



Spring 2022

Lend a Heart News



The Bi-Annual Newsletter of Lend a Heart Animal-Assisted Therapy, Inc.
Proud to be an American Kennel Club recognized Therapy Dog Organization



Celebrating 35 years



Lend a Heart ♥ Lend a Hand



Let's Pawty! Lend A Heart will be celebrating its 35th Anniversary on April 2, Saturday, 1-3pm, Hagen Community Park in Rancho Cordova. Bring your Lend A Heart pup, family members and friends to celebrate this auspicious occasion. For more event information, turn to page two of the newsletter.

Lend A Heart, Lend A Hand Animal-Assisted Therapy was founded in 1987 through the involvement and dedication of local dog club members. Lend A Heart provides the Sacramento area with animal-assisted teams to be used in therapeutic settings. Our programs connect with people of all ages with the support of our volunteers and the unconditional love of our therapy pets. 🐾

Bringing comfort to those who need it most.

MISSION STATEMENT

Lend A Heart is a volunteer organization comprised of certified handler and animal teams, and associated volunteers, dedicated to provide compassion and understanding for our clients through animal-assisted therapy. Our values are to provide quality, commitment, integrity, and to celebrate diversity.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jannette Phelps, Vice-President
Sandy McKaig, CFO (Treasurer)
Christine Hale, Secretary
Joanne Faist
Stephanie Plucker
Kristine Nymoen
Brett Glines



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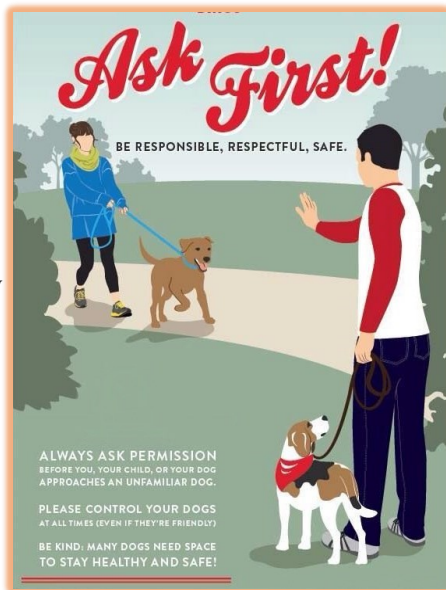
Let's Celebrate our 35th LAH Anniversary at Hagen Community Park in Rancho Cordova! Saturday, April 2 from 1 - 3p...Bring your friends, family and definitely your furry LAH team mate. We have picnic site #A2 reserved - lots of shade, tables, and grass. Easy access and near parking lot.

Potluck style - bring an appetizer or dessert to share. Water, plates, napkins will be provided. Bring chairs or blanket but please no alcohol. If desired, come earlier (around 12:30p) and have a picnic and take advantage of our reserved site. Some LAH board members will be there by noon.

Masks are optional but we encourage social distancing.

We have planned some activities that include LAH History Trivia Game, Introduction to Agility by way of a course set-up for those teams who want to give it a try, and we will have an Intro to Dance

Steps demonstration featuring Stephanie Plucker and Willow as our guides. If that is not enough fun, we will be handing out prizes for A Couple of Obedience/ Distraction Activities and Best Trick to our teams who want to participate in a little "friendly competition". 🐾



Is Your Dog Scared of People in Masks?

by Haylee Bergeland, KPA-CTP, CPDT-KA, CBCC-KA

Reprinted from Daily Paws

Are masks scary and confusing to your dog? Maybe. But there are lots of things you can do to help your dog feel more comfortable around mask-wearing people. Over the last 2 years our dogs have been enjoying having their people at home (except for the couch stealing) and love getting lots more walks (lots and lots). But what about all the strange humans wearing masks? As our communities are masking up to slow the spread of COVID-19, what do our dogs think when they meet people with covered faces? Are dogs afraid of masks? The answer isn't a simple yes or no. Your dog is an individual, and what *you* do around people in masks will impact how your dog will feel and react.

Do Masks Confuse Dogs?

While we know that dogs pay attention to a human's smile and facial expressions, human mouths are not always good information providers for dogs. We all have had the experience of not being able to "read" a person based on their facial expressions. That happens daily for many dogs. Mask-wearing may make this confusion worse, by limiting a dog's ability to interpret facial expressions.

On the other hand, a team of cognitive scientists at the University of Veterinary Medicine in Vienna found that dogs can differentiate happy and angry faces by just seeing half of a human's face. That may be due to dogs' close relationships with people and having learned to understand non-verbal communication. Dog's pay very close attention to our body cues. All. The. Time. And dogs have another advantage: They get a great deal of information from their sense of smell. So, while mask-wearing decreases dogs' ability to read our faces, they're still able to gather a lot of data to make a judgment.

Some dogs seem surprisingly at ease with covered faces. In her blog, Patricia McConnell, PhD, CAAB emeritus, discusses why some dogs (including her own) may not mind—and may sometimes even *like*—people with masks on.

"Mine tolerate [masks], but they are clearly less comfortable interacting with new people wearing masks," says Leslie Stewart, PhD, who's a therapy animal professional and Associate Professor at Idaho State University. "I'm sure lots of genetic, environmental, and individual factors are at play," she says. "But I also recognize the influence of my relationship with my dogs."

(Continued on page 3)

Can We Help Dogs Feel Better About Masks?

“To help support my dogs in navigating a new world full of humans

wearing masks, I consider what that looks like from the perspective of a dog,” Stewart says. It’s always a good idea to ensure your dog has a positive experience with



anything new. When you’re around strangers with masks on, offer your dog lots of tasty treats they adore to help create a positive association. You can even make a game out of this!

“I do a lot of ‘watch me’ and focus games, which they already enjoy,” Stewart says. The moment you, and your dog, spot a person with a mask on, offer your dog some treats and lots of good praise.

Pay close attention when out on walks or in public spaces, so your dog is not surprised by a stranger with a mask. Always be an advocate for your dog, never forcing them to interact if they’re scared or unsure.

“Another thing I do is to make sure I greet the masked person before they speak to or approach us,” Stewart says. “That way, the dog knows I’m OK with that person.”



As we mask-up right now, these actions will help to shape a more positive emotional response in your dog. 🐾



Take the Lead! Looking for a new opportunity in Lend A Heart? Due to our reduced number of current team leaders, we need additional new team leaders to handle our facilities and events. Please consider team leading a new visit, there is no experience necessary!

All you need to qualify for this opportunity is to be friendly, consistent, punctual, and responsible. As a team leader, you will have Team Leader Admin options in Better Impact which will allow you to email your group and check attendance.

An experienced team leader will help you establish the visit and get you off and running. Lend a Heart will provide you with the “On the Visit Training” course along with a zoom “Team Leader Intro course and refresher”. If you have been a Team Leader for LAH in the past, and want to lead a visit in the near future all these resources are available to you too!

So, if you’re ready to “Take the Lead” and become a Team Leader please call or e-mail Sandy McKaig, she’d love to hear from you!





RSVP Donates to Lend a Heart

by Jannette Phelps

A Special Thanks goes out to the Reconciliation Singers Voices of Peace (RSVP), and Dear Darling. RSVP's goal is to present uplifting vocal concerts to raise money for local Sacramento charities. RSVP is an accomplished a cappella group, with very talented and well-known singers. Each concert was a unique and memorable experience.



For their first-time holiday performance, RSVP, selected Lend A Heart (LAH) as the recipient of a generous **donation of \$7216.00**. The first concert was held December 10th at the Westminster Presbyterian Church. The second concert was held December 11th at the Pleasant Grove Community Church. Both concerts were a packed house featuring our awesome pups, holiday song, and a supporting audience of good cheer.

At each venue, LAH CFO Sandy McKaig gave a presentation to introduce the audience to our organization. At the second concert, she was able to have a slideshow to go along with her presentation. Sandy did an amazing job!



In the Lobby we had a table and two displays set up. We had four teams at each concert. The teams mingled with the audience before and after the concert. Everyone loved the dogs and learning about LAH. We had several people interested in joining. During the concert the dogs were so



well behaved. At Westminster the piano was right in front of the row where we were sitting. A couple of songs were accompanied with the piano. The pianist is world renowned Jennifer Reason. Jennifer is also the director of the group and Midday Classical Announcer for CapRadio. Rose Margolis' little Sophie was the closest to the piano and she was so interested, just sitting and watching the pianist while she played. At one point Sophie went over and gave Jennifer a couple of kisses on her ankle. When Jennifer was addressing the audience, she mentioned how special it was to get the kisses from Sophie.



We all enjoyed both evenings listening to talented performers and talking to the people that attended the concert. 🐾



Community Outreach

LAH Donates to Homeward Bound Golden Retriever Rescue

by Jannette Phelps

As a board, we decided in December to have the Lend a Heart group donate items to Homeward Bound Golden Retriever Rescue and Sanctuary which is a wonderful organization that rescues golden retrievers, golden mixes and other dog breeds as well. Through the years, many LAH dogs have been adopted from Homeward Bound. I adopted my beautiful Jasmine in 2010.



Sandy McKaig, Christine Hale, and I met with Carolyn Unger, Volunteer (LAH member) and Judy Kent, President of Homeward Bound to present them with our donations. Many LAH members donated items, here is a list of some of the donations. Paper towels, Kong toys, Lick Pads, dog food and blankets.

While we were touring the facility with Carolyn, we observed an adoption and watched a dog find their “fur-ever” family. We had a great day. 🐾



Elk Grove Girl Scout Troop 2407

Elk Grove Girl Scout Troop 2407 reached out in March for some help with their animal badges. The scouts were focusing on the human-animal bond, as well as how animals are used to help people emotionally. Handlers (Jenniene Cheng and Sandy McKaig) began with a joint presentation allowing for lots of questions.



Isaiah (black lab)



Proctor (yellow lab/golden)

Following the presentation, both dogs demonstrated how they create a mood of comfort and joy for their clients. 🐾

Twelve Bridges Library in Lincoln

If your dog loves kids, this is a visit for you. We have been doing this program for 5 years. We meet on the third Saturday of the month from 3-4 pm. We usually have a great attendance. This past month, March 19, we had over 20 children come. The library has selected a number of books for the children to read, dog oriented of course. We have ages from 2- 12 years that come.



With the help of our librarian, Amanda, the kids rotate through with our teams every 10 minutes and if time permits we have a number of children who go through a few times just to visit with all the dogs! 🐾

Community Outreach

Summerset Senior Living

by Kim Oliver

It's been great getting back to Summerset Senior Living LAH visits, not only for me personally, but also for Kona. It had been a very long time since our last visit and getting to see other LAH teams was wonderful. We were all ready to get back to visiting our senior clients and they enjoyed it immensely. We had to speak a bit louder, due to the masks, but other than that it was really like the good ol' days.



Kona


Since we resumed our visits at Summerset Senior Living, the only thing that I've personally changed from my prior routine is that I wipe Kona down

with sanitizing/deodorizing pet wipes after our visits before putting on her seat belt and heading home. With or without a pandemic, I believe that's a good "healthy" habit to get into!



Daisy

Those we visited really enjoyed our "fur babies" and we are looking forward to spending time with them each month.

I encourage all LAH members to sign up and join one of our senior visits as they have really missed us! 



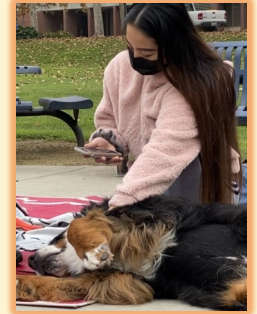
Sergeant

Reprint of photos have been authorized by Summerset Senior Living

De-stressing with a Therapy Dog

by Sandy McKaig

The top stress relief activity that appeals to students is therapy dogs. Our LAH pups have stepped up to confirm that. They've been very busy with de-stressing the college students, starting last December (Jessup, CRC, UC Davis, UOP) and more recently February



through June (UC Davis, UCD Med Center, Bitney Prep High School). **Dante / CRC** Currently, Lend A Heart has scheduled 14 de-stressers and counting.



Rocky/UC Davis

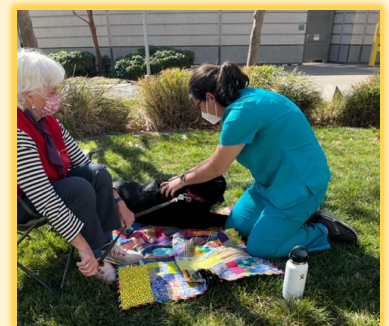
UCD Med Center featured our therapy dogs in their yoga and Thai chi wellness classes. We will see if our pups (and/or handlers) learn a few new poses. And, our de-stressers are now expanding into the working world (Amazon Fulfillment Center near airport) and first responders (CHP Dispatcher's Center in Rancho Cordova).



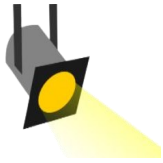
Proctor / UC Davis



Nanami / UC Davis



Ringo / UC Davis



Volunteers In the Spotlight

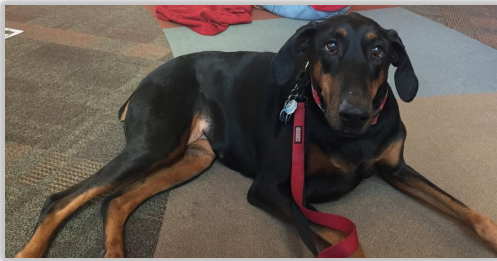
Hi there. My name is Stephanie Plucker. I have been with Lend A Heart for 15 years.

I started with my Doberman, Drucilla. I had been a member of Lend A Heart Animal Assisted Therapy for about a year when I saw another member do a Canine Freestyle routine to the Mission Impossible theme for a group of elementary students we were visiting. I was sure Drucilla could do this even though she was 7 years old when we started canine freestyle. She became known in our group as the Dancing Doberman.



Drucilla

She delighted children and seniors at our therapy visits for the next six years. She and I tried some competitions but Drucilla preferred her dancing at therapy visits. I got my second Doberman, Willow when Drucilla was 10 years old.



Willow

Willow not only became a certified therapy dog at 1.5 years, I also started her in canine freestyle. She loved it and loved doing her routines at her therapy visits. I decided a few years later to try competition with her in canine freestyle. We did a combination of live performances and submitting videos. It took a little over 4 years but we did get our **Grand Championship** completing all 8 challenges. Willow just turned 12 in January. She has some medical challenges with her back and heart but I think because of her involvement in Canine Freestyle, it has helped her handle these health issues. Also it provides an avenue for ongoing training.

For those of you who have therapy dogs, Canine Freestyle is a fun way to keep training and can reinforce the bond between you and your dog. 🐾

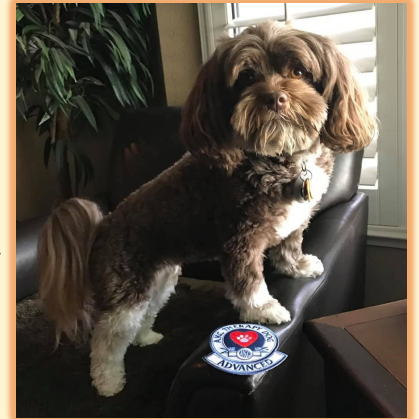


Volunteers Helping



Hi there. My name is Kim Oliver and I have been with Lend A Heart for over 10 years. A funny thing happened on the way to a camping trip in Coloma! It was Memorial Day weekend and we had no idea we would be adopting a puppy that weekend but as fate would have it, we did!

Having said that, while camping we had a chance encounter with a family who recently adopted an adorable male chocolate Havanese puppy.



Kona



Kona—10 weeks

The owner told us that the Havanese Breeder still had a few pups from a recent litter left. When we cuddled with this little “fur-ball” while camping, we didn’t have to think about it to know that we were puppy “smitten”.

So, on the way home, with no hesitation, we headed over to the Havanese Breeder to get better acquainted and to see if there was a “forever-puppy” waiting for us there too! As fate would have it, we met Kona and fell in love. She was the smallest of the three and the calmest. It turns out that the calm aspect worked out great for a LAH therapy dog. She’s ten now and we are still just as in love with her as we were when we first met. Somethings are just meant to be! 🐾





Lend A Heart Evaluation Success and Process

by Sandy McKaig

Thank You (LAH volunteers) and Congrats (new LAH teams)! Three evaluations have been conducted by Lend A Heart - June, 2021; December, 2021; February, 2022.

10 New Teams...Jenniene/ Isaiah; Rose/Sophie; Debbie/Murray; Cindy/Gabby; Laura/China; Margot/Gracie; Rose/Vinnie; Mickey/Tea; Katie/Logic; David/Nanami



**Gabby
Jannette
Phelps Tour
Guide**



David/Nanami



Katie/Logic



Jenniene/ Isaiah



Debbie/Murray

LAH's volunteer application process has been modified...The new orientation is now satisfied by new teams attending at least one park role-play. This provides an opportunity for a variety of LAH teams to meet and greet and observe new teams, and demonstrate role-play exercises.

The other part of the orientation consisted of two online

training courses featuring components of LAH's Volunteer Guide, with quiz questions interspersed.

LAH's volunteer application of 3 parts has also been slightly modified. LAH Part 1 Volunteer Application is now online, using Better Impact - each new team creates an initial profile for handler and pet. The other two application parts (Obedience and Health) remain the same.

Next evaluation? Maybe in June, 2022. As a LAH volunteer, please consider assisting with an evaluation. And, if you have friends or family with a potential therapy pet, encourage them to reach out and apply at our website. LAH accepts dogs, cats, and rabbits.

LEND A HEART ♥ LEND A HAND
ANIMAL ASSISTED THERAPY

HOME ABOUT ENGAGE JOIN CONTACT VOLUNTEERS

How To Join

STEPS TO JOIN (CLICK ON EACH LINK):

- Meet the basic criteria
- Apply and observe
- Attend Orientation
- Pass Evaluation
- Trainee Evaluation Period
- Active Volunteer

Click on each link to walk through the process to become a Lend A Heart volunteer.

Additional details are provided in the Lend A Heart Volunteer and Policy Guide.

[DOWNLOAD VOLUNTEER & POLICY GUIDES](#)

To Join visit: [www. Lendaheart.com](http://www.Lendaheart.com)



LAH Therapy Dog Stories

Gracie

by Margot Vandercapellan

My last article for the LAH Newsletter was about my dear Stella who crossed the rainbow Bridge in 2019 and what she meant to us. Life goes on after all. After my grievance period I decided to rescue another Golden at Homeward Bound.

I arranged a visit and within two hours my husband and I brought home this gorgeous female blonde Golden Retriever mix. We noticed she was quite attached to Carol Unger's side during her walk through this large grassy area to meet us. I couldn't help but notice how well behaved this Golden was on the leash. I thought then right away, this was a good sign for her to become a Therapy dog.



The moment we met she welcomed us with a wagging tail and was extremely friendly. After signing the paperwork, we took her to the car, it did not take but a second for her to jump in. She enjoyed the ride all the way home. She started to make more points to become a Therapy dog. We arrived home and her very calm behavior, yet curious enough to check out her new environment earned her yet another star. The grandkids couldn't wait to see her, so they came shortly after we arrived home. They were all over, and she took it all in. This was yet another accolade for her to be eligible to become a therapy dog. I then decided to get in contact with LAH to let them know I came home with a 4 and ½ old Golden from Homeward Bound who absolutely showed attributes to become a Therapy dog. After the contact with LAH I noticed a few days later that she showed exemplary behavior towards other dogs and that is a very important personality trait. Finally, a year later we made it to the evaluation and she passed. 🐾

Once she finishes her probation visits, I, without any doubt know that she will make kids, teenagers and adults alike happy.

Gracie, this is, the name we gave her, picks up emotions, for example, she just knows when you are down, she won't leave your side. Here is another example of how Gracie is adorable, she makes this "pff, pfff, sound when she greets us, it is a sound I never heard with any other dog.

In addition to the cute sounds she makes, there are several funny characteristics you most likely will never get to see. Let me explain; we have a pool, when one of us swims or stands in the water in front of her, she immediately puts her paw on top of your head. First her right then her left paw and that can go on forever unless you stop her. When it's time to go to the Vet, we open the door to the Vet's office, she sits down and plant's her paws on top of the leash to the floor and her body looks like a stubborn mule. Gracie then looks you straight in the eye, and glares I am not going in!

I have been with LAH with our Stella since 2012 until 2019. I did not realize then that visiting the Community with your Therapy Dog is a total WIN encounter. The receiver as well as the Handler, benefits from the beautiful visits. I have missed the visitation during Covid times and can't wait to take Gracie out into the Community to make a difference in the world. 🐾

Vinnie

by Rose Margolis



Vinnie is the newest member of our family. I have always had a Cardigan Corgi, and he is the most loving one I have ever had. He really enjoys people, and loves the attention. He makes people smile when they see his big blue eyes. Vinnie is young, so he has a lot of energy, but seeks out pets from everyone.

I've been a member of LAH for several years, and have learned so much. The dogs provide such comfort for everyone, and share their love all the way around. 🐾



LAH Therapy Dog Stories

Logic

by Katie Edgren

Logic is a sweet boy and is still very young; he'll be three in May. Logic was a puppy in training for Guides for the Blind. He is smart, wants to please, and was a very mellow puppy. When he was recalled and examined, the vets found mild arthritis in his lower spine, which disqualified him from being a service dog. We knew he wanted to work. He loves to be touched and to interact with people, so we thought therapy work for him might be a good fit for us.



Although Logic seems serious to most people, we often get to see the goofy pup side of him. He will sometimes initiate play with our other puppy in training by putting his butt in the air, tail wagging, while he bounces. At night time, Logic becomes a cuddly lap dog and snores like a "walrus"!

I saw the benefits of pet therapy when I took an older dog to visit my grandma in assisted living. She was so happy to have a dog to cuddle and loved sharing her with her friends for the day. Our granddaughter also was helped so much when she had a therapy dog with her before open heart surgery. It also provided comfort to my daughter and her husband to know their daughter wasn't stressed. So far, Logic is enjoying the visits as much as the people he's met. 🐾

LAH Therapy Dog Stories

Nanami

by Dave Bose

My name is David Bose and I work with Nanami, who is a familiar dog to many of you because she and my wife, Sheila Bose, have been involved with LAH for a few years. In my case I just need to train the dog handler (me) rather than the dog and the handler. I decided to get involved with LAH after surviving a rare cancer which shifted my focus to "live your best life every day" and "give back where you can". I am a retired Civil Engineer and Navy veteran so I enjoy trading "sea stories" with the assisted living clients. I look forward to meeting everyone. 🐾



The Sacramento SPCA Doggy Dash will be live in person on **April 23**. Lend A Heart will have a booth at this event. Now in its 29th year, the Doggy Dash has become the most prominent dog walk and festival in the Sacramento area, bringing together

more than 5,000 people and their dogs to William Land Park. The Doggy Dash is a 2k/5k walk with you and your furry friend(s) and a post walk "Bark in the Park" pet festival that includes vendors, contests, food trucks, beer garden, local entertainment and more! LAH needs volunteers for the booth to help set up and run the booth, if interested please sign up in Better impact. **For more information regarding how you can help at the Doggy Dash, please contact Stephanie Plucker or Rose Margolis.** The event goes from 10:00am to 1:00pm. We also will be having a walk team. The start of the 2k/5k dog walk and the Bark in the Park Festival is located on the corner of Sutterville Road and Freeport Boulevard in the 'Village Green' area of the William Land Park.

Lend a Heart Animal Assisted Therapy Dogs, Inc.
11230 Gold Express Dr. Ste 310
Gold River, CA 95670



SACRAMENTO SPCA DOGGY DASH
APRIL 23 2022
WILLIAM LAND PARK

Saturday, April 23, 2022 • 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Save the Date!

Become a Lend a Heart Donor
YES— I would like to make a donation to support the programs provided by **Lend a Heart Animal-Assisted Therapy Dogs, Inc.** Enclosed is my check for:

\$25 \$50 \$75 \$100

Please make checks payable to: **Lend a Heart Animal-Assisted Therapy Dogs, Inc.** and mail to: **Lend a Heart Animal-Assisted Therapy Dogs, Inc., 11230 Gold Express Dr, ste 310 #284 Gold River, CA 95670**

Donor's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

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Special Instructions for gift (in honor of, in memory of, other)

If any: name and mailing address of the person we should notify regarding the gift: _____



May 5, 2022

24 Hours To Give Where Your Heart Is

Big Day of Giving

bigdayofgiving.org

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THANK YOU

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