REE WINTER 2022 | VOL. 36 | NO. 2

## a publication of the humane society of sonoma county

Life Saving with a Twist p 6

HSSC Shelter Initiatives -Taking it to the Next Level p 11



After two years of virtual events, we were beyond excited to gather in person for our award-winning Wags, Whiskers & Wine gala this past August! A huge HSSC THANK YOU to our dear friends at Kendall-Jackson Winery for hosting the event this year! Their gracious hospitality and beautiful Wine Estate and Gardens created the perfect setting for this fun-filled evening. Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped make this event a dazzling success for the animals! **Please save the date!** We can't wait to see you next year for Wags, Whiskers & Wine at Kendall Jackson Wine Estate & Gardens, August 4, 2023!

Our Wags, Whiskers & Wine annual gala is made possible by the compassion and generosity of our fabulous sponsors, including Kendall-Jackson Wine Estate and Gardens and Mr. Ryder & Co. Antiques and Art.



In 1974, the Jackson family bought a Lake County vineyard, and making wine became so much more than a business - it became a tradition and a family legacy. As founder, Jess Jackson said, they "simply wanted to create extraordinary wine from California's best vineyards." The extended Kendall-Jackson family, from winemakers to culinary experts, represents the best in the food and wine industry. Their estate vineyards are located throughout the cool California coastal regions, where they sit atop mountains, ridges, hillsides and benchlands. Kendall-Jackson is a Sonoma County landmark and we are so proud of and grateful for their partnership.

## **SAVE THE DATE!** August 4, 2023



Betty Ann Sutton of Mr. Ryder and Company is a longtime friend of the Humane Society of Sonoma County. She's supported HSSC for over 20 years and we were so honored to have her sponsorship of our gala again this year!

Mr. Ryder and Company is a fabulous emporium of art and antiques located on Graton Road in Graton. So, who is "Mr. Ryder"? Mr. Ryder was Betty Ann's rescue dog. Her maiden name is Ryder and adding "mister" to his name was a tribute to her dad, the original Mr. Ryder. Betty Ann had been "rescuing" antiques for 25 years and rescuing cats with Forgotten Felines for many years. She became interested in supporting an organization that was making a difference for both dogs and cats. We are so grateful that she chose the Humane Society of Sonoma County! Betty Ann donated a portion of her mother's estate to the HSSC Spay/Neuter clinic and has been generously supporting our animals ever since. Thank you, Betty Ann!



## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Florence Nightingale said, 'A small pet animal is often an excellent companion for the sick.' When we explore the human-animal relationship, we see countless benefits. Some may be easier to spot than others - service animals, hiking partners, lap warmers, etc. - but I am most delighted when the magnitude and importance of these relationships in our lives are given the spotlight they deserve.

There is work being done around the globe to examine the human-animal bond. While we are seeing concrete evidence of pets providing therapeutic relief to the physical self, such as keeping blood pressure low or providing safety and protection against allergens or environmental dangers, the thing I'm most inspired by is a bit harder to quantify. It's in the stories we see unfold daily in our work; living proof of the power those connections to our animals can hold, and what they teach us about loyalty, patience and unconditional love. As you flip through the pages of this Winter issue of North Bay Pets, you'll catch a glimpse of some of the things we are doing, in every way we can, to support, protect and strengthen those beautiful connections.

The staff, volunteers, and you – the amazing supporters of the Humane Society of Sonoma County - possess the emotional endurance to make this world a better place. It may be through rescue, adoption or donations, through our community veterinary clinic, by offering free pet food and supplies, or even just by being there to lend an ear to pet parents in need. Thank you all for being a part of this beautiful, challenging journey and for coming along with us as we continue to explore and grow our lifesaving efforts for both pets and their people.

Lindsay McCall, HSSC Executive Director & Chief Morale Officer Bird McCall

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## The Humane Society of Sonoma County - ensuring every animal receives protection, compassion, love & care.

We are a locally-founded, locally-funded nonprofit organization supported through donations from our community. TAX ID# 94-6001315

North Bay Pets is a publication of the Humane Society of Sonoma County.

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Twist the kitten Photo by Kelsey Joy Photography



# HEALDSBURG HIGHIGHIS

## Something to meow about!

As of this writing, 169 at-risk animals, including 66 cats and 75 kittens, have been transferred directly to Healdsburg from crowded regional shelters this year! Direct transfer increases the total number of lives we can save and means the animals bypass a potentially stressful stop at our Santa Rosa campus.

HSSC's Healdsburg Shelter has been transferring adoptable animals directly from HSSC rescue partners since 2019. Our Healdsburg staff are able to provide intake exams, treat basic medical conditions, test for FeLV/FIV, and treat ringworm positive animals. They also have in-house lab equipment enabling them to do microscopic cytology for ear and skin infections and run full blood panels to diagnose certain health concerns.

The Healdsburg team works hard every step of the way on each animal's journey to adoption. They take care of everything from organizing transfers to cleaning habitats, administering medications, evaluating behavior, thoughtfully facilitating adoptions (281 to date!) and so much more!



## **Nonprofit of the Year!**

We're not the only one singing the praises of our hardworking Healdsburg team! The Healdsburg Shelter was recently honored with the Nonprofit of the Year Award from the Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce. We are very proud of our tiny-but-mighty Healdsburg team for providing so much compassionate care to the animals and our community.



## **Remembering Dean Gross** - a forever friend to the animals

HSSC is saddened by the loss of our dear friend Dean Gross. A compassionate and caring advocate for the animals of the Healdsburg Shelter, Dean was especially fond of cats. Along with his partner Clay Nesbitt, he was a longtime volunteer and supporter of HSSC. Each week he spent time doting on our shelter cats, giving them love and companionship. Our hearts go out to Clay and his family. Dean will be deeply missed. Please stay tuned as we announce the details for a special ribbon-cutting event to officially dedicate Kitty City, our Healdsburg Shelter's innovative cat room, in honor of Dean.

## BE SOMEBUNNY'S HERO!

Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease (RHDV) is a highly contagious and deadly virus that affects both pet and wild rabbits. Rabbits who enter our care that haven't already been vaccinated against the disease are vaccinated upon arrival and must be quarantined for 35 days before they're available for adoption. We are currently seeking house rabbit fosters to help us care for bunnies during their quarantine period. *For more information about becoming a foster volunteer, please visit: humanesocietysoco.org/foster/* 

**Big Love for Little Critters!** Guinea pigs, hamsters, rats and mice – oh my! These sweet petites may be tiny, but HSSC is showing them major lifesaving love! So far this year, we have transferred in over 81 small companion animals from overcrowded shelters! And, we've placed 110 wee friends into forever homes this year!

Meet our littles at humanesocietysoco.org/available-animals



**Thank You!** To Oliver's Market for their weekly donation of fresh greens and veggies for our hungry herbivores. To our 14 skilled and dedicated bunny/small animal volunteers who help us care for our smalls, and to our wonderful small animal adopters. And our heartfelt thanks to YOU! We're so grateful for the compassion of all who help us make heartwarming outcomes for these lovely pets possible.

## THINGS-A-PAW IN THE Volunteer World

We have some fun news in the HSSC volunteer world! For starters, we have a slew of new volunteer positions supporting our **Animal Care Technicians** (ACTs). These positions provide critical support to the ACTs and often include opportunities to interact with the animals, such as feeding, mopping and other cleaning in kennels/ habitats. These tasks are crucial to keeping our animal friends well fed, clean, and healthy, and we love that our volunteers can help with them!

We have also created our **Volunteer Ringworm Dipping Team**! These volunteers treat our ringworm kittens and cats twice a week and are a huge help to our ACTs. Read more about the impact they are making for kitties on pg. 6! We are currently seeking backup volunteers for this team - please see below to find out how to get involved.

And finally, we are looking for volunteers for an exciting new program that will bring our **Pet Food Pantry** out into our community. Volunteers will be involved in picking up donations of food, re-bagging food into smaller bags, labelling bags and helping deliver the food to various locations. For more on this new program please see page 11.

If you are interested in learning more about any of these positions, please email Katie at kmchugh@humanesocietysoco.org or visit: humanesocietysoco.org/get-involved/volunteer-faq

Volunteer Mary in Kitty Dipping Gear

## NEWS FROM OUR HUMANE EDUCATION PROGRAM

## Afterschool Animal Academy

This autumn we piloted a fun new program promoting compassion and care for all animals – the Afterschool Animal Academy! One afternoon a week for six weeks, kids aged 7 to 11 explored different animal-related careers, crafts and games, and enjoyed supervised interactions with animals. The first session sold out in minutes and we're excited to offer more sessions in the near future!

## HSSC Summer Camps win PD Best Of award!

We're pleased to announce that our Summer Camps won the Press Democrat's Best of Sonoma County Readers' Choice Awards for 2022! Our Humane Educator Kathy and our staff work hard to make our camps an award-winning experience for local youth.



## Winter Camps in full swing!

This year, Winter campers are meeting all kinds of animals (including alpacas, ponies and sheep!) and participating in all kinds of animal-related activities (including making toys and enrichment items for shelter animals and learning about dog and cat body language!). They're also participating in engaging presentations from a veterinarian, an animal control officer, a pet adoption counselor, a foster care coordinator and other animal experts.

## Latham Foundation Scholarship Grant

This summer we were honored to receive a grant from the Latham Foundation to help us create a camp scholarship fund for families of veterans, military personnel and first responders. We are tremendously grateful to these families for all the ways they serve our community and to the Latham Foundation for their generous support.



The Latham Foundation

For more information about Humane Education programs, please visit humanesocietysoco.org/humane-education/



## LIFESAVING

Twist is part acrobat, part purr machine and 100% kitten! He deftly chases his wand toy, stops to solicit cheek scritches, then commences with his playful leaps and pirouettes. At five months old, he's a "pre-teen" kitten who views the world with confidence and wide-eyed curiosity. And, thanks to your compassion, his world is a whole lot brighter!

Twist was in a vulnerable state and quickly running out of options before coming to HSSC this past September. At his previous shelter, he presented with a condition sometimes known as Orphaned Kitten Prepuce Syndrome. This occurs when orphaned kittens, in absence of a mama, mistakenly nurse on their siblings' genitals. This can lead to scarring and eventually cause damage and obstruction to the urethral opening. This sets the animal up for painful urinary infections and life-threatening blockages but can be remedied with surgery.

Unfortunately, surgery was not an option at Twist's previous shelter. They were overcrowded and faced with making the hardest, most heartbreaking decisions: Twist and several other kittens with medical issues (including eight with ringworm) would be euthanized unless they could find placement elsewhere. Thankfully, we were able to make room and take them all in.

Our veterinary team went for the least invasive route for Twist – a surgery called Preputial Urethrostomy. HSSC DVM Ada Norris describes the procedure as an attempt "to salvage the anatomy and create a functional urinary system." His condition was so severe, however, that he ultimately needed a second, full Perineal Urethrostomy surgery. The surgery was a success. Twist is healing well and will soon be available for adoption. "He's the happiest little kitten and seems grateful for all our interventions," Dr. Ada says.

2022 has been a year marked by urgent pleas and last-minute saves. Our intake team has been inundated with desperate requests from overcrowded regional partners faced with euthanizing animals unless they could find placement elsewhere.

## WITH A TWIST



## Ringworm

This year, we've taken in a high volume of kittens and cats infected with ringworm who had nowhere else to turn. This highly contagious fungus requires lengthy treatment times and strict isolation protocols – resources that are beyond the means of many of our partner rescues. Sometimes these kittens suffer from severe upper respiratory infections, which need to be treated at the same time. At our highest point this summer, we had four full isolation wards between our Santa Rosa and Healdsburg shelters!

What enables us to expand our capacity to take in the most vulnerable animals? The compassion and coordination of many, including:

## **Our Beloved Volunteers**

Our staff is grateful for our dedicated volunteers who spend several hours a day assisting with dip treatments and socializing of infected cats to help them feel comfortable and loved.

As Saffron Williams, HSSC Feline Behavior Program Manager, explains, "cats who are undergoing treatment for ringworm could, if only given attention during medication, form a negative association with humans. Having consistent visitors who will play with them, sit with them while they eat, and pet and otherwise handle them, ensures that they will have positive experiences with people."

Mary, one of these special volunteers, goes the extra mile and creates disposable toys by hand from recycled materials. While these kitties are living in isolated wards for weeks at a time, Mary and her kicker toys give them much needed enrichment.

Our foster volunteers are another reason we are able to save animals when they need us most. They open their homes to animals recovering from illness or surgery - or baby animals not yet ready for adoption - so that we have space to care for more animals in our shelters. HSSC Foster Program Manager Nicole Gonzales is currently seeking fosters to help with some of our most sensitive groups – bottle baby kittens and those with infectious diseases, like ringworm. "Ringworm fostering requires a dedicated space for the animals that can be easily disinfected," she explains. "A spare bathroom or bedroom with tile flooring works well." Foster parents wear personal protective equipment, and we provide all materials and trainings necessary.



Donate to our Angels Fund by visiting our website!

## **Our Regional Rescue Partners**

Shelters across the country have been dealing with an unprecedented overcrowding this year and our area is no different. We salute our North Bay rescue partners who collaborate with us to provide lifesaving pathways for at-risk animals. At a time when our industry continues to face staffing shortages and other complex challenges, their passion and hard work keep us moving forward toward our shared goal of saving more lives. We are all in this together!

## **Our Compassionate Donors**

Your commitment to the animals enables us to be nimble and responsive when precious lives are at stake. While our industry continues to navigate challenging times, you are truly making a lifesaving difference – you make it possible for us to answer these calls for help. Your compassionate contributions to our Angels Fund go directly toward medical care for animals in need on their path to adoption. Thank you for making our community a safe place for animals to thrive through your loving support.

## ALI, NOW PURROW

Adorable kitty Ali was transferred to our Healdsburg shelter from the Astro Foundation, a partner shelter in Oakdale, CA. When she arrived she was a little on the shy side, but it didn't take long before this beautiful green eyed girl gained confidence, and got adopted!

Kristen had recently lost her 19 year old cat, and really wanted to find the right companion for her 7 year old kitty Weezie, who was now in need of a playmate. It was Ali's little mustache that caught Kristen's attention, and Ali's description fit what she was looking for in a kitty, so that afternoon she drove to the shelter to meet this little sweetheart. It was love at first sight. Kristen adopted Ali that very day, and recently sent us this update, "I was told she was shy - she hid for the first week at the shelter, but once comfortable, was quite people oriented! As expected, she was shy at home, but if I put my hand under the chair where she hid, she'd rest her cheek against it. If my boyfriend or I laid on the floor, she'd come up on our chests. Within a week she became confident enough to explore the house, eventually not needing to retreat to her hiding spot. We changed her name to 'Purrow' - a play on the mustachioed Agatha Christie character Inspector Poirot.

It took a few weeks for Weezie to accept her, but now they are partners in crime. They love snuggling with us and getting cheek scratches. Purrow sits in my lap every night when I watch TV, and she cuddles with us in bed. She's spunky and full of character! Her meows are laughably expressive and she sits with her paws crossed. I often find an array of cat toys that she has pulled out of the baskets, and I'm happy to see Weezie join in on playtime. I can't wait to see how Purrow reacts to her first 10 foot Christmas tree with us! My boyfriend often comments that I chose the perfect cat."

## DOT DOT, NOW MR. DOT DOT

Dot Dot is one lucky rabbit. This sweet guy got a new chance at a forever home when he was surrendered to our care. He was a little bit shy at the shelter, but he was friendly and very cute. When Megan, his adopter, came to HSSC to meet him, it was a done deal. Dot Dot's adorable face won her over, and he was off to new adventures!

We were so happy to hear from Megan with this update: "Mr. Dot Dot is loving his new place. He's so playful, loving, and curious. When we first met Mr. Dot Dot, he was pretty shy and did not like being picked up. But once you picked him up, he loved to sit on your lap for some pets. Since we've brought him home, he has really broken out of his shell. He's a master at flopping. Loves to run and jump around. Also will lick your face to say hello. Mr.Dot Dot is one of the sweetest rabbits. Everyone who's ever met him has fallen in love with him. We want to say thank you to the people of The Humane Society of Sonoma County for allowing us to adopt Mr. Dot Dot. We are so happy Mr. Dot Dot is a part of our family."

HAPPY trils











### REMI

Our sweet Remi has been on a long journey to find her forever family. After trying for years with a few different homes that just weren't the right fit, Remi once again found herself at HSSC waiting for the right adopters to come along. She became best buds with many of our staff and volunteers, everyone loved her for her sweet, goofy personality!

The last time Remi was returned to our care, we were surprised to find out that Carolyn, one of HSSC's volunteer dog walkers, had her eye on Remi and had been interested in adopting for quite some time! Whenever someone asked which dog was her favorite at the shelter, she'd say, "Remi, of course!" Carolyn and her partner had sadly lost both of their dogs four years ago, but hadn't been ready to adopt yet. Carolyn says, "Then my partner casually mentioned that she was ready to adopt if the right dog came along. In between two trips this summer, I thought, 'wouldn't it be great if Remi was still available for adoption after we're done with our next trip?' Well, timing is everything! She's been with us for 5 weeks and has brought us an immeasurable amount of joy. She loves laying in the sun and receiving lots of loving rubs and scratches. A huge thanks to the Humane Society for all they do in caring for animals."

## MARCUS (NOW RUFUS)

Marcus was a young dog who arrived at HSSC as a stray from the streets of Healdsburg. At around one year old, this energetic puppy was very bouncy, excitable, and didn't know how to walk on a leash. Our Canine Behavior team worked with Marcus to help him learn and grow at the shelter. After nine months of searching for a forever family, Marcus finally met his new parents, Virginia and Anthony!

They recently reached out to give us an update on Marcus (now named Rufus), they said, "Rufus is doing fantastic! Every day he has a blast playing with our other dog, Bindi. Right now, their favorite 'game' is for Rufus to chase after a ball, and then try and get it back to me, with Bindi on his tail in hot pursuit! They'll run laps around one of the local playing fields with her chasing him. We've also gone to the Russian River and Lake Sonoma multiple times, and he loves hopping on the paddle board! A few months ago, we took him down to Vandenberg Space Force base, and we watched a rocket launch together! Afterwards, we stopped at Pismo Beach, and he had a blast running on the beach and running away from the surf as it rolled in. We absolutely love having Rufus in our home, and I look forward to spending many years exploring the outdoors with him!"

## **RON WEASLEY (NOW PHOENIX)**

Ron was at immediate risk of euthanasia and urgently transferred to our care. He'd been housed in an overcrowded shelter and was very stressed and shut down. HSSC was contacted with the hope that we could provide a calmer environment and give him a second chance at life. We were overjoyed to give this adorable red headed pitty a fresh start in Sonoma County! He was a little shy at the beginning, but quickly became a staff and volunteer favorite for his sweet, silly personality!

When Nicholas and his family came to HSSC looking for a new fuzzy family member, they quickly fell in love with our sweet Ron Weasley. It was a mutually loving connection from the start. We recently heard from Nicholas with an update: "Ever since Ron Weasley entered our home he's gone from sedated and anxious to excited, content, and cuddly. We all watched Harry Potter the week we got him and realized the name Ron Weasley no longer suited him, he was more like the Phoenix rising from the ashes, so that's why we named him Phoenix. He fits right in with us and we all couldn't be happier."

## FIND YOUR OWN HAPPY TAIL AT HUMANESOCIETYSOCO.ORG/ADOPT/

## PROVIDING YOUR PUPPY WITH PAWSITIVE INTERACTIONS!

HSSC's Academy of Dog team believes that the path to positive interactions is paved with gradual introductions to new situations, people and dogs. That's why we offer a series of fun, science-based and stress-free classes designed to support safe and healthy socialization for your puppy – and provide the tools you need to help your pup grow into a happy, confident dog.

## The path to pawsitivity begins here!

**ORIENTATION:** A 60-minute online orientation introducing you to common issues of puppy development, such as housetraining, teething, chewing, equipment and much more, preparing you for classwork ahead!

**DROP-OFF PUPPY PLAY:** This special 4-week class provides a comfortable, carefully monitored space for your pup to progress at his or her own pace. When your puppy is ready, they will begin to make friends with other classmates, building their own "canine cohort" where they learn to play and interact with ease and confidence. Drop off your puppy for supervised play with other dogs while you run an errand or get a cup of coffee. Come back forty-five minutes later to pick up your happy, tuckered out pup!

**KINDERPUPPY:** This 4-week class provides a safe and fun learning environment for you and your puppy. Your pup will develop important socialization skills with other pups and their humans. Through games and easy exercises, you will develop basic skills such as sit, come, go-to-mat, and beginning leash walking.

To learn more about Drop-Off Puppy Play and our other training classes, please visit our website: **humanesocietysoco.org/dog-training** 

## NORTH BAY PETS IS GOING DIGITAL!

To make our Happy Tails accessible to as many animal lovers as possible, to conserve our donor-supported resources and to make all our practices as environmentally sensitive and sustainable as possible, we are transitioning North Bay Pets to a digital format.



Everyone will now be able to read our joyful adoption stories, stay up to date on shelter activities, learn about our life-saving and safety net programs, and explore the many ways to help the animals in our community.

We'll send out a special email announcing each new issue, and the magazine will always be accessible at the North Bay Pets link on our website!

We want you to have your North Bay Pets your way! If you would like to continue receiving your North Bay Pets in the mail, please email us at **info@humanesocietysoco.org** or call Julie Compton at **707.542.0882 x265**.

Thank you for your love and support of the animals!

## **HSSC SHELTER INITIATIVES:** TAKING IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL!

As a friend of HSSC and the animals, you're already aware of the many resources we provide for pets and their people. Our donor-supported Community Veterinary Clinic, Pet Food Pantry and Low-Cost Spay/Neuter services are just a few that may come to mind. Now, we are taking it to the next level!

The aim of our new Shelter Initiatives program is to improve, grow and create public programs that will enable HSSC to be even more of a resource center and community staple for all pet lovers in the North Bay and beyond. HSSC's Director of Shelter Initiatives, Meagan Cirivello, has been working hard to assess the needs of pet parents in our community. "The most pressing ones pertaining to pets are often the most basic: food, shelter and veterinary services. And access to these basic services can be limited," she says.

One of our first priorities has been to expand access to our pet pantry. "HSSC's Pet Food Pantry has existed for many years as a place to come and pick up food for their pets," Meagan states, "but what if you don't have a vehicle or can't get to the shelter during business hours?" Her team has been coordinating with local agencies to meet community need where it exists. "We've been going to mobile shower sites for unhoused individuals, bringing pet food and supplies each week. It's been a great way to reach pet guardians who may not be able to get to our shelter. We're also collaborating with our friends at Compassion Without Borders to bring a mobile pet food pantry to their mobile wellness clinic."

Meagan is also developing a "tool kit" to connect historically underserved pet guardians with resources for their pet's basic needs. "We are hoping to provide support to people who experience homelessness, domestic violence, low or fixed income and seniors – all with the mission of helping people and pets."

Stayed tuned! We are assessing and evolving additional public service initiatives, such as pop-up veterinary clinics, animal assisted therapy opportunities, mobile adoptions and much more – and we are truly excited about the possibilities. Bringing – and keeping! – people and their pets together is not only good for the animals, it's good for us humans too. By supporting the human/animal bond, we're supporting the collective health and wellbeing of our beloved community.

Growing and sustaining our safety net programs require the compassion of many. HSSC is grateful for generous support this year from organizations including the Banfield Foundation, California for All Animals, California State Prevention Fund, Community Foundation Sonoma County, DogsTrust USA, Grey Muzzle Organization, Latham Foundation, Petco Love, PetSmart Charities and the Thelma Doelger Trust for Animals. And... YOU! Your steadfast kindness helps us ensure that every animal is safe, cared for and loved.





Estamos listos para servir a nuestra comunidad. La Sociedad Humana de Sonoma County está creando programas de servicios para ayudar a la comunidad y sus mascotas que se encuentren en necesidad, dando una respuesta al gran Ilamado de ayuda que recibimos.

Programas que ofrezcan comida gratis de animales, cuidado preventivo a bajo costo, educación, recursos y conexiones a otros servicios públicos para sus mascotas.

Nuestra visión es crear y mantener un departamento que ofrezca necesidades básicas y otros recursos para mantener familias juntas y conservar la conexión de humano con su mascota.

Estamos motivados en construir un ecosistema de bienestar para animales y establecer relaciones con negocios locales y otras agencias de servicios comunitarios para ofrecer acceso y más recursos.

### To donate, please visit:





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