The Inside of th

Groundbreaking 2022 Legacy Run donation totals! Lomac Paytor

reetings American Legion Family-With the new officers starting to fulfill their responsibilities, we are looking forward to working with everyone. We are making changes in all aspects of our organization from the Department, Post, District and Division levels. You will see some of those changes not only in the Legion newsletter, but in Auxiliary, Sons, and Legion Riders as well. We are bringing our organization up to date. The membership director, Jim Talaska has opened a box of new ideas on membership that include the special 5-year membership card and incentive. Post level training workshops will be held throughout the state. Some of the training will include leadership, communication, dedication and responsibility. The first post level training workshop was held on August 13th in Bartonville and Limestone Post for the 15th and 16th Districts.

On Friday August 5, I attended the Fall Board of Directors Meeting, followed by Department President Janet's homecoming on the 6th in Genoa. The attendance was great at both functions. Keep in mind that my homecoming will be September 24 in Galesburg. I'm looking forward to a great turnout. Remember this will be a part of history for The American Legion and the 15th District. It's been over 37 years since a Department Commander was elected out of the 15th District. I also attended the 103rd National Convention in Milwaukee.

Remember to attend post level workshops being held in your area for Post Commanders and Adjutants, District Commanders and Sr. Vice. You may think you know everything about The American elmar Buske

o Our American Legion Family— It was an honor to be invited to President Janet's Board Meeting where a lot of good information was shared. I'm sure President Janet will have a "Beary good year".

I have enjoyed visiting with The Legion family during my recent post visits.

Thank You to the Bartonville Post who hosted our first training session. Looking forward to further training sessions. If you have a chance to attend, it is well worth your time.

I've also had the pleasure of visiting with old and new friends on Veterans Day at the State Fair. The weather was beautiful. This was a great way to honor our Veterans and Gold Star Families. It was a good day to catch up with ISP friends also including Director Kelly, many are members of post #1922. The parade is always fun to participate in.

I just headed North to Milwaukee for our National Convention, making a quick stop at Department for a visit with the legion Riders on the way. It was great getting to spend the afternoon with HQ staff and volunteers as we hosted the Riders during their stop.

Wishing everyone that has recently headed back to school a safe and enjoyable year.

(Continued on page 5)

Janet Bacon

ello American Legion Family.

It has been a very busy and exciting first month of being the American Legion Auxiliary Department of Illinois President. In the first week of being Department President I was the Installing Officer for the 1st Division American Legion Auxiliary. It was very exciting, and I was very proud to install this wonderful group of women. They will serve the 1st Division and Illinois with pride and honor. So, we are off to a "beary" good start.

We held our Fall Board Meeting on August 5-6th in Rockford, Illinois. The day started with a Workshop that discussed membership, Constitution & Bylaws, duties of officers and chairman. After dinner, we started our Fall Board Meeting. Special thanks gout to Commander Lomac, Sr. Vice Commander Delmar Buske and SAL Detachment Commander Kevin for attending. A Membership wager was made, and Commander Lomac increased our wager. We will find out at Patriotic Conference in March who will win the wager. These wagers are a fun way of keeping all the organizations on track with membership. Our meeting continued on Saturday morning.

I attended the Illinois State Fair on Sunday, August 14th as part of Veterans Day at the State Fair. Our Legion Family was well represented. I found the Gold Star Ceremony to be quite moving and meaningful. Later in the afternoon the Legion Family participated in the Veterans Parade.

I enjoyed attending the National Convention in Milwaukee. Starting in this month, our Fall Forums will begin. I am hoping for many units to be repre• o Our American Legion Family—

The Sons of the American Legion Preamble begins with the phrase "Proud Possessors of a Priceless Heritage". What better way to honor the Veteran that made you eligible then by renewing your membership. Now is the time we must work on getting our Squadrons membership numbers up to 100%. We've been told our membership cards are in and being shipped out. There are several ways to get this done. Sending out reminder notices, phone calls, and face to face meetings.

We all have members that joined but we never see them. There may be reasons for that. We need to make those members feel that they are wanted. Invite them to a meeting, make them know that they are wanted. Ask them for help on some projects. And most important keep them in the loop on activities within the Squadron or Post. The benchmark of a healthy Squadron is how involved it's members are.

Membership is paramount within the American Legion Family when it comes to standing up for Veterans rights. The American Legion is able to show they have a strong voice because of membership. Also important is making sure every Squadron turns the consolidated squadron report, "CSR". The American Legion forwards the final report to the U.S. Congress.

On August 10th President Biden signed into law the PACT Act. This law will empower the V.A. to deliver the care to millions of Veterans who were exposed to dangerous toxins. The legislation itself

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued on page 5)

2022	—2023 D	IVISIO	ON & DISTRICT MEETI	NG DATES
DATE	DIST. / DIV.	TIME	POST	CITY
09/16/2022	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	LAKE REGION POST 703	FOX LAKE
09/17/2022	14TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	MILAN POST 569	MILAN
09/21/2022	7TH DISTRICT	TBD	LINCOLNWOOD POST 1226	LINCOLNWOOD
10/02/2022	15TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	GALVA POST 45	GALVA
10/02/2022	21ST DISTRICT	1:00 PM	POST 905	KINCAID
10/09/2022	16TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	TOULON	TOULON
10/09/2022	18TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	CISSNA PARK POST 527	CISSNA PARK
10/16/2022	3rd division	1:00 PM	ALEDO POST 121	ALEDO
10/16/2022	19TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	NEWMAN POST 201	NEWMAN
10/16/2022	5TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	LOUISVILLE POST 914	LOUISVILLE
10/19/2022	7TH DISTRICT	TBD	GEORGE W. BENJAMIN POST 791	NORTHBROOK
10/22/2022	14TH DISTRICT	1:00 PM	MACOMB POST 6	МАСОМВ
10/23/2022	22ND DISTRICT	1:00 PM	MASCOUTAH POST 292	MASCOUTAH
10/23/2022	25TH DISTRICT	TBD	EVANSVILLE POST 1172	EVANSVILLE
11/05/2022	19TH DISTRICT	7:30 AM	CARAVAN STOP—CHAMPAIGN POST 24	CHAMPAIGN
11/06/2022	19TH DISTRICT	7:30 AM	CARAVAN STOP—DELAND POST 102	DELAND
12/02/2022	19TH DISTRICT	10:00 AM	REVITALIZATION @ NEOGA POST 458	NEOGA
12/03/2022	19TH DISTRICT	10:00 AM	REVITALIZATION @ NEOGA POST 458	NEOGA
11/18/2022	10TH DISTRICT	7:00 PM	GURNEE POST 771	GURNEE
11/19/2022	13TH DISTRICT	TBD	STERLING POST 296	STERLING
01/08/2023	5TH DIVISION	1:00 PM	MARION POST 147	MARION

Jim Watson Presented with 75 Continuous Year Membership Award while Celebrating his 93rd Birthday!

On Wednesday, August 3rd I had the honor of presenting a 75 Continuous Years Membership Award on behalf of our National Commander, Paul Dillard and our National Adjutant, Dan Wheeler to James Watson. Jim is a member of Post 2910 and currently resides in Oak Forest, IL. When I first contacted Jim to arrange a time and location to present the award, he wanted to do it at the Mission BBQ in Downers Grove. Jim offered to arrange this as he and another Veteran stop there many times after trips to Hines VA. Mission BBQ set everything up and the chow was great as always! I also invited our Post 43 Legion Riders to come and be part of this and we had a great turnout. Jim was also celebrating his 93rd Birthday. As many of you that are familiar with Mission BBQ and their mission, another Legionnaire, Emery Wolff from Downers Grove Post 80 was there with his son to celebrate his 95th Birthday. All in all, it was a great day for our fellow Legionnaires. These 2 Veterans served their country and still serve our American Legion.



Pictures from top left, clockwise: (1) Immediate Past Department Commander Wayne Fischer presenting Jim with the Award, (2) Emery Wolff, Laura Mahler (Mission BBQ Ambassador), Jim Watson, and (3) Jim Watson, his daughter Jaime Watson Bickerton, fellow Veterans Tom Goetz and Bill Becker, and American Legion Auxiliary member Sandra Czyznikjewicz. Both Tom and Bill received two Purple Hearts each in Vietnam.

(Department Commander, Continued from page 1)

think you know everything about The American Legion and its programs, but in this training you will learn more than you realize about our organization.

It is also time to campaign for membership. Without members, there will be no American Legion. So let's get busy and contact members. Do your Buddy Checks as well! Take care and be safe. Don't forget to keep each other in your prayers. May GOD bless.

Your Department Commander, Lomac A. Payton I

(ALA President, Continued from page 2)

sented at the Forums. Remember, getting back to basics starts with the Units attending, understanding, and participating.

(SAL Commander, Continued from page 2)

had bi-partisan support and was spearheaded by the American Legion. Because of the membership numbers of the American Legion Family, The American Legion has the strong voice in Washington when dealing with Veteran Rights and Benefits. It is our duty and obligation support the American Legion Family and continue to fight for the rights of all Veterans. For God and Country.



SEPTEMBER 7: Commander's Appointments

SEPTEMBER 10: 2nd Division Fall Forum (#1) @ Post #57 (Elgin, IL)

SEPTEMBER 11: PATRIOT DAY

SEPTEMBER 24: FALL D.E.C.

COMMANDER HOMECOMING (Galesburg, IL)

3rd Division Fall Forum (#1) @ Abingdon

SEPTEMBER 25: GOLD STAR MOTHER'S DAY 3rd Division Fall Forum (#2) @ Macomb

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE Top 10 District & Division Rankings

District	Commander	
8	Petersen	
10	Castella	
17	Abdelnour	
13	Gibbs	
16	Burnett Jr	
19	Smith	
3	Fitch	
11	Oikion	
21	Baumann	
9	Fiorentino	
Division	Commander	
2	Kraut	
4	Garrett	
3	Seward Jr	
1	Thompson III	
5	Maden	



107 N. 600 East Rd., Loda, Illinois

September 23 — Friday at Loda Post 503

from 4:00PM to 7:00PM

The menu includes Fish (Pollack), Chicken, French fries, Baked beans, Green beans (with potatoes, bacon, and onions) Coleslaw, and Potato salad.

Price is **\$10.00 for** all you can eat. Children eat free.



13th District Commander & American Legion Post 193 Commander Jerry Howard was able to personally present Eagle Ridge Resort & Spa with the 2022 Employer of Older Workers Award. This award was presented at the Department Convention in Springfield in July by the Veterans Employment & Education Commission.

DON'T WAIT!

Veterans and Survivors:

File your Toxic Exposure/Burn Pit Claim now!

Go to VA.gov/PACT

Or

Call: 1-800-698-2411

More information on the passing of The Pact Act can be found on pages 9-10 of this issue.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS:

We are happy to include your District/Division Meeting Dates, Happenings at your local post/community, announcements. etc.

> Email sgreen@illegion.org OR send by mail to: American Legion, Dept. of IL P.O. Box 2910 Bloomington, IL 61702 **ATTN: SHANDI GREEN**

If any changes or updates need to be made to the schedule or other submissions, please submit them as soon as possible to Shandi Green in by email (or in writing).

NOTE: WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO INCLUDE YOUR SUBMISSIONS BUT CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT THEY WILL BE. IN ORDER TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE, PLEASE SUBMIT BY THE 15TH OF THE MONTH PRIOR



The new PACT Act

» Expands toxic-exposed Veterans access to VA care

» Extends health care eligibility for Vietnam, Gulf War, and Post-9/11 era combat Veterans

» Adds new presumptive conditions for radiation, Agent Orange, Gulf War toxins, and burn pit exposures

EXPANDED VA CARE & BENEFITS

Learn more at VA.gov 1-800-MyVA411 (800-698-2411)

COMMANDER'S HOMECOMING

2022-2023



COMMANDER LOMAC A. Pa Saturday, September 24, 2022 Social Hour: 5:00 p.m., Dinner: 7:00 p.m. KC Hall - 1556 Fremont St., Galesburg, IL 61401

D.E.C.—1:00 PM

Meeting will be held at the KC Hall

HOUSING:

Baymont by Wyndham

2285 Washington St Galesburg, IL 61401 A block of rooms is reserved.

Call 309-807-3727 for reservations.

Use group code AMLEGION2022

Dinner Menu: Buffet Style Dinner consisting of Spaghetti with meat sauce, grilled chicken, sliced roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn, tossed salad, pasta salad, bread and butter. Water, Coffee, Iced Tea. There will be a full cash bar.

Dinner: \$50.00 per person (MUST RSVP)

Make check payable to: Jim Talaska

Dinner Chairman: Jim Talaska (309) 532-6011,

jtalaska@illegion.org

Name:

Address:

City: State: Zip:

Phone# Division# District#

Number of Persons: _____Or table(s):_____

Amount Enclosed:__

Group Seating may be available: Please attach a list of names for table, if applicable.

7

SAVE YOUR SEAT

With only a couple of weeks until Commander Payton's Homecoming, it is important to get your reservations in AS SOON AS POSSIBLE! Seats are filling up fast and we can no longer guarantee that we will be able to accommodate walk in guests at the door. If you would like to attend, please send your checks in with your reservation form. We have made the corresponding corrections to the form and it is included in this issue. We're looking forward to a great turnout and seeing you all there!



PO BOX 1055, INDIANAPOLIS, IN, 46206-1055 · WWW.LEGION.ORG · P: (317) 630-1200 · F: (317) 630-1223

President Signs Honoring Our PACT Act, American Legion Commander Praises 'Patriotic Advocates'

WASHINGTON (August 10, 2022) – The American Legion National Commander Paul E. Dillard praised President Biden and the bipartisan majority of congressional members who supported the most comprehensive veterans' health-care legislation in decades.

Dillard, who attended the bill-signing ceremony at the White House this morning, pointed to the law's overwhelming support. "The Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our PACT Act is now the Honoring Our PACT *law*," Dillard said. "We thank President Biden for signing this legislation. Millions of veterans and their families can take comfort in knowing that their government truly appreciates their service and sacrifice. This comprehensive health care law is the result of hard work and bipartisanship by patriotic advocates, members of Congress and American Legion Family members worldwide. It was a privilege to represent all of our allies at the White House today. I encourage all veterans who have been exposed to toxic substances while serving in the military to contact their American Legion service officers for free assistance in accessing the benefits that they have earned. The claims process can be complicated, and American Legion service officers are happy to help."

The PACT Act will provide health care for millions of post-9/11 veterans who were exposed to contaminants emanating from open-air burn pits. It establishes presumptions of service connection for 23 respiratory illnesses and cancers linked to burn pits and other hazards, including Agent Orange and atomic radiation for veterans whose exposure was previously unrecognized for VA health-care services and disability benefits. It will also provide additional resources and staff to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Enactment of the PACT Act was a major legislative priority for The American Legion in this session of Congress.

<u>The American Legion</u> is dedicated to the motto of "Veterans Strengthening America." Chartered by Congress in 1919, The American Legion is committed to mentoring youth and sponsoring wholesome community programs, advocating patriotism and honor, promoting a strong national security and continued devotion to servicemembers and veterans. Legionnaires in more than 12,500 posts across the nation and regions overseas serve their communities with a devotion to mutual helpfulness.

-30-

Media Contact: John Raughter, jraughter@legion.org, (317) 630-1350, Dave Lapan, <u>dlapan@legion.org</u>, (703) 403-3835.



What you need to know about PACT Act benefits

The American Legion

August 10, 2022

As the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our PACT Act becomes law millions of veterans suffering from illnesses caused by toxic exposures will be eligible for benefits.

The PACT Act, which covers veterans from Vietnam through Iraq and Afghanistan, is the most significant expansion of benefits and services for toxic-exposed veterans in more than 30 years and addresses a broad spectrum of toxic exposures.

Veterans will now see additional benefits for exposures to burn pits in Iraq and Afghanistan, additional presumptive conditions for Agent Orange exposure and provisions for victims of water contamination at Camp Lejeune.

There are many pending questions about the new law and what it means. Here are some common questions and answers:

Question: What changes will the PACT Act bring?

Answer: While some ailments caused by toxic exposure can present quickly, other illnesses can take years to manifest. This left many veterans outside their eligibility window to enroll in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care and others struggling to prove a service connection because of the time that had lapsed. To address this, the PACT Act makes significant changes to the timeline veterans have to enroll in VA health care. The PACT Act:

• Increases the period of time veterans have to enroll in VA health care from five to 10 years following discharge for post-9/11 combat veterans.

• Establishes a one-year open enrollment period.

Additionally, the legislation codifies VA's new process for evaluating and determining presumption of exposure and service connection — removing the burden of proof from the veteran.

Question: How do I know if I've been exposed to burn pits?

Answer: If you served in any of these locations and time periods, VA has determined you have a presumption of exposure to burn pits or other toxins. On or after Sept. 11, 2001, in any of these locations:

Afghanistan, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Uzbekistan, Yemen

The airspace above any of these locations on or after Aug. 2, 1990:

Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, The United Arab Emirates

Question: What new presumptive conditions were added for burn pit exposure?

Answer: The PACT Act added more than 20 new condition, including a dozen cancers, which are now presumed to be caused by exposure to burn pits and other toxins. This change impacts Gulf War era and post-9/11 veterans. These cancers were added to the presumptive conditions list:

Brain cancer, Gastrointestinal cancer of any type, Glioblastoma, Head cancer of any type, Kidney cancer, Lymphatic cancer of any type, Lymphoma of any type, Melanoma, Neck cancer, Pancreatic cancer, Reproductive cancer of any type, Respiratory (breathing-related) cancer of any type

Additionally, these illnesses are also now considered presumptive: Asthma that was diagnosed after service, Chronic bronchitis, Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, Chronic rhinitis, Chronic sinusitis, Constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis, Emphysema, Granulomatous disease, Interstitial lung disease, Pleuritis, Pulmonary fibrosis, Sarcoidosis

Question: What changes were made for Vietnam-era veterans?

Answer: The PACT Act added two additional Agent Orange presumptive conditions: High blood pressure (hypertension), Monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS)

Additionally, five new presumptive locations were added for Vietnam-era veterans:

• Any U.S. or Royal Thai military base in Thailand from Jan. 9, 1962, through June 30, 1976

Laos from Dec. 1, 1965, through Sept. 30, 1969

Cambodia at Mimot or Krek, Kampong Cham Province from April 16, 1969, through April 30, 1969

• Guam or American Samoa or in the territorial waters off of Guam or American Samoa from Jan. 9, 1962, through July 30, 1980

· Johnston Atoll or on a ship that called at Johnston Atoll from Jan. 1, 1972, through Sept. 30, 1977

Question: What new radiation presumptive locations were added?

Answer: VA added three new response efforts to the list of presumptive locations:

 Cleanup of Enewetak Atoll, from Jan. 1, 1977, through Dec. 31, 1980
Cleanup of the Air Force B-52 bomber carrying nuclear weapons off the coast of Palomares, Spain, from Jan. 17, 1966, through March 31, 1967

• Response to the fire onboard an Air Force B-52 bomber carrying nuclear weapons near Thule Air Force Base in Greenland from Jan. 21, 1968, to Sept. 25, 1968

Question: How do I receive these benefits?

Answer: VA encourages anyone who thinks they may be eligible for benefits and care under the PACT Act to file a claim. American Legion department service officers (DSOs) stand ready to assist veterans with their VA claims at no charge. Please visit

www.legion.org/serviceofficers.

On August 24, 2022,

300+ motorcyclists made a lunch stop at Department headquarters. This

5 day, 1,200 mile cross-country ride marked the 16th year of The American Legion Legacy Run. Over the years, The American Legion Riders have raised more than \$15 million, including \$1.14 million in 2021 for The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund. This fund provides college scholarships for children of U.S. military personnel who were killed while serving on active duty on or after September 11, 2001 and children of post-9/11 veterans with a combined Department of Veterans Affairs disability rating of 50 percent or higher. Since 2004, the Legacy Scholarship Fund has awarded 478 scholarships, totaling more than \$4.7 million.

More than \$717,000 was donated to the Legacy Fund on the convention floor at the 103rd National Convention in Milwaukee on Aug. 30. With the \$606,839 raised prior during the Legacy Run in

addition to floor donations, this year's ride total was a record at

\$1,324,548.36!!

(Pictured on right) Immediate Past Department Commander, Wayne L. Fischer and Legion Riders Committee Chairman, Joe Lampert presented a total donation of \$44,000 from Illinois.



THE DEPARTMENT OF ILLINOIS STATE HEADQUARTERS. STAFF/VOLUNTEERS HOSTED

AS THEY CONTINUED ON THEIR 1,200 MILE RIDE FROM MOBILE, AL TO OAK CREEK, WI. WE VISIT-ED WITH OLD FRIENDS, MADE NEW ONES, AND WERE HONORED TO HAVE NATIONAL PRESIDENT, KATHY DAUDISTEL AND NATION-AL SAL COMMANDER, MICHAEL FOX AT OUR HQ ONCE AGAIN. LOCAL NEWS STATIONS PROVID-ED COVERAGE OF THE EVENT AND OUR LOCAL BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL HONOR GUARD TOOK TIME TO DO A SMALL CEREMONY IN HONOR OF OUR VETERANS. WE ARE INCREDIBLY OF **OUR AMERICAN LEGION RIDERS** AND THEIR SUCCESSFUL RIDE.



MARTY CONATSER



Gifts to Gift to The Yanks Christmas Gifts Worksheet

Please complete this form and go to

https://orders.minervapromotions.com/gifts to the yanks/shop/home

to order. All orders must be sent before November 1st, 2022

A Hospital or Nursing Home Name
ldressCity/Zip
tivity Director or Person in charge
cility Telephone number (include area code)
nerican Legion Representative responsible for delivering gifts
ost #Phone # (include area code)
ldressCity/Zip
cility is located inDistrict of theDivision of the Department of Illinois American Legion.
tal number of VETERAN patients in you facility? MaleFemale
ertify these figures are accurate as of today's date
perintendent or Administrator

GIFT LIST (ONE GIFT PER VETERAN)

(Please note, these are the only sizes available).

ITEMS		2	Quantity E	ach Size		
	Small	Medium	Large	X-Large	XX-Large	XXX-Large
Robe						
Jogging Suit						
Blanket						
Males Gift Bag						
Female Gift Bag						

A Gift Bag Gift, for a veteran where size may be a problem: Male_____Female_____

One Gift Per Veteran

A Gift Bag Gift, for a veteran where size may be a problem: Total Gifts Needed_____



https://orders.minervapromotions.com/gifts_to_the_yanks/shop/home



Gifts To The Yanks Jogging Suit

Crewneck Sweatshirt

- 8.0 oz.., 50/50 cotton/polyester
- Seamless body with set-in sleeves
- 1x1 rib collar, cuffs and waistband with spandex
- Double-needle stitched at stress points
- Screen printed with the Gifts to the Yanks Who Gave logo on the left chest

Sweatpant

- 8.0 oz.., 50/50 cotton/polyester
- No side seams
- Two-needle covered waistband with inside drawcord
- Elastic bottom leg openings
- Screen printed with the Gifts to the Yanks Who Gave logo on the left hip

The above product attributes may vary based on availability.

Gifts to the Yanks Robe

Heavy weight, ultra soft and comfortable, micro fiber bathrobe - Navyo

Gifts to the Yanks Fleece Blanket

- 365 GRAM WHIPSTITCHED 60" X 80" - Heavyweight nylon stadium carrying

strapWhipstitched edges

Embroidered with the Gifts to the Yanks Who Gave logo

Gift to the Yanks Veterans Gift Bag

The perfect gift for a veteran where size may be a problem. Gift bags include:

- hat
- socks
- puzzle book
- deck of cards

14

- hankies etc.





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S-3XL



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Department Commander	Department Editor

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