

Clinton Courier

A Publication of the Clinton Parent Teacher Association
Issue 9, May 2007

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

We are proud at Clinton to be the ESL receiving school for our district. These students bring backgrounds and experiences that not all of us may have been exposed to otherwise. As we focus on improving instruction for all of our students, we have identified a need to address concerns with the program being delivered to our ESL students.

We believe that our current ESL delivery structure is not maximizing students' success as they progress through elementary school. Next year at Clinton, our first grade ESL students will be placed in one classroom with an approximately equal number of non-ESL students. During morning instruction, there will be one regular classroom teacher and one ESL teacher in the class. In the afternoon, an ESL aide will replace the ESL teacher. A similar class will be formed in second grade where the classroom teacher will have an ESL aide during the morning hours.

This in-class model provides different and potentially more meaningful instructional opportunities than the current pull-out model. New materials will be utilized such as books in native languages and supplements specifically designed for English language learners. The co-teaching model provides increased opportunities for flexible grouping and targeted individual instruction across the curriculum for all students. Whole class instruction and activities are minimized. Additionally, the ESL students can build upon the bonds they share with each other and increase their level of comfort, identity, and connectivity to the school community.

Under the new format, kindergarten ESL students will no longer be guaranteed a full-day program. ESL kindergarten students will attend the PM session but with a 60-minute extended day prior to the afternoon kindergarten.

Improving Communication

Increased and improved communication is a major goal of ours at Clinton School this year. From a personal standpoint, I have been exploring means of communication that can better connect me to you.

For the past few weeks, I have maintained a blog to help keep you informed of news and notes from Clinton School. The topics, length of posts, and time between posts vary; however, you can expect to read relevant and insightful information about happenings at Clinton School.

The blog address is <http://clintonnews.blogspot.com>. You can also submit comments for me. I hope you find this to be a timely and reliable resource.

Sincerely,
Rich Katz

MAY-AT-A-GLANCE

- 1-31ST ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH**
- 9-10TH MOTHER'S AND FATHER'S DAY GIFT SHOP**
- 10TH GENERAL PTA MEETING, 7:15 PM, GUEST SPEAKERS KIRK SMITH, PRINCIPAL OF SOUTH ORANGE MIDDLE SCHOOL, AND RIVKA NELSON, HSA CO-PRESIDENT**
- 11TH GRADE 5 SCIENCE FAIR**
- 16TH PTA NEWARK BEARS NIGHT**
- 19TH CLINTON SCHOOL FAIR, 11 AM-3 PM**
- 19-25TH SPRING SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR**
- 22ND KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION, 9 AM**
- 25TH INVENTION CONVENTION, 9-11 AM**
- 28TH MEMORIAL DAY, NO SCHOOL**
- 30TH ART AND MUSIC FESTIVAL**

TRICKY TRAY AN UNPRECEDENTED SUCCESS!

This year, our 4th Annual Tricky Tray/Silent Auction, which took place on Saturday, April 21st, broke all previous records. The Tricky Tray Committee is delighted to announce that we brought in over **\$20,000** for our school!

We could not have done it without the support of the amazing Clinton School community. Parents, teachers and staff, friends and families, and neighbors, all came together in a tremendous show of support for our wonderful, and much-loved, school.

Thank you to everyone who donated prizes, money, and services. Thank you to everyone who came out that night and spent money to support our school. The Live Auction portion of the evening was a first, and it was successful and fun. Congrats to those who are going to Disney, enjoying an autographed Soprano's script, golfing with their child, spending the day at a fancy spa, or sitting back in a big, comfy armchair, thanks to their generosity and boldness on the auction floor.

Prizes were won by many, and a good time was had by all, as our school community came together to celebrate in an unprecedented show of support. We are already looking forward to the 5th Annual Auction next year!

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PTA PRESIDENT

Happy May, Clinton Families!

Twenty thousand dollars! That's how much your PTA raised at our 4th Annual Tricky Tray. Wow! Thank you Claire Sinclair for all of your hard work and a big thank you to David Sinclair and Maureen Davenport for assisting. I take my hat off to the Tricky Tray Committee. What a fabulous team. Clinton families rose to the occasion and bid generously. Jeremy Moss got the evening going with great grooves and Derek Romanau shined as emcee during the live auction, and all night long. It was Clinton at its best. I'm already looking forward to next year.

On the tail-end of my term I'm trying to thank all of the many people who have been so generous with volunteering. One of the people on that list is Corey Fagundez who has taken on the daunting job of organizing and running Ice Cream Thursdays without hesitation or complaint. Corey, thank you for your many years of service to Clinton School.

Our second year of After School Enrichment has come to a close and once again it exceeded our expectations. Thanks to everyone who helped out, especially Cecelia Cancellaro, and to those who participated.

Thank you to Mrs. Edelberg for arranging our author visit. Lisa Mullarkey was truly a great find. And thank you to Kirsten Fallon for coordinating the soldier care package project.

Thanks to Mr. Katz for arranging for the guest speakers at our April PTA meeting. The math presentation was an eye-opener and very useful. Mr. Katz arranged for the speakers to come at the request of a parent who had questions about the elementary math curriculum. It is not always easy to arrange for speakers to join our PTA meetings. When it can be done, we really encourage families to participate. Please make every effort going forward to attend the PTA meetings. Also, please note that Clinton teachers donated the food and refreshments at the last PTA meeting. Teachers, we thank you very much for your generosity.

Fewer than seven weeks remain until school is out; I can't believe we're closing in on another year. Mark your calendars for the PTA Meeting on Thursday, May 10, the school fair on Saturday, May 19, and the book fair from May 19-25. Look in your child's backpacks for yearbook order forms and fair advance ticket sales forms.

As the end of the year approaches, and we begin to enjoy the warm weather and look forward to summer break, I think we can look back and say it's been a great school year so far. Let's have a strong finish. See you at the fair!

All the best, Josie O'Brien

MAY PTA MEETING: MIDDLE SCHOOL TRANSITION

Don't miss our PTA Meeting on Thursday, May 10th at 7:15 pm, which will focus on middle school transition. Mr. Kirk Smith, Principal of South Orange Middle School, and Rivka Nelson, HSA Co-President of South Orange Middle School, will speak about the transition to middle school and answer your questions. This meeting is especially important to 5th grade parents.

Additionally, the 2007-08 PTA Executive Board will be voted in.

As always, refreshments and babysitting (for children 4 and above) will be provided.

NEWS FROM SOMEF

SOMEF has begun its popular annual staff-appreciation initiative, "Honor Your Teacher and Staff." As an alternative to common year-end gifts, SOMEF invites parents and students to order tribute cards that will be individualized with their own messages to thank teachers and staff members. Cards may be ordered for *any* staff member in *any* school using order forms that will be available in early May. The cost of the cards is a contribution to SOMEF of a minimum of \$5 per card. Proceeds raised will be earmarked for the SOMEF Teacher Grants Fund that enables staff members to apply for grants for special projects in all nine schools. SOMEF funded 31 grants totaling \$29,000 for projects in 2006-07. For information, go to www.somef.org or call 973-378-2055.

CLINTON FAIR IS ALMOST HERE!

When: Saturday, May 19th, from 11 am–3 pm

Where: The Clinton School Parking Lot

There is still time to volunteer, so please consider giving an hour of your time to help make the day a big success. The rest of the day can be spent enjoying the fair's fun activities which include games, rides, music, food, and prizes! To volunteer, please contact Deb Yohannan, Volunteer Coordinator, at deb1105@verizon.net or 973-762-8358 or Josie O'Brien at dinkycostonobrien@yahoo.com or 973-275-6220. Please provide a time slot during which you are available (set up, 11-12, 12-1, 1-2, 2-3, or break down). Your participation makes this event an awesome one every year. Please volunteer.

PTA BOARD NOMINATIONS

The nominations for the 2007-08 school year are:

Leah Gomberg - President

Cecelia Cancellaro - Vice President

Karen Bethel - Vice President of Fundraising

Rosanna McCrear - Assistant to Vice President of Fundraising

Lori Mirabal - Vice President of Cultural Arts

Robin Frazier - Corresponding Secretary

Erica Dussman - Vice President of Membership

Liz Herring will also be taking over as Editor of the *Courier*. This is a non-voting position.

Marieka Buckham, Chairperson of the Nominating Committee, would like to thank the committee, Catkin Flowers, Suzanne Roghanchi, Kimberly Chambers, and Paula Chmiel, as well as everyone who sent in nominations. These positions will be voted on at the May 10th PTA Meeting.

A NOTE FROM THE PTA BOARD

Beginning next month, the PTA Executive Board will distribute a list of agenda items being discussed at our monthly meetings, prior to the meetings, via the Clinton School email list. Copies of the agenda items will also be available on the table in the front hallway of Clinton (beneath the PTA bulletin board). This will allow all parents who are PTA members, the opportunity to provide feedback and receive clarification. Meeting minutes are available upon request. PTA members are always available and open to discuss your ideas and concerns. Their contact information is located on the masthead of the *Courier*.

INVENTORS IN OUR MIDST

Have you ever dreamed about owning a protective yet stylish vest to use while eating in order to guard against food and drink spills? What about training handles for a skateboard? A suitcase organizer, equipped with different sections for different items, would certainly come in handy for your next trip. The next time you take a group picture, wouldn't it be amazing to have silly faces appear behind the camera to get everyone to smile without saying cheese? Wouldn't it be handy to have a pen-and-pencil-all-in-one combo the next time you're digging around your backpack for a writing implement? Even handier might be a Velcro wristband to hold your pencil when you're not using it.

No, these items are not the latest offerings from The Sharper Image catalogue. They are actually inventions dreamed up and made by our very own Clinton third-graders. Every spring, as part of the third-grade curriculum, students throughout our school district participate in **Invention Convention**. The unit begins with illustrating how everything we come into contact with in our daily lives began as someone's invention. Students are then asked to look at an ordinary object, like a pencil, and think of one hundred different uses for it. They are then encouraged to come up with their own invention. First, they brainstorm ten problems that exist in everyday life. Then they focus in on one of these problems and brainstorm five possible solutions. These solutions become the basis of their idea for an invention.

The final inventions are displayed for their peers, families, and fellow Clinton students to see. This year, Clinton's **Invention Convention** will take place on **Friday, May 25th**, from **9-11 am** in the cafeteria. The inventors will be on hand to explain and demonstrate their innovative inventions. Don't miss it. This is always an event where our third grade students and their talented teachers shine.

**DON'T FORGET TO BOOKMARK
PRINCIPAL KATZ'S NEW BLOG:
[HTTP://CLINTONNEWS.BLOGSPOT.COM](http://clintonnews.blogspot.com)**

KIDS SHOP AT MOTHER'S AND FATHER'S DAY GIFT SHOP

On May 9th and 10th, your children will have the power to choose and purchase gifts for you and other family members and friends. The cafeteria will be transformed into a boutique in which each class will be given an allotted time to shop. A wide range of unique gift items geared toward celebrating Mother's/Father's Day will be on display for purchase (with prices ranging from 50 cents to \$5.00). Parents can send in money in the envelope that was sent home in backpacks.

SURF'S UP ON BOOK FAIR BEACH!

The Spring Scholastic Book Fair kicks off at the Clinton Spring Fair on May 19th and runs through May 25th. The theme is Book Fair Beach and it will be a great way to stock up on all your summer reading. Whether your child prefers *Magic Tree House* or *Harry Potter*, *Junie B. Jones* or *Judy Moody*, *SpongeBob* or *Yu-Gi-Ho!*, he or she will surely catch the reading wave at Book Fair Beach. And don't forget, proceeds benefit the Clinton PTA.

So stop by during the Clinton Spring Fair to cool down and browse the racks. You can even enter a free sea glass guessing contest—the lucky winners receive gift certificates to the Book Fair! And please visit Book Fair Beach during the week that follows—either at the beginning or end of the school day.

We can always use more beach-combing book finders. So if you can spare a few hours to volunteer, please contact Liz Herring at 973-378-3099 or echerring@verizon.net. Let's make Book Fair Beach a splashing success!

Meanwhile here's a sneak preview of just some of the great titles to be featured at Book Fair Beach:

Fun Dog, Sun Dog by Deborah Heiligman, illustrated by Tim Bowers
Short snappy rhymes and comic illustrations describe a day at the beach for Tinka, a charming golden retriever, and the boy who owns her.

There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Shell! by Lucille Colandro, illustrated by Jared Lee
This hilarious spin-off on the classic "There Was an Old Lady" song is sure to have kids singing along!

Henry's Freedom Box by Ellen Levine, illustrated by Kadir Nelson
Based on a true event, this beautifully illustrated story of one boy who risks everything for what he knows is right is sure to inspire students to learn more about the Underground Railroad.

The Great Fuzz Frenzy by Janet Stevens and Susan Stevens Crummel
When a mysterious, fluorescent, very fuzzy thing rolls down their hole, the residents of a prairie dog town find their home in an uproar.

Magic Tree House: Season of the Sandstorms by Mary Pope Osborne
Travel back in time with Jack and Annie to a desert in the Middle East. Filled with mystery, history, magic, and old-fashioned adventure, this series is still a #1 favorite with kids—and teachers!

Judy Moody Declares Independence by Megan McDonald, illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds
When a visit to Boston spurs Judy's interest in Revolutionary War heroes and heroines, she's soon on a quest for more independence herself.

Heat by Mike Lupica
The author of the #1 *New York Times* bestseller *Travel Team* delivers another sure hit with this baseball coming-of-age story. Believable characters and well-developed action scenes make this a top pick for sports fans, who will find themselves cheering for young Michael Arroyo as he overcomes the many obstacles in his life and pursues his dream of pitching on the hallowed mound of Yankee stadium.

Room One: A Mystery or Two by Andrew Clements
A shrinking school in a dying town. A face in the window of an empty house. At first these facts don't seem to be related, but young Ted Hammond learns that in a very small town, there is no such thing as an isolated event.

BOOK FAIR BENEFITS TEACHERS

Scholastic is rewarding a bonus of \$1600 worth of books to Clinton School for holding two book fairs per year for the past two years. A portion of this (\$50) will be awarded to the winners of the Web Page Scavenger Hunt. The rest will be divided among the teachers to use to purchase books for their classroom libraries. This should work out to about \$50 per teacher! In addition, Mrs. Edelberg will receive over \$300 in books for the library for allowing Scholastic to host a Chairperson's Workshop there in February.

CLASSROOM NEWS

This feature provides a wonderful opportunity for everyone in the Clinton community to learn about all the innovative and inspiring activities that engage students during the school day. If you would like to have your child's classroom experiences and stories included in next month's *Courier*, please send an email to Amy Higer at amyhiger@gmail.com.

KINDERGARTEN

The highlight of the past month for the kindergarten classes was the field trip to the Paper Mill Playhouse to see classic children's stories come alive on stage. In the classroom, the children have been busy setting up their habitats for their new **class pets**: salamanders, crabs, snails, and fish! Miss Cosmas's annual crab and salamander races were a huge success. They have also been busy measuring everything from stuffed animals to shoes to pencils. And they have started to learn about counting money by purchasing items in the classroom grocery store. Together, the children have read an **impressive 6,690 books** in the at-home reading program! During gym, the kids have truly enjoyed the chance to run off spring fever as they race around the track.

ORDER YOUR YEARBOOK!

Yearbooks are \$17 each/2 for \$30. Send your check (made payable to Clinton School PTA—include phone number on check) in an envelope marked "2007 Yearbook." Include your child's name and teacher, parent/guardian name, phone number, and email address, and the number of books you're ordering. Yearbooks are only being sold by pre-order. They will not be available for sale at a later date. Yearbooks will be delivered to your child's classroom upon delivery from the printer. If you have any questions, contact Maureen Davenport at Maur760@hotmail.com.

NEWARK BEARS NIGHT

Take your family out and enjoy the finest nine innings of fun and family entertainment at the Riverfront Stadium in Newark on May 16th! First pitch will be thrown at 6:30 pm.

Tickets are \$8. Please send a check payable to Clinton PTA with your child's name, teacher, telephone number, and number of tickets wanted in an envelope marked "Bears Tickets" by May 14th.

For more information, call Josie O'Brien at 973-275-6220. For directions to the stadium call 973-848-1000 or visit the Bears website at www.newarkbears.com.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THE CLINTON PTA

The Clinton School PTA prides itself on being a committed, proactive, and creative force in our school community. We work rigorously to provide valuable resources and services to Clinton students, parents, and staff and we take our role very seriously, especially in light of the current budget restrictions imposed on our school district. Whether we are volunteering in classrooms and at school events, fundraising, creating enriching programs for our students, maintaining a stellar cultural arts assembly program, purchasing items—both big and small, or advocating for our school, our students, and our staff, our work has a major impact on many aspects of the Clinton School experience.

We have worked very hard this year to make our already wonderful school even better, and we have been very successful in our efforts, thanks to the amazing support we have received from our school community. We want the best for our students, which is why you hear from us as frequently as you do, and we greatly appreciate your patience, commitment, and dedication.

Your time, effort, and generosity have made many great things possible this year. Here are just some of our accomplishments:

- Raising over \$20,000 at our 4th annual Tricky Tray/Silent Auction
- Purchasing a license to “Study Island,” a test prep site that students can access to help prepare for standardized tests and for general tutoring
- Funding Clinton’s Character Education initiative by purchasing materials for the Honey Pot Heroes campaign.
- Creating an awesome new website (www.clintonelementary.org) to share information and news about our wonderful school.
- Purchasing assignment books for every student in the school to help with planning and scheduling.
- Offering two sessions a year of our amazing After School Enrichment Program which includes a wide variety of fabulous classes and top-notch instructors.
- Providing funding for students in need to participate in the After School Enrichment Program and obtaining grants (SOMEF) and parent contributions to support this cost.
- Spending thousands of dollars on stimulating cultural arts assemblies that educate and entertain our children all year long.
- Sponsoring major outdoor and indoor beautification efforts that include landscaping, painting, and decorating.
- Completing a major renovation of the outdated teacher’s lounge.
- Sponsoring a number of great annual events including the Election Day Bake Sale, the Pumpkin Patch, Storytelling Night, the International Dinner, the Winter Craft Fair, the fall and spring book fairs, and the Clinton School Spring Fair.
- Providing funds for school trips.
- Purchasing a new PA system for use during assemblies and other events.
- Spearheading a program designed to allow elementary school PTAs to share information and resources.

With your help, we’ve accomplished a great deal this year. Let’s make next year even better

MAY IS ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Nin hao. That means “hello” in Chinese. Did you know that more than one billion people speak Chinese and that it is the most widely spoken language in the world? Chinese is one of the cultures celebrated during Asian Heritage Month, which takes place in May. This cultural celebration began as Asian Heritage Week in 1977, and was expanded to a month-long event in 1990. May was chosen to commemorate the first Japanese immigrants to the U.S. and also the completion of a railroad that was built largely by Chinese workers. These and other fun facts will be available for your viewing in the display case outside the main office. *Xie Xie* (thank you) to parents Emni Audet and Kathleen Morrow Reilly for sharing their wonderful treasures. You can see

BOX TOPS CLIPPERS

We are heading into the stretch on a good note. Hopefully everyone can make a last best effort and bring in *many* box tops and Campbell’s labels for May! Second and third graders did a great job overall. We have currently collected \$45.30 for April. Keep it up! —Stephanie Mosé

<u>Kindergarten:</u>	Swan-Josh R., Cecilia M., Amiri S., Miranda L. Shelfo-Jack K., Nick W.
<u>1st Grade:</u>	Frascella- Renee M. Motz- Connor F. Harth-Christina R. Cutrufello- Jashan S., Shannon D.
<u>2nd Grade:</u>	Poutre-Scott M., Jack K., Samuel F., Kwabena F., Kayla F. Hall- Brian E. Froelich-Jordan S.
<u>3rd Grade:</u>	Khan- Scott M., Blake F., Dalila R. Dreschel-Caila B. Pomares-Alexandra M., Alaina B. Schwarz- Brigid L., Grant K., Lexie M. Antunes-Aaron E.
<u>4th Grade:</u>	Power- D.J. S., Jacob R., Jesse N.

COME TO THE CLINTON PICNIC

Please join the Clinton PTA as we close the school year with our wonderful picnic. The picnic will be on **June 14th at 5:30 pm** on the Clinton School front lawn. You can pack a picnic or buy food and drink on site. Jeremy Moss will serve as DJ to get everyone on their feet, and our outgoing PTA President, Josie O’Brien, will introduce the 2007-08 PTA Board. Come celebrate what a great year it’s been at Clinton!

NOW YOU CAN READ THE *COURIER*
ON THE SCHOOL’S NEW WEBSITE:
WWW.CLINTONELEMENTARY.ORG

NEWS FROM PAC

The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) provides a forum for interaction between the principal and parents. The goal is to develop action plans to address concerns of the Clinton community. Each month, the Courier will run a summary of the PAC meeting agenda and discussion. This summary is from the April meeting.

Discussion: Aid to U.S. Soldiers

Questions were raised regarding the process used to approve the PTA collection and whether the PTA and school are taking a political stance by participating in this project.

Action: The PTA will begin to share their executive committee and general meeting agendas through the email list and by hard copy available at school. Meeting minutes will also be available upon request. This will allow all parents who are PTA members, the opportunity to provide feedback and receive clarification.

Discussion: Road Construction

Safety and planning concerns were shared regarding the construction that occurred in front of the school. School personnel were not informed of the work until the morning the work began; however, at that point information was shared with parents and issues were shared with central office administration. Many parents have called the Township offices to express their thoughts as well.

This year's PAC members are:

Kindergarten: Tammy Dandino, Kat Lozynsky
First Grade: Mike Paris, Celynn Lennon
Second Grade: Serena Sailsman, Stephanie Motachwa
Third Grade: Laura Whitmire, Sharon McHale
Fourth Grade: Beatrice Mebude, Stephanie Williams
Fifth Grade: Mary Jo Hoyt, Rita Willis
At-Large: Erica Dussman

ARE YOU IN THE LOOP?

If you're not on the Clinton PTA email list, you should be. It's a wonderful tool to share news, updates, and information in a timely and paper-free manner. To be added to the list, send your name, email address, and your child's name and grade to Cecelia Cancellaro at ccancellaro@comcast.net.

DON'T MISS ANOTHER AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM EXTRAVAGANZA

Those of you who missed the fabulous After School Program extravaganza at Maplewood Middle School in March will have a second chance to see the Clinton portion of the show as well as brand new material from our wonderful Clinton performers. Back by popular demand, Ms. Bennett and her "After School Program Players" once again strut their stuff. You'll be amazed at the incredible talent of the Clinton students. Mark your calendars now. The show will take place in the Clinton Auditorium on Friday, June 8 at 6 pm.

SPRING ART SHOW

Clinton's annual Spring Art Show will take place on May 30th. So be sure to come by and see the impressive artwork created throughout the school year by Clinton students. Mrs. Dunsavage is looking for volunteers to help her get the artwork ready to display. She will hold meetings on May 9th and 14th to show volunteers how to mat artwork, which she strongly urges volunteers to attend. Volunteers can prepare artwork for display in the art room on May 10th, 17th, and 24th or they can work on the matting at home. For more information, please email Mrs. Dunsavage at idunsava@somds.k12.nj.us.

ANOTHER GREAT SESSION OF AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT

The Clinton PTA Spring After School Enrichment session ended on Thursday, April 26th. We've received many rave reviews from our spring students (and their parents). The program included a wide range of activities including fencing, gardening, tae kwon do, cooking, magic, mosaic-making, science, yoga, and piano keyboarding. Our next session will begin in the fall and registration materials will be sent home shortly after school starts in September. Watch this space and the Clinton email list for exact dates, which will be announced shortly. Contact Cecelia Cancellaro (ccancellaro@comcast.net) with any questions or comments.

Here are some student and parent reviews from the spring session:

"I think Enrichment is a great idea and very fun."
-4th grade student

"My daughter says yoga was excellent!"
-Parent of a 3rd grade student

"Clinton's After School Enrichment is one of the nicest programs at any school we've been to."
-Parent of a 1st grade student



WEDNESDAY IS
CLINTON DAY
AT ARTURO'S!

Clinton School will get 10% of your total bill (eat-in or take-out). Mention Clinton when you pay and send receipt to school in an envelope marked "PTA Food Receipt Program." Arturo's has a wonderful family-friendly menu which includes pizza, salad, and wraps.

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