

"I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving - we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it - but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor." - Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.



ChaNNels Monthly Newsletter – November, 2018

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Table of Contents

Commodore's Log	2
Hail and Farewell 2018	5
2018 Racing Recap	7
River and Bay	9
Chesapeake to Tortola	10
Sailing in Britannia	11
Adaptive Sailing	15
Celtic Tides	17
Your Article Goes Here	19
Upcoming SCOW Events – December 2018	20
2018 SCOW Board of Directors	21

[Use the Table of Contents to “Navigate” your ChaNNels](#)

Commodore's Log

By Joe Leoncio



Joe Leoncio, Commodore 2017 & 2018

My friends,

'Tis the season of gratitude. We just had our big annual Hail and Farewell celebration on Nov. 10th to thank our many volunteers who made all the fun possible this year. While there are challenges in running a sailing club and keeping the fleet afloat, I cannot overstate how thankful I am to have led the club as Commodore for the last two years. I've gotten to know so many of you over the last few years, and it's been a very meaningful and rewarding experience. I've truly enjoyed working with my team on the 2018 Board of Directors, and I'm a little sad that our time together is now winding down.

2019 Board of Directors

Congratulations to the volunteers who stepped up to serve on the 2019 Board of Directors. You're in a unique position to shape the future of the club for generations to come. For those of you who missed Hail and Farewell, here's your 2019 Board of Directors:

- Commodore - Richard Kaiser
- Vice Commodore - Brian McPherson
- Secretary - Wayne Williams
- Treasurer - Mike Hooban
- Social Director - Marie Brennan
- Training Director - Steve Youngblood
- Scot Maintenance Director - Dana Howe
- Cruiser Maintenance Director - Vincent Penoso
- Racing Director - Dave Beckett
- River and Bay Director – Carlie Smith
- Membership Director - Barry Yatt
- Skipper Certification Director – Chip Lubsen



2019 Board from left to right: Barry Yatt, Dana Howe, Carlie Smith, Marie Brennan, Dave Beckett, Wayne Williams, Mike Hooban, Brian McPherson, and Richard Kaiser. Not pictured: Chip Lubsen, Steve Youngblood, and Vince Penoso. Looking forward to another successful year in 2019! Make us proud!

I also want to recognize the great work done by Luis Rivas, Barbara Thacker, and Kevin Longenbach to identify Board candidates and to conduct the election.



2018 Board from left to right: Richard Kaiser, Dick Vida, Marie Brennan, Mike Hooban, Dave Beckett, Brian McPherson, Julie Pixler, and Joe Leoncio. Not pictured: Vince Penoso, Steve Youngblood, Talya Mallin and Jyoti Wadhwa. Thank you all for your service!

Life Vests

While the season is pretty much over with, I know there are a few of you who will still sail through the winter. Please remember to wear your life vests as they are required on SCOW boats from Oct 1st through April 30th.

We had Dan Dunham from the USCG Auxiliary talk at our November membership meeting on boater safety. It was a good reminder for me on the importance of wearing life vests.

Consider this:

- In 2017, two thirds of 709 boating fatalities drowned = 510 drowning victims
- 90% were not wearing a life jacket = 459 deaths

My other takeaway was how cold water makes it really hard to survive once you're in it. I'm a confident swimmer, but you won't find me on a boat without a life vest when the water's cold. Club rule or no rules, it just makes sense to wear a PFD.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Joe Leoncio
Commodore
Sailing Club of Washington
703-314-7583

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Hail and Farewell 2018

By Julie Pixler

Thank you to everyone who lent a hand, helped set up, checked guests in, presented awards, carried boxes, flowers, candles, and worked to make SCOW's most glittery night so special. Congratulations to all of the award winners, and to all those who worked hard to recreate the plaques, coordinate, carry, and store supplies, all the little details needed to make this evening such a success.

Hail and Farewell is a reminder that our club has lasted over 50 years because of the volunteers who work hard all year long to keep our club afloat & exciting. I hope this evening inspired some of our new members to look to 2019 to get more involved, volunteer some time to help with events, boat maintenance, river & bay events, training, social sail, Special Olympics, etc. There are many many ways to lend a hand and get more involved in our unique club.

I for one joined in 2015, and after a year of taking it all in, I got more involved in 2016, and that is when I met more people, found mentors, and found a community of welcoming sailors and friends.

Cheers to the outgoing board members, and high-five to the incoming 2019 board - it's been a fulfilling several years and I look forward to seeing what we do next year!

Your Social Director, Julie Pixler

Photos Below: *Highlights of Hail & Farewell 2018.* © JULIE ANN PIXLER





[Back to Table of Contents](#)

2018 Racing Recap

By David Beckett



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Directors Cup Regatta – first leeward mark of second race

The weather heavily affected scheduled race days in 2018, so much that only one day of Series racing was conducted all year. It rained so much that even when it wasn't raining, there was often too much current and too much debris in the river for sailing. Two fortunate byproducts of the excessive rains were; 1) the water level in the lagoon was extraordinarily high, and 2) the turbidity of the water was credited with suppressing the hydrilla this year. This allowed us to race in the lagoon more than we're accustomed to from previous years, even at low tide.

We usually dodged the weather bullet for Wednesday Night Racing (WNR) and had some fantastic mid-week racing which went a long way toward saving the 2018 sailing/racing season. Participation was high with 7-10 boats every week and 30-40 sailors. The boats were usually packed and the racing was competitive. Camaraderie and sportsmanship were exemplary.

SCOW turnout this year was low for the local regattas. The PRSA Spring Regatta and Presidents Cup, as well as the Leukemia Cup and Cantina Cup regattas saw more of our club boats on the trailers than racing. SCOW held the Magellan Race in August, which was a well-attended, low key distance race with some offbeat sailing instructions that penalized anyone out in front of the pack. We had three members represent SCOW and Fleet 203 in away regattas including the Capital District Championships in Rehoboth Bay, DE. We finished off the year on a high note with our Directors Cup Regatta, in which eleven Scots competed for line honors.

So here we are heading into Thanksgiving, very thankful for the days on which we got to race and looking forward with impatient enthusiasm toward the beginning of the next racing season. Now is the time to acquire knowledge through reading and research of the many articles, books and videos available online. For book recommendations, ask your Racing Director. A couple for starters are "*Winning in One Designs*" by Dave Perry and "*The Rules in Practice 2017-2020*" by Bryan Willis.

During the cold, snowy, winter, we'll start preparing for the spring with a round of instructive seminars that should appeal to new sailors, as well as, experienced racers.

Some things to look forward to for next season:

1. Seminars for Crew Development, Racing Rules of Sailing, Sailing Fast, Starts/Strategy/Tactics, and Team Racing.
2. A continuation and expansion of formal one-day racing events and regattas in lieu of our traditional three-day series formats
3. More weekend pick-up racing opportunities
4. Team Racing events
5. Spectator boat opportunities
6. Race Committee training and familiarization



[Back to Table of Contents](#)

River and Bay

By Marie Brennan

Hi Everyone! It has been a pleasure serving as River & Bay for the past two years. I have met lots of great skippers, and many new and old members. We had many successful destination sails, dinners and raft ups thanks to your help! We had huge success with our River Clean Up earlier in the spring, and I'm sure it will be another great success next year! Thank you to everyone who has volunteered for raft ups and other events. Thank you to the skippers and to the wonderful members who participated. I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season, and I will see you next year as Social Director! Marie



[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Chesapeake to Tortola

By Bill Davenport

I did a trip from the Chesapeake to Tortola BVI one winter that was eventful, but had a good ending. It was December and we had left Norfolk, VA and headed across the northward flowing gulf stream and then south. The sky was overcast and it wasn't long before we were in a storm which, as time progressed, developed into 60+ knots of wind and waves around 30'. We were in a new 47' sloop and surfing at times. It was difficult keeping the boat from broaching as the following seas negated the rudder's effect on steering.

As time went by the helm got more and more loose, then stopped working altogether. This brought on a mad dash to find the emergency tiller, which we located at the bottom of the lazaret beneath a ton of gear, which we lost overboard. You can imagine the fun I had trying to unload this gear with one hand while holding on with the other. We finally got the boat under control with the tiller. After the storm subsided we got the steering cable fixed. It was a scary trip that was punctuated with prayers that included promises to be a better Christians and to fix past transgressions.

We arrived in Tortola's West End, cleared Customs and docked in Nanny Kay. Soon we found another American crew that had gone through the same storm and agreed to meet at the bar and swap "sea stories". We all meet at the bar later and as the evening progressed, I commented to another in my crew that the other crew had a lot of black and blue marks all over their bodies. This was overheard by some of the other crew, who began to recount events of their trip all while looking at one crew member, who was looking at the floor.

It seems he had made everyone dinner and the storm struck just as they finished and had to shorten sail and sit on the rail. It was hours before anyone went below to find a gallon of salad oil had gotten loose and eventually painted the interior, making it like an ice rink below. Hence the bruises.

Our steering problems seemed small in comparison.

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[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Sailing in Britannia

By Esther Petrilli-Massey

When one thinks of the United Kingdom, sailing normally doesn't come to mind even though the British navy was once the greatest in the world, sending ships around the globe for war and commerce. I was reminded of this on a recent trip.



Boats in Creux Harbor on Sark Island

Of particular interest to SCOW members is my final destination of Dundee, Scotland, Alexandria's Sister City. I went there as a member of the Alexandria Sister City Committee to meet our counterparts. Like Alexandria, Dundee is a port city. Nonworking jute mills dot the town. Some have been converted into apartments, torn down, or remain vacant. What I discovered there is that Dundee formed the backbone of the sailing industry through its jute production. Jute was used to make the sails for the ships that plied the seas for England's navy, as well as the material for the covered wagons trundling into the American West. Today it is used to make artificial turf.

In late August to early September I went on vacation to the United Kingdom and Ireland, beginning on Sark Island, onto Wales, then Ireland, and lastly Scotland. I didn't get to sail at any time during the tour, although many people sail around the islands. The Channel Islands form a chain in the southern English Channel from the English coast to Normandy in France, with Sark lying closest to France. The water clarity ranges up to an amazing 100 feet. Sark registers as one of the world's few "Dark Sky Islands," as it features no street lights. Roads are unpaved. No cars are allowed on the island and transportation is by farm tractor, horse carriage, bike, or on foot. Motorcycle traffic is rare.



Jute Factory Museum



RRS Discovery in Discovery Point

The sails also adorned the RRS (Royal Research Ship) Discovery, the last barque-rigged auxiliary steamship to be built in Britain. The Discovery now sits in Dundee's harbor in front of the new Victoria & Albert museum that prompted the committee's visit. Its first and very successful mission, the British National Antarctic Expedition, carried Robert Falcon Scott and Ernest Shackleton to the Antarctic. Now it serves as a museum. I was fascinated by both the scale and genius of the design.



Different woods of varying thickness and other properties to accommodate navigating through rough waters and ice



Another Sister City member examining the salt layer needed to reduce moisture

The ship borrowed many aspects of her design (as well as her name) from the Bloodhound, a Dundee-built whaling ship taken into Royal Navy service as HMS Discovery for an Arctic Expedition. By 1900 few yards in the United Kingdom had the capability to build wooden ships of the size needed - only two shipbuilders submitted bids for the contract - but it was deemed essential that the ship be made from wood, both for strength and ease of repair and to reduce the magnetic interference from a steel hull to allow the most accurate navigation and surveying.

The main compass was mounted perfectly amidships and there were to be no steel or iron fittings within 30 feet (9.1 meters) of this point - to the extent that the original cushions for the wardroom (just aft and below the main bridge) were changed when it was found they included steel-backed buttons. For the same reason the boilers and engine were mounted toward the stern of the ship, a feature which also provided maximum space for equipment and provisions. A special laboratory for taking magnetic field measurements was located below the bridge. (from Wikipedia)

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[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Adaptive Sailing

By Mike Hooban

My other water sport, aside from sailing, is kayaking. I'm also a veteran, and had the great good fortune to get through 18 months in Vietnam sound in body and perhaps even in mind. So when I learned in 2005 that people were looking for volunteers to help get injured veterans out in kayaks to help with their recovery, I thought it would be a good way to pay back some of my good fortune.

The organization in question is called Team River Runner (TRR), and currently has 40 some odd locations around the US, after starting out at Walter Reed here in DMV in 2004. I continued my active involvement with them through 2014, and still maintain contacts with them, though limited by the passage of time. TRR is a "chapter" of an organization called Disabled Sports USA (DS/USA), started by another Vietnam veteran, Kirk Bauer, who lost a leg over there. DS/USA serves as an umbrella for a large and varied number of organizations serving adaptive athletes throughout the US.

In addition to kayaking, DS/USA covers such sports as swimming, biking, climbing, wheelchair basketball, skiing, and fishing, among others. If it's a sport, there's a good chance DS/USA is doing it somewhere, somehow. They issue a magazine called *Challenge* three times a year, and provide information about the various activities that take place under their aegis. I can't resist mentioning that their fall 2018 issue talked about a TRR trip September to guide 5 blind paddlers in kayaks down the Grand Canyon. Having been challenged when guiding blind paddlers in much calmer waters locally, I can only be astonished that they were able to pull this off. Then again, knowing some of the people involved, maybe I shouldn't be that surprised. You can find issues of *Challenge* on the DS/USA website: www.disabledsportsusa.org.

Also in that issue was an article entitled "Sailing Can Take You Away" about sailing opportunities for adaptive athletes throughout the US. One organization they mentioned is called Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB) based in Annapolis MD. As I looked through earlier issues of *Challenge* I found a notice from CRAB from last Spring, encouraging people to look into sailing with them. I called their operations manager, Sarah Winchester, and had a pleasant and informative chat about their program and the possibility of SCOW people being involved if interested.

I'll quote the writeup from earlier this year describing their program:

"Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB) has been providing the thrill and freedom of sailing to persons with disabilities, recovering warriors, and children from at-risk neighborhoods for over 26 years. Located in the beautiful city of Annapolis, CRAB sails on the largest estuary in the US, the Chesapeake Bay. Our fleet consists of six new Beneteau First 22A Sailboats modified for adaptive sailing and complete with secure seating. We hope to share the recreational and therapeutic benefits of sailing with you during the 2018 season.

For recovering warriors, a two-day sailing clinic will be held May 16-17. The basics of sailing, navigation and racing will be taught to participants culminating in a regatta on the second day. Any veteran with a disability may participate in this sailing clinic.

CRAB's monthly SailFree Sundays are a great opportunity to spend time with friends and family on the water. This wildly popular sail event, which kicks off April 22, is available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

If you're looking for some competition CRAB offers four regattas throughout the season: two for recovering warriors (one on April 28 & one in September), the Don Backe Memorial CRAB Cup on June 9; and the biggest regatta and party of the year, the Boatyard Bar and Grill Regatta in August. All events are free of charge for our guests. See you on the water!

For more information please visit www.crabsailing.org or call 410-266-5722."

I'm hoping we can persuade a representative of CRAB to come speak to us at a membership meeting or similar gathering. I'm also personally interested in participating in some capacity, and think there may be others in SCOW who would also find this a rewarding thing to do. I'll monitor how things develop for the coming season (they're pretty much buttoned down for the winter, starting up again up at Sandy Point in April or so), and will notify the club when there is news.

I can say from personal experience that it can be very rewarding to participate in something like this. It can of course also be challenging, but that to me is really what sailing is about in any case.

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[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Celtic Tides

By Mike Hooban

At our November member meeting, we had a very good talk from Dan Dunham of the Coast Guard auxiliary on boating safety, with an emphasis on winter conditions. The first thing he talked about was dealing with finding yourself suddenly in cold water. So I was struck a bit later on, when I ran across a good description of a real life situation of this type in a book I was reading, and thought I'd share it in ChaNNels.

The book is entitled *On Celtic Tides*, by Chris Duff, and describes the author's voyage in a sea kayak around the coast of Ireland, beginning in Dublin and proceeding south, then west, then north then south again back to Dublin. The incident in question occurred in a place called Ballinskelligs, in Kerry, at the western part of the Iveragh peninsula on the west coast of Ireland, in late June. The area has lovely beaches, and Duff was camping close to one of them waiting for the weather to become suitable for him to continue his voyage. He ran into a vacationing Irish family that invited him to lunch. The children wanted to have a ride in the kayak, which fascinated them. The story picks up from this point, as their dad, Con, agrees that they can try out this odd conveyance.

"It wasn't one of the kids who got the first ride in the boat. It was Con. I gave him a few tips, suggested he stay close to shore, then stepped out of the water and watched. For the first few minutes he looked awkward, his upper body rigid and the boat responding like a nervous horse with a rider who had never sat in a saddle. I remembered my first time. The boat had felt claustrophobic. If I tipped over, I was certain I would be trapped in the cockpit, unable to get to the surface for a breath. The narrow hull mirrored my anxiety and tension, quivering and responding to every twitch of muscle. Paddling is like riding a bike, you have to be half removed from it before it begins to feel natural. After a half hour Con had relaxed, his shoulders had dropped, and the boat glided smoothly with each stroke. Occasionally, he would lean too far to one side and the boat would hang on its edge, threatening to capsize, but giving Con a few seconds to again find his balance. He paddled it one way, tenderly eased it in a broad turn and paddled it back, then around a little faster and back again.

When the pleading and pacing of the kids in knee-deep water got to be too much Con eased the bow into the sand and it was Donall's turn. I watched him sink into the cockpit that seemed to swallow his seven-year-old body. No fear or anxiety, just the thrill of the moment engulfing him. Con held the stern and gently pushed him around in waist-deep water while Donall dipped the blades, laughed, and pretended to paddle. I returned to the tent for a few minutes of quiet while everyone else played on the beach. I had picked up the journal again when suddenly I heard cries of alarm. I looked up to see the boat drifting away from Con's outstretched hands and a look of panic on his face. A sudden offshore wind had caught him off guard and was blowing Donall out to sea. He yelled for someone to get the lifeguard and started to swim after Donall.

I ran to the water's edge and dove in. The frigid water hit my inner ear and eye sockets with such pain that I felt nauseated. "*Forget it! Swim! Get to Donall!*" I came up on Con, then pulled past him. On a breathing stroke I caught sight of the lifeguard hitting the water on the run and a crowd of people gathering on the beach. Straight ahead I could see the stern of the boat but I wasn't gaining on it. The wind was picking up, the water getting choppy, and I started to pray, "Please God, don't let him go over. Stay calm, Donall, stay calm."

I could feel the cold locking my chest and arm muscles in spasms. Every fourth or fifth stroke I would look up, but the boat wasn't getting any closer. Through the cold I tried to concentrate, ignoring the nausea and focusing on pulling through the water. I had done a lot of long-distance swimming, but not in fifty-degree water. My arms felt as heavy as waterlogged stumps and I couldn't get a full breath of air. With every stroke I wondered if I was chasing a boat I couldn't catch, and if not, would I have the

strength to make it back to land? On and on. Desperately looking up and still the boat drifting ahead of me. Maybe a little closer but so little. How long could I keep going? I lowered my head again, the waves catching my arms in their forward arc and blocking them in mid-stroke.

I stopped and yelled to Donall: “Just sit there. Don’t move. Just sit.”

He looked scared, the land getting more distant by the second and me taking so long to reach him. He was crying. I was almost there but I couldn’t close the last ten yards. Damn the wind! With every stroke I gained a foot. I was at my limit, my breath gone and my body beginning to shake from the cold and exertion. Finally I reached out to grab the stern, missed it, and grabbed again. On the third try I got it and hung on, sucking in lungfulls of air. My head felt like it was being split open by the cold slicing into my eye sockets. I tried to focus on the stern of the boat, looking at the yellow of the hull, anything to get my mind away from the nausea and pain as I slowly regained control of my breathing.

I tried to reassure Donall, told him everything was going to be all right even though I couldn’t feel my legs and didn’t think I could tow the boat the half mile back to shore. Tears ran down his face and he was shivering. He nodded, his entire body shaking from the cold wind. I started towing the boat, stern-first, back to the beach. My one thought was to get out of the water. The lifeguard was still swimming out raising his head out of the water more often than keeping it down. He was obviously near his limits, but towing a rescue buoy that I watched like a desperate man. I prayed that he wouldn’t turn back when he saw us struggling back toward the beach. “Come on. Come on. Don’t turn back. We need that buoy.” We closed the gap and he finally reached out for the boat. He was wiped out, his breath as ragged as mine had been. We lowered Donall into the buoy – his legs dangling in the water, his upper body draped over the boat, white fingertips clinging to the boat. I pulled myself over the rear deck and into the cockpit. With Donall shivering on the front deck and the lifeguard hanging on the rear toggle, we headed for shore. Donall was one brave boy. Cold and scared but staying low on the deck like I told him, even as the waves washed over the bow and soaked him. He didn’t say a word but I could hear the gasps as the waves hit him and the shivering shook his little body.

The paddle back took as long as the swim out. The lifeguard was so cold he just hung there. I kept calling back, encouraging him to hang on and that it wouldn’t be long. If it was me being towed, I would have been finished. The cold would have drained all muscle control from me. Thankfully, he had more body fat. He was shaking but still coherent.

As we got within yards of the shore, Con waded out and reached for Donall, the lifeguard let go, and strong welcoming hands pulled us from the water. There were tears of relief, hugs and handshakes as we landed and were hurried to the warmth of the caravan. For an hour we sat wrapped in blankets clutching hot-water bottles to our chests and drinking hot tea. I kept spilling mine, my hands and body shaking uncontrollably from the cold. I looked over at Donall, wrapped in a blanket on Con’s lap. He was safe in his dad’s arms but very quiet. He would look over at me with huge eyes, smile softly and bury his head in the warmth of the blanket again. Someone asked him what he had thought while he was drifting away. With a lisp he said quietly, “I was afraid I would capsized.” Such a big word for such a little fellow. Con kissed him on the forehead and he snuggled in closer. I thought how brave he was and thanked God that we had both made it back to the beach. In an hour Donall was asleep on the couch. Con came over and sat beside me. “Thank God you’re a good swimmer or we would have lost Donall. I don’t know what I would have done. His voice had an edge to it that brought tears to my eyes. I was still shivering. Con got up, brought me another blanket and filled my cup with more tea.”

The story parallels many of the things Dan spoke about in his talk. I’ll just note that the water is described as being 50 degrees. The Potomac today is in the mid-40s, and has been hovering around 50 for several weeks.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Your Article Goes Here

By Any SCOW member willing to share content of interest to our community.

[At any time, please submit articles, or links to articles that you think would be meaningful to other SCOW members. Photos are always welcome – preferably with captions. Word format preferred but not necessary. Be informative! Be creative! Unleash your inner-writer (in a super safe forum). Be serious or funny! Please submit to editor@scow.org]



[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Upcoming SCOW Events – December 2018

December 3	Monday	7:00pm	SCOW BOD Meeting
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Check SCOW.ORG for all membership events and details.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

2018 SCOW Board of Directors

Commodore	Joe Leoncio	commodore@scow.org
Vice Commodore	Richard Kaiser	vice@scow.org
Secretary	Steve Youngblood	secretary@scow.org
Treasurer	Mike Hooban	treasurer@scow.org
Training Director	Jyoti Wadhwa	training@scow.org
Skipper Director	Brian McPherson	skipper@scow.org
Social Director	Julie Pixler	social@scow.org
River/Bay Director	Marie Brennan	river@scow.org
Flying Scot Maintenance Director	Dick Vida	scotmaint@scow.org
Cruiser Maintenance Director	Vincent Penoso	cruisermaint@scow.org
Racing Director	Dave Beckett	racing@scow.org
Membership Director	Talya Mallin	membership@scow.org
Full Board	All Board Members	board@scow.org

All SCOW board members welcome your questions, comments and input.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

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