



5 Echoes from the Hilltop Gallery
Crossing Borders, Bridging Generations

CONNECTING SOUTHERN ARIZONA



Mental Awareness Month



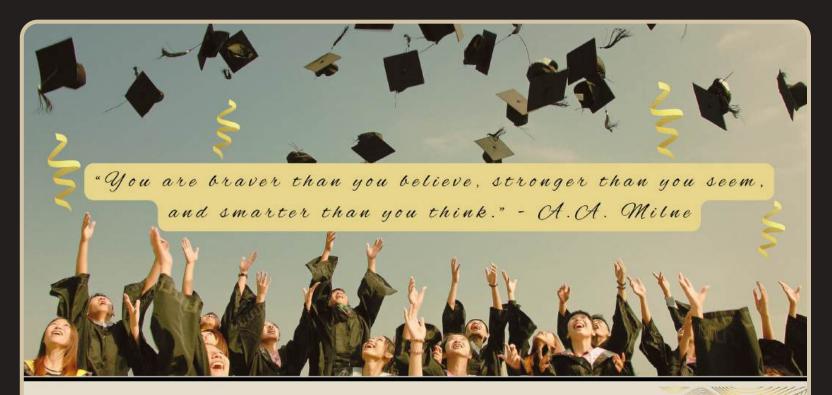
1 O Star-Studded Talent Show Steals the Show at RRHS



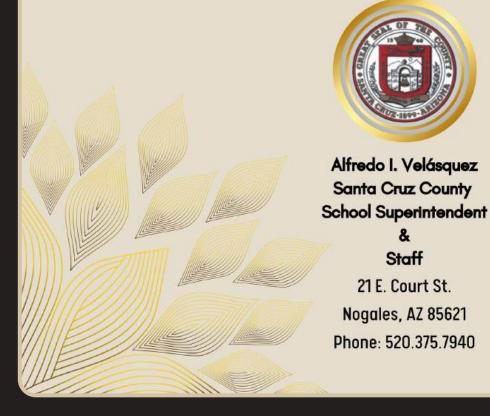
The Nogales City Council establishes the Commission on Disability Issues (CODI)



15 Sheriff's Round Up



Elass of 2025 Congratulations!



Border Eco Updates

Get Ready to Shine, Class of 20251

We're thrilled to celebrate the amazing graduates of Santa Cruz County at Border Eco! If you're a proud parent, family member, or friend of a Class of 2025 graduate, we want to feature them in our upcoming issue and on our social media platforms! Share their story, pictures, and info (including school, age, and class) with us at contact@bordereco.com.

But that's not all! We're on the hunt for everyday heroes who make a difference in our community. Do you know someone who's changing lives? Send us leads on people who deserve recognition! We're also looking for updates on upcoming community events, meetings, and conferences. Let's support each other and build a stronger community!

Stay connected with us on Facebook for the latest news, events, and inspiring stories from Santa Cruz County.

Ready to join our team? We're looking for talented individuals with a passion for sales, journalism, and photography! Send your resume to contact@bordereco.com and let's create something amazing together!

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Please send us information on any upcoming events, meetings, or programs to share with our readers.

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July 15, 2025 - Special Primary Election: Congressional District 7

Important Dates for Early Voting:

Ballots mailed to Uniformed and Overseas Voters: May 30, 2025

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Early voting begins / Early ballots are mailed: June 18, 2025

Last day to request a mail ballot: July 7, 2025

Recommended deadline to mail back your ballot: July 8, 2025

Last day to vote early in person: July 11, 2025

Election Day (Vote in person or drop off your early ballot): July 15, 2025

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Echoes From the Hilltop

Crossing Borders, Bridging Generations: A Dynamic Duo of Nogales Artists

Get ready to experience the vibrant artistry of Grecia Solorio and Ricardo Santos Hernández.

These are two talented individuals from the Nogales frontera who have made Chicago their home.

Despite being generations apart, their paths crossed in the Windy City. Their art has flourished, infused with Ambos Nogales' rich heritage.

Meet Grecia Solorio: A Rising Star

Born in Nogales, Arizona, Grecia Solorio's artwork is a powerful blend of realism and figurative styles. It explores themes of love, tragedy, and faith. With a rebellious edge and vulnerable spirit, her art challenges conventions and resonates with emotional depth. This young artist has already made a name for herself with commissioned murals in Nogales and Rio Rico. She has also shown on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border and in Chicago. Currently pursuing her BFA in Art with a minor in Art History at the University of Illinois-Chicago, Solorio is poised for greatness.

Ricardo Santos Hernández: A Master of Storytelling

A Nogales High School alumnus from the class of 1976, Ricardo Santos Hernández has spent decades honing his craft, earning a Master of Fine Arts degree from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. With a career spanning exhibitions in New York, London, Paris, and cities across the United States and Mexico, Ricardo's artwork is a testament to his innovative spirit. As a collaborator and member of the Chicago arts community, he co-founded the Ambos Nogales Border Art Project with Carlos Cabrera, further solidifying his connection to his roots.

The Cross Generational Exhibition

This unique exhibition brings together Solorio and Hernández's distinct perspectives, showcasing the evolution of art and identity across generations. Don't miss this opportunity to experience the dynamic interplay of their artwork, infused with the spirit of Ambos Nogales.

Get in Touch

For more information about the exhibition, artwork, or the artists, contact:

Ricardo Santos Hernández: ricardopitor1957@gmail.com | 520-223-6334 | @ricardo_santos1957

Grecia Solorio: gsolorioart@gmail.com | 520-223-6273 | @gsolorioart







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BRIGHTER FUTURES TOGETHER

At South32, we're doing things differently. Hermosa is designed to use 90% less water than other mines in the region. We understand that water is precious here in southern Arizona. With advanced technology and smart monitoring, we're committed to efficiency, safety and protecting resources that matter most."

- Billy, Environmental Technician



Learn more

South32 Breaks Ground on Centro: Hermosa's Remote Operating Center

South32 broke ground today on Centro, a remote operations center in Nogales, Arizona, that will support Hermosa's innovative and responsible approach to mining. Centro will use advanced automation to enhance both safety and productivity—key pillars of sustainable operations.

"Centro represents more than just a facility – it is a commitment to create economic opportunity and shared value in Santa Cruz County," said Pat Risner, President of South32 Hermosa. "By establishing Centro in Nogales, we are ensuring that the economic benefits of Hermosa stay local, providing high-skilled, good-paying jobs and supporting the development of a skilled workforce for generations, right here at home, while also providing opportunities for both populations historically excluded from the industry and underrepresented community groups." The groundbreaking marks the culmination of nearly three years of thoughtful design and planning to align with South32's long-term economic and employment goals in Santa Cruz County.

Attendees at the ceremony included Arizona
Governor Katie Hobbs, local and state officials,
municipal leaders, and representatives from
organizations such as the Port Authority, The Nature
Conservancy, and the University of Arizona.
"Centro represents innovation in mining, a
commitment to sustainability, and an investment
in Southern Arizona that will deliver high-quality,
well-paying jobs to Arizonans for generations to
come," said Governor Katie Hobbs. "As the largest
private investment in Southern Arizona history, the
Hermosa project will strengthen our community and
create a brighter future for the families of Santa Cruz
County."

"The Hermosa project is a major investment in Arizona's future as our state leads the way in producing critical minerals that power everything from clean energy to national defense," said Arizona Senator Mark Kelly. "Centro, as the project's state-of-the-art operations center, will create good-paying jobs and strengthen our economy."

"South32 Hermosa's Centro is a major step forward for regional development and the production of critical minerals in southern Arizona," said Congressman Juan Ciscomani. "By anchoring high- quality jobs, workforce training, and critical infrastructure in our communities, this project strengthens the local economy and positions our region to continue to serve as a hub for responsible innovation and growth. I'm proud to support efforts that bring long-term investment and opportunity to the people of southern Arizona and beyond."

Supporting an 'All in Community' Workforce

Today's groundbreaking also marks the launch of the South32 Hermosa Workforce Development Executive Committee – an expanded initiative aimed at supporting long-term workforce development across Santa Cruz County that will move beyond the needs of South32's workforce development efforts into the broader needs of the community. This initiative is part of South32's commitment to support establishing an "all of community" workforce development ecosystem in collaboration with intermediaries and partners across the county and southern Arizona. The committee brings together local education leaders and South32 representatives to focus on post- secondary education, facilities development, resources and training needs of the local businesses. It will develop a long-term vision, plans and a resourcing strategy to deliver on this vision for the community.

Committee members are:

Development Ecosystem

- Angel Canto, Nogales Unified School District # 1
 Superintendent
- Skylie Estep, South32 Human Resources Director, North America
- Kenny Hayes, Patagonia Public Schools Superintendent
- Greg Lucero, Director, Strategic Initiatives, Santa Cruz County Provisional Community College District
- Pat Risner, Hermosa President, South32
- Alfredo Velasquez, Santa Cruz County School Superintendent
- David Verdugo, Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District No. 35 Superintendent
- •Chris Young, Deputy County Manager, Santa Cruz County

To further support local workforce development, tied to Centro and the broader Hermosa project, South32 has partnered with the Nogales-Santa Cruz County Chamber of Commerce to launch a Vendor Readiness Program. South32 Hermosa's Workforce Development Taskforce has also collaborated with Pima Community College to bring an Electrician Certificate Program to the

Santa Cruz Center Provisional College District. This is the first of many programs that will be delivered in the county specifically to train the local workforce for Hermosa.

High-Skilled Careers, Close to Home Centro will be a modern commercial building with an office-like setting, designed to accommodate around 200 full-time employees across multiple shifts in a 24-hour period. These employees will use advanced automation technology to remotely monitor and operate underground and surface equipment at Hermosa. In addition to operations roles, Centro will also house professionals in engineering, geoscience, environmental science, human resources, supply chain, and other technical and functional areas. By creating high-skilled, degree-relevant career opportunities in Santa Cruz County, Centro plays a critical role in reducing local talent flight and allowing professionals to build careers close to home. Through electrified equipment and innovative technology, South32 is setting a new standard for safer, lower-emission mining operations.

As part of the development process, South32 hosted a community naming competition, where "Centro" was selected to reflect the center's pivotal role in Hermosa's success—and the project's commitment to hiring 80 percent of its workforce from the surrounding region.

Centro will be part of a ten-acre complex that includes an employee parking lot and a bus station for parkand-ride service to the project site. Construction is expected to begin this summer and conclude in 2027.





Rio Rico Insights A Shining Star: Milan Wilkinson's Remarkable Journey

As Rio Rico High School's valedictorian, Milan Wilkinson is more than just a stellar student - she's a beacon of excellence, leadership, and community spirit. In addition to her impressive resume, she is passionate about making a positive difference. Milan has earned a number of accomplishments, including the Presidential Volunteer Service Medal in Gold, Silver, and Bronze, an impressive award to showcase how dedicated she is to the service of others.

Throughout Milan's high school career, she has demonstrated balance and excellence. During her time in the JROTC program, she rose to the rank of Cadet Major and Battalion Operations Officer. In addition to serving as Class Secretary and member of the National Honor Society, she served as HOSA President. However, Milan's dedication did not end there. She also volunteers at local hospitals, teaches self-defense classes at her church, and participates in numerous extracurricular activities such as Marksmanship, Color Guard, and JLAB.

Throughout her four years, Milan consistently demonstrated strong work ethic, discipline, and a desire to make a difference. Her academic excellence was evident in her Gold Honor Roll status, Cambridge Award, and eventual Valedictorian honor. But it's not just about the grades it's about Milan's character. She's a natural leader, a team player, and a compassionate individual who has given back to her community in countless ways.

As Milan prepares to begin her next adventure, attending the University of Arizona's Nursing Honors Program in the Fall of 2025, she will make even greater contributions. Her accomplishments serve as a shining example for her peers, and her dedication to community service inspires us all. Milan Wilkinson is a truly exceptional student with a bright future ahead of her.



Rio Rico Insights Star-Studded Talent Show Steals the Show at Rio Rico High School

On Friday, April 25th, Rio Rico High School's Performing Arts Center was filled with excitement as the Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District 35 hosted its 2025 Talent Show. The event, which took place from 5:30-6:30 PM, drew a packed audience of family members, elementary school principals, Superintendent Mr. David Verdugo, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Melisa Lunderville, Governing Board Members, and students from across the district.

Several talented performers were featured in the talent show, each displaying their own unique skills. Milah Rivas dazzled the audience with her "Flip Fusion" tumbling routine, while Rodrick Garcia's soulful vocal solo of "Beautiful Things" by Benson Boone brought the house down. The Instrumental Band, composed of Andrew Espinoza, Emiliano de la Torre, Shawn Colgan, Damian Loya, Daniel Loya, and Javier Martinez, played "Hey Yeah" energetically.

Italiah Watson's confident dance routine to "Confident" by Demi Lovato earned her a spot among the top performers, while Mateo Padilla's country-inspired vocal solo of "Ain't No Love in Oklahoma" showed off his country style. In the end, Analy Armenta's dance to a Michael Jackson remix took home first place, followed by Rodrick Garcia's and Italiah Watson's performances.

Special recognition goes to Ms. Liana Carrasco, Director of RRHS Hawk Theatre Company, and her students, who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure the performers were ready and supported. Additionally, Mr. Randall Johnson, RRHS Performing Arts Center Technician, played a crucial role in bringing the event to life with his technical expertise.

The CTMS NJHS vocal group, led by Ms. Wendy Noriega, delivered a memorable performance of the Knowledge Song, while Abigail Kuhm's powerful vocal solo of "Million Reasons" by Lady Gaga, "If I Ain't Got You" by Alicia Keys, and "Last Dance" by Donna Summer showcased her impressive range and talent.

The 2025 Talent Show was a resounding success, thanks to the hard work and dedication of the students, teachers, and staff involved. The event not only showcased SCVUSD35 students' talents but also highlighted the importance of arts education and self-expression.

1st place: Analy Armenta

2nd place: Rodrick Garcia

3rd place: Italiah Watson







Santa Cruz County Technolochicas Clubs Encourage Girls to Explore STEM

Technolochicas Clubs in Santa Cruz County continues to inspire and empower girls to pursue careers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). Technolochicas replaced its annual conference with a trip to the renowned Kitt Peak Observatory in this year's program.

This memorable event took place at Wade Carpenter Middle School, Desert Shadows Middle School, Coatimundi Middle School, and Calabasas School. During the trip, the students toured telescopes, learned about astronomy, gained unique insight into the universe and were inspired by the STEM fields. Thanks to the generous sponsorship of South 32 and the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent, Alfredo I. Velásquez, this inspiring experience was made possible.

During the visit, the girls had a unique opportunity to inspire the next generation of innovators through practical, engaging experiences. The Technolochicas program plays an important role in fostering students' dreams and enabling them to explore the endless possibilities in STEM careers.





The Nogales City Council establishes the Commission on Disability Issues (CODI)

As a major step towards addressing the needs of those with disabilities, the Nogales City Council voted to establish the Commission on Disability Issues (CODI) on April 2, 2025. As part of Ordinance O2025-04-003, the new advisory body was created to facilitate a rapport between the city government and the disability community, as well as to advocate for changes in policies.

Members of the CODI will include representatives of the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, the Office of Individual and Family Affairs, and the Mariposa Community Health Center. The commission advises the mayor and council on disability-related concerns, promotes public awareness, and collaborates with local agencies. Michelle Ramirez, a recognized advocate for the autism community and recipient of the Good Samaritan Award, was appointed chairwoman.

The ordinance, which takes effect 30 days after adoption, also outlines CODI's operational framework, including term limits, meeting protocols, and financial authority limitations. The council emphasized the commission's role in fostering inclusivity, with Mayor Jorge Maldonado calling it a "critical step toward a more accessible Nogales."

The meeting also featured recognitions for the Nogales High School Jazz Band and discussions on liquor licenses, cell tower leases, and budgetary approvals. This reflects a broad agenda aimed at community development and governance.

For further details, contact: Michelle Renee Ramirez, Behavioral Health Technician/ Mariposa Community Health Center/miramirez@mariposachc:net/ (520) 281-1550 EXT. 1537









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Nogales Celebrates Autism Awareness with Community Resource Fair

In honor of World Autism Awareness Day, families from Santa Cruz County gathered at Teyechea Park on Saturday. Around 300 people attended the event organized by Mariposa Community Health Center's Behavioral Health team in collaboration with the City of Nogales.

A Day of Support and Celebration

Wendy's, Burger King, Jack in the Box, and Rio Rico's Little Caesars donated kid's meals to ensure no child left empty-handed. Numerous agencies also offered informational booths at the fair about healthcare, education, and disability services.

Honoring Advocates and First Responders

As part of the festivities, the Nogales Police Department exhibited a specially marked Autism Awareness Police Vehicle, along with its new Autism Awareness Police Patch, which was unveiled by Chief Jimenez, Chief Bermudez, and Officer Marina Duran. Embracing neurodiverse individuals is at the heart of law enforcement's commitment to inclusivity and understanding.

Councilman Saulo Bonilla was recognized for his tireless advocacy on disability issues. Through his work with the newly established Commission on Disability Issues (CODI), he has fostered community engagement and support for disabled individuals.

A Growing Movement

The fair, held from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. behind City Hall, showcased the increasing collaboration between local government, healthcare providers, and businesses. The Mariposa Community Health Center and the City of Nogales reaffirmed their commitment to providing accessible places for neurodiversity awareness and access to vital resources.

As the event concluded, organizers expressed their gratitude to all participating agencies and volunteers, emphasizing the importance of continuing collaboration to build a more supportive and informed community. To stay updated on similar initiatives, residents are encouraged to follow the announcements of the City of Nogales and Mariposa Community Health Center.

For further details, contact: Michelle Renee Ramirez, Behavioral Health Technician/Mariposa Community Health Center miramirez@mariposachc.net/(520) 281-1550 EXT. 1537



May is Mental Health Awareness Month: Let's Talk and Take Action

As we observe Mental Health Awareness Month in May, we're reminded that mental health is just as crucial as physical health. This month-long observance is a powerful opportunity to raise awareness, promote mental wellness, and break down stigmas surrounding mental health conditions. By educating ourselves and others, we can create a supportive community that encourages open conversations and seeks help when needed.

Why Mental Health Matters

Mental health impacts every aspect of our lives, from relationships and work to overall quality of life. When we prioritize mental health, we can build stronger, more resilient communities. By acknowledging the importance of mental health, we can reduce stigma and create a world where everyone feels comfortable seeking help.

Get Support in Nogales

If you're struggling with mental health issues or know someone who is, there are local resources available in Nogales, Arizona.

Consider reaching out to:

Pinal Hispanic Council: Providing mental health services with a focus on cultural sensitivity and community support.

275 N. Grand Court Plaza, Nogales, AZ 85621/ Call: (520)287-0015

Intermountain: Offering comprehensive mental health care with a range of services and providers.

276 W View Point Dr, Nogales, AZ 85621/ Call: (520)281-068

Mariposa Community Health Center: Delivering holistic mental health care with a focus on wellness and prevention.

1852 N. Mastick Way, Nogales, Arizona 85621/ Call: (520)281-1550

Circles of Peace: Outpatient Treatment center for court-ordered and substance abuse programs.

155 North Morley Avenue, Nogales, Arizona 85621/ Call: 520-281-0579

Hope: Outpatient treatment services for adults and young adults struggling with substance use.

1891 N Mastick Way, Nogales, AZ 85621/ Call: (520) 287-9612

Let's Break the Silence: Observing Mental Health Awareness Month is a chance to hit the reset button on how we view mental health. It's a time to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and remind everyone that it's okay not to be okay sometimes. By working together, we can create a healthier and happier society for all. Let's start the conversation, seek help when needed, and support those around us.

Take Action: This Mental Health Awareness Month, let's take action to prioritize mental health in our community. Share your story, seek support, and encourage others to do the same. Together, we can build a stronger, more supportive community that values mental health just as much as physical health. Our community is home to several organizations dedicated to mental health care. These organizations include HOPE, Pinal Hispanic Council, Intermountain, Circles of Peace, and Mariposa Community Health Center.



"Celebrate your achievements, for they are significant."



www.santacruzsheriff.org Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office 2170 N. Congress Dr. Nogales, AZ 85621 520-761-7869



Sheriff's Round-Up

We proudly recognize National Correctional Officers Week, celebrated annually during the first week of May – from May 4 to May 10 this year. This observance was established by President Ronald Reagan on May 5, 1984, in appreciation of the vital role correctional officers play in our communities. We extend our sincere gratitude to all the dedicated men and women working in our Detention Center – thank you for your service.

Following that, we will observe National Police Week from May 11 to May 17, 2025. In 1962, President John F. Kennedy signed a proclamation designating May 15 as Peace Officers Memorial Day, and the week in which it falls as Police Week. It is a time to show support for law enforcement and to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. The Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office will hold a memorial ceremony on May 15 at the Morris K. Udall Courtyard to pay tribute to our fallen heroes. We are also proud to celebrate the achievements of our newest graduates:

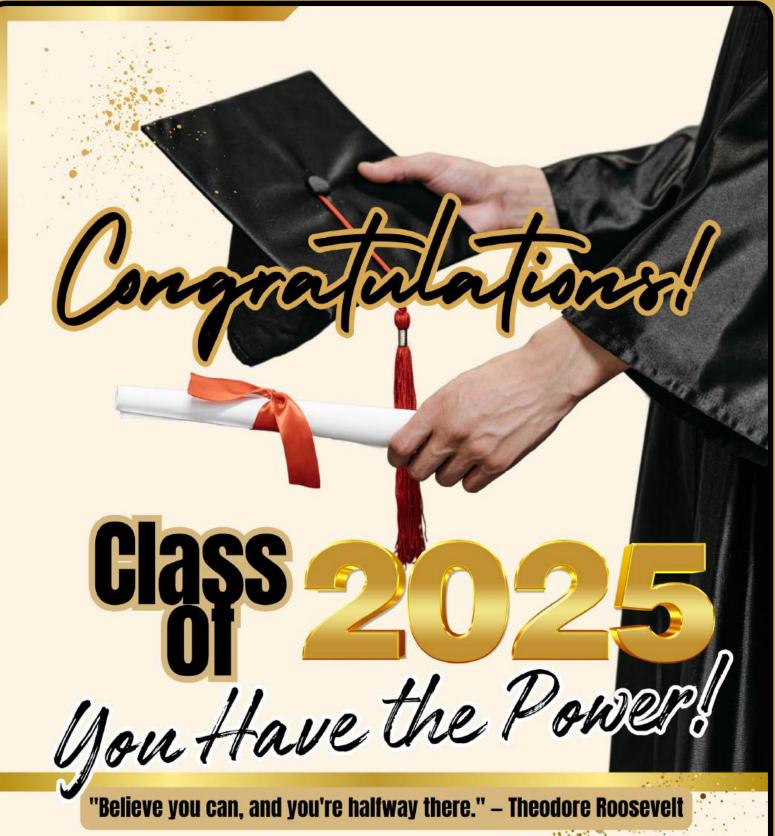
- Deputy Sheriff Alexis Cirerol, who completed 21 weeks of rigorous academic and physical training and successfully met all AZPOST requirements. Congratulations!
- Detention Officers Aidan Hernandez and Marko Gudino, who recently graduated from the Correctional
 Officers Training Academy in Tucson, Arizona, after 7 weeks of intense training. Well done to both!
 If you are interested in starting a career in law enforcement with the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's
 Office, we are currently accepting applications for positions such as Deputy Sheriff, Detention Officer,
 Dispatcher, and Accounting Specialist. We are also seeking lateral officers for both Peace Officer and
 Detention Officer positions. Applications can be downloaded from the County website and submitted to
 the Human Resources Office.

On behalf of myself and the entire administration, we extend our heartfelt thanks to the public for assisting us in our public safety mission.

Sincerely,

Sheriff David Hathaway





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