

BOOTPRINTS

Volume 12 Issue 1

January 2008



2007 Holiday Party

By John Klebes

As 2007 comes to end and we ring in the new year I look back with amazement at how our club has grown into a family of great friends enjoying our common passion for the outdoors. Watching Ann Marie's slideshow at the Holiday party, filled with great hikes and trips with friends, new and old, left lasting memories that I will cherish forever. Who could have imagined when we first started this club that we would be offering hikes and events on almost every day of the week? And not just fun local day hikes, evening and moonlight hikes, and backpacking trips. This year found us rafting in the Grand Canyon, sailing in Maine, hiking

Thank you to everyone that donated food items to the Open Pantry at the Dec 4th meeting.

on Mt Whitney, traversing parts of the High Sierra Mountains, and exploring Africa and Costa Rica. Not to forget our many recurring events such as the White Mountain Sampler, Christmas in Vermont, the summer picnic and boat ride, and the many kayaking, biking, water tubing, and other fun events.

This years party certainly lived up to our reputation as the hiking & dining club as I am sure everyone gained a few pounds from the unbelievable assortment of food that everyone brought. And Rick Briggs and his party committee did a wonderful job with the rest of the food, decorations, door prizes, and all the work that goes on behind the scenes to pull off such an amazing party. Thanks Rick & everyone that helped with setup and cleanup!

At this years holiday party we acknowledging the over 41 Event Coordinators and many Standing Committee Chair people who volunteered their leadership over the past year to put on almost 350 events. That's almost one out of four members of the club leading at least one hike or event! You should all be very proud of your contributions to making this club so successful.

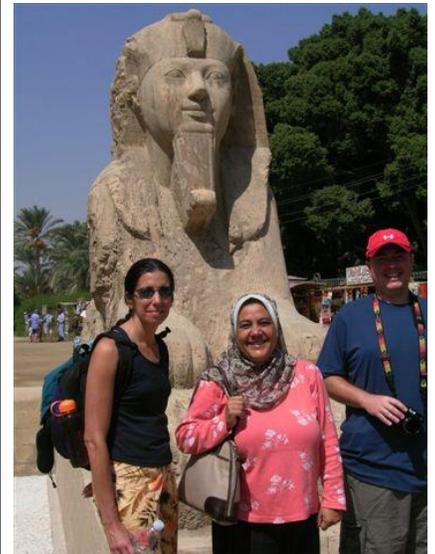
Special recognition was given to our top four hike leaders Marcia Kelly, Richard Harris, Carol Vanderheiden and John Klebes. In addition, this year's Volunteer of the Year Award was given to Connie Fogerty and Bill Nickerson. Connie & Bill have been members since 2000 and have never hesitated to step forward to help out with all of the behind the scenes activities with our club. They always step forward to help with the holiday party and even chaired the party in 2006. I recall trips such Breakneck pond and the Cape Cod weekend but mostly they

can always be counted on to help when we need it most. The campshow booth, greeting people at club meetings, the holiday party and club picnics. It is a great honor to recognize Bill & Connie's contributions to the club over the past years as our 2007

Volunteers of the Year!

Thanks to all of you that volunteer your time to make this club the valley's best. As we move into 2008 how about adding your name to this list by becoming more active in the leadership of the club?

~John Klebes



Egypt

By Laura Cook

This past September, I had the good fortune to travel to Egypt, ancient land of the Pharaohs. It was an amazing experience as I was pleasantly surprised by how much I didn't know about this mysterious country.

Egypt is a very safe place to visit and explore. Tourism is their number one priority, handling over nine million tourists from all over the world. Security is well controlled at all airports and a special tourist police force is

{Egypt – continued on page 2}



Visiting Santa -Al Goodhind's Vermont Trip (contributed by Mike Gross)

{Egypt - Continued from page 1}

available to assist travelers in need at anytime .The travel time to Cairo is only a ten hour night flight right out of JFK airport. Since I slept most of the flight, I arrived feeling somewhat rested and ready to begin the day's touring.

Our Egyptologist, Afifi greeted us and quickly walked our group through immigration and purchased our visas within minutes. We were then transported to our hotel and received a brief history and city tour of Cairo. Lunch followed and as we explored the hotel and its amenities, we prepared for the following day's tour.

The following morning after breakfast, we traveled to the old capital of Memphis and then headed to Sacarra, the home of the first pyramids which were designed in step formation. Our visit to the pyramids of Giza



provided an opportunity to enter the 2nd pyramid which was very exciting. The immensity of these monuments is difficult to comprehend until you find yourself standing very small before them. The chance to take a camel ride at the pyramids and some photo opportunities was enjoyed by all. We ended the day with a dinner of fine Egyptian delicacies.

Our third day in Cairo began with a visit to the museum of antiquities to view King Tut's exhibit and the famous mummy room. The museum itself is a wonderful place to discover and become familiar with the history of this ancient land. The afternoon was spent at the stature of the Sphinx and then to the Mohammed Ali mosque for an informational of the Muslim religion. This was truly interesting and not at all what I anticipated.

Egypt has many items of interest and value which make truly unusual gifts to bring home. The first is papyrus paper which is still made by hand and then painted on by local artists. The area also has several alabaster shops where vases and statues are carved out of several types and colors of alabaster stone. The perfume factories are

known for their variety of essences which are created locally and sold. Finally, there are many carpet schools which educated children in the art of carpet weaving and tapestry design. These carpets are made of wool or silk carpets and can be purchased for the return home.

Day four brought us to Luxor and a chance to view the magnificent Nile River. Our resort was located directly on the Nile, just a few short miles from the Valley of the Kings and the Karnack and Luxor temples. We toured the temples in the late afternoon where the light cast shadows on the temple ruins and surrounding areas giving it an even more dramatic look.

A longer stay of Luxor would have been appreciated but flights into our next destination city only ran twice weekly.

Sharm El Sheik is often referred to as the jewel on the Red Sea, where you can scuba dive for a few days to sample the multitudes of marine life. The second day of diving was at the S.S. Thistlegorm, a WWII wreck and war grave sunk by the Germans in 1949. The cargo is still in place



on the ship having been undisturbed for more than 50 years. The resort in Sharm was the Sheraton Resort located directly on the beach allowing us some quality down time from touring. The area is also surrounded by the Ras Mohammed National Park which includes the Ras Mohammed Marine Park as well.

After four nights, we returned to Cairo and spent one final night prior to our return back to the United States. It was here we had a chance to say farewell to our Egyptian guides who became our friends. I am looking forward to returning to Egypt next Summer, why not join us for an unforgettable experience and a once in a life time adventure.

~Laura Cook



Discover a Winter Wonderland

By Laura Cook

The leaves have fallen, dropping temperatures and shortened days all force us to acknowledge that winter is really here. Whether this season is your favorite time of year or not, here are a few ideas to make the most out of your winterland experience.

Let's start with the out of doors.

Like to hike? Think snow shoeing, it's the only way to hike in the snow or ice safely and actually have fun doing it! Snowshoes are now much more user friendly with lightweight frames, easy strapping systems to accommodate any shoe type or size and built in crampons made of steel to provide traction and mobility.

Snowshoes are by far easier to maneuver in the woods than cross country skis and you don't need to break track, which means no path required. No matter how deep the snow is, you can get through it by walking on top of it!

The kids want to go sledding? There's snow tubing, it's inexpensive, easy to do, so just find a hill and you're ready to roll. When you reach the bottom, lay on your back and make a snow angel.

Ice skating is a great winter sport you may have put aside but it's still popular. Take out those skates, dust em off and find a public skating rink to brush up your skills. There are indoor and outdoor rinks all over the area and the benefits to this kind of exercise are unlimited. It's like bicycling; you never really forget how to skate.

Prefer to stay indoors? Here are a few ways to still stay in shape or begin a fitness program of your own. If you are bored with your work outs at the gym, how about taking to the pool for some aerobic exercise. Forget lap swimming and go for some no impact exercise that everyone can benefit from. The water's a great way to restore flexibility, gain muscle tone, and improve balance. Find a local indoor, heated pool or better yet a nearby outdoor center and join an aquatics class for a better outlook on life and stress buster. How about brushing up on your swim skills so you can finally participate in that kayak or snorkel class you have always wanted to take?

These are just a few of the alternatives to the usual winter activities. Forget the expensive lift tickets and long waiting lines every weekend. No big investment in equipment necessary and your local health club or adventure center can provide lessons at affordable prices which often include the use of equipment needed.

Most activities can be placed in water such as water walking or jogging which has become very popular on the West coast.

Water biking is also challenging spinners beyond their imaginations. These no impact ways to enjoy simple activities help improve your physical health but also do there part in fighting the Winter Blues. So don't sit in front of that wide screen TV living someone else's life, put away the video games and get moving and energized by becoming an active participant in your own life.

You'll rediscover who you are and feel good again. Get out and have your own adventure, the outcome is making new friends, having fun and exploring the real world. Not sure how to take the first step? Give us a call and remember your adventure begins with our experience. 413 569-1287 Wilderness Experiences/Westfield Water Sports

New classes forming weekly and introducing the Girls Day/ Night out Programs.

Dec 1, 2007

Dear PVHC,

I would like to thank the PVHC and Jane Glushik for offering to lead a hike/wheelchair hike on the Manhan Rail Trail. Since Jane made me a co-leader, I took the opportunity to offer this to the community and give anyone else who is limited in their walking abilities, such as I, a chance to join us. The following were invited:

- The Council of Aging
- The Cyclonauts Bicycling Club (They ask to be part of it)
- The Manhan Rail Trail membership. Note: one of the visiting nurses said this posted in the town hall and mentioned to me that since I was co-leading this walk that they probably fulfilled their obligation and I would no longer be eligible for home care. See what a great job they did.
- The Pascommuck Conservation Land Trust. (A few took the opportunity to walk on the trust parcels and trekked along the Manhan River)

You did well PVHC for some of our best past hiking leaders in this valley, who years ago lead trips, and now in their limited mobility where wheel chaired or hobbling along, were very appreciated of having this opportunity to be on an outdoor event. I want to thank you for giving them that opportunity.

Besides your kindness of leading this walk I would like to take the opportunity to thank the club for all the wonderful things you have done for me.

- Thank you for all the get well cards and warm wishes and kind thoughts.
- Thank you for the visits to my house and helping me with my home chores such as bringing in firewood for my wood stove.
- Thank you for all the gifts, from food to books, to personalized cooked meals, and the list goes on.

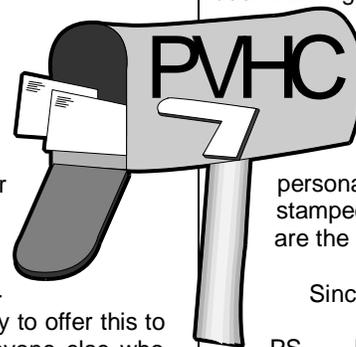
I have been saying that the Manhan Rail is a model trail for others to copy. An ideal trail that every community would want. Since this accident, I now have something else to boast about. I think that the PVHC is a model club and I am happy and proud to be a part of it. I now realize the depth of friendship in this club. I have been thinking that I should add another

t-shirt to my collection. Yes I would get one of those Life is Good shirts and I would wear it proudly, for I would have it

personalized with PVHC stamped on it! Thanks folks, you are the best.

Sincerely, Bill Burgart

PS. If I were to enter a wheelchair race, I would pick Carol; she can push my wheelchair anytime



Newsletter Helper?

I am looking for just a little help from a few members to be contributing reporters to our clubs newsletter. I think it would add a little freshness to our club newsletter; not to mention provide a little needed help to the trusty editor. How about it? Would you be willing to commit to finding one new story once every two months? It can be your own or simply take the lead to solicit your favorite club member to write one about your or their favorite trip. If I had two or three people that each author, or solicited, or simply persuaded another, to write one story each newsletter we would have plenty of interesting additions and keep the issues exciting. How about stepping forward and committing a little of your time to taking the lead and getting a story to me? Thanks,

John Klebes, PVHC Bootprints Editor
(pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com)

Upcoming Events

January 12-13, 2008

Beginner Winter Backpack to Mt Wilcox

In July 2007 the AMC completed the new Mt Wilcox South Lean-to on the Application Trail in Beartown State Forest. Sounds like it would make a good destination for an easy beginner winter backpack. The trail passes Lake Benedict and a scenic vista on the way to the lean-to. An opportunity to climb Mt Wilcox (Elev 2155 ft) will be an option. The lean-to is a typical three-sided open shelter so it should provide a good, but safe, taste of winter backpacking. Contact leader if you are interested. We may be able to help with loaning equipment and suggestions for clothing so you can try out winter backpacking without investing in gear before you know you like it. If you enjoy winter day hikes you may find something very exciting in spending a night out. There should be lots of opportunities to get tips on how to enjoy all winter holds, and less that fear of the cold, on this trip. No experience necessary.

~John Klebes

March 1-2nd, 2008

Winter in Vermont's Merck Forest

Join the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club on another visit to the Snowy Wonderland of Vermont's Merck Forest. We will return to Ned's Place, a rustic cabin located at the edge of a high meadow with views of Bear Mt. and Mt. Equinox. This fully enclosed cabin is equipped with a simple wood burning stove and firewood and has bunks and loft space for ten people. The hike has some ups and downs over moderate farmland trails and is 2.25 miles from the Visitor Center. The cost for the cabin (\$60) and a group meal will be split evenly between those camping (about \$10 each). Merck Forest has an extensive network of hiking trails so bring your snowshoes. This one usually fills up very fast so if you are interested sign up early. Check out the website www.merckforest.org for more information.

~John Klebes

March 7th - 9th, 2008

Northwest Cabin Weekend

Join us for a weekend of hiking/snowshoeing at the AMC's Northwest Cabin located in the Northwest part of Connecticut at the base of Bear Mountain. (Moderately Difficult) The location will afford hikes along the AT through Sages Ravine to Race Mountain, Bear Mountain and the South Taconic Range. The cabin is heated with a wood stove and sleeps 6. The cost for lodging is \$10.00/person with additional costs for group dinner and breakfasts. For more information contact leader/Co-leader: Janice Doubleday/Wayne Rodrigues at beechhill26@hotmail.com or during the evenings.

May 23-26, 2008

Memorial Day Weekend Sailing Adventure

I have a 3 day Maine Windjammer Sailing Adventure planned for Memorial Day Weekend on the Schooner "Timberwind" in Rockport, Maine-Friday, May 23 (boarding is after 6:00p.m) We sail Saturday morning-visit a small village or deserted island in Penobscot Bay-destinations depend upon the winds and tides and includes a lobster bake on a beach with a little hiking of course. Sunday we will cruise to another port and dock at about 4:00 p.m and explore another locale. Return to Rockport, Me. before noon on Monday May 26th. Cost is \$495 but discounts are offered if booked before certain dates. All meals included from Saturday morning...Cabins for 20 passengers-7 doubles & 2 triples. Deposit is \$350 balance due 6 weeks before cruise. If interested call Sheila Croteau, or sheilacroteau@aol.com and check out their web site: www.schoonertimberwind.com

Dog Sled Adventures

I have discovered a musher in Brookfield, Ma who offers dog sled adventures! I don't have a date yet - cost is approx \$100 but the more people...cost will decrease-the course is approx 3 1/2 miles the adventure includes meeting the dog team. Thank you, Sheila Croteau or sheilacroteau@aol.com

Snowshoe Rentals:

The club has snowshoes and backpacking tents available for rent at a nominal cost. The clubs screen house, trail maintenance tools, hand held radios, and in-step crampons are also available to club event leaders without fees. Contact Jack Leary (, our Quartermaster, for help with rentals.

Membership Directory

Membership Directories were distributed at the Holiday Party. Those who didn't pick them up had them mailed in early January. The directory, in addition to being a great resource for staying in touch with club friends, contains a large reference section. Be sure to look through the appendix and take full advantage of the many benefits of club membership. If you are a new member and would like a copy or did not receive your copy by January 15th let me know. I have a limit supply of extras that I would be happy to mail you. John Klebes (j.klebes@ieeee.org)

Carpool Logistics:

Just a quick note that our carpool meeting place in Holyoke has changed names. It's still the same place but Brooks Pharmacy is now RiteAid Pharmacy. To avoid confusing new members we are changing the carpool directions and meeting location notes on the schedule to reflect the name change to RiteAid Pharmacy.

Important Message - PVHC Email List

As junk mail becomes more and more of a problem many email programs are filtering out or blocking emails that is sent to large distribution lists. I am hearing from people, almost weekly, that they stopped receiving emails from the club. This is usually because your email provider has started sending our mail to your spam folder.

To be sure you get email from the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club please be sure to add the clubs email address: pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com to your address book. Club emails are sent as a blind copy (to protect the privacy of your email address). This sometimes causes spam filters to block the emails as junk mail. If you add our address to your contact list (address book) your email system will know we are a friendly email address.

Even if you do not have any problem getting our emails now, please add the address anyway to avoid the problem in the future. Just save the return address from one of the weekly club emails to your address book. It will avoid a problem in the future.

If you are a club member and are not on our email list, but would like to be, simply send us an email to: pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com

Important Notice

The following memberships are up for renewal:

January Renewals:

Helen Bowers
Sheila Croteau
Diane Crowell
Kathleen Damon
Gary Dolgoff
Thomas Harrington
Ann Kennedy
Judith Koretz
Michael Kurowski
Toni Mango
Karen Savoy
Cindy Taylor & Family
Elaine Tryjankowski
Ann Wood

February Renewals:

Dana Benoni
Syndi DiRico
Paul & Maxine Lessard
Harry (Chip) Pray
Carol Vanderheiden
Ruth Wade

Please renew early, and renew by mail. (*Make checks payable to PVHC*) Mail your renewal with your name and any address or phone number changes to:

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club
c/o Shari Cox
223 Gifford Street, Springfield, MA 01118

(Dues are \$25 member. \$40 familv. and \$15 for students)

Peak-Baggers

By John Klebes

Don't try to hide, we know who you are! This highly contagious disease has grown rampant within the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. In talking about peak bagging, that activity in which hikers attempt to reach the summit of some collection of peaks listed on a popular target list. Peakbaggers just love their lists; sometimes to the total blindness to anything other than simply checking off another mountain from their list. Who cares if it has a view, if it's raining too hard to enjoy it, or if it's too dark to see the views? I just must check off another peak!

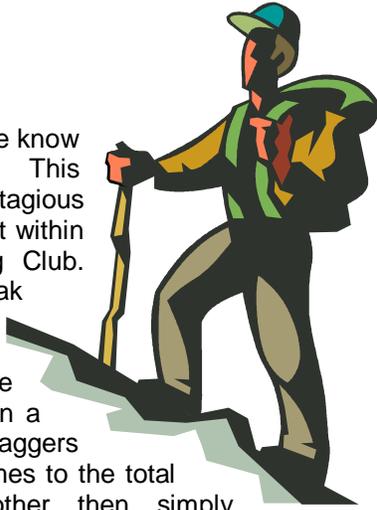
For example, the most popular list in our club is the AMC New Hampshire 4000 footer list. We have many alumni who have achieved the goal of climbing all the 4000 foot or higher peaks on this popular list. But they don't stop there. Once addicted peakbaggers have an insatiable need to continue to climb more lists. Fortunately for those addicted there is no lack of lists: You can continue to climb all the peaks over a certain threshold in a certain area--the 4000 foot peaks in all of New England States, the 14,000-foot peaks of Colorado, or the 8,000 meter peaks of the world. There are an infinite number of possible lists the creative peakbagger can dream up.

The most popular lists in our Northeast area:

- Adirondack 46ers (a list of 46 high peaks that were originally thought to be 4000 footers)
- The AMC Four Thousand Footer Club Lists (4000 footers of New Hampshire, 4000 footers of all the New England States, and the 100 highest in New England)
- The Northeast 111 List (all the 4,000 footers in the Northeast including the Adirondack 46ers list (46 peaks), the New England 4,000 Footers (initially 63, now 67 peaks) and the two 4,000 footers in the Catskills (Slide, 4,180' and Hunter, 4,040'). The initial total was 111 peaks, and the Club has kept that name, though the total is now 115 peaks.
- The Catskill 3500 (all the peaks over 3500 feet in the New York Catskills)

And they don't stop there. How about all the peaks in winter, or all the peaks in New York that have ever had a fire tower on them, or all the peaks that ever had a ski run? The lists go on and on. I found one list that is simply a list of the 200 most popular lists!

Which list is my personal favorite? The New Hampshire 52 With-A-View! (A list of mountains in New Hampshire under 4000 feet that offer a fine view. These are the ones that basically don't qualify for the 4000 footer list but because of their views shouldn't have been missed! Not to be confused with some of the mountains that did make the lists and have no view at all.)



But figuring out what mountains make that list is not as easy as you think. Have you ever thought you were about to reach the top of a mountain only to find you were on a false summit. Certainly a high point but in actual fact it was just a bump on the ridgeline on the way to the true summit? What makes a bump a new mountain and not just a minor summit on the ridgeline off another summit? Most lists use a term called prominence to measure the height of a peak above the highest saddle connecting it to a higher peak. (A saddle is the lowest point, or col, on the ridge connecting the two peaks) The prominence is how high the higher peak reaches above this low point. To create a list of peaks we have to pick some kind of criteria such as an arbitrary amount of prominence to determine which points are summits.

For the AMC 4000 footers the criteria for mountains on the official list are: (1) each peak must be 4000 ft. high, and (2) must rise 200 ft. above the low point of its connecting ridge with a higher neighbor. The criterion for the Adirondacks was that each peak be at least 0.75 miles distant from the nearest higher summit, or that it rise at least 300 vertical feet on all sides. As you can see it's all arbitrary. But, if it gets you to discover a new peak, live a new grand adventure, and just get outdoors and enjoy life . it's all worth it! Happy Peak Bagging in 2008!

~John Klebes

Ten Reasons why People Climb Mountains

1. **The Challenge:** Climbers want to prove themselves against the mountains and give themselves tangible goals (summits) to see how they measure up.
2. **Exercise:** Mountain climbing is a great way to stay fit; those climbers who are not killed in accidents often lead healthy, active lives well into their 80s or 90s.
3. **Social:** Climbing is often a group activity and a great way to spend time with friends and family.
4. **Wilderness:** Mountains are often in wild, remote areas, and climbing is a great excuse to explore those blank spots on the map and get away from civilization.
5. **Scenery:** Mountains are visually stunning places to be, and the views both from the summits and on the way up are often spectacular.
6. **Nature:** Climbing mountains provides excellent opportunities to observe plants, animals, birds, geology, and other facets of the outdoors.
7. **Sports/Hobbies:** Climbing mountains lends itself to a whole host of fun sports and activities, such as skiing, mountain biking, backpacking, photography, trail running, fishing, base jumping, and others.
8. **Climate:** Mountaineering is a great way to increase the amount of wind, rain, snow, and overall coldness in your life, which is often a welcome respite for those from the desert or the jungle.
9. **Inspiration:** Sometimes a climber sees a peak and just somehow feels inspired to climb it, especially prominent and striking summits such as the Matterhorn or the Grand Teton.
10. **Existential:** Climbing a mountain to get to the top. Or, to quote Mallory, "because it's there."

(Source: Greg Slayden, the owner of the website peakbagger.com)

Pioneer Valley Hiking Club Officers & Committees

Ann Marie Visconti, President
Marcia Kelly, Vice President
Gail Carrier, Secretary
Shari Cox, Treasurer
Scott Cook, Wilderness Experiences Unlimited
Ray Tibbetts, Founder

Standing Committee Chairs

Hike Planning Coordinator: *Sue Forest & AnnMarie Visconti*
Backpacking Coordinator: *Ed Laroche*
Trail Maintenance: *Ed Laroche & Rob Schechtman*
Web Page Editor: *Dick Forrest*
Email Correspondent: *Rob Schechtman*
Email List: *John Klebes*
Quartermaster: *Jack Leary*
Bootprints Editor: *John Klebes*

Bootprints is a publication of the Pioneer Valley Hiking Club. Send your story contributions to the editor at: j.klebes@ieee.org (Email) or by USmail to John Klebes, P.O. Box 51385, Indian Orchard, MA 01151.

IMPORTANT NOTICES

- ❑ Next Club Meetings:
Feb 5, 2008, 7pm at **FBC**
Mar 4, 2008, 7pm at **FBC**
- ❑ Deadline for Submissions for next BootPrints is: Feb 20, 2008
- ❑ Elections for new officers will be held at the Feb 5th Meeting

FBC . First Baptist Church, West Springfield

***** Check out our web page at:**

<http://www.geocities.com/pvhcweb>

Members may join the PVHC Email List by sending a message to: pvhc.hikingclub@gmail.com

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