



**Peace Corps Connect – Berkeley
Affiliate Group Network (AGN)**

June 7, 2015

Cheney Main Lounge

University of California – Berkeley

1. Call to Order – *Maricarmen Smith-Martinez, Affiliate Group Network Coordinator (AGN-C)*

Welcome and introduction: The Meeting was called to order at 9:08 AM PT by Maricarmen Smith-Martinez.

2. Member Group Voting Delegates – *Maricarmen Smith-Martinez, AGN-C*

Establish Eligible Voters List:

Suzanne Marks (Atlanta Area RPCVs), Doane Perry (Boston Area RPCVs), Chuck McConnell (Columbia River PCA), Patricia A. Wand (Friends of Colombia), Frank Yates (Friends of Ghana), David Ingleman (Friends of Jamaica PCA), Thaine Allison (Friends of Malaysia), Jonathan Pearson (Friends of Micronesia), Tim Resch (Friends of Morocco), Peter Hansen (Friends of Nigeria), Gary Schulze (Friends of Sierra Leone), Jane Bardon (Friends of Turkmenistan), Doane Perry (Friends of Uganda), David Scheinman (Gulf Coast Council of RPCVs), Sara Thompson (Health Justice for Peace Corps Volunteers), Kevin Laughlin (Idaho RPCVs), Katy Hansen (Iowa PCA), Kirsty Morgan (Kansas City Area RPCV Association), Manuel Colón (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender RPCVs), Jane Bardon (Minnesota RPCVs), Margaret Riley (North Carolina PCA), Lynn Foden (Northern California PCA), Sarah McMeans (Peace Corps Alumni Foundation for Philippine Development), Jackie Spurlock (Peace Corps Iran Association), Suzanne Smith (RPCVs of Colorado), John Coffey (RPCVs of Los Angeles), Barbara Junge (RPCVs of South Florida), Mariko Schmitz (RPCVs of Washington, DC), Kate Schachter (RPCVs of Wisconsin-Madison), Jim Waters (Sacramento Valley RPCVs), Lynne Graham (San Diego PCA), Lillian Baer (Seattle Area PCA), Mary Schwarz (Southeast Michigan RPCVs), Elizabeth Isele (St. Louis PCA), Jack Allison (Western North Carolina RPCVs)

Non-Voting Attendees:

David Fields (Friends of Ghana), Linda Stingl (Friends of Kenya), Lynn Olson (Friends of Nigeria), Averill Strasser (RPCVs of Los Angeles), Sean Anderson (San Diego PCA), Karen Keefer (Northern California PCA/Friends of Nigeria), Lie Njie (Northern California PCA), Sharon Keld (NPCA Board of Directors), Adam Tutor (San Antonio RPCV Group), B.J. Whetstine (Peace Corps), Mark Troy, Barbi Broadus (Peace Corps), Bill Ferguson, Adam DeJoseph, Emma Jones (Australian Volunteers for International Development), Susan Neyer (Northern California PCA), Pete Johnson (Northern California PCA), Jayne Booker (NPCA Board of Directors), Susan Pitt, Nancy Tongue (Health Justice for Peace Corps Volunteers), Mike Burden (Central Missouri RPCVs)

Approval of 2014 minutes: The motion to approve the minutes of the 2014 Group Leaders Forum was made by Jack Allison and was seconded and carried. Please note that the name of the annual gathering of group leaders has been changed to “Affiliate Group Network Annual Meeting” as provided in the 2015 NPCA Bylaws adopted on June 3, 2015.

3. Member-Elected Director Introductions – *Maricarmen Smith-Martinez, AGN-C*

The AGN Coordinator introduced the Member-Elected Directors for each Division (formerly “Region”) who described their positions as Divisional representatives and as Board Directors.

- Jane Bardon – Upper Midwest
- Randy Adams – Mid-Atlantic and Nationwide (elected 2015)
- Chuck McConnell – Pacific and Northwest
- Ruth Senchyna – Northeast (elected 2015)
- Marjorie Harrison – Asia and the Pacific
- Linda Stingl – Europe, North, and East Africa (elected 2015)
- Gary Schulze – West, Central, and Southern Africa
- Dennis Grubb – The Americas
- Not Present: Angie Harris – Southern Tier

4. NPCA Welcome and Update – *Glenn Blumhorst, NPCA President*

President Glenn Blumhorst spoke to the group about the critical role of the Affiliate Groups in a grassroots organization like NPCA. Several members of the group voiced questions and concerns about NPCA Membership. Glenn explained that the Board would be establishing a new Membership Committee to address membership issues and work toward membership growth. He pointed out some of the new opportunities available to Members and to Affiliate Groups:

- Employers of National Service (EONS)
- Netagogo – international phone service
- Gathr Films – cinema on demand as a fundraiser for groups
- Water Charity – NPCA partner
- CALL – program to use RPCV expertise and support RPCV NGOs
- A Towering Task – film about Peace Corps history in development
- Purpose-Driven Group – best practices sessions for group leaders

7. World Café Sessions: Initiatives and Opportunities to Bolster Groups – *Various*

To provide an opportunity for group leaders to learn directly from NPCA and Peace Corps about recent initiatives, projects, and campaigns, the group divided into smaller segments that focused on announcements about specific topics:

- NPCA Initiatives: Glenn Blumhorst
- NPCA Technology Support: David Fields
- Health Justice for Peace Corps Volunteers: Jonathan Pearson
- LGBT RPCVs: Manuel Colon, LGBT
- Peace Corps Office of Third Goal and Returned Volunteer Services: BJ Whetstine
- *A Towering Task*: Alana DeJoseph
- Small Business Association Toolkit: Tameka Montgomery

8. Roundtables – NPCA Board Directors

These break out groups resulted from the issues raised in a survey sent to members via website. Discussions varied; there was insufficient time to allow for all topics, and conversations continued during lunch and throughout the conference. Roundtables were conducted in three 15-minute sessions to brainstorm and share best practices about topics including:

- Membership growth and retention
- Leadership recruitment and engagement
- Fundraising purposefully
- Data/information management
- Engaging communications strategies

9. Conclusion – Maricarmen Smith-Martinez, AGN-C

The AGN-C introduced the concept of the AGN Advisory Committee and asked for volunteers to serve on the 2015 Advisory Committee. Group leaders expressing interest included:

- Barbara Junge – RPCVs of South Florida (RPCVSF)
- Kirsty Morgan – Kansas City Area PCA (KC-RPCV)
- David Scheinman – Gulf Coast Council of RPCVs
- Elizabeth Isele – St. Louis PCA
- Kevin Laughlin – Idaho RPCVs

The AGN Coordinator announced that there will be a conference call with the group leaders sometime in the next two weeks. She thanked NPCA Vice President Anne Baker for her support of the AGN and the AGN Annual Meeting participants.

10. Adjournment – Maricarmen Smith-Martinez, AGN-C

The meeting was adjourned by Maricarmen Smith-Martinez at 12:02 pm.

Jane Bardon
NPCA Board Secretary
Minnesota RPCVs (MNRPCV) Board Member

World Café Discussions – Initiatives and Opportunities to Bolster your Group	
<p>NPCA Initiatives</p> <p><i>Host:</i> Glenn Blumhorst NPCA President</p> <p><i>Notes:</i> Tony Barclay NPCA Board Director</p>	<p>Programs and Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next Step Travel (NST) – Need more info about member group travel programs and stronger link with NST • Employers of National Service (EONS) – How can EONS provide value to RPCVs? RPCVs can view which employers have signed on to the program on the Corporation for National and Community Service website (www.nationalservice.gov/about). NPCA encourages member groups to reach out to employers and build the list. <p>Group Needs and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain inventory of all active projects undertaken by RPCVs and/or affiliate groups, in their host countries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Would be of value to RPCV community to find resources ○ Excellent tool to raise awareness in Congress • Repository of all Peace Corps films • How can groups use the Peace Corps logo – users must follow protocols when they use it. NPCA can answer questions. <p>Group Leader Ideas and Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “All welcome” theme in member groups: include diaspora • San Antonio group looking for ways to reengage inactive members • Improve coordination among four Missouri groups – explore different models – e.g. have one group and then local chapters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How can NPCA help in a process like this? • How can NPCA revive defunct groups, e.g. Friends of Mali?
<p>NPCA Technology Support</p> <p><i>Host:</i> David Fields NPCA</p> <p><i>Notes:</i> Sharon Keld NPCA Board: Europe, North and East Africa (outgoing)</p>	<p>Programs and Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email david@peacecorpsconnect.org for technical assistance with group initiatives. He will work with you to find what works for your situation. Squarespace is often a good fit for affiliate group websites. • Other tools: Squarespace (website), Facebook, Skype (video chat/conference), Google Hangouts (video chat/conference), Slack (messaging), Ning, Dropbox (file sharing), and MailChimp (email). Slack very beneficial for group messaging. <p>Group Needs and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group challenges include development and maintenance of web sites, databases, social media, and membership tracking. Many groups need websites or web updates. • Most groups are unsatisfied with their website and Facebook page. • NPCA deposits dues into group bank accounts when individuals join through NPCA. Staff send instructions for logging in to the database to access the list of new members with the notice that the funds have been deposited. Groups having trouble should contact staff at groups@peacecorpsconnect.org. • Groups exploring how to incorporate features on websites, such as: optional donations, mentoring, LinkedIn connections. • How can groups reach older members if not through modern social media? <p>Group Leader Ideas and Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring is done face-to-face so it should be done through the regional groups not the

	<p>country of service groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign up for mentoring can be done online.
<p>Health Justice for Peace Corps Volunteers</p> <p><i>Host:</i> Jonathan Pearson NPCA Advocacy</p> <p><i>Notes:</i> Chuck McConnell NPCA Board: West Region</p>	<p>Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 25th awareness date – Goal is to trigger a national conversation about Peace Corps health justice among RPCV groups and even general public. • The event stemmed from the question, “How to launch a nationwide conversation in the Peace Corps community?” • Fourth Thursday in June was identified as a focus day on this. There are events planned in NY, Boston, DC, Baltimore, Mississippi, and Indiana. <p>Discussion and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect RPCVs. The challenge of returning home and feeling isolated. How to connect RPCVs stateside, for example, when serving PCVs are medevac’d? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Build a database of people willing to help with this. • PTSD is an issue. RPCVs need a good community to return to here at home. Many RPCVs had violent experiences in-country • Create a hotline? “Hotline for Health Justice”? Our community includes people who are trained, for example, in suicide prevention. • Build awareness. There is pending legislation for some of the things that need to be done. When those laws are introduced on the hill, Jonathan will light up the advocacy network.
<p>LGBT RPCVs</p> <p><i>Host:</i> Manuel Colon LGBT RPCVs</p> <p><i>Notes:</i> Joby Taylor NPCA Board Chair</p>	<p>Discussion and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGBT issues, Pride events, rainbow flag with the Peace Corps logo? • How do we do targeted messaging to members of regional groups appropriately? (Without offending or mis-stepping) • Friends of Country Groups could do advocacy for their countries of service. Friends of Nigeria sent a letter to the President of Nigeria stating their opposition to the policies/legislation around issues of sexual identity discrimination • PC Policy on Same Sex Couples went into effect June 2013. First couple served in Ecuador and has story feature on their experience. Another is currently serving. • Have sexuality, identity, and safe zone training? • Peace Corps has to work with specific countries’ policies to determine whether a country is an appropriate placement site for LGBT individuals and couples. • What is the balance on social justice and activism? Serving PCVs cannot politicize their role, but must self-advocate and recruit others (RPCVs) to advocate.
<p>Peace Corps Office of Third Goal/Returned Volunteer Services</p> <p><i>Host:</i> BJ Whetstine Peace Corps, Director of 3G/RVS</p>	<p>Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meleia Egger can help groups reach out to constituents and new audiences with strategies on how best to engage members and groups. • RPCV Portal. LinkedIn: PC will be sending regional newsletters to provide info on PC, etc. Can provide access to career resources and all of Third Goal office resources. Resources will be added every three-six months. • Reaching out to groups with best practices about events. A toolkit is being developed & there will be links on PC and NPCA websites.

<p>Peace Corps Office of Third Goal/Returned Volunteer Services</p> <p><i>Host:</i> BJ Whetstine Peace Corps, Director of 3G/RVS</p> <p><i>Notes:</i> Marjorie Harrison NPCA Board: Asia and the Pacific Region</p>	<p>Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meleia Egger can help groups reach out to constituents and new audiences with strategies on how best to engage members and groups. • RPCV Portal. LinkedIn: PC will be sending regional newsletters to provide info on PC, etc. Can provide access to career resources and all of Third Goal office resources. Resources will be added every three-six months. • Reaching out to groups with best practices about events. A toolkit is being developed & there will be links on PC and NPCA websites. • Long-term goals: create a data base on best activity ideas. The content will come from groups and the template will come from PC Third Goal Office.
<p>A Towering Task</p> <p><i>Host:</i> Alana DeJoseph</p> <p><i>Notes:</i> Gary Schulze NPCA Board: West, Central, and Southern Africa</p>	<p>Discussion and Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why should NPCA support this project? Madison RPCV Group gave \$ 1,000 to the project – it can improve our membership as well as increase knowledge about the Peace Corps – need to get more people connected. • The Madison group is selling products like calendars and using the profits to help the project. One RPCV group has a membership form with a check-off for supporting projects like this one. • The documentary needs \$2.5 million for completion. Country of service groups have the connections we need with foundations and corporations that can all benefit by an association with the Peace Corps. We need corporate sponsors so that we can associate “big names” with the documentary. The documentary cannot only talk about what PCVs did in the past, we need to talk about what the RPCVs have done since returning to support the Third Goal and include the perspective of host country nationals. • The documentary has a website with a trailer and the completed project will be of PBS quality. The distribution curve for the video will be a bell curve, similar to book sales. It is important to get the story out because the population that cares about the 1960s is dwindling. Expected to complete documentary by the end of next year. • We need endorsements from RPCV groups to show Peace Corps involvement throughout the world. We want to be able to talk about the Peace Corps intelligently and illustrate Sargent Shriver’s dream. We hope the video will help reduce some of the bigotry around the world and show that in a world faced by problems like climate control and poverty, the Peace Corps is at the center of helping to make the world a better place. • The documentary will be shown on PBS and at film festivals throughout the country. We need the Peace Corps to officially endorse it in order to receive funding from foundations.
<p>Small Business Administration Toolkit</p> <p><i>Host:</i></p>	<p>Announcements and Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SBA hosts Business Smart Workshops for inclusive entrepreneurship. Small business numbers are low for women. • Trying to reach out to underserved communities and connect to educators to connect with the target group

Roundtables – Brainstorming and Sharing of Best Practices	
<p>Membership growth and retention</p> <p><i>Facilitator:</i> Chuck McConnell NPCA Board West Region Representative</p> <p><i>Notes:</i> Jane Bardon NPCA Board: Upper Midwest Region</p>	<p>Discussion Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you do that works to maintain/increase membership? • How can NPCA better support your group with membership? • A stronger NPCA means stronger group support. How can your membership growth support NPCA’s membership? • Does your group have a data-sharing agreement with NPCA? If so, were you able to utilize the data? <p>Group Leader Discussions and Best Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPCVs of South Florida. Use Wild Apricot to increase membership, talked to members about what they want (older RPCVs need social and younger need jobs), need personal touch and fast email response. 258 paid and two-thirds are engaged. Group is located close to recruiter. Single renewal date for membership. Lifetime membership is \$450 for over 65 and \$300 for under 65. • NorCal PCA. 400 members now, former 1000. Because of large geographic area, hosts events for subsets of members. Of their members, 60% are NPCA members, 40% are members of NorCal only. • RPCV/W. Collect dues through Holiday Party ticket sales • RPCVs of Houston. Website, Facebook, Happy Hours, 2 events. Membership about 350. NPCA \$50 is too much. (Note: NPCA dues just \$35.) Fundraisers with international fundraising dinners • Friends of Malaysia. All members are older, last group in 1982 • Friends of Morocco. Previously obtained 4,200 names from old COS books, though not clear how. Now uses NPCA database to find recently COSed RPCVs • Health Justice for RPCVs. Nationwide group, so members are scattered. Many dealing with personal health issues and do not have time to reach out • Friends of Mongolia. Take membership toolkit to cities for events • Friends of Jamaica. Maintain list of everyone who has ever belonged to group • Group. Membership: 250 members, about half also NPCA members; renewals are challenging. Communication: utilize website, Facebook, print/electronic newsletter, email listerv, Twitter. Fundraising: 3 ethnic fundraiser dinners each year, sell calendars. Activities: Provide job search help to RPCVs, give grants to PCVs (\$4000-\$5000 each year), this year \$1000 to Ebola and \$1000 to Nepal pending <p>General Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all groups log in to NPCA database, check out LinkedIn for Good • One-time membership push. Important to catch RPCVs in the first five years after COS. • RPCV Portal has 70,000 emails – Third Goal office will send one-time membership email. • Regional events, some groups divide by age, Age differences are a problem for payment/donations. • Some groups considering dropping dues. Rationale is that many members will pay anyway.
<p>Leadership recruitment and</p>	<p>Discussion Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you identify leaders, especially those more recently returned?

<p>engagement</p> <p><i>Facilitator:</i> Joby Taylor NPCA Board Director</p> <p><i>Notes:</i> Tony Barclay NPCA Board Director</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some groups have “New Member” brunches or other appreciation events, opportunities to connect with the Board. • After identification, what is the biggest challenge to encourage involvement? • What is your Board structure? Do you hold elections? Have a nominating committee or search committee? <p>Group Leader Discussions and Best Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One group is struggling to find leaders to replace those who are tired and have “done it too long” • Mentoring practice in Idaho group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Put a structure in place for succession and transition ○ Use task forces to enlist participants – find millennials ○ Use local nonprofit center for its resources • New group starting in College Station. NPCA has templates, toolkits, example bylaws, etc. See Affiliate Group Resource Library page section on NPCA website. • Look at Tucson and Columbia MO for models • Good resources: www.Boardsource.org or premium account on LinkedIn (special section for board members) • Madison group has put processes and calendars in place to track responsibilities and activities • Tallahassee group is less formal but functions well • San Diego just had annual meeting, but all board members continued, no new ones stepped up • NorCal has worked on getting board to recruit new members • Issues of multiple group affiliations (NPCA, geographic group, country of service group) • Always missing the middle group – natural link between boomers and millennials • Contrarian view: too much process when you are a 501(c)3 (LA), would we better off without officers and bylaws? • Jamaica set up both executive board and advisory board. The exec board meets on Google hangout, but open to all • How to recruit high profile sponsors (e.g. Reed Hastings) – NorCal suggests you need to be intentional, make a case and a pitch for what you are doing and how they can help • How do you avoid the pattern of someone who becomes “indispensable”? • Emails must be updated when there is turnover. It helps to have a general point of contact with the group • Central Missouri group has a mentoring system which is informal and still somewhat dependent on individuals • Predictability is key to engage people to sign on. Important to know how long they will serve in leadership • Cheerleader personality needed to drive membership development – “welcome wagon” function for newly returned RPCVs • Roles on board should be closely aligned with the mission (e.g. Central Missouri and its annual film festival has a board member dedicated to this). They then match people with “fun” roles. • Statewide calls to link locality groups (worked well with Florida groups – coordinated by RPCVs of South Florida, PC Third Goal Office, and NPCA)
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<p>Fundraising purposefully</p> <p><i>Facilitator:</i> Janet Greig NPCA Board Director</p> <p><i>Notes:</i> Sharon Keld NPCA Board: Europe, North and East Africa</p>	<p>Discussion Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has your group raised money traditionally? • What ideas is your group considering for raising funds? • Does your group have a Board donor or fundraising requirement? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Other alternatives? (i.e. Some Boards require leadership to sell calendars instead of contributing direct donations.) <p>Group Leader Discussions and Best Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storytelling at social events, donation fee for entry (\$15-20). • Sell calendars • Host holiday parties with event fee • Major donor strategy: Find corporations with parallel mission, country, region fundraising capacity for grant writing. • Need to be 501c3 to get grants. Half of the groups are not nonprofits. • Engage arts, social events, international potlucks, seasonal fundraising • Focus on a specific cause/project • <i>Let Girls Learn</i> will inject funding from the groups • Health justice initiative, strong resource for PC, personal versus general. • Some groups do not actively raise funds, but count on key benevolent donors
<p>Data/information management</p> <p><i>Facilitator:</i> Brian Forde NPCA Board Director</p> <p><i>Notes:</i> Marjorie Harrison NPCA Board: Asia and the Pacific; Friends of Malaysia (Special thanks to Manuel Colon)</p>	<p>Discussion Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What data platform(s) does your group use? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Does your group have a membership/information database? ○ If not, how do you currently manage contacts/membership? <p>Group Leader Discussions and Best Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft Access. But it's not dynamic and only one person can manage at a time • NationBuilder, Kindful is an online platform that can be used. • With so many databases (Peace Corps, LinkedIn, NPCA, individual groups), how can we merge or utilize them all better? • Would it makes sense to reach out to all RPCVs and see who has the know-how in the tech industry to help this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPCA can update their database with information from the individual groups, even if people are not paid members. Just send that information to them. • How can NPCA be the lead on making this consolidated database? • Possibly culture, not technology. • Why are so many databases in existence? • Not all member groups have members that are of interest to the Agency, NPCA - for example, just friends and interested parties.
<p>Engaging communications strategies</p> <p><i>Facilitator:</i> Sandra Bunch NPCA Board Director</p>	<p>Discussion Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your group have a communication strategy? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If not, how do you communicate with your group? • Discuss communications schedule, utilizing different platforms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Email, newsletter (electronic or traditional), social media, blog ○ What method generates the most response? Better event attendance? <p>Group Leader Discussions</p>

<p><i>Notes:</i> Jayne Booker NPCA Board Director</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The major purpose of communication is to increase participation and engagement with the group and to allow for communication despite geographical distance. • Technology cannot replace in-person activities. • Most groups do not have a formal communication plan, but they do have newsletters and emails that go out on a regular schedule. Some groups have a person or committee dedicated to communication. <p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choosing what media/platform to use for website and for email communications. Platforms include Constant Contact, Mail Chimp, Wordpress, Facebook, Twitter • Lack of consistency across groups, every group is individual and different. • Getting baby boomers to embrace technology especially social media • Addressing communication needs and styles of different generations • Finding right mix of in person activities and technology. • Getting positive press coverage. • Lack of marketing committee within the Group. • Not enough support from NPCA particularly with messaging, value proposition and platforms. Need tool kits and templates. • Many groups have subgroups within their structure, which further complicates communication. <p>Best Practices (<i>Specific comments of interest to use as examples</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends of Morocco curates information on Morocco to post on website and Facebook, making the website more interesting and building membership • LBGT collects metrics from the website/Facebook/Twitter • Friends of Micronesia provides intercommunications between groups NPCA, Peace Corps recruitment office, Basic website, Facebook page • RPCVs of Idaho has a formal marketing committee and develops a marketing plan each year
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