

May 2009

# CITY ATTORNEY CANDIDATES TRUTANICH AND WEISS ANSWER COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

Voters will go to the polls on May 19, 2009 as part of a special election that will address a number of issues, including the run-off election for City Attorney. As a follow-up to the Los Angeles City Attorney candidates forum it held in March of this year, the Studio City Residents Association asked both City Councilmember Jack Weiss and attorney Carmen "Nuch" Trutanich, the two run-off candidates, three questions that are on the mind of the community.

Question #1: Can the City Attorney proactively bring issues to the attention of the City Council or must he or she wait until the City Council initiates action? If the answer is "yes," and he or she can act proactively, please provide an example where you see a proactive action on present conditions currently being undertaken.



**TRUTANICH:** Whether to be a proactive City Attorney is not a choice of the officeholder; it is the Charter-prescribed duty of the Los Angeles City Attorney. The responsibility of the City Attorney is broad - he or she is the legal advisor to all the City boards, departments, officers and entities, including but not limited to the City Council. In addition, the City Attorney prosecutes crimes and defends civil actions against the City. The City Attorney may initiate litigation. These broad roles are tempered: the City Attorney must wait for client direction in the settlement of litigation and before writing a requested opinion.

A few recent examples where my legal advice as a strong City Attorney would have altered present conditions include:

1) requiring a thorough public hearing process before Measure B was placed on the municipal ballot; 2) undertaking the legally essential environmental analysis in advance of one-way streets for Pico and Olympic and before adoption of the City's SB 1818 implementing ordinance; 3) issuing a written opinion favoring the power of the City Controller to conduct a performance audit of all City programs; 4) disapproving the pending constraints on CEQA appeals; and 4) refusing to authorize 840 digital billboards in order to settle litigation the City Attorney was then winning.



**WEISS:** The City Attorney can and must take the lead on issues important to the people of Los Angeles both in legal action and legislative proposals. As a City Councilmember, I have been a leader on public safety and environmental protection, adding 1,000 cops to our police force, expanding DNA testing in sexual assault cases and improving water quality. As City Attorney, I will partner with the Mayor and the City Council to expand gang injunctions and intervention and rehabilitation programs, gun control legislation and other measures that will make our streets safer. The current City Attorney has taken the initiative to stop the mistreatment of hospital patients dumped on Skid Row, and this effort will help end the abuse of some of our City's most vulnerable

people. Whether by continuing to protect the most vulnerable, fighting illegal supergraphics or intervening to stop gang violence, I will be not only an aggressive prosecutor, but a relentless advocate for a cleaner and safer Los Angeles.

Question #2: What action will your office take to correct the billboards being erected, both static and electronic, without permits and inspections? And will your office prosecute against billboards that have been erected without the proper permits and inspections?

**TRUTANICH:** Before the City acts to adopt new discretionary exceptions to our billboard ordinance, which will themselves provoke additional years of litigation, my office will advise three prudent, preliminary steps: 1) that the addition of any new exceptions to our billboard laws be deferred until after the Ninth Circuit rules on our current exceptions in the case now pending before it - this ruling can then inform any new exceptions the City Council may propose to enact; 2) that we continue to enforce an Interim Control Ordinance on all off-site sign permits until that Ninth Circuit ruling is delivered; and 3) that we begin a swift process to remove all illegal signs. We will give billboard scofflaws a reasonable amount of time, such as 90 days, to remove their illegal boards. After that, we arrive at the bottom line: break our laws and you will be prosecuted, with vigor.

(Continued, Page 2)

### (Candidates, cont'd)

**WEISS:** As City Attorney, I will throw the book at anyone who puts up an illegal billboard or supergraphic. Stronger penalties on illegal signs must be implemented. I have proposed charging large per day fines for illegal supergraphics, and, as City Attorney, I will pursue criminal charges against illegal signs. Digital conversions should not be exempted from specific plans or other zoning districts and should undergo appropriate environmental review, and I have fought the installation of digital signs on these grounds in Encino and Westwood. I support Assemblymember Mike Feuer's legislation to stop digital conversions until studies regarding their safety and impact on traffic can be completed. The next battle in the signage war is the proliferation of illegal supergraphics. Many supergraphics have been installed in violation of the current Interim Control Ordinance (ICO), which I authored to prohibit any new signage until the City Council implements a new sign ordinance with meaningful civil penalties and enforceable restrictions on signs. I have been working with the Los Angeles Fire Department to inspect supergraphics and identify fire/life safety hazards and get them removed. The bottom line is that as City Attorney, I will stand up for our safety and quality of life against the billboard companies

# Question #3: What qualifications and experience do you believe you possess that would qualify you to hold the office of City Attorney?

**TRUTANICH:** My qualifications begin with my independence from the political decision-making that has prevailed in City Hall and my commitment to the open and transparent government that our residents deserve. My qualifications extend to my commitment to sound reasoning, excellent lawyering, tough fiscal management, respect for due process and a level playing field for all comers. These are the principles on which I have built my legal career, and they are the principles that will guide the legal advice that my office will give. My qualifications also embrace the dozens of endorsements I have received from independent Los Angeles leaders, including the Los Angeles Times, the Daily News, the Daily Breeze, the Metropolitan News, District Attorney Steve Cooley, the 9,800 men and women of the LAPD and dozens of homeowner groups. I have a reputation for being an outstanding listener, and I look forward to engaging every official and citizen stakeholder in the process.

My thirty years of experience representing clients and trying cases are the most sincere proof of my qualifications. I began my career in the District Attorney's Office, where I prosecuted hundreds of violent criminals and put murderers, rapists and gang members behind bars. I was invited to join the office's elite hardcore gang unit, and I later created the first environmental crimes division in the DA's office. I obtained the first felony conviction of an environmental crime in the State of California, and to this day, as a private environmental lawyer, I am regularly called back to teach our environmental prosecutors how to do their jobs. I have been named a California SuperLawyer for several years running. I have managed a law firm and made its payroll for nearly two decades. My family, including my wife of thirty years and my four children, support me in everything I do, and perhaps that is my proudest endorsement.

**WEISS:** I know how to fight crime - as a federal prosecutor I put sophisticated white collar criminals, violent criminals, corrupt public officials and civil rights violators in prison. As head of the City Council's Public Safety committee, I have led the fight to hire

a thousand new cops and give our Police and Fire Departments the resources they need to keep us safe. I have written laws to take guns and ammunition off our streets. As City Attorney, I will expand gang injunctions and aggressively enforce our gun laws and defend those gun laws from the NRA. I have led the effort to get the LAPD to more effectively use DNA evidence to catch and stop rapists. As City Attorney, I will continue this work to ensure sexual predators are brought to justice and DNA evidence is tested in real-time. I am a proud, lifelong environmentalist who will prosecute those who pollute our water, air and neighborhoods. I have spent my whole career in public service fighting to make Los Angeles a safer and better place to live, and those are the values I will bring to the City Attorney's Office.

# SCRA GETS FIRST-HAND ANALYSIS OF LA SCHOOL BOARD BUDGET AT APRIL COMMUNITY MEETING

SCRA members and guests found the SCRA's April Community Meeting to be powerful and highly informative. Arriving at the meeting just moments after voting "no" on the 2009-2010 Los Angeles School Board budget, LAUSD Board member Tamar Galatzan was greeted by both KCBS and KNBC, who covered her remarks. Galatzan gave three reasons for voting no on the budget. First, the budget called for half the stimulus dollars to be saved for the 2010-2011 school year. Galatzan said the "rainy day" had arrived, meaning all available stimulus dollars should be used for the 2009-2010 school year. Second, regarding the job cuts, there is no provision for analysis of jobs related to usefulness. Third, the budget does not take into consideration the growing disparity of funding received for Title One schools (below poverty level) and schools above the poverty level. Title One schools receive \$900 per student and non-Title One schools may receive \$195 per student from this budget. Galatzan also reported developments are approved and take place without any input

from LAUSD as to what burden they will have on schools in the increase of student seats required. She said bond dollars have gone to many local schools for painting, air conditioning, libraries and general repairs. Schools receiving the bond money include Colfax



LAUSD Board Member Tamar Galatzan and SCRA President Alan Dymond admire thank you card presented to the SCRA by Carpenter Avenue Elementary School students in appreciation of SCRA's ongoing support of the school

Elementary, Carpenter Elementary, Rio Visa, Riverside, Walter Reed Middle School and North Hollywood High.



### Real Estate Update

Former Studio City Neighborhood Council board member and former Studio City Chamber President Joe Goodman of ReMax Realty also gave SCRA members an update on the state of Studio City real estate. Goodman said there are

new qualified buyers who can now afford to enter the Studio City market and are currently shopping. Studio City real estate has not dropped as low as other areas, and buyers believe Studio City is close to the bottom.

# **BREAKING NEWS**

### SB1818

The SCRA has been supporting a lawsuit challenging a city ordinance that allows density bonuses to developers provided the developer makes provisions for affordable housing. This ordinance was passed under a mandate of State law; however, it was challenged as the ordinance exceeded State law requirements. The judge in the ruling for the petitioners stated in pertinent part: "The city is PROHIBITED from processing applications for density bonuses and/or incentives that exceed state mandates. Furthermore, any approvals already extended to projects under those conditions are INVALIDATED" (emphasis in the original ruling).

The judge did not invalidate the complete ordinance so those projects that comply with the state mandate should not be affected. The SCRA understands the immediate effect will be on the proposed development at Colfax and Ventura known as the Luxe project. It also means the City must revisit the ordinance and rewrite it; hopefully, this time ordinary citizens and organizations will have a voice and be heard in what is finally passed.

It is still early to determine the impact of the ruling. Will the City appeal? Will the other lawsuits out there all be consolidated into this case? There are numerous possibilities; the SCRA will continue to monitor and support these efforts. SCRA members will be interested to know one of the successful law firms is Chatten-Brown & Carstens, which Save LA River-Open Space has under retention for when the time comes to challenge any formal proposals and applications to develop that site. That firm is also acting for Communities United for Smart Growth (CUSG) in its present activities challenging the developments at the MTA/Universal sites. (SCRA has four seats on the Board of CUSG). As reported in the last newsletter, the SCRA will be issuing a position paper on the CUSG alternate proposal.



# UPDATE FROM SAVE LA RIVER OPEN SPACE

The Studio City Neighborhood Council has approved a motion to

donate \$5000 to Save LA River Open Space (formerly Save Studio City Golf & Tennis) in support of efforts to preserve the green space known as Weddington Golf and Tennis. Funds will be used for a feasibility study on the concept/vision for this popular area of open space.

SLAROS has new lawn signs. Interested parties are invited to show support for SLAROS by donating \$5 or more to receive one of these beautiful signs to display on the front lawn. To donate, please email SaveOpenSpace@SLAROS.org, or call 818-509-0230.

# MAY 19 SPECIAL ELECTION WILL IMPACT STUDIO CITY

Two important elections that will directly affect Studio City will be decided as part of the May 19, 2009 special election.

**Council District 5 (CD5):** SCRA members who live in CD5 (west of Coldwater) will be voting for a new City Councilmember. The runoff is between David Vahedi and Paul Koretz.



# TO THE MARKET

The Farmers Market is proud to announce its new website <a href="https://www.studiocityfarmersmarket.com">www.studiocityfarmersmarket.com</a>. Log on to find out what is happening at the market, what's in

season and to find fresh seasonal recipes. You will also find a list of all the Studio City Farmers Market vendors with their contact information. The market now offers a free booth for qualifying, non-profit Studio City groups to promote events. May is beautiful and brings an abundance of cherries to the market. Look for Emily from the Pop-Shop to return with her gourmet popsicles. Come and enjoy "L.A.'s Most Family Friendly Farmers Market" as voted by Los Angeles Magazine and experience a wonderful, fun-filled spring day at the Studio City Farmers Market.

The Studio City Farmers Market is presented jointly by the Studio City Residents Association and the Studio City Chamber of Commerce. Parking is available in the structure at CBS Studios on Radford.

**LA City Attorney:** All in the community will be voting for a new City Attorney. (See lead article in this newsletter.)

Voters will be asked to pass judgment on six state propositions, five of which (1A-1E) directly affect the state budget.

Prop 1a : Changes the California budget process. Limits state

spending. Increases "rainy day" budget stabilization fund

Prop 1b: Payment plan for education funding.

Prop 1c: Lottery modernization act.

Prop 1d: Protects children's services funding and helps

balance state budget.

Prop 1e: Mental health services funding. Temporary

reallocation. Helps balance state budget.

Prop 1f: Elected officials' salaries. Prevents pay increases

during budget deficit.

For more Information go to <a href="http://www.voterguide.sos.ca.gov">http://www.voterguide.sos.ca.gov</a>.

# **IMPROVING PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**

The Studio City Residents Association has received a number of calls about speeding and pedestrian safety on Studio City streets. A reoccurring problem seems to be cars not yielding to pedestrians. As a reminder, pedestrians have the right of way, not just in marked crosswalks, but also while crossing any intersection. To report an area where cars are speeding, ignoring crosswalks and disobeying other posted signs, such as no left turn and no u-turn, please contact Officer Goodyear with Valley Traffic at 818-756-9203. When the menu begins, press 4, then 3 to be directed to his box.

Residents interested in speed humps for their neighborhood should contact LADOT at 818-374-4688. If the DOT determines speed humps are justified and feasible, it will provide the resident with detailed information on how to submit a speed hump petition. Petitions need signatures of at least 75 percent of owners or occupants on the blocks where speed humps are requested. More information is available at <a href="https://www.ladot.lacity.org">www.ladot.lacity.org</a>.

# IT'S HAPPENING IN STUDIO CITY

### **Community Events**

First Annual Studio City Community Barbecue & Roundup: May 24, 2009 - High Noon to 6:00 PM.

Enjoy live music, great food, games, raffle and more on the Sunday of Memorial Day weekend and help raise money to support both Studio City Beautification and Save LA River-Open Space at this first annual community barbecue. The event will be held at the Hirsh Ranch, 3528 Laurel Canyon Blvd., Studio City (Laurel Canyon at Fryman). Buy your tickets at the Studio City Farmers Market during the month of May at the manager's booth at Studio City Hand Car Wash and at Moorpark Park on May 9 and 10. Tickets are also available online at www.studiocityresidents.org. Advance purchase price: \$15.00 adult entrance ticket includes first-round beer, wine or specialty drinks, games, sack and three-leg races; \$5.00 child's entrance ticket (ages 3-12) includes first-round juice, soda or specialty drinks, games, sack and three-leg races. Adult barbecue meal is \$12.00 and child's barbeque meal is \$8.00. Tickets priced higher at the gate the day of the event. Desserts, bouncies and raffle tickets are available for purchase. Advance paid VIP on-site parking is available for \$10 (limited to the first 100 cars). Free parking and shuttle at OSULA/Bridges, 3921 Laurel Canyon Blvd. Enter at Maxwellton Rd.

Carpenter Avenue Elementary School Recession Buster Raffle

Thanks to Carpenter community sponsor Wells Fargo, Carpenter Avenue Elementary School is excited to offer the community a chance to win \$5,000 cash, a \$750 Mobil gas card or a \$500 Ralphs Grocery gift card as part of Carpenter's 21st Annual Dinner Dance & Auction. This major fundraising event is sponsored by Parents for Carpenter (PFC) and will be held at CBS Studios on May 30, 2009. A second Opportunity Drawing for an exquisite freshwater pearl necklace is available courtesy of Barin's Fine Jewelry. Tickets will be sold at the Ralphs Studio Plaza, 10901 Ventura Blvd., on May 9 and 16, 2009. Winning tickets will be pulled the evening of May 30, 2009, but winners need not be present. For information on becoming a community sponsor, or to purchase raffle tickets, visit <a href="https://www.ParentsForCarpenter.com">www.ParentsForCarpenter.com</a>.

### Studio City Branch Library

# Fourth Annual Edible Book Tea Party:

Saturday, May 9, 2009

Join the Friends of the Studio City Branch Library for this popular event where books become cakes. Visit the library for an entry form or visit <a href="https://www.studiocitylibraryfriends.org">www.studiocitylibraryfriends.org</a> for more information.

**UCLA Gluck Flute Trio:** Saturday, May 2, 2009, 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**Suspenseful Saturday Cinema:** Saturday, May 23, 2009, 3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. "Little Shop of Horrors" (1960), starring Jack Nicholson.

**Infant & Toddler Story times:** Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m. & 11:30 a.m. Join Ms. Barbara for a half hour of books, music and movement in the library's meeting room.

**Children's Book Club:** May 14, 4:00 p.m. (for upper level students). Call 818-755-7873 to find out the book for the month or email Barbara at bmetzenb@lapl.org.

**Fourth Annual Author Panel:** - "Why I Write Books for Children," May 14, 2009, 4:00 p.m. This author panel features Tim Egan, picture book author and illustrator; lan Ogilvy, author of the Measle series; and non-fiction writer, Sharon Sharth. The event is open to the community, and books will be available for purchase. Call 818-755-7873 for information.

# DON'T MISS OUT: RENEW YOUR SCRA MEMBERSHIP

At the end of May, SCRA members will receive their June 2009 - 2010 renewal notice in the mail. Please check the membership expiration date, which appears on the address label of this newsletter. If it says 06/09, your SCRA renewal is due. The cost of membership remains at the same low price of \$25 per household, or, if you are a senior, membership is \$10 per household. The SCRA appreciates any amount over and above membership as a donation.

The SCRA Board thanks each and every one of our members for their support and their faith in the SCRA. The SCRA Board pledges to continue the work of preserving our special Studio City community. Every membership counts! When our board members speak on your behalf at public hearings, the Hearing Officers are very impressed when they hear how many households are standing there with us. Renew your membership today!

# CITY COUNCIL FIELD AND PLANNING DEPUTIES TO HOLD COMMUNITY FORUM AT MAY SCRA COMMUNITY MEETING

Joan Pellico, field deputy for Councilmember Jack Weiss; Evan Roosevelt, field deputy for Councilmember Wendy Greuel; and Renee Weitzer, chief of staff and chief planning deputy for Councilmember Tom LaBonge, will tackle community issues and take questions at the May SCRA Community Meeting. SCRA members and guests are invited to come with questions about any issues that affect Studio City, including crime and safety, transportation, development, education, traffic, etc. The meeting will be held at Beverly Garland's Holiday Inn Theatre, 4222 Vineland Avenue, Studio City. Members and guests are invited for refreshments at 7:00 p.m. with the meeting starting at 7:30 p.m.

# GALATZAN CONVENES SCHOOL SIGN TASK FORCE

The LAUSD School Board recently passed LAUSD Board Member Tamar Galatzan's resolution to convene a task force consisting of community leaders, school district staff, school police and the General Counsel's office for the purpose of developing a workable policy governing operation of marquees on school campuses.

The SCRA spoke in favor of the task force and requested the Superintendent appoint a representative from SCRA to this task force. The purpose of the group is to establish regulations schools must follow when installing digital signs on campus.

The SCRA hopes to bring a number of issues to the table, including brightness, hours of operation, frequency of message change, placement, a means to minimize impact in residential neighborhoods as well as removal of older unused signs.

# **COMMUNITY CRIME REPORT**

Ву	Studio	City	Lead	Officer	Mike	Lewis
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### Criminals Among Us.

Recent issues of the SCRA newsletter have reported success stories in which Valley divisions of the LAPD, including North Hollywood, have successfully arrested suspects responsible for major crimes in Studio City and the surrounding areas. There are career criminals driving throughout these neighborhoods looking for a target. They look for cars with cell phones or GPS devices, businesses not adequately lit and monitored and similar opportunities in which they have a relatively easy target. In the cases of three major recent arrests, the suspects have one thing in common, narcotics arrests.

A March arrest in the Devonshire Division of a male and female suspect helped address the number of car break-ins in subterranean garages located on Arch Drive, Bluffside Drive, Aqua Vista Avenue and Fair Avenue. These same suspects hit North Hollywood Division and throughout the Valley. Here's an idea of how just one of the suspect's rap sheet looks:

1/1993	Burglary
1/1993	Vandalism and resisting arrest-home on probation
	for eight months
4/1993	Petty theft, possession of burglary tools and

12/1993	burglary- 30 days of jail and three years' probation Robbery- unknown disposition
8/1998	Possession of knife on school property- 30 days of jail and probation
11/1999	Warrant for arrest
3/2002	Possession of narcotics- Proposition 36 drug
	program and probation and one year in jail
6/2002	Narcotics arrest- warrant
8/2002	Unlicensed driver-convicted \$50.00 fine
8/2002	Possession of burglary tools and false id to peace
	officer-case rejected
6/2003	Narcotics violation- probation and Proposition 36
	drug program
8/2003	Receiving stolen property, burglary and possession of burglary tools- case rejected
10/2003	Burglary and ns deportation proceedings hold-
	convicted -one year and three years' probation
7/2005	Possession of narcotic paraphernalia- 30 days jail
5/2008	Possession of narcotics and traffic warrant
7/2008	Arrested on traffic warrants
9/2008	Burglary and possession of burglary tools- 30 days
	jail and three years' probation

What will he get now?

(Continued, Page 6)

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Alan Dymond

In recent months, since its inception, I have been writing a column for the <u>Sherman Oaks Studio City News</u> as your president in order to expand the reach of the SCRA to those who are not members. This throwaway paper has limited distribution in certain areas of Studio City. Nevertheless, it seemed well worth the effort to participate. However, the article I submitted for the last edition of the paper was edited to such an extent that it contained inaccuracies and misstatements, and I need to correct the facts.

The first concern is the statement that SCRA endorses the "upcoming replacement for Council District Two's open seat and the city attorney run off." SCRA does not and never has endorsed a candidate for office. From a practical viewpoint, our members hold disparate political opinions and certainly would not like to see our organization make an endorsement in their name; from a political viewpoint, why would SCRA want to take a chance on backing the wrong horse. Further, SCRA has a reputation of being open and fair minded and presents viewpoints from across the broad spectrum so our members are presented with as much cogent information as is possible.

The second concern was the distinction between "stakeholders" and "members." The edited article left the reader with the impression that residence in Studio City automatically makes one a member of the SCRA. As our dues paying members were quick to point out, this is not the case. And those who were left with the impression they were automatically members may not be too happy when they are asked for the membership fee. "Stakeholders," on the other hand, is a term used to denote those who are automatically part of the Studio City Neighborhood Council, an official adjunct to the City of Los Angeles that was brought into being by the latest city Charter reform.

Let's move on to other news. The community should be pleased about the excellent ruling from the judge on the density bonus issue (see article in this issue). On the parking meter concerns, the SCRA participated in another conference call with Wendy Greuel's office, along with the SCNC, Studio City Chamber of Commerce, Mexicali and Art's Deli. We are waiting on the "official" position being declared. As soon as this is known we will send a News & Notes to our members.

Keep up-to-date on events in our community by signing up for the SCRA's "News & Notes" eblast. Email the SCRA at scraboard@studiocityresidents.org and provide your email address.

Hum DymonL



P.O. Box 1374, Studio City, CA 91614



# MONTHLY COMMUNITY MEETING Tuesday, May 12, 2009

Meeting Starts at 7:30 p.m.

Agenda

7:00 p.m. Light refreshments

7:30 p.m. Community Forum / Q&A featuring Joan Pellico (CD5 Jack Weiss), Evan Roosevelt (CD2 - Wendy Greuel) and Renee Weitzer (CD4 - Tom

# **Meeting Location**

LaBonge)

Beverly Garland's Holiday Inn Theatre 4222 Vineland Avenue, Studio City

When entering the hotel driveway, turn left and go through the parking turnstile. Drive to the end and turn right. Go to the large back lot. The handicap entrance is from this lot. Walk to the southwest corner of the lot, and signs will direct you to the Beverly Garland Theatre. PARKING WILL BE VALIDATED at the sign-in-table.



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# (Crime Report, cont'd)

When the media report a criminal has been convicted and is going to jail for a year or for three, five or ten years, this is typically not the case. His or her arrest record shows, time and time again, a sentence not served fully. He or she usually gets off for good behavior, and the cycle begins again. Now, with overcrowding, many serve less than half of their sentences. These career criminals are often back on the streets and a menace to the community. Taking precautions is critical not just now, but always.

# Census Bureau Activity

The U.S. Census Bureau has begun an address canvassing operation that will continue in the San Fernando Valley until approximately May 21, 2009. This operation aims to identify every living quarter where people live or could potentially be living. They are currently working in Studio City and carry employees identification credentials and a GPS-equipped handheld computer used to conduct their research.

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