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PTO Monthly Meetings: 2nd Wed each month

Stay Informed

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COLFAX COMMUNICATOR THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COLFAX K-8 VOLUME 13, NO. 2

February 2020

Quality Supplemental Education • Fundraising • Parent-Teacher Collaboration • Community Communication & Support

A Letter from the President

Dear Colfax Families,

Do you think that we'll make our goal? This is what Zauyah Waite, Colfax's PTO Vice President of Fundraising, and I anxiously debated with just a week remaining in our annual Ask-Drive Fundraiser and still \$9,000 more to raise.

But this is Colfax.

A place where Eliot Kennedy and Mary Dorfner Hay take the initiative and donate their time to facilitate our many recess volunteers so that our kids have an opportunity to use Colfax's Bob O'Conner (PTOfunded) playground. And a place where they also ensure we have a fully-equipped activity locker for indoor recess.

A place where Sarah Grubb facilitates the annual Teacher Celebratory Luncheon with food provided by dozens of Colfax Families inspired by the many cultures from our diverse community. And a place where the teachers describe the Teacher Celebratory Luncheon as the best day of the year.

A place where Tiffany Stuckey coordinates the collection of \$1200 from our generous Colfax

Families as a thank you to our 60 non-homeroom teachers and staff. And a place where she also coordinates our volunteer Homeroom Reps to provide a classroom gift to each of our 40 homeroom teachers from all of their students.

A place where Mrs. Edwards promotes and directs a student musical (Beauty and the Beast this year!) with unrivaled passion and professionalism. And a place where I am genuinely excited to spend three nights in May watching my daughter and her classmates perform under her direction.

So, did we meet our Ask-Drive fundraising goal? Of course we did! In fact, 140 generous Colfax Families donated more than \$33,000 (25% increase from 2018). Your donations of both time (volunteers needed) and resources (**\$100 per child**) are essential to our continued success.

The "Party-4-Play" Silent/Live Auction is our next big fundraiser and is scheduled for March 28, 2020. This year, we are targeting to raise \$30,000: please be part of the excitement of helping our Colfax students by volunteering for the event and/or buying a ticket and partying with us! Contact our Party-4-Play Chairperson, Amanda Cline, at <u>secretary@colfaxpto.org</u> for more information.

Sincerely,

Ross Ingram

Colfax PTO President

Proudly Pittsburgh Public



\$30,000 Please help us reach our target for this year's Party-4-Play

Movie Night Submitted by: Sarah Grubb

The fall family movie night held in October was a blast! Kids and grownups enjoyed popcorn, pizza, and other snacks served by a wonderful, hard working group of middle school volunteers. Toy Story 4 provided lots of laughs for our viewers in the gym and we had a strong group of viewers determined to make it to the very end of Avengers: Endgame in the cafeteria. We raised over \$600 for the Middle Level students' end of the year trip. Thank you to everyone that volunteered and to those that came out to watch the movies and support our students. We're looking forward to another fun movie night in the spring.







A Letter from the Principal

Greetings Colfax Families,

I hope this edition of the Communicator finds you and your family doing well! We have all been enjoying the unseasonably warmer weather this season has afforded us. Teachers and Administration are hard at work finalizing budgets for the upcoming school year, reviewing staffing details to accommodate projected enrollment, and beginning the work of creating master schedules. Many of you have asked; I have not received any additional information regarding previously discussed spacing concerns. However as a team, we are working hard to plan accordingly for the 2020-2021 school year.

We are well into the second half of the 2019-2020 school year. This is the time of year that it is imperative to be aware of your child's academic and behavioral progress, support given, and a plan of next steps to encourage growth at home and in school. Teachers will be reaching out to individual parents to schedule meetings regarding. If you are unable to meet in person, we will accommodate you by scheduling a telephone conference.

As a reminder, please refer to our district website, robo calls, local radio and television stations for information regarding school delays and closings. Oftentimes students unknowingly report at regular times during delays and closures. Create a plan with your child regarding what to do if there is a bus or school delay. During inclement weather our classes begin at 10:05. Breakfast is not provided on two hour delay days; however juice and muffins are available.

Please mark your calendars for the upcoming events and early dismissals:

- Report Card distribution Feb. 7
- Half Day Dismissal/Middle Level Club / **PBIS Incentives Feb. 7**
- Family Ice Skating Night Feb. 10 .
- Half Day Dismissal/Middle Level Clubs / **PBIS Incentives Feb. 21**
- Rescheduled Ski Trip Feb. 28
- Mobile Dentist Exams March 10
- Soccer Tryouts March 10-12
- Half Day Dismissal/Middle Level Club / **PBIS Incentives March 13**
- Half Day Dismissal, Middle Level Dance / **PBIS Incentives March 27**

Best

Dr. Sanders-Woods

6th Annual MLK Day Unity Brunch Essay Winners

The Fight for Freedom Continues

Congratulations to Colfax sixth graders, Kofi Opoku-Dakwa and Miles Bluman for placing 1st and 2nd in the Middle School category at the 6th Annual MLK Day Unity Brunch essay contest.

The event was held January 20th, 2020 at the Hosanna House, in Pittsburgh, and was held to honor members of the community who devote time to service and advocacy, as well as highlighting youth for their volunteer and scholastic achievements.



Colfax Ski Club Takes to the Slopes



A Message from Pam Harbin, School Board Representative

Hello Colfax families!

I'm honored and excited to serve as your School Board Director and work with each of you to create the schools our children and educators deserve. I hope you will "like" my Facebook page where you can find important information about what's happening in the District. You can also find information about upcoming School Board meetings with links to agendas and videos. Please feel free to reach out to me anytime - I welcome your ideas, comments, and questions.

My Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/PamHarbinPGH/

My email address: pharbin1@pghschools.org

Pam Harbin





Colfax PTO Family Ice Skating Night



Join us on Monday February 10th from 7:00 to 9:00 PM at the Schenley Oval Ice Rink

Admission for the event is free. Skate Rental is \$3.50

Hot chocolate and small snacks will be available for purchase

We need a few volunteers to help make the event run smoothly (sell skate rentals or work the concession stand). If you are able to help please sign up here. It would be most appreciated https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0C4FA4AA2CAAFB6-colfax or contact Sarah Grubb srherrle@gmail.com with any questions



Friends and family are welcome! The more, the merrier!



Colfax Chess Club

Submitted by: Jitka Benedikova

Thanks to the generosity of our Colfax PTO and parents' support, Colfax could once again open the doors to the lunch chess program. This program is free to all students 1st – 8th grade, who are interested.

The chess classes are split into 2 sessions, one in fall and the second one in winter/spring. Children, grouped by grade, meet once a week during their lunch/recess period for total of 7 weeks in fall and 7 weeks in winter/spring.

We have two great teachers, that many of you probably already know, Jerry Meyers and Gabriel Petesch, who are experienced chess teachers as well as good chess players.

Big thanks go to Mrs. Julie King as well as to all our teachers, who always support programs like these and lend their classrooms for a good cause.

We really hope that children, who are currently in our chess program continue enjoy it and learn a lot.

If you do have questions about Colfax chess program, please contact us on: <u>cxlunchchess@</u> <u>colfaxpto.org</u>







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Tuesday-Friday 7am-6pm / Saturday 8am-5pm / Sunday 8am-2pm

Making a Splash with Colfax Swim Team

Submitted by: Lorena Mitchell

Another swimming season has come to an end and on Wednesday, January 22 Colfax participated in the Pittsburgh Middle school championship. Before we reveal the results of Pittsburg Colfax, have you ever thought about being a better competitor in swimming. Here are a few ways that you can get use to swimming and turning like a boss:

Do your wall turns to make sure that you maintain your speed while swimming. You can practice this by diving from the side of the pool about 7-8 meters away from the wall and swim your fastest toward the wall before approaching your turn. Don't slow down.

Maintain a steady pace for half a lap and then build up to a sprint and do a turn at full speed, explode off the wall to the 12.5m mark and then cruise the remainder of lap.

Always try your wall turns at practice. The fastest way to improve your turns is to practice regularly in practice. We sometimes slow down at the wall when we don't mean to. Faster turns mean not being afraid to approach the wall at full speed.

So, there you have it, three simple ways that you can use to get comfortable with performing at high speed in practice so that there aren't any surprises when it matters most. Give one of them a try at your next practice and let me know how it goes.



Well, do Colfax swimmers attack the wall while swimming in Championship? Most certainly. Eighth Grade swimmer, Casey Bloom has mastered the wall turn and decreased her time to 33 second while placing 1st in City Championships and winning the Gold. Sixth Grader, Zoe Casci, also won Gold and 8th grader Alina Weise won the Silver in the 100- and 200-yard free style events. Utilizing turns on every lap.

The girls placed first in every event, except the 50-yard breast where they won silver. Congratulations to both girls' and boy's swim teams for a wonderful season. Good luck to the 8th grade and I am looking forward to another successful year next year.

Girl's Swim Team Coach Mitchell

Casey Bloom Ava Czerwinski Alina Weise Ella Washburn Ella Greenfield Swati Mylarappa Lillian Schaefer Serenity Fennell-Massey Leilah Reed Natalie Ruane Zoe Casci Rino Watanabe Mary Pidvysotska'

Boy's Swim Team

Henry O'Boyle **Tobais Badino Ekow Opoku-Dakwa** Luke Peralta Finn Swartzwelder Takumi Nakamura Noah Cline Zach Coffey **Tivon Jackson** Mark Stuckev Kofi Opoku-Dakwa

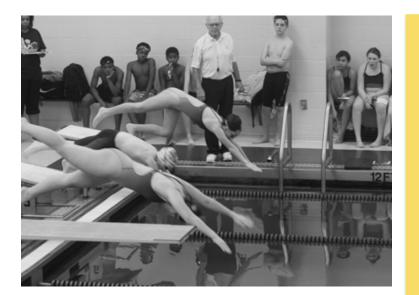
Moving Up

Good luck to our 8th grade swimmers who will be moving on to high school next year.

Casey Bloom Alina Weise Ava Czerwinski Ella Washburn Henry O'Boyle









2020 Middle School Swimming City Championships Results

200 medley relay: 1st place: Alina Weise, Ella Washburn, Ava Czerwinski, Casey Bloom

200 free style: 1st place, Zoe Casci; 2nd Place Alina Weise

100 Individual Medley: 1st Place, Ella Washburn; 2nd Place Lillian Schaefer

50-yard Freestyle: 1st Place, Casey Bloom

50 yard- butterfly: 1st Place, Ella Washburn; 3rd Place Natalie Ruane

100-yard freestyle: 1st Place, Zoe Casci; 2nd Place Alina Weise

50-yard backstroke: 1st Place, Lillian Schaefer

50 yards breaststroke: 2nd Place, Ella Greenfield, Kofi Opoku-Dakwa; 3rd place, Natalie Ruane

100-yard freestyle relay: 1st place, Zoe Casci, Natalie Ruane, Ella Greenfield and Lillian Schafer

200-yard freestyle relay: 1st place, Alina Weise, Ava Cxerwinski, Casey Bloom and Ella Washburn.









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Girls Basketball

Submitted by: Coach Marano

The Girls Middle School Basketball Team had an exciting season this year! Mr. Grate and I (Mrs. Marano) joined the team as new coaches this year. The Middle School Team consisted of determined and motivated student-athletes from 6th. 7th. and 8th Grade.

Despite beginning the season with some losses, the team persevered and earned very close and exciting wins - including a 18-17 win over Sterrett and a 19-18 win over CAPA. The team ended the season with a record of 3-6. We (the coaches) are extremely proud of how this group of student-athletes came together as a team and supported one another. It was a winning season in terms of teamwork and perseverance. Go Cobras!



CONGRATS 8TH GRADERS Good Luck and Keep Balling!

















Boys Basketball

Submitted by: Coach Boyce

Colfax Boys had a good season standing wise finishing with a record of 7-2 led by 8th grader Spencer Waite. We didn't make the playoffs this year do to a 2-way tie for 3rd place that knocked us out. The only silver lining in a season that didn't see us win the city championship for a 3rd year in a row, was the fact that we were the only team to beat the eventual 2020 City Champions in Sterrett.

With returning players such as Tristan Pezzelle, Victor Nernberg and Cecil "Stash" Foster the 2021 Season looks like another successful season ahead for the Cobra's of Colfax.





CONGRATS 8TH GRADERS Good Luck and Keep Balling!















THANK YOU COACH BOYCE



Book Fair / Chorus

Submitted by: Joshua Zelesnick



Colfax had a Book Fair and Chorus performance at Barnes and Noble at the Waterfront on December 14th that was very well attended. Kids enjoyed listening to the author J.M. Emswiller read his children's book, "Little White Spots"; crafting their own unique bookmarks; browsing and buying books; and watching the chorus perform holiday songs. The school raised over \$200 at the event. Thank you to all of the students, parents, family, and friends who attended!

Short Story Contest Submitted by: Joshua Zelesnick

The librarian Mr. Z. held a fall themed short-story contest for 3rd and 4th grade students during the month of October. The contest was inspired by short Halloween stories he read to students during their library classes. Over 70 students entered the contest! Congratulations to the winners! They all received awards with their names on them, and they all will be getting a book of their choosing for a prize.

The winners are listed to the right:



Contest Winners

4th Grade

1st Place - Annie Hoffmier

2nd Place - Zoja Lifson

3rd Place (tie) - Annui Xu Lucy Ingram

3rd Grade

1st Place - Norah Gruber

2nd Place (co-authors) - Jack Chatfield Zora Gardiner

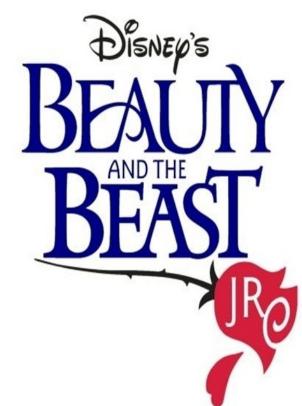
3rd Place (tie) - Chimdalu Isiguzo Maayan Dubowitz

Middle Level Spring Musical

Mrs. Edwards is looking for help in many areas for the spring production of Beauty and the Beast, Jr. If you are interested in helping in any of the areas listed we would love your help. Please email <u>aedwards2@pghschools.org</u> or text 410-206-1067 Mrs. Edwards with your information and area of interest. THANK YOU!

Volunteers Needed

Ticket Sales Costumes Program Snack Sales (intermission) Snack Helpers for Saturday Rehearsals Set Painting Set Construction Clean-up after show Publicity Backstage Chaperoning Other, Please Specify by Email



Winter Concert

Submitted by: Elizabeth Hazlett

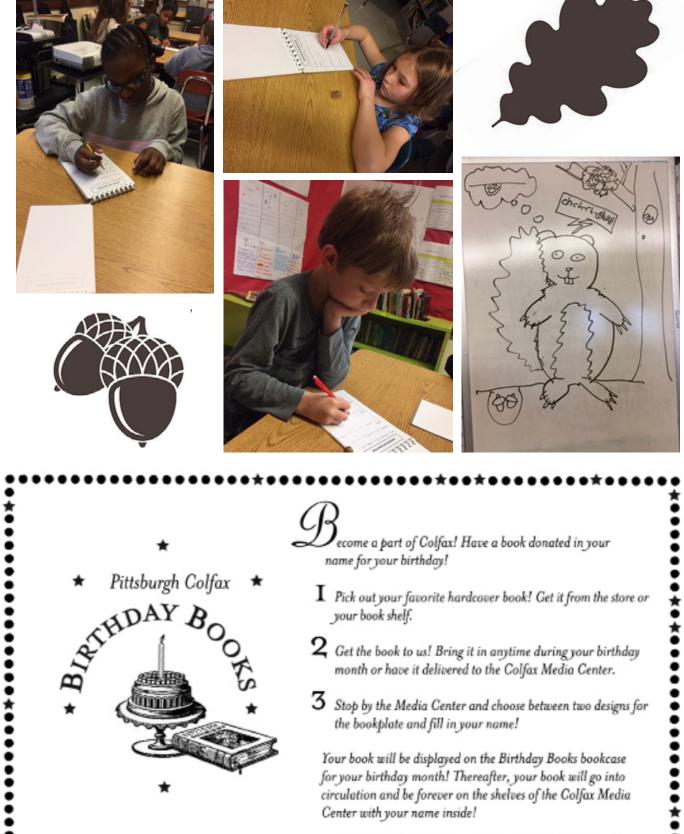
The Winter Instrumental concert was held on December 19, 2019. The concert featured four performing groups: Intermediate Band, Intermediate Strings, Advanced Band, and Advanced Strings. The students played a variety of winter/holiday music they had been learning since October. The students were also joined by some very special guest musicians: Mr. Rose on trumpet with advanced band; Ms. Murphy and Ms. Long on flute with the intermediate band. Mr. Katz and I want to thank everyone for all of their support so far this year. We will be adding to performing groups in the spring, beginning strings and beginning band. We look forward to seeing you then!



Park Stewards Program Update

Submitted by: Casey Weiss

We noticed and wondered about squirrels, hibernation, and acorns. We even got to crack acorns open and record our findings. We love Park Stewards!



Contact Amanda Cline with any questions at amandakasscline@gmail.com or librarian Mr. Zelesnick at jzelesnick1@pghschools.org.

Kandinsky-Inspired Art







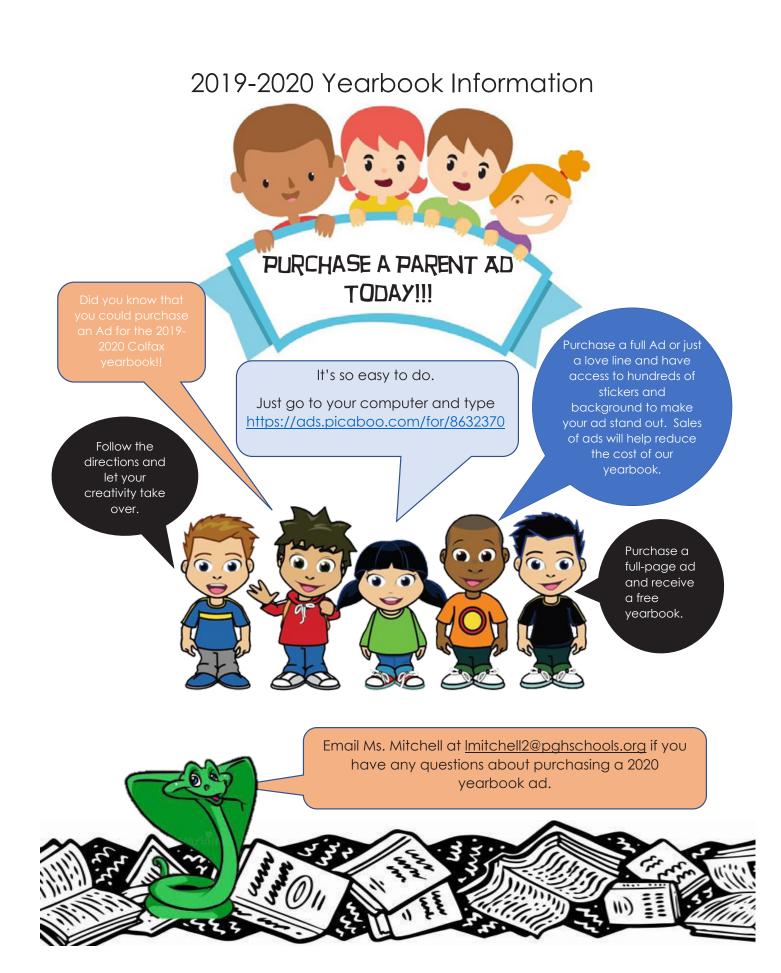
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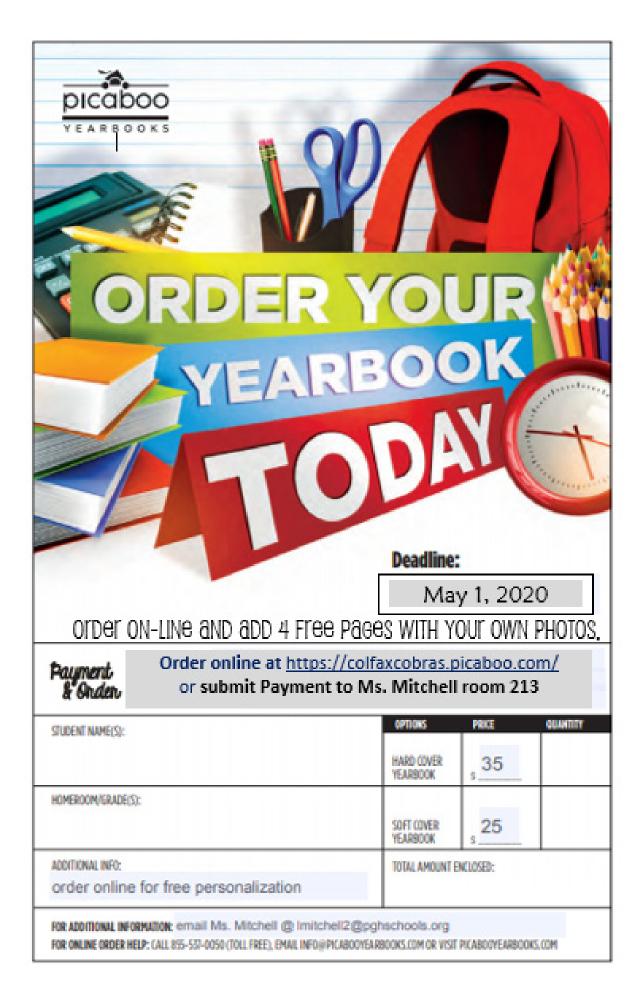


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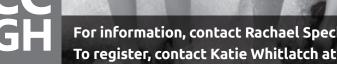
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J&R Day Camp, located on our beautiful 100-acre wooded site in Monroeville, prepares children for life's journeys through connections, values, growth and fun. Activities include daily swim lessons, archery, sports, arts & crafts, ropes course, cooking, gardening, music, woodworking and so much more!

> See you on June 22nd for our first foam party of the summer!



For information, contact Rachael Speck at 412-697-3537 or RSpeck@jccpgh.org To register, contact Katie Whitlatch at 412-697-3540 or KWhitlatch@jccpgh.org

CONNECTIONS • VALUES GROWTH • FUN

Let's All Practice Bus Safety!

Whether you ride the bus to and from school, the gifted center or a field trip, you need to make sure you are practicing bus safety every day! You never know if a bus must stop abruptly or if an emergency is happening on the bus, your safety comes first. Please remember to always do the following when riding the bus

- 1. Get on the correct bus
- 2. Sit down and stay in your seat
- 3. Keep hands feet and unkind words to yourself
- 4. Use an inside voice when speaking to your seat partner, use appropriate language
- 5. No throwing objects of any kind inside or outside of the bus
- 6. Eating and drinking not permitted on the bus

Bus safety is your responsibility, make sure you are practicing bus safety everyday by following the bus rules listed above.



Please remember riding the bus is a privilege not a right! Together we can achieve Bus Safety Excellence here at Colfax!



Recess Volunteers Needed

Looking for a great way to get involved in the Colfax community and helping with the day-to-day needs of students and teachers? Consider becoming a recess volunteer!

Here is one parent's opinion about their time as a recess volunteer:

" I believe this will be my 3rd year volunteering and I really love getting to know my child's classmates outside the classroom. The kids are so excited when I show up to take them down to the playground. It also gives me the opportunity to get to know the teachers and staff better and to have a better feel for what's going on in the school. It has allowed me to feel more connected to the Colfax community. "

A RECESS VOLUNTEER allows for one class from each grade to go the lower playground at recess. This is a big deal to our kids! They are always so happy when it's their turn to go to the playground, but without a RECESS VOLUNTEER present that does not happen!

Volunteering can be a small commitment of your time. Just one or two hours a month can really make a difference for the kids! And don't let getting your Clearances stop you! We will help you navigate this process. Please consider joining our team!

Please contact Mary Dorfner Hay at 412-337-9941 marydorfnerhay@gmail.com_

or Eliot Kennedy at 412-523-0106 eliotkennedy2001@yahoo.com







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