

Hobbyists Newsletter

Winter Edition – December 2025

President – **Peter Weinstein** First Vice President – **Steve Friedman**
Second Vice President – **Chuck Woehrle** Secretary – **Dick Boswell**
Treasurer – **Gary Engelhardt** Church Liaison – **Lew Dickinson**

Sponsored by the First Presbyterian Church, Ridgewood, NJ

<http://www.hobbyists-unlimited.com>

From Our Outgoing President

Having spent the past year as President of the Hobbyists, I want to take this opportunity to thank all our members for the support given me. There are too many individuals who deserve to be thanked personally. Suffice it to say, I hope they know who they are and know what they have done to make my time as President truly rewarding. Our Board, all our activity chairs, treasurer, membership chair, etc. donate their time willingly. They are to all be commended for the outstanding job they do for Hobbyist's Unlimited.

To me, the most outstanding benefit of being a Hobbyist, is the spirit of fellowship we are all privileged to enjoy. This fellowship is the lifeblood of our organization. I feel so fortunate to have developed a wealth of new friends over the years. The breadth of our activities is nothing short of spectacular. With all the activities we offer, you can be kept busy virtually every day of the week. Our membership is so diverse that anyone with a particular passion can start a new activity.

When asked to become a Board member by a former President, I fully agreed to do my part. I wasn't sure of what being a Board member entailed. During the past few years, leading up to my time as President, I learned so much about our traditions, activities, etc. and how important the Hobbyists are to all of us. Our well-being is aided by being a member. Prior to becoming a Board member, I enjoyed simply being a member. My time on the board made me fully aware of how important it is to give back to something you fully enjoy.

I again want to thank all of you for the faith and trust you put in me to lead Hobbyist's Unlimited during the past year.

Don Peterfriend

Honoring Past Presidents

“I am greatly honored to be your President for the coming year and look forward to a great 2026. A safe and healthy year to all my fellow Hobbyists,” said incoming 2026 Hobbyist President **Peter Weinstein** (left) as he honored past presidents during the Pass the Gavel Ceremony at the General Meeting on December 4.



Club Activities



Membership

Membership Committee Report – End-of-Year Newsletter November 27, 2025

Membership numbers fluctuate throughout the year, but overall, we continue to see healthy growth and strong engagement.

Membership Overview by Year

- **2025:** 446 members, including 76 Life Members and 42 new Applicants
- **2024:** 404 members, including 67 Life Members and 36 new Applicants
- **2023:** 376 members, including 34 Life Members and 18 new Applicants
- **2022:** 352 members, including 12 new Applicants
- **2021:** Approximately 350 members (post-COVID)
- **2020:** Approximately 450 members (pre-COVID)

Membership Age Trends

- The average age of dues-paying members is 74, down from 78 mid-year. The overall average age, including Life Members, is 80, and we expect to see it drop.

Sponsorship and New Applicants

This year, **16 of our 42 new Applicants** entered through the Membership Committee's **Introductory Sponsorship** program. These individuals join activities immediately and transition to permanent member sponsorship once they establish member connections within those groups.

This temporary sponsorship model has helped **lower our average age**, as many Applicants begin seeking meaningful activities earlier in their retirement journey.

Occupations of the Most Recent Ten Introductory-Sponsored Applicants

Teacher/Published Writer, Guidance Counselor, Attorney, Administrator, Manager, Senior Manager, Editor, Financial Consultant, Project Manager, Engineer.

Looking Ahead to 2026

Next year marks **the 60th anniversary of Hobbyists**. To honor this milestone, our goal is to welcome **at least 60 new Applicants** in 2026. We ask all members to help us achieve this ambitious and exciting target.

With Appreciation: Report submitted by **Bob Mosher, Membership Committee Chairman**, on behalf of committee members **Ed Daly, Steve Hochman, Paul Daniele, Steven Fonder, and Cliff Matthews** (shirts and hats). For membership questions, contact: **hobbyistsmembership@gmail.com**

Archive

Joe Suplicki, 201-316-3262, jssuplicki@aol.com.

Audio/Visual

Bob Mosher, 201-689-9651, rmosher895@aol.com, **Ed Daly**, 201-447-4603, eddaly386@yahoo.com.



Beer Appreciation

Rick Rosenthal, rickrosenthal@icloud.com, 201-675-1870. We meet monthly at various local restaurants to enjoy different brew choices and dining selections.



Blackjack

Ray Litwitz, 973-714-9019. Blackjack meets on the second and fourth Thursday at noon. The eight players gather to play at various members' homes on a rotating schedule. There are subs who attend when needed. It is a friendly game. New members are always welcome. Contact Ray at: raylitwitz@gmail.com if interested.



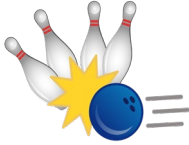
Bocce

Steve Friedman, 201-916-6079, stefri4@yahoo.com. The bocce boys continue to play the game every Friday morning at 9:30 a.m. We play outdoors at Borough Park in Waldwick as long as Mother Nature cooperates and she hasn't been too friendly to the group this spring. We will continue to play outdoors until it gets too cold in the fall. We welcome new players - no skill required - just be able to roll a ball. Age is also not a factor, two of our regular players are 90+ and they are pretty good. Join us - there are two courts available if we have enough players.



Book Club

Peter Philip 201-666-0105, pjphilip37@optonline.net, **Jon Sterling**, jbsterling@optonline.net. We meet on the third Friday of the month at 10 a.m. at the church. **Jon Sterling** has volunteered to read and analyze two poems by Ernst Hemingway, "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" and "Soldier Home." Both can be found in a book by Hemingway, "In Our Time", which should be available at the Ridgewood library.



Bowling

Gary Don, 201-574-3506, garydon3@verizon.net, **Don Peterfriend**, 201-739- 8672, dpeterfriend@yahoo.com, **Mark Singer**, 201-446-6809, msinger@ramapo.edu, **Bill Raftery**, 201-527- 8585, mrbill357@verizon.net, **Bob Mosher**, 201-615-5603, rmosher895@aol.com. The final four playoffs have concluded with the Kingpins (**Paul Richert, Giancarlo Bisone, Dick Boswell and Frank Tercovich**) beating the Phantoms (**Gary Don, Ray Litwitz, Greg Burks and Bob Stevenson**) in the final match on May 14. Congratulations to them and all the bowlers who participated this year for another successful season. The bowling luncheon was held on May 21 at Fiona's Ristorante in Midland Park. 49 members attended this annual season-ending event, which concludes our season with a free lunch and many prizes for bowling accomplishments during the year. We are still looking for additional bowlers for next year. If interested, please contact any member of the Committee.



Bridge

Mike Murphy, 201-334-7284, mgmclbchp@gmail.com. **Ray Chuebon**, 201-652- 4586, rchuebon@yahoo.com, Thursdays, 11:45 a.m. in the East Room of the church. Duplicate bridge play concludes no later than 4 p.m. We're still looking to add new players, so come on down and join us. The Bridge Group held its annual luncheon at the newly renovated Ramsey Country Club on December 4, during which congratulations were given to **John Gilpatrick** on his 97th birthday and **Harry Conant** on his 96th birthday.





Camera

Tom Heed, 845-534-8695, theed@ramapo.edu, **Mark Singer**, msinger@ramapo.edu.

The Camera Club is back in business! We meet every other month beginning in October on the fourth Monday at 2 p.m. in the First Presbyterian Church auditorium. If you are interested in receiving notifications about the meetings, contact Mark Singer.



Chess

Rick Pascal, Chairman, 201-208-7191; rickpas@optonline.net, **Jeff Kresky**, 201-965-5078, kreskyj@wpunj.edu. Our ever-expanding group of Kingsmen continues at a rate faster than originally assumed. We meet each Wednesday morning at the church from 9:30 a.m. until noon. Our games involve friendly competition without fanfare for wins or losses. Our chess players' skills may vary, but all who have joined with us have experienced an increase in their strategic playing abilities. We offer instruction for new players who are willing and eager to learn the game. Several newer participants stated that they haven't played in many years, but when they sit down at the chess board, it's amazing how quickly their skills return. During the summer months of July and August, we play outdoors at one of the Ridgewood County Parks. Last summer, several of us got together at the park on Ridgewood Avenue. The photo shows the smiling faces of Bill Rooney, Stuart Levine, Paul Nicolardi, Rick Pascal, Jeff Kresky, Enzo Mangano, Kevin Swisher.





Computer

There is interest in resurrecting the Computer Club. Please contact **Bob Stevenson**, 201-615-1202, robtstevenson@hotmail.com, to share information and if you would like to chair the activity.



Cribbage

Some Hobbyists have expressed interest in pursuing this activity. If anyone would like to organize it, contact **Bob Mosher** at rmosher895@aol.com. We have the cribbage boards.



Dances

Bill Healy, 201-652-5868, whealy3741@aol.com, **Gary Engelhardt**, 201-670-9185, garye569@msn.com, **Bob Mosher**, 201-615-5603, rmosher895@aol.com.



Discussion Group

Mitch Milch, 201-647-6607, mhmilch@gmail.com. This new Hobbyist activity will meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 2p.m. for 60-75 minutes in the church. During the initial meeting in January Mitch will challenge participants (in a compassionate, empathetic and respectful manner) to observe, reflect upon and evaluate whether individual dimensions of their retired lives are everything they wish them to be. Future discussion topics planned include: Mindful Meditation, How to Best Cultivate Gratitude, Weaknesses to Addiction in Retirement, and other meaningful aspects of Life in Retirement. The group may also bring up topics of interest for future discussion.



Fishing

Gene Boyle, 973-703-9065, gbrealty@optonline.net, **Peter Weinstein**, 201-663- 3536, rodnreel44@aol.com. The 2025 season is winding down. We went through the seasons of fluke, sea bass, and striped bass. Steve Weinstein showed the way on fluke with a huge 28" doormat fluke that won the boat pool. Gary Englehardt and Peter Weinstein had caught some nice striped bass along the way. In 2026, we hope to schedule a Lake George fishing trip in early June that will coincide with our 60th Anniversary Festivities.



Man, oh man. Them's some big fish!!!



Golf

Gary Engelhardt, Gary Don, Paul Fazio, Mike Doherty, Giancarlo Bisone, Paul Richert, Charlie Tuch, Len Manis, Stu French, Sid Sobel, George Giaquinto, Don Peterfriend, Ed Dowd. The 2025 Hobbyist outdoor golf season ended with the annual golf luncheon held in late October at Fiona's restaurant . During the luncheon members of the golf committee presented the **Bob Norelli** Trophy to **Jim Harte** who won the 2025 Club Championship. The second picture is from the September Atlantic City Golf Trip where 31 Hobbyists played three rounds of golf. Congratulations to all the club's golfers who had another banner year.



Habitat for Humanity

Bob Becher, 201-281-2874, bobpeg451@gmail.com. Work is now underway at a new construction single family home at 45 Auburn St. in Paterson. New volunteers are always welcome. Bob has taken over as Chairman of our Habitat club, replacing **Rich Edelman** who headed the group for the past 13 years. We appreciate all you've done, Rich.



Hiking

Ed Lundell, 612-865-5381, edlundell4@gmail.com. After meeting at Graydon Pool, the Hiking Club visits local sites each Tuesday and Friday morning. The hiking group has three hikes weekly during all four seasons. There are two hikes on Tuesday and one hike on Friday. In addition, we have a picnic in the Spring and a three-day hiking trip in the Fall. This year the picnic was at Shepard's Lake in Ringwood State Park in June, attended by about 35 hikers and guests. In October, 14 hikers went to Mount Greylock State Park in the Berkshires in western Massachusetts. Below is a picture of the eleven hikers who summited Mt. Greylock.



Hobbyists Concerned

Peter Philip, 201-666-0105, pjphilip37@optonline.net. and **Steve Rubin**, 201-390-1220, srubin226@gmail.com. Following is a summary of H.C. messages sent November 2024 through October 2025:

Hobbyist died - 13 messages

Hobbyists ill - 9 messages

Non-Hobbyists notices - 7 messages



Hobbyists Songs

Steve Friedman, 201-916-6079, stefri4@yahoo.com and **Dick Boswell**, 201-264-5180, rbozz55@gmail.com. We write and record whimsical parody songs examining Hobbyist sports and other activities, notable Hobbyist members, and the joys and challenges of aging. Lyrics illustrating these topics are transplanted into well-known popular songs from the 50s, 60s and 70s, replacing the original lyrics in a way that (ideally) preserves the style and character of the original songs. Our web page now has 35 songs spread across 9 categories of Hobbyist activities. As we compose new songs, we are striving to expand the categories covered. If you have suggestions for new topics or song ideas, we would welcome your input.



Investments

Ron Reedy, ronaldreedy@gmail.com, **Mike Flannery**, mikevflannery59@gmail.com. During the year, the Investments Group held four quarterly meetings. We have approximately 25 members and 12-15 routinely attend any one meeting. These meetings follow a standard agenda:

- Markets Review
- Guest Speaker/Special Topic
- Investment Competition Scorecard
- Review of Interesting Articles
- Open Forum / Q&A

This year, we had local Ridgewood resident and finance professional, Paul Cummings, lead a lively discussion on private credit. Other topics included stock valuations and crypto currency basics.

Through 9/30, the US stock market was up 10-20%, using the seven domestic indices we routinely follow. International returns (five indices) were -2% to +26% through 9/30.

The Group is also running a friendly investing competition with 22 members participating and investing a hypothetical \$100,000. The leaders at 9/30 are: **Tom Cahill; John Randolph; Bob Reilly;** and **Jack Rosenberg** – all generating a 19.4% positive return for the nine months – kudos to them. As an FYI, all presentation decks are available on the Hobbyists web site. Lastly, a big thank you to **Ed Daly**, without whose help, the technical issues we experienced from time to time would have been far worse. Thank you Ed!



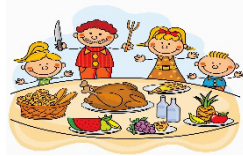
Italian Club

Don Togneri, 201-445-0679, dj2dm2@hotmail.com. Meetings are on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month at 2 p.m. at the church.



Jazz Bunch

Bob Stevenson, 201-615-1202, robtstevenson@hotmail.com. The Hobbyists Jazz Bunch consists of Hobbyists who enjoy all forms of jazz and swing music and periodically attend interesting concerts in the metro NY/NJ area.



Lunch Bunch Sunday

Bob Sayegh, 201-670-6010, bobsay14@gmail.com.



Military History

Tom Heed, 845-534-8695, theed@ramapo.edu. Fourth Monday of each month at the church.



Movie Lovers

Dick Oswald, 201-447-4053, ddoswald@verizon.net. We schedule one movie each month except July and August at the Ridgewood Village Hall. Attendance is open to the public, as we are using the Village facilities and the schedule is published by the Parks and Recreation Dept. Attendance was generally from about 10 to 20. Most were Hobbyists and their wives, or Hobbyist widows. The films were selected either because they are considered classics or because they are little-known and of high quality and/or interest. A general discussion follows the viewing. Attendees are encouraged to select and present their own choices, but seldom do.

The movies this year were:

Witness for the Prosecution
Bread and Chocolate
The Life & Death of Colonel Blimp
House of Games
The Private Life of Henry VIII

Roman Holiday
Still Life
It Happened One Night
Mister Roberts
Rembrandt



Music Lovers

Jim McKeown, 201-327-3411, jimmckeown@optonline.net. Second Friday, 10 a.m. at the church. Music Lovers ended Spring with a 'Blast'....*Jazzy Ladies*; *They Died too Young*, *Great Composers* who died under 40; and *Broadway Blockbusters*, Part One.



Enzo Mangano presented a music program: *Happy Feet*, a perspective of various dance styles.



Pickleball

Alan Lo, 908-447-833. Pickleball is played outdoors during the spring, summer and fall. We are now on hiatus during the winter. Watch for more news in the coming months.



Pinochle

Jim Atieh, 201-315-5346, atiehlj1@verizon.net. We meet every Thursday at 9:15 a.m. at 27 Royal Street, Hawthorne. Open to beginners and players at all levels.



Poker

Dan Wolf, 201-825-7769, danlwolf@optonline.net. We meet every Friday at members' homes. On alternate Fridays we play Texas Hold'em then Hi-Lo Poker the following week. Hold'em is limited to eight players due to homeowner's table size. Hi-Lo Poker is limited to seven players.



ROMEO

Cliff Matthews, 201-447-9040, cematthews0914@gmail.com. ROMEO meets at different moderately priced BYOB places on the third Friday of the month and is a pleasant way to meet and socialize with fellow Hobbyists.



Science & Technology

Elliot Ratchik, 914-420-4330, eratchik@gmail.com. The Science and Computer club will continue this fall every third Wednesday beginning at 2 p.m. via ZOOM. We are looking for someone to replace Elliot as chairman. He will work with any replacement who is willing to serve and save this activity.



Tennis

Al Ianacone, 973-650-1738, acianacone@gmail.com, **Bob Kozar**, bkozar1@aol.com.



Trips & Tours (Day)

Chairman needed for this activity. Contact **Don Peterfriend**, 201-825-7515, dpeterfriend@yahoo.com



Trips & Tours (Extended)

Chairman needed for this activity. Contact **Don Peterfriend**, 201-825-7515, dpeterfriend@yahoo.com

Volunteer Service

Joe Hammer, 201-675-0651, joseph.hammer@icloud.com. We volunteered at Eva's Village in Paterson on two Tuesdays each month to aid in the set-up, service and clean-up of two seatings of a hot, nutritious lunch for the homeless and working people in need in the surrounding area. Fourteen Hobbyists participate regularly with 6 to 7 on any given Tuesday. We have been active all Spring and will continue throughout June and July. Special thanks to the following Hobbyists who have selflessly donated their time and energy for four hours once or twice a month: **Scot Feld, Peter Finlay, Joe Hammer, Tom Lewis, Stu Levine, Steve Marcone, Patrick Mulry, Bob Reilly, Mike Ritchie, Ido Rossi, Ray Rubin, Joe Taormina, Dave Smilon** (co-chair), and **George Millington** (co-chair). We are always looking for more member-volunteers.



George Millington and Tom Lewis smile as they hand out meals to needy recipients.

Walking

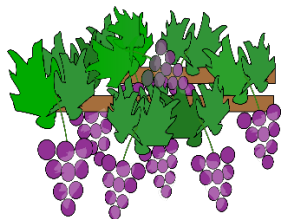


Alan Stein, 201-447-4235, stampmaven1@verizon.net, **Mark Singer**, 201-446- 6809, msinger@ramapo.edu. The Thursday Walking Group continues to thrive, walking from the Ridgewood Duck Pond to the Dunkerhook area and back on the Saddle River Trail, a distance of four miles. The walk entails both good exercise and brilliant conversation. We encourage more walkers to join us.



Wine Appreciation

Bob Stevenson, 201-615-1202, robtstevenson@hotmail.com. WAG was launched in 2008 with the help of several members who wanted to sample fine wines at upscale Bergen County restaurants. These included **Joe Augustine**, **Warren Boroson**, **Ed Collins**, **Jost Ladwig** and **Bob Stevenson** with recent valued contributions by **Gerry Schott**, **Jim Cinquina** and **Alex Baron**. Bi-monthly luncheons feature four-person tables randomly seated. Wine selections include an opening social featuring sparkling wine, followed by two fine wines-red and white-to match the food entrées. Our WAG attendance over the years has averaged in the mid-twenties with a membership mailing list in the high eighties. We plan to organize a WAG membership survey to obtain member feedback for suggestions to re-energize the WAG experience and make changes to increase participation. I want to thank **Jack Warner** and **Jim McKeown** for volunteering to help in drafting this survey. To be added to, or removed from the WAG Constant Contact mailing list, please contact Bob Stevenson.



Winemaking

Paul Richert, 201-967-1347, phriche7314@gmail.com. This year there were three separate wine- making activities which took place at the Wine Experience winery in Tinton Falls, NJ. In February we bottled our 2024 Chilean blend of Carmenere, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. We also racked our California Cabernet Sauvignon and Barbera blend. Racking consists of pumping the fermenting wine from the barrel into a holding tank and then turning the barrel over and completely washing it out to clear it of any residue and impurities. The wine is then pumped back into the barrel where it remains until we drive down to bottle the wine. In May we crushed and pressed a Chilean blend of Syrah, Cabernet Sauvignon and Malbec which will be ready for bottling in February or March of next year. In October we crushed our newest wine experiment, a Montepulciano d'Abruzzi. Montepulciano is originally from the Italian region of Abruzzi. Today the Montepulciano grapes are grown in California. The wine will be bottled next July or August.

At the Wine Experience 2025 awards dinner we earned a gold medal for our 2024 Chilean Carmenere blend and a double gold medal for our 2024 California Cabernet - Barbera blend.

The Hobbyist members who participate in this activity thoroughly enjoy both the wine making process and the camaraderie that accompanies the experience. I sincerely thank all Hobbyists who have joined us in making wine. It has been a most rewarding process and has opened new doors for getting to know our fellow Hobbyist wine makers. All Hobbyists are invited to join us. If you would like to participate, please look for the emails from me announcing a new wine, usually in January or February (Chilean wine) and again in August or September (California wine).



World Affairs

Don Togneri, 908-347-2820, dj2dm2@hotmail.com. ZOOM meetings only. Second Wednesday of each month at 2:00 p.m. Contact Don for ZOOM link.

Constant Contact

Ed Daly, 201-447-4603, eddaly386@yahoo.com. If you are creating an email using Constant Contact, you will need to have an access code for your first use. The codes are user-specific. Call Ed Daly to get your code for your first use.

Special Events

During the Hobbyists General Meeting on December 4, we were visited by members of the Ridgewood High School Choral Group who serenaded us with a host of seasonal holiday songs.



Meeting Presentations

At the November General Meeting **Peter Weinstein** demonstrated how he won his case.



Notice

Valley Hospital presents a roundup of the latest events taking place throughout the year which may be of interest to you. If interested, go to **ValleyHealth.com/Events**.



Hobbyists Alert

If you ignore robo-calls from a Caller ID that you don't recognize, you may be missing important calls from the Hobbyists. The service we use is **CALLING POST**, although at times the calling number with an area code of 405 is used instead. So, unless you have voicemail or an answering machine, we suggest you take the call.

Quote of the Day

"The longer I live, the more convinced I am that this planet is used by other planets as a lunatic asylum." – George Bernard Shaw

All Hobbyists are urged to display their Hobbyists dashboard pass when parking in the church parking lot **and** on local streets on General Meeting days. All are encouraged to attend the programmed presentation following each meeting. Please make sure you discard any coffee cups, plastic bottles, and paper wrappers in the appropriate receptacles in the church auditorium after the General Meeting.

From the Editor

Another calendar year in the Hobbyists books has come to a close. The staff of the Hobbyists Newsletter wish all of you and your families a happy holiday season, good health and happiness in the coming year. It's been fun putting these newsletters together while, at the same time, learning and disseminating more about all the wonderful activities – social, educational, physical, and mental challenges – that we've come to enjoy and fill our spare time. That said, do you ever think about buttonholes?

If you've ever tried putting on a shirt that was designed for someone of the opposite gender, you may have noticed something peculiar: The buttons are on the “wrong” side. Men's shirts button left over right, with buttons running down the right side and buttonholes on the left. Women's shirts do the opposite, buttoning right over left.

Before the rise of buttons, garments were typically laced together or fastened with brooches or clasps. Buttoned closures for garments became prevalent in the 13th century with the advent of the reinforced buttonhole — and the two opposing button configurations for men and women have existed for centuries. But why? Here's a look at some of the theories behind this long-standing design choice.

Historians don't know for sure why men's and women's buttons are on opposite sides, but some of the most common explanations involve military considerations. According to the authors of *The Art of Chivalry: European Arms and Armor from the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, medieval breastplates were formed of two separate and overlapping plates. To ensure that an enemy's lance point would not slip between the plates, they were pieced together with the left plate overlapping the right, “since it was standard fighting practice that the left side, protected by the shield, was turned toward the enemy,” the authors point out. For this reason, they argue, “men's jackets button left to right even to the present day.”

Others have made similar observations. Due to the predominance of right-handedness (about 90% of humans are right-handed), swords were typically worn on the left side, so they could be drawn with the dominant right hand. According to Paul Keers in *A Gentleman's Wardrobe*, men's shirts and jackets were deliberately designed to button left over right “to avoid catching the pommel of one's sword in the opening, when drawing it right-handed.”

From avoiding the piercing blows of lance tips to smoothly drawing weapons, there is some logic to the soldierly need for buttoning left over right. But there's no definitive evidence to support these military theories — and while they might explain the need for buttons on the right, they don't supply any answers as to why women's buttons are on the opposite side.

Rick Pascal

Hobbyists Newsletter Staff

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