

Solebury Messenger

A bimonthly publication of Solebury Township

Vol. 23, No. 1

BUDGET ISSUE

JANUARY 2017

2017 Budget Highlights

Solebury's new annual budget requires no increase in property taxes to maintain the current level of services provided to the community, Township Manager Dennis Carney reported.

Within the unchanged total millage, the Township shifted 0.25 mills from Debt Service to the General Fund, with a goal of gradually building a General Fund reserve between 2017 and 2024. The fund is intended to provide recourse against catastrophic loss or damage, such as emergency bridge repairs caused by tropical storms and hurricanes, Dennis said.

The total property tax allocation for 2017 is shown in the table.

Police Dept.

The 2017 Police Dept. budget reflects salary increases specified in a three-year collec-

tive bargaining agreement that is in effect through December 31, 2018.

The department will make a \$13,600 capital expenditure in the new year for two in-car cameras, which includes software and training.

Police Chief Dominick Bellizzie plans to purchase cameras for two cars per year until the full fleet is equipped with the technology.

The cameras can be transferred to new vehicles when the cars are replaced, so the chief expects the cameras to adequately serve the department for 20 to 25 years.

The department also spends \$80,000 in capital funds each year on the scheduled replacement of the two oldest police vehicles; the cost includes extended warranties for the new cars.

(continued on page 6)

2017 Property Tax Allocation

General Fund	7.8750 Mills
Fire Fund	1.7500 Mills
Library	0.4047 Mills
Debt Service	12.2803 Mills
Total	22.3100 Mills

SOLEBURY POLICE

Officer Gary W. Forrester, Jr., and Dori Dugan of NHS Cares collect medications at the Giant Food Store during the federal Drug Enforcement Administration's national drug take-back October 22. According to Solebury Police Chief Dominick Bellizzie, Bucks County police departments together collected more than four tons of unneeded and/or expired medications for proper disposal during the autumn event. Solebury's permanent drug collection box is accessible Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM in the Police Department lobby at Township Hall.



Township Newsletter to Go Electronic

Last Print Edition

It's time to sign up for Township emails: The Solebury Messenger is going digital!

After this issue, the Township newsletter will be available by email and on the Township website (soleburytwp.org).

While a small number of printed copies may be available for the convenience of residents without electronic access, it will no longer be delivered by mail.

"By moving forward in this fashion, we accomplish a number of things," noted Township Manager Dennis Carney. "First, we reduce the cost of the newsletter; second, we reduce the amount of paper used; and third, it provides the Township the flexibility to add special editions as events warrant."

The supervisors hope the e-newsletter will draw more residents to visit the website and sign up for email alerts, Dennis said. "That would be an added benefit."

To sign up now, go to soleburytwp.org, click "Solebury Email Alerts," and enter your email address.

What's Inside?



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Township Directory

Emergency? Dial: 9-1-1. Nonemergency? Call: 215-297-5656.

General Inquiries: soleburytownship@soleburytwp.org

Township Manager Dennis H. Carney:

soleburymanager@soleburytwp.org

Asst. Township Manager/Secretary/Treasurer/Zoning Officer

Gretchen Rice: grice@soleburytwp.org

HARB Administrator, Environmental Advisory Council

Secretary Christine Terranova: cterranova@soleburytwp.org

Admin. Asst., LPC Administrator, Planning Commission

Administrator Jean Weiss: jweiss@soleburytwp.org

Parks & Recreation Director Dudley Rice:

soleburyparks@soleburytwp.org

Right-To-Know Officers

Administrative Records: Asst. Twp. Manager Gretchen K. Rice,

soleburymanager@soleburytwp.org

Police Records: Police Chief Dominick Bellizzie,

police@soleburypd.org

Board of Supervisors

Chair Kevin Morrissey

kmorrissey@soleburytwp.org

Supervisor Noel Barrett

nbarrett@soleburytwp.org

Supervisor James Searing

jsearing@soleburytwp.org

Supervisor Paul Cosdon

pcosdon@soleburytwp.org

Supervisor Helen Tai

htai@soleburytwp.org

P.O. Box 139, Solebury, PA 18963

SoleburyTwp.org

Township Calendar

Calendar information is subject to last-minute changes.

Confirm all dates and times with the Township office.

All meetings are held at Solebury Township Hall.

January

- 1/3 Board of Supervisors, Reorganization, 7pm
- 1/9 Historical Architectural Review Board, 7 pm
- 1/9 Planning Commission, 7 pm
- 1/10 Environmental Advisory Council, 7 pm
- 1/17 Board of Supervisors, 7pm
- 1/19 Land Preservation Committee, 7 pm
- 1/19 Parks & Recreation Board, 7 pm

February

- 2/6 Historical Architectural Review Board, 7 pm
- 2/7 Board of Supervisors, 7pm
- 2/13 Planning Commission, 7 pm
- 2/14 Environmental Advisory Council, 7 pm
- 2/16 Land Preservation Committee, 7 pm
- 2/21 Board of Supervisors, 7pm
- 2/23 Parks & Recreation Board, 7 pm



Stay on top of meeting times with email alerts!

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Winter Festival 2017: A 20th Anniversary Extravaganza

An Evening at Odette's Celebrates the River Towns' Shared History of Supporting the Arts

A snowflake snowman is the happy herald of the 20th Winter Festival, to be held Jan. 21-29. Some exciting new events are planned to help you celebrate!

The 2017 concert and VIP Gala will be a Broadway-style show called *An Evening at Odette's*,



featuring entertainer Bob Egan, Odette's alumni, special guest vocalists, and The Brian Pastor Big Band.

Solebury Parks and Recreation is sponsoring a new **Hawaiian Luau** to get festival goers in a tropical mood in the cold winter months. Magician Ran'D Shine, back from a Las Vegas appearance on the TV show *Penn & Teller: Fool Us*, will be there to perform two hours of extraordinary, strolling magic.

New Hope Park & Rec's first **Karaoke Night**, emceed by Mayor Larry Keller, is sure to be a hit. DJ Rockin' Ron will offer singers 100,000-plus song choices, and the audience will vote to award prizes.

Blues, BBQ, & NFL Playoffs is planned to appease anyone using football as an excuse to stay home! The game will air on large-screen TVs, and the Bob Lanza Blues Band will also entertain the crowd.

Restaurants participating in the first-ever **Soup-A-Thon** will offer \$2 cups and \$5 bowls of different soups for lunch and dinner. A \$20 ticket lets you sample each soup and vote on a winner.

Beloved events that have drawn crowds to Winter Festival for two decades will make another encore this year, but remember to purchase tickets for all events early through winterfestival.net so you don't find yourself left outside in the cold!

Some event details below.
More at: winterfestival.net



MAGICIAN RAN'D SHINE

Winter Festival 2017 Highlights: January 21 to 29

FIRE AND ICE BALL

Sat., Jan. 21, 7-11 PM

Cornerstone Event Center (Eagle Firehouse)

TICKETS: \$25/\$30 (advance/door)

TASTE OF WINTER FEST

Thurs., Jan. 26, 7-9 PM

Riverside Ballroom, Inn at Lambertville Station

Presented by The Lambertville Station

A savory evening of fine food and beverages from great local restaurants.

TICKETS: \$45

WINTER FESTIVAL CONCERT

An Evening at Odette's

Featuring Bob Egan/Odette's Alumni/
Special Guests/The Brian Pastor Big Band
Fri., Jan. 27, 8 PM, Steven J. Buck Theater,

New Hope-Solebury High School

Optional pre-concert VIP reception,
6-7:30 PM, Logan Inn, New Hope, includes
meet & greet, light fare, ride to & from concert.

TICKETS: \$45/\$50/\$90 (advance/door/VIP)

NEW EVENT! KARAOKE NIGHT

Sat., Jan. 28, 6-10 PM

Cornerstone Event Center (Eagle Firehouse)

Presented by New Hope Parks & Recreation
Food, cocktails, laughs, and prizes—and you
don't have to be a singer to win!

TICKETS: \$50

FREE MUSIC & THEATER PERFORMANCES

Sat., Jan. 28, 10 AM-3 PM, St. John's School

A full schedule of family-friendly events!

Featuring the SHR PTSO Café in basement.

HISTORIC PUB CRAWL

Sat., Jan. 21, Two Crawls Between 12-5

Period drinks, snacks, & reenactments
at Lambertville & New Hope pubs!

TICKETS: \$50 (Sold out last year!)

BEEF 'N BREW

Sat., Jan. 28, 1-4 PM, Triumph Brewing Co.

Presented by Lambertville-New Hope Rotary
An afternoon of hot roast beef sandwiches,
Triumph brews, & live music.

TICKETS: \$40

NEW EVENT! HAWAIIAN LUAU

Wed., Jan. 25, 7-11 PM

Karla's, 7 W. Mechanic St., New Hope

Presented by Solebury Parks & Recreation
Dinner, live music, & cash bar, with
acclaimed guest magician Ran'D Shine!

TICKETS: \$40/\$45 (advance/door)



**TRIUMPH
BREWING COMPANY**

20th ANNUAL CHILI COOK-OFF

Sun., Jan. 29, 1-4 PM

Triumph Brewing Company, Union Square
Presented by Triumph Brewing Company

Chili prepared by area restaurants,
with award-winning Triumph beers.

\$50 Adults / \$45 Under 21 or No Alcohol
(includes commemorative pint glass)

PURCHASE TICKETS, DISCOVER MORE EVENTS, & GET EVENT DETAILS AT: WINTERFESTIVAL.NET

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Solebury Resident

New Ordinance Regulates Growth & Planting of Bamboo

In-Ground Planting Prohibited as of Nov. 20

In the fall, the Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted an ordinance that (1) regulates the growth of all invasive, nonnative bamboo planted prior to November 20, and (2) prohibits the planting of all invasive, nonnative bamboo species in the ground after that date.

The goal of the ordinance is to protect Township residents, private and public property, and indigenous plants from the spread of what is commonly known as “running bamboo.”

Responsibility for complying with the new regulation falls to the current owner and occupant of any property on which bamboo grows, “even if the bamboo has spread from an adjoining property,” the ordinance states;

this includes the cost of removal or abatement of bamboo grown in violation of the ordinance.

Property owners and residents can now face fines and other penalties if they do not prevent any part of a pre-existing bamboo plant from spreading to an adjoining property or right-of-way, or from growing closer than 30 feet to the edge of a Township road or legal right-of-way, regardless of whether it is grown in the ground or a container.

The same is true if property owners or residents plant new bamboo in the ground.

While bamboo may still be grown in con-

tainers, fines and penalties can be issued if the plant is not stopped from spreading outside its container, from encroaching on an adjoining property or right-of-way, or from growing closer than 30 feet to the edge of a Township road or legal right-of-way.

The 30-foot limitation is designed to prevent bamboo from falling on another property or a road.

The ordinance specifies how fines and penalties are applied, the type of remediation required, and the timeframe within which corrective action must be taken when bamboo

grown on a Township property violates the new ordinance.

When the *Solebury Messenger* went to press, the Environmental Advisory Council was

gathering information on methods of bamboo removal to post on the Township website. As a first step, the advisory body recommends that property owners and residents cut down any bamboo growing within the 30-foot boundary as soon as possible.

To view the new ordinance:

1. Visit SoleburyTwp.org
2. Rest your cursor on the Government tab and select Township Administration: Ordinances.
3. Click the PDF link for the bamboo ordinance.
4. Read, print, or download the file.

BAMBOO—Any monopodial (running) tropical or semi-tropical grasses from the genera *Phyllostachys* or *Pseudosasa*, including, but not limited to, *Phyllostachys aureosulcata* - Yellow Groove Bamboo. In addition, this definition includes Common Bamboo, Golden Bamboo, and Arrow Bamboo.

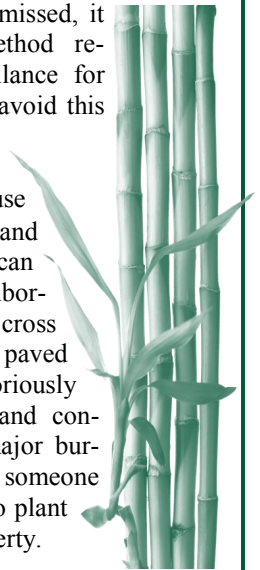
Why Is Bamboo an Issue for Solebury?

🐾 **Safety**—Bamboo spreads rapidly through its rhizomes (roots) and can encroach on roadways, driveways, and utility lines. When it snows, bamboo tends to lay over and can quickly become a traffic hazard and obstruct access to emergency vehicles.

🌿 **Environment**—Bamboo is vigorous and can easily outcompete native species. Over time, an area can be taken over by bamboo, drastically altering the ecosystem.

🌿 **Cost**—Once established, bamboo is difficult to eradicate. It can be mowed, solarized, contained, and excavated, but if one rhizome fragment is missed, it resurfaces. Each method requires time and vigilance for success. It is best to avoid this burden by planting native alternatives.

🌿 **Courtesy**—Because of its rapid growth and expansion, bamboo can easily spread to neighboring properties and cross the street under paved roads! As it is notoriously difficult to manage and control, this can be a major burden, especially for someone who did not choose to plant bamboo on their property.



Concerned About Fracking?

The Board of Supervisors hired two zoning and geology consultants to provide an environmental assessment and recommendation on how the Township could best protect itself from the negative impacts of gas and oil drilling.

Stay tuned for a presentation of the results in January.

This will allow the Township to make an informed decision on how best to proceed.



Safe Deer Management Practiced Here

Solebury Township needs landowners

who are willing to allow safe, legal hunting on their land as part of the Deer Management Program.

**Contact Jean Weiss to learn more:
215-297-5656**

Need News?

Stay informed about Township happenings by signing up for emails.

The Township sends emails about supervisor meeting agendas and minutes, community news, and other matters, such as the fall budgeting process, advisory committee openings, and the new bamboo ordinance.

To sign up, visit: soleburytwp.org click “Solebury Email Alerts” and enter your email address.

In addition, residents may now contact individual supervisors directly using their public email addresses (see the directory on page 2).

Land Preservation Program Seeks Properties for Preservation

Solebury established the Land Preservation Committee in 1996 out of rising concern for loss of open space—especially farmland. While much has been accomplished, the need for preservation continues. The committee urges landowners to consider preservation as a financial option before choosing development.

Historical perspective

By 1995, Pennsylvania had already lost a quantity of farmland equal to the combined area of Connecticut and Rhode Island. In place of these farms were unchecked housing developments; roads choked with traffic; aquifers drained beyond their ability to recharge; and stormwater runoff causing uncontrolled flooding.

Perceiving these development pressures creeping closer, in 1996 Solebury passed the first referendum to help achieve its new mission: Preserving the rural character and natural resources of the Township and encouraging agriculture.

Across two decades, residents have approved four bond referenda totaling \$44 million for this purpose, allowing the Township to purchase the development rights to qualifying properties, using conservation easements

to limit future development and define allowable improvement of such properties.

As a result of these efforts—in combination with lands owned or conserved by the county and state, the Heritage Conservancy, and the Natural Lands Trust—roughly one-third of the Township's 17,900 acres are protected from overdevelopment.

Where we are today

Today, fertile farmland, wooded slopes, streams, watersheds, scenic canals and riverbanks, picturesque villages, and low population density remain envied attributes of Solebury's unique character and quality of life.

However, these characteristics could become threatened if key landscapes are ever considered for development.

The Land Preservation Committee strives to minimize this possibility by acquiring conservation easements to such properties. For the Township to purchase an easement, the parcel must meet criteria established by the committee. Landowners may also donate easements to Solebury for tax purposes. Each easement is tailored to the particular needs of the specific owner and property.

After an easement is placed on a property, the owner retains ownership and enjoyment of the parcel, but gives up the right to develop the property beyond what is specified in the easement, as these rights are now owned by the easement holder. If the property is sold, the easement continues to control what new owners can do into perpetuity.

What you can do

Over the next decade, whether additional Township properties are preserved as open space depends on Solebury landowners.

Even if you do not intend to subdivide and develop a property you own in the Township, you can preserve the property now to prevent future owners from doing so.

Also, the conservation easement you place

on your property today could, at some point in the future, thwart the efforts of a developer seeking to purchase multiple properties in combination for purposes of a large-scale development.

Whether the property is 10 acres or 100 acres, you are encouraged to act now. Starting the process or gathering more information is simple: Just call Land Preservation Administrator Jean Weiss at 215-297-0347.

Tax Season

EIT/LST Filing Reminder

Solebury residents file and pay the 1% Earned Income Tax (EIT) and the \$52 Local Services Tax (LST) through the Bucks County-wide tax collection firm, Keystone Collections Group.

The 1% EIT is assessed by the Township (0.5%) and the New Hope-Solebury School District (0.5%) on the earned income of Solebury residents, as well as on that of individuals who live outside the Township but work in Solebury.

Earned income and net profits from all sources for a specific calendar year that total less than \$5,000 are exempt from the EIT.

E-filing of both taxes is available on the Keystone website.

For more information on matters related to the EIT or LST, contact Keystone:

www.keystonecollects.com
724-978-0300

2010 Taxes and Earlier

Any returns for 2010 and earlier that remain to be filed or paid are to be submitted to former Township collector H.A. Berkheimer: www.hab-inc.com

REFERENDUM RECAP		
YEAR	PERCENT APPROVAL	AMOUNT
1996	93%	\$4 million
1999	90%	\$10 million
2002	87%	\$12 million
2005	88%	\$18 million

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Attention Residents

Please do not blow leaves and grass clippings onto Township roads. This organic waste can clog storm drains and impede the flow of stormwater from homes, roads, and driveways. If the waste is carried by storm drains to local waterways, it can cause pollution (1) by increasing the amount of organic waste in our streams and/or (2) by carrying fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides to the water supply.

2017 Budget Highlights *(continued from page 1)*

The Township anticipates contributing an additional 10% of its 2017 Minimal Municipal Obligation of \$385,120 to the police pension plan in order to defray the plan's liability. This additional contribution will be \$38,512 for 2017, and 10% of each year's Minimum Municipal Obligation going forward.

Parks & Recreation Dept.

Construction of the new link in the Solebury Trail will move forward in 2017, funded by nearly \$1.7 million in grants, plus \$225,000 in local matching funds that were set aside in 2015-2016.

The linkage involves completing a portion of the Solebury Trail that will connect Magill's Hill Park to Canal Park, then head south from Canal Park along River Road, where it will connect with the existing segment that runs from River Road, follows the New Hope-Solebury School District fields, and ends at Eagle Fire Co.

The Parks & Recreation Dept.'s 2017 operating budget reflects no substantive changes over 2016 levels; minor increases in administrative costs were offset by decreased maintenance costs resulting from the completion of planned improvements.

Each year, the Parks & Recreation Dept. operating budget is also offset by Summer Adventure Camp revenues and sales of Solebury tiles and license plates.

The Township's sports programs are self-funding, with all league expenses covered by the respective organization's registration fees. Also, local soccer and baseball organizations each contribute \$6,000 per year toward Township expenses and pay for additional field maintenance out of their own funds; the football organization is charged an annual maintenance fee based on field usage.

Parks & Recreation Director Dudley Rice announced that a new partnership with NH-S Cares will continue in 2017, allowing the de-

partment to expand its Halloween Safety and Community Awareness program in local neighborhoods.

The director stresses that volunteers and partnerships are critical to the department's success, including NH-S School District, which provides facilities for Solebury's Summer Adventure Camp and basketball program; the Solebury School, which provides gym facilities for basketball and wrestling; Lambertville-New Hope Winter Festival, which helps support several local organizations in addition to Solebury Parks and Recreation;



View the 2017 Budget Online

You can view the 2017 budget on the Township website.

Visit soleburytwp.org, click the Resources menu, And choose Documents & Forms. The budget is in the Finance folder.

and individual sports organizations.

Public Works Dept.

In 2017, the Township anticipates borrowing \$1,000,000, which will be used over a two year period. Of this amount, \$400,000 will fund construction of a new salt storage building to replace the deteriorating Public Works pole barn. Architectural plans for the structure are complete, as they were commissioned during planning for the newly completed Public Works facility.

Public Works Director Dennis Carney—also the Township Manager—recently updated the Public Works department's Road Maintenance Program for 2017, which lays out an extended-year maintenance plan for Township infrastructure.

In keeping with that plan, this year a total of

\$225,000 will be used for milling, paving, overlay, and tar-and-chip treatments of local roads, and \$80,000 will be used to complete both planned bridge repairs and repairs identified as necessary during annual bridge inspections.

Other Capital Projects

After construction of the new Public Works salt storage building, the Township will use approximately \$30,000 of the borrowed funds, mentioned above, to convert the land on which the pole barn now sits into a grassy area or multipurpose playing field. The cost covers 1,500 cubic yards or more of topsoil, plus spreading, seeding, grading, contouring, and some flexibility for contingencies, Dennis said.

Architectural plans will be prepared in 2017 for improvements to the Police Department's locker rooms and entrance. The remainder of the borrowed funds will be used for these improvements across 2017 and 2018.

Other

The Township Manager noted that the Parks and Recreation Capital Fund will support ongoing stream restoration work at Aquetong Spring Park in 2017 (\$50,000).

The Natural Resources Fund will support the Township's ongoing deer management efforts (\$10,000), as well as membership in the Audubon Bird Town program (\$500).

Solebury will maintain its annual contribution to the Lambertville-New Hope Ambulance and Rescue Squad at \$17,000 this year; will keep its contribution to Central Bucks Ambulance level at \$83,000; and will increase its contribution to the Free Library of New Hope & Solebury from \$92,130 to \$100,000 (reflected in the millage chart on page 1).

The Township will support other local non-profits at 2016 levels, including the Bucks County SPCA (\$2,000), Central Bucks Senior Citizens (\$500), and Phillips Mill Community Association (\$375).



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PLANNING AN ADDITION OR RENOVATION?

Be smart: Talk to the Township first.

We have a wealth of handouts at Township Hall and on soleburytwp.org (Resources > Documents & Forms > Permits) that provide guidance on different kinds of projects. Also our staff can help you navigate the Township's forms, approval process, codes, and regulations. We're here to help!

Getting it right the first time could save you time and money.

Solebury Parks and Recreation Hosts Tree Planting

A \$5,739.90 Bucks County Conservation District TreeVitalize Watershed Grant—combined with the Township’s \$3,217 matching contribution—supported the planting of more than 200 young native-Pennsylvania trees at Aquetong Spring Park in November.

The planting of the trees took place in a 0.64-acre open area along the north side of what is now the main stream leading from Aquetong Spring, ending about 1,000 feet east of the spring.

By planting the trees in the fertile area that was formerly lakebed, the Township is hoping to stabilize the new stream’s riparian buffer and meadow, as well as to increase the canopy around the former lakebed.

Pennsylvania Rep. Scott Petri (R-Bucks/Montgomery), who now resides in New Hope with his wife, Ellen, and their son, Drew, was one of among 22 volunteers who came out to help with the Saturday tree planting.



The **Bucks County Conservation District** strives to provide for the wise use, management, and development of county soil, water, and related natural resources through cooperation with public agencies, private groups, and individuals. For more about the organization, visit:

<http://www.buckscdd.org>

Parks and Recreation Dept.

Upcoming Events



January 21-29
On the Web:
winterfestival.net



Baseball and softball online registration has started. Go to the baseball website, below, and click this link:

SIGN UP NOW

To keep abreast of local sports, visit these websites:

soleburytwp.org (Parks & Recreation tab)

www.soleburybaseball.org (baseball)

www.soleburybasketball.org (basketball)

www.nhsfcc.com (football)

www.soleburylacrosse.com (lacrosse)

www.soleburysoccer.com (soccer)



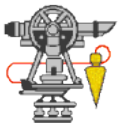
A **TREEVITALIZE GRANT** from the Bucks County Conservation District brought out 22 volunteers to plant roughly 200 trees at Aquetong Spring Park in November. Among them were Solebury Supervisor Jim Searing and Pennsylvania Rep. Scott Petri (R-Bucks/Montgomery), seen at left. The young trees were wrapped in mesh for a week after the initial planting (right); the mesh was then replaced with green, deer-resistant plastic tubes.

**Township
News Inside!**

Happy New Year



FROM SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP



Crews Surveying, LLC
Adam D. Crews, PLS

1806 Deep Run Road
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