



CHECKPOINT

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PRESIDENT/CEO - HENRY ROSALES

IMPORTANT DEADLINES FOR APRIL 29TH, 2025, BOARD MEETING AND THE APRIL 30TH AND MAY 2ND, 2025, REGULAR MEMBERSHIP MEETING

April 11, 2025

Meeting information package for Regular Membership and Board Meeting emailed to Club Officers and Board Members.

April 14, 2025 – Revised **FINAL** deadline for Credential Forms to be postmarked or emailed to Marian (marian@ava.org) at the National Office

The AVA National Board will meet Tuesday, April 29, 2025, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Room #10

[Check the AVA website for meeting agenda.](#)

The AVA Regular Membership meeting is Wednesday, April 30, 2025, 3:45 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. and Friday, May 2, 2025, 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Exhibit Hall # 2

[Check the AVA website for meeting agenda.](#)

All meetings will be held at the Las Cruces Convention Center in Exhibit Hall #2 and Room #10

Las Cruces Convention Center
680 East University Avenue
Las Cruces, NM 88001
(575) 526-0100

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URGENT: NEW VOTING PROCEDURES DURING THE REGULAR MEMBERSHIP MEETING

We are excited to inform you that all club Delegates, Alternates, and Proxies will be able to participate and vote electronically during the upcoming Regular Membership Meeting, on April 30 and May 2, 2025. This means you can participate and vote even if you are not attending the convention. The Regular Membership Meeting will be hosted on the **Zoom Platform** both days and we will use an electronic voting system called **Election Buddy**. This system is extremely easy to use if you know how to use email.

We invite everyone to participate in a test on the Election Buddy voting system, which will be used during our upcoming Regular Membership Meeting. To ensure a smooth voting experience, we will host a **Zoom webinar on Wednesday, April 9 at 6:00 PM Central and another one on April 16, at 7:00 PM Central**. During the webinar, we will provide a short demonstration of the voting system, followed by the opportunity for you to cast test votes starting at 6:15 PM CT, when the voting opens. Everything will be explained at the beginning of the webinar before you are asked to vote. After the vote, we will take time to answer all questions. **Do not forget to sign up for the Zoom webinar so you can receive the meeting link.** Click here to sign up: [Election Buddy Voting Webinar](#)

Please note, **ONLY** those clubs who have completed and returned their Credentialing Form to Marian by Sunday, April 6 will be able to test the system this coming Wednesday. If your club has not yet submitted the form, please do so asap so you are able to vote during the Regular Membership Meeting. **The deadline to return these forms to the National Office has been extended to April 14, 2025.**

[Click here to access the Credentialing Form.](#)

If for whatever reason you do not send in your credentialing form by April 14, you can still bring the form to the credentialing booth at the **Las Cruces Convention Center on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, from 1:30-3:30 pm. No credentialing forms will be accepted after this deadline.**

The Election Buddy system we are testing on Wednesday will send email notifications at the scheduled start time of voting, 6:15 PM CT, containing a personalized link to vote. The email will look like the message below. Simply click on the link to access the voting site. You may use a desktop, laptop, tablet, or smartphone to vote. Please make sure your browser is up to date. If you do not see the email, please check your "other" or "junk" folders.

The webinar starts at 6:00 pm CT and voting will commence at 6:15 PM CT and conclude at 6:40 PM CT. We look forward to your participation in this important test and thank you for your cooperation.

During the convention, members can also stop by the Tech Bar for assistance and a tutorial on how the voting application works. It is critical that all Delegates, Proxies, and Alternates, include their names and email addresses on the Credentialing forms submitted to the National office so instructions and user codes can be emailed to them.

SAMPLE ONLY OF THE EMAIL YOU WILL RECEIVE TO VOTE

Vote now: America's Walking Club - VOTING TEST - 2025 Officer Election & Bylaw Amendments
AVA-001_D

You are invited to vote in the America's Walking Club - VOTING TEST - 2025 Officer Election & Bylaw Amendments.

The voting deadline is Apr 2, 2025, 9:10am Mountain Time (US & Canada).

We are using an online election system to tabulate our votes. You have been assigned a unique access key which can only be used to vote once. Do not forward this email. Do not reply to this email to vote, as your vote will not be registered.

If you have election questions, feedback, or want to be removed from future ballot lists, please email Samanta Sanchez at samanta2@ava.org.

To vote, visit:

<https://secure.electionbuddy.com/4WHS-N6DG-RBPW-RTG2/>

Or copy and paste the link into your web browser.

You can also visit <https://secure.electionbuddy.com/ballot/> and enter "4WHS-N6DG-RBPW-RTG2"

[Unsubscribe](#) from any further emails about this election.

NEW BOARD MEMBER AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR ORIENTATION DURING CONVENTION

There will be a ninety-minute orientation for all new and returning Board Members and Deputy Directors on Friday, May 2, 2025, immediately after the Regular Membership Meeting. The location will be announced during the meeting.

AVA STATE ASSOCIATION AND REGIONAL MEETINGS DURING CONVENTION

Although there will be no "scheduled" State Association and Regional Meetings during the convention, **Ballroom 2** will be available all week during the day in case State Associations want to gather in this room. We encourage Regions and State Associations to meet as time permits.

TENTATIVE BOARD RETREAT DATES FOR RETURNING AND NEW AVA BOARD MEMBERS

These are tentative dates for planning purposes. The dates will be confirmed once the new Board Chair has been elected. The location is San Antonio, Texas. The retreat is for Board Members only. Details to follow.

May 20 Arrival before 5pm
 May 21 Training All day (and night)
 May 22 Departure after 12 noon

Calling All Regions!

Purchase an information table.

For the reduced price of \$20, each Region has the opportunity to have a table in the Vendor's area where their clubs may showcase some of the unique and fun walk brochures, YRE and Seasonal walk schedules, seasonal walking events for their states, i.e. Roundup in Texas, Walking Around Florida, etc., give out candy to people who stop by your table, make friends, good conversation, etc.



AVA WEDNESDAYS WEBINARS– APRIL 16, 2025, AT 7:00 P.M. CENTRAL

The next AVA online seminar will be Wednesday, April 16, 2025, 7:00-8:00 pm Central. The registration link will be on the AVA website, or you can [click here](#) to pre-register for the event. If asked for a passcode, the passcode is AVA.

Special Guest Host: Marian DeVaul, AVA Finance

April online seminar presenters include:

Jerry Wilson, Chair of AVA Conventions, and members of the Convention Committee

2025 AVA Biennial Convention, Las Cruces, NM

Learn of any last-minute details and updates for the 2025 convention before you hit the road!

Samanta Sanchez, Consultant (Administrator of the Election Buddy Voting System)

We will test the Election Buddy Voting System that will be used during the Regular Membership Meeting. If you are a Delegate, Alternate, or Proxy, it is recommended you attend this webinar.



AND THE WINNER OF THE 2024 BIG GIVE REGIONAL CHALLENGE IS...

The Southwest Region has achieved another remarkable victory! With the generosity of 57 individual donors and 10 clubs, they successfully raised an impressive total amount of \$28,184.07 for our 2024 Big Give fundraiser. A heartfelt congratulations to every one of you —enjoy your VIP front-of-the-line access at the 2025 Convention! The esteemed Walking Stick of Kindness will be presented to your Regional Director during the Convention.

We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to all the donors who generously supported our 2024 annual Big Give fundraiser, helping us achieve remarkable total of \$96,366. Your support and commitment to our mission means the world to us. Thank you.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON THE JUAREZ, MX INTERNATIONAL WALK DURING CONVENTION.

The El Paso Convention and Visitors Bureau, Visit El Paso, has requested a list of participants for the Mexico walk with the following information:

Name of Participant

REAL ID Number (This can be a REAL ID State issued ID or Passport number)

State the ID was issued

(Please make sure your ID's are not expired and that you have the NEW REAL ID.

This information will be given to US Customs to help expedite crossing back from Mexico and avoid any issues.

Mike Green and Jeff Giddings, our Information and Technology developers, have created a **secure link** that will be emailed to all who have registered for this walk. We ask that you please use this link to send us your information. We are also asking for a photo of your ID or Passport so we can verify the numbers you entered are correct. We are taking every precaution to make sure things go smoothly at the border.

Should you have any questions on this system, contact Mike Green at mikeginf@gmail.com

Also, we will be organizing group walks with a lead for all participating on this walk. Everyone is highly encouraged to participate in a group.

Lastly, the AVA has purchased General Liability and Medical Insurance for this walk.

Remember, everyone MUST pre-register for this walk!



MA REGIONAL DIRECTOR - CRAIG GAUGER

I hope all of the Mid America walkers that are able to, sign up and go to NM for the upcoming AVA Convention. There are a lot of great walking venues set up, the food is wonderful, and you get to see friends and meet new ones. Faith and I were there last November for several days. There is an upcoming Wednesday webinar showcasing convention voting procedures.

CONVENTION COMMITTEE - JERRY WILSON, CHAIR

It's almost time to pack for traveling to Las Cruces, New Mexico. Pack your walking shoes, AVA achievement books, your passport or other acceptable ID at the Mexican - United States border, and your thirst for adventure. We've planned the rest. You'll find unforgettable walks, and fun times with southwestern food, music, dance and walking friendships.

This week we have updated information on the AVA website, access updated information via the AVA front page. FAQs (frequently asked questions) and the Convention Schedule have been updated. Also checkout the most recent TAW (The American Wanderer).

We are looking forward to seeing everyone in Las Cruces and at the pre- and post-convention walks.

CONVENTION COMMITTEE - HELEN HULL, TRIAILMASTER

WHAT TO DO ON MONDAY, APRIL 28 AT THE CONVENTION

The preconvention walks will be held at City of Rocks State Park and Silver City on Sat/Sun, Apr 26-27, but what to do on your free day, Mon, Apr 28 before the convention opens its doors. There are several options available, so let's look at those around Las Cruces.

Note: If you are planning to do any of the walks on their non-featured day, then you can get directions in 2 ways. If you have registered either full or 5-day package, then you will receive an email about 2 weeks before the convention containing a link to the directions. **(This is not the OSB.)** You can then download, print, and bring the directions with you for your walking convenience or you can wait and pick up directions at the Convention Center once we open on Monday afternoon.

Now for the Las Cruces area events:

New Mexico State University convention walk: This walk starts at the Las Cruces Convention Center adjacent to the University's campus and is included in both the full and the 5-day packages. Previous articles in the Checkpoint and TAW have stated that it was not included in the 5-day package, but in the Apr 2 convention planning meeting, it was decided that it was indeed meant to be included as part of the 5-day package, too. So good news for the 5-day people. But the walk is not featured on any particular day, so how do you get your directions? Again, if you have preregistered, you will receive an email about Apr 10 with a link to the site where you can download all the walk directions that you have registered for (but this is not the OSB). Download the directions, print them, and bring them with you to Las Cruces. If you are waiting to register onsite, we will have a table set up in front of the Convention Center at the corner of University and Union streets where you can pay (this is a \$10 convention walk) and pick up your directions starting at 8:00am on Monday morning. Remember that the convention center does not open until Monday afternoon. The walk explores the campus first established in 1888. It is the state's oldest public institution of higher education and was the original land-grant institution in New Mexico. The walk passes historic buildings, the Zuhl Library containing some interesting petrified wood samples (worth a quick stop), athletic fields, and art sculptures. The walk offers both a 5k and 10k routes. Check it out.

Las Cruces Encanto: Registration is available at the Hotel Encanto do Las Cruces at 705 S Telshor Blvd or online using the OSB. The hotel is 3.5 miles from the Convention Center. The hotel itself exhibits the New Mexico culture and is quite beautiful. This walk explores residential neighborhoods, a hospital, several shopping malls, and a bike path. The hotel is close to many restaurants offering many choices. You may also register for this walk from Tues thru Thurs at the convention center.

Mesilla: Register for this walk at the Hotel Encanto (see above) or at the convention center Tues thru Thurs then drive to the start point at the Mesilla City Hall 6 miles from the hotel or 3 miles from the convention center. There is also a free city bus from the convention center area to Mesilla. The walk explores the old city plaza with its beautiful church and unique shops and restaurants, an old cemetery, and local irrigation canals crisscrossing the many pecan orchards. Check out Mesilla's connection to the Gadsden Purchase and Billy the Kid.

Plan to bike: The biking event will be open from Mon thru Fri. The 16k (10 mile) ride starts at the convention center and explores the Las Cruces Lateral (East) Trail and connects to the Arroyo Trail which loops thru the University's campus on the east side before ending up back at the convention center. Bikes may be rented at Outdoor Adventures at 1424 Missouri (575-521-1922) which is about 1 mile from the convention center (reservations suggested). Google them for more info. Directions available Mon morning outside the front of the convention center.

Further afield in El Paso about 50 miles south of Las Cruces: If you are flying in or out of El Paso, then you might want to check out the historic downtown El Paso or the UTEP (University of El Paso) walks. Both of these walks are available via OSB or from Tues thru Thurs at the convention center where stamps and directions will be available.



The UTEP walk starts at Albertson's at 3100 N Mesa (careful, there are 2 Albertson's in El Paso, make sure that you go to the one on Mesa). Please park away from the front of the grocery store. The walk explores the University of Texas at El Paso campus whose buildings feature the Kingdom of Bhutan design, unexpected in the southwest. The campus overlooks the Rio Grande with views of Mexico to the south. The 10k walk continues thru an affluent residential neighborhood in the foothills of the Franklin Mountains with views of downtown El Paso. Again register via OSB or at the convention center.

Near the pre/post convention walks: Several other seasonal walks are available near our pre/post walks including Deming, Fort Bayard, Gila Cliffs Dwelling National Monument, and Truth or Consequences. These walks are available via the OSB or at the convention center Tues thru Thurs. The first 3 walks are between Las Cruces and Silver City while Truth or Consequences is about ½ way between Las Cruces and Socorro on I-25.

Deming: Located about half way between Las Cruces and Silver City, Deming was part of the Gadsden Purchase in 1853 which was to provide a transcontinental railroad route along the southern border. In 1881, another 'golden spike' marked the completion of the route connecting the Southern Pacific and the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe railroads in Deming. A very flat town (easy on the knees), the walk explores the historic downtown area and its many buildings.

Fort Bayard: Located about 10 miles east of Silver City, historic Fort Bayard was established in 1866 to protect settlers and miners from the Apaches and later served as the army's first tuberculosis hospital. It became a Veterans Hospital in 1919. The walk explores the old parade ground, officer quarters, hospital, recreational building, and the National Cemetery. The walk also includes information about the nearby Dragonfly Trail, a strictly nature trail to a dragonfly petroglyph.

Gila Cliffs Dwellings National Monument: Located about 45 miles north of Silver City at the end of a picturesque drive thru the mountains. The walk explores ruins from the Mimbres culture dating back to the 13th century and continues to another trail along the cliffs overlooking the Gila River. Hiking boots and sticks are strongly recommended.

Truth or Consequences: Originally named Hot Springs for its many hot springs and bath houses, the town changed its name to T or C for the popular radio game show in 1950. The walk starts at the Ralph Edwards Park (host of Truth or Consequences) and passes historic buildings, murals, hot springs, and the Veterans Memorial (10k only). The town holds its annual festival with a parade and many other activities on the first Saturday in May (say May 3).

So don't despair and hide in your hotel room, there's plenty to do on your free day while waiting for the convention to start.

Image from National Park Service - Hike to the Cliff Dwellings



PUBLICITY COMMITTEE - SUSAN FINE, CHAIR

PUBLICITY UPDATE

If you missed the March Webinar about the Convention walk from El Paso to Juarez over the International Bridge, plus more answers about registration, etc., you can [access it here](#). Visit El Paso, Ah Chihuahua, and the Municipality of Juarez are working together to make our international walk a wonderful experience. They will guide us throughout the walk, provide snacks, have entertainment, and pay our fees both entering and exiting Mexico. While initially, we stated Passports were needed, you can also use a "Real" driver's license with the gold star. We encourage you to see the [March webinar](#).

Also, Helen Hull did an excellent webinar last September on the various walks we'll experience at the Convention. You can [access that here](#).

If you are still on the fence about attending the convention, we encourage you to register and have a fabulous adventure in southern New Mexico. Not only are there great walks showcasing the area, but the socials will be fantastic. We have a welcome reception Tuesday with buffet dinner at the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Museum, Dessert in the Desert Wednesday with 2 great speakers on local history, and the Gala and Hall of Fame Induction Thursday (socials are included in the 9-day package; or you may purchase any social if you purchase a 5-day package). But best of all, you'll enjoy walking with fellow volkswalkers from around the country. [Register today](#). (FYI: when I lived in New Mexico and would travel across the country, I was asked more than once if I had to have a passport, haha. YES, New Mexico is part of the United States).

National Walking Month is May, and we want to showcase your walk on the website, and on social media. We will also have a sample press release posted on the website, plus there are [marketing tools](#) at the bottom of the page. Please post any groups walks or traditional walks your club is having here. If you have questions, please email me: publicity@ava.org.

Congratulations to Cindy Hilling for winning \$100 off your AVA Convention registration. Your \$100 will be refunded to your credit card. You can contact Marian, marian@ava.org, if you have questions.

Ten more winners were drawn, to pick up your prize at the Las Cruces Convention Center: Three won ball caps: William Rhoat, Angier Spaulding, and Mary Wolfe. Seven people win a thermal mug: Joanne Beecher, Debra Gley, Carol Mukasa, Regina Prokopczuk, Beverly Watry, Sheila Kuschke, and Tom Crabill. You can pick up your prizes at the Las Cruces Convention Center. See Erin Grosso, or email her: erin@ava.org.

There are several multi-day events this spring. Please encourage members to attend, and support the hard work clubs are doing to create great walking weekends:

- April 10-11 – [Ozark Hill Hikers 2 new counties](#) – Clarksville and Ozark, Arkansas
- April 12-13 – [Indiana Spring Fling](#) – Madison, Indiana
- April 26-May 4 – [AVA Biennial Convention](#) – Las Cruces, NM
- May 5-8 – [NW Counties in New Mexico](#) – Gallup, Farmington and more, NM
- May 7-11 – [Huffin & Puffin on High Plains of Kansas](#) – Dodge City, Cimarron and more, KS
- May 16-18 – [Tri-State Lighthouse Weekend](#) – NH, ME, MA
- May 23-26 – [Triangle of Fire](#) – Port Townsend, WA
- June 27-28 – [Iowa County Weekend](#) – Corning, Glenwood, and Stanton, IA

AVA CONVENTION APRIL 29-MAY 2, 2025

The 2025 Biennial Convention Registration is open! Special thanks to Jeff Giddings, Atlantic Regional Director, who has worked many hours creating and editing the registration system for the AVA.

Registrants have the option to pay online or send a check to the AVA. Should you need help registering or have questions about payments, please contact Marian at marian@ava.org or feel free to call the office at 210-659-2112.

[Click here to register online.](#)



ONLINE

REGISTRATION IS

OPEN. REGISTER TODAY!

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE - SUSAN FINE, CHAIR

AVA SPECIAL PROGRAM – ANNIVERSARIES HURRAH

Runs January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026. Redeem completed books by December 31, 2027. This shortened period reflects the singularity of the anniversary year. The Program booklet has space for 25 events. Any AVA sanctioned YRE, Seasonal, or Traditional event may be completed for this program celebrating the semi-quincentennial (250th) anniversary of the United States and the Golden (50th) Anniversary of the AVA. (It is also the sesquicentennial of the Centennial State.) Any event which a walker believes is representative of our national or volksmarching history may be completed. One stamp can be used twenty-five times or twenty-five stamps can be used one time. Create your own sub-program within this one to make it truly memorable for you. If there is no event at the historical site you select, find the sanctioned event closest to it and complete that trail. Upon completion, participants will receive a 4"x6" oval patch. Cost of the booklet is \$14. Booklets can be ordered after November 1, 2025. Send request for the booklet to: Falcon Wanderers, c/o: Anniversaries SP, P.O. Box 17162, Colorado Springs, CO 80935-7162. POC is Terry Lunghofer at: tlunghofer0031@gmail.com or 719-597-4307 (H).

Stay tuned for a future article recommending possible sub-programs for qualifiers and an image of the patch celebrating these two historic anniversaries!

ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST - MARIAN DEVAUL

MAY NATIONAL PHYSICAL FITNESS PATCH

Sometimes, great products take a break! Unfortunately, due to low interest and declining sales, we will not be offering a 2025 May National Physical Fitness Patch. If demand for these patches increases in the future, we may consider bringing them back.

FINANCIALS

If your club is on a calendar year, Annual Financials Reports, e-Postcard filings, and Officer Updates (ESR update) are due by May 15, 2025. Please submit a copy of your filings to marian@ava.org.

May 15th, 2025 – The following items are due:

- E-post card must be filed with the IRS and a copy provided to AVA HQ.
- Club's Annual Financial Report is due to the AVA HQ.
- Update of Officers Information in the ESR must be completed by each club.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns, I am certainly available and eager to help in any way possible.

Note: Financials for clubs with a fiscal year ending 6-30-24 are not due until November 15, 2025

FAX LINE

Effective June 1, 2025, the AVA will discontinue its fax line.

TEMPORARY PAUSE IN BOOK PROCESSING:

Please note that event and distance books will not be processed during April 2025. After nearly 15 years of dedicated service to the AVA, Karen Winkle is retiring. While we celebrate her well-earned retirement, the rest of the team is busy preparing for the upcoming convention. With our limited staffing, we are unable to process books this month. Processing will resume in early May, and we'll work through all submitted books to ensure you receive your certificates, patches, and pins as soon as possible.

Thank you for your understanding during this busy time!

IT SPECIALIST - HECTOR HERNANDEZ

INTERNATIONAL

NATIONAL WALKING MONTH

We are now on our first year of the National Walking Month campaign. Last year we had 27 participating Clubs and 65 events. If your Club would like to participate this year and would like us to promote your event on social media and the AVA website, please click the logo for link and fill out the form by April 26. To help promote your events see the marketing tools at the bottom of the National Walking Month page by [clicking here](#). Images to help promote your event are encouraged. Don't forget to send out a local press release for your event and ask local officials to issue a Proclamation in support of National Walk Week. You can find templates of these forms on the AVA home page. For more information on National Walking Month go to ava.org.



NATIONAL EVENTS

WORLD WALKING DAY

Here is the World Walking Day certificate. Please click the image to view and download the certificate for printing.

Urkunde • Certificate • Diplôme 2025



Urkunde für/Certificate for/Diplôme pour

Internationaler Volkssportverband e. V.
International Federation of Popular Sports
Fédération Internationale des Sports Populaires



Giuseppe Colaninno
President / Président / Président



Contact infotristate25@aol.com or visit [25NEWeekend](https://www.walkscv.org/25NEWeekend/home.html) or <https://www.walkscv.org/25NEWeekend/home.html>

26 APRIL 2025 VOLKSWANDERUNG AND "FEST" EVENT

Come to Helen and Enjoy a great Hike and Bavarian Fest event....

Presented by the Alpine Helen Volksmarch Club (AHVC), a non-profit 501c3 organization, aimed primarily at promoting "Bavarian-style walking and hiking activities" that build a healthy lifestyle and German oriented culture in our community.

Our annual marquee event, the Volkswanderung 10k hike and 5k walk, "Bavarian Biergarten Style Festival", and huge prize drawing, is held on the fourth Saturday of April every year in beautiful Helen, Georgia



ALPINE HELEN VOLKSWANDERUNG
5k & 10k Hike/Walk
April 26, 2025
WWW.alpinehelenvolksmarch.org

www.helenga.org

After many years of inactivity, Our newly reformed Club in Helen is doing all we can to provide a fun and memorable event that will grow bigger and better every year. It will always be on the 4th weekend, Saturday, every year so hikers and walkers can plan in advance to return to Alpine Helen.

BRITISH WALKING FEDERATION SPECIAL PROGRAMMES



CLICK TO VIEW PDF



Checkpoint Available Via Email to All Club Members Who Request It

To receive an electronic copy of the Checkpoint send your request to Hector at hector@ava.org. Please note on the subject line: Request for Checkpoint.



The American Volkssport Association

The Mission of AVA is to promote and organize noncompetitive physical fitness activities that encourage lifelong fun, fitness, and friendship for all ages and abilities.



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