

HERE'S HOW. Jim Newton, PBA Past-President, talks about tree, a Robusta Green Juniper, he is styling for visitors to '74 PBA Annual Spring Show at National Arboretum. Similar demonstration work will be featured

at the 1975 Show, scheduled to take place on April 26-27. (Photo by Suniewick)

Wash Washington Club? Maybe

Austin T. Graves, Jr., a Brookside Gardens Bonsai member and a District of Columbia resident, called a meeting of a group tentatively identified as the Washington Bonsai Club. More than 40 persons turned out at the National Arboretum on March 23 in response to an announcement carried in the Washington Post.

PBA was not given advance notice, so its participation was limited to attendance by a few members reading the newspaper article.

Following an oral presentation of various items of information about bonsai in general and announcements, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden film, "Bonsai," was shown. A question and answer session followed, conducted by Cliff Pottberg.

Recognized and asked to speak a few words were PBA President John Hreha and PBA Board members Peter Abresch and Jim Newton.

No formal business was conducted, and the group may elect officers at their next meeting, scheduled as a workshop, in April. Details will be announced, Graves said.

12

TO:

FIRST CLASS MAIL



Potomac Bonsai Association

c/o National Arboretum
24th & R Streets, NE
Washington, D.C. 20018

UP A TREE...



"I think my three-trunk Japanese Andromeda just committed harakiri!"

REMOVE CLOSE-IN FOLIAGE

Twigs and foliage on naturally-grown old trees do not grow close to the main trunk. Usually, branch forks are exposed. Remove foliage starting at the base of the branch outward to a distance from the trunk consistent with the correct proportion of the bonsai. This will measurably add to the appearance of age.

Surface roots can be encouraged to increase their diameter more quickly if they are underground and kept moist. Try covering them with a little soil and sphagnum moss, which can be removed for exhibition and replaced at other times.

DID YOU KNOW...

A little corrective pruning or rubbing off of unwanted buds during the growing season will save work during the dormant period and cause much less shock to the tree than an amputation later.

April 1975 • PBA NEWSLETTER



BCI '76



Upright

Yew

April 1975 Volume 5, Number 4



PBA Newsletter

Potomac

Bonsai

Association


The Cover

Looking like a forest giant silhouetted against a clear sky, this Upright Yew (*Taxus cuspidata*) exudes a ruggedness that suggests a rough life full of storms and winds and ice. Yet its spread of branches, its upright stature, its strikingly visible scars all paint a picture that cannot fail to strike a chord in the true bonsaiist. Its dignity gives it a touch of *shibui* that caught the selection committee's eye for last year's PBA Show. The Yew belongs to a Northern Virginia Bonsai Society member.

(Photo by Suneiwick)

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POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION



Newsletter

Published solely in the interests of the POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION, a non-profit organization, and its affiliate member clubs and societies, under the authority of its Board of Directors.

JOHN C. HREHA, President

POTOMAC BONSAI ASSOCIATION
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Washington, D.C. 20018

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president's message

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY, PBA

My tenure as PBA President will end at the Board of Directors meeting to be held this month, and I take this opportunity to say a few words in regard to the past year.

The most memorable event, of course, is the donation of 50 trees to the United States by Japan as a gift to celebrate our Bicentennial next year. The trees are quarantined in Glenn Dale, Md. and will remain there until 1976, when they will be housed in a specially-built pavilion at the National Arboretum. The formal dedication ceremony will take place during, and as part of, the BCI '76 Convention scheduled here in July 1976. PBA is the host for this Convention, and I know all members join me in extending sincere gratitude to the Japan Foundation the Japanese Government, the Nippon Bonsai Association, and the people of Japan.

In June 1973, Jim Newton, John Hinds, Cliff Pottberg, and myself met with Dr. John Creech, whose untiring efforts in this endeavor will be honored to the highest degree in the ensuing years as the knowledge, the interest, and the expertise of bonsai increases in this country. For these efforts, I believe it would be most fitting to propose that the National Arboretum Bonsai Collection be named "The Creech Collection."

On another note, the affiliation of two more clubs with PBA has been most gratifying. I welcome members of the Forest Glade Bonsai Club of Reston, Va., and the Columbia (Md.) Bonsai Club into the PBA family. In our six clubs, at the last count, PBA membership totals 269. We have come a long way from the original 14 charter members in four years. The Brookside Gardens Bonsai group went over the 100-member mark to make it the largest of the affiliates.

But large or small, to all you in PBA who helped our progress during this past year, I express my deepest appreciation.

Sincerely Yours in Bonsai,
John Hreha
President

National Collection Trees Accepted In Tokyo Ceremony

In U.S. This Month

Dr. John Creech, Director of the National Arboretum and PBA Honorary Member, accepted on behalf of the United States, in ceremonies in Tokyo, Japan, on March 20, the 50 trees which will become the permanent National Arboretum Bonsai Collection. The rare and priceless collection was presented by the Nippon Bonsai Association of Japan.

Half the miniature trees are donations from private sources, including some from members of the Royal Japanese Family. The remainder were purchased with funds provided by a semi-official agency of the Japanese government, The Japan Foundation

which works to promote international cultural exchange. The Foundation also is providing funds to send expert Japanese bonsaiists to this country to instruct American personnel in proper care of the plants.

"These particular bonsai," Dr. Creech said, "comprise some of Japan's most treasured and valued specimens, some dating back more than 400 years. Each specimen is unique. Each one is irreplaceable."

Following the presentation ceremonies, which were attended by Japanese government dignitaries and representatives of the United States Embassy, the Collection was placed on public display in Tokyo for three days. It was then packed in specially designed crates and shipped via commercial airline to Washington. Dr. Creech and the Arboretum's chief horticulturist, Sylvester "Skip" March, accompanied the trees to assure safety.

The bonsai will remain in quarantine, required by law, at the US Department of Agriculture's Plant Introduction Station at Glenn Dale, Md. After their stay in quarantine, the trees will be moved to their permanent quarters at the Arboretum where they will be displayed. A viewing pavilion is being designed as a permanent addition to the Arboretum.

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Bonsai - Taught And Learned

by KHAN KOMAI

(Reprinted permission of the California Bonsai Society)

(Part 1 appeared in the February 1975 issue of the Newsletter - Ed.)

One of the foremost bonsai teachers in Southern California implied that to make a good bonsai one must have a feeling of Zen. Zen is described simply as seeking

Part 2

truth through introspection and intuition. Although bonsai classes are generally taught logically, to become proficient a feeling of "rightness" of the tree must come from within rather than from rules.

Too many students, without really understanding the basics of bonsai, want to make a "pretty" bonsai because it appeals to them. Often what they label bonsai is simply a potted plant. If a person truly likes bonsai, learn what the instructor teaches. There is time enough for experiment after he has learned what is basic.

Some argue that bonsai need not follow traditional lines, that the ancient art is being evolved to meet western needs, that freedom of expression is important, that naturalness of form is the modern trend.

Writing in the Australian Bonsai Journal, Vita Koreshoff says, "The arguments one so often hears...in favour of naturalness of shapes in bonsai...all are gen-



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Member Bonsai Artists League

Tree of the Month

Rhododendron Sp.

by MILT KIDD

President, Brookside Gardens Bonsai

Rhododendrons! "Diverse they are, wildly so, but it becomes a little more meaningful to make a comparison: if humans varied in stature as much as do rhododendrons, a good part of the population would be half a mile tall! From two-inch alpinists atop the Tibetan Himalayas to oak-like trees festooned with orchids in the monsoon moisture of upper Burma; from minute matchstick leaves to elephant-ear monsters a yard long and a foot across; from vine-like epiphyte sorts rooted in a bit of debris high in the tree crowns of southeastern Asia's forests to squat, square undershrubs on the rocky mountain slopes which loom above them..." To narrow the subject even to just dwarf rhododendrons makes it only slightly less difficult to assimilate.

Nevertheless, this area of ericaceous plant material offers the experimentalist a vast untapped source of possible bonsai material. Not an expert, I can only offer a bibliography and some observations based on nearly four years experience.

Rhododendron growth habit is ideal for bonsai - slow and generally more horizontal than vertical. The color range is enormous - from the pale pinks of R. moupinense and the lemon-yellows or R. keskei to the lavenders, purples, and blues of R. impeditum, fastigatum, or rupicola. The latter species are much more readily available in this area, and varieties derived from cross-breeding easier to obtain and seem to adapt to pot culture more successfully than the species itself. Ramapo, Blue Tit, Blue Diamond, and Purple Gem are but a few of the cultivars available locally. They propagate easily during July and August from semi-hardened new growth in a $\frac{1}{2}$ -sand, $\frac{1}{2}$ -sphagnum medium, in either plastic shoe boxes or under laundry bag plastic.

Culture is essentially the same as for any Azalea, with the exception of their

vulnerability to overwatering. PROVIDE EXCELLENT DRAINAGE LAYER AND POT HIGH IN THE CONTAINER. Many will grow in full sun (R. impeditum, for example), but only four to five hours of early morning sun is suggested, followed by light shade or filtered sun.

The necessary acidity is helped by using vinegar - water in two of the waterings during the week (1 tbs vinegar to 1 gal. water). Oak compost, coarse sand, coarse Michigan peat, and Kitty Litter in the ratio 1:2:1:1 has worked well, but much depends on pot size, its draining ability, and your own watering habits. It is suggested you experiment.

Fertilizing should be minimal if your soil contains compost; once immediately after flowering and again in the middle of June with doubly-diluted Hyponex is sufficient. Remember, fertilizing of bonsai is to keep them healthy, NOT to make them grow faster.

Prune as with Azaleas, but remember - DWARF RHODODENDRONS DO NOT TAKE SEVERE PRUNING. Do it a little at a time. Good pruning techniques are explained in Lynn Perry's "Bonsai - Trees and Shrubs," which is available from the PBA Library.

Insects and diseases are minimal if rhododendrons are grown in the correct soil, but some, R. impeditum, are susceptible to mealy bug and occasionally to lace-bug. A forceful spray with the hose followed by spraying with nicotine or doubly-diluted Malathion and mixed with a drop or two of soap takes care of them. Apply three times, four days apart.

A phytophthora root rot and blight are the most serious, particularly when the dwarf rhododendrons are container-grown. Sterilizing compost (125° for one hour) and providing excellent drainage are good preventatives. In the heat of Washington summers, keep bonsai where there is a

(to page 6)

All-Day Workshops Set For June

by RICHARD MESZLER
PBA Educational Vice-President

The educational vice-presidents of each PBA affiliate club have been asked to plan to host an all-day workshop at different times in June. All PBA affiliate members are urged to attend one or more of these workshops. Any member of any affiliate club will be welcome at any of the workshops.

The idea originated with the Baltimore club, which had great success with one of these all-day workshops last year. It was held in my backyard. All of our own club members were invited to come between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.; the club served iced tea and soda, and attending members brought their own lunch. Some came simply to talk and learn, others brought trees to repot, style, etc. The more experienced members were on hand to help out.

The workshops will provide a great opportunity for an interchange of ideas, techniques, and tips, while each person works on his own trees. I hope all PBA affiliate club members will not only attend the workshop hosted by their own club, but will visit other hosted workshops as well. This will be another way we all can learn about bonsai by drawing on the larger resources of the Association. Check your educational vice-president for the date of your club's workshop and the PBA Newsletter for dates of other club workshops.

Oops!

A sharp-eyed reader caught an error in last month's issue concerning the tree featured on the cover, incorrectly identified as a *Pinus strobus* and owned by a Baltimore Bonsai Club member. Actually, it is a *Pinus parviflora*, Japanese White Pine, and its owner belongs to the Brookside Garden Bonsai group.

Sorry about that!

Thickening Methods


For a bonsai with little taper, this deficiency can sometimes be corrected by cultivating it in open ground for two or more growing seasons. The effect can be speeded up by planting it deeper than usual. Partially "strangling" the trunk just below the soil surface will cause swelling that also rectifies the "telegraph pole" look. Still another trick is to let suckers or low-growing branches grow unrestrained during the two-season in-ground period. The trunk will thicken below such growth, which can be cut off when the tree is once again potted.

RHODODENDRON... (from page 5)

good breeze and do not overwater during the muggy season. Terrazole helps control the wilt.

Repot yearly or every other year in October or early April.

Those interested in furthering their knowledge of rhododendrons may contact Henri Sokolove, a Brookside Gardens Bonsai member, for information on membership in the American Rhododendron Society, or may read: "Handbook on Rhododendrons and Their Relatives," Brooklyn Botanic Garden publication; "Dwarf Rhododendrons" by Peter A. Cox, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1973; "Wise Garden Encyclopedia;" or other books in your local library.



JULY
10-12

American
Bonsai
Society

ABS
Symposium
Kansas City, MO

PBA Annual Meeting Set In Baltimore

MARION GYLLENSWAN
TO DEMONSTRATE

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Potomac Bonsai Association will be held at 1 p.m., Saturday, May 24, in Cylburn Mansion, Cylburn Park, Baltimore, Md. It will precede a demonstration of bonsai styling and planting by Marion Gyllenswan of Nanuet, N. Y., past-president of the Bonsai Society of Greater New York and American Bonsai Society Director. The agenda for membership business will include election of two At-Large Directors,

a vote on PBA constitutional amendments, and committee reports.

The following day, Sunday, May 25, Marion will conduct a bonsai workshop at the National Arboretum, starting at 1 p.m. The fee will be \$15 per person, and the workshop is limited to 10 people - BEGINNERS ARE URGED TO APPLY. Call John Hreha, 301-253-4167, for reservations. Observers may attend (no questions permitted during workshop) for \$3.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

Club News Notes

The Annapolis Bonsai Club held its annual election at their March 14 meeting, with the following results:

Joyce Pelletier, President
Stephen Morse, Vice-President
John Patterson, Educational VP
Rose Mary Swartwood, Secretary
Ann Day, Treasurer

The ABC Board of Directors is composed of: Dorothy Brown, Peter Abresch, Lynette Nielsen, Joyce Pelletier, Ann Day, Ron Lovejoy, and John Patterson, Chairman.

There will be a Baltimore Bonsai Club display held in conjunction with Cylburn Market Day, an annual Horticultural Happening, on May 10, according to Cliff Pottberg, BBC President. Hours will be from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Baltimore Bonsai Club elected new Directors Kirk Cylus, Helen Lauenstein, and Felix Ready. They join incumbents Richard Meszler, Michele Hecht, Cliff Pottberg, and Katherine Johnson.

BBC officers will be elected at an April 4 meeting.

Brookside Gardens Bonsai elected new officers at their meeting on March 21. Results were:

Milton Kidd, President
Harvey Everett, Vice-President
John Hinds, Educational VP
Ann Edwards, Secretary
John Hreha, Treasurer

Emphasis during the coming year, the new President said, will be on workshops.

New Directors selected were: Keith Kaneshiro, Harvey Everett, and Ann Edwards. John Hreha was selected as the club Regional Director to the PBA Board.



JULY
2-6

New
Bonsai
Horizons

1975 International
Bonsai Convention
MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA

Extrapolation By Abresch

Annapolis Vice-President Peter Abresch presented an unusual program for club members in February. His talk and slides covered Bonsai Village near Omiya, Japan, and a study he made of John Naka's personal collection.


Slides and handmade sketches illustrated his primary purpose: to show how to reduce wildings in size. His approach is unique, in that he extended pictures of miniature trees as they are today to show with line drawings where the original trunk might have been and probable size.

With close-up color photos he pinpointed ways in which trunks have been tapered or new top lines created. He visually demonstrated how the lack of branches can be overcome by training - even to wiring peeled bark to look like a jinned branch.

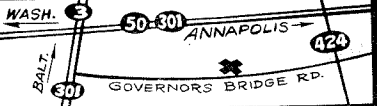
He also discussed how to fatten up a particular trunk section by letting some branches grow to great lengths, and showed how the angle of planting can create the illusion of greater trunk taper. Many slides detailed hollowed-out trunks and scarifications used to hide cut areas. Several fascinating theories were put forth on increasing taper - including the hollowing out of a trunk then squeezing the bark together in the desired shape.

A lasting benefit of Pete's program was enabling members to better visualize how trees might look after styling.

Got ideas, hints, suggestions about our activities? Don't keep them to yourself. Call the Newsletter editor!



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4th Demonstrator

Molly Hersh, outgoing Brookside Gardens Bonsai President and PBA Treasurer, will round out the list of four demonstrators performing at the Fourth Annual Bonsai Show on April 26 and 27. She will do her thing at the 2 p.m. Sunday session.

Other performers will be Peter Abresch, Saturday morning at 11 a.m.; John Hreha, Sunday 11 a.m.; and Marion Gyllenswan, Sunday 2 p.m.

The PBA Board of Directors will meet at 10 a.m. Sunday to elect new Association officers and conduct Association business as required. Meeting will take place in the conference room above the Arboretum's auditorium.

Picking A New Leader

Topping a tree to bring it down to bonsai size can leave an unsightly scar unless made with some forethought. Here is one method that has proven satisfactory.

The first spring, make the topping cut about two inches above the topmost branch selected to be the new leader. Tie this new leader in a vertical position, tying it to the stump with spirally-wound twine or padded wire.

The following spring, remove the twine or wire and the new leader's position should remain in the vertical. The stump is then cut from the base of the leader diagonally from the base of the branch downward. Cover with wound treatment. As the new leader develops branchlets, the cut scar will gradually disappear.

Shorten To Thicken

When a bonsai's trunk diameter appears to be too thin, shorten the height of the tree. This immediately creates a change in proportion, making the shortened tree look noticeably thicker than before the reduction of height was made.

Got ideas, hints, suggestions about our activities? Don't keep them to yourself. Call the Newsletter editor!

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Naka Day Session

A few openings remain for the day session of the John Naka four-day school set for April 14-17 at the National Arboretum auditorium. Charge is \$65, and would-be students should contact Molly Hersh, 301-589-3725, for reservations.

BEGINNERS ARE WELCOME

All students may bring as many trees to work on as they are capable of doing in the allotted four-day sessions. This is usually limited to two trees requiring full pruning, shaping, wiring, and potting. Slower workers may do only one; more rapid students may do three. Each student must provide his/her own wire, soil, and tools.


NATIONAL...

(from page 3)

American bonsaiists, including PBA members, have volunteered to assist in the conditioning necessary to maintain these bonsai in their unique styles. Arboretum horticulturists, under Skip March's supervision, will perform the daily care of the trees.

The full Collection will not be available for public viewing until July 1976, when formal ceremonies are planned. These ceremonies are an integral part of the planning for BCI '76, when all attendees to the Bonsai Clubs International Convention will be bussed to the Arboretum to witness the official event and to view the Collection first-hand. They will be guests at a reception following the formal program.

for
membership
information
in the



**American
Bonsai
Society**

write: _____

Membership Secretary-PB
464 South Shore Drive
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Professional Profile

Until recently, most dealers carrying bonsai or material suitable for bonsai stocked only outdoor plants. This made it difficult for bonsai enthusiasts who want to indulge their hobby on a year round basis, or those who live in apartments and other space-restrictive locations, to find suitable stock.

Last year, Robart Bonsai Co., owned and operated by Thomas C. Rozzell, decided to concentrate solely on indoor bonsai. Thus began a long search by Tom for material suited to indoor culture.

Although bonsai is part-time for Tom, he has sold more indoor bonsai than any-

Tom Rozzell

one else in the metropolitan Washington area during the past year. This is remarkable because his entire operation is carried out in an 8' x 12' greenhouse inside his garage. The structure is heated by a small electric heater, and fluorescent grow-lights are used.

Tom has travelled as far west as California and even to Maine in search for suitable plants for indoor growing. His company carries a number of Mame bonsai because these generally do well inside and require less space. Robart also carries many other different size bonsai, including: *Serissa foetida* in several varieties; *Malpighia coccigera*, the so-called Barbados or Singapore Holly; two *Zelkova* varieties, *serrata* and *nire*; *Satsuki* Azaleas; *Cotoneaster* (in bloom now); Firethorn - *Pyracantha*; Globe Brush Cherry, the *Eugenia* sp.; Natal Plum, *Cassia macrocarpa*; *Raphiolepis indica*; San Jose Juniper; *Crassula arborescens*.


Robart prices are among the lowest in this area for bonsai of comparable size. Quality is excellent, and each tree has obviously received individual attention. Each reflects a high degree of artistry and imagination in styling. Yet wiring is held to a minimum, for Tom leaves some training and pruning for the buyer, believing that much of the joy of bonsai is in personal creation of the final form of the tree.

Tom also believes a bonsai sale should

be accompanied by instructions on how to care for the tree bought. He has written and published a very fine instruction book, *The Care of Indoor Trees*, which explains in simple language the important techniques involved in caring for subtropical plants. A copy of the book, now in its second printing, goes with each tree sold.

Robart Bonsai Co. is located between Annandale and Fairfax in Virginia. All showings are strictly by appointment, which should be made in advance by calling 703-280-5933. Directions are given when the appointment is made.

Tom is a member of the Northern Virginia Bonsai Society, and Robart Bonsai Co. is one of four firms founding the Bonsai Artists League, along with the Bonsai Information Guild, Inc., Bertha's Bonsai, and Cochel Bonsai Studio, a consortium established for mutual cooperative benefits in Washington area bonsai business.



BONSAI /

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PBA Affiliate Club

Activity Schedule

	Columbia - Field Trip, date to be announced
8	Columbia - Potting Workshop
11	Annapolis - General Workshop; bring your own materials, any tree you want to work on
12	Baltimore - Bonsai Demonstration by E. Felton Jones of Atlanta (Felton is PBA Honorary Member); Cylburn Mansion, 3 p.m.
12	Northern Virginia - Show Tree Selection; while selection committee works, Jim Newton will conduct "Impossible Tree Clinic;" members are urged to bring worst trees for advice and counsel, if desired, pruning, shaping, wiring will be started on the spot
13	Baltimore - Bonsai Workshop with E. Felton Jones; call Cliff Pottberg, 301-472-2664, to sign up; Cylburn Mansion, 10 a.m.
14-17	All - John Naka School; \$65; contact Molly Hersh, 301-589-3725, for reservation; beginners welcome as well as advanced students
18	Brookside - Second Show Tree Selection Session; necessary due to late spring that kept members from dewinterizing trees by March meeting date
20	Annapolis - Collecting Trip to eastern shore; call Joyce Pelletier, 301-639-8547, for details
25	Forest Glade (Reston) - Workshop, using Colorado Spruce; bring your own pots; soil and wire will be furnished by the club
26-27	All - Fourth Annual PBA Bonsai Show; National Arboretum, 24th & R Sts, NE, Washington, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily; bonsai demonstrations 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. both days

ANNAPOLIS BONSAI CLUB - Main Library, West St., Annapolis, Md., 2d Friday, 7 p.m. regular meetings; 6:30 p.m. workshops

BALTIMORE BONSAI CLUB - Cylburn Park Mansion, Baltimore, Md., 3d Saturday, 3 p.m.

BROOKSIDE GARDENS BONSAI - Brookside Nature Center, 1500 Glenallan Ave., Wheaton, Md., 3d Friday, 7:30 p.m.

COLUMBIA BONSAI CLUB - Jeffers Hill Neighborhood Center, Old Montgomery Rd. and Tamar Dr., Columbia, 2d Tuesday, 8 p.m.

FOREST GLADE BONSAI CLUB - Glade Room, 11550 Glade Dr. in Hunter's Woods, Reston, Va., 4th Friday, 7:30 p.m.

NORTHERN VIRGINIA BONSAI SOCIETY - Golf Branch Nature Center, 3608 Military Rd., Arlington, Va., 2d Saturday, 10 a.m.

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