

AN INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER COVERING HADDAM, HIGGANUM, HADDAM NECK AND KILLINGWORTH

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Free weekly

December 16, 2021

For breaking news go to HK-Now.com every day

Killingworth Lions Club announces 2021 Peace Poster winners

By Greg Wind, Killingworth Lions Club

(Dec. 4, 2021) — The Killingworth Lions Club congratulates three Haddam-Killingworth Middle School 7th grade Students for their outstanding and meaningful submissions to this year's Lions International Peace Poster Contest. Mia Lomuntad was the 1st place winner, with Lawton Duch 2nd, and Mia McLaughlin 3rd place. All winners will receive a monetary prize as well as being recognized in-person by Hilary Kumnick – Killingworth Lions Club President.

This years Lions International Peace Poster Contest theme is "WE ARE ALL CONNECTED" and each of the 10 students who entered really spent some time thinking about how they would portray their understanding of the theme and apply it to the canvas. All these young artists are both remarkable and talented and hope that they continue pursuing peace efforts with their artistic skills and passion. Judging these paintings was so difficult because all paintings were very well done. The Lions would like to express their appreciation for the support that Principal Dolores Bates and Art Teacher Jill Thompson provided, and to the judges that had the most difficult task of determining the winners. The panel of (7) judges

included Lions Charter member Charlie Mia Lon Smith, Past Presidents Thomas Keyes and Greg Wind, School Superintendent Jeff Wihbey, Michele Ouellette who is Lead teacher for Student Life, Principal Dolores Bates, and Art Teacher Jill Thompson.

Mia's poster was submitted to CT Lions 23C District Governor Michele Wyatt for the difficult task of judging the many posters submitted by participating Middle Schools. The overall

Continued on page HK2



Mia Lomuntad — 1st place.

Lawton Duch — 2nd place.



Mia McLaughlin — 3rd place. Photos by Greg Wind.

Olympic Speed Skater Kristen Santo's Higganum connection

By Kathy Brown

Kristen "Puff" Santos is a short track speedskater headed for the Olympic trials this month, to see if she can earn a place on the team headed to Beijing in February 2022. Kristen's mother, Donna Lula Soukup, lives in Higganum.



Kristen with her husky. *Photos courtesy of Kristen Santos.*

Donna told Haddam Killingworth News that Kristen started figure skating at 3 years old because her older sister, Samantha, wanted to try it. She then participated in both figure skating and soccer. When Kristen was 9 years old, Kristen saw speed skating on the Disney Channel "and begged me to bring her for almost a year," explained Donna. "I told her I would look into it when soccer season was over." Kristen remembered, and repeated her request. Donna looked into it and found a club in Connecticut. At that time, they were living in Fairfield. "I had a feeling she would be good at speed skating," said Donna. "During figure skating sessions, she would ask me to time her to see how fast she would go as she did laps around the rink."

Within a couple of years, she won Nationals for her age bracket. After Kristen graduated high school in 2012, Donna and Kristen drove to Utah from Connecticut so that Kristen could attend University of Utah while training full time. "We

Continued on page HK2

Haddam community gathers together to light up Tylerville Christmas tree

By Meghan Peterson

On Saturday, December 4, Tylerville businesses sponsored and hosted a festive event to usher in the 2021 holiday season. The Christmas tree was lit with fanfare, joyful music played, a cozy fire warmed kids at heart of all ages, Santa Claus merrily attended to

children as parents looked on and snapped photos, and a mini Christmas train journeyed throughout the River Valley Provisions/Tony's Package Store

Continued on page HK2



Photo by Kathy Brown.



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CONNECTICUT NEWS

Olympic Speed Skater Kristen Santo's Higganum connection

Continued from page HK1

had never been to Utah before this, so it was an adventure," said Donna, who left her old car with Kristen to use while Donna flew back home to Connecticut.

"Connecticut will always have a place in my heart," said Kristen. "The food, the houses, the trees, and the people are hard to come by anywhere else."

She has been competing at World Cups for seven years. According to her website, she holds two American records: 500m (42.514), and 1000m (1:26.765).

Five years ago, Donna and her husband moved to Higganum after finding a historic home they loved. They had visited Essex and "really liked the area with the charming homes." Kristen stayed in Utah to train.

In the spring of 2021, Kristen graduated with a degree in Kinesiology, and a minor in Nutrition. She has been training eight hours a day, six days a week on the US National Team while working toward her degree.





1500 meters at World Cup Beijing

Kristen is also filming a speed skating session with Blippi, a YouTube educational video maker, who has over 14 million subscribers.

The Olympic trials will be aired live on December 17 (9:00 p.m. on NBCSN), 18 (5:30 p.m. NBCSN), and 19 (4:30 p.m. NBC), 2021. According to Donna, the top five girls and top two boys will make up the U.S. Olympic team. "This is based on how well they did on the four recent World Cups." Kristen just earned her first World Cup Gold in 1000 meters at World Cup Nagoya, as well as two Bronze in 1000 and.

"My ultimate goal is to medal at the Olympics," said Kristen. "In the past, the dream was simply to become an Olympian, but over the years and with all the training, that has evolved into more and just being an Olympian isn't enough. I want to be an Olympic medalist. These past World Cups and Olympic qualifiers have been a huge confidence booster going into the Games, and given me a lot of insight in what I need to do to reach the podium."

KILLINGWORTH

Killingworth Lions Club announces 2021 Peace Poster winners

Continued from page HK1

winner will be announced at the Multi-District (MD23) – Mid-Winter Conference scheduled in February

and from there the state winner's poster will be submitted to Lions Cub International (LCI) for international judging.

Lions Club International,

areas throughout the world. LCI created the Peace Poster Contest to foster a spirit of peace and international understanding in young people worldwide.



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L to R: Lawton Duch, Mia Lomuntad, Jill Thompson (Art Teacher), Mia McLaughlin, Dolores Bates (Principal).

HADDAM TOWN NEWS

on everything ranging from paint & primers to power tools & drill bits.

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Hours of Operation: Mon-Fri 8:30 am - 8:00 pm Saturday 8:30 am - 4:00 pm Sunday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Haddam community gathers together to light up Tylerville Christmas tree

Continued from page HK1

parking lot. The businesses also offered hamburgers, hot dogs, and hot chocolate.

Lori Maggi, owner of Fireworks Hearth & Home, thanks "folks for coming out and supporting the event" as well as "those who contributed to make the event a success." Gianna Milardo, owner of River's Edge Home Center explains that in 2015, Alan's Small Engine Service, Fireworks Hearth & Home, and River's Edge Home Center all combined efforts and decided "to buy a Christmas tree, plant it, light it, and give back to the community the first Saturday of December every year." In addition,

Milardo says that while "[w]e did not do anything in 2020 due to covid," they still lit the tree.

For next year, the business community wants to spread the word even more and has created a Facebook page called "Tylerville Christmas Tree Lighting." On that site, the Tylerville businesses will "keep everyone updated throughout the year" as to event information, according to Milardo.

The people who attended this year's celebration greeted the evening in good spirits and with a cup of Christmas cheer for all. Here is to a merry season this year, with an eye already on next year's gathering!

нк2



Middlesex Eye Presents: Eye Exam: Why must you touch my eye?

By Middlesex Eye Physicians, PE

Editor's note: This is part 5 of an 8-part series submitted by Middlesex Eye Physicians.

We know the eye exam is not peoples' favorite doctor appointment; maybe a step above having someone's fingers in your mouth? AND we know...the benefit is vision: to see our beautiful world, our loved ones!

During an eye exam, doctors can detect early signs of eye disease or other issues that cause vision changes or impact the health of your eyes. As an exam progresses, the technician or doctor may decide on additional diagnostics, for a comprehensive picture of your eyes' health.

Bring your list of medications; some can impact your eye's pressure or dryness. Additionally, your medical and eye history are important for the doctor to know. If you know of any eye conditions that run in your family, please tell your doctor. You may be asked about environmental conditions, as well as your lifestyle; This helps the doctor make recommendations, such as, if you play sports, some type of goggle or sports eyewear would be suggested.

Next comes measurements to evaluate how clearly each eye is seeing which is called visual acuity. As part of the testing, you will read letters on charts at a distance as well as close-up. The results are written as a fraction, such as 20/40. The top number in the fraction is the standard distance at which all testing is done (20 feet). The bottom number is the smallest letter size you were able to read. A person with 20/40 would have to get within 20 feet to see a letter that should be seen clearly at 40 feet. Normal distance visual acuity is 20/20.

Other tests that are given include: pupil movement with a penlight, depth perception, color perception,

muscle movement (eyes follow object with your head still), peripheral or side vision. Refraction is another important test that uses the phoropter machine; which determines your prescription if needed to get your vision as close to 20/20 as possible. Dilating/numbing drops are typically used for the examination part, where different magnifiers are used to see the eye topography and inside health. The doctor will use bright light in the "direct" tool to see into the eye; the slit/lamp may be used to check intraocular pressure in each eye.

Other tests include OCT, OPTOS, Lipiscan, TearLab, IOL Master, Pentacam and every patient is encouraged to ask the doctor what these tests are for and what the doctor is assessing diagnostically. Don't be afraid to ask questions! Your eyes are the only ones you get; care for them.

Insurance covers eye exams but it is best to check with your particular policy for coverage details. Since 1985, Eye America, an award-winning program has helped more than 2 million people get sight-saving care and resources from volunteer eye doctors (ophthalmologists) across the United States. If you are over 65 years old, you can go to the website www. aao.org/eyecare-america and see if you qualify for free care and where you can obtain this care.

Recommendations for frequency of eye exams for infants and children can be found here: www.aao.org/eye-health/ tips-prevention/children-eye-screening Recommendations for frequency of eye exams for adults can be found here: www.aao.org/eye-health/ tips-prevention/eye-exams-101

Middlesex Health to hold Covid-19 booster vaccine clinics

By Amanda Falcone, Middlesex Health

Middlesex Health will administer COVID-19 booster shots to those 18 and older at vaccine clinics on December 16 and December 17, 2021. These clinics will be held from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Middlesex Hospital, 28 Crescent Street in Middletown.

Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines will be available. Appointments are required.

You can make an appointment by visiting MiddlesexHealth.org/vaccine.

To be eligible for a booster shot, you must have received your second dose of the Pfizer vaccine or Moderna vaccine at least six months ago. If you received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, you must have received your vaccine at least two months ago.

Middlesex Health also administers COVID-19 vaccines in its primary care offices, which are located throughout Middlesex County and the Connecticut shoreline. You can make an appointment to receive your vaccine or a booster shot at a Middlesex Health Primary Care office by visiting MiddlesexHealth. org/vaccine.

OBITUARIES

Irene Watrous, 98, of Higganum, passed away Wednesday, Dec. 1, 2021.



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Interview with new Killingworth First Selectwoman Nancy Gorski

By Clark Judge

Editor's Note: This is Part 1 of a two-part series about Killingworth's new First Selectwoman.

For the first time in 12 years, Cathy Iino is not Killingworth's First Selectwoman. Republican Nancy Gorski is. A former member of the town's Boards of Selectmen and Finance, as well as the RSD 17 Board of Education and Killingworth Charter Revision and Conservation Commissions, Gorski is grounded in local politics. "So I'm ready," she said. She proved it when she sat down on her first day of office to explain why.

Q: You've been in town politics before. But never at this level. Why now?

GORSKI: Good question. I retired in June, 2020 and thought: Well, I have an opportunity. In all fairness, I never expected to win. I expected Cathy to run again. And (I thought I'd challenge her) just to present some new ideas; to give her some things that I'm thinking about that maybe she could use. Cathy's been such a force in this town. When I found out after the fact that she wasn't running I was shocked. Truly shocked. But I'm ready to do this. I've got some ideas for this town, and I'm ready to go forward.

O: New ideas?

GORSKI: I really do want to focus on health and safety. That's first and foremost. But that's not a new idea. Some of the new ideas are with people in Town Hall. I was talking with women for the Krier, and I'd like to see the town pay for a monthly page where we could spotlight people who work in our town. I think we should pay for that because it gives everyone an opportunity to see what people do. Another idea is that I want to work with the town employees and make sure that we look at their job descriptions and make sure they're getting timely annual reviews. It doesn't sound like it's new, but it's been falling through the cracks. Probably under the health-and-safety aspect, I want to work on a water filtration system for the Town Hall campus. That to me is critical. We shouldn't be moving forward to look at what we need to do with Town Hall and the Fire Hall until we make sure that the water is managed. Walter filtration is important there. Spotlighting our employees is important but secondary to their well-being. I want to put money

into the 2022-23 budget to do this.

Q: Well, since you mentioned it ... PFAS water contamination, Deer Lake and affordable housing are hot-button issues waiting for you. How soon do you plan to address them and in what fashion?

GORSKI: The PFAS situation is an on-going activity, so there are monthly meetings with the state and DEEP to go over that. Right now, with the town residences that are over the threshold ... those filtration systems have been put in place. But we just recently found out that with the sale of the Killingworth Cafe that PFAS is as far south as the circle.

Q: How about the street where you live? There are numerous residences there with contaminated water.

GORSKI: Yes. I'm below the action level of 70 (million parts per trillion). I'm at 10. But my neighbor directly across the street is in the 1,000s. It is absolutely crazy. What I'm hearing from the state right now is that they only look at the filtration systems as a short-term solution. They need something long-term. They're looking into whether any of the infrastructure bill that's been recently signed can be utilized to help with the situation or alleviate the situation. I asked whether or not Killingworth was unique or how many other towns are being impacted by this, and the answer was: No, Killingworth is unique, though there are some pockets of PFAS in other areas.

Q: Then there's the sale of Deer Lake. Does that have your attention?

GORSKI: Yes. The Trust for Public Land has submitted an offer. It's not the only offer that has been submitted. We talked to the Yankee Regional Council (that owns Deer Lake) and some of the challenges in the offer the TPL submitted. It's a range, and if it's at the lower end of the range, they're not going to buy it. If it's at the upper end of the range, they'll consider the offer. I do feel that there are private funding sources, as well as state funding sources. The town may have to pony up some (money). I don't know yet. I will tell you this: The Yankee Council is not meeting until Dec. 14. My guess is that if we get information back on this by Dec. 15 there would have to be a January Town Hall where I could present this to the town. That really has my attention now. Because if we're going to have to act, we're going to have to act quickly. The Yankee

Council did come back and say to us that they have to start paying on their debt ... I believe in January. So they're anxious to move.

O: And what about affordable housing?

GORSKI: I met with the Committee on Alternative Housing in mid-November, too. I'd been to one meeting, but that was my first time as First Selectwoman. We do need to have a plan in place by this coming summer (2022), and



Photo by Tim Gannon.

that's under state statute. So I want to have more information there, and I will continue to meet with the committee. I don't have the numbers, but my intuition tells me that the housing that we need is in the (age) 55-plus type of housing. We don't have employees necessarily that work in this town that need access to small apartments or things of that nature. I don't see that in this town. But I can't be certain until I get the information back from Alternative Housing. We talked about Deer Lake and whether or not that would be some place they could do that, but the infrastructure's not there.

Q: You've said communication is key with your administration. The past year-and-a-half Town Hall meetings have been held virtually. Do you envision returning to in-person sessions? If so, when and where?

GORSKI: There is something coming from the state that prohibits us from having an in-person meeting unless it's hybrid. We have to be able to dial into a meeting if we offer in-person contact. So I'm looking into the Middle School to see whether or not it has the equipment that will allow us to do that. I think the Board of Education does meet at the middle school, and if the Board of Education is having in-person meetings I see no reason why the Board of Selectmen can't do the same. As long as we can offer the hybrid solution that's exactly what I'm going to do.





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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Please visit www.haddam.org, www.

townofkillingworth,com or hk-now.com for the most current information, including cancellations, location changes, time changes. See hk-now.com for more information on calendar items.

Thursday, December 16

HKHS Winter Band Concert 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Haddam P&Z Meeting 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

St. Peter's Knights of Columbus will host a Red Cross blood drive in the church hall (corner of Maple Ave and St Peter's Lane, Higganum). 9:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 18

Brainerd Memorial Library Outdoor Storytime 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Join us for a festive outdoor storytime and sing-along with Santa and Mrs. Claus.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From 7:30 to 8

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The views stated here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the editors of this newspaper. *We welcome supporting or opposing* views on any published item. Received November 12, 2021. The convenience store referred to across from Middletown Rug Cleaning.

Oh to Aziz

Oh convenience store man You are my hero

Killingworth Library's Saturday Storytimes via Zoom! 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Monday, December 20

Haddam Committee on Aging Meeting 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Haddam BOF & BOS Meeting 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Haddam Inland Wetlands Meeting 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 21

Killingworth P&Z Meeting 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. (remote access)

RSD #17 BOE Meeting 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. (remote access)

Tech Tuesday Killingworth Library 2:00 p.m. -2:30 p.m. Call 860 663-2000 for info.

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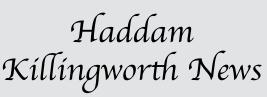
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нк6 December 16, 2021

This week on VSCTV: Dec.16 – 22, 2021

By Chris Morgan, VSCTV

Comcast Channel 18 - Valley Shore Educational Network 12/16 - 6:00 p.m. - LIVE HK High School Winter Band Concert 12/18 - 12:30 p.m. - LIVE HK vs Valley Reg. Girls Basketball 12/20 - 7:00 p.m. - LIVE HK vs North Branford Girls Basketball 12/23 - 8:00 a.m. - LIVE 33rd Annual HKTV Holiday Show Comcast Channel 19 - Valley Shore Community Television 12/16 - 1:00 p.m. & 8:00 p.m. UMC of Clinton Sunday Service 12/12/21 12/19 - 4:00 p.m. First Congregational Church in Essex Sun. Service 12/12/21 12/19 - 5:00 p.m. Emmanuel Baptist Church Sunday Service 12/12/21 12/19 - 6:00 p.m. Deep River Town Meetings 12/14/21 12/20 - 5:00 p.m. Silver Linings Talk Show 12/20 - 6:00 p.m. Shore Things: Kristen Vollaro 12/20 - 8:00 p.m. Art of Poetry 12/21 - 4:00 p.m. Clinton Meetings 12/21 - 6:00 p.m. Arts & Entertainment: CT Office of the Arts 12/21 - 7:00 p.m. Pete Mezzetti Show: Chris Aniskovich Clinton Town Council 12/21 - 8:00 p.m. Shoreline Music Monthly: BEPW 12/22 - 4:00 p.m. Westbrook Congregational 12/19/21

For the complete schedule, and to view programs ondemand, visit www.vsctv.com.



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Haddam Poet Laureate: The Empress of Haddam 2.0

By Lorraine Riess.

For Izumi Shikibu, Japanese court poet 974-1034 A.D.

The Empress arises with a haiku in mind, raku teacup cradled in palms. Her flannel kimono in well-worn folds sweeps across the wooden floor. Her thin and threadbare obi sash is tied in a careless, double knot. Her feet are snug and bound in fleece. Her consort walks the Reservoir his watch dog at his heel. As the morning mist takes leave winter fields fill with snow, a blanket of ermine too soft and pristine to be marred by his return. She hopes that he will stay away while images and words align. All is silent, clouds hang low,

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the Empress considers a metaphor while her tea grows cold. Who is this immersed in reveries assuming a regal guise? Wanting him near or wishing him away, parsing this paradox till the muse arrives, she writes until the snow subsides.

Lorraine Riess is current poet laureate of Haddam and invites your submission in HK-Now for publication. You may email submissions to: lcfriess@ att.net. All poetry should be no longer than 30 lines (one page). Include a short bio of 75 words or less. You will be notified by email if your work is selected. All work is copyrighted by the author.

Her collection of poems **Still Life With Wings** has been published and is available from her website or Amazon. The book contains a few poems that relate to Haddam and its history, as well as the environment and other topics.

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Haddam Town Office 2021 Holiday hours

By Kristin Battistoni, Haddam Tax Collector

Thursday December 23, 2021 close at noon. Closed December 24 & 27. Closed December 31

The Tax Office will be closed December 23-31, 2021. A drop box is located outside the Town Office Building to the left of the front door. A drop box is located on the door to the Tax Office. If you need a receipt include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

> Outdoor dropbox. Photo provided by Haddam Town Hall.



LEGAL

PLANNING AND ZONING NOTICE OF DECISION

It was decided at the Town of Haddam Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting on December 2, 2021 Meeting at 7:00 p.m. to approve:

1. Proposed amendment to the previously approved special permit to remove "woman only" restriction at Hope Garden Wellness Center - as mentioned in the Statement of Use submitted with the original application. Applicant: Hope Garden Wellness Center - 7 Island Dock Road (map 26/ lot 7A)

2. Re-approval of 19 lot Brookline subdivision with conditions. Applicant: Rogers Realty - Gunger Hill Rd (map 42)

Town of Haddam Planning and Zoning Commission



The test in a premises liability case is whether the property is reasonably safe for its intended use. The injured party must prove the existence of a dangerous condition; that the owner knew or should have known of its existence; and, that the dangerous condition existed for such a period of time that the owner should have discovered it in time to remedy it.

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December 16, 2021 HK**9**

HKYFS

Introducing Ben Eaves, HKYFS's new Prevention Coordinator

By Kathy Brown



Ben Eaves. Photo by Laura Shipman.

(December 8, 2021) — Haddam Killingworth Youth & Family Services has a new Prevention Coordinator. Ben Eaves, who started at HKYFS on Nov. 15, hails from northern England. He grew up playing soccer and tennis, before falling in love with basketball, Ben told HK-Now.com. "I originally came to the States to play basketball at prep school and then at University of Rhode Island," said Ben. "That led to a professional career overseas, playing for five years."

Though Ben majored in Art at URI, he became "heavily involved in violence prevention, substance prevention, community outreach and advocacy services, and have continued to involve myself in similar work ever since."

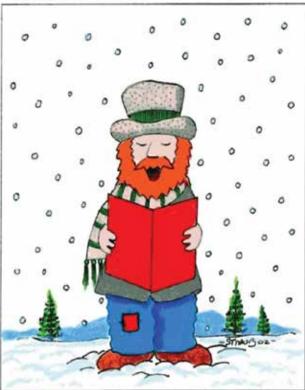
When he moved back to the United States permanently (he lives in Groton with his wife), he worked in the East Lyme school district in a variety of roles, before getting hired by HKYFS.

"I am really excited about this opportunity in HK and looking forward to building on the great work that's been done so far, and looking for new ways to connect and engage the community as a whole; with a view to encouraging sustainable, positive, and meaningful actions and decisions," said Ben. "I want to build more connection opportunities within the community, bringing young people and adults closer together, in an effort to make prevention something the entire community can influence and positively affect."

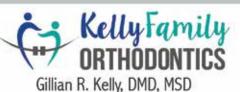
He likes mountain biking and coffee, and "I always welcome a chat," Ben said. "So reach out!"

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