



# L'ITALIA

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2019

NEWSLETTER OF THE ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY OF INDIANA

Founded in 1993

## *Mission Statement*

*The Italian Heritage Society of Indiana (IHSI) seeks to preserve, promote and share the Italian values and culture which its members inherited from their ancestors: Religion, family, history, art, music, food and camaraderie. It reaches out to everyone of Italian ancestry and welcomes others who share our appreciation of the Italian culture.*

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**[www.italianheritage.org](http://www.italianheritage.org)**

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## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**Silvana Martini Schuster**

*Cari amici*, dear friends, The first thing that I will comment on, is that after three years as officers of our IHSI, myself as president, Claudia Heck as vice-president and Susan Lew as secretary, we now are at the end of our allotted terms, and we will soon welcome new officers to lead our Society. Following in the newsletter, is the information for the process for nominations for those positions. The nominations can be made by members who are current in their membership, i.e., who are current in their yearly dues. If you will to step up to the job, nominate yourself for one of the positions. This is wonderful opportunity for those who are willing to get to know the history of our IHSI and other dedicated members of our Society, and implement new ideas for our members to enjoy.

This past month our Italian Heritage Society of Indiana has been involved in two very special events. As you have read previously in our newsletters, the Italian cooking host, cookbook writer and restaurateur, *Lidia Bastianich*, visited Indianapolis on August 24 for taping promotional videos for WFYI, our local Public Television station on which she appears. Our IHSI sponsored a fundraising reception for Lidia, held at the WFYI studio and an array of delicious Italian appetizers and prosecco vine was served. Lidia was a gracious guest and impressed all who were there with her calm, easy manner as she spoke about he fascination life and career, and answered questions from the audience. A lovely collage of some of the photos taken that day follows in the newsletter.

On Saturday, September 8, the 30th Italian POW Chapel in the Meadow Memorial Mass and Pitch-in Luncheon Picnic was held at Camp Atterbury at the Chapel and at the Welcome Center and Museum. **Mille grazie**, a thousand times thank you, to **Mario Vian** who tirelessly worked with the personnel at Camp Atterbury to bring about the event. **Matt Iaria** again provided a delicious main course of pasta and meatballs, grazie Matteo! The guest provided other varied and tasty dishes. Another a photo collage of that event follows in the newsletter.

## IHSI NEWS

On Sunday, August 18, the cultural lecture on obtaining Italian citizenship was well attended by a very attentive group, all eager to learn if they qualify. IHSI member **Marlene Adami**, presented an excellent, detailed lecture of the process . The information will be on our website. Grazie Marlene.

Our Society was asked to provide a knowledgeable guide to lead a tour of the Indianapolis Italian neighborhood, which centers on *La Chiesa del Santo Rosario*, Holy Rosary Church on Stevens St. The tour will occur on Wednesday, September 25, at 6:00pm. IHSI members, **Ray Brown** will lead the tour and **Dr. James Divita** will provide the information about the church. The tour will conclude at Iaria's Restaurant. More information follows.

October is National Italian American Heritage Month and our IHSI will host a lovely dinner to celebrate our heritage. **Una Serata Italiana, An Italian Evening**, will be held on **Wednesday, October 23, 5:00 pm, at the Willow on Westfield**. We look forward to seeing many of our members there, especially our new members, as we enjoy the conviviality of our Society members.

We gently remind our members to renew their membership. If you are unsure of when your last payment was, please email our membership chairperson, Phillip Kappes, [phillipkappes@att.com](mailto:phillipkappes@att.com)

As summer is ending, we look forward to the harvest time. We have included a short article about the *vendemmia*, the grape harvest in Italy. May you all enjoy the fruits of our country's bounty.

*Silvana Martini Schuster*  
*IHSI President 2019*

**WELCOME**

**BENVENUTI**

**Frank Basile**  
**Nathan Leffler**  
**Donald Meadlo**  
**Ronald Povinelli**

## **IHSI NEWS**

### **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

#### **SEPTEMBER**

**INDIANAPOLIS ITALIAN  
HISTORY WALKING TOUR  
LUGAR PLAZA**  
Wednesday,  
September 25, 2019  
6:00 pm

#### **OCTOBER**

**BOOK CLUB**  
Wednesday, October 15, 2019  
12:30 pm  
Indianapolis Museum of Art

**SERATA ITALIANA**  
Wednesday, October 23, 2019  
5:00 pm  
Willow on Westfield

**THE TENOR**  
Friday, October 25, 2019  
8:00 pm  
The Palladium

#### **NOVEMBER**

**INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL**  
November 7, 8, 9, 2019  
Indiana State Fairground Blue  
Ribbon

**LECTURE**  
Guy Tedesco, Artist and  
Sculptor  
November 10, 2019  
2:00 pm  
Nora Library

#### **SAVE THE DATE**

#### **DECEMBER**

**CHRISTMAS PARTY**  
Sunday, December 15, 2019  
4:00 pm

IHSI NEWS  
**IHSI Italian-American  
Heritage Month Dinner**



*Una Serata Italiana*

*An Italian Evening*, of delicious food, conviviality,  
music and pride in our heritage!

And . . . a special visit from Chris Columbus!!

Wednesday, October 23, 5:00 p.m.

*The Willows on Westfield*, 6729 Westfield Blvd.

*We cordially invite our new members to meet and share  
the camaraderie of our amicable Society.*

Members . . . \$35 Non-members . . . \$45

Please make your reservations by Saturday, October 19.

Use the link on our website, [italianheritage.org](http://italianheritage.org)

or send a check to:

IHSI Treasurer; 1116 Hillcrest Dr.; Carmel, IN 46033

This October, marks Italian-American Heritage Month by recognizing the contributions and achievements of Italian Americans. Over 26 million Americans of Italian descent currently reside in the U.S.—making up America’s seventh largest ethnic group. The Italian American heritage month is in October to coincide with **Columbus Day**—the national holiday celebrated on the second Monday of the month. Italian-American Heritage Month celebrates the distinguished cultural contributions of American with Italian lineage.



# I AM AN ITALIAN AMERICAN

My roots are deep in an ancient soil drenched by the Mediterranean sun, and watered by pure streams from snow capped mountains.

I am enriched by thousands of years of culture.

My hands are those of the mason, the artist, the man of the soil.

My thoughts have been recorded in the annals of Rome, the poetry of Virgil, the creations of Dante, and the philosophy of Benedetto Croce.

I am an Italian America and from my ancient world, I first spanned the seas to the new world. I am Cristoforo Colombo.

I am Giovanni Caboto known in American history as John Cabot, discoverer of the mainland of North America.

I am Amerigo Vespucci, who gave my name to the new world, America.

First to sail on the Great Lakes in 1679, founder of the territory that became the State of Illinois, colonizer of Louisiana and Arkansas, I am Enrico Tonti.

I am Filippo Mazzei, friend of Thomas Jefferson, and my thesis on the equality of man was written into the Bill of Rights.

I am William Paca, signer of the Declaration of Independence.

I am an Italian American. I financed the Northwest Expedition of George Rogers Clark and accompanied him through the lands that would become Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Michigan. I am Colonel Francesco Vigo.

I mapped the Pacific from Mexico to Alaska and to the Philippines. I am Alessandro Malaspina.

I am Giacomo Beltrami, discoverer of the Mississippi River in 1823.

I created the Dome of the United States Capitol. They called me the Michaelangelo of America. I am Constantino Brumidi.

In 1904, I founded in San Francisco, the Bank of Italy now known as the Bank of America, the largest financial institution in the world. I am A. P. Giannini.

I am Enrico Fermi, father of nuclear science in America.

First enlisted man to win the medal of Honor in World War II, I am John Basilone of New Jersey.

I am an Italian American.

I am the million strong who served in America's armies and the tens of thousands whose names are enshrined in military cemeteries from Guadalcanal to the Rhine.

I am the steel maker in Pittsburgh, the grower in the Imperial Valley of California, the textile designer in Manhattan, the movie maker in Hollywood, the home maker and breadwinner in 10,000 communities.

I am an American without stint or reservation, loving this land as only one who understands history, its agonies and its triumphs can love it and serve it.

I will not be told that my contribution is any less nor my role not as worthy as that of any American.

I will stand in support of this nation's freedom and promise against all foes.

My heritage has dedicated me to this nation.

I am proud of my full heritage, and I shall remain worthy of it.

"I am an Italian American."

*Author Unknown*

## The Columbian Quandary



As Italian Americans, and many other persons who appreciate Italian culture and history, we have taken great pride in the “discovery” of the American continents by Christopher Columbus. He was an ambitious and capable Genovese sailor working for the reigning Spanish monarchs at that time, Ferdinand and Isabella. For many years the facts, though readily available in

scholarly circles, were not known or ignored by the general public. Instead, his accomplishments were romanticized and the many negative circumstances that came about after that “first contact” with the native populations were downplayed and even hidden. All to maintain the emphasis on the fact that his perseverance led to the colonization and eventual domination of the Americas by European nations.

Columbus was a man of his times; he was intelligent but also ambitious; a good Catholic in certain ways, who named the Caribbean islands that he visited with the names of saints or feast days; but he was seeking gold and luxuries that would pay for the expenses of the trips! At first friendly with the native people when he first met them, he became harsh with them when he found little profit available to take back to Spain. He was a confident and intelligent man, but he was also flawed. However, because he had courage and a brilliant sense of navigation he opened these American continents to the European Age of Discovery.

So, we can continue to admire him for the courageousness of the journeys he led, and accept with regret that he was not a saint. I suggest that you consider reading the book, *Columbus: The Four Voyages, 1492-1504*, by Laurence Berggren, that our Book Club will read for its October selection. The information is in the newsletter and we invite you to join us. The book was recently published and has more accurate information about the man, his circumstances and the turbulent times he lived.

Silvana Martin Schuster



Here is a short poem, familiar to most of us from our childhood schooling, which embellished Columbus' image: **IN 1492**

**In fourteen hundred ninety-two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue.**

**The three ships that sailed from Spain, sailed through sunshine, wind and rain.**

**He sailed by night; he sailed by day; he used the stars to find his way.**

**A compass helped him know, how to find the way to go.**

**Ninety sailors were on board, some men worked while others snored.**

**Then the workers went to sleep; and others watched the ocean deep.**

**Every day they looked for land; they dreamed of trees and rocks and sand.**

**October 12 their dream came true, you never saw a happier crew!**

**"Indians! Indians!" Columbus cried; his heart was filled with joyful pride.**

**But "India" the land was not; it was the Bahamas, and it was hot.**

**The Arakawa natives were very nice; they gave the sailors food and spice.**

**Columbus sailed on, did find some gold, to bring home, as he'd been told.**

**He made the ocean trip four times again, seeking gold to bring to Spain.**

**The first American? No, not quite, but Columbus was, brave and bright.**

**An unknown land was what he found, and proved to all, the world was round!**

## **IHSI NEWS**

**La Bellezza d'Italia.....September 2019**

**The Cultural Page of the Italian Heritage Society of Indiana**

**Submitted by Susan Santore Lew and Carol Faenzi**



**Italian Heritage Society Lecture Series**

**Sunday, November 10th at 2:00 p.m.—Nora Library**

**Guy Tedesco artist, Sculptor. Designer**



IHSI Member, Guy Tedesco lives and works in southern Indiana, near Louisville, KY. His art works in bronze and diverse design projects have taken him to international destinations as well as locally and nationally. A son of an Italian POW, you may have met Guy at our annual celebration at Camp Atterbury. Join Guy as he shares with us his fascinating artistic journey.

Know someone who might want to deliver a lecture? Contact Susan Lew at 317-691-0139 or [susan.lew27@gmail.com](mailto:susan.lew27@gmail.com). We pay an Honorarium. The lectures are always free and open to the public.

## Opera News!



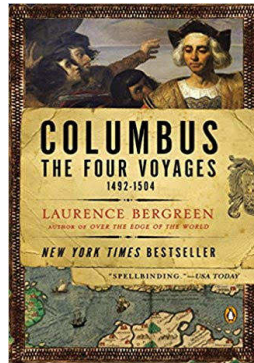
**Donizetti Romantic Comedy, Elixir of Love.  
November 15,16,17, 2019  
The Tarkington  
The Center For the Performing Arts in Carmel**



**And Mozart's Masterpiece Don Giovanni  
March 20, 21, 22, 2020  
The Toby Theatre at Clowes Hall**

**[www. Indyopera.org](http://www.Indyopera.org)**

## BOOK CLUB



October is Italian American Heritage month, so we will read a new biography of Christopher Columbus' legacy is being hotly debated. Our reading this book will bring about interesting discussions as we learn of actual circumstances and the consequences that befell Columbus during his four voyages to the American continent.

**Book:** Columbus, the Four Voyages, 1492-1504  
**Author:** Laurence Bergreen  
**When:** Wednesday, October 15, 12:30 pm  
**Where:** Indianapolis Museum of Art (Newfields)

He was a self-promoting and ambitious entrepreneur. He knew nothing of celestial navigation or of the existence of the Pacific Ocean. His maps were a hybrid of fantasy and delusion. When he did make land, he enslaved the populace he found, encouraged genocide, and polluted relations between peoples. He ended his career in near lunacy. But Columbus of the sea, of wind and weather, and of selecting the optimal course to get from A to B. Laurence Bergreen energetic and most importantly, the whole of his career.

The book is available from the library and area bookstores and the usual internet sites with many used copies available at reasonable prices. All interested members and friends of IHSI are welcome to join us for lunch, the lecture and discussion. Contact for Book Club: Silvana martini Schuster: [silvams@comcast.net](mailto:silvams@comcast.net)

November Book Selection; **Immigrant Saint by Pietro di Donato.**  
**Details to follow.**

## IHSI NEWS



### **Opera in the Park was a great success!**

The Indianapolis Opera held a free concert in Garfield Park on Sunday, September 8th, showcasing favorite opera arias from Tosca, Don Giovanni, and Elixir of Love. Special guest was international opera star, Angela Brown and ended with a toast! Don't miss it next year!



(Carol Faenzi, Deborah Margolin, Silvana Martini Schuster and Ray Brown).

**The Four Tenors  
Friday, October 25th  
At the Palladium  
8:00 pm**



Direct from Rome on the inaugural U.S. tour, vocalists Alessandro D'Acrissa, Roberto Cresca, Federico Parisi and Federico Serta pay tribute to Enrico Caruso, Mario Lanza, Luciano Pavarotti and Andrea Bocelli. The program includes the most beloved arias and songs of the Italian opera tradition, performed with romanticism, lyricism, dramatic flair and operatic style

**Tickets start at \$25.00-Order [www.thecenterpresents.org](http://www.thecenterpresents.org)  
Or call the box office 317-843-3800**

**Beautiful Italian Phrase of the Month**

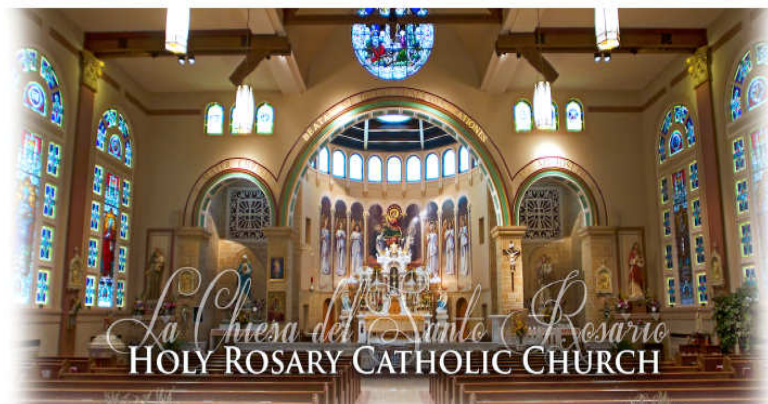
***Amici e vini sono meglio vecchi.***

**Friends and wine improve with age.**





## IHSI NEWS



### Walking Wednesdays at Lugar Plaza

### Indianapolis Italian History Tour

Wednesday, September 25, 6:00 pm

Led by Ray E. Brown Jr. of the

### Italian Heritage Society of Indiana

This 2-mile walking tour explores the history of Italian legacy of the near southeast area of Indianapolis. The tour will stop at Holy Rosary Catholic Church, the traditional heart of the Italian community, the bocce courts at Lacey Park, and other historical places in the area. Then on to Fletcher Place and participants can enjoy a drink or dinner on your own at Iaria's, Turchetti's or Bluebeard restaurants before heading back to Lugar Plaza.

Meet at Lugar Plaza near the swings. We won't walk if the weather is terrible. The tour will be rescheduled to Tuesday, October 1 in case of rain. Free to the public and suitable for all ages.

Brought to you in partnership with:

City of Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development and  
Big Car Collaborative

[italianheritage.com](http://italianheritage.com)

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**IHSI NEWS**

**ITALIAN HERITAGE SOCIETY OF INDIANA  
NOMINATIONS**

Nominations for board members and officers for the 2019 Italian Heritage Society of Indiana board of directors may now be made through and including 11:45 P.M. of November 1, 2019.

A nominee must be a current-active member of the organization in good standing, i.e., dues have been paid within the past calendar year.

Either self-nomination or nomination of another with the prior consent of the person being nominated, must be made in writing via e-mail to the nominations committee through our website, see below. Please include the nominees' names and contact information (address, telephone numbers & e-mail addresses) along with the reason(s) you believe these persons should be nominated.

The nominating committee, appointed by Chairperson James Divita, will then review the nominations and make a final selection for a slate to be submitted to the current board.

The board must consist of no less than 9 but no more than 15 members and officers for president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. All positions serve a one (1) year term. Officers may only serve 3 consecutive terms while there are no term limits on board members. *At this time the current President, Vice President and Secretary will not be running for re-election for the position they now hold as they have reached their three (3) year term limit.*

If no more than the required number to serve on the board have been selected by the committee after nominations are made, *a ballot vote will not be necessary.* Only in the event that the number of nominees selected exceeds the number required under the bylaws will a ballot vote by the general membership be required. In that event, ballots will be sent to current members by e-mail.



## *Lidia 's Visit to Indianapolis*

*Silvana Martini Schuster*

Lidia Matticchio Bastianich came to Indianapolis on a beautiful Saturday, August 24. She proceeded to charm all who met her at the WFYI station where she filmed promotional video's for the station. She then signed many copies of her autobiography and cookbooks as she chatted with her admiring fans. Our IHSI hosted a small lovely fundraiser reception in her honor at the WFYI station.

Lidia and I have similar immigrant stories, as we were born in an area called Istria that has had a difficult political history. After WWII, it was annexed by Yugoslavia and both of our families fled the area. I arrived in the United States in 1951, as an 8 years old and became a Hoosier, she arrived in 1959, as a 12 year old and has since lived in NYC area. Needless to say, she has had the more interesting life and has achieved national and international fame with her warm personality, her artistry with food and her direct approach to cooking.

\*The center photograph is of Lidia and the five of the six Italian born *nonne*, grandmothers, who attended the fundraising reception for Lidia. From left: Mimi Sturiale Collins, Lidia, Lelia Topolovec-Shaffer, Caterina Odorico Piga, Silvana Martini Schuster, Ginny Bellentini Koss, not pictured, Ca-terina Blitzer.

\*On the right, the event committee members, Carol Faenzi, Susan Santore Lew, Lidia, Claudia Collins Heck, Silvana, not pictured Ashleigh Lazarus. Grazie, thank you, amiche!

\*Below, Lidia signing copies of her book for Paula Wright and Claudia.

\*Carol and Susan chatting with Lidia

\*Mimi with her daughters Claudia, Maria Collins, and granddaughter Lauren Collins

\*Lidia admiring the cross that was given to her by artist Guy Tedesco, below left, Guy is the son of an Italian WWII POW who was interned at Camp Atterbury, and then met and married a lovely young woman from Louisville. He will be the speaker at next cultural lecture series on Sunday, November 10.

*Tante grazie*, many thanks to Pam Elliot, WFYI Manager for On Air Development , who has teamed with our IHSI committee to bring about the event, as well as the volunteers at WFYI studios for their help on the day of Lidia's visit. Also, Shelly Burgess Nicotra, of Lidia's Italy Company, New York, with whom we communicated to arrange this event.

In addition, a special *grazie*, thank you, to our local donors: from Carmel Joe's Butcher Block and Fish Market, Convivio Restaurant from Carmel, The Fresh Market, Nicole Taylor, The Smoking Goose, Turchetti Salumeria. If you have a chance, do patronize them and thank them for



## IHSI NEWS

their support.

Grazie, thank you, to all who supported this event.....Silvana



## **IHSI NEWS**

### **30th Annual POW Chapel in the Meadow**

Sunday, September 8, 2019 about 45 people gathered for the thirtieth yearly outdoor mass at the tiny Madonna del Prato chapel at Camp Atterbury.

Italian POW's captured in Northern Africa in World War II built the chapel in 1943 from materials begged from the internment camp at the time. The chapel now remains as the only building left standing of the facility which once housed 15,000 POW's.

Father Chris Wadleton, pastor of Saint Bartholomew Parish in Columbus, Indiana celebrated the mass accompanied by a choir formed from parishioners of Little Flower Parish and Father Wadleton former pastorate, St. Philip Neri Parish both in Indianapolis.

The Italian Heritage Society of Indiana has sponsored the event since its inception, this year with the necessary and vital assistance of Camp Atterbury Muscatatuck under Captain Jesse Bien, Camp Atterbury Public Information Officer and the Camp Atterbury Veteran Memorial Association (CAVMA).

This year the event was held in conjunction with a Camp Atterbury Museum open house and a pitch in lunch at the Camp Atterbury Welcome Center.

Attendees included four sons of former POW internee Giovanni Tedesco.

Staples of delicious pasta and meatballs once again came to the luncheon courtesy of Matthew Iaria.

Thanks to all who participated in and attended this memorable event.

**Humbly submitted by Mario Vian, Our Lady's Chapel in the Meadow**



## IHSI NEWS

## 30th Annual P.O.W. Chapel in The Meadow Memorial

September 8th, 2019



## The Vendemmia: An Italian Autumn Ritual



The arrival of autumn is filled with meaning in many cultures; in Italy it is associated largely with the "*Vendemmia*"—the grape harvest—that will go to make that year's wine. The vendemmia is much more than a mere agricultural event: entire villages dedicate their whole energies to it, and life revolves around the grapes. The pickers are old farmers, young students trying to make a buck, tourists who wish to share the experience, and relatives of the landowners.

The work is fairly hard (and very sticky!), and long days under the Mediterranean late summer sun take a toll on your energies, but when nighttime falls the workers collect around campfires to chat, tell their stories, finish up the previous year's wine and have a jolly time before heading to bed where they will enjoy a good night's sleep.

The rites of vendemmia have something ancestral about them. In Italy, people have been cultivating vines for the past three millennia, and collecting the grapes has always been the same work. It can't be done with machines, so the workers today do exactly what the inhabitants of the Greek colonies in southern Italy did when Rome was still a small provincial town in Italy, centuries before turning into the greatest empire in human history. Back then the wine was much stronger (it was unthinkable to drink diluted wine: according to Homer, pure wine was the drink that helped Ulysses to get even the Cyclopes Polyphemus to sleep, allowing him to escape with his men, but the vendemmia is still the same.

So if you are planning a trip to Italy, this might well be the perfect time, as you'll enjoy the countryside immersed in its loveliest activity of the year.

**Camillo Mekacher-Vogel**

## **IHSI NEWS**

### **NEWSLETTER EDITOR Caterina "Rina" Piga**

Share your news, award, birth, change of address or any articles that will be of interest to the members and also any comment you might have about the newsletter.

The newsletter is published by-monthly, email any articles in MS WORD format to:

**catpiga45@gmail.com**

Or

Mail to:

**Rina Piga  
373 Woodview Dr.  
Noblesville, In. 46060  
317-773-6442**

**DEADLINE: November 15, 2019**

### **BUSINESS ADDRESS PHONE LINE**

**Italian Heritage Society  
of Indiana  
520 Stevens St.  
Indianapolis 46202**

The IHSI has a voice mail for members to call and leave any messages or questions that you might have about the Society. Let us hear from you! The phone number is:

**(317)767-7686**

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*Ralph L. Tambasco*

**IHSI NEWS**



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