place at the normal date and time: Thursday December 6, starting at 6:30 p.m, at the Wood Grill on Reservoir Street in Harrisonburg.. Spouses and family are invited. A brief family-friendly musical program is on the agenda.

The editor received no information regarding PVARC's plans, if any, for a Christmas or Holiday gathering.

### **2019 Club Dues Now Due**

Don't risk having to re-apply for membership. Renew your club dues NOW by using the renewal form at the end of this issue of the Monitor.

### **MARA Members see Page 3 for an Important Announcement about Dues**

### **Last Bi-Monthly VE Exams Scheduled for December 8**

VE exams will be held Saturday, December 8, starting at 9:00 a.m. at the Woodmen Building .

The new year will see the local Volunteer Examiner testing schedule move to a quarterly schedule. VE Testing will be held on the **FIRST SATURDAY** of **March, June, September, and December.** The testing fee remains at \$15.00, regardless of how many test elements are administered.

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# DECEMBER MEETINGS

## **Tuesday, December 4 – VARA Annual Christmas Banquet: Golden Corral**

The Valley Amateur Radio Association, Inc., will hold it's annual Christmas Banquet on Tuesday, December 4, at the Golden Corral Buffet Restaurant in WAYNESBORO. As stated on the front page of this issue of the Monitor, the meal begins at 7:00 p.m. so NOTE THE TIME CHANGE, too! Bring a wrapped, inexpensive gift if you wish to participate in the Yankee Gift Swap.



## **Thursday December 6 – MARA Christmas Banquet: Wood Grill**

The Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc., will hold its annual family Christmas Banquet on Thursday, December 6, at the normal location: the **Wood Grill at 1711 Reservoir Street in Harrisonburg.** Dinner starts shortly before 6:30 p.m. All hams and their families are invited and welcome. A brief musical program has been arranged as after-dinner entertainment.



## **Thursday December 13 – PVARC Meeting: Tactical Walls in Luray**

The newsletter editor has received no information about a PVARC Holiday gathering. The normal Page Valley Amateur Radio Club would be held on Thursday December 13 at the normal location, Tactical Walls, in Shenandoah. The address is 611 Williams Avenue, Shenandoah VA 22849. Tactical Walls is a manufacturing facility with a nice meeting room that is just east of highway 340 in Shenandoah. Turn east off 340, go about one block and drive through the gate in the fence and around to the door on the right.



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 145.130 Repeater Antenna Work to be RE-Scheduled

Due to the ice storm on November 15 making the access road impassable, Project Manager Mark Hensley, N4YSA, made the safety-first call of postponing the installation of the K4MRA repeater antenna on Massanutten Mountain. The work will be rescheduled as soon as possible. This project is taking far more time than originally anticipated. If you can help, contact Mark at [n4ysa@gmx.com](mailto:n4ysa@gmx.com) and let him know the dates you are available.

## MARA Dues Change – Renewal at Old Rates Available Until Dec. 31

The Massanutten Amateur Radio Association, Inc. (MARA) dues are increasing from \$12 per year to \$15 per year, effective January 1, 2019. Current members can renew their dues for 2019 at the old rate of \$12 per year **if and only if** payment is received by the Treasurer by December 31, 2018. Additionally, current members can renew for **two** years (e.g., 2019 **AND** 2020) at the old \$12 rate, if paid by December 31, 2018.

Members whose renewal is received after December 31, 2018, and new members whose first reading is after the upcoming December meeting, will pay the \$15 annual dues.

## Estate Sale: Icom T90A Handheld Transceiver

The widow of John (Wayne) Chamblee, KI4HYR, wishes to find a home for his Icom T90A tri-band handheld transceiver. The radio covers the 6m, 2m, and 70cm bands, and has wide-coverage receive capability (475kHz to 1GHz), 500 memories. It comes with the 6-meter antenna stub and a manual (missing its cover). Unfortunately, the factory Li-Ion battery is dead and the charger cannot be located. The radio uses a micro-DC coaxial power connector. Due to the dead battery, it is unknown whether or not the radio is in working condition, although its appearance is mint. Offers are being accepted if anyone wishes to take a gamble. One offer of \$45 has been received, but a working tri-band handheld of this quality and capability might be worth much more, even after purchase of a new battery and charger. If interested, to get more information or to make an offer contact David Fordham, KD9LA, at 540-234-0448, or email [kd9la@arrl.net](mailto:kd9la@arrl.net).



# CONGRATULATIONS



**John Keller, W4ZA0**

**National First Place  
Trophy Winner**

**CQ 160m SSB  
DX Contest,  
Single-Operator,  
Low-Power**



Congratulations to John Keller, former VARA President and former officer of MARA, who took first place in the U.S. in the 2018 CQ 160-meter SSB DX contest, scoring over 50,000 points. John showed that he is definitely one of the 'big guns', even on Low-Power, John is racking up walls full of plaques and certificates proving his extraordinary prowess in phone contests. Plus, he still works full time at a day job, too! Kudos.

# MORE CONGRATULATIONS

**Fred Castello, KF4FC: Frequency Measurement Test, 99.99999% Accurate!**

Fred Castello, KF4FC, reported on some "Green Box", er, ... gold medal, performance in the ARRL's annual frequency measurement test. Fred used his Flex 6400 without any internal or external frequency reference, SmartSDR Version 2.4.9, the FLDigi software, and his double-extended Zepp antenna

He used a pre-test check run to calibrate and find his error correction figures, and an Excel spreadsheet for his analysis tool. With a one-second sampling rate, tuning in on the 600 Hz reference tone, he was able to hit "the Green Box", meaning that Fred was able to measure both unknown frequencies to within less than a single Hertz! On 40 meters, this is an accuracy rate of 99.99999%!



# PVARC MEETING MINUTES

PVARC did not meet in November due to the ice storm on Nov 8 (and therefore there are no minutes).

Respectfully submitted by  
Gary Fischer K6OZ, PVARC secretary

# MARA TREASURER'S REPORT

## MARA Treasurer's Report – September 21, 2018 to October 20, 2018

Opening Balance		\$ 766.74
Income:		
	Memberships	\$ 300.00
	50/50 – August Meeting	\$ 22.00
	Proceeds from storage sale	<u>\$ 304.00</u>
Total Income:		\$ 626.00
Expenses:		
	Electric	\$ 22.72
	Great North Mtn Lease	<u>\$ 123.08</u>
Total Expenses:		<u>\$ 145.80</u>
Balance November 20, 2018		\$ 1,246.94

Submitted by Foster Farone WF40  
MARA Treasurer

## Rockingham County ARES Net

As of press time, it is uncertain whether the Rockingham County ARES net will meet on Christmas Eve or New Years Eve. Check into the Net during December and ask net control about these dates. Remember, the first Monday of every month, the net meets on 146.550 simplex starting at 8:00 pm local time. The next three Monday nights it meets on the 147.225 repeater, which uses an input up 600 kHz, with a PL tone of 131.8. The fifth Monday of the month, if any, the net meets on 145.130 repeater, input down 600 kHz, with a PL tone of 131.8.





# MARA MEETING MINUTES

## MARA Secretary's Report – November 1, 2018 Meeting

**General Meeting** called to order at Wood Grill, Harrisonburg, by President Gerald Nauman (KN4FM) at 7:33 P.M. There were 28 members and 5 guests present. Introductions were made all around.

**New Member Vote:** Andy Jezioro (WA2ONG) unanimously approved. Welcome, Andy!

**New Member First Reading:** none

**The Secretary's Minutes:** approved as printed in the Monitor.

**The Treasurer's Report:** approved as printed in the Monitor.

### Committee Reports:

**ARES:** Bryan Daniels (K4RMY): A meeting was held at HRECC with Jim Junkins (W4JLJ, HRECC Head) on Oct. 17, concerning the lack of response from Sentara RMH about their amateur radio operational support. "We decided to let them come to us for help".

New ARRL ARES procedures go into effect "soon", with 3 levels of ARES membership. Level 1 is for anyone interested but not certified Level 2: Those who have taken a course and passed a test, on ARRL Introduction to ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Procedures. Level 3 is for leadership positions, e.g. DEC, SEC, etc. emergency management. There are also other requirements including those where they "would like" these leaders to take several additional classes. Bryan is planning to write new emergency procedures for local use.

**Repeater Committee:** David Fordham (KD9LA): 145.130 repeater antenna: Saturday, Nov. 17, at 8:30 a.m., the group of ground and tower climbers will meet in the parking lot opposite the Exxon station on Rt 33 at the entrance intersection to Massanutten Park. From there they will proceed to the top of the peak to install the new antenna.

**VE Committee:** Gayle Shull (KU4XN): The next regular test session will be at 9:00 A.M., Dec. 8, 2018, at Woodmen Life, 3045 John Wayland Hwy (Rt 42) in Dayton. The fee for the test section remains at \$15

**Public Service Committee:** Comments on recent events:

**Shenandoah 500:** "several problems, including .225 repeater"

**Grindstone 100:** "very smooth communications".

**Camp Still Meadows horse ride:** "had several volunteers".

**Old Business:** Inventory of MARA items in storage: All items except one sold. A disassembled tri-band antenna, but no knowledge of its bands. It will be auctioned off under the same rules as the earlier items.

**New Business:** Bob Dixon (W8HGH) has many CDs with back issues of QT, QEX, and Contest Journal from 1950 to 2013 to donate for MARA programs. David KD9LA offered to help Bob go through them this Spring.

David also is writing a draft letter to ARRL in a "whereas" form, to express concern with the proposed requirements for ARRL ARES levels of membership. A motion was tabled for further consideration and refinement at the next board meeting.

**Announcements:** Next meeting: December 6, 2018.

50/50 Drawing: \$11 won by Eric Pults (K9JEP). \$11 went to the MARA Treasury. Congratulations, Eric!

**Meeting adjourned** at 8:20 P.M.

**Program:** Bryan gave a short talk on his TYT DMR radio.

Respectfully submitted,  
Herb Slade (AA2BF), Secretary

# VARA MEETING MINUTES

## VARA Secretary's Report – November 6, 2018 Meeting

The **November meeting of VARA, Inc.**, was brought to order by Board member **John Keller W4ZAO**, standing in for President David Fordham KD9LA, at 7:03 pm. 23 members, visitors, and guests were present. The usual introductions were made.

The **50/50 drawing** for \$11.00 was won by **Jim Menard, KN4FJG**. 2 more drawings were held for mystery bags: **Pat Morgan AK4VQ**, and **Erika Kancler K4NOV**, were the lucky winners.

**Robert Moore, KN3Y**, was voted in as a new member. Welcome, Bob!

**ARES: David Tanks AD4TJ, EC**, reminded us that we are still in the hurricane season, and to be vigilant. The next net will be November 8th at 8 pm, on the 146.850 repeater. When asked for a volunteer to be Net Control, **Fred Evans N4KYM**, said he would do it. Thanks, Fred!

**Secretary's report:** David, AD4TJ, club secretary, noted that a clarification needed to be made to the October minutes, as to which Ray volunteered to be a Board member; It is **Ray LaFalce K2ULW**. The updated minutes were seconded and passed.

**Treasurer's report** was given by **Greg Czerniak, W4GRC**; accepted. John thanked Greg for his many years as Treasurer. A reminder that **John Chevalaz KB2LOZ** will be taking over in January.

**Grindstone 100 report:** **Gordon Batey WA4FJC** thanked all who gave their time to help out. He still had some sweatshirts to hand out.

**Waynesboro Repeater Association:** Gordon said that the annual meeting will be December 1, at 1 pm, at the Augusta County Library, in the basement.

**Fall Foliage Bike Festival:** John reported for **Lenny Vincent, N4LXP**: we had 22 hams for Saturday and 16 for Sunday. There were 13 sags on Saturday, and only 1 on Sunday. For the ones who worked 4 or more hours in that event, their dues for the coming year will be waived.

**Old business:** none.

**New business:** none.

David AD4TJ brought us up-to-date on upcoming contests and Special Events.

**VE Testing:** will be **December 8th** at 9 am, at the Dayton Woodmen Of The World building.

Please see Fred or **Ray Colvin KE4HVR** to update your email address. David also reminded us of the valley ham groups that is very useful to local hams.

**Christmas Banquet:** will be the first Tuesday in December (the 4th) at the **Golden Corral in Waynesboro**; due to a previous reservation, we can not get into the room until 7 pm. We will get a 10 percent discount off the meal, due to the lack of heat we experienced last year. We will get the "Veteran's Discount" due to the cash register not being able to have a ham club discount programmed into it; be sure to mention that when you are paying; if there is any doubt, have a manager come help out the cashier. We decided to again have the Chinese gift exchange, price range of \$5 to \$10.

**Al Bonck N3JB:** he and Gordon helped dispose of the radio equipment for the widow of **Ron Birch W4ZEE, SK**. Only 2 items remain: Astron power supplies. She wanted the club to receive the proceeds, so Al presented the club with a check for \$1130. Greg will send her a thank you note from the club. David also mentioned that in CQ magazine for November( note:

## VARA Secretary's Report – November 6, 2018 Meeting (continued)

actually it is the October issue), there are 2 organizations that will come to a person's house, and categorize all of the ham equipment( radios, antennas, towers ) that someone is wanting to dispose of, and take down the antennas and towers, etc, and write you a check for the whole lot, easing what a wife or family members would have to do after the passing of a ham.

Fred said that the VARA website has undergone some changes due to the incorporation of the club, and that the membership application will be changed to one similar to MARA's soon. He was wondering also, that do all VARA old members have to re-apply to VARA, Inc.? John said he would ask **David KD9LA** about that.

**Ellsworth Neff, K4LXG**, mentioned that **Clayton Towers**, a former ham, had passed away some time ago, and that he had written a letter stating that he wanted Ellsworth to have all of his equipment. Ellsworth will be working on that in the spring, and may need help.

John mentioned that he would like to have some more valley hams interested in working sideband contests, such as the CQ sideband contests, and the North American QSO Sideband contests, as the Shenandoah Valley Wireless contest club does sideband, CW, and RTTY contests. So please consider entering those contests, and put in some serious time, and putting " Shenandoah Valley Wireless " on your entry.

With no other business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 7:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted, David AD4TJ, VARA Secretary



### December Mystery Ham:

### Former MARA Secretary

The December Mystery Ham passed away in October of 2015, after suffering through several months of poor health after sustaining major injuries in a fall down the stairs. She and her husband were both ham radio operators on VHF and HF, and both served as officers of the MARA club They were active members of the local ham clubs, and had been married for 65 years. She and her husband were always two of the first to volunteer for public service events, even into their 80's. She passed away at age 88, and had been on the air just the week before. Her husband is still active and living in an elder care facility in Hagerstown, Maryland. His address, in case you wish to send him a Christmas card, is 20009 Rose Bank Way, Apt 241 – Hagerstown, MD 21742. His phone number is active as of the date of this newsletter, and is 301-745-5403.

### November Mystery Ham: Bruce Catlett, N4RVG, SK

The November Mystery Ham was **Bruce Catlett, N4RVG**. Bruce was an Air Force veteran, former resident of Staunton, and long-time Shentel employee. He was a licensed EMT and elected an honorary lifetime member of the Staunton-Augusta Rescue Squad. While on the job with Shentel, he once recognized a dead-line caller's heart attack over the phone and saved her life by notifying 911. He moved from Staunton to Mt. Sidney, where he enjoyed collecting old radio receivers, including some from the 1920's. Sadly, he passed away from cancer in 2014 at the young age of 64. Gone, but not forgotten.





# UPCOMING EVENTS

## DECEMBER 2018

- December 1: ARRL 160-meter Contest (conclusion)
- December 2: 10-meter RTTY Contest
- December 3: Page County ARES Net (146.550 simplex)
- December 4: Rockingham County ARES Net (146.55 simplex)
- December 5: VARA Club Christmas Banquet – Golden Corral W'boro 7 pm
- December 7: MARA Club Christmas Banquet – Wood Grill Hburg 6 pm
- December 8: VE Exams – last one for 2018
- December 8-9: ARRL 10-meter Contest
- December 9: Page County ARES Net (146.625 PL 131.8)
- December 10: Rockingham County ARES Net (147.225 PL 131.8)
- December 13: Augusta County ARES Net (146.850 PL 131.8)
- December 13: PVARC Club Meeting (?)
- December 16: Page County ARES Net (146.625 PL 131.8)
- December 17: Rockingham County ARES Net (147.225 PL 131.8)
- December 23: Page County ARES Net (146.625 PL 131.8)
- December 24 (?): Rockingham County ARES Net (147.225 PL 131.8)
- December 31 (?): Rockingham County ARES Net (145.130 PL 131.8)



## JANUARY 2019

- January 1: VARA Meeting (might be cancelled due to holiday)
- January 3: MARA club meeting
- January 5: Winston-Salem (NC) Hamfest
- January 5: ARRL Kids Day on the Air
- January 5-6: ARRL RTTY Roundup Contest
- January 6: Page County ARES Net (146.550 simplex)
- January 7: Rockingham County ARES Net (146.550 simplex)
- January 10: PVARC Club meeting
- January 10: Augusta County ARES Net (146.850 repeater)
- January 12-13: North American QSO Party CW weekend
- January 13: Page County ARES Net (146.625 repeater, 131.8 tone)
- January 14: Rockingham County ARES Net (147.225, 131.8 tone)
- January 19-20: North American QSO Party SSB
- January 19-21: ARRL January VHF Contest
- January 20: Page County ARES Net (146.625 repeater, 131.8 tone)
- January 21: Rockingham County ARES Net (147.225, 131.8 tone)
- January 25-27: CQ 160-meter Contest CW
- January 26-27: Winter Field Day
- January 27: Page County ARES Net (146.625 repeater, 131.8 tone)
- January 28: Rockingham County ARES Net (147.225, 131.8 tone)

FEBRUARY 2: Richmond Frostfest

## The January Monitor will be Abbreviated

The Monitor editor appreciates submissions of photos, announcements, your contest performance, event reports, ANYthing you'd like to see in the Monitor. The normal deadline for submissions is the 20th of each month.

The January 2019 issue will be a short version, containing only announcements of the club meetings. The Editor will be extremely busy with family during the holidays. Here's hoping you and your family will be too, regardless of which holiday(s) you observe. All material received in December will be published in the February Monitor. Merry Christmas, Happy Hannukah, and Season's Greetings.

## Do You Do Dues? Yes, Dues are Due!

**USE THESE  
HANDY RENEWAL FORMS  
TODAY!**

### PVARC Membership Renewal Form

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CALLSIGN: \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE (If you want it in club records for emergency purposes, not the roster!): \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: (print legibly!!) \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER ARRL (Y/N) \_\_\_ REGISTERED ARES (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_ SKYWARN ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you available for Workday Daytime Emergency Call up? (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_

PVARC Members mail with \$12 to PO Box 245 Luray VA 22835-0245

### MARA Membership Renewal Form

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CALLSIGN: \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE (If you want it in club records for emergency purposes, not the roster!): \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: (print legibly!!) \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER ARRL (Y/N) \_\_\_ REGISTERED ARES (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_ SKYWARN ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you available for Workday Daytime Emergency Call up? (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_

**IF PAID BEFORE DECEMBER 31, MARA** members mail with \$12 to: MARA, PO Box 1882, Harrisonburg, VA 22801

**IF PAID AFTER DECEMBER 31, MARA** members mail with \$15 to: MARA, PO Box 1882, Harrisonburg, VA 22801

### VARA Membership Renewal Form

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CALLSIGN: \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE (If you want it in club records for emergency purposes, not the roster!): \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: (print legibly!!) \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER ARRL (Y/N) \_\_\_ REGISTERED ARES (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_ SKYWARN ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you available for Workday Daytime Emergency Call up? (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_

VARA members mail with \$15 to: VARA, PO Box 2103, Staunton, VA 24402

### MASSANUTTEN AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, Inc.

President: Gerald Nauman, KN4FM  
Vice President: David Fordham, KD9LA  
Secretary: Herb Slade, AA2BF  
Treasurer: Foster Farone, WF4O  
Board (exp 2018): Rick Adams, KJ4IND  
Board (exp 2019): Andrew Pearson N4RCE

<http://mara.ws>

MARA meets the first Thursday of each month at Wood Grill Buffet on Reservoir Street in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Dinner begins at 6:30 pm, the business meeting begins at 7:30 pm

**Visitors are always welcome.**

Dues (\$12 per year) should be mailed to:

MARA  
PO Box 1882  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

### VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION, Inc.

President: David Fordham, KD9LA  
Vice President: Benny Cook, N4BCC  
Secretary: David Tanks, AD4TJ  
Treasurer: Greg Czerniak, W4GRC  
Board Member (exp. 2018): John Keller, W4ZAO  
Board Member (exp 2019): Jeff Rinehart, W4PJW

<http://w4xd.com>

VARA meets the first Tuesday of each month at the Hometown Grill and Buffet off Richmond Rad in Staunton, Virginia

Dinner starts at 6:00 pm, the business meeting starts at 7:00 pm

**Visitors are welcome**

Dues (\$15 per year) should be mailed to:

VARA  
PO Box 2103  
Staunton, VA 24402

### PAGE VALLEY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

President: Will Baukhages, N4WIL  
Vice President: Gene Frazier, KJ4HFO  
Secretary: Gary Fischer, K6OZ  
Treasurer: Carrie Matter, KM4WDX  
Board Member (exp 2018): Tim Matter, KM4TGC  
Board Member (exp 2019): Dave Firestone, K4DPF

<http://www.k4pmh.org>

PVARC meets the second Thursday of each month at Tactical Walls, 611 Williams Avenue in Shenandoah, Virginia

The meeting begins at 7:00 pm

**Visitors are always welcome.**

Dues (\$12 per year) should be mailed to:

PVARC  
PO Box 245  
Luray VA 22835-0245

The Monitor is published monthly for members of the three amateur radio clubs in the Central Shenandoah Valley.

Distribution is in Adobe PDF format via email attachment to all club members in good standing.

Contact the president of your respective club for information on paper copies.

Back issues are freely available on the MARA website starting a few months after publication.

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