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# THE CONCORD CORRESPONDENT

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American Association of University Women Concord, California Branch  
Monthly Newsletter for November, 2007

Volume 2007 Issue #11

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**BENECIA-VALLEJO, CONCORD, DANVILLE-ALAMO  
AND WALNUT CREEK BRANCHES PRESENT**

**CHARLOTTE NEWHART  
AAUW CA'S SACRAMENTO LOBBYIST**

**What:** November General Meeting

**When:** Sunday November 18

**Time:** 2:30-3:30PM

**Where:** Mt. Diablo Unitarian Universalist  
Church, 55 Eckley Lane, Walnut Creek

**Cost:** There is no charge for this meeting



Charlotte will cover what's happening in the State Legislature discussing issues of interest to AAUW members with a special emphasis on health care reform. PLEASE JOIN US

Partners and friends are welcome to attend. Plenty of parking is available. The meeting is in the main church beyond the gardens.



## DIRECTIONS:

Taking 680 North, take the Ygnacio Valley Road exit

and turn right at the end of the exit ramp.

Turn right on Walnut Blvd (fifth stoplight) and continue for about 3/4 mile to Eckley which will be on your left (Homestead is the cross street just before Eckley).

Go up the hill. Watch for the church on the left.

Taking 680 South, exit on North Main going south and

proceed to Ygnacio Valley Road.

Turn left and go two stoplights to Walnut Blvd. Turn right and go about 3/4 mile to Eckley which will be on your left (Homestead is the cross street just before Eckley).

Go up the hill. Watch for the church on the left.



**Concord Branch AAUW**

The *Concord Correspondent* is published monthly by  
**American Association of University Women  
Concord Branch**

Permit #166  
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Concord, CA 94522

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*from your President...*

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Hello -

This message comes to you as Concord is in the midst of The Big Read. Many of our AAUW members have assisted the library, read the book, attended the movie and enjoyed various discussion groups. I hope you have been able to avail yourselves of this opportunity to participate in this citywide project.

Last Saturday many of us enjoyed touring the garden of Frank Reyes of Clayton who discussed his love of the Bonsai tradition and shared his plants and expertise with us. There are many AAUW'ers who have green thumbs and we expect to see a Bonsai as a silent auction prize sometime in the future. Many thanks to Lana Hanlon for arranging this program.

As you may remember, the November program will be a joint venture with neighboring branches. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend the presentation featuring Charlotte Newhart, AAUW lobbyist. The site of this program will be the Walnut Creek Unitarian Universalist Church on Eckley Lane and takes place on Sunday, November 18th at 2:30 pm. I can guarantee you that her talk will be important and entertaining. She has many wonderful insights and stories of the California State Legislature. If you have a neighbor who is interested in the health care issue, invite her as your guest and we may get a new member.

Please continue to read this first rate Newsletter and let the board know your thoughts and concerns. Happy Thanksgiving!

--Carol Slatten

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**Save these dates...**

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December General Meeting:

Dec 15: This year we will celebrate December with a Holiday Breakfast on December 15 at 9:30am at Marie Calendars.



Because that is a 49er working day, this will bet a Holiday Brunch to begin at 9:30 a.m. Those working at the 49ers can then meet at noon.

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## ***October Board Meeting highlights...***

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October 1, 2007

In attendance were Lana Hanlon, Carol Slatten, Elaine Groen, Betty Hirsch, Andrea Proctor and Jean Simutis.

**Treasurer's Report:** Jean reported that monies from the first two 49er games have been received. At the first game, 4 Concord members made \$139/person. The second game sales were low; each Concord person received \$115. These two games made approximately \$1000 for our branch. The third game with 4 of our members working will provide \$200/person plus \$30/person in tips. Management paid 12% at this game; usual percentage has been 7. Statistics are not in for yesterday's game—Jean reports that it was busy. She will write checks once per month during the season. We continue to need workers to gain a larger share of the proceeds.

**LAF :** Jean reported that Christine Hwang (new Chairwomen voted in at the general meeting) has received 3 Tootsie Roll banks with a total of \$70 plus. LAF now wants branches to allocate use of the money. The board discussed and decided on funding the California Plaintiff support.

**Program:** Lana reviewed the program: December 15—we will meet for the Holiday Brunch at 9:30 a.m. Lana has telephoned the Pacific Choral Group to have them entertain. They have not yet had a replied. Discussion ensued as to whether to continue with the Silent Auction. The Board agreed to continue it and to ask members who are not on the Board to arrange and manage it.

**Membership:** Carol reported for Joyce Jacobs that we only have one unpaid member who most likely will continue. Of the 71 members, Jean reminded the Board that one member gets a free membership at the raffle and Honorary Life Members—including Jo Harberson—do not pay dues.

**EF:** Discussion ensued about whose responsibility it is to do the various tasks at the February meeting. Clayton chose the speaker “out-of-line” last year. Carol provided Andrea and Betty names, phone numbers and email of Clayton Branch's President and EF Chair women. The Co-Chairs of both groups will discuss and decide how to proceed.

### **New Business**

**Fund Raising:** Carol shared that the new restaurant in Pleasant Hill, Capitola Grill, is offering a percentage if we send people to eat there on a select night (e.g. every Tuesday evening). Discussion by members—most would be for it if we have enough members and contacts to do it. Carol will investigate further.

**Website:** Beverly Crane has suggested that we put

Connections and The Concord Correspondent on our website. Discussion ensued as to how much personal information we would want—most said that having one person as a contact—especially if through email—would be helpful. We have acquired new members due to our website. Carol will ask Beverly and Phyllis Nishimori (our newsletter editor) to discuss and bring their recommendation to the Board.

**National Bylaws:** Carol informed the board that the changes do not affect us this year. The big change will be that all members will vote on critical issues rather than delegates.

**Concord Branch Bylaws:** Concord Branch bylaws need to be reviewed and updated every two years. Lana and Jean have taken on this task.

**Read Concord:** Carol and Jean were thanked as representative so Concord AAUW at the Big Read assembly prior to the Board Meeting. Both wore their T-shirts which show AAUW as the first name listed as sponsors. In addition to Carol and Jean, Celeste Graham, Norma Griffin, Sandy Hartman, Betty Hirsch, Andrea Proctor, and Jean Simutis have distributed packages of materials to professional offices and businesses. Those at the Board meeting shared some of their experiences. They encouraged us all to read *Fahrenheit 351* and to attend some of the many events scheduled in October.

**Barnes and Noble:** The Board was appreciative that our new member, Christine Hwang, has agreed to coordinate this project. We learned that she already has 17 members signed up to work on December 7.

**Backpack project:** Carol read the thank you letter sent by the Principal of Ygnacio Elementary School. The letter will be given to Phyllis for the newsletter and then the secretary will maintain it in records.

**Publicity:** Franki English is available to provide information and photos to the Concord Transcript. The Board discussed whether our news has been printed in a timely manner. Some have experienced delays in getting our news in print. Others thought it was due to not having a PR person last year. It was noted that the newspaper likes to receive digital photos.

AAUW “Equity is Still an Issue” : Carol has reviewed this 7-minute videotape. She says the tape could be helpful to explain AAUW to possible new members.

**Next Board Meeting: November 6 at 7 p.m. at Elaine Groen's home. Lana will provide the refreshments.**

Elaine Groen, Secretary

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## Public Policy--California

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### Updates

Follow-up to Women's Equality Day: Maloney Proposes Global Women's Rights Office. In honor of Women's Equality Day (August 26), Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney (NY) has announced that when the House reconvenes this fall, she will introduce a bill to equip the US government to advocate for global women's rights. The legislation would establish a Commission on International Women's Rights and a special State Department office to advise the president and secretary of state on international women's issues. It would also give the president power to block US aid to governments found to be engaged in gross violations of women's rights. (Source: Feminist Daily News Wire, August 27, 2007, [www.feminist.org/news/newsbyte/uswirestory.asp?id=10490](http://www.feminist.org/news/newsbyte/uswirestory.asp?id=10490))

### ACTION Items

Opposing Parental Notification (yes, again!): In response to a third initiative relating to parental notification, Jerry McNerney, the Representative from the 11th District in California, is co-sponsoring H.R. 1964, the Freedom of Choice Act. California is one of seven states who codified the protections of Roe v Wade into state law; The Freedom of Choice Act will insure these protections at the Federal level. To express support for H.R. 1964, you may email Representative McNerney at [www.mcnerney.house.gov](mailto:www.mcnerney.house.gov)

An e-mail from Parker Dockray of the California Coalition for Reproductive Freedom reported that a Sexual Abuse Reporting Initiative has been approved for signature gathering but seems to have been abandoned. Instead they filed a third version of the parental notification for abortion initiative, which is essentially a photocopy of 73 and 85 but with a few new ideas thrown in. See [http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections\\_j.htm](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_j.htm) for the last ballot initiatives. He noted that it will be important to partner with diverse communities in order to educate voters by November 2008. Steve Smith from Dewey Square and Maggie Linden from Ogilvy PR Worldwide are once again working with Planned Parenthood on focus groups and message development. At the CCRF meeting, Steve encouraged people or organizations who would like to inform the process to contact him at [SSmith@deweysquare.com](mailto:SSmith@deweysquare.com) or 916 447 4099 (Summary of e-mail from Roz Wright, Reproductive Rights Chair).

### Upcoming Events

03/25/08: Reproductive Freedom Day in Sacramento will be held on Tuesday, March 25th, 2008

### Special Reports

#### Effects of an Early Primary in California

I attended my first presidential candidate rally, and it is something that I encourage everyone to do. I can say that I finally feel like issues that affect my life on a daily basis are being discussed not just at rallies in California, but around the country. This is an exciting time.

What can account for this noticeable change? Is it related to California's new and earlier date for the primary presidential elections? Candidates use presidential primary dates as a way to strategize—to determine what states and cities to visit, when to visit, who to hire for their campaigns, where to establish campaign offices, and how much money to spend. Beyond that, and more importantly, California's early primary date is affecting the dialogue that candidates are having with voters. Issues that are in the forefront of California politics are shaping the national political debate. For example, a New York times article reported that global warming, which is a hot topic in California, was not addressed in the last two presidential campaigns but is being discussed in this campaign. Issues like immigration, stem-cell research, same-sex marriage, and technology are getting candidates' attention (Adam Nagourney, 05/07/07 [http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/07/us/politics/07campaign.html?\\_r=2&adml=1&ref=slon&ref=politics&adml=119198261-RkoJccORgqRWYcc2C+wxwg](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/07/us/politics/07campaign.html?_r=2&adml=1&ref=slon&ref=politics&adml=119198261-RkoJccORgqRWYcc2C+wxwg)).

Yes, it is an exciting time. California has moved its presidential primary to February 5. Few states have earlier primaries; Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina have their primaries in January. Tony Quinn, co-editor of the California Target Block, which provides nonpartisan analysis of legislative and congressional elections, explains that California voters may have a stronger influence on the outcome of our nation's primaries than we have in the past.

Quinn reports that one factor affecting California voters' influence is early absentee voter decisions. In 2006, 42% of those who voted in the general elections voted by absentee ballot. Furthermore, absentee voters returned their ballots up to three weeks before the polls opened. County officials can begin mailing absentee ballots 29 days before the February 5 elections.

There has been an increase in absentee voting in California for the last few election cycles. Between 2004 and 2006, the number of absentee voters nearly doubled, and a post-election analysis showed that 80% of 2004 absentee voters were also absentee voters in 2006.

Quinn suggests that campaigns could randomly sample absentee voters from mail-list vendors to do post-polling surveys. Favorable results showing that a candidate has the early lead could affect a campaign's fund-raising and influence other voters ([www.latimes.com/news/opinion/commentary/la-op-quinn8jul08,0,6591960.story?coll=la-news-comment-opinions](http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/commentary/la-op-quinn8jul08,0,6591960.story?coll=la-news-comment-opinions)).

So, I remind myself to focus on the issues that are (or aren't) being discussed, to vote regardless of post-polling results, and to never underestimate that powerful staple of politics—strategy.

~ Monica Johnston

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## ***49er Days are here again!***

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In recent years, we have shared the wealth earned from our 49er booth with other groups, in order to have enough bodies to "work" the booth. This year, it would be great if we could get a few more volunteers from our Concord Branch.

We put in a full day's of work; however, we are provided with lunch and unlimited non-alcohol beverage. If you personally don't feel qualified to do this kind of volunteering, perhaps you have a family member or a friend who would like to come. We truly do have fun working together with the excitement of the crowd, and we truly do earn a lot of money.

Could you help us keep this money IN our Branch?  
Please let me know for which games you have volunteers or if you have any questions.

The dates for the remaining games are:

**November 18** – vs. St. Louis – Sunday, Meet at 8:00am

**December 9** – vs. Minnesota – Sunday, Meet at 8:00am

**December 15** – vs. Cincinnati – SATURDAY, Meet at 11:45am

**December 23** – vs. Tampa Bay – Sunday, Meet at 11:45am

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## ***Next Board Meeting***

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The next board meeting will be on November 5 at 7 p.m. at the home of Elaine Groen. All members are welcome to attend. Try coming....you might learn something!

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## ***Want your newsletter by e-mail?***

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If you are interested in getting your newsletter in your computer's mailbox, let us know. It is sent out at the same time as the regular mailing, in .pdf format....so all you need to read it is Adobe Acrobat Reader. E-mail Phyllis Nishimori if you are interested, and we'll put you on the list.



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## ***Our Tech Trek girls***

### ***...and Barnes & Noble***

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Tech Trek is such a great program....let's be sure to help keep Concord AAUW involved! Joanne Brown is busy looking for sponsors for our 2008 students.....if you can help, give her a call.

Also, be sure to sign up to help with the Barnes and Noble fund-raiser, which is designated for Tech Trek. For info on that, call Christine Hwang. The event will be held on December 7 and involves sitting at a table and passing out info (on AAUW), coupons (we get a percentage on those used with purchases) and smiles (to get people to stop and ask "what's up?")

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## ***Section Meetings***

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***Evening Book:*** We will review the "Big Read" book *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury at our Nov. 13th meeting. Come join us!

Helen Nelson

***Afternoon Book:*** We will meet at the home of Bea Cortes on Monday, Nov. 12 at 1:00. The book to review is *Beneath a Marble Sky* by John Shors.

Lucille Rudik

***Bunco:*** BUNCO will meet on Wednesday, Nov. 14 at 7p.m. at Karen Maurer's. Please call Andrea by Nov. 9 if you would like to join us. Anyone can play and each player donates \$5.

***Whine and Wine:*** Beaujolais nouveau is a red wine made from Gamay grapes produced in the Beaujolais region of France. It is the most popular vin de primeur, fermented for just a few weeks then officially released for sale on the third Thursday of November. This "Beaujolais Day", or "Beaujolais Nouveau Day", and sees heavy marketing from the producers, with races to get the first bottles of the vintage to Paris by Midnight.

This month we will be visiting BevMo's Beaujolais Nouveau Release Party in Walnut Creek on the third Thursday in November.

Date November 15

Time 4-7pm Let's Meet after 5pm!!

Cost \$1.00 for Beaujolais, \$5.00 if you want to try other wines

Location 2940 N Main St  
Walnut Creek, CA94597US

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## ***Public Policy--National***

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With the passage of H2269, the College Cost Reduction Act, by the House and Senate, and President Bush signing the bill, we can say it was an "education success". Although allocation of the \$18 billion should be made, we always have to make sure it is allocated in the budget. To this end, letters or telephone calls to Sen. Dianne Feinstein, who is a member of the Subcommittee on Appropriations, would be appropriate to make it a certainty.

Dist Office: 1 Post St., Ste 2450, San Francisco CA 94104. (Call 415-393-0707)  
Washington Office: Hart Senate Office Bldg, Ste 331, Washington, D.C. 20510 (call 202-224-3841)

More about AAUW Lobby Corps in Washington, D.C.: The 32-year old AAUW Lobby Corps was almost eliminated in 1983, due to a financial shortfall. So lobby members lobbied AAUW members for support, causing a groundswell of support for their work. A steering committee was formed to develop training programs and recruitment. Professional staff provided briefing materials and assistance in incorporating AAUW public policy.

A 32-year member of the Corps remarked, "Of course, we haven't always gotten our way on legislation--it takes a long time--as with the Family Medical Leave Act. The Equal Rights Amendment also comes to mind. Many believe that it's passage would have eliminated many things we lobby for today--like pay equity."

The "wins" are never final. Lobby members "re-lobby" about certain things, like Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act. It is a constant battle, they say.

In 1998, a Student Lobby Corps was launched--a revitalization addition in which students were recruited and trained by seasoned Lobby members.

It is really a remarkable group there on Capitol Hill every Thursday. As one member expressed it, "We keep at it. For AAUW lobbyists, hope springs eternal."

--Margaret Hackenbracht, Co-chair, Public Policy

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## ***AAUW Unveils New Website***

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AAUW launched its newly redesigned website in September. The new site offers an updated look, as well as a streamlined structure that helps visitors locate information quickly. Finding all the tools you need to support AAUW's mission has never been easier! Visit [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org) to see the new site for yourself. Check it out!

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## ***Our adopted school.....***

### ***YV Elementary***

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Thanks again to all of you who helped make our YV Elementary School students HAPPY with our zillions of backpacks!!!! We still plan to do one more delivery in January. In addition to those mentioned in last months newsletter, thanks go to Iola O'Grady!

The December holidays are just around the corner, so start thinking about the family (ies) that we hope to adopt next month. As usual, we will send out a letter with details as soon as we can. If you feel like helping out this year, that would be great! Always needed are non-perishable food items (especially rice, uncooked beans, masa flour), shampoo, soap, towels, blankets.....

Thank you once more for making this project possible and for giving us the opportunity to spread our cheer!

Phyllis Nishimori and Betty Hirsch

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## ***3rd Annual Holiday Home Tour***

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Friday, December 7 and Saturday, December 8  
11:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Six homes will be open from in the Danville and Alamo area  
Sponsored by Danville-Alamo Branch of American Association of University Women (AAUW)

Tickets are \$25 per person if post marked by Friday November 30th, \$30 thereafter. Mail self-addressed stamped business sized envelope to Danville-Alamo AAUW, 255 Morris Ranch Ct. Danville, CA 94526. All proceeds go toward Local Scholarships and Tech Trek summer camp for middle school girls at Mills College. Call Mary at (925) 831-1784 with any questions

Tena Gallagher, President  
Danville-Alamo Branch of  
AAUW  
400 Cliffside Dr.  
Danville, CA 94526



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## *Support the Prevention First Act*

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The Senate passed (75-19) the appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education for FY08 (H.R. 3043). Several anti-choice amendments were offered for consideration with the bill, including some that would have restricted funds under Title X, the nation's family planning program. Title X is critical in providing reproductive health services to low-income women. However, anti-choice members of Congress have not supported adequate funding for Title X; in fact, taking inflation into account, funding for the family planning programs under Title X declined by 59 percent between 1980 and 2005. While most of the amendments never came up for a vote and none passed, it is critical that we continue to urge Congress to improve - rather than impair - women's access to reproductive health care services.

The Prevention First Act (S.21/H.R. 819) would expand access to contraception and preventative health care services that help reduce unplanned pregnancies, abortions, and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases while improving access to

women's health care. The increase in funding authorized by the bill, from \$283 million to \$699 million, reflects what the budget for Title X would be if it had kept up with inflation since 1980.

The Prevention First Act also includes provisions to increase insurance coverage for contraceptive prescription drugs, devices, and outpatient services; provide medically accurate information about contraception in education programs; increase education about emergency contraception; and require hospitals that receive federal funds to provide emergency contraception to victims of sexual assault. It also provides grants for teenage pregnancy prevention programs in at-risk communities and provides grants to states for family life education, including education on abstinence and contraception. In addition, it expands family planning services covered under Medicaid, which remains the largest source of subsidized family planning services.

AAUW supports the right of every woman to safe, accessible, affordable, and comprehensive family planning and reproductive health services and believes that improved pregnancy prevention programs and access to complete reproduction health information and services enhance women's reproductive choices. We urge all senators to cosponsor this important bill to improve the reproductive health and safety of all women and girls.

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## *Set Aside These Dates...*

November 6	Board Meeting
November 12	Afternoon Book
November 13	Evening Book
November 14	Bunco
November 15	Whine and Wine
November 18	GENERAL MEETING

December 7	Barnes and Noble for Tech Trek
December 7-8	Holiday Home Tour--Danville/Alamo
December 9	49ers vs. Minnesota
December 15	HOLIDAY BREAKFAST
	49ers vs. Cincinnati
December 23	49ers vs. Tampa Bay

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The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is California's most active and diverse organization for women offering: action for equity, personal and professional growth, community leadership, and friendships.

In principle and practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. Membership is open to all college or university graduates ) and to students enrolled in college or university. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.



Concord AAUW  
PO Box 434  
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AMERICAN  
ASSOCIATION OF  
UNIVERSITY  
WOMEN



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