



# The Sower

## *Newsletter for the Presbyterian Women in the Synod of Lakes & Prairies*

November, 2019

Editor: Kathleen Keefer

### MUSINGS FROM THE MODERATOR:

November is when we think of thanks, even though we should think of thanks at all times. But, It's the time of year when families come together and friends have "Friendsgivings" together. As I think of the season of thanksgiving, some things come to mind.

First, that we all give thanks for the obvious things - family, health, warm homes, good food, etc. These things spring to mind first when you think of giving thanks. Why? Because they are the important things, the things we need for survival. You can't give thanks for little things until you have the big things taken care of.

Second, I see several friends on Facebook doing the "thanks challenge". They post something they are thankful for each day in November. One friend does this year-round and they usually post in threes. These things are more intangible - thanks for co-workers who step up to help if we need them to; thanks for being able to share stories of people that uplift and inform; thanks for making an early flight.

Being able to find something to be thankful for in the smallest, everyday actions is an intentional spiritual practice and helps those who do it to focus on the positive things in their lives. We all need to find these things in our own lives and keep them in focus to help us be positive.

May you find the small gratitudes in your life and make them the focus of your attention.

*Sue Medsker-Nedderman, moderator of PWSCT*

### *Mark Your Calendars:*

April 17-19, 2020 - PWSCT meeting

Oct 16-18, 2020 - PWSCT meeting



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## What If God Got Tired? By Hope Dougherty

On my journey home from the Synod board meeting, this thought kept going thru my mind.....

What if God got tired?

What if God decided to sleep in?

What if God took a day off?

What if God took a vacation?

When I get tired, overwhelmed, over committed, watching the same people step in and up time and time again, to keep us active, I question my own commitment to God, myself, my family, my friends, my community, my world.

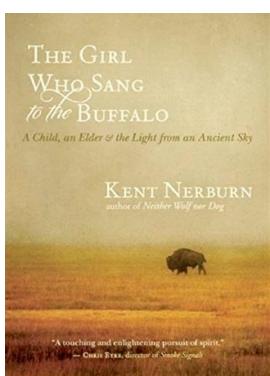
We know God would never forsake us, but, sometimes, we have no problem forsaking him.....

We neglect to guide, mentor, challenge, change, nourish, nurture, protect, not only ourselves, but those who come after us.

The question "What would God do?" Should be in the front of our thoughts daily.

Just my thoughts on this! Something kept compelling me to put this down and share.

Hmmmm, wonder who put these words and thoughts in my head.....



### *The Girl Who Sang to the Buffalo*

I am still reading the book, "The Girl Who Sang To The Buffalo ", and I have not read any previous books from the author, but it is simply breathtaking.

This world has so many cruel ways to take away a culture, a tribe, a tradition, a way of life!

Who are we to decide our way, our opinions are the only ones that God listens to? I believe God is everywhere, in everything. After all, he created everything, seen and unseen! We destroy what we don't understand, constantly.

It is time to let go, let everyone and everything enjoy the life that God, not man, created! Each of us have our own unique gifts and for others to take them away because they don't understand is cruel!

This book really makes you think about how you have lived your life, how you judge, how you fail to understand others, and how you treat them. The past is that, but the future is wide open and today is the first day of your life! Live it the way God intended you to. Ask God for guidance,

instead of others! Hope A. Dougherty

## SPEAKERS AVAILABLE FOR GATHERING PRESENTATIONS

Gail Heimbuck from Rocky Mountains (Wyoming) ([bbtchr@gmail.com](mailto:bbtchr@gmail.com)) and Rhoda Frasier from Mid-America (Concordia, KS) ([rhodaf805@gmail.com](mailto:rhodaf805@gmail.com)) have offered to come to present programs in our synod to tell about the USAME trip to upstate New York. Our synod did not have a representative on the trip.

Kathleen Keefer from Presbytery of the Missouri River Valley (Clarinda, IA) attended the 63<sup>rd</sup> UN Commission for Status of Women. She is available to share her experience with your PW. [klkeef@mail.com](mailto:klkeef@mail.com) is her contact.

Susan Medsker-Nedderman is also available as a speaker to relate her experience during the USAME trip to the Bay Area. [S.medske.nedderman@gmail.com](mailto:S.medske.nedderman@gmail.com)

## Sower Articles and stories are always welcome!

The next Sower deadline is January 25, 2020 for the February publication. The focus is on Leadership. Our Working for Justice and Peace focus is on violence against women. Book reviews, devotions, calendar items, and articles on our focus features are welcome.

## **Women of Dakota Presbytery attend national gathering of native women**

Native women from across the nation attended a meeting in Tacoma, Washington in early July. Representing Dakota Presbytery were: Fern Cloud (CP and Clerk of the Presbytery), Susie Amos (moderator of Dakota Presbytery PW), and Rev. Danelle McKinney (member of the planning committee). Madison McKinney, Danelle's daughter, led one of the workshops at the event.

Also attending were Jenny Lee (moderator of churchwide PW, the first Korean woman to hold that position), Rev. Irvin Porter (Associate for Native American Congregational Support for the denomination), and Elona Street Stewart (Synod Executive of the Synod of Lakes and Prairies, and member of the Delaware Nanticoke Tribe).

This national gathering gave native women the opportunity to share perspectives on issues that mattered to them, to develop leadership skills and to encourage one another to step into roles of responsibility at Presbytery, Synod, and the General Assembly levels.

Each day began with Spirit Rising, a time for attendees to step forward with a song, a story, a scripture, or something to bring joyful laughter, as a way of sharing traditions and a way to listen to the great variety of gifts represented at the conference.

Workshops covered topics such as: the structure of the PC(USA), responding to the Doctrine of Discovery, foraging for and using wild plants, and reasons to get involved in leadership.

The final sharing at the event was an Apron Exchange. Each attendee brought an apron to give and returned home with an apron that had been given to her. The Exchange is the ritual ending of every national gathering of native Presbyterian Women and builds relationships among indigenous women.

### **147<sup>th</sup> Annual Mission Meeting of Dakota Presbytery hosted by Goodwill Presbyterian Church, Sisseton SD**



Dakota Presbytery has been holding Mission meetings every year since 1872, sharing hosting responsibilities with the Dakota Association of the United Church of Christ. This year, the meeting was hosted by the Goodwill Presbyterian Church in Sisseton SD, one of the oldest congregations in the Presbytery.

A highlight of the meeting involved the youth of Goodwill PC. After singing Jesus Loves Me in the Dakota Language, each young person explained a story they had drawn on a poster board, which they then gave as a gift to one of the adults present.

Sharon Falck, Moderator of PW of Des Moines Presbytery, was the recipient of a poster board story. On his board, Tristen had drawn a turtle (which he said was a symbol of protection), a thunder bird (which he said was a symbol of faith), and a snake (which he said was a symbol of wisdom). Tristen explained that the wisdom of his faith was protecting him as he walked the path of his life.

*This report was given to Des Moines Presbytery at their August 2019 meeting by Rev. Barbara Tooker Todd, clergy representative to the PW of Des Moines Presbytery.*

## Fall Stated Meeting of the Dakota Presbytery

The Rev. Barbara Todd, Sharon Falck (Des Moines Presbytery) and Marilyn Stone (Milwaukee Presbytery) corresponding members of the Dakota Presbytery attended the Fall Stated Meeting of the Dakota Presbytery at the Canuska Presbyterian Church in Frazer, Montana on October 4<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was well attended by the pastors, commissioned ruling elders and commissioners from the local congregations.

The Committee on the Preparation for Ministry introduced a young man who wishes to become an Inquirer, the first step in becoming an ordained pastor. By unanimous vote the Presbytery took him under their care. This was a huge step toward gaining ordained pastors who will labor in the Dakota Presbytery as many of the ordained pastors now serving are getting older.

The Rev. Clifford Canku presented a rough draft of the requirements and plans for ordaining Commissioned Ruling Elders which would help many of the local churches. Several items were presented for discussion and this will be presented again at the Spring Stated Meeting in May 2020.

Leaders of the Baltimore Learning Camps presented a summary of the camps they held in 2019. This is the 10<sup>th</sup> year they have led the Ihanktonwan Learning Camp at Marty Indian School in Marty, South Dakota. There they provided a variety of activities including music, Native speakers who told them about native seeds and plants, and the Indian Health Service had a speaker speak about nutrition as it relates to diabetes, which is prevalent among the Native people.

The Pejuhutazizi Family Learning Camp was held at the Upper Sioux Community Center and Pejuhutazizi Presbyterian Church, Granite Falls, Minnesota for the 7<sup>th</sup> year. Dr.Terri Peterson Co-Founder of Dakota Wicohan, and a children's book author shared a documentary about interviews with Dakota language speakers and their recollections of the past and the decline of the use of the Dakota language. The group attended the Friday evening Upper Sioux Wacipi (Powwow) some wore theirs regalia and took part in the Wacipi. The younger campers participated in Story Time, Hands on Science and Movement activities.

The Porcupine Bible Camp at Porcupine, South Dakota (on the Pine Ridge Reservation) has been in existence for 3 years. An average of 30 children attended each day; overall 50 different children were served during the week. "The Life of Jesus" was the theme for the week .The first day the focus was on Jesus' mission, second day focused on Jesus the Miracle Worker, day three Jesus our friend and day four- Jesus the Son of God. Four stations : storytelling, games/activities, crafts and science emphasized the theme for the day.

Veterans Memorial Youth Center in Sisseton, South Dakota was the location of the Sisseton Family Learning Camp for the second year. Morning devotions focused on virtues from the Lakota Way. They then discussed how the virtues related to Scripture. They enjoyed enlightening conversations about the local youth, their current progression through high school to the real world with planned teenage pregnancies to receive government monies and their feelings of inadequacy to go to college even if they receive straight A's and are top students in Sisseton.

Susie Amos, Moderator of the Dakota PW led the afternoon devotions with a reading from "Our Daily Bread" and related how it related to her being the leader of the PW and speaking before the Presbytery. The women in attendance joined her on the stage and sang two songs from the "Dakota Odowan" (all words in the Lakota language).

Susie also told us of her desire to have several quilts ready to display at the Mission Meeting in August. She recalled as a young girl she remembered quilts lining the whole interior of the tent. She believes with some of the younger women wanting to learn to quilt having the quilts on display will help bring back some of the unity she felt as a child. The blocks are 13 ½ inches square and can be crazy quilt blocks.

Learning more each time we attend the Dakota Presbytery Meetings and the Mission meetings helps us understand their customs, music and their deep faith in God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. We come away filled with the Holy Spirit and a great love for these sisters and brothers.

The best way we can help them is to keep the following things in our daily prayers:

- Pray for the Native girls and women who are kidnapped, abused, and killed and for their families.
- Pray for those who are addicted to alcohol, meth and other drugs, that they may receive help
- Pray for the young people who often feel there is no hope and turn to suicide

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Joe Obermeyer, Bdecan Presbyterian Church Youth and Outreach Coordinator, writes a blog post that is on the church's website. It can be viewed and read at <https://www.bdecanpresbyterianchurch.org/tidbits-from-joe>. It is an inspiration message with some info on what is happening at Bdecan. Check it out.

Joe is booking mission groups now for summer of 2020. They can do VBS and/or work projects. The children love VBS and would love to have a new group every couple of weeks. We thank East Iowa PW for sending a group summer of 2019. 1st Presbyterian Churches of MN, coordinated by the Rochester Church, have booked their date for 2020 which is their 6th year at Bdecan running VBS. Great relationships are built both with children and adults through the running of VBS. His contact info and a form to fill out are at: <https://www.bdecanpresbyterianchurch.org/contact-information.html>.

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**PW in the Synod News:**

PWS, thanks to a grant from Churchwide, has purchased a one-year ZOOM contract. Lana Schultz, Communications Coordinator, should be contacted at [lanaj0@casselton.net](mailto:lanaj0@casselton.net) or 701-238-4538 to schedule your ZOOM meetings, book studies, etc. Please provide the date, time and approx. length of time you will need to use the ZOOM conference. When your meeting is scheduled, Lana will email to you the invitation and you will be responsible to send the invitation to attendees.

**BOOK REVIEWS:** This year our Native American Concerns Committee has led book studies over ZOOM. The author of these book studies Kent Nerburn is an author, educator and director of an award-winning oral history project on the Red Lake Ojibwe Reservation in northern Minnesota and resides with his family in Bemidji, Minnesota.

The first book study *Neither Wolf nor Dog On Forgotten Roads with an Indian Elder* "tells the story of two men, one white and one Indian, locked in their own understandings yet struggling to find common voice. [Whites looked at land as property to be owned. Indians look at land as sacred, belonging to the Creator.] Kent is led by a Native American elder named Dan through Indian towns, forgotten roads with memories of the Ghost Dance and Sitting Bull. The book takes its readers past the myths and stereotypes of the Native American experience."

In the second book study, *the Wolf at Twilight An Indian Elder's Journey through a Land of Ghosts and Shadows*, Kent Nerburn returns to the Lakota reservation after ten years when a note is left on his car windshield that an old dog has died. This journey goes "deep into reservation boarding school mysteries, dark confines of sweat lodges and isolated Native homesteads in search of ghosts that have haunted Native American elder Dan since childhood." The Native American way of teaching and learning is revealed in depth. All things in creation have knowledge--learn from them rather than about them.

In our third, and current, book study, *The Girl Who Sang to the Buffalo A Child, an Elder & the Light from an Ancient Sky*, "a haunting dream pulls author Kent back to Native America, where dreams have meaning, animals are teachers, and the 'old ones' still have powers beyond our understanding. [Powers to be accepted, not understood.] We encounter a girl with a connection to the past and a forgotten asylum." After reading Nerburn's books, "you can never look at the world, or at people, the same way again."

Join the ZOOM book study on November 11 and 25 at 1:30 pm or 6:30 pm by contacting Marilyn Stone (mmstone52@att.net) and she will send you an invitation.

## DEVOTIONS

### *The Two Wolves Cherokee Proverb*

One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside all people. He said, "My son, the battle is between two wolves inside us all. One is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego. The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith. The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather, "Which wolf wins?" The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."

### *Lakota Prayer*

Wakan Tanka, Great Mystery, teach me how to trust my heart, my mind, my intuition, my inner knowing, the senses of my body, the blessings of my spirit. Teach me to trust these things so that I may enter my Sacred Space and love beyond my fear, and thus Walk in Balance with the passing of each glorious Sun.

## **From the Fargo Forum:**

The Fargo Forum newspaper on its November 2 front page reported on a recent House bill, "The Remove the Stain Act, sponsored by Rep. Denny Heck, Washington. [This bill] would rescind 20 Medals of Honor awarded to U.S. soldiers for the Dec. 29, 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre." 100-year-old Marcella LeBeau of Cheyenne River Sioux Nation in South Dakota attended the Democratic presidential debate in August asking each candidate whether they would support this Act. She added, "We have a pervasive sadness that exists on our reservation because of Wounded Knee and our unresolved grief." Representative Deb Haaland, New Mexico, "one of two Native American women to be the first to serve in Congress, said The Remove the Stain Act is about more than just rescinding Medals of Honor. It's also about making people aware of this country's history of genocide of American Indians, adding [further] that she's been educating her colleagues about the massacre as it's a tragedy that's been left out of history books." She feels the bill "has the potential to provide profound healing." The entire article can be read at:

<https://www.inforum.com/news/government-and-politics/4746419-Some-reps-from-Dakotas-Minnesota-undecided-on-revoking-medals-awarded-after-Wounded-Knee-massacre>

## CELEBRATING FALL

Submitted by Janine Brandt, Frankville (IA) Community Presbyterian Church PW



Each year the Frankville Presbyterian Women host a **Fall Fun Day** at their church (rural Postville, IA). Community members, both young and old, are invited to come dressed up in a costume if they like, and enjoy food, fun, games and prizes. The Presbyterian Women always choose a theme each year to dress up as. This year's theme was *Alice in Wonderland!* We thoroughly enjoy this opportunity to share our church and give area children a fun and safe alternative to "halloween."



## Prayer From the Hiding

By Jordan Peterson, age 17,  
Senior at Burke High School,  
Omaha, NE

I have spent a lifetime hiding.  
Hiding from people  
People who taunt, torment, hurt  
A twisted, cruel game no one  
wants to play  
But will say nothing against  
And so I can be found in a dark  
corner  
Forgotten

Hiding from people  
Who want to touch, to kiss, hug  
Who mean well but don't  
understand that  
Sometimes  
I can't stand the suffocation that  
comes with their embraces  
So I can be found  
In an undiscovered room  
Silent

But usually,  
I'm hiding from myself  
And the darkness that purrs within  
my chest  
And the emotions I feel so  
strongly  
Too strongly

That they threaten to wash over  
me  
And wipe out those around me  
As I stand  
Literally the eye in my own  
personal hurricane  
There are more casualties than I  
care to admit.

**To read the entire poem, please click here to go to Google Docs:**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1P6CeI3R2aCVEVjNsDCIGpsb9jpanlaf\\_vnp7F8H0/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1P6CeI3R2aCVEVjNsDCIGpsb9jpanlaf_vnp7F8H0/edit?usp=sharing)

The following PWs have been trained through the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance program to be trainers for Disaster Preparedness. They are another great source of women for your Gatherings or Circle meeting.

Linda Barnett, Hendricks, MN; Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys;  
barnelim@hotmail.com

Maggie Horak, Lincoln, NE; Presbytery of Homestead; mmhlin@msn.com

Kathleen Keefer, Clarinda, IA; Presbytery of Missouri River Valley;  
klkeefer@mail.com

Linda (Kitch) Shatzer, Washington, IA; Presbytery of East Iowa;  
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Elizabeth Swee, Moorhead, MN; Presbytery of Northern Plains; bswee@aol.com

Louise Van Poll, Huron, SD; Presbytery of South Dakota; lcvanpoll@gmail.com



## Native American Concerns Corner

### 2019 National Native American Presbyterian Women's Gathering



Speaker/presenters l to r: Elona Street Stewart, Danielle Palomino, Madison McKinney, Danelle Crawford McKinney, Melissa Myers, Suzette Amaya



Welcome Sign at host church



Danelle Crawford-McKinney  
preaching for Sunday worship



Suzie Amos, PW Moderator  
for the Dakota Presbytery and  
Marilyn Stone, Board of  
Directors PW Rep



JyungIn Lee, Moderator for PW  
Churchwide and Danelle Crawford-  
McKinney,

## JUSTICE AND PEACE ISSUES

Kathleen Keefer

4 out of 5 of our Native women are affected by violence today

**FROM CBS NEWS:** "In the United States, Native American women are more than twice as likely to experience violence than any other demographic. One in three Native women is sexually assaulted during her life, and over 85% of these assaults are perpetrated by non-Natives.<sup>[18][19][20][21]</sup> Due to a history of legal loopholes hindering prosecution of non-Native perpetrators, many reservations have become popular destinations for rapists and serial killers.<sup>[21]</sup> Law enforcement, journalists, and activists in Indigenous communities - in both the US and Canada - have fought to bring awareness to this connection between sex trafficking, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and the women who go missing and turn up murdered."

The US declared May 5, 2018 as a national day of awareness in order to raise concern for the crisis, and refocus attention on issues affecting Indigenous women. It hopes to improve relations between the federal and tribal governments

On March 7, 2019, Congress introduced this bill in the House of Representatives and this bill was to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and other specific reasons.

To watch the CBS News story: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/congress-crisis-missing-and-murdered-native-american-women/>

**Savanna's Act** – from Wikipedia "The bill known as [Savanna's Act](#) was initially introduced in Congress in October 2017 by former Senator Heidi Heitkamp, but later reintroduced in January 2019 by Senator Lisa Murkowski.<sup>[98]</sup> The purpose of Savanna's Act is to increase cooperation and coordination between "Federal, State, Tribal, and local law enforcement agencies" as this has been one of the major barriers to developing an accurate database. This bill would also implement training for Tribal agencies from the Attorney General as well as improve tribal access to databases (including the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System). In addition, data collection will be increased so that statistics more accurately represent missing and murdered indigenous women. This bill was read twice in Congress and referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs where it currently sits.<sup>[9]</sup>

<https://www.csvanw.org/mmiw/>



**506** MMIWG cases were identified across 71 selected urban cities

**128** were cases of missing Indigenous women

**280** were cases of murdered Indigenous women

**98** were cases with an "unknown status"

**29** The median age of MMIWG victims

Urban Indian Health Institute  
A division of the Seattle Indian Health Board



# PW Working for Peace and Justice Calendar November and December, 2019

## November, 2019

### Native American Heritage Month;

<https://www.archives.gov/news/topics/native-american-heritage-month>;  
also see  
<http://nativeamericanheritagemonth.gov>  
10 Caregiver Sunday;  
<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/november-12-2017/>  
13 World Kindness Day;  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World\\_Kindness\\_Day](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Kindness_Day); also see  
<https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/world-kindness-day>  
17 Hunger and Homelessness Sunday;  
<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassionpeace-justice/hunger/>  
20 Universal Children's Day;  
[www.un.org/en/events/childrenday](https://www.un.org/en/events/childrenday)  
25 Orange Day; [www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/take-action](https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/take-action)

25 International Day for the Elimination of Violence

Against Women; [www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday](http://www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday)

25-D.10 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence;

<http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu>

28 Thanksgiving—For the Native perspective, see

[https://americanindian.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/education/thanksgiving\\_poster.pdf](https://americanindian.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/education/thanksgiving_poster.pdf)

## December

5 International Volunteer Day;  
[www.un.org/en/events/volunteerday](https://www.un.org/en/events/volunteerday)

10 International Human Rights Day;  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human\\_Rights\\_Day](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_Rights_Day)

18 International Migrants Day;  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International\\_Migrants\\_Day](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Migrants_Day)

25 Christmas; Orange Day;  
[www.unwomen.org](https://www.unwomen.org)

## For Future Sowers:

February Sower articles due January 25  
Focus: Leadership

May Sower articles due April 30  
Focus on Together in Service

August Sower articles due July 31  
Focus on Justice and Peace

November Sower articles due October 31  
Focus on Native American Concerns  
Please send articles to: [thesower.slap@yahoo.com](mailto:thesower.slap@yahoo.com)

## Officers & Appointed Positions June, 2019 (changes highlighted)

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This section will be provided by any Presbyterian Woman who would like to offer ideas that would be beneficial to others and should be shared, rather than kept to herself. Send these to your Sower editor, Kathleen Keefer: [thesower.slap@yahoo.com](mailto:thesower.slap@yahoo.com)

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[www.presbyterianwomen.org](http://www.presbyterianwomen.org)

### Here is a link to the Who-Ya-Gonna-Call? The Who's Who at PW National

[https://www.lakesandprairies.org/files/448\\_pw\\_national\\_staff.pdf](https://www.lakesandprairies.org/files/448_pw_national_staff.pdf)

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