



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Nature Rx

by Jim Waltman

Playing in the woods and fields for hours on end. Enjoying burgers on the grill

with ripe Jersey tomatoes and sweet corn. Enduring those hot, sweaty days and warm, sticky nights in a house without air conditioning. The arrival of summer always brings back memories of my childhood.

I grew up in Princeton, near what is now the Billy Johnson Mountain Lakes Nature Preserve. In my youth, the park was a vast private estate—a highly inviting place to trespass on and explore. One of my most memorable "watershed moments" as a boy was following Mountain Brook on its westward journey. On that summer day, my friends and I discovered that the stream led us from the estate all the way to Johnson Park Elementary School—our school - after joining the Stony Brook!

My children have had their own wild places to explore. Growing up in Hopewell Borough, they sought out Bedens Brook in the town's park and the preserved open space owned by Mercer County that surrounds the park. And, of course, every summer my children explored the vast Watershed Reserve—which now measures nearly 1,000 acres—during Watershed Nature Camp.



Emma and Jimmy Waltman at ages 8 and 4 years old.

Unfortunately, spending time outdoors in nature is much less common than it once was—and that may be at least part of the reason for the extraordinary increase in attention deficit disorder, depression, anxiety, and other physical and mental health disorders witnessed in America's children in recent decades.

Nearly fifteen years ago, author Richard Louv introduced the term "nature deficit disorder" to describe this phenomenon in his book "Last Child in the Woods." Louv posited that unscripted, outdoor play is essential to the healthy development of the human mind, of creativity, and of our five senses. Children today are bombarded instead by unnatural sights and sounds delivered through hand-held devices, which may be leading to an unbalanced development of the senses and the mind.

Since Louv's book was first published, a movement has emerged of pediatricians and other physicians who prescribe time in nature for their patients. In 2016, Dr. Nooshin Razani, a pediatrician at the University of California at San Francisco's Benioff Children's Hospital, founded the country's first hospital-based nature research program (The UCSF Center for Nature and Health). Her program and the "Nature Rx" movement is the subject of a long feature story in Outside Magazine ("Science's Newest Miracle Drug is Free").

The concept of "Nature Rx" registered immediately with my children's pediatrician when I mentioned it to him. He told me that time spent outdoors was one of two things that he wished his patients had more of (the other being sleep).

This year, my children graduated from college and high school, respectively. Like all parents, my wife and I are extremely proud of our kids and hope that we've imparted wisdom that will serve them well in adulthood. Looking back, the most important thing we may have helped them find was their own loving relationships with nature. And that may just be the most important thing that our staff at The Watershed Institute does too.



FROM COVER

Engaging Students in Remediation

our small floating wetlands were installed recently at the Meadow Lakes retirement community in East Windsor with the help of about 20 Peddie School students involved in Earth Day activities. This action is part of a larger project to study and clean up the watershed of Peddie Lake, which is downstream from Meadow Lakes.

About 400-square-feet of floating wetlands will help tackle the algae growth in Meadow Lakes' interconnecting lake and ponds and improve the quality of the water without using chemicals. Joe Greipp, the arboretum director for the Meadow Lakes continuing care retirement community, said these small floating wetlands add to those previously installed in 2017 and 2018. Steve Tuorto, Ph.D., Director of Science and Stewardship, said the Watershed plans to continue this innovative project until about 1,200-square-feet of floating wetlands are in place.

"We've had success in removing pollution with small wetlands and without using chemicals," he said. "We're eager to expand our efforts at Meadow Lake and are grateful to the Peddie School for their help."

The small wetlands are designed to reduce the nutrients in the water – primarily nitrogen and phosphorus. They also decrease the suspended solids and mitigate the loss of dissolved oxygen in the waterways, which will improve the aquatic life in the ponds and lake. The students and Watershed staff planted about 180 plugs of ninebark, silky dogwood, red twig dogwood, button bush and soft rush plants into the wetlands, which are composed primarily of Poly-Flo filter material and marine foam.



Peddie students add plants, soil covering, and direct seed components to the wetlands before launch.

Shani Peretz, chair of the science department and advisor for the school's environmental club, said the Earth Week activities helped students connect environmentalism to something beyond recycling a container. "The environmental science and bioremediation of floating wetlands connected well with concepts that we're trying to teach them. There is more than you can do than just plant a tree," she said.

"Additionally, the students don't necessarily think of career opportunities besides being a lawyer, a doctor or a teacher. No one thinks, 'I could work to conserve waterways or be a landscape architect.' Seeing the engaged and passionate Watershed staff may encourage kids to change what they do in their futures." The Peddie students helping with the wetlands came from the environmental and robotics clubs, as well as from the track and football teams.



Students help launch and anchor the wetland floats.

Sophomore Peddie students Hanah Lee of New York City and Kaya Gorsline of Flemington, NJ, said "It seems simple, but it can really impact the people in our community by helping the environment".

Korey Smith, 18, of Madison, VA, said, "I thought it would be good to be out with friends and help the community. I've never heard of a floating wetlands before. It is cool to explore how this is done."

Erin Landis, River-Friendly Coordinator at the Watershed, said the floating wetlands are part of Meadow Lakes' goal of attaining a River-Friendly Business Certification.

A MOMENT IN OUR HISTORY

Annual Meeting Reflects on 70 Years

A tour recent Annual Meeting, The Watershed Institute celebrated and thanked several longtime members. Jim Waltman, Executive Director of the Watershed, paid tribute to Rev. David H. McAlpin Jr., and his father, the late David McAlpin Sr., whose terms on the Board of Trustees spanned 35 years.



Exec. Dir., Jim Waltman and David McAlpin Jr. at the newly commemorated McAlpin Library at The Watershed Center.

"The McAlpin Family has served this organization with vigor," Waltman said. "We are humbled by their vision and care as they guided this institution forward." The Watershed honored them by dedicating the McAlpin Library to acknowledge their contributions. Longtime supporter Scott McVay provided a historical account of the McAlpins' contributions.

Jeff Hoagland, Education Director, was recognized for his 35 years of service to the Watershed. "Jeff is our institutional memory, a pioneer and innovator," Waltman said. "His enthusiasm for the natural world and passion for teaching the next generation of environmental science leaders is unparalleled." Former trustees Meg Gorrie and Nelson Obus praised Jeff at the meeting.

Fredric J. Spar was commemorated posthumously for his integrity, dedication and years of service as a Trustee and environmental leader. Fred had a passion for the environment, history, and education, and contributed significantly to the Watershed's programs. His wife, Winnie, accepted the Edmund W. Stiles Award for Environmental Stewardship on his behalf.

Kate Dunham was saluted for her creative leadership in environmental science education at the Village Elementary School in

Montgomery Township. She was presented with the Richard Rotter Award for Excellence in Environmental Education.

Retiring trustees Beth Behrend, Laura Hanson, Catherine Sidamon-Eristoff and Greg Vafis were honored for their years of service. Board members from the 1960s, '70s, '80s & '90s, '00s & '10s were also recognized.

A joint resolution from state lawmakers was presented, commemorating the Watershed's 70 years of "tribute to the meritorious record of service and commitment of its leaders, staff and volunteers."



Edu. Dir., Jeff Hoagland, presents the Rotter Award to Kate Dunham with her Village Elementary School students present.



Did You Know... last year New Jersey experienced the largest precipitation total since record keeping began in 1895? The rainfall record has been broken six times in our 70 year history, but the 64.78 inches marks only the second time it has ever exceeded 60 inches (2011) - an astounding 19 inches over the average!

 $National\ Weather\ Service\ |\ NOAA-NJ\ 365\ Day\ Precipitation\ Departures-https://www.weather.gov/marfc/NJPrecipitation365Day$

STREAMWATCH

A Look at Rocky Brook

rom extensive patches of farmland to the dense residential center of Hightstown, the Rocky Brook passes through a variety of land uses as it runs northwest from its headwaters in Millstone Township to its confluence with the Millstone River in East Windsor. Centuries worth of human impacts are still evident today in the three dams along its 10.5 mile length that form Perrinville Lake, Etra Lake and Peddie Lake, remnants of the area's industrial past.

Chemical measurements taken by our dedicated Chemical Action Team volunteers, Tanya Dymtrow and Tom Smith, indicate recent reductions in nutrient pollution that have had a beneficial effect on overall health of the brook. Reduction in phosphates and nitrates prevent the overgrowth of aquatic plants and algae, making more dissolved oxygen available and lowering the pH.

These increases in water quality may account for the increase in the diversity of aquatic life at our biological sampling location in Rocky Brook Park, sampled by Patricia Donahue and Tom Smith, over the past two years. However, even with these improvements, the biological health of the stream is still impaired, likely due to polluted stormwater runoff entering the stream from the more densely paved areas of the watershed.

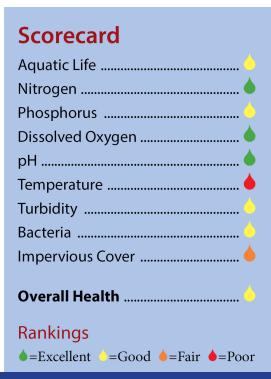
Upper

Impacts of stormwater runoff from 2018's record rainfall is reflected in worse temperature and turbidity scores. As stormwater flows over paved surfaces, heat from the pavement is transferred to the water and runs into the stream, increasing the temperature of the water in a phenomenon known as thermal pollution. Volunteers recorded fluctuations in temperature above 31 degrees Celsius on more than three occasions in Rocky Brook, falling outside of the temperature range that fish and other organisms that live in the stream are adapted to survive. In addition to these increases in temperature, stormwater runoff over cleared land and impervious surfaces also carries materials that cause the water to be cloudy, or turbid. This turbidity interferes with the light that enters the stream, affecting aquatic plant's ability to produce oxygen and interfering with the breathing of aquatic animals.

The Watershed Institute is installing floating wetlands upstream from Peddie Lake (see p3). We also have plans underway in Hightstown to reduce the impact of stormwater runoff on the Rocky Brook by installing green infrastructure in Rocky Brook Park to help capture and treat runoff before it enters the brook. You can help support The Watershed Institute's initiatives at Rocky Brook and other streams in the Millstone River and Central Delaware watersheds by becoming a member, making a one-time donation to cover the cost of sampling equipment, or taking advantage of the many volunteering opportunities available.

Acknowledgements:

Many thanks to Marylin Anker, Tanya Dmytrow, Patricia Donahue and Tom Smith for monitoring Rocky Brook and its tributaries. The Stream Watch program is funded by Janssen Pharmaceuticals Inc, Colgate Palmolive Company, and the New Jersey Water Supply Authority.



Cranbury Brook

Upper

SPEAKING OF NATURE

An Incurable Curiosity by Jeff H

Sometimes, a chance encounter with a new organism can be simply hypnotic: A hellgrammite prowling beneath a stone in quiet Jacob's Creek, a pink lady's slipper, standing in full bloom, begging for the company of a bee, a mink hunting in the floodwater's of the Stony Brook. As a naturalist, I find each encounter luminous, affirming my place in the grand family of life on this planet.

At the age of eight years, David Tattoni had one such encounter. Almost. On a walk at nature camp, a Northern Harrier made an appearance, fleetingly gracing the skies for everyone to see. Almost. David was the only one who didn't see the bird and as a result, he contracted an incurable form of bird fever. Life-altering.

The Northern Harrier haunted David's daydreams leaving him with a sense of longing. This resulted in more visits to the nature center, more time on the trail, more time with the holy field guide in hand, more time in pursuit of shadows. He found an indescribable joy in the company of birds.



David Tattoni exhibits Dodder vines as a camp counselor.

David is a keen observer and yes, he eventually did see a northern harrier. Along the way, he discovered that seeing something very clearly can somehow create mystery. He discovered the world of ecology, where everything is not as it seems, where unique and complex relationships may lie hidden.

David joined the staff at the Watershed Nature Camp after graduating high school in 2016 before continuing his education at Stanford University. Lured in part by the opportunity to spend the summer outdoors in the wild on the Watershed Reserve, he found himself surrounded by a fascinating array of plants and animals, day after day. He also found himself surrounded by campers, often energized by the wild world around them, and some, distracted by incurable curiosity.

Watershed Nature Camp is many things. Joy. Discovery. Adventure. Community. Nature. Fellowship. Exploration. It is the kingfisher rattling his way down the length of the Stony Brook. It is the cool embrace of the oak shadow. It is a camp-

fire in the woods.



Camp is a deep immersion into the natural world and David was thrilled to facilitate this. Through each season, campers accumulate a rich collection of observations, of flora, fauna, and phenomena. David was determined to dive just a bit deeper.

Camp is also an incubator for science. Campers are literally wading through data and tripping over phenomena every day. They play in science.

Through his second summer at the Watershed Nature Camp, David implemented a series of investigations with his curious twelve to fourteen year old campers. A simple extension of the traditional camp activities, these investigations gave campers a chance to see the world through a scientific lens.

Fueled by their sense of wonder, campers dove deeper each week: exploring and comparing insect diversity on native and non-native plants; observing slug herbivory while pondering chemical defenses in plants; and investigating the concept of island biogeography as they examined plant diversity on various sized islands in the Stony Brook. All this science, these short sweet investigations, didn't distract from the magic of camp – they enhanced it.

Throughout the summer, campers inhabit the delight of being outdoors, roaming the wilds, and being a part of nature. They experience an on-your-knees sense of wonder for the natural world. David harnessed this sense of wonder and introduced his campers to the joy of science. In a crazy world where the validity of evidence-based science is actually debated in political arenas, I cannot imagine a more beautiful blossoming.

Summer 2019 Calendar

Catch some summer sun with The Watershed Institute! Join our programs & events with the whole family. Be a part of the magic that makes our work so special. Clean water and a healthy environment depend on you.

Visit us online to register for events, renew your membership, and automatically receive member discounts securely from any device. Pre-registration is required. Programs with low registration are subject to cancellation.

Watershed members receive 20% off most programs when signed in.

thewatershed.org/events

WEDNESDAYS | JULY 3, 10, 17, 24, & 31 AUG 7, 14, 21, & 28

Butterfly House Tours

10:00-11:00AM, General Audience; \$5 per person

Join us for a guided tour of the butterfly house to view and learn about local butterfly species. If time and weather allows, we may try catching wild butterflies in the field. Cameras welcome. Butterfly House Tours will continue weekly through the summer. Pre-registration required.



The Painted Lady is the most widely distributed butterfly species in the world.

SATURDAY JULY 13

Fairy Festival

10:30AM-1:00PM, Children; \$5 per child 3+, under 3 FREE Come celebrate fairies at our annual festival! We will fête the Rainbow Fairies, Woodland Fairies, Forest Elves, Gnomes and more. We will dance around a maypole, create magical crafts, construct villages in Honeysuckle Hollow and stroll around Fairy Friends Pond with the Water Sprites! Fairy finery, insect or animal costumes and gnome haberdashery is very welcome.

TUESDAY JULY 16

Exploring the Stony Brook

5:30-8:30PM, General Audience; \$5 per person

Join Jeff Hoagland for a family picnic and stream exploration of the Stony Brook at Greenway Meadows. Bring your picnic dinner to enjoy on the terrace and shoes for walking in shallow water. Drinks and dessert provided. Register through D&R Greenway Land Trust: rsvp@drgreenway. org or 609-924-4646. Meet at 1 Preservation Place, Princeton, NJ. Rain date July 17.

SATURDAY, JULY 20 Butterfly Tea Party

10:30AM-12:00PM, Children, ages 3-10; \$15 per child Come meet our butterflies! We will tour the butterfly house, try to catch some wild butterflies in our nets, and then finish with a story and a 'tea' party of lemonade and sugar cookies in the shade.



Meet our winged friends in the Kate Gorrie Butterfly House.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 24

Secret Lives of Bats

8:00-9:30PM, General Audience, ages 5+; \$5 per person

Join nocturnal naturalist Jeff Hoagland for an evening investigation of the world of bats, including a bat count of one of the colonies that resides on the Watershed Reserve.

SATURDAY, JULY 27

Carnegie Lake Canoe Paddle

9:30AM-12:00PM, General Audience, ages 8+; \$20 pp

Join us for a guided morning paddle on Lake Carnegie, in cooperation with Princeton Canoe and Kayak Rental. Naturalist and Education Director Jeff Hoagland will share some of the many wonders of Lake Carnegie. View the lake from a different perspective, discovering firsthand a wide array of plant and animal life. Meet at Turning Basin Park on Alexander Road, Princeton, NJ.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 3 19th Annual Watershed Butterfly Festival

10:00AM-4:00PM, General Audience; \$10 pp or \$25/carload Our biggest event of the year is full of magic and wonder for all ages. This year, we're excited to announce, Watershed members get in FREE! Come explore the Kate Gorrie Butterfly House, an incredible insect zoo, and live animal displays. Play games, see demonstrations, eat great food, and learn all about our work to protect and restore clean water in central New Jersey. Online pre-registration required.



FRIDAYS | AUGUST 9 | SEPTEMBER 20 Campfire Storytelling

7:00-8:30PM, General Audience; FREE

Step away from the screen and listen to our storytellers spin yarns from several cultures. Spark your imagination with stories both funny and poignant. Roast a marshmallow as you lend an ear to stories from far and near. Co-sponsored by the Washington Crossing Audubon Society.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 23

Family Astronomy

8:30-9:30PM, General Audience, ages 5+; \$5 per person

Explore the wonders of the night sky beneath the ribbon of the Milky Way. Discover some prominent constellations and learn the stories behind them. Meet some of our planet neighbors through telescopes during this beginner family astronomy session.



Enjoy a clear view of the night sky on the Reserve.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

Creepy Spider Hunt

7:30-9:00PM, General Audience, ages 5+; \$5 per person Crab spiders, jumping spiders, wolf spiders, orb and funnel weavers and more! Join our annual night hunt with nocturnal naturalist Jeff Hoagland. Bring your flashlight or headlamp to use as we navigate the trails in search of many different types of spiders.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

Tie-dye Day

1:00-3:00PM, General Audience; \$5 per participant

Campers, are you missing your tie-dye days already? Watershed Nature Camp participants and their families can bring 3 adult-size shirts (or the equivalent amount of fabric) to dye! Using red, yellow, and blue, create your own colors and patterns! Feel free to bring a friend too!

WEDNESDAYS SEPT 18 | OCT 16 | NOV 13 | DEC 11 Out There Reading Group

7:30-9:00PM, Adults; Free

Facilitator Jeff Hoagland invites you to enjoy this unique and relaxed reading group in exploring the wide and varied terrain of nature writing, wildness and wilderness. Each month, readers will receive by email, a curated collection of poems and prose focused on a specific topic or author. Register for individual sessions or all. Light refreshments provided.

TUESDAYS | SEPTEMBER 2019 - JUNE 2020

Homeschool Nature Class * NEW FORMAT!

Join us each semester for 8 weekly classes (3 classes per bridge) that deeply investigate a topic. Classes include informational classroom-style presentation and outdoor investigation for children, *ages 5-8 and 9-12*. Parents must stay on the property and are encouraged to let their children participate in the class independently. Dress for the weather of the day. If there are fewer than 5 students per age group, the groups may be combined.

SEPT 10, 17, 24 OCT 8, 22, 29 NOV 5, 12

9:30-11:30AM, \$105 per semester (\$15 per class drop-in)

Fall Semester: INSECTS

This semester is all about insects. We will cover insects 101, insects as pollinators, aquatic insects, predatory insects, insect adaptations, monarch migration, the social life of insects, insect-human interactions, and insects in winter.

DECEMBER 3, 10, 17

9:30-11:30AM, \$40 per semester (\$15 per class drop-in)

Fall-Winter Bridge Semester: CRAFTING

This short, fun semester will be three weeks of crafting, indoors and outdoors!



Students craft ornaments in the Watershed lab.

TUESDAYS, JULY – AUGUST Toddler Nature Class

10:00–11:00AM, Children, ages 18-36mo.; \$10 per child Start instilling a love of nature with our Toddler Nature Classes. We provide a fun introduction to animals, plants and nature in general. You and your toddler will enjoy a song, a story, and a walk outside. Dress for the weather because we always go outside. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

JULY 9 - Butterflies

JULY 16 - Flowers

JULY 23 - Water

JULY 30 - Birds

AUGUST 13 - Yoga

AUGUST 20 - Forests

AUGUST 27 - Insects

[2020] JAN 7, 14, 21, 28 | FEB 4, 11, 18, 25

9:30-11:30AM, \$105 per semester (\$15 per class drop-in)

Winter Semester: SURVIVAL

This semester will cover survival basics, shelter, fire, water, cordage and knots, navigation, what not to wear, and a survival challenge day.

MAR 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 | APR 14, 21, 28

9:30-11:30AM, \$105 per semester (\$15 per class drop-in)

Spring Semester: ASTRONOMY

This semester will cover topics of the solar system, the moon, constellations, galaxies, the sun, moving objects, telescopes and optics, and humans in space.

JUNE 2, 9, 16

9:30-11:30AM, \$40 per semester (\$15 per class drop-in)

Spring-Summer Bridge Semester: BUTTERFLIES

This short semester will cover butterfly life cycles, food, predators, gardening for butterflies, and other topics.

THURSDAYS, JULY - AUGUST Preschool Nature Class

10:00-11:30AM, Children, ages 3-5; \$10 per child

Get wild with us as we learn about a variety of nature topics! Each class includes outdoor exploration, stories and a craft. Dress for the weather because we always go outside. Children must be accompanied by an adult. This class will move to Tuesdays starting in September.

JULY 11 – Butterfly Magic
JULY 18 – Wildflower Sensations

JULY 25 - Water Olympics

AUGUST 8 - Come Fly With Me

AUGUST 15 - Yoga for Little Ones

AUGUST 22 - Walk in the Woods

AUGUST 29 - Amazing Ants

CONSERVING AND RESTORING HABITATS

A Category One Upgrade

onsider two streams. One with deep green, well-manicured grass flowing to the banks of a stream. The second stream has a wide area with a rag tag assembly of trees, bushes and other plants along the banks of the stream. Which stream is more likely to have better water quality? Which stream is more likely to provide quality wildlife habitat?

As economists like to say, "all other things being equal", the stream with the trees, bushes, and other plants is the healthier stream, not the one with lawn running to its banks. That stretch of land along the stream covered in foliage is known as a *riparian zone* or *buffer*. These zones protect the stream from the impacts of our land use.





Erosion forms along an unbuffered stream bank.

A fortified stream corridor is more resilient to heavy rainfall.

Buffers filter out some pollutants as runoff from our streets, driveways, and homes flows through them. Additionally, some of this polluted runoff makes its way into the ground or is absorbed by vegetation, thus reducing the amount that enters our streams. These buffers also slow down the flow of water into the stream, thereby reducing erosion and sedimentation of the streams. Lastly, riparian zones provide habitat for a wide variety of species - many of them threatened or endangered in our state. The wider the riparian zone, the better protection the stream has.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) recently unveiled a proposal to upgrade 749 stream miles to *Category One (C1)* status. Category One classification provides the widest protected riparian zone provided under New Jersey law. Most new development is prohibited within 300 feet of C1 streams. The C1 designation also protects the stream from additional activities that could impact water quality.

A stream is designated as C1 if the water is found to be of exceptional ecological significance, exceptional recreational significance, exceptional water supply significance, or contains exceptional fisheries resources. Many of the 749 stream miles are proposed for upgrading due to exceptional trout habitat. Others are designated because of the healthy aquatic habitats and low levels of impervious cover.

NJDEP's proposal includes Rock Brook in Montgomery Township and Jacobs Creek in Hopewell, which we have been monitoring for the last year. Portions of the Stony Brook were classified as C1 back in 2008, the last time DEP proposed any stream as C1. We look forward to the Department adopting the proposal and finalizing the protections. We also look forward to working with the Department to designate additional waterways for this protection.

OUR DONORS

2018 Individual Donations

The Watershed Institute extends gratitude to donors and friends who supported us throughout the year in so many ways. We thank you for financial support, volunteerism, and in-kind donations. Without you, our work protecting clean water and the environment would not be possible.

| ♦ *Special thanks to our donors of 10 or more consecutive years* **|**

Muriel Buttinger Society \$5,000+

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Complete the Macro

Benthic Macroinvertebrates are aquatic bottom dwelling organisms (benthic) that are large enough to see with the naked eye (macro) and do not have a backbone (invertebrate). Complete the drawings below to identify two macroinvertebrate species that we look for as biological indicators of good water quality.

Mayfly Nymph

Stonefly Nymph





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