

# VOX



## HUNTSVILLE AMATEUR RADIO CLUB

Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 45, Number 3

March, 2005

### Huntsville Amateur Radio Club Information

#### Club Officers

##### President:

Woodie Zeigler, K8GNM  
tzeiglerjr@bellsouth.net

##### Vice President:

John C. Hilliard, K4JCH  
k4jch@aol.com

##### Secretary:

Rolf Goedhart K4RGG.  
k4rgg@arrl.net

##### Treasurer:

Heath Thorson, KC4HRX, 489-1240  
hthorson@knology.net

The club's address is Box 423, Huntsville, Ala. 35804. Meetings are held each Friday night at 7:30 P.M. at the American Red Cross Building, 1101 Washington Street. Dues are \$12.00 per year, family memberships are \$15.00 per year. The club maintains a Web Site at "http://www.harc.net"

The North Alabama Repeater Association operates repeaters on 146.34 / 146.94, 147.78 / 147.18, 223.34 / 224.94 and 448.5 / 443.5. NARA dues are \$16.00 per year and may be sent to NARA at P.O. Box 18941 Huntsville, AL 35804-8941.

The club's packet radio interest group, HUNTSPAC, maintains an extensive packet network for the Huntsville area. Dues for use of this network are \$15.00 per year, and can be paid through the HARC Secretary-Treasurer listed above.

The club's ATV special interest group, TVATV operates an ATV repeater. It's input frequency is 439.25 MHz and its output is 421.25 MHz. A voice coordination repeater is operated with output frequency of 145.33 MHz, input 600 kHz down.

The Vox is published the third Friday of each month except for August. Editor of the Vox is Frank Emens, W4HFU, 3714 Lakewood Circle, Huntsville, Ala. 35811 or femens@hiwaay.net. Material of interest to the HARC membership should be submitted to the editor by

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A Newsletter published monthly except for August by the Huntsville Amateur Radio Club, P.O. Box 423, Huntsville, AL

### From The Veep

I have some good things lined up for March. Most of you will get this just before we go to the E-9-1-1 center tour at 7:00 PM on February 25th, please let Ernie know we appreciate what he has done. I hope to see you there. For March I have some (I think) good programs set up. On March 4th there is NARA Repeater Runners part 2 for those that wouldn't mind helping NARA with repeater repairs. This will be a great help during severe weather. On March 11th the meeting will be held at 7:00 PM at the EMA office and we will get a tour. We will have part 2 of the Auto CW beacon kit on March 25th. If you are interested in building one of these, please bring a soldering iron. Old Timers will be on April 1st. If you are an Old Timer or someone who might have a good story about your adventures in amateur radio, please come down and share it with us. April is looking good for programs too. If you have anything that you might think would be of interest to the club, please send me an email. It doesn't have to be about Amateur Radio.

I would like to remind everyone that March is the beginning of Severe Storm Season. Please make sure that the batteries in the Weather Alert radios are good. Also, that your HTs are charged and the spare batteries are charged. You may want to check and make sure that anything you use during severe weather is working now before you have to have it. You never know where you might be when severe weather starts to brew.

I have been guilty of not checking into the Net lately, I think a lot of us need to try to check in on Thursday nights. Also, I would like to encourage people to check into there local/county nets, both practice and during storms. Why? Your local county nets want to know about tree branches/limbs breaking off, trees and power lines down, traffic light malfunctions, things that block traffic, plus the tornado and hail reports just to mention some. All neces-

sary information will be relayed to Skywarn, plus the local nets have phone numbers of the local EMA and other offices and/or these offices are listening to the local net. One of these offices may want to talk to you directly for more information. The local offices will get people to work on these problems as soon as there is no threat of being caught by the severe weather. The North Alabama and Southern Middle Tennessee Skywarn net covers a lot of counties, and preferably want tornado, damaging wind, and large hail reports. This information goes directly to the National Weather Service office in Huntsville. We don't want to tie up the Skywarn net with things other than severe weather so that the NWS can give fast and reliable reports.

I have been a supporter of getting the youth involved in Amateur Radio, and wondered how I could get the youth to see what Amateur Radio has to

#### CAVEC License Exams

*Exam sessions are held at 9:00 AM the first Saturday of each month unless a holiday causes the session to be delayed for one week.*

*Upcoming sessions are:  
Saturday, March 5  
Saturday, April 2*

*For information contact:*

*Larry Frost, KR4GU, 864-3244  
kr4gu@hamfest.org  
Or*

*Don Tunstill, W4NO, 536-3904  
dontunstill@hamfest.org*

*Exam Sessions are held the 3rd Saturday of each month at 1:00. In even numbered months they are held at the Athens EOC. In odd numbered months they are held in Madison at Intergraph, Building 15*

*For information contact Bob Hudson,  
W4RKH, 461-7905*

offer. Believe it or not, I found out that some of the youth like to help out with things in there community and what better way than through Amateur Radio. ;) Then I remembered that sometimes high schools would let people come and talk and give demonstrations on things. I was telling one of my ham buddies about doing this with ham radio, and he said that he thought it sounded good. He ask why don't I try to find more hams that would want to do this so that kids from multiple schools could talk to each other (hands on fun). I thought that was an even better idea. Since I only have a Technician license, it might be something to have HF to demonstrate as well. I want to talk about and maybe demonstrate some of the different things in Amateur Radio depending on how much time is allowed. Although I have only listened,

I thought it may be neat for some of the school kids to talk to people over IRLP or Echo Link (in other countries?) just to name a few. I would like to see if there is an interest in this before I go to my girl's school and present them with what I would like to do. This way I can give them a scope of what is planned. Maybe they won't turn me down. :( This does not have to be limited to high schools. If this interests you as well and would like to do something at the school near you (not necessary to have kids there), please email me for more details. Please include the school/place you would like for this to happen so I can put you in touch with others in your area. If you know other hams in close by counties that might want to participate, please ask them.

*k4jch@arrl.net*

### Calling all Old Timers

Negotiations with Punxsutawney Phil having become intractable, Old Timers' Night 2005 was moved into the balmy days of spring - check your VOX calendar. What we now need are a few good old timers. If you are an old timer yourself, or suspect you might be now or at some time in the future, make sure to come. If you're having transportation problems (regarding Old Timers' night that is, we can't do anything for your '49 De Soto), contact any of the HARC officers listed on the front page, or contact me at 539-7544, or duncant1@ds-s.com . If you know an old timer who is reluctant or undecided, remember the enticement of free food and the fellowship of other timers, old and otherwise. If all else fails, grab hold of an arm and give a firm twist. Old Timers are advised that story tell-

HARC ACTIVITY CALENDAR FOR March, 2005						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	1 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	2 SE Linked Repeater Net at 2000 on +442.775, PL 203.5 Hz	3 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	4 HARC Meeting Second Repeater Training Session	5 CAVEC Exams, 0900 at Red Cross Bldg
6	7	8 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	9 SE Linked Repeater Net at 2000 on +442.775, PL 203.5 Hz	10 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	11 HARC Meeting Meet for tour of the EMA at 7 P.M.	12
13	14	15 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	16 SE Linked Repeater Net at 2000 on +442.775, PL 203.5 Hz	17 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	18 HARC Meeting Vox & RagChew Night	19 Kennehoochee ARC Hamfest  TN State Conven- tion, Middle TN ARS
20 TN State Conven- tion, Middle TN AR	21	22 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	23 SE Linked Repeater Net at 2000 on +442.775, PL 203.5 Hz	24 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	25 HARC Meeting Auto CW Beacon Kit, Part 2	26
27	28	29 ATV Net 2000 Check In 145.33	30 SE Linked Repeater Net at 2000 on +442.775, PL 203.5 Hz	31 EMERGENCY NET on 34/94 @ 1930 Skywarn Net on 147.24 @ 2000	1 HARC Meeting Old Timer's Night. Come meet & enjoy HARC's history	2 CAVEC Exams, 0900 at Red Cross Bldg

\*TWIAR -- This Week In Amateur Radio, +442.775 PL203.5 Hz 8 PM Every Saturday  
 ATV Net @ 20:00, Check in on 145.33, Tuesdays  
 Southeast Linked Repeater Net on +442.775, PL 203.5 Hz @ 20:00, Wednesdays  
 Madison County Emergency Net on 34/94 @19:30, Thursdays  
 SkyWarn Net on 147.24 @ 20:00, Thursdays

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ing is in order every year at this time, so come armed.

*73 and see you there,*

**Nara Notes:**

The second repeater training is scheduled for March 4th. This will specifically cover the GE Master II radios. If you've signed up for helping out, it is very important for you to attend this one.

After this meeting for those that have signed up to help out, we'll be making assignments for which repeater we need you to help maintain. I plan on having a field trip to each of the repeater sites to familiarize you with that site.

We've received one of the four 'cable kit' construction projects for our repeater systems. If you are working on one of the kits, please drop me an email to my address below and let me know your progress. The March 4th meeting would be a good time to drop off completed kits to me. We appreciate your help with these kits.

Ron W4VM and I recently spent a good two-hour lunch session up at

146.94 balancing the audio on the repeater. We used a HP signal generator and IFR service monitor to precisely adjust deviation levels. The main & remote receiver, CWID, digitized voice, DVR and auto-patch levels were all set. The user signal was adjusted for a 1:1 linear ratio. In other words a 3 KHz deviated signal in results in 3 KHz repeater output and 5 KHz in results in 5 KHz out. The exciter was adjusted to a maximum limit to clip slightly over 5 KHz. We don't want over-deviated user radios to over-deviate our repeater. This would result in interfering with adjacent channel repeaters.

The 146.94 remote receiver continues to perform nicely at Ron's QTH in South Huntsville. We are still looking for the optimal mountain site location to fill in some of the RF black holes. If you use a 107.2 Hz encode tone you will activate the remote receiver.

Bill KC0ONR currently has our 220 repeater on his bench. It was experiencing some desense issues, so he is working to rectify this situation.

Many thanks to all for your support and I look forward to seeing you at the March meeting!

*73, NARA President Ralph Hogan W4XE  
W4XE@qsl.net*

**The VOX Journey**

As I write this note, the volume 45, number 2, February 2005 issue of VOX rests beside my laptop computer upon my desk.

It is precariously close to the wastebasket, less than an arm's length away. And I foretell that within the next 24-36 hours, the journey to its final resting place will begin in my wastebasket, where it will transfer to the garbage can, and then be relocated to reside deteriorating somewhere in the Madison County Sanitary Landfill.

And what a shame, because in its path, moving that piece of paper from point to point to point has been a source of income to many. First, the trees were grown by a multinational mega-corporation that owns hundreds of thousands of acres of timberland here in Alabama and pays less property tax on it than you or I do on our houses.

Since I don't own stock in Georgia Pacific, Weyerhaeuser or International Paper, I'm proverbially SOL, but I do use toilet paper. So if Madison County collected dew moistened paper for recycling (which they do not) the VOX could be much more use in the near term.

Secondarily, the printing of the VOX means money to printers, ink producers and mail carriers; for without them, it would remain paper stacked in some warehouse at some mega-store's distribution center, or worse yet, auctioned off to profit their stockholders. And, since I neither own stock in Wal-Mart, Office Depot, Target, or Kinko's (which is owned by FedEx) I don't benefit. But I do drive past those store on occasion, and they advertise to me to encourage me to spend my money in their stores through the television commercials that assault me when I watch CNBC.

So far, it's difficult to say how much money producing the VOX has created. I'm truly in favor of creating jobs, but as I read the VOX I see only one 1/2 page space that I hope (though not certain) is some type of advertising from Gigaparts. And I wonder if that space was sold, and for what amount if so. Why a more aggressive approach and a smarter strategy hasn't been used to increase our treasury with selling advertising in the VOX I'll neither know, though I fear it may be the "Little Red Hen" phenomenon. It'd be nice and everyone would enjoy the benefits but who would do the work? The blues singers say it like this: everybody wants to go to heaven, but nobody wants to die.

For the VOX I pay \$12 per annum, or about 3 1/2¢ per day. For that minor investment I get less than 30 minutes of pleasure, which is certainly less than the length of time it takes to enjoy a good meal with family or friends. And if I were so inclined, I could buy 240 pieces of bubble gum with that same amount. The thought that some take the VOX with them to trips to the smallest room in their house has only recently crossed my mind. However, I concede that some may find it useful that way - as the editor recently noted.

Yet, I do understand that some of my dues is purported to be used for upkeep of the club's... no, wait... that's the NARA dues that pays for upkeep of the repeaters. So, I now know that my club

dues pay for the printing and mailing of a piece of paper.

I would gladly pay double my dues if it were used to buy new radio equipment, antennas, computers and the like for our dedicated room at the local chapter of the American Red Cross. Why, we could even finance an I-Gate, APRS server and a whole lot more goodies since we have 501(c)3 status (I think) with the money we're currently spending on mailing paper.

We're fortunate to have one of the largest, and certainly most vigorous amateur radio clubs in the region, and perhaps in the nation, and we should use that to our advantage. Our membership is diverse and represents a veritable cornucopia of society, all with one thing in common: the love of fellowship through Amateur Radio. Through Amateur Radio we have made lifelong friendships, helped save lives, protected property, assisted rescue efforts, explored the heavens, forecast the weather and advanced science and promoted peace and harmony in the world.

There is much work that we can do to promote the highest and best, and there are many more who still do not know about the joys of Push To Talk, QSL, 73 or low standing waves (not to be confused with microwaves). Many of our members helped usher the United States into the Space Age. Now, they can help us enter into the Internet Age by taking advantage of proven and almost ubiquitous modern technology. By using more amenable and less expensive methods of communication, we can reallocate generous resources toward growth of the club, its physical assets and radio and member resources.

Kevin L. Bardon KG4RCP

## **The Giggle Box**

### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO EVERYBODY THAT WAS BORN IN MARCH!!**

A note from Giggles: Well, is winter just about over. It sure has been pretty for the last couple of days. The daffodils are peeking up out of the ground, but the groundhog said that we would have six more weeks of winter. Really, I heard him. Didn't you? RIN I can't believe that January has passed and February is half over. Time is flying by so fast. I told you that we were having fun. At the last meeting, there was a few interesting programs that are coming up in the next couple of months.

Look for the times, locations and dates in this newsletter. Hope to see you at the meeting. 73

### **A Joke or Two**

Thoughtful Sons Four brothers left home for college, and they became successful doctors and lawyers and prospered. Some years later, they chatted after having dinner together. They discussed the gifts they were able to give their elderly mother who lived far away in another city. The first said, "I had a big house built for Mama."

The second said, "I had a hundred thousand dollar theater built in the house."

The third said, "I had my Mercedes dealer deliver an SL600 to her." The fourth said, "You know how Mamma loved reading the Bible and you know she can't read anymore because she can't see very well. I met this preacher who told me about a parrot that can recite the entire bible. It took twenty preachers 12 years to teach him. I had to pledge to contribute \$100,000 a year for twenty years to the church, but it was worth it. Mamma just has to name the chapter and verse and the parrot will recite it." The other brothers were impressed.

After the holidays Mom sent out her Thank You notes. She wrote:

"Milton, the house you built is so huge I live in only one room, but I have to clean the whole house. Thanks anyway."

"Marvin, I am too old to travel. I stay home, I have my groceries delivered, so I never use the Mercedes. The thought was good. Thanks."

"Michael, you gave me an expensive theater with Dolby sound, it could hold 50 people, but all of my friends are dead, I've lost my hearing and I'm nearly blind. I'll never use it. Thank you for the gesture just the same."

"Dearest Melvin, you were the only son to have the good sense to give a little thought to your gift. The chicken was delicious. Thank you."

### **Another Blonde Joke**

A blonde decided she needed something new and different for a winter hobby. She went to the bookstore and bought every book she could find on ice-fishing. For weeks she read and studied, hoping to become an expert in the field.

Finally she decided she knew enough, and out she went for her first ice-fishing trip. She carefully gathered up and packed all the tools and equipment needed for the excursion. Each piece of equipment had its own special place in her kit. When she got to the ice, she found a quiet little area, placed her padded stool, and carefully laid out her tools. Just as she was about to make her first cut into the ice, a booming voice from the sky bellowed, "There are no fish under the ice!"

Startled, the blonde grabbed up all her belongings, moved farther along on the ice, poured some hot chocolate from her thermos, and started to cut a new hole. Again the voice from above bellowed, "There are no fish under the ice!"

Amazed, the blonde wasn't quite sure what to do, as this certainly wasn't covered in any of the books. She packed up her gear and moved to the far side of the ice. Once there, she stopped for a few moments to regain her calm. She was extremely careful to set everything up perfectly — tools in the right place, chair positioned just so. Just as she was about to cut the new hole, the voice came again: "There are no fish under the ice!"

Petrified, the blonde looked skyward and asked, "Is that you Lord?"

And the voice boomed back, "No, this is the manager of the skating rink".

\*\*\* I was driving with my three young children one warm summer evening when a woman in the convertible ahead of us stood up and waved. She was stark naked! As I was reeling from the shock, I heard my five-year-old shout from the back seat, "Mom! That lady isn't wearing a seat belt!"

\*\*\* My son Zachary, 4, came screaming out of the bathroom to tell me he'd dropped his toothbrush in the toilet. So I fished it out and threw it in the garbage. Zachary stood there thinking for a moment, then ran to my bathroom and came out with my toothbrush. He held it up and said with a charming little smile, "We better throw this one out too then, 'cause it fell in the toilet a few days ago."

\*\*\* On the first day of school, a first grader handed his teacher a note from his mother. The note read, "The opinions expressed by this child are not necessarily those of his parents."

\*\*\* A woman was trying hard to get the catsup to come out of the jar. During her struggle the phone rang so she asked her four-year old daughter to answer the phone. "It's the minister, Mommy," the child said to her mother. Then she added, "Mommy can't come to the phone to talk to you right now. She's hitting the bottle."

\*\*\* I love the outdoors, and because of my passion for hunting and fishing, my family eats a considerable amount of wild game. So much, in fact, that one evening as I set a platter of broiled venison steaks on the dinner table, my ten-year-old daughter looked up and said, "Boy, it sure would be nice if pizzas lived in the woods."

\*\*\* A mother was showing her son how to zip up his coat. "The secret," she said, "is to get the left part of the zipper to fit in the other side before you try to zip it up." The boy looked at her quizzically... "Why does it have to be a secret?"

\*\*\* When my daughter was three, we watched Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs for the first time. The wicked queen appeared, disguised as an old lady selling apples, and my daughter was spellbound. Then Snow White took a bite of the poisoned apple and fell to the ground unconscious. As the apple rolled away, my daughter spoke up. "See, Mom. She doesn't like the skin either."

\*\*\* A little boy got lost at the YMCA and found himself in the women's locker room. When he was spotted, the room burst into shrieks, with ladies grabbing towels and running for cover. The little boy watched in amazement and then asked, "What's the matter — haven't you ever seen a little boy before?"

**Did You Know?** When cooking cabbage, place a small container full of vinegar on the stove near the cabbage. It will absorb the odor.

The Reminder for the Month of March You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk.

Solve the puzzle: A NEKCIHC  
SSOGINRC HET DOAR SI  
OULTRYP NI NOIMTO

73 Peggy Bell (Giggles) K4EGB  
pbell@hiwaay.net SEW LONG!

## Local Area Hamfest for February/March:

### 26 Feb 2005

- Dalton ARC  
<http://www.qsl.net/w4drc/> Talk-In:  
145.230(-) Contact: James Jordan,  
K4FLG 811 Piedmont Lane Dalton,  
GA 30720 Phone: 706-278-0630  
Email: [jjordan@optilink.us](mailto:jjordan@optilink.us) Dalton,  
GA North Georgia Fairgrounds 500  
Legion Drive Div: Southeastern Sect:  
Georgia

### 19 Mar 2005

- 52nd Kennehoochie ARC Hamfest  
Kennehoochie ARC  
<http://www.w4bti.org> Talk-In:  
146.880 - (PL 100) Contact: Elliott  
Kanter, W4PGI 1213 Pinehurst  
Circle SE Smyrna, GA 30080-4320  
Phone: 770-815-1570 Email:  
[w4pgi@arrl.net](mailto:w4pgi@arrl.net) Marietta, GA  
Southern Polytechnic State  
University 1100 South Marietta  
Parkway Div: Southeastern Sect:  
Georgia

### 19-20 Mar 2005

- Tennessee State Convention Middle  
Tennessee ARS  
<http://www.qsl.net/mtars> Talk-In:  
146.700 (PL 114.8) Contact:  
Michael Glennon, KB4JHU 302  
Twelve Oaks Road Tullahoma, TN  
37388 Phone: 931-461-3037 Email:  
[kb4jhu@arrl.net](mailto:kb4jhu@arrl.net) Tullahoma, TN  
Tullahoma Business Incubator 410  
Wilson Avenue Div: Delta Sect:  
Tennessee

Steve Bell KD4TFN: [sbell@hiwaay.net](mailto:sbell@hiwaay.net)

## From The Editor's Wastebasket

Moving the OT Night meeting a bit later in the year was, I think, a great idea. However, I disagree with Tom, KG4CUY, about negotiations with Punxutawney Phil. Granted, Ol' Phil is pretty knowledgeable about conditions in the great Northeast. Around here though, the Ruling Rodent is Monte Sano Marvin. I kept an eye out for conditions on Feb 2 this year, and if ol' Marvin saw his shadow it had to be cast by a photographer's flash gun or a videographer's floodlight. Lakewood Louie, who sometimes visits my backyard agrees. It was raining most all day and heavy with cloud cover. What does that mean? From observation, I'd say it means instead of six more weeks of waning Winter, we'll move directly into

**ARRL Alabama Section Leadership Team.**  
**Check [www.arrl-al.org/officers.htm](http://www.arrl-al.org/officers.htm) for address and phone info.**

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 Affiliated Club Coordinator: Jeff L OBrien, KV4CX, [jeffo@zebra.net](mailto:jeffo@zebra.net)  
 Assistant Section Manager for Youth Activities, Rebekah A. Dorff, WG4Y, [wg4y@arrl.net](mailto:wg4y@arrl.net)  
 Bulletin Manager: William K, Hensley, WG8S, [whensley11@comcast.net](mailto:whensley11@comcast.net)  
 Alabama Frequency Coordinator - Liaison Alabama Repeater Council: Ron Shaffer, W4VM, [w4vm@comcast.net](mailto:w4vm@comcast.net)  
 Official Observer Coordinator: Ken Magnant, WA4WEY, [kmagnant@att.net](mailto:kmagnant@att.net)

Public Information Coordinator: James Spann, WO4W, [wo4w@jamesspann.com](mailto:wo4w@jamesspann.com)  
 Section Emergency Coordinator: Jay Isbell, KA4KUN, [sec@arrl-al.net](mailto:sec@arrl-al.net)  
 State Government Liaison: Richard D. Doll, KU4PY, [ku4py@arrl.net](mailto:ku4py@arrl.net)  
 Silent Key Coordinator: Doc Gordon King, W4XI  
 Section Traffic Manager, Randy Cox, AI4FP, [ai4fp@yahoo.com](mailto:ai4fp@yahoo.com)  
 Technical Coordinator, Tim Winger, KY5R, [timky5r@direcway.com](mailto:timky5r@direcway.com)

a cold messy Spring. What's the difference? Not much.

Whatever the weather, it looks as if this year's Old Timer's Night will be the night of April 1. Dunno if that has anything to do with it being April Fool's day. By the way, thinking of April Fool's day, I have committed myself to

dredging up some of the historical information on Yak Fat and its importance to radio amateurs for inclusion in the April issue of the Vox.

Another vote for Spring comes from the daffodils in my back yard. I'm sure they must be the most optimistic ones in town, but come Valentine's Day,

there were four of the things all popped out and blooming. Several more have since joined them. I'm not going to tell them that below freezing temps are expected for Friday morning.

*73, Frank Emens, W4HFU*

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