



Forging Better Writers

January 2025

Gold Country Writers is a 501(c)(3) non-profit volunteer organization of writers that meets every Wednesday at the Auburn City Hall Rose Room from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Email goldcountrywriters1849@gmail.com to join or find out more. **Website:** goldcountrywriters.com. **Facebook:** Gold Country Writers. **Mailing address:** P.O. Box 5991, Auburn, CA 95604.



[Printable pdf file](#)

President's Message

Happy New Year, 2025, to all GCW members! A new year full of promise is beginning. I hope you all had a festive holiday season and that this new year brings you good health, inner peace and happiness.

I'm looking forward to being with my GCW friends, socializing, discussing new ideas about reaching our goals in writing, and publishing that next book. I have found a writing partner, who unfortunately travels on Wednesdays due to business, so he is unable to join us at this time. He has a great story lined up for his first book, and I'm helping him write it. It's great fun writing a book with another person because every milestone you have someone to share the joy. You plan trips and travel to places that you intend to name in your book, together you take photos, and decide which ones will go into your story line.

Mary Helen Fein, our Website Director, is relocating to Reno, Nevada, in March. This is a call out to anyone who has an interest in replacing Mary Helen as the Webmaster Director for GCW. Mary Helen is willing to train anyone who may have an interest to learn the process and the program. Please contact me or any of the Board Members if you have an interest.

Mary Helen has done an outstanding job for us. We are so grateful for her website skills these last few years. Her work has been excellent in sharing information to all of us in a professional manner. Thank you, Mary Helen, for all your good work and for making our website look great, too.

GCW President (Susan Korn) and GCW Internal Vice President (Barbara Young) will be replaced with new officers in July 2025. I know it sounds like a long way off, but this is important to plan and consider in advance. Please be sure to vote for your choices when the time comes.

I will continue to be the Mentor Coordinator for the members who have an interest in improving their writing or completing the book of their dreams. The GCW Mentorship Program is very successful, and this year we had three Mentees complete their books and send them to a publisher for print. I'm thrilled when this happens. Congratulations to Mary Mohs, Lisa Schliff, and Pat Snelling for completing their new books. I can't wait to see the covers and your books in print. Save me one!

Continue on the right path to your goals and dreams of writing. Here's to a Healthy, Happy, and Prosperous New Year 2025!

~ **Susan Korn**

GOLD COUNTRY WRITERS



"TURNING YOUR STORY INTO AN AUDIOBOOK: HERE'S THE REALITY"

RANDY LANDENBERGER



Before spending time and money on making an audiobook, come get an education about audiobooks and the audiobook business. Randy Landenberger will explain the process and the realistic expectations of producing an audiobook of your work. Doing business as Randco Studio, Randy has a home recording studio for audiobook narration, voice-over work, and music. Writing under the pen name Randy L. Scott, he is a master of psychological suspense with each book revealing many intricate layers. His psychological action-adventure-drama novels in The Dream Messiah series are *Freedom*, *Into the Fire*, and *Awaken*. For more information: www.randco.me

JANUARY 15, 2025

10 AM TO NOON

Auburn City Hall
Rose Room
1225 Lincoln Way
Auburn, CA 95603

PUBLIC INVITED - FREE

www.goldcountrywriters.com



Things to Know About the Audiobook Business

by Margie Yee Webb

We are pleased to welcome Randy Landenberger for a presentation to Gold Country Writers. On Wednesday, January 15, 2025, he will present "Turning Your Story into an Audiobook: Here's the Reality."

Before spending time and money on making an audiobook, come get an education about audiobooks and the audiobook business. An author and audio engineer, Randy will explain the process and the realistic expectations of producing an audiobook of your work.

Doing business as Randco Studio, he has a home recording studio for audiobook

narration, voice-over work, and music. Randy, a member of GCW, also provides audio visual support at meetings, including helping guest speakers set up their computers for PowerPoint presentations.

Writing under the pen name Randy L. Scott, he is a master of psychological suspense with each book revealing many intricate layers, and captivating readers through his gripping narratives and complex characters. His psychological action-adventure-drama novels in The Dream Messiah series are *Freedom*, *Into the Fire*, and *Awaken*.

An avid adventurer, Randy has experienced a wild variety of gypsy lifestyles and professions. His life mentorship under wild and colorful characters from around the world, along with training from Toastmasters International, where he served as Vice President of Education, inspired him to become a professional storyteller. Starting by delivering captivating tales on stage in front of audiences of hundreds to winning awards for technical writing, Randy grew into a teller and writer of wild, epic sagas with characters you both love and hate.

For more information, visit <https://www.randco.me>

Eats, Sweets, Awards and Books: Holiday Party Was a Blast

|

by Lisa Schliff

If you made it to the GCW Holiday Party, you were plied with yummy holiday cuisine, treats and libations. To add to the festivities, you heard three fantastic storytellers weave their magic. Not only that, but you had the opportunity to acknowledge the volunteer efforts of GCW members who went the extra mile for this amazing organization. And of course, there was the shmoozing among friends.

If you didn't attend, make a point of doing so next year. It's a party you won't want to miss! Below are photos of the Holiday Party for attendees to reminisce and non-attendees to behold and admire!



President Susan Korn addresses the GCW partygoers in the Rose Room.
(photo by Margie Yee Webb)



Kathryn Shields enchanted us with her storytelling.
(photo by Margie Yee Webb)



Bill Baynes entertained us with his poetry.
(photo by Margie Yee Webb)



Chery Anderson captivated us with her storytelling.
(photo by Margie Yee Webb)



Pop-Up Holiday Book Sale after the party.
(photos by Margie Yee Webb)



GOLD COUNTRY WRITERS

YOU ARE A WRITER
YOU WERE TOUCHED BY THE DIVINE FOR WHO ELSE CAN CREATE WORLDS FROM NOTHING AND LIFE BY MERE THOUGHT?

EITHER WRITING IS A PRIORITY OR IT CEASES TO EXIST.
INSPIRE DON'T DISMISS THE POWER OF YOURSELF DAILY. TO COMBAT WRITER'S BLOCK. BE PREPARED TO SACRIFICE GREAT PIECES OF WRITING AND NEAR PERFECT WORDS - PARTS OF YOURSELF THAT BLEED TO GET ON PAGE. WRITE EQUALLY WHEN YOU HAVE NO IDEAS AS WHEN YOU HAVE A HUNDRED.
EMBRACE THE MUSE. TRUST YOUR INNER VOICE. WHENEVER, WHEREVER, HOWEVER. IT'S THE BETTER WRITER. YOUR JOB IS TO PUT WORDS ON PAPER. MAKE THEM THE RIGHT ONES LATER.
WRITE HONESTLY. WRITE FEARLESSLY.
WRITE TRUE. BUT ABOVE ALL... **WRITE.**



Yearly dues of \$60 are due January 1, 2025

Please pay by cash to Nicolle Goldman

or send a check to

P.O. Box 5991, Auburn, CA 95604

Pay with Pay Pal at

Link coming soon.

Read and Review

2025 Book Lineup

Our first Read and Review for 2025 will meet Friday, January 17 at Depoe Bay Coffee Roasters, 893 High Street, Auburn. Please join us from 10 a.m. to noon. *Tales from a Rogue Ranger*, by Roseanne S. McHenry, and *Mother's Pearls*, by Barbara Young, are available for checkout in our GCW library and on amazon.com.

McHenry gives readers a fascinating peek into the world of a park ranger with humor and wit, about the pains and joys of her job.

Barbara shares heartwarming personal stories from her mother's life, metaphorically likened to the characteristics of pearls. She invites the giver and receiver of this gift book to share pearls (memories) of their own on the provided pages.

Make note of the Line-up for Read and Review 2025. Read ahead and plan to join us from ten until noon at Depoe Bay in downtown Auburn on these dates:

Friday, January 17 *Tales from a Rogue Ranger*, by Roseanne S. McHenry
Mother's Pearls, by Barbara Young

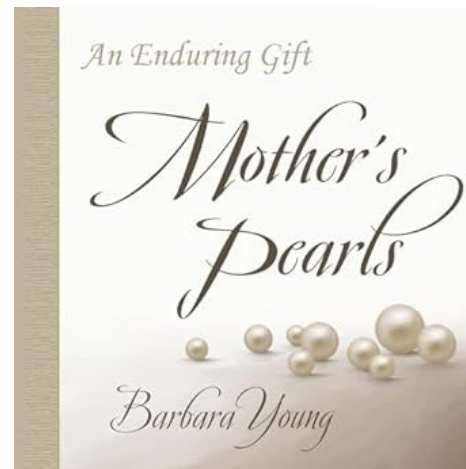
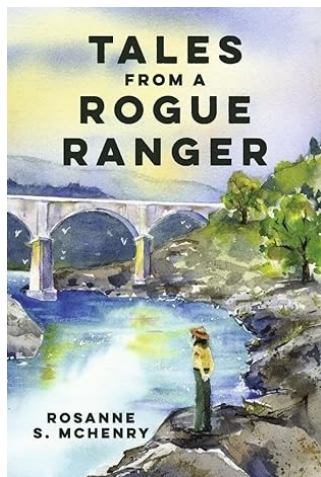
Friday, April 11 *Mission to Brimstone*, by Bill Baynes

Friday, July 18 *Create Your Own Closure Map: Avoid an End-of-Life Scavenger Hunt*,
by Heidi Struve Currey

Maddie's in the Middle, by Mary Boyle

Friday, October 10 *The True Story of Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Stevens: The Ghosts of Kennicott*, by Randy Landenberger writing as Randy L. Scott

Kelly Lardner, Coordinator
lrdnr@yahoo.com



Fiction and Poetry Contests

Driftwood Press is sponsoring contests in both fiction and poetry. The link appears below. Be sure to scroll down the page to In-house Contests. The deadline is January 15, 2025. For more information, the website is: <https://www.driftwoodpress.com/contests>. Thanks to Betsy Schwarzentraub for forwarding this from another source.

VOICES 2025 Open for Submissions

by Margie Yee Webb

VOICES 2025, a publication by Cold River Press in Grass Valley, is open for submissions. The deadline is April 20, 2025, with publication in the Summer.

“This year's theme, MYSTICISM, PROPHECIES & MARIGOLDS is sure to inspire a unique take on how we view our world, our times, and our place in history; nationally, worldly, and cosmic, not forgetting, of course, our place in the afterlife found in the myths, and religions, throughout time.”

They are accepting submissions of poetry, prose, essay, short fiction, flash fiction, photographs, artwork, and collage. For details, visit: <https://www.coldriverpress.com/>

KUDOS!

To Randy Landenburger for his helpful audio-visual assistance to our Guest Speakers. He goes above and beyond in getting them set up with AV equipment.

To Frank Nissen, who comes every Wednesday to set up the Rose Room for GCW meetings. He is a model of reliability.

To Philip Jacques for filming our Guest Speakers. His work produces archives that can be viewed by members for years to come.

To Terry Wicks for donating award plaques to our above-and-beyond volunteers.

To Margie Yee Webb for her excellent photos of the Holiday Party.

Share Your Milestones!

Please send news of your writing milestones and accomplishments to Lisa Schliff, Dispatch Editor, for recognition in the newsletter: onthebeamlisa@gmail.com. Your news will be posted in the Kudos column. We want to read about you!

2025 Next Generation Indie Book Awards 2023 and 2024 Books Eligible

by Margie Yee Webb

The 2025 Next Generation Indie Book Awards is underway, and entries must be received by February 13, 2025.

The **Next Generation Indie Book Awards** is “the largest international awards program for indie authors and independent publishers.” Entries are currently being accepted for books written in English and released in 2023, 2024 or 2025. **Books must be received by February 13, 2025**, to be entered into the 2025 Awards Year. The Awards with 80+ categories offer cash prizes, exposure, and Gala invitations to finalists and winners. For complete details, visit: <https://www.indiebookawards.com/>

Good luck to those entering their books!

Can You Master a Website for GCW?

Our excellent webmaster, Mary Helen Fein, will retire from this volunteer position in 2025. If you have the skills to take over, please contact our GCW President Susan Korn at susankorn130@yahoo.com. Mary Helen will be happy to show you the ropes.



Thinking of becoming a member of Gold Country Writers? It's easy to join. Email your name, address, and telephone number to: GCWmembership@gmail.com. Please put 'GCW Membership' in the subject line. We will mail you a more comprehensive membership questionnaire.

Gold Country Writers is here to support and encourage writers of all levels and all genres — whether Novels, Poetry, Science Fiction, Fiction or Memoirs or your own creative genre. Whether you are a beginner or an established writer — WELCOME.

Membership gives you: Critique groups, monthly speakers, networking, mentor program, Read and Review quarterly book club, monthly newsletter, website with your bio, social events and much more!

Snap Your Critique Group

Critique Group Leaders and participants: Please send photos of your critique groups in action to Sarah Pressler at: sarahpressler2@gmail.com. Also, you can visit the GCW Facebook page, like the posts, and generate more traffic and interest in Gold Country Writers.

Calendar of Events

Please note: GCW meetings have been moved up one week because the first Wednesday is New Years Day and there are no meetings that day.

Please note: GCW drop-in critique meetings will take place two Wednesdays in a row only in January.

Wednesday, January 8

Wednesday, January 22

10:00 a.m. - noon - General Business Meeting.
5:45 p.m. - Evening mixed genre, Pizza Factory, 13470 Lincoln Way, Auburn.

Saturday, January 11
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Novel Group, Mary Helen Fein's home. Currently full.

Tuesday, January 14
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Memoir Critique, Atwood Business Park, 11768 Atwood Road, Auburn. Currently full.

Wednesday, January 15
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Guest Speaker Randy Landenberger
noon - 2:00 p.m. - Poetry Group
noon - 2:00 p.m. - Inspirational Group
2:30 p.m. - Sci Fi and Fantasy Group, Flames Restaurant, 13434 Lincoln Way, #3215, Auburn (Raley's Shopping Center).

Friday, January 17
10: a.m. - noon - Read and Review, Depoe Bay Coffee Roasters, 893 High Street, Auburn.

10:00 a.m. - noon Drop-in critique
2:30 p.m. - Sci Fi and Fantasy Group

Tuesday, January 28
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Memoir Critique, Atwood Business Park, 11768 Atwood Rd., Auburn. Currently full.

Wednesday, January 29
10:00 a.m. - noon Drop-in critique

Flash Fiction - Via e-mail only, goldcountrywriters1849@gmail.com

***All meetings take place at the Rose Room, Auburn City Hall, 1226 Lincoln Way, Auburn, unless otherwise indicated.**

***See Critique Group List in this newsletter for group leader, contact person and more details.**

Save the Dates

by Margie Yee Webb

Wednesday, January 8, 2025
2nd Wednesday - Business Meeting*

Wednesday, January 15, 2025
Author and Audio Engineer **Randy Landenberger**
"Turning Your Story into an Audiobook: Here's the Reality"
<https://goldcountrywriters.com/upcoming-events/>

Wednesday, January 22, 2025
Drop-in Critique

Wednesday, January 29, 2025
5th Wednesday - Drop-in Critique*

Wednesday, February 19, 2025
Spoken Word Poet and Literary Event Producer/Host **Rina Wakefield**
"Intertwining the Oral Tradition with Spoken Word Poetry Performance" Workshop

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Authors **Susan M. Osborn** and **Sarah Michie Pressler**

“Lettuce Laugh: Adding Humor to Your Writing” Workshop

***Note:** Change to Wednesday meeting due to holiday in January. Usual meeting schedule resumes in February

The Speaker Programs, on the third Wednesday of the month, are free and open to the public. Writers, readers, and guests are invited! Join in for these engaging events!

SPEAKER PROGRAMS ON ACTV

Click on the blue link to view the Guest Speaker's presentation on youtube.com. Auburn Community Television (ACTV) Studio Manager **Phil Jacques**, a member of Gold Country Writers, has been filming the Speaker Programs since March 2022 when his schedule permits. Much appreciation to Phil!

For more information about the speakers listed below, visit:

<https://goldcountrywriters.com/gcw-videos/>

Dänna Wilberg, “How Script Writing Can Enhance Your Novel Writing Experience,” November 20, 2024

<https://youtu.be/ZMAcqsqv3Is>

EJ DeBrun, "The Principles of Narrative Believability", September 18, 2024

<https://youtu.be/tP0-OqGyqqc>

Karen Phillips, “It’s All in the Presentation - Cover Design and Book Formatting,” July 17, 2024

<https://youtu.be/74SVTm8eCrE>

Geri Spieler, “Advanced Internet Research Skills”, June 19, 2024

<https://youtu.be/87WZEHalYRc>

Bill George, “How a Maverick Coach Upended Society and Led a Group of Young Swimmers to Olympic Glory,” May 15, 2024.

<https://youtu.be/BQapVrNzxJ0>

Beverly Parayno, “Drawing From Lived Experience To Write Fiction,” April 17, 2024

<https://youtu.be/6tRXVMk6GCI>

Lisa Schliff, "Write a Newsletter to Promote Your Book," February 21, 2024

<https://youtu.be/Fd4-OCZj3Cc>

Lara Gularte, "Is it a Prose Poem or Flash Fiction?" January 17, 2024

<https://youtu.be/A5aOfEm-zD8>

James L’Etoile, “Building Author-Bookstore Relationships,” November 15, 2023.

<https://youtu.be/HDF1yAMBv8s>

Meera Ekkanath Klein, "Food and Fables in Fiction Writing," October 18, 2023.

https://youtu.be/r_ERGLxJ-DY

Sands Hall, "Overlapping Strategies in the Writing of Fiction and Memoir," September 20, 2023. <https://youtu.be/H8rcZ7ve2G4>

Lois Ann Abraham, "Feelings, Nothing More Than Feelings," May 17, 2023.

<https://youtu.be/vIBHahFBang>

Susan M. Osborn, "Creating Flash Fiction," April 19, 2023.

<https://youtu.be/5O3JNYOJi7Q>

Barbara Young, "Manifesting Your Book," March 15, 2023.

<https://youtu.be/tlv972i2ZE0>

Georgette Unis, "Sounding the Metaphor," January 18, 2023.

<https://youtu.be/STtdiepCfa4>

Amy Rogers, "Write a Thriller Novel Using Craft Tips From the Pros," September 21, 2022.

<https://youtu.be/VmJ4wBKLrA0>

Dierdre Wolownick, "How to Succeed at Anything," July 20, 2022.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=8e9EiQksIVQ>

Joan Griffin, "Spice Up Your Writing With Sensory Details," June 15, 2022.

<https://youtu.be/F5m34xaTWOo>

James L'Etoile, "Exploring Character," May 18, 2022.

<https://youtu.be/rgB4jBclBvk>

Mary Helen Fein, "Writing Family History ~ A Process," March 16, 2022.

<https://youtu.be/P1jiaqQ0mPo>

Spin-off Critique Group information can also be accessed on the GCW website:

<https://goldcountrywriters.com/genre-specific-critique-groups/>

Specialty Spin-off Critique Groups

Coordinator: Sarah Pressler

Contact group leaders on your latest club roster to learn the current schedule for your group.

Children's Lit: Contact Sarah Pressler, sarahpressler2@gmail.com. Meets at noon at the Rose Room, Auburn City Hall, on the 2nd Wednesday. New members welcome.

Evening Critique: Contact Karen Clay, karen@karenclay.com. Meets the 1st Wednesday of the month at 5:45 at Round Table

GCW OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

PRESIDENT: Susan Korn

VICE PRESIDENT - INTERNAL AFFAIRS:
Barbara Young

VICE PRESIDENT - EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: Pat Snelling

TREASURER: Heike Kutchukov

Pizza. Open to new members.

Evening Mixed Genre: Contact Rebecca Inch-Partridge: rebeccapartridge@att.net.. Drop in at Pizza Factory, 13470 Lincoln Way, Auburn, 1st Wed. of the month, 5:45 p.m. Open to new members.

Flash Fiction: Contact Chery Anderson: goldcountrywriters1849@gmail.com. Meets once a month via e-mail. 100-word stories in response to writing prompts. New members welcome.

Inspirational Group: Contact Susan Korn, susankorn130@yahoo.com. Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from noon to 2:00 p.m.. Bring your own lunch. Open to new members.

Memoir Critique: Contact Philip Jacques, philipjacques@gmail.com. The group meets twice a month in Atwood Business Park, 11768 Atwood Rd. Auburn. Currently full.

Memoir Share: Contact Terry Wicks, terryshenhouse@gmail.com. Meets 4th Wednesday each month at 12 noon at the Rose Room, Auburn City Hall.. Emphasizes sharing & caring, not in-depth critiquing. Open to new members.

Mystery & Thriller: Contact Rebecca Inch-Partridge, rebeccapartridge@att.net. Meetings are via zoom at 1 pm on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Next meeting is in February 2024.

Novel Group: Contact Mary Helen Fein: maryhelen@maryhelenfein.com. Meets 2nd Saturday each month at Mary Helen's home from 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Currently full.

Poetry: Contact David Anderson: dcajla80@gmail.com. Meets 2nd & 4th Wednesday from noon to 2:00 p.m. Sharing poems after the Drop-In Critique. Open to new members.

Science Fiction & Fantasy: Contact Bill Baynes, bbaynes303@aol.com or Frank Nissen, f.j.nissen@icloud.com. Meets the 2nd & 4th Wednesdays of each month at 2:30 p.m. Meet at Flame Restaurant and Tap Room, 13434 Lincoln Way, #3251, Auburn. Open to new members.

DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP: Nicolle Goldman

SECRETARY: Phyllis Kalbach

DIRECTOR OF SPEAKER PROGRAMS: Margie Yee Webb

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS: Chery Anderson

DIRECTOR OF MENTOR PROGRAM: Susan Korn

WEB MASTER: Mary Helen Fein

DIRECTOR OF SPIN-OFF CRITIQUE

GROUPS: Sarah Pressler

DROP-IN CRITIQUE GROUPS

COORDINATOR: Frank Nissen

READ & REVIEW COORDINATOR: Kelly Lardner

DISPATCH NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lisa Schliff

DISPATCH NEWSLETTER PROOFREADER: Sarah Pressler



OUT OF TOWN

Literary Events and More

by Margie Yee Webb

Cameron Park Library — Tuesday, January 7, and Thursday, January 16, 2025 - 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Poets and Writers Workshop led by El Dorado County Poet Laureate Emeritus Lara Gularte and author Beverly Parayno — held on the first Tuesday and third Thursday of every month. “We offer an encouraging space for writers and poets to gather in community. Bring one or two poems or six pages of prose, double-spaced. Read, discuss, critique.”

Cameron Park Library, 2500 Country Club Drive, Cameron Park, CA, 530-621-5500

Face In A Book Bookstore — Sunday, January 19, 2025 - 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

“Drop by for a meeting of the **Writers' Coffeehouse** — a group open to writers of all levels and interests! Meet like-minded people and share writing tips, industry info, and a bit of what you're working on. There are no fees, no registration, and no publishing requirements. All writers are welcome!” The Writers' Coffeehouse meets on the third Sunday of every month. <https://www.getyourfaceinabook.com/event/writers-coffeehouse>

Face In A Book Bookstore, 4359 Town Center Blvd. #113, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

Sierra Writers Conference 2025

by Margie Yee Webb

The Sierra Writers Conference, which is celebrating 10 years, will take place on Saturday, March 8, 2025, in Grass Valley at the Sierra College Campus in Nevada County. “The theme for this year’s Sierra Writers Conference is ecosystems, a recognition that like all living things, writers, craft, and environments are interconnected.”

As part of the 10-year celebration, they are offering online and in-person workshops and presentations scheduled from February 27, 2025, to March 8, 2025, at the Sierra College Campus — in Rocklin, Grass Valley, and Truckee.

The conference will feature **Amy Tan** discussing her new book, *The Backyard Bird Chronicles*. **Sands Hall**, former Gold Country Writers speaker, will give the conference keynote. **Catharine Bramkamp** and **Joan Griffin**, GCW members, will each give presentations.

For details on all presenters, dates and times of sessions, tickets, and more, visit:

<https://sierrawritersconference.wordpress.com/>

www.goldcountrywriters.com

Gold Country Writers | P.O. Box 5991 | Auburn, CA 95604 US

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