



pacific northwest chapter

## THE TRAINMASTER

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER

Room 1, Union Station

Portland, Oregon 97209

January 1981

Chapter Phone 226-6747

Number 236

### PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER TIMETABLE

Friday

January 16

7:00pm

#### REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

The regular monthly meeting of the Pacific Northwest Chapter will be held at the Georgia Pacific Museum in the basement of the GP Building in downtown Portland. The GP museum will be open at 7:00pm to allow members to see the extensive collection of historical logging artifacts. The regular business meeting will start at 8:00pm followed by an outstanding program of 16mm black and white movies shot by the company photographer of the C.D. Johnson Lumber Company on the Oregon coast during the 1920s. More details are in the special flyer enclosed in this issue.

Friday

February 20

8:00pm

#### REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

The February meeting will be held at the usual location, the Union Pacific Clubhouse which is located one block south of the intersection of N. Interstate Avenue and Russell Street. The program will feature a recent look at railroading in the Northeast Corridor and in Mexico.

Saturday

March 7

10:00am to

4:00pm

#### THIRD ANNUAL RAILROADIANA SWAP MEET

The Third Annual Railroadiana Swap Meet will be held at the Sheraton Airport Inn near the entrance of Portland International Airport. Co-sponsored by the Pacific Northwest Chapter and the Columbia Gorge Model Railway Club the meet promises to be bigger and better than last year. Tables are still available. Call Terry Parker for more information (see "glory page" for his telephone number).

Friday

March 20

8:00pm

#### REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

The March meeting will be held at the Union Pacific Clubhouse. See the March Trainmaster for details.

SUMMARY OF MINUTES - REGULAR CHAPTER MEETING - NOVEMBER 21, 1980

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Terry Parker at 8:10 pm in the Union Pacific clubhouse.

National Director Roger Sackett reported on an NRHS national board meeting he attended recently in Milwaukee, WI. Ed Berntsen has been elected as the new Northwest Vice President. Jerry Hilton was elected to the position of Vice President for public relations. As of October 1980 there were 10497 members in 126 NRHS chapters.

Terry Parker reported on the 1981 Swap Meet. It will be held on Sat., March 7 at the Airport Sheraton Inn. Tables for sellers will be \$7.50 each. Admission for adults will be \$1.25. Table reservations will be taken beginning on Jan. 1, 1981 on a first come first served basis.

V.P. Terry Parker reported on the opening of the California Railroad Museum at Sacramento. Both the Union Pacific 8444 and 3985 will be there for the opening. If the 4449 goes the Chapter's car Mt. Hood will also go. The Chapter is waiting for the S.P. board of directors to decide on final details for moving the 4449 to Sacramento.

Terry Parker reported that the Chapter is considering an excursion to Los Angeles with the car Mt. Hood over the Washington's birthday weekend. This may be the last opportunity before the Coast Starlight goes to Superliner equipment. Also a trip with the Mt. Hood to La Grande over the Memorial Day weekend is a possibility.

Treasurer John Holloway reported that the present Chapter dues of \$5.50 a year cover only a small part of the Chapter's fixed costs. John relayed a suggestion from the Chapter board of directors that Chapter dues be increased by \$2.00 to \$7.50 a year. Jim Whaley moved that the dues increase be voted on at the January 1981 meeting (\$2.00 increase). Motion seconded and passed.

Election of 1981 officers. The nominating committee proposed the following for Chapter officers for 1981: President: Ben Fredericks; Vice President: Terry Parker; Secretary: Chuck Storz; Treasurer: John Holloway; National Director: Roger Sackett; Directors-at-Large: Pete Dorland, Irving Ewen, Jim Schmidt and Jim Whaley. There were no nominations from the floor. The proposed slate of officers was elected by unanimous vote of the members present.

Terry Parker announced that the January 1981 meeting will be held at the Georgia Pacific Museum in the GP building in downtown Portland. The program will be a movie made in the 1920's of the C. D. Johnson logging operations.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Chuck Storz, Secretary

NOTICE OF VOTE ON CHAPTER DUES INCREASE

An increase of \$2.00 a year in Chapter dues to \$7.50 a year was discussed at the November meeting. A vote to increase Chapter dues to \$7.50 a year will be taken at the January 1981 meeting. The vote will amend the Chapter's by-laws to permit the increase. The increase will make to total of Chapter and national dues go up to \$15.00 a year.

EMERGING CORRIDORS - A STATUS REPORT

Public Law 96-254, Title II is titled the "Passenger Railroad Rebuilding Act of 1930" and asked the Secretary of Transportation to develop criteria for evaluating possible rail corridors which would receive special funds to upgrade service. The Federal Railroad Administration was charged with preparing a report to be delivered to Congress in February 1931. The Secretary was to develop a method for evaluating rail passenger corridors by determining which corridors had the greatest potential for attracting riders, which have the greatest potential for energy savings, and which are capable of providing cost effective rail passenger service.

The Department of Transportation's interim report was delivered in September with the following ranking:

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| Best       | 1. Los Angeles-San Diego                            |
|            | 2. Philadelphia-Atlantic City                       |
|            | 3. New York-Buffalo                                 |
|            | 4. Los Angeles-Las Vegas                            |
| Marginal   | 5. New York Albany                                  |
|            | 6. Chicago-Detroit                                  |
|            | 7. Washington-Richmond                              |
|            | 8. San Jose - Reno                                  |
|            | 9. Texas Triangle (San Antonio, Dallas/FW, Houston) |
|            | 10. Philadelphia-Harrisburg                         |
|            | 11. Chicago-St. Louis                               |
|            | 12. Dallas-Houston                                  |
|            | 13. Dallas-San Antonio                              |
| Worst      | 14. Chicago-Milwaukee                               |
|            | 15. San Jose- Sacramento                            |
|            | 16. Miami-Jacksonville                              |
|            | 17. Chicago-Cleveland                               |
|            | 18. Chicago-Twin Cities                             |
|            | 19. Chicago-Cincinnati                              |
|            | 20. Seattle-Portland                                |
|            | 21. Cleveland-Cincinnati                            |
|            | 22. Houston-San Antonio                             |
| Impossible | 23. Atlanta-Savannah                                |
|            | 24. Atlanta-Nashville                               |
|            | 25. Boston-Springfield-New Haven                    |

Immediate reaction to the report was that too much was not said. The original criteria called for 79mph speeds and 110mph speeds. At no time did the FRA report state exactly what those speeds meant. Was that 79mph average or what? Some of higher ranked corridors were meant just to get gamblers to their games. Would it be politically viable to suggest that tax money be spent to get people to Reno, Las Vegas and Atlantic City? The National Governors Association was the strongest objector leaving very little except the staple holding the report together untouched.

The FRA later stated to a meeting of state railway officials that maybe their methodology was faulty and as a result the whole subject was going to be restudied using

different criteria. The final report was to have no ranking like the first report but just state the information gathered and let Congress draw up the ranking rules.

The end result is that any funding of rail corridor development would probably be a political decision and little or no relationship to any actual cost/benefit ratio or, for that matter, any other rational criteria. In order to better define the costs, FRA set out to examine each corridor from the ground to get a better idea of the upgrading costs involved. In addition, Amtrak set to write a rebuttal to the FRA report by having a series of public meetings in each corridor to ask public comment to the idea of a rail corridor in their area. (The Portland hearing will be January 15th and the Seattle hearing on January 16th)

The main objection to the FRA report appears to be that each state has its own rail passenger problems and just because they do not qualify for having a corridor their problems are just as real as those states having a potential corridor. Also, limiting improvement to only a selected pair of corridors would not have the ability to gather the political backing to fund improvements. Federal programs that are very regional in scope usually do not have a very good chance of getting funded. Everyone wants a slice of the American pie.

Of more basic concern is if rail corridors are really a viable alternative to freeways and air travel. Should tax money be used to build systems that will show no ability to breakeven let along make a profit. Passenger train backers usually show how well all of the passenger trains in Japan, France, England and other parts of the world operate and how fast they go. If only we could go 100 mph then all of our transportation problems would be solved.

Detractors are quick to point out that only in the Northeast Corridor is there the population densities that can support highspeed, frequent train service. Germany has such a great train system since there are just a lot of people to move. (Example - Germany and Oregon are the same size. German population 60+ million, Oregon population 2.5 million) Tokyo has more population than all the Western states (excluding California and Texas) combined. It was pointed out that slightly increased speeds coupled with greater frequency of trains would probably be more cost effective than trying to run 100mph between cities.

At last report the final FRA publication was being delayed until April for delivery to Congress. But given the mood of the new administration to funding new programs many observers give no chance of funds being appropriated for anything more than additional study.

#### NEW CHAPTER OFFICERS

The elections held at the November meeting produced the following new Chapter officers:

President	Ben Fredericks	Chapter Directors-at-Large
Vice-President	Terry Parker	Pete Dorland
Secretary	Chuck Storz	Irving Ewen
Treasurer	John Holloway	Jim Schmidt
National Director	Roger Sackett	Jim Whaley

MEXICO - 1980 (an epic journey by Ed Immel)

The last time I was in Mexico in 1965 steam could still be found on the mainline and on the narrow gauge. Streetcars were plentiful in Mexico City and a rolling museum was still operating in Veracruz. You could still ride behind electrics climbing up 4.7% grades and the Pullman Company was alive and well. Thus, a comparison with what was with what exists would be most interesting.

Arrival in Mexico City was by Eastern Airlines 727 after a flight from Portland to Atlanta and then to Mexico City. One has to expect these crazy routings using an EAL unlimited mileage ticket. The trip to downtown Mexico City from the airport showed just how much traffic had increased on the streets since my last visit. Also noticed were the empty streetcar tracks where once endless streams of PCC cars traveled. Most a victim of Mexico City's new Metro subway.

It is hard to see how Mexico City could move without a subway. The system is fast and cheap (1/4¢ a ride). The system is also very crowded with 1.8 million passengers carried every day. The trains are rubber-tired and are a copy of those used on the system in Paris and Montreal. During the peak rush hours the front car of each train is reserved for females and children. Transit police enforce this rule.

At the end of Line No. 2 can be found the last of Mexico City's streetcars. From Taxquena Station streetcars still operate to the floating gardens at Xochimilco. The PCC cars have been repainted into the new Orange paint scheme but most of the cars appear to be pretty beat up and at the same time extremely crowded. The #54 Line to Xochimilco splits up into three different routes serving areas to the south of the city. Streetcars also still run from the end of Insurgentes to the University of Mexico's modern campus. It would appear that the PCCs need some replacements since the service they are receiving now is extremely hard on the cars. The new subway feeds many more people onto the remaining streetcar system than can be easily handled with the existing equipment.

One segment of our vacation trip was to take the train from Mexico City to Merida in the Yuchatan, a distance of around a thousand miles. At Merida we would pick up another Eastern flight to Miami and Barbados. The whole thing seemed to fit together so easily. Little did I know.....

We picked up our tickets at the modern station in Mexico City and were told that the train had no diner so we should take our own food along. This was to be a trip of two nights and one day departing Saturday night November 29th. Our sleeper was the Mar del Groenlandia ex-Canadian Pacific "Poplar Grove". I estimated it was constructed just before World War II and contained five bedrooms and 10 roomettes. I also noticed a slight list to the starboard and the fact that there was not a bit of hot water on the car. Our train consisted of three PFE reefers, an express car, some old second-class coaches, several 1977 coaches built by Hawker-Sidley in Thunder Bay, Ontario and our lone sleeper.

Departure from Mexico City was right on time. I remember looking fondly at the Mexico City-Guadalajara "El Tapito" next to us and wishing we were on that 13 car all Pullman train with a complete diner and lounge rather than on this very spartan mixed train.

We moved right along for all of thirty minutes when we went into the hole to wait for two passenger trains to come by. Once they had cleared we backed out of the siding and headed into the night. The sleeper had badly worn springs and it kept bottoming out all night long, rattling everyone's teeth in the process. This would be spelled by periods of extremely hard switching followed by more bottoming out of the sleeper. I noticed that more hard switching took place about three in the morning followed by deathly silence for hours. I awoke at 7am to find that we had not moved since 3am. We were at Orizaba and the engines were now up against the sleeper and the PFE reefers at the end of the train. The conductor handed up orders to the engineer and we left town at a high rate of speed. I had this feeling that we were heading back to Mexico City. A feeling that was confirmed when we passed an abandoned substation of the former electrified Mexicano Railway. I had ridden this line in 1965 and thus had a pretty good idea where we were heading. The couple in the next room to us were Americans who spoke excellent Spanish and I relayed my impression of returning to Mexico City to them. They asked the conductor and he replied that "Yes, we were returning to Mexico City". There had been a derailment just to the east of Orizaba when Friday night's train from Veracruz just "fell over".

We stopped at the top of the 4.7% grade at Esperanza to leave two engines behind from our eight car train. Soon we were off to San Marcos where we ran around the train and backed onto a freight line which went to Oriental. This would put us on the line to Veracruz that ran via Jalapa. It all seemed to be quite a simple diversion. Little did I know.....

At Oriental I found that next to the station still exists part of the narrow-gauge operation that runs to Teziutlan. Once this had been steam powered with small 2-8-0s and was part of the narrow gauge line between Mexico City and Veracruz. Today a General Motors G8 locomotive was the only power seen although the yard seemed to have a large collection of coaches and express cars present. Seen on a standard gauge flat car was a newly repainted and rebuilt mail car for the narrow gauge. At Oriental we also received the first set of many orders that called for us to go like hell to the next siding and then wait for three freight trains to pass. This act kept up into the darkness and all through the night. More bottoming of the sleeper, accompanied by hard switching, followed by more bottoming out, followed by deathly silence. I figured out that Veracruz was reached sometime around two am followed by a long period of silence. 7am saw us at Tierra Blanca and Sunday's train had caught up with us. We had managed to cover just 74 miles in 26 hours!

Monday turned out to be a day of going like hell and then waiting. We got later and later. The crowning insult was when the sleeping car attendant thought that our food bag was garbage and threw it out of the window! This was timed to go with the air conditioning failure. We spent all the day plodding through the countryside. At Coatzacoalcos we interchanged with the Unidos Del Sureste Railway. We also managed to get a meal in the station beanery consisting of beans, tortillas and fried potatoes. It all seemed like a gourmet feast.

Tuesday found us on the last leg of our trip. We had only several hundred miles to go. At this thought the last car on the train decided to experience some brake trouble and we spent 1½ hours staring at a cow in the field while the train crew banged on the last car with a track bar and a large rock. Finally, we resumed our trip and again we would go like hell and then wait. Arrival in Merida was at 4:45pm where I noticed a brand new first class all airconditioned train sitting in the station. This seemed to be like a mirage. To top it off after almost four days without a shower our hotel's hot water system decided to give up the ghost!

# JANUARY MEETING AT GP MUSEUM

900 S.W. Fifth Street

The January meeting will be held at the Georgia Pacific Historical Museum located in the GP Building in downtown Portland. The GP Museum will be open at 7:00am for interested Chapter members. Admission is free. The regular business meeting will begin at 8:00 in the auditorium. The program will feature black and white 16mm movies taken in the 1920s by the official company photographer of the C.D. Johnson Lumber Company at Toledo, Oregon. All aspects of the timber operation are shown from the logging railroad to the steam operated mill. These are outstanding movies!

People attending the meeting can use the GP parking structure located between 3rd and 4th streets. Entrance is on 4th Street. GP museum personnel advises that due to the time the meeting is over the parking structure attendant has usually gone home, so the parking is free. Or parking is also free if one is using any of the restaurants in the GP building. Take the parking structure to the "C" Level and the museum is right outside the elevator door.

You can also enter the GP Building on the Fifth Avenue entrance. Sign in with the security guard and he will give directions to the museum.

Due to the special program there will be no newsreel slides program.

February meeting will be at the Union Pacific Clubhouse.

## SP Steam Calendar

A good number of the 1981 "Steam on the Southern Pacific" calendars are still available from the Chapter. This year's publication is available for \$4.95 post paid from the Chapter at Room -1, Union Station, Portland, Oregon 97209. They will also be on hand at the January meeting to be sold at a discount to Chapter members.

BACK ISSUES OF

STEAM ON SOUTHERN PACIFIC CALENDERS

\$3.00 Each, postpaid

	<u>QTY</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
1977 ( 1st issue, very few left ) _____	_____	@ \$3.00 _____
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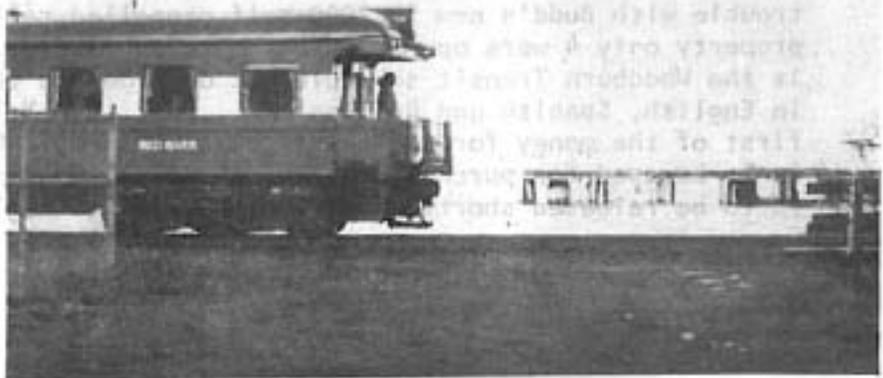
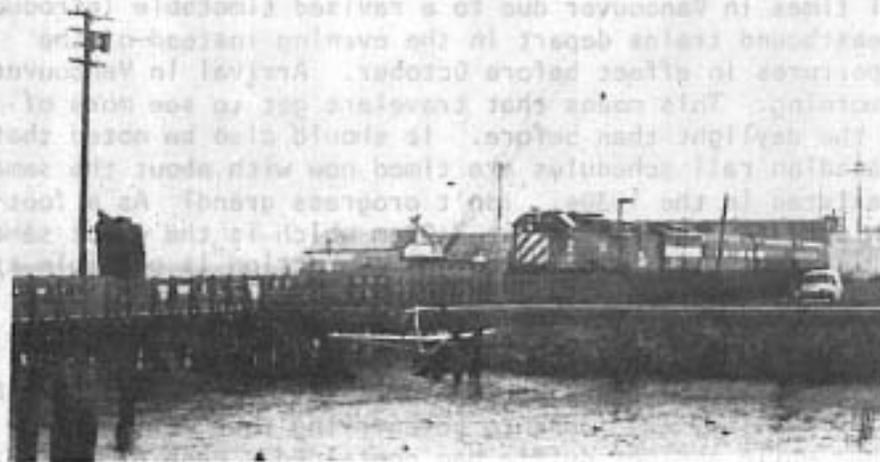
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THIS IS THAT

Southern Pacific is trying out a new paint scheme with one unit already out of the shops. The top is gray with an orange body. The undergear is also gray. The front and backs are red with the front having a wing design in white.....The Union Pacific's 1981 calendar contains a photo of #8444 for the month of April. This is the first time in recent history that the UP has admitted that they still own a steam engine on their calendar. This year's photo is a mood scene taken at night in Portland.....The SP's business car Oregon has been repainted into the regular SP color scheme. Gone are the pointless and tailless Amtrak arrows.....Amtrak plans to introduce the first set of Superliner equipment on the Coast Starlight beginning January 15th. Each set is planned to include one baggage car, six coaches, one lounge/cafe car, one diner and two sleeping cars. Amtrak has also announced that sometime in 1981 the Coast Starlight would be rerouted by way of Sacramento.....New schedules were introduced on the Willamette Valley trains on December 7th. They allow more time for Portland travelers in the Willamette Valley and also provide another through Seattle to Eugene service. Train #753 connects with Amtrak train #797 in the evening at Portland. New, lower fares are also expected in January. Right now the fares between Portland and Eugene are approximately 20% higher than those charged between Portland and Seattle.....VIA Rail trains have new departure and arrival times in Vancouver due to a revised timetable introduced in October. Both eastbound trains depart in the evening instead of the early afternoon departures in effect before October. Arrival in Vancouver is earlier in the morning. This means that travelers get to see more of the Rockies during the daylight than before. It should also be noted that transcontinental Canadian rail schedules are timed now with about the same running times as existed in the 1930s. Isn't progress grand? As a footnote: The Canadian arrives in Vancouver at 7:00am which is the exact same time Amtraks Pacific International departs. No connection is possible at either Vancouver or New Westminster since the VIA trains no longer serve New West.....Amtrak has finally gotten the Seattle Seahawks football specials under control. On December 7th the passengers were checked for carryon booze. It was reported that a baggage cart full of liquor was taken from the passengers. One lady was found to be carrying four fifths of liquor in her handbag while another duffle bag contained a case of iced up beer. The football fans were just a little upset and Amtrak had to endure flack from the press but something had to be done to prevent the problems on the trains. On December 21st there was no booze allowed on the train or was it sold from the Amtrak snack bars. This seemed to have taken care of the worst problems.....Amtrak's LRC (Light, rapid, comfortable) trains have finally entered regular service between Boston and New Haven. The cars and locomotives are manufactured in Canada and were originally destined for the Portland to Vancouver, B.C. market.....Amtrak seems to be having trouble with Budd's new SPV2000 self propelled rail car. Out of 12 on the property only 4 were operating on November 17th.....Trivia statement: Is the Woodburn Transit schedule the only one in the United States printed in English, Spanish and Russian?.....Tri-Met has received the first of the money for the new light rail line to Gresham. The \$10 million is to be used for purchasing right-of-way. The remainder of the funding is to be released shortly with construction to begin early in 1981.....

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER

NATIONAL RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(An Oregon Non-Profit Corporation)

Room 1, Union Station, 800 NW 6th Ave.  
Portland, OR 97209 (503) 226-6747

1981 CHAPTER OFFICERS

President		Director-at-Large	
BEN FREDERICKS	(503) 256-4503	RANDLE ("PETE") DORLAND	(503) 659-1274
16531 N E Hoyt Street		14884 S E River Road	
Portland, OR 97230		Portland, OR 97222	
Vice President		Director-at-Large	
TERRY PARKER	284-8742	IRVING G EWEN	232-2441
1527 N E 65th Avenue		2215 S E 37th Avenue	
Portland, OR 97213		Portland, OR 97214	
Secretary		Director-at-Large	
CHARLES W STORZ JR	289-4529	JAMES W SCHMIDT	253-4196
146 N E Bryant Street		13525 S E Mill Street	
Portland, OR 97211		Portland, OR 97233	
Treasurer		Director-at-Large	
JOHN D HOLLOWAY	246-5752	JAMES H WHALEY	244-7948
2201 S W Palatine Street		3106 S W Beaverton Highway	
Portland, OR 97219		Portland, OR 97201	
Chapter National Director			
ROGER W SACKETT	644-3437		
11550 S W Cardinal Terrace			
Beaverton, OR 97005			

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PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the National Railway Historical Society and the Pacific Northwest Chapter is open to all persons 16 years of age and over who are interested in railroads and railroad history. Dues for the Pacific Northwest Chapter are \$15.00 a year. Membership includes six issues of the NRHS Bulletin (national publication) and nine issues of the Pacific Northwest Chapter's publication The Trainmaster. The Pacific Northwest Chapter meets on the third Friday of the month except during July, August and December. Meeting location and time are given in the monthly issues of The Trainmaster. Write to the Pacific Northwest Chapter at the address given on this page for an application or for more detailed information.

THE TRAINMASTER STAFF

EDITOR

Edward E Immel (503) 233-9706  
715 S E Lexington Street  
Portland, OR 97202

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Charles W Storz Jr' 289-4529  
146 N E Bryant Street  
Portland, OR 97211

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All exchange news letters should be sent to the Chapter's business address:

Room 1, Union Station  
Portland, OR 97209

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Pacific Northwest Chapter NRHS  
Room 1, Union Station  
800 N. W. 6th Ave.  
Portland, OR 97209

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