



WEST WALKER WIRE

SEPTEMBER 2025

www.westwalkercivic.org



From Summer Wellness to Fall Celebrations: An Expert's Guide to Maintaining Progress

by Jenna Zaffino

As we make our seasonal transition towards the crisp air of fall, many of us find ourselves shifting from outdoor adventures and fresh farmers market finds to busier schedules and the anticipation of holiday gatherings - I know it feels early, but as my West Walker neighbors remind me, pumpkin season is not far off!

This transition, while welcome, can make it challenging to maintain the healthy habits we've built over the summer. But with a little planning and flexibility, you can keep your momentum going and enjoy the celebrations without sacrificing your progress.

Embrace the Shift in Routine

Summer often brings a sense of freedom: more time outdoors, fresh produce, and a natural boost in activity. As fall arrives, routines change-kids return to school, work picks up, and the calendar fills with social events. For some, this structure is a welcome return; for others, it signals the start of a hectic season that can derail healthy habits.

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WITHIN THE WIRE...

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Friday, September 12 • 4 - 9 pm

St. Ed's Food Truck Fest
Sunnyside Ave between Kostner and Lowell

More information on page 3

Sunday, September 14 • 9 am - 1 pm

Independence Park Farmer's Market
featuring a tree walk, book swap, and puzzle exchange!
Independence Park - NW corner

Thursday, September 18 • 6 - 7 pm

The Pieces by Aloft Circus Arts
Athletic Field Park

www.aloftcircusarts.com

Friday, September 19 • 6 pm

WWCA Friday Front Porch Party
4249 N. Springfield Ave.

More information on page 2

Saturday, September 27 • 12 - 9 pm

Indie Park Fest
Independence Park

Sunday, October 5 • 2 pm

Irving Park Fine Arts Concert
featuring Mike Brozick, trumpet
& John Goodwin, piano
Irving Park Lutheran Church
4100 N. Harding Avenue

Sunday, October 5 • 3 pm

St. Ed's Harvest Bash
4350 W. Sunnyside Ave.
More information on page 3

Saturday, November 15 • 6:30 pm

Carlson Community Services'
TRIVIA NIGHT Fundraiser
Irving Park Lutheran Church Gym
4057 N. Harding Avenue



KIDS - CAN YOU FIND ALL NINE (9) PENCILS HIDDEN IN THIS ISSUE? LOOK FOR



Dear Neighbor,

It's hard to believe summer is over and fall is here. I hope you were able to get out and enjoy all the things the neighborhood had going on this summer, from movies in Independence Park, the GIPNA garden walk, Independence Park Farmers Market, West Walker's participation in the [rainy] 4th of July celebration at Independence Park, and various garage sales around the area. After all this heat, I'm excited to get into fall and the end of the Kennedy construction!

Please note, the 39th ward has alerted us that a bike rack will be placed on Berteau at Elston right next to the triangle. I'm not sure of the timing as the parts were delayed several times. If you didn't vote or receive the results of ward participatory budgeting, there are a few things near West Walker that I'd like to point out. From the 39th ward, there will be a left turn arrow added to the stop light at Elston and Pulaski. From the 33rd ward, bike lanes will go in on Hamlin between Montrose and Lawrence. The 45th ward has not released the winning items yet.

The WWCA Board is looking forward to a new year of activities including something new - **Friday Front Porch Party!** Music will be played on front porches giving neighbors and families the opportunity to get together casually. These events will be BYO-everything (chairs, drinks, snacks, friends, etc). You can sit on the front lawn, parkway, etc and enjoy the music for as little or as long as you wish. Our first event is scheduled for **Friday, September 19 at 6 pm at 4249 N Springfield**. If you are interested in playing music at a Friday Front Porch party, please reach out. Please check our Facebook page or website for our first musician and more information.

As usual, we can always use volunteers, its impossible to plan events and activities without them. If you'd like to volunteer to assist, please reach out to me at: jankow2003@gmail.com.

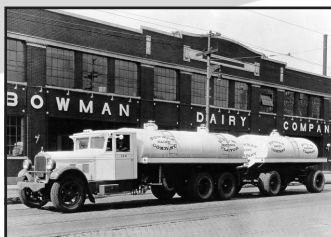
Until next month,

Erin Hunter

WWCA President

DID YOU KNOW?

by Michael Kus



Did you know that before there was **Pickleball Clubhouse** and **Thillens Check Cashing**, there was **Bowman Dairy**?

Yup, the building at **4218 N. Elston Avenue** was once a distribution center for Bowman Dairy which was at one time one of the largest dairy distributors in the Midwest.... Moo!



WEST WALKER CIVIC ASSOCIATION

West Walker Mission Statement

"The pursuit of the West Walker Civic Association is to make our diverse neighborhood the best it can be by securing the services, safeguards and improvements the West Walker community is entitled to have."

Celebrating over 100 years of service to the West Walker Community

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WEST WALKER EMAIL BLASTS

Brian Hunter

The West Walker Wire is published monthly September through June by the West Walker Civic Association.

All story ideas, articles and ads are due 7 days prior to the 1st of each month. Submit ideas and articles to the editor at west_walker_wire@yahoo.com.

Please include a phone number in case we need to follow up with you.

We reserve the right to edit all submissions for space and content.

For information on advertising, please contact Shannan Bunting at shannan@solsticepr.com.



Neighborhood School News



St. Edward School Events

Fall Fun for Families at St. Edward!

St. Edward School kicked off our 115th academic

year on August 20! Since 1910, we've been educating young people, serving the poor, and strengthening our local community by coming together and supporting one another. You can join us for one of our newer and most popular events, our annual **Food Truck Fest** on **Friday, September 12!** We will have a variety of food trucks along **Sunnyside Ave (between Kostner and Lowell)** from **4:00 - 9:00 pm**. There will be games for kids, a DJ, drinks for purchase, and some other surprises! The parking lot will be blocked off with plenty of tables and chairs (you can still bring your own if you'd like) to keep the space safe for all the kids running around. You don't want to miss this night of delicious food, fun activities, and plenty of opportunities to meet neighbors and fellow community members.

Not long after the Food Truck Fest on September 12, our parish will host our largest fundraiser on **Sunday, October 5**, our **Harvest Bash!** There will be kids' activities available from **3:00 - 4:15pm**. We'll celebrate Holy Mass outside at **4:30 pm**. We will serve a delicious dinner of various Asian cuisines or BBQ pork after Mass; two live bands will play this year including award-winning Blues artist **Gerald McClendon**; and the evening will end with raffle drawings! It's always a night of delicious food, good beer, great music, and more opportunities to meet neighbors and strengthen our community.

St. Edward Parish was founded in 1899 and has been serving the Mayfair and Irving Park communities' spiritual needs for over 125 years. You can worship God with us daily, Monday - Saturday, at 7:00am; Saturday evening at 4:30pm; and on Sunday at 8:00, 9:30, 11:00am, or 6:00pm. Follow us on social media @stedparish or visit our website www.stedparish.org to see the various ways you can be part of our family of faith. If you're interested in our award-winning school for your child, visit our school website www.stedwardchicago.org and schedule a tour with our principal.



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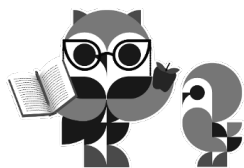
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Chicago Public Library, Independence Branch

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Friday & Saturday 9-5 / Sunday 1-5

Play Day For ages up to 5.

Mondays at 10:30 am

Bring a friend or meet a new one during our open and unstructured play group time.

Story Time For ages up to 5.

Wednesdays at 10:30 am

Talk, sing, read, write, and stay to play with us!

Gentle Yoga For adults

Fridays at 10:00 am

Pixel Party

Tuesday, September 16th at 4:30 pm

It's time for a pixel party! Join us as we use fuse beads to create unique, one-of-a-kind art. Use provided patterns to make special supplies for the school year or use your imagination to make your own creations.

Cookie Club For kids

Thursday, September 18th at 4:30 pm

Read and eat cookies!



Make Your Mark: Clay Beads

Thursday, September 23rd at 4:30 pm

Learn how to make different types of beads out of clay.

Silent Book Club

Sunday, September 28th at 2:00 pm

Community Cinema

Saturday, September 13

11 am: *Despicable Me 4*, 2024, PG

1 pm: *Garfield Movie*, 2024, PG

Sunday, September 14

130 pm: *West Side Story*, 2021, PG-13

Questions? Contact Jessica Kimpel, Children's Librarian, at 312-744-1135 or jmccarney@chipublib.org, or visit the library at 4024 N. Elston Ave.

JENNI ON THE BLOCK



NEIGHBOR SPOTLIGHT
by Jenni Kus



It's hard to believe that summer is winding down already! Say it isn't so! Most kids recently started back to school and pumpkin spice has arrived. The past few months have been a whirlwind, therefore, I've decided to introduce my family. I hope you don't mind!

My husband Michael and I moved to West Walker in November 2018. We have a blended family of five children, ages 16 to 25, who frequently come and go as they attend various colleges (UWSP, ISU, KU, Bradley). Our car has racked up the road trip miles these past few years! Michael is a Firefighter/Paramedic and works as an Aviation Fuel Inspector with the Chicago Fire Department at O'Hare Airport, while I work as an EMS Assistant at Lutheran General Hospital for the Emergency Medical Services System and Paramedic Program.

We fell in love with West Walker upon our first visit. The tree lined streets, church bells ringing, and friendly neighbors struck us immediately. Living on the 4100 block of Springfield Ave, we were also ecstatic to find out that we are show center for the annual September block party! This is our perfect neighborhood because we love food! Living within walking distance of these great restaurants is ideal.

Michael is a Chicago history and aviation buff. Check out his **"Did you Know?"** column in this newsletter! He enjoys cooking, NASCAR, baseball (we are a triple team household: Red Sox, Cubs, and Tigers!), and other sports. I enjoy reading (mostly historical fiction but will pick up anything that sparks my curiosity), getting involved with the community, and spending time with family and friends. Our musical tastes involve a wide variety of genres. Us Gen Xers have collected our favorite tunes throughout our lives, and we can be found reminiscing on our enclosed front porch with a few drinks. We lovingly refer to our porch as the "frunchporch", which I enjoy decorating for every holiday. My kids make fun of me.

We have met so many wonderful neighbors over the years and look forward to meeting more of you! Happy September!

Please contact me if you would like to be the next neighbor spotlight or nominate a neighbor via jennikusbds@gmail.com.



**Carlson
Community
Services**

News and Events

A 501(c)(3) non-profit connecting

the Irving Park community with programs that enrich lives through education, culture, and service.

Magic After-School Place Welcomes Students for the 2025-26 School Year!

On August 18th, Carlson's Magic After-School Place (MAP) welcomed students for the 2025-26 school year! We are excited to have several new students join our returning students and families for a new school year together. MAP was started in 2006 to meet the after-school care needs of working parents in the neighborhood and currently serves forty (40) students from Belding Elementary School in kindergarten through 8th grade. The focus of our after-school program is on homework completion and enrichment activities designed to encourage socialization and allow students to explore new interests. We are looking forward to another year of friendship, learning, and fun!

Tuesday Night Harvests Continue through October at Three Brothers Garden

We bid farewell to our Summer Garden Coordinator, **Jack Olech**, in mid-August when he returned to college. Jack had a great first year in the garden and we appreciated his enthusiasm, organization, and leadership.

The garden is flourishing and will be in production for several more weeks. We've already delivered nearly 200 pounds of fresh produce to our partners at the **Irving Park Community Food Pantry**. All are welcome to join us on **Tuesday evenings from 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm** in the garden located at **4107 N. Pulaski**, next to the Irving Park Lutheran Church parking lot. The work is easy, social, and fun!

32nd Season of Irving Park Fine Arts Concert Series kicks off on October 5

Carlson Community Services and the Irving Park Fine Arts Committee are proud to announce that the 32nd season of the Irving Park Fine Arts Concert Series will kick off on **Sunday, October 5 at 2:00 pm** when we welcome **Mike Brozick** on trumpet, accompanied by **John Goodwin** on piano for a concert at the **Irving Park Lutheran Church, 4100 N. Harding Avenue**.

Trumpeter **Mike Brozick** performs with the Grant Park Orchestra, Northwest Indiana Symphony, and several regional ensembles. He has appeared with major orchestras across the U.S. and Europe and holds degrees from Duquesne and Rice Universities. He is also a Fulbright Fellow and active chamber musician.

Known for his versatile, knowledgeable, and above all musical approach to all styles of piano playing, American pianist **John Goodwin** has performed throughout the world to great acclaim. He was a featured performer in six (6) productions of the highly respected multimedia series *Beyond the Score* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, demonstrating the evolution of great orchestral works. He has also collaborated with such diverse artists as William Warfield, Joshua Bell, Kurt Elling, and Bobby McFerrin. Goodwin can regularly be heard in performance both as a soloist and collaborator throughout Chicago and beyond.

Our remaining concert dates will be announced before the end of the calendar year. We have a great season planned.

Save the Date! Carlson's Annual TRIVIA NIGHT is Saturday, November 15

Mark your calendar and start studying! Carlson Community Services' **Trivia Night** will be held on **Saturday, November 15** at the **Irving Park Lutheran Church gym at 4057 N. Harding Avenue**. As Carlson's largest fundraiser of the year, Trivia Night has become a beloved community event supporting Carlson's after-school program, community garden and fine arts concert series. Tickets will go on sale soon! Watch our Facebook page or visit the Events page on our website for details.

For more information, visit carlsoncommunityservices.org or contact Sara Yoest at sarayoest@carlsoncommunityservices.org.



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Irving Park Community Food Pantry News

*text and photos by Craig Shutt,
Publicity & Special Events Coordinator, unless noted*

Pantry Seeks Toiletries

The Irving Park Food Pantry provides clients in our priority service area of 60641 and 60618 ZIP codes with the most needed personal-care items, trying to stay in stock on key items: toothpaste and toothbrushes, deodorant, shampoo, body wash, razors, and shaving cream. Unfortunately, they all are popular and even with the limitations we put on how many each client receives, the items are difficult to keep stocked.

To alleviate these shortages, we are asking for donations (or drives) of the basic toiletry items as well as other popular options such as body lotion, conditioner, sunscreen, lip balm, larger sizes of diapers (#5 and #6), adult diapers, washcloths, and baby wipes.

Donations can be dropped off at the **Big Helpers** store at **4184 N. Elston Ave** from 10 to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday or on the front porches at **3912 N. Kenneth** or **4242 N. Hamlin** any time. You also can make a contact-free donation from our Amazon registry using the QR code here. We appreciate your help to fill this ongoing need!



Thank you to all the farmers at the **Lincoln Square Farmers Market** who donate products to the Pantry all summer! Volunteer **Lisa Hendricks** picks up donations at the end of the market on Tuesday and brings them so we can give them out immediately on Wednesday morning to our clients. Donations come from **Bread Man Baking Co., Compean & Sons, Los Rodriguez Farms, and Noffke Family Farms.**

Thank you to the leadership and congregation at **Renewed Hope United Methodist Church**, which selected the Pantry as one of the primary recipients of stewardship dollars and other donations in 2025. We appreciate their ongoing support, especially as many of the members were in the congregation at our former home, the Irving Park United Methodist Church at 3801 N. Keeler Ave. In 2024, after that church building was sold, the congregation merged with Berry United Methodist Church of Lincoln Square to form Renewed Hope.

We appreciate everyone's time, effort and donations that help us be **"Neighbors Helping Neighbors!"**

The Irving Park Community Food Pantry is open on **Wednesday** mornings from **9 am - 12 pm** and on the **second Tuesday** of each month from **6 - 7 pm**. The Pantry is located at **4256 N. Ridgeway Ave.**

For more info about the pantry, contact **John Psiharis**, Executive Director, at info@irvingparkfoodpantry.org or visit www.irvingparkfoodpantry.org.



Troop leader Amy Isadore from the Girl Scout troop at Belding Elementary brought in a donation of 100 boxes of cookies for our clients. Photo by Mary Ann Ballard

Executive Director John Psiharis brings in some of the donations from farmers at the Lincoln Square Farmers Market. Photo by Lisa Hendricks



Jim Motzer, of Renewed Hope and Vicci Rodgers, a long-time Pantry supporter, present a donation from the congregation. Photo by Craig Shutt

Elim Christian Services donated 250 packs of school supplies to the Pantry's annual program! They delivered them to program manager Mary Ann Ballard. Photo by John Psiharis



Irving Park Lutheran Church News & Events

Sunday School at Irving Park Lutheran Church

The presence and participation of children are an important part of Irving Park Lutheran Church, which has members of many different ages, from several months old to well over 90! Children are welcomed and celebrated with important roles during the **10:30 am** worship service. For kids or adults who need a break, they may also enjoy the large and well stocked nursery, downstairs from the sanctuary, which is overseen by an adult skilled in childcare. From September through May, Sunday school classes are offered from **9:15 am – 10:15 am** before the worship service) for children ages 3-13. Each two grade level class includes service projects, arts and crafts, an annual original Christmas Play, and an opportunity to grow in faith and community with caring peers and mentors. For more information, email pastorbouman@iplc.org.

Share Your Musical Gifts

Irving Park Lutheran Church has a number of opportunities to share the gift of music. You can offer an instrumental or vocal solo during the service, or be part of a group of singers. The **Choir** rehearses **Sunday** mornings (except 2nd Sundays of the month) from **9:15 am – 10:05 am**. The **Ensemble** rehearses **Sunday** mornings after worship, from **11:30 am – noon**. You may also be part of the handbell choir (seasonal rehearsals). For more information, contact IPLC's Music Director Bing at music@iplc.org.

Group Trip to Soccer Game at Soldier Field on September 27

IPLC's Welcome & Witness Team is organizing a new fellowship event early this fall- watching the **Chicago Fire** play Columbus at **Soldier Field** on **Saturday, September 27** at **7:30 pm**. Group tickets are \$25 each and we have a twenty five (25) seat bus reserved to take us there and back (included in the price of the ticket). The first twenty five (25) ticket purchases get first dibs on seats! Contact the church office for more information: office@iplc.org.

Flu Shots and Other Vaccines Offered at IPLC on Sunday, October 5

A pharmacist from Walgreens will be offering various shots (flu , RSV, COVID, pneumonia) here at IPLC on **Sunday, October 5**, from **9:00 am - noon**. Many thanks to **Melissa Casillas**, daughter of IPLC Member **Angie Casillas**, who works at Walgreens and helps coordinate this special opportunity at IPLC.

NOTE: The flu shots are free, but other shots require insurance, HMO is not accepted. Please bring insurance cards.



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*Matt 7:7a*

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Romanian materials



Continued from page 1

The key is to recognize this shift and plan for it, rather than letting it catch you off guard.

Set Your Vision for the Season

Before the holidays are in full swing, take a moment to envision your ideal fall and holiday season. What does success look like for you? Maybe it's enjoying your favorite holiday dishes while keeping up with regular movement, or finding a balance between weekday structure and weekend flexibility. Perhaps you want to focus on mindful indulgence, or try a new approach to alcohol during celebrations.

The most important step is to choose a plan that feels realistic and enjoyable for you—not one dictated by strict rules or all-or-nothing thinking.

Plan for Real Life, Not Just the Best Days

Life is unpredictable. There will be stressful days, emotional moments, and times when you crave comfort foods. Instead of aiming for perfection, build flexibility into your plan. Ask yourself: What will I do when things don't go as planned? How can I respond to stress or unexpected changes without abandoning my goals?

Having a strategy for these moments—whether it's a go-to nourishing meal, a quick walk, or simply giving yourself permission to enjoy a treat—helps you stay on track without guilt.

Celebrate Culture and Connection—Mindfully

Food is a powerful part of our traditions and celebrations. You don't have to choose between honoring your heritage and maintaining your health. With a little intention, you can enjoy the foods that matter to you while still supporting your well-being. Consider what dishes are most meaningful, and allow yourself to savor them without overindulgence.

The Bottom Line: Progress, Not Perfection

The most important thing is to create a plan that works for you—one that lets you enjoy the season, celebrate with loved ones, and feel good about your choices. With a little foresight and flexibility, you can move from summer wellness to fall celebrations without losing your momentum.



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Independence Parka

by erica dreisbach



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WWCA Members

Have you renewed your membership yet for 2025?

WWCA Membership runs January 1 through December 31 annually. Your dues help fund a variety of items:

- Ten (10) issues per year of the *West Walker Wire*, delivered free to residences and businesses in West Walker
- The annual community garage sale
- Area non-profit groups like the Irving Park Community Food Pantry, Independence Park, and Independence Library
- Free email updates on neighborhood events, area crime, and a LOT MORE!

Thank you to renewing members:

Dorothy Panzke
Lilian & Jared Pryor
The Lasota / Wendt Family
Charleene Greif

Welcome new members:

John Mendez
Veronica Aguirre
Regan Murphy



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INFORMATION



CAPS REPORT

BEAT 1723

by Jenni and Michael Kus

The next CAPS meeting is at **6:30 pm** on **Wednesday, October 15 (4650 N. Pulaski)**.

All members of the community are welcome to attend!

Public review and comment for the draft De-escalation, Response to Resistance, and Use of Force Suite of Directives has been extended to September 26, 2025! Follow this link to view the draft and submit your comment:

<https://bit.ly/47NxIMd>

It's been a busy summer for our family and unfortunately, we missed both the June and August beat meetings.

Earlier this month, the 017th District CAPS celebrated a successful National Night Out community event! NNO is held annually on the 1st Tuesday of August. Keep this fun family event in mind for next year!

We compiled crime information from the CPD CLEARMAP Source Data (<https://gis.chicagopolice.org/>) to catch you up since our June newsletter update.

Beat 1723

017th district officers responded to the following types of incidents, separated by Ward:

June

Ward 33	Assault x 1, Battery x 10, Burglary x 2, Robbery (armed) x 1, Theft x 3, Vandalism x 2, Misc Other x 10
Ward 39	Assault x 2, Battery x 1, Vandalism x 1, Misc Other x 1
Ward 45	Assault x 3, Battery x 3, Burglary x 2, Criminal Damage x 1, Human Trafficking x 1, Theft x 6, Misc x 2

July

Ward 33	Assault x 4, Battery x 4, Burglary x 2, Criminal Trespass x 3, Deceptive Practice (fraud) x 4, Narcotic x 1 (crack), Theft x 7, Weapons Violation x 2, Misc Other x 7
Ward 39	Battery x 1, Burglary x 1, Theft x 3, Misc Other x 1
Ward 45	Assault x 3, Battery x 4, Criminal Damage x 1, Criminal Trespass x 2, Deceptive Practice (fraud) x 3, Prostitution x 1, Public Indecency x 1, Theft x 4, Misc Other x 2

August

Ward 33	Assault x 2, Burglary x 1, Criminal Damage x 1, Deceptive Practice (fraud) x 1, Theft x 4, Weapons Violation x 1, Misc Other x 1
Ward 39	Theft x 3
Ward 45	Assault x 1, Battery x 2, Theft x 1

Tips/Reminders:

- ☐ **Call 911** to report emergent crimes, suspicious activity or individuals in your neighborhood, and provide detailed descriptions of the individuals and vehicles involved in any incident.
- ☐ To report incidents such as theft, criminal damage to property, lost property and other non-emergency situations, you may **call 311** to have a police officer complete a report or some reports can be completed online.
- ☐ **utilize the CHI311 app** to create/track service requests and learn more about the city services available to residents. Use 311 to report those unavoidable potholes in our alleys and streets!
- ☐ If you suspect drug trafficking in your area, please visit <https://webapps1.chicago.gov/eforms/drugTrafficking> and fill out the form with as many details as possible.

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