



Greetings from your friends in Big Sky Country! Spring has finally arrived. Our winter was so long that it feels like we skipped spring and jumped right into summer. We've enjoyed warm, sunny days with rain and thunderstorms coming through every two or three days.

We are thankful winter is over, but the summer-like temperatures coupled with abundant rain has caused flooding on streams and rivers. Everyone is on "flood watch". It is a helpless feeling to watch the water rise and know sandbags can only do so much. The elders are safe at Heritage Living Center high up on the hill where Crazy Horse once camped. That doesn't stop the elders from worrying about their children and grandchildren who live in areas vulnerable to flooding. They worry about our staff members, too, for the same reason.

As I'm writing this article to you, parts of our main highway just south of the Little Bighorn Battlefield are closed due to flood waters covering the highway. It is amazing to think about that infamous battle when the combined forces of

Cheyenne, Sioux and Arapahoe warriors defeated Lt. Col. George Custer and the 7th Cavalry in the exact same spot now facing a different battle between nature and the lifeline for supplies traveling along Interstate Highway 90 in southern Montana. The old saying "water always wins" may be true, but let's hope and pray there is minimal damage to our highway.

In this newsletter I need to tell you about new water damage to our 16-year-

old roof. We faced a historic winter this past season with record setting snowfall of 104". That snow accumulates in some odd places on our roof. We have four flat areas on HLC's 50,000-square foot building. Over the years, the heavy snows and blistering sun have deteriorated the membrane that keeps our building dry. The sloped roof which covers most of our building is in good shape considering its age. It is the odd flat areas that need immediate attention.



Brian Red Star, Mike Skaggs and Rich Miner inspect the collapsing, leaking roof above the kitchen.

This year, we learned that even the tiniest of holes can lead to major leaks and damage. At Easter, you may recall that I wrote to you about a leak that we faced and asked for help to raise \$10,000 to repair that section of roof. You and other good friends came through and provided us the funds to make the needed repair.

Soon after my Easter Roof Repair letter went out, I received word that three more leaks were discovered. One of those leaks is over a part of our food storage area. Thankfully, no water has leaked through the ceiling yet. I've walked on that section of roof and can feel it give underfoot like walking on a wet sponge. Melted snow has gotten into that space and soaked the sub-structure and insulation. It is a disaster waiting to happen right over our kitchen. We must make repairs as soon as possible.

I've asked a reputable roofing contractor who Soaring Eagle has worked with before to give us an estimate to make repairs to each of the four sections. I trust this company as they are the finest roofing contractor in the region. I know we can rely on their roofing solutions for many years to come.

This is an urgent need. I don't have a building reserve fund to make the repairs before something awful happens. The thought of water crashing through the ceiling into our kitchen area is... well, unimaginable.

Here is where I need your help. The chart in the next column shows the four sections needing repair. Our roofing contractor is over 125 miles away and

they know the cost to transport their equipment, supplies and laborers for each section will add to the cost. They know how much we struggle to provide a safe home for the Cheyenne elders, so they discounted their price if we could do all four sections at one time to save on transport costs.

Heritage Living Center Roof Repairs		
Roof Section	Size (Sq. Ft.)	Cost Per Section
A	225	\$ 8,500
B	1,680	33,000
C	2,978	48,300
D	2,263	39,200
Total	7,146	\$ 129,000
Total Roof Repair With Discount		\$ 118,200
Savings if we repair the entire roof at once		\$ 10,800
Please note: We can feed 40 elders for a month (3,600 meals) with the cost savings.		
We have the cost of Section A covered plus another \$ 7,000.		
We need an additional \$ 102,700 to meet our goal. Please share a generous gift for the elders' home.		

We already have the funds for Section A. Now, we must fund the other sections and we need to do it soon. I beg you to consider a special gift, even a sacrificial gift, over and above your generous regular support. You might consider a gift to cover the cost of 5 square feet at \$83. Maybe you can give \$165 for 10 square feet of new roof over the elders' home. A donation of \$827 for 50 square feet of roof would be a wonderful blessing to us.

The elders are grateful for their safe home. After 16 years, it is to make their home watertight again. I wish I could talk with Father Emmett about this problem, but I think he would tell me,



"Mike, get this fixed as soon as you can. Our donors will help you as they always helped me. Pray for a blessing for the givers and the blessing of receiving their gifts."

Even with our leaking roof problems, five residents have made Heritage Living Center their new home since I last wrote you in our Fall newsletter. That is a testament to the level of care that your gifts make possible around the clock, 365 days a year.

Please join me in welcoming Minnie Hirst, Gilbert Brady, George Spang, and husband and wife, Francis and Vonda Limpy to our family of elders.

If it wasn't for your love and generosity these elders and the other Cheyenne residents who have lived here for many years would have few options in our remote location to find security in warm, dry apartments and three nutritious meals each day.

God bless you for all you make possible for them.

With a grateful heart,

## GIVE WITH CONFIDENCE TO THE SOARING EAGLE

Some of our good friends and donors have alerted me to the fact that there are a few entities using the Soaring Eagle name. That is ok but it is creating some confusion among our supporters.

There is an interesting history about the Soaring Eagle name. Father Emmett Hoffmann founded our organization in 1997. Father Emmett's provincial superiors tried to move him to other ministries to reproduce the successes he achieved among the Northern Cheyenne but he wanted to stay with the Cheyenne people. In the early 1960's, tribal leaders organized a public ceremony to name Father Emmett an Honorary Chief of the Cheyenne. At that ceremony he was given his Cheyenne name Netse Ame'héóhtse. In English, "Soaring Eagle." Father explained after becoming a chief that his superiors found it impossible to move a chief away from "his" people.

When it came time to name the new charity that would build the Heritage Living Center, Father knew the perfect name to give his undertaking – **Soaring Eagle**. Our name is the original Soaring Eagle that donors have known and trusted since 1997.

Over the years, other organizations have used the name Soaring Eagle. A quick search on the internet will reveal the use of the Soaring Eagle name for a casino, non-profit entities, schools, amusement park rides and sports teams.

The Saginaw Chippewa tribe runs a casino and resort they call Soaring Eagle in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. It is a successful venture bringing jobs and hope to their families and communities. Many of our donors and prospective donors think that the Soaring Eagle casino is owned by Soaring Eagle, the charity in Montana. It is not and we do not benefit in any way from the success of the casino. Those benefits are reserved for the Saginaw Chippewa people.

A charity affiliated with a ministry helps Native American children in the southwestern US. The director of that charity signs his name as Soaring Eagle. That is a name his grandmother gave him when he was a young child. Some donors have asked if our Public Charity, Soaring Eagle has taken over that organization



Chief Father Emmett Hoffmann with Austin Two Moons.

or are connected in anyway? We are completely separate organizations. We wish them great success in their future endeavors.

As a benefactor to Soaring Eagle, you can give with confidence that any donations you send will go to care for elders living at Heritage Living Center in the remote town of Ashland, Montana. Your gifts can be sent to:

Soaring Eagle  
922 Wyoming Ave.  
PO Box 879  
Billings, MT 59103-0879

God bless you caring for our elders.

# DELPHA HARRIS - A PROMINENT NAME IN THE WORLD OF INDIAN BEADWORK

The upbeat energy Delpha Harris brings to her daily rounds at the Heritage Living Center is contagious. She usually has another resident or two involved in a collaboration to do something, like scheduling a short trip or picking choke cherries.

That is - unless she is beading.

Delpha is not only one of the Heritage Living Center's finest bead workers, her regional reputation is well known and her work is highly sought after. One of the largest and diversified retailers of Native American art, The Prairie Edge of Rapid City, South Dakota, sends a driver 200 miles, one way, to purchase her work. "They pay me what is fair," she said softly when asked if the company tries to negotiate low.

That is high praise in an art world that commonly pays a small percentage of the true value to Indians selling their work. Off the reservations in nearby towns there may be but one store, or pawn shop, willing to buy beadwork and crafts. The Indian artists accept whatever is offered and go home poorer than planned to a disappointed family in need of money.

That makes Delpha even more unique. When you think about it, few

artists, in any field, get to work with the peace of mind knowing that once the piece is finished it will sell for the asking price.

Perhaps her level of comfort in commerce comes from a career spent working for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in towns and cities in several



Delpha's sunny apartment is her workstation, where amazing one-of-a-kind canvases of sewn beadwork for a single powwow dance outfit lay under construction on her work stand.

states, where she met people in so many walks of life. Born in Lame Deer, Delpha attended Northern Cheyenne reservation schools before heading off to college in Springfield, South Dakota and Black Hills State University. Her work with the BIA began in Lame Deer, then she moved to the Billings, Montana office, and then to Portland, Oregon and Sacramento, California. She retired from the BIA in 1994 and Delpha discovered that authentic Native beadwork was rare, and some people like to own the real thing.

Delpha grew up on Muddy Creek with her cousins all up and down the creek. Some of those cousins share Heritage Living Center as their home. Delpha says, "I am honored that donors understand how important it is to have a place like this for elders. I know how vulnerable we are living so far away from a city with services. It is comforting to know that we have a safe home and that someone is watching after us. I'm thankful for the donors who make all of this possible for me and my elderly family and friends."

She learned to bead by watching her grandmother. "One thing she taught me right off was if you make a mistake, stop right there and fix it," Delpha said. (For those unfamiliar, two threads are utilized in beadwork. A smaller gauge thread is used to slide the bead on to, and a heavier thread is utilized to "tack" it to the surface, one bead at a time.)



When Jesuit Volunteer Samantha Smith complimented Delpha on the watchband she made and wears on her wrist, Delpha knew just what to make Sam for her going-away gift.

Delpha, now 81, moved into the Heritage Living Center seven years ago. "It's my home," she says with a smile. Her sunny, neatly kept (but lived-in) apartment bursts with colorful projects in the making. She's backed up with custom orders from locals yet is oblivious to any pressure. Delpha beads with consistency, daily, and the creations are completed on time.

Does she ever get tired of the tedious task of beading? "No, I don't get tired. I get up early and bead all morning. I bead all day. Unless there's a football game on."

## OUR CHAPEL IS BUSY

Each day, elders and staff gather in our little chapel to pray for each other and our donors. Mass is celebrated and church services are regularly held. Bible studies bring elders and community members to the chapel and elders often stop here to pray.



## How I Spent My Summer Vacation

Shoveling compost for the outside garden is today's chore for these hardworking summer employees at HLC. From left, (Supervisor) Rich Miner demonstrates how to mix soil for Chasitie Rollins, Shelby Button and Constance Rollins to copy.



DETACH, MOISTEN GLUE STRIP AND SEAL



The Tongue River floods homes and the Ashland Powwow grounds.

## REFLECTIONS OF A JESUIT VOLUNTEER

In August of 2017 I began as a Jesuit Volunteer at the Heritage Living Center. With an East Coast upbringing and a degree in Engineering, I didn't quite know how I would fit in here at the Heritage Center or in eastern Montana. I did learn quickly that the landscape was incomparable, and I was here to love and care for the Northern Cheyenne elders as best I could. The first meeting with the residents I'd be spending the next year with was like going to college and making new friends, except these new friends were a lot older than me! I was also ready to learn from them and share in their experiences, with all of their fascinating backgrounds and life stories. And I felt I was ready to put my own self aside and jump into the role of the Jesuit Volunteer's work.

My role here began to take shape as I quickly memorized resident's names and breakfast drink of choice. I soon understood long hours of listening were an important part of this new setting, and compassion mixed with patience could be wonderfully rewarding. I grew to know people whose bodies and hearts were aching so often I cried that I could do so little to help. And I was aching too, I was homesick and feeling isolated during the longest winter this small



**Above:** Samantha Smith of Boonsboro, MD spent nearly a year at the Heritage Living Center as a Jesuit Volunteer. She writes about some of her experiences.

remote town had seen in decades. So how do we deal with that? We talk, play scrabble, shuffleboard and Wii Bowling; and we prayed for our aching to go away. And the snow. God, please let this snow go away. It finally did, and now my heart aches anew, to be leaving my beloveds here at the Heritage Living Center.

As I prepare to exit my "service year" as a Jesuit Volunteer and return home to Maryland, I am emotionally reflective. I have been in the roles of a newcomer, a young person, a caregiver and most of all, a friend.

As I leave this is what I know best; I am simply one who loves and is loved. I am overwhelmed by the love I feel for and from my 40 grandmas and grandpas I now have here, friends who hug me often and tease me much more often. Leaving will be jarring, as I've grown so accustomed to their presence. But in a few short months a new Jesuit Volunteer will arrive to fill - in his own way - the space I've been so blessed to inhabit during the past year. I will carry each of them with me wherever I go, whatever I may be doing. I will never forget them.

## GIVING AFTER TAX REFORM IN 2017

Late last year, Congress made sweeping changes to U.S. tax law to simplify and reduce taxes. The changes lowered tax rates for many and changed a few familiar and longstanding deductions.

Many charitably-minded individuals think that deductions for charitable gifts were eliminated. Not so and in fact, there is good news for donors who enjoy helping others through their charitable gifts. Surprisingly, donors can still fully use charitable gifts as qualifying deductions.

The tax laws continue to encourage gifts of cash, by check or credit card. In past years, donors could only

deduct gifts of cash up to 50% of their adjusted gross income (AGI). Under the new law, you can now deduct up to 60%. If your giving to all charities exceeds the 60% limit, then you can carry forward any excess amount for up to five years to reduce your income taxes.

Itemizing your deductions including medical expenses, property taxes, state income taxes and charitable gifts may amount to more than the \$24,000 standard deduction for married couples or \$12,000 for individuals.

A Soaring Eagle donor in Florida, carefully plans his deductible expenses every other year so that he can use

the higher itemized deductions in one year and take the standard deduction in alternate years. This is known as "bunching" deductions. In one year, the donor prepays any permissible property taxes and discretionary deductible expenses including charitable donations. He "prepays" his annual gifts to charities so that he can exceed the \$24,000 standard deduction threshold. Then, in the next year, he utilizes the standard deduction. Bunching your deductions is a tax-wise strategy to consider if you are at the threshold of itemizing deductions. Your tax advisor can help you decide if it is beneficial to you in supporting your favorite charities.

## TRANSFER GIFTS AT LIFE'S END

Donors often have bank accounts or investment accounts that they rely on to hold cash and assets during retirement. Such accounts are often used to pay bills or hold liquid assets for unexpected expenses. At life's end, those accounts can make wonderful donations to Soaring Eagle.

To make such a gift possible, the account owner simply names Soaring

Eagle as the beneficiary to their account through a "pay on death" (POD) or "transfer on death" (TOD) designation. The account owner has full control and discretion to use the funds in his or her account throughout their lifetime. The charity has no control or access to your account and receives what remains in the account at your death.

Donors, Ann in Ruidoso, New Mexico and Norman in Appleton, Wisconsin have provided for Soaring

Eagle and the elders with POD and TOD designations on their investment accounts. Both say it is a simple way to plan for a future gift and maintain control of their money until they no longer need it.

Talk with your banker or investment advisor about how to add a POD or TOD designation to your account. It usually only takes naming the charity, your signature and date. Quick, easy, and you are in full control.

# GIVING FROM YOUR INDIVIDUAL RETIREMENT ACCOUNT

This helpful tip comes from a Soaring Eagle friend and donor, John in Fairfield, California. John reminds his fellow donors who choose to benefit from the federal tax laws by giving to their favorite causes from their IRA accounts, to let the charity know that a special gift is on the way.

Oftentimes, a check will arrive at a charity office from a financial institution with no reference to the donor's name. The charity has little information to go by and be able to send a receipt or acknowledgement letter. IRS regulations state that donors must have an acknowledgement in hand when they file their taxes.

Soaring Eagle has been successful in tracking down the right donor when

we receive a Qualified Charitable Distribution from a donor's IRA. Sometimes it takes a lot of time to match the gift with the correct donor.

A quick phone call or note to our offices letting us know to expect a gift from your IRA is appreciated. You can call us at 406-256-8500 or write to us at:

Soaring Eagle  
922 Wyoming Ave.  
PO Box 879  
Billings, MT 59103-0879

What is a Qualified Charitable Distribution from an IRA? Federal tax code allows a donor age 70 1/2 or older, to directly distribute to a charity funds or assets from their IRA

accounts. The distribution cannot go to the donor and then to the charity. It must go directly to the charity. By donating this way, the distribution is not recognized as income; thus, no taxes are owed on the distribution and it also counts toward the Required Minimum Distribution for that year. Donors can give up to \$100,000 each year through a qualified charitable distribution from their IRA.

More and more donors are finding that giving through their IRA accounts is a convenient and tax-wise way to give to Soaring Eagle. IRA gifts help us care for the Cheyenne and other Native American elders at Heritage Living Center. Ask your IRA financial advisor for more information or give us a call.



## NEW SOARING EAGLE GIFT ANNUITY RATES

*Higher gift annuity rates will go into effect on July 1, 2018 for Soaring Eagle annuities. If you've been thinking about making a gift to Soaring Eagle through a gift annuity, now may be a good time.*

*Soaring Eagle has a "family" of over 100 annuitants who have transferred cash or securities to us to produce a fixed income stream for each annuitant and a remaining gift to help the elders in future years. The*

*To learn more about the benefits of a Soaring Eagle gift annuity, please use the coupon in this newsletter or call Mike Skaggs at 406-256-8500, Soaring Eagle, PO Box 879, Billings, MT 59103.*



*new, higher rate is set at the time of your gift and the annuity payment to you is fixed at that rate for the rest of your life. It becomes a reliable income that you can't outlive.*

*You receive a tax deduction when you set up your annuity and a large portion of the annuity payments are tax-free.*

## New Annuity Rates

*One-Life Annuity  
beginning July 1, 2018*

Age	% Rate	Age	% Rate
65	5.1	78	6.8
66	5.2	79	7.1
67	5.3	80	7.3
68	5.3	81	7.5
69	5.4	82	7.7
70	5.6	83	7.9
71	5.7	84	8.1
72	5.8	85	8.3
73	5.9	86	8.5
74	6.1	87	8.7
75	6.2	88	8.9
76	6.4	89	9.2
77	6.6	90+	9.5

*Lower two-life rates are available. Please contact us for information.*



## YOUR WILL KEEPS ON GIVING

*Please use one of the following sample forms of bequest when preparing your Will:*

- A. Giving a Specific Amount – "I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana, the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_."
- B. Giving a Specific Property - "I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana, (identify specific property, example: 500 shares of XYZ stock)."
- C. Giving a Percentage – "I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana, \_\_\_\_\_% of my estate."
- D. Giving the Residue - "All the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate, I bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana."
- E. Giving a Contingent Bequest – "I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana my bequest to (name of intended recipient) should he/she not be living or be able to accept my bequest."

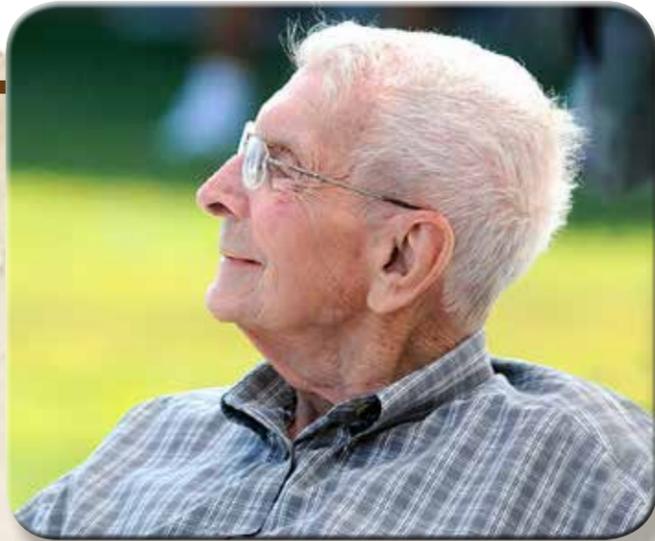
***The above are sample forms only. Consult your attorney when preparing any legal document.***

**To learn more about giving to Soaring Eagle through your will, request our free booklet "Giving Through Your Will" by writing or calling: Soaring Eagle, PO Box 879, Billings, MT 59103 406-256-8500.**

In 2008, Father Emmett wrote to his friends and donors about a terrible leak at the Heritage Living Center. Father turned to his benefactors for their financial support. We ask for your help today, to prevent the devastation that our roof leaks will cause if we don't repair them soon.

Last Monday afternoon after lunch, my dog, Fergie and I were resting in our recliner. It was a sunny, cool day and I'd just drifted off to sleep when suddenly, the fire alarm went off! A terrible feeling of dread came over me. I immediately feared the worst.

The siren went on for 25 minutes and I couldn't smell smoke or hear any fire engines. I sat there in absolute terror for what seemed like an eternity. A part of the sprinkling system in the attic above the Bitterroot wing on the second floor had failed, causing several hundred gallons of water to burst through the ceiling, down through the floor to the Ponderosa Room below. The water rushed down the stairs and under the back door and outside the building. The flood destroyed 3,500 feet of living space in the Heritage Living Center. The damage was so extensive; it broke my heart to see it. Thank God, it was just a miracle that nobody was injured.



## Reminisce with Father Emmett Ten Years Ago . . . . .

All the beautiful woodwork, the sub floors, carpeting, linoleum, washer and dryer in the laundry room, the walls, irreplaceable native art, everything was gone. I wanted to see the damage up close but the staff would only let me go part way down the hall for fear more of the debris would cave in. I could see the ceiling hanging down with metal pieces jutting out, clogged with white, soggy insulation, still dripping everywhere. Wiring and heavy light fixtures hung in a tangled web.

I went back to my room and just fell apart with grief. With winter approaching, I knew this might break us.

That night, some of our residents were temporarily displaced. None of them wanted to leave, but there

was no electricity or heat in their apartments. One elder, an Indian cowboy and rodeo bull rider in his day, refused to leave, no matter how much we advised him to go. Sonny toughed it out, but by midnight he was freezing. The next morning, he admitted he should have left but he said, "I laid there in bed under layers of blankets and it brought me back to the log cabin with my parents when I was young – no electricity, no running water, dreading the walk to the outhouse in the cold wind."

I don't know what to do and I'm worried sick. A pall has come over the resident Cheyenne elders and our staff. They are afraid we won't be able to pay for the damages and they'll have to move out. I'm doing everything possible to calm their fears.

I desperately need your help in this disaster! I can't do this alone!

Please do what you can to help us. We can't let mold and moisture ruin any more of the building. It wouldn't be safe for our Cheyenne elders and they have nowhere else to go. I have a foreboding that I can't seem to shake off. We have no help from the government and no place to turn but you.

Your beggar friend,  
Father Emmett



THANKS  
FOR  
USING  
YOUR  
STAMP

SOARING EAGLE  
PO BOX 879  
BILLINGS MT 59103-0879



## SOARING EAGLE GIFT INFORMATION REQUEST

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email *(Promise we will not share)* \_\_\_\_\_

**YES, I'm interested in a Soaring Eagle Charitable Gift Annuity. Please send me more information.**

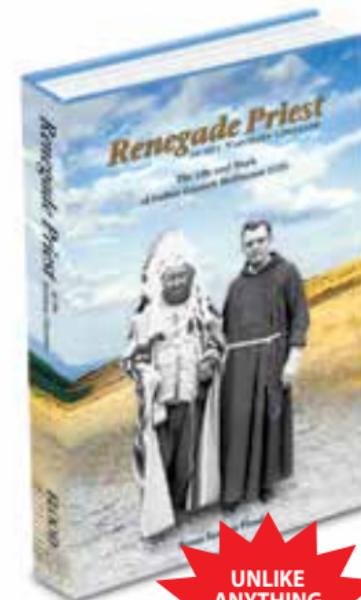
Birth date(s) of annuitant(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Annuity Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ *Minimum annuity amount \$5,000 (up to 2 names/birth dates allowed per annuity.)*

*This is a non-binding proposal. Upon receipt of actual payment for an annuity, a formal contract will be mailed. For more information call (406) 256-8500.*

**Please send to me the following:**

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