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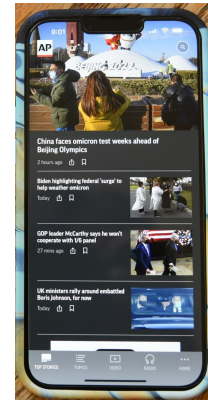
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# Connecting

August 30, 2022

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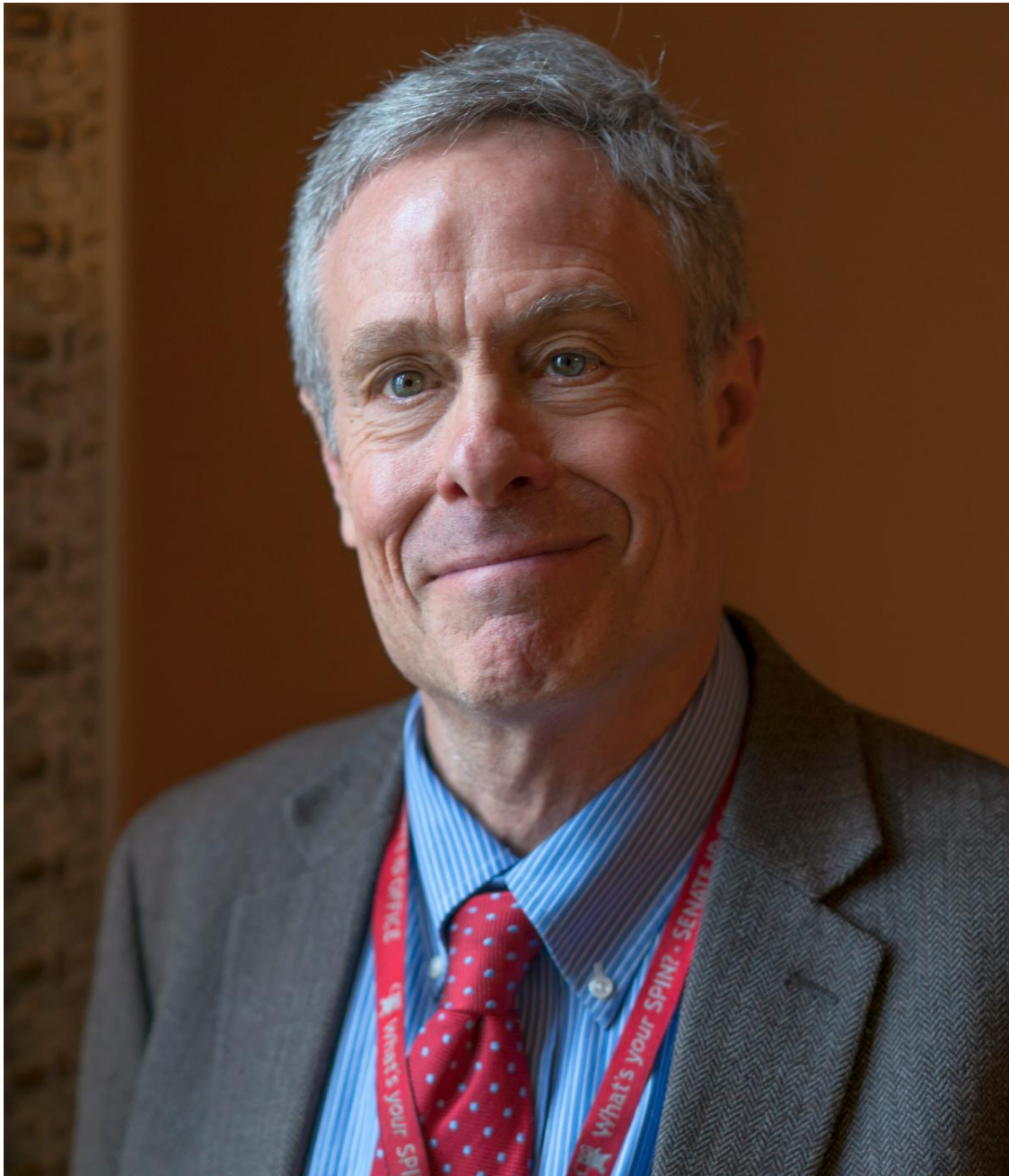
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Colleagues,

Good Tuesday morning on this Aug. 30, 2022:

[Alan Fram](#), who's covered Congress for AP since 1987, specializing in budget and spending issues, reflects on four decades of covering Congress in today's lead Connecting story. Fram, a native New Yorker, joined AP in Newark, New Jersey, in 1981 and is part of AP's national politics team. He's reported on battles over guns, health care and immigration, as well as numerous congressional campaigns. He retires from AP on Sept. 30.



*Alan Fram*

Thanks for more jury duty yarns.

No update yet on Ye Old Editor, but I'll pass along as soon as I hear.

Be well,

Peg

## Retiring AP reporter chronicles four decades covering Congress

By **ALAN FRAM**  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In the waning moments of Democrats' four-decade hold on the House, I saw a gesture that seems unthinkable today. On the evening of Nov. 29, 1994, they let the top Republican preside, briefly, over the chamber.

It was a display of respect and affection toward Minority Leader Bob Michel, R-Ill., retiring after a 38-year House career served entirely under Democrats. He embraced with outgoing Speaker Tom Foley, D-Wash. Republicans were taking over in January under the combative Rep. Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., abandoning Michel's consensus-building style.

Those feelings between leaders are all but gone. In their place are suspicion and even hostility, most starkly symbolized by magnetometers lawmakers must pass through before entering the House chamber.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., installed the metal detectors over GOP objections after the brutal Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol attack by supporters of then-President Donald Trump. Democrats also expressed concerns about Republican lawmakers who carry guns.

As I retire after nearly four decades covering Capitol Hill, that contrast and the forces behind it illustrate why I've loved covering Congress — and why I've recently felt dispirited.

Read more [here](#).

Shared by Sibby Christensen.

## Connecting series:

*More of your stories about  
getting the call to jury duty*



Gerald Bodlander - I've been called for jury duty twice. For the first I filled out a short questionnaire (age, occupation, etc.) and mailed it in—didn't think much of it.

Turns out it was a murder trial — the killing had occurred in the neighboring county, but the venue was changed because of the publicity there. There were 200-225 of us in the jury pool. As I recall my number was in the 1980s, and there was an audible sigh of relief when we were told the death penalty was not on the table for the trial.

We were also told the trial would last six to seven weeks, something that I reticently told my boss at AP Radio Ed Tobias when we got our lunch break. Fortunately, even after all the lawyers' challenges and people being excused because they had vacations planned for the time period, the jury was filled by the time they got to number 150 or 160. Those of us with higher numbers had big smiles and wasted little time leaving when given the green light.

The second time I was called I was part of a group of about 50 people who were told to just sit around and wait in case a lawyer suddenly requested a jury trial in the hopes it would result in a delay. We were out by 3 p.m.

-0-

James Carlson - My one stint at jury duty didn't get far. I spent a week in the mid 1970s going to the Milwaukee County Courthouse, and the one time I made the panel of prospective jurors for a trial, I was ousted at the question about possible conflicts of interest.

The judge, Ralph Adam Fine, previously was a lawyer for a Madison judge who got in hot water when his local newspaper reported the comments he made at a hearing for a 15-year-old boy after the teen pleaded guilty to sexual assault of a 16-year-old girl.

Judge Archie Simonson said such a thing could be a normal male reaction to provocative female clothing and a "sexually permissive" culture in Madison.

It's no surprise he became the subject of a recall campaign and was ousted from the bench, leading to the election of Dane County's first female judge.

Judge Fine, then in private practice, took the case when the judge sued all the news outlets, including AP, that reported on his comments in the juvenile's hearing.

He got nowhere with his lawsuit.

When I reminded Fine of the case and my position with AP, I was quickly ruled out for the jury.

-0-

Carl Leubsdorf - My one experience on a jury was quite interesting—and revealing. In the District of Columbia, where I live, adults who are not in jail and don't have felony convictions get called quite regularly every two years for Superior Court duty. And everyone gets called, judges, lawyers, journalists, you name it.

I was in a panel of about 50, and it included three journalists, among them my late AP colleague Fran Lewine. Two of us got chosen for the jury which was hearing a murder case, with a complication.

The timing wasn't great; there was a big Republican do in Iowa that Saturday night I had hoped to cover. As it turned out, I was able to get there when one juror asked for a day off, and the judge excused the case until Monday.

The complication was that an eyewitness to the murder had been killed—by somebody. We were told only that the defendant was not involved, a stipulation that while technically correct proved to be misleading. But before the eyewitness died, he told a third party exactly what he had seen. If you were able to accept the third party's account, you'd have no problem finding the defendant guilty.

The two journalists on the jury had no trouble reaching a guilty verdict. After all, we are trained to look at facts and draw conclusions from them. Neither did the lawyer from one of the city's most prestigious law firms. (During one break, he was on his cell phone to his office, and I heard a familiar voice booming out of the other end – longtime Democratic party power Bob Strauss.)

Though some witnesses were obviously scared to say much—with good reason—the case seemed simple enough. But there were two holdouts, a paralegal who worked for a defense lawyer and an 18-year-old kid who had trouble adding one and one and getting two. Two others wanted second-degree murder instead of first-degree murder.

So, after four days, we were hopelessly hung. The assistant DA said the case would be re-tried. One other interesting note: The judge -- Colleen Kollar-Kotelly – was excellent. She since has become a prominent federal judge who for years headed the FISA tribunal.

Some weeks later, I checked in with the assistant DA who had handled the case to find out what happened when the defendant was re-tried. One thing was different about the second trial: The jury was told that the defendant's brother had been charged with killing the eyewitness. (Technically, the defendant was not involved, but...) Armed with that, the jury found him guilty, and he was sentenced to 30 years.

And yes, I wrote a column about it, and about the difficulty of applying the “three strikes and you're out” rule if it was hard to get an obvious conviction on the first round.

Several years later, I was the alternate on a case involving drugs and firearms. It appeared from the way the trial unfolded that the jury would be hung. Luckily, I had been dismissed when that happened several days later.

## Announcing the AP's Politics, Elections & Democracy team

**Anna Johnson**  
AP Washington Bureau Chief

We have been expanding our U.S. politics, elections and democracy coverage this year to produce a deeper, more cohesive report that unifies AP's journalism produced in Washington with reporting from bureaus across the country. As we enter the final months before the Nov. 8 midterms, we are thrilled to announce the members of the AP's national politics, elections and democracy team and highlight their reporting beats and coverage areas.

- **Steve Peoples**, based in New York, will continue as AP's chief political writer with a focus on the biggest political trends, voter behavior and major statewide campaigns
- **Bill Barrow**, based in Atlanta, will cover politics in Georgia, a state that is on the frontlines of some of the biggest political stories
- **Tom Beaumont**, based in Des Moines, will cover politics in Iowa and the Midwest, with a focus on House campaigns
- **Sara Burnett**, based in Chicago, will cover governors' races and the intersection of gender and politics
- **Christina A. Cassidy**, based in Atlanta, will cover how elections are administered throughout the U.S.
- **Jill Colvin**, based in New York, will cover former President Donald Trump and the GOP
- **J.J. Cooper**, based in Phoenix, will cover the rapidly changing politics of Arizona and the southwest
- **Gary Fields**, based in Washington, will cover challenges to democracy with a focus on marginalized and disaffected people
- **Adriana Gomez Licon**, based in Miami, will cover the political influence of Latino voters
- **Meg Kinnard**, based in Columbia, South Carolina, will cover breaking news, the South and the 2024 Republican presidential primary
- **Michelle Price**, based in New York, will focus on the political players in the nation's largest metropolis
- **Nick Riccardi**, based in Denver, will cover emerging threats to democracy, including new rules and tactics that make it harder to vote
- **Brian Slodysko**, based in Washington, will cover influence, money and politics
- **Will Weissert**, based in Washington, will cover Democratic politics, including efforts to maintain Congress and the emerging 2024 campaign

With their reporting expertise and strategic locations across the U.S., this team is in a strong position to cover upcoming elections with speed and sophistication. And this is only the beginning. We also posted a two-year reporting position for a journalist who will cover voting access and race in the U.S., and we will spend the coming months continuing to build out the team and our coverage.

Deputy Washington Bureau Chief Steven Sloan, Democracy News Editor Tom Verdin and Deputy Political Editor Ashley Thomas are leading this expanded team and our overall coverage of politics, elections and democracy in the U.S. The team will continue to work closely to produce ambitious journalism with our talented staff in Washington and bureaus across the country.

At a time when the U.S. is at a political crossroads, we are excited to devote more resources to this critical coverage that is central to the AP's mission. Please join us in

congratulating the journalists who are at the forefront of this effort.



*Columbia Journalism School Dean Jelani Cobb*

## Stories of interest

### *'Are we the problem?' The new dean of Columbia j-school wrestles with its place in the industry*

By Calder McHugh  
POLITICO

Everyone is in their back-to-school finest. For the incoming Columbia Journalism School class, this means: a lot of Fjällräven backpacks; some of those little reporters' notebooks that journalists use in the movies; at least one *LA Times*-branded mask (is it from a subscription deal or a coveted internship?). Doc Martens abound, so do first-day jitters.

A little under 250 new students are masked up and packed into the Joseph D. Jmail lecture hall to hear Dean Jelani Cobb talk about a 118-year-old article that he plucked from the archives. His goal: to get these newly minted J-schoolers to think more clearly about a journalism school's place in America. The title of the piece, written by founder of the Columbia Journalism School Joseph Pulitzer is "The College of Journalism," which Pulitzer describes as "a review of criticisms and objections." And while some of the complaints about the concept of a journalism school feel slightly anachronistic (whether a journalist must be "born" or whether he can be taught) many remain relevant: whether journalism has to be taught in newsrooms, what can't be taught in a classroom — and whether a "college of journalism" is superfluous.

These are a ballooning list of questions that are very much on Cobb's mind these days as he takes on a job as the public face of the country's premier J-school. He's stepping in at a particularly fraught time: Local newsrooms have been hollowed out; the ones remaining are regularly accused of relentlessly chasing clicks and eyeballs, rather than delivering reporting that seeks to educate or hold power to account. Politicians and their fans regularly attack the credibility of the press. (As do some journalists.) Then there's a worldwide rise in the killing of journalists.

"What is Columbia Journalism School's role when there are news deserts everywhere?" a new student asks Cobb. "Are we part of the problem?"

That's a question he's still thinking through, Cobb says, but he likes the idea of providing the occasional workshop for underserved journalists. "I know it may be an unsatisfactory answer, but we'll see how that can be done," he says.

Inherent within his measured answer is Cobb's growing understanding — officially one month into the job — of what it means to be dean. He's spent six years teaching at the J-school while also contributing to *The New Yorker* (a job he will continue), but dean-hood comes with a distinct set of challenges.

It's easy to arrive starry-eyed, imagining the ways you and your students can—and will—change the world. Then comes the fundraising.

An M.S. in journalism from Columbia — all told a nine and a half month program — costs an estimated \$121,290. Depending on where you're looking, a journalist with a master's degree makes on average between \$36,000 and \$58,000 after graduating. Columbia can offer generous aid packages (73 percent of those who applied for scholarship aid received funding and the median award is approximately \$40,000), but its students are also regularly drowning in debt. For many young people with journalistic aspirations, the training that Columbia provides is a luxury they literally cannot afford.

Cobb is all too aware of the problem. He told me that he regularly hears from students who have always dreamed of becoming journalists but now worry about how they'll pay for school or how much of a burden their debt will be. "It's not a novel idea that we need to find some other way for this to exist," he says. "We just don't know what that is right now."

Read more [here](#).

Shared by Scott Charton

## ***We don't like those pesky errors, either: Letter from the Editor***

Dear readers,

Back in the day, many layers of editors would stand between a reporter's typed copy and the printed page. Now when we publish rapidly onto OregonLive, the process is



greatly streamlined – and readers notice.

To take an example from the past, a suburban reporter might turn in his article to the bureau chief, and she would edit it and send it to the suburban editor, who would pass it along to the city desk. A news editor then would read it to decide placement within the newspaper. On the copy desk, a rim editor would make copy edits and write a headline. Then, the slot editor would take a careful read.

The article would be placed on the page in the composing room, where the makeup editor would check it. Then, page proofs would be generated for more checks.

In the current fast-paced world of digital first news, a routine article might go straight from reporter to OregonLive's home page with just a quick glance from a single editor.

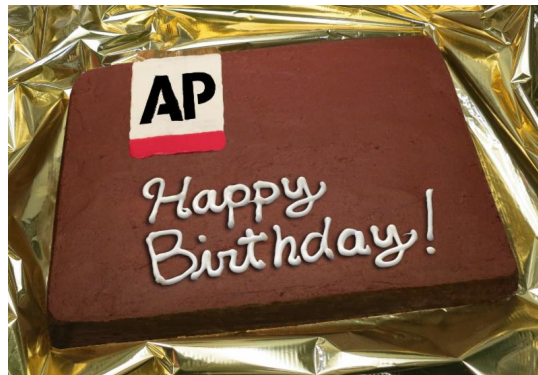
Of course, The Oregonian/OregonLive has thousands of copy editors. They are also known as readers.

And they have something to say.

Read more [here](#).

Shared by Les Blumenthal

## Connecting wishes Happy Birthday



[Kristi Chew](#)

## Today in History – Aug. 30, 2022



## By The Associated Press

Today is Tuesday, Aug. 30, the 242nd day of 2022. There are 123 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlight in History:

On Aug. 30, 2021, the United States completed its withdrawal from Afghanistan, ending America's longest war with the Taliban back in power, as Air Force transport planes carried a remaining contingent of troops from Kabul airport; officials put the number of Americans remaining in Afghanistan at under 200 and said they would keep working to get those people out. After watching the last U.S. planes disappear into the sky over Afghanistan, Taliban fighters fired their guns into the air, celebrating victory after a 20-year insurgency.

### On this date:

In 1861, Union Gen. John C. Fremont instituted martial law in Missouri and declared slaves there to be free. (However, Fremont's emancipation order was countermanded by President Abraham Lincoln.)

In 1941, during World War II, German forces approaching Leningrad cut off the remaining rail line out of the city.

In 1945, U.S. Gen. Douglas MacArthur arrived in Japan to set up Allied occupation headquarters.

In 1963, the "Hot Line" communications link between Washington and Moscow went into operation.

In 1967, the Senate confirmed the appointment of Thurgood Marshall as the first Black justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1983, Guion (GY'-un) S. Bluford Jr. became the first Black American astronaut to travel in space as he blasted off aboard the Challenger.

In 1991, Azerbaijan (ah-zur-by-JAHN') declared its independence, joining the stampede of republics seeking to secede from the Soviet Union.

In 1992, the television series “Northern Exposure” won six Emmy Awards, including best drama series, while “Murphy Brown” received three Emmys, including best comedy series.

In 1993, “The Late Show with David Letterman” premiered on CBS-TV.

In 1997, Americans received word of the car crash in Paris that claimed the lives of Princess Diana, her boyfriend, Dodi Fayed (DOH'-dee FY'-ehd), and their driver, Henri (AHN'-ree) Paul. (Because of the time difference, it was August 31 where the crash occurred.)

In 2005, a day after Hurricane Katrina hit, floods were covering 80 percent of New Orleans, looting continued to spread and rescuers in helicopters and boats picked up hundreds of stranded people.

In 2007, in a serious breach of nuclear security, a B-52 bomber armed with six nuclear warheads flew cross-country unnoticed; the Air Force later punished 70 people.

Ten years ago: Mitt Romney launched his fall campaign for the White House with a rousing, personal speech to the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Florida, proclaiming that America needs “jobs, lots of jobs.” Earlier in the evening, actor-director Clint Eastwood offered an endorsement of Romney that entailed using an empty chair to represent President Barack Obama. The U.S. Justice Department announced it had ended its investigation into CIA interrogations of terrorist detainees without bringing criminal charges.

Five years ago: The former Hurricane Harvey completed a U-turn in the Gulf of Mexico and rolled ashore for the second time in six days, hitting southwestern Louisiana as a tropical storm with heavy rains and winds of 45 miles an hour. Floodwaters began to recede in Houston, where thousands of homes were flooded. A federal judge in Texas temporarily blocked most of a new state law that would have let police officers ask people during routine stops whether they were in the country legally; the law also threatened sheriffs with jail time for not cooperating with federal immigration authorities. (The crackdown on “sanctuary cities” took effect the following March after a federal appeals court upheld the law.)

One year ago: Rescuers in boats, helicopters and high-water trucks brought to safety hundreds of people in Louisiana who were trapped by the floodwaters of Hurricane Ida. The entire resort city of South Lake Tahoe, California, was ordered evacuated as a ferocious wildfire raced toward Lake Tahoe on the California-Nevada state line; the city of 22,000 was normally filled with tens of thousands of summer tourists. (Improved weather conditions would help keep the flames out of the city.)

Today's Birthdays: Actor Elizabeth Ashley is 83. Actor Ben Jones is 81. Actor John Kani is 80. Cartoonist R. Crumb is 79. Olympic gold medal skier Jean-Claude Killy (zhahn-KLOHD' kee-LEE') is 79. Comedian Lewis Black is 74. Actor Timothy Bottoms is 71. Actor David Paymer is 68. Jazz musician Gerald Albright is 65. Actor Michael Chiklis is 59. Actor Michael Michele is 56. Country singer Sherrie Austin is 51. Rock singer-musician Lars Frederiksen (Rancid) is 51. Actor Cameron Diaz is 50. TV personality Lisa Ling is 49. Rock singer-musician Aaron Barrett (Reel Big Fish) is 48. Actor Raúl Castillo is 45. Actor Michael Gladis is 45. MLB pitcher Adam Wainwright is 41. Former tennis

player Andy Roddick is 40. Singer Rachael Price (Lake Street Dive) is 37. Rock musician Ryan Ross is 36. Actor Johanna Braddy is 35. Actor Cameron Finley is 35.

## Got a story or photos to share?

Connecting is a daily newsletter published Monday through Friday that focuses on retired and former Associated Press employees, present-day employees, and news industry and journalism school colleagues. It began in 2013 and past issues can be found by clicking Connecting Archive in the masthead. Its author, Paul Stevens, retired from the AP in 2009 after a 36-year career as a newsman in Albany and St. Louis, correspondent in Wichita, chief of bureau in Albuquerque, Indianapolis and Kansas City, and Midwest vice president based in Kansas City.



Got a story to share? A favorite memory of your AP days? Don't keep them to yourself. Share with your colleagues by sending to Ye Olde Connecting Editor. And don't forget to include photos!

Here are some suggestions:

- **Connecting "selfies"** - a word and photo self-profile of you and your career, and what you are doing today. Both for new members and those who have been with us a while.
- **Second chapters** - You finished a great career. Now tell us about your second (and third and fourth?) chapters of life.
- **Spousal support** - How your spouse helped in supporting your work during your AP career.
- **My most unusual story** - tell us about an unusual, off the wall story that you covered.
- **"A silly mistake that you make"** - a chance to 'fess up with a memorable mistake in your journalistic career.
- **Multigenerational AP families** - profiles of families whose service spanned two or more generations.
- **Volunteering** - benefit your colleagues by sharing volunteer stories - with ideas on such work they can do themselves.
- **First job** - How did you get your first job in journalism?
- **Most unusual place a story assignment took you.**

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