

# SLA Chemistry Division E-Newsletter

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## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

SUE CARDINAL

Greetings and Happy New Year!

The Chemistry Division Board is preparing for the SLA Leadership Summit in Louisville, KY from Jan 23 – 26, 2008. At our meeting, we will thank and say good bye to the Ad Hoc Committee on Information Literacy and welcome the new Awards Committee.

We will also welcome assistant chairs: Denise Callihan, Mentorship; Judith Currano, Membership; Ted Baldwin, Professional Development; and Sophia Guevara, Webmaster. These brave volunteers will transition into their chair-ships over this year bringing new ideas and energy. I can't wait to hear about their plans!

I encourage you to attend and participate in the annual conference this summer in Seattle. Registration is open and Early Bird Registration ends on April 1<sup>st</sup>. The preliminary program will be published soon. If you've never presented before, the poster session is a great place to start! Our theme is "Collaborative Communities in Physical and Virtual Environments: the Science Library and Beyond" and the deadline for submission is March 1<sup>st</sup>. Believe or not, the planning for the 2009 program has begun and Luray Minkiewitz, Cathy Dipalma and Susan Makar will be our planners.

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The Editor welcomes readers' contributions. Items wanted include: Articles of interest to the community of chemistry information specialists, book reviews for new reference materials, citations for new journals, accomplishments & accolades for the Members' Corner and website recommendations for "Beyond the Chemistry Web..." If you have something you would like to contribute, please contact the Editor or send it via e-mail as a text file or Word document.

April issue copy deadline: *April 4, 2008*

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Later this year we will update our strategic plan. Although not exciting reading, this document encompasses our core values and provides some direction. Our current plan is located at <http://units.sla.org/division/dche/Strategic/index.htm>  
Let me know if you would like to become involved in this process.

Lastly, we'd like to grow our international membership. We are looking for practical ways to do this so feel free to send any experiences and ideas you'd like to share.

Thank you to all the Chemistry Division volunteers. ❖

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESKTOP

Welcome to the long-awaited January-March issue of the Chemistry Division Newsletter! This is the first issue with our new assistant editor, Kevin Lindstrom, from the University of British Columbia. In this issue you'll find an article about Margarete Bower's trip to China as an exchange librarian and Ted Baldwin's article on the Creativity Collection in his library. In the next issue we'll be gearing up for the Annual Meeting in Seattle. Please send any article or column ideas to Kevin or me. We look forward to hearing from you! ❖

Meghan Lafferty and Kevin Lindstrom



## A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR-ELECT LURAY MINKIEWICZ

Greetings and a Happy New Year!

As I eagerly wait for the Spring-Summer catalog from one of my favorite department stores that usually arrives on my doorstep near the beginning of January, I am struck with the “lead time” that must be involved with the production of one of these catalogs. This reminds me of the “lead time” needed for planning the SLA Annual Conferences, too!

At the SLA Leadership Summit in Louisville, KY, Jan 23-26, the planning for the 2009 annual conference will officially begin. This will be an especially significant conference since it will mark the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of SLA.

Your friendly SLA Chemistry Division planners for the 2009 conference are:

Susan Makar, 2009 Conference Planner

susan.makar@nist.gov

Cathy DiPalma, MRM Section 2009 Program Planner

cathy.dipalma@saint-gobain.com

Luray M. Minkiewicz, Chair-Elect

luray.m.minkiewicz@usa.dupont.com

Any of us will gladly take your suggestions to make this centennial conference a great one for the Chemistry Division and MRM Section. Let us know what has worked well in the past and what has not. Although we have many ideas for conference topics that have been generated from past lists, who knows what the next “hot topic” will be 18 months from now!

- What is the future of chemical or materials science information? Of chemical or material science librarians/ information professionals?
- Is science becoming even more interdisciplinary and if so, how does that effect our profession?
- Are more narrowly defined subject specialists needed or more generalists?
- Where is e-everything (or everything-e) leading us?
- What is beyond Web 2.0?

So let's all look into our crystal balls and send those ideas our way. ❖

## EXCHANGE LIBRARIAN TO CHINA

MARGARETE BOWER

About this time last year I was preparing for a visit to China as an exchange librarian at Wuhan University. This was part of an ongoing program the University Library System at the University of Pittsburgh has established with various academic and research libraries in China. We regularly have visiting Chinese librarians who learn about our systems and current American library practice, and Pitt librarians periodically have had a chance to apply to go to China on exchange.

Wuhan is a major and historic city on the Yangtze River, and Wuhan University is located on what many consider to be the most beautiful campus in the country. While I arrived too late for the cherry and plum blossoms, I enjoyed the wooded hills, flowers, and the huge East Lake. Although I spent most of my time in the main library, I did visit a number of other libraries on campus and in the city, including the chemistry, engineering, and medical libraries, another university library, and the Wuhan public library, which is in a very nice new building.

For about a month I worked giving presentations to the library staff and administrators and to students. I also spoke at a meeting of the Hubei Provincial Library Association and did some proofreading of English language documents and web pages. The librarians are interested in providing high quality 21<sup>st</sup> century library services and in the specifics of how major American research libraries work. For instance, they were aware of the ACRL guidelines for information literacy, but were interested in how we implement that type of instruction. One of the things I shared was the DCHE chemical information literacy guidelines. They were also very interested in what our “subject librarians” do, as well as our peer review process for librarians and our annual review process for all library staff.

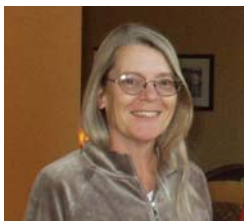
I taught two classes for a first-year chemical information course on finding property data on the web and how to search Gmelin. I also spoke to science graduate students on writing papers in English as a second language and preparing papers for publication in international journals. One of those students I met again this fall as a new chemistry graduate student at Pitt.

The information technology available was quite up-to-date. The “electronic reading room” where I gave some presentations had approximately 90 computers that were regularly in use. Chemistry students have access to Beilstein, Gmelin, and SciFinder Scholar as well as most of the major publisher e-journals. The library is also working on cooperative projects to digitize and share resources that may be rare and old or only available regionally.

Some differences I noticed were the separate reading rooms for different subject matter and formats, e.g. social science books and humanities journals. Some were designated as faculty reading rooms, but did not seem to be tightly restricted. Most of the reading rooms did not circulate their books; separate rooms housed the circulating collection. Students left their backpacks in lockers before entering the reading rooms. The reference department, where I had a desk, answered many questions that came in remotely, but the reference desk was a table near the main entrance that was staffed by a librarian with a laptop computer. And does your institution teach chemistry classes on Friday night?

As things worked out I didn't have as much time to talk informally with the librarians and learn the details of their work as I had hoped. I also wish I had managed more time to speak informally with the students. Many are eager to practice speaking English and curious about life in the U.S. and studying at an American

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## NEWS FROM THE MRM SECTION CHAIR

NORA K. STOECKER

Happy 2008! I trust you all had a relaxing holiday break and are facing the New Year with high energy! I want to thank Betsy Aldridge for her hard work of the past two years, as chair of the MRM section, and for her continued work on behalf of the section. She is a high-energy person and I'm glad to have met her!! I have three priorities for the section this year – communications, the strategic plan, and the 2008 conference in Seattle.

### I. Communications

**MRM Section:** I communicate best by e-mail, and that is also the best way to reach me. I'll do my best to keep MRM members informed and involved in section plans and activities by utilizing the MRM section listserv. I believe that you must "opt-in" to the listserv; you're not automatically enrolled.

To subscribe, send an e-mail to [lyris@sla.lyris.net](mailto:lyris@sla.lyris.net) with the **SUBSCRIBE** command in the body of the message:  
**Subscribe** SLA-DMRM your-e-mail\_address "FirstName LastName"

**Chemistry Division:** As members of the chemistry division, MRM section members may miss out on important news and updates unless they also subscribe to the Chemistry division listserv. Send an e-mail to [lyris@sla.lyris.net](mailto:lyris@sla.lyris.net) with the **SUBSCRIBE** command in the body of the message:

**Subscribe** SLA-DCHE your-e-mail\_address "FirstName LastName"

I belong to both, and, honestly, you won't get inundated with messages! Please subscribe. Additional information about posting messages, unsubscribing, etc. can be found at

<http://www.sla.org/content/community/lists/instruction/index.cfm>

### II. Strategic Plan

The MRM strategic plan has four goals:

1. Provide channels of communication among members (includes the listservs, Sci-Tech News and the online DCHE newsletter (notification sent via the DCHE list ☺, and the section website). Contributors needed!
2. Increase member involvement by developing programs and opportunities other than conference attendance. I'll be soliciting ideas and notices via the DMRM and DCHE lists.
3. Position section members to meet future information challenges. Champions are needed for this effort. Please contact me if you're interested.
4. Develop a vision of the profession. This includes opportunities for partnering, and champions are needed. I invite all section members to read the full strategic plan and contact me if you are interested in contributing to one or more of the goals. See <http://units.sla.org/division/dche/mrm/2007/strategicplan.pdf>

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## BEYOND THE CHEMISTRY WEB...

BOB BUCHANAN

Career information and job hunting resources are highly sought after information. Here is a brief guide to the best job-related web sites for chemistry and valuable general web sites.

### Off the Beaten Path

**PhDs.org: Science, Math, and Engineering Career Resources** aims at students who want to pursue a Ph.D. and those with a Ph.D. who are looking for work. The extensive resources and the forum for early-career scientists help balance the perky optimism offered by most professional societies. Rank graduate programs by faculty reputation, educational quality, student funding, tuition and living expenses, program size, and student demographics at **Find the Graduate School That's Right for You**.

<http://www.phds.org>

<http://graduate-school.phds.org/rankings>

**Chemicalmusings** is an intelligent, if somewhat jaded, blog written by “an industrial chemist trying to craft a career.”

<http://www.milomuses.com/chemicalmusings>

### Chemistry Job Hunting

Unfortunately, the ACS does not put its terrific career-related resources in one place. In addition to a searchable job bank, **ACS Careers** has sections called Career Advice and Publications and the ACS Chemistry Blog. Students may appreciate “Profiles of chemists at work” and “Career descriptions” in the section What Chemists Do. At **ACS Education**, the Graduate Education link offers several good articles for prospective chemistry graduate students. For some of the most detailed and up-to-date articles and data on chemistry careers in the U.S., use the **Career & Employment** link in *Chemical & Engineering News*. Especially valuable is the annual “Employment Outlook” cover story published in the first November issue. Finally, search **DGRweb 2007**, the free online version of the *ACS Directory of Graduate Research*, for information about U.S. and Canadian academic researchers.

<http://www.acs.org/careers>

<http://www.acs.org/education>

<http://pubs.acs.org/cen/employment/employment.html>

<http://dgr.rints.com>

**Science Careers**, from the journal *Science*, provides an average of 2,900 job listings for scientists in industry, academia, and non-profit organizations. Features include career advice, information about graduate careers, funding opportunities, and Career Forum.

<http://www.scijobs.org>

**Naturejobs** offers a searchable job bank with thousands of positions worldwide. Career-related articles from *Nature* publications are gathered together in Naturejobs Career Magazine which also includes Career Snapshots and the Career Expert.

<http://www.nature.com/naturejobs>

## PROFESSIONAL FOCUS: JUDITH MATTHEWS

### INTERVIEW BY SOPHIA GUEVARA, MLIS

1. *What is your position and who are the clients that you serve?*

I am the Head of the Biomedical & Physical Sciences Library at Michigan State University (MSU). I serve the Department of Chemistry and the Physics-Astronomy Department as librarian/bibliographer. I also provide services to the Department of Microbiology & Molecular Genetics, the Department of Physiology, and the Department of Biochemistry. The latter three departments are also served by another bibliographer whose office is located in MSU's Main Library. I am also liaison to the National Superconducting Cyclotron Laboratory which maintains its own private library.

2. *What is a typical day like for you in your position?*

There really is no "typical" day, but typical activities involve responding to faculty e-mail requests and problems, selecting monographs for the collection, responding to reference questions at the desk including assisting students in using databases (SciFinder Scholar or Beilstein/Gmelin), reviewing our journal collection for possible cancellations or the purchase of new titles. I might also be preparing for the chemistry graduate student fall orientation, writing new handouts, or updating our website to include new resources.

3. *How did you get involved in chemistry librarianship?*

The Chemistry Librarian position was eliminated by the Department of Chemistry during a budget review a few years ago. I assumed the role of chemistry librarian/bibliographer at that time, despite the fact that I do not have a background in chemistry – a definite challenge.

4. *What innovations have you made use of in order to best deliver the information your clients are seeking?*

On the BPS Library website I have a number of regularly updated blogs: *News*, *New Books*, *Website of the Week*, *Service Alerts* (to notify clients of any current problems with databases, e-journals, or other electronic resources). I also send out, very selectively, news of importance to chemistry faculty via the department e-mail list. If I overwhelm them with e-mail, they will simply ignore it and I will lose them as an audience. I also develop online resource guides on various topics.

5. *What do you consider to be the most important tools (information products) that you use in any given day?*

Beilstein, SciFinder Scholar, ISI's Web of Science, Google (yes, Google! for quick look-ups). And of course, our other journal databases and individual journal links via our library catalog.

6. *How do you keep yourself informed about the profession's best practices and the newest information products? What resources would you suggest to other librarians?*

I subscribe to excellent chemistry discussion lists: SLA-DCHE, SLA's Chemistry Division list, and CHMINF-L (Chemical Information Sources Discussion List) originated by Gary Wiggins, former head of the Chemistry Library at the University of Indiana and chemistry information guru. I also read the SLA Chemistry Division's website at <http://units.sla.org/division/dche/>. I, of course, visit the vendor exhibits at SLA's annual conference and read such publications as *Searcher*, *Information Today*, *Library Journal*, and many others.

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# GETTIN' CREATIVE! TOYS IN A SCIENCE LIBRARY

TED BALDWIN

Ever want to try something out of the ordinary for your library? How about adding a collection of toys and other creative items? In fall of 2004, I developed this very type of hands-on collection. It was a lot of fun to set up and added an interesting learning tool for my students and faculty.

My library serves University of Cincinnati's College of Applied Science (CAS), an undergraduate college with diverse range of technology programs. Bachelor's degrees include chemical technology, culinary science, construction management, horticulture, information technology and electrical engineering. My library's collection focuses on practical materials for the budding scientist or engineer, such as technical handbooks, books on professional ethics, trade journals, and career resources.

The original idea for what became known as our "Creativity Collection" came from the Dean of CAS, who had heard of a similar collection at the library at Olin College of Engineering near Boston, MA. He offered to pay for these out of the college's funds. How could I refuse! After much research, including visits to toy stores and museum shops, I developed a proposal, which was fully funded. Then, the real fun began, as the contents of the collection began to arrive: hands-on building and modeling kits (Darling models, K'NEX, Lincoln Logs, LEGOs), artistic resources (drawing paper, modeling clay), games (chess/checkers game table), and a magnetic dry-erase board. The collection was placed prominently in the library, on shelving formerly occupied by part of the reference collection.

After more than three years, this collection has continued inspiring students' abilities in discovery and invention, while giving them a helpful break from their studying. Students have built and rebuilt all sorts of contraptions, and have enjoyed some intense games of chess between classes. Faculty have also found the Creativity Collection beneficial, and have used it in problem-based learning exercises. The LEGO sets even traveled to Brazil in 2007 for use in a professional development workshop.

For the future, I hope to further integrate the collection into the classroom experience. I also hope to evaluate its usefulness to our users, and see what additional toys they would recommend. Building and using this collection has given me a new perspective on the role of an academic science library, especially in how I can help to build professional 'soft skills' in my students. I would highly recommend that libraries put out a few "toys" and see what happens! For more information, see <http://www.libraries.uc.edu/libraries/cas/Creativity.html>.



## 2008 MARION E. SPARKS AWARD FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CORY CRAIG

The Chemistry Division of the Special Libraries Association (SLA) is sponsoring a student/new member travel award to defray the costs of attending the 2008 SLA Annual Meeting June 15-18 in Seattle, WA. The award is intended to encourage the professional development of student members and new members of the Chemistry Division and encourage their participation in Chemistry Division activities.

**TRAVEL AWARD:** \$1,500 stipend to attend the 2008 SLA Annual Conference. The winner will also receive a certificate of achievement and will be introduced at the Chemistry Division Business Meeting & Breakfast.

**ELIGIBILITY:** All student members of the Chemistry Division and all new members of the Chemistry Division (individuals who have joined since January 2007) are eligible. All applicants must have joined the Chemistry Division by March 3, 2008. See below for how to join.

### APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

Please submit the following:

-A brief essay that: a) clearly articulates your objectives for professional development; and b) indicates what you hope to gain from attending the SLA Annual Meeting. Maximum length: 2 pages.

-Resume

-Names of two references.

-Brief budget (expected expenses for registration, airfare, lodging, food and/or continuing education course). Registration in a Chemistry Division or other Continuing Education (CE) course is recommended, but not required.

**DEADLINE:** All applications must be received by March 17, 2008. The winner will be notified by April 10, 2008. Essays will be judged by a panel of SLA Chemistry Division members.

**HISTORY:** The award is named to honor Marion E. Sparks, a chemistry librarian at the University of Illinois from 1913 until her death in 1929. Ms. Sparks contributed a great deal to the field of chemical information, her achievements include teaching courses on chemical information, and authoring and publishing what is argued to be the first book to formally address chemical literature and library instruction.

### SUBMIT APPLICATION VIA EMAIL TO:

Cory Craig

University of California, Davis

Physical Sciences & Engineering Library

One Shields Avenue

Davis, California 95616-8676

[cjcraig@ucdavis.edu](mailto:cjcraig@ucdavis.edu)

**SLA CHEMISTRY DIVISION SPARKS AWARD:** <http://www.sla.org/division/dche/sparks.htm>

### Want to join the Chemistry Division of SLA?

**Not a member of SLA?** To join SLA go to <http://www.sla.org/content/membership/joinsla/index.cfm>.

When you join SLA, you can also join one division for free, additional divisions are \$18/year.

**Already an SLA member?** To join the Chemistry Division either: 1) Download the SLA Change/Add Units form (<http://www.sla.org/content/membership/unitchange.cfm>) and fax or mail it to SLA. **OR** 2) Call 1-703-647-4936 and pay with a credit card. When you join SLA, you can join one division for free, additional divisions are \$18/year.

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university. In addition to putting Gmelin to immediate use after the class, they also asked about Pittsburgh and the University. One even said he liked to follow the Steelers.

Overall it was a very rewarding experience. Everyone was helpful, both regarding my professional activities and showing me the city and making sure I had lots of good food. They also helped with travel plans for the vacation time I took at the end to see more of China. I now have a better sense of the library systems our Chinese graduate students are used to and hope the information I shared will be useful. I now look forward to sharing some of the Pittsburgh area with our next visitor from Wuhan or another Chinese library. ❖

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**New Scientist Jobs** offers a job bank with hundreds of positions and career-related articles from the *New Scientist* magazine at the link Career Advice.

<http://www.newscientistjobs.com>

**Organic Chemistry Jobs Worldwide** focuses on synthetic organic chemistry jobs, but it has links to chemistry job banks.

<http://organicworldwide.net/jobs>

**Chemistry Jobs in the UK** is an excellent portal for academic, research, and scientific professions in Britain and Europe. **RSC – Careers Gateway** provides a British perspective on chemistry careers and job hunting.

<http://www.jobs.ac.uk/categories/chemistry>

<http://www.rsc.org/Gateway/Subject/Careers>

From the Chemical Information Sources Wiki, **Careers in Chemistry** by Bob Buntrock gives a good overview of what to do with an undergraduate chemistry degree.

[http://cheminfo.informatics.indiana.edu/cicc/cis/index.php/Careers\\_in\\_Chemistry](http://cheminfo.informatics.indiana.edu/cicc/cis/index.php/Careers_in_Chemistry)

### **General Job Hunting**

What might happen if a librarian ran a web site on how to find a job? A high quality site you can trust? Yes. Founded in 1994 by a former librarian, **The Riley Guide** accepts no advertising except sponsorship by *CareerJournal.com*. No jobs are listed, but there are plenty of annotated links to job banks, articles on the job search, and other job hunting resources.

<http://www.rileyguide.com>

**Job-Hunt.org** is an outstanding portal to locate job banks by subject and location. While providing straight-talk on job hunting much like the Riley Guide, it aims more at those that already have a job.

**CareerBuilder.com** and **Monster.com** also offer advice for job seekers, but their primary virtue is that they are huge job banks.

<http://www.job-hunt.org>

<http://www.careerbuilder.com>

<http://www.monster.com> ❖

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### **III. Seattle 2008: Materials Resources Forum**

Planning continues for the MRM section program planned for the 2008 conference in Seattle. We're re-formatting the vendor roundtable concept slightly, calling it the "Materials Resources Forum." Four vendors have accepted our invitation to date. I'm pleased to welcome ASM International, CSA Proquest, Springer, and STN-Fiz Karlsruhe. Each will have the opportunity to tell us about recent materials-related additions to their offerings, but I envision the bulk of the session being devoted to either case-studies or other discussion of the value-add for research librarians and end-user customers. I'll be seeking questions and comments from each of you, to help provide the presenters with discussion guidelines.

I'm looking forward to working with you and supporting your interests in 2008. See below for contact information. ❖

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*7. In your opinion, what are the top three challenges for chemistry information professionals? What tips can you provide to other librarians to overcome them?*

Our challenges are much the same as for librarians in other subject disciplines, really; all relating to the changing landscape of information access: coping with increasing journal pricing and bundling in a climate of stretched to-the-limit budgets, communicating effectively with library clientele (especially faculty) about those issues (and encouraging the shift to publication in open access journals), and simply trying to keep up, as information professionals, with new information resources and database platforms.

*8. What suggestions do you have for new information professionals who are interested in becoming chemistry librarians?*

For starters, I'd advise that they contact chemistry librarians at a variety of institutions to ask questions – even request a visit/tour of their libraries. I'd also suggest that they attend chemistry sessions at SLA's annual conference and any relevant local SLA chapter meetings.

*9. How can the SLA and the Chemistry division continue to support information professionals such as yourself?*

They can continue to offer CE courses excellent programming at the annual conference, as well as web-based seminars. For chemistry librarians without chemistry backgrounds, I highly recommend the *Chemistry for the Non-Chemist Librarian* CE course. I also recommend *Chemical Information Sources, Requests, and Reference*.

*10. In closing, where are your thoughts on the future of chemistry librarianship?*

As more new information professionals enter chemistry librarianship, I believe we will see increasing use of technology in terms of interactive training and teaching, online collaboration, and customized user/course software tool development. I believe we will see the demise of print journal subscriptions. I hope that we will see continued movement toward open access publishing. ❖

<p><b>CHAIR:</b> Sue Cardinal Carlson Library University of Rochester Rochester NY 14627 <a href="mailto:scardinal@library.rochester.edu">scardinal@library.rochester.edu</a> 585-275-9007 585-273-4656 (FAX)</p>	<p><b>CHAIR-ELECT:</b> Luray Minkiewicz E I DuPont De Nemours Co Experimental Station PO Box 80301 Wilmington DE 19880-0301 <a href="mailto:luray.m.minkiewicz@usa.dupont.com">luray.m.minkiewicz@usa.dupont.com</a> 302-695-1257 302-695-1350 (FAX)</p>	<p><b>PAST-CHAIR/NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR:</b> A. Ben Wagner University@Buffalo, SUNY Science &amp; Engineering Library 226 Capen Hall, North Campus Buffalo NY 14260-1672 <a href="mailto:abwagner@buffalo.edu">abwagner@buffalo.edu</a> 716-645-2947 X230   716-645-3710 (FAX)</p>
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