

The Groton Independent

Vol. 137 No. 46 \diamond Groton, South Dakota \diamond Wednesday, July 15, 2020 \diamond Established in 1889

Groton changes school calendar to 4-day weekly schedule

The Groton Area Board of Education voted Monday night to change the school calendar, switching to a four-day week with the first day of school being August 19th and the proposed final day being May 6th. The one major hiccup with this calendar is that every day missed will need to be made up at the end of the school year, or adjustments made later in the school year where some of the Fridays could be make-up days.

The four-day week will allow the teaching staff to have Fridays as a prep day so teachers can prep for hybrid education with in-person and E-learning.

If the school has to shut down for 24 hours due to a case, that day would be flipped with Friday. So if school was called off on Tuesday, Tuesday would be the teacher prep day and instruction would be held on Friday that week. Schwan said he is normally opposed to a fourday school calendar due to the limitations of the number of contact hours. However, with the situation the way it is, everyone was in favor of going with the four-day school week.

An adjustment was made as February 15th would be off for President's Day and February 19 would be in session.

Free meals will be available to all students through August 31. The national policy stands through the end of August. No forms need to be signed for the free meals.

Fall athletics meeting and school open house are not good ideas and will not be held this fall.

Face coverings will be required on the buses. Schwan said he would encourage parents to bring in their children to school instead of putting them on the bus because of the close quarters. The school can provide masks if a family does not have one. As far as the classroom, masks are optional at this point, but it will be strongly recommended.





Business Manager Mike Weber gives the oath of office to Steve Smith and Grant Rix at Monday's school board meeting. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Schwan warned that anyone who is infected with COVID-19, will have to be out for two weeks; however, even those who are considered to be in close contact with someone with COVID-19 will also need to be out of school for 14 days.

The substitute teacher pool across South Dakota is mostly elderly people and they are considered high risk and Schwan said there will be a shortage of substitute teachers.

Board member Deb Gengerke said the staff is by far at higher risk than the children, and while it is the children we are protecting, the staff is at higher risk for COVID-19.

Also please note that decisions made today could be changed by the time school starts, based on the COVID-19 situation.

Board Member Marty Weismantel said this is not an idea situation, "but it's what we are facing. We need to do the best, step up to the plate and make it work."

the proposal.

Steve Smith was voted back in as the school board president as the new school board reorganized. The oath of office was read to Steve Smith and Grant Rix. Marty Weismantel was re-elected as the Vice President.

Carleen Johnson was approved as a volunteer girls soccer coach, Carla Tracy was approved as a volunteer assistant volleyball coach, and Jasmine Schinkel was approved as a co-cheer advisor, all for the upcoming school year.

Substitute teacher pay was tabled to the next meeting. Substitute bus drivers rate remains at \$65 a day. The school lunch prices and activity admission prices will remain unchanged. Also, no change in the OST rate for the upcoming school year.

- Paul Kosel

The following was posted by **Superintendent Joe Schwan**

At their regular meeting on Monday, July 13, 2020, the Groton Area Board of Education adopted a revised school calendar for the 2020-2021 school year.

The new calendar moves first day of school for the new year to Wednesday, August 19, 2020. A major shift in the calendar for the year will be the inclusion of instructional planning days, typically Fridays, into the calendar. The primary purpose of those days will be to provide the teaching staff with the time and resources necessary to develop and implement hybrid forms of instruction suited for a remote learning environment. Students will not be in session on those days.

The district is continuing to prepare its back-to-school plans, part of which includes an acknowledgement that remote learning may very well be necessary during parts of the school year. At a minimum, we anticipate that student absenteeism will be higher than typical necessitating a system that will allow us to keep all of our students moving forward.

Flexibility in everything we work through during the next school year will be critical. There may be instances that require a short-

Bill Duncan was recognized for his 16 years of service to the Groton Area School District. Darlyne Johnson was also recognized, but not present, for her 21 years of service. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Schwan said it would be possible if there is a COVID-19 situation in one building, that it would be possible to keep school going in the other building.

Busses were inspected and just two had a couple of minor issues.

Kevin Nehls from Allied Climate Professionals proposed the installation of HVAC ionization system. The board will do more research on

term school closure during the week (e.g. typical snow days or closures for facilities cleaning). If such a situation arises, we can swap the Friday planning day with another day in the week to best maintain a continuity of learning.

The calendar adoption represents only part of the work underway to provide for the best instructional opportunities for our students during the 2020-2021 school year.

First Round State VFW Jr. Teener Schedule in Webster

DATE +	AWAY TEAM	HOME TEAM	Result/Time
Fri, Jul 17	SDVFW 14U Castlewood	SDVFW 14U Groton	12:00PM CDT
Fri, Jul 17	SDVFW 14U Canova Gang	SDVFW 14U Parker	2:30PM CDT
Fri, Jul 17	SDVFW 14U Mt. Vernon-Plankinton	SDVFW 14U Gregory	5:00PM CDT
Fri, Jul 17	SDVFW 14U FH Hitmen	SDVFW 14U Webster	7:30PM CDT





JoAnn and Mike Nehls erect a sign at the end of Groton's Main Street. Nehls is running for Brown County Commission.



Deadline to submit items: Noon Monday] Yearly Subscription Rates are listed below. The Groton Independent (USPS# 230-440) is published weekly with its periodicals postage paid at Groton, SD.

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GHS Graduation Service Held, finally! July 12th seemed like a long ways away when the decision was made in March to postpone the graduation ceremony due to the outbreak of COVID-19. But July 12th did finally arrive and the ceremony was held in the GHS Arena with appropriate spacing for the graduates. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

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2020-2021	Groton	Area	School	District
	Adopted	7/13/202	0	

August			Jan	uary 2	2021			
5 - Faculty Inservice	Su	М	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
6 - Faculty Inservice						1	2	
19 - 1st Day of School	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	4
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Student Contact: 8; Inservice: 4	31							
								1
September			Febr	ruary	2021			
7 - Labor Day - NO SCHOOL	Su	М	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
21 - Homecoming Coronation (7:30)		1	2	3	4	5	6	4
25 - Homecoming FB vs. Redfield	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4
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Student Contact: 19; Inservice: 2			16	17	18	19		
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Student Contact: 19; Inservice: 2	21		16 23	17 24	18 25	19		

January		

1 - Christmas Break - NO SCHOOL 4 - School Resumes

15 - NCSEC Faculty Inservice - NO SCHOOL

Student Contact: 16; Inservice: 4

February 11 - Parent/Teacher Conferences - (1:30 - 8:30)

12 - Faculty Inservice - NO SCHOOL

Student Contact: 16; Inservice: 4

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4 - End of 3rd Quarter (36)

19 - Spring Break - NO SCHOOL

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9 - Faculty Inservice - NO SCHOOL

- 16 End of 1st Quarter (36)
- Student Contact: 17; Inservice: 5

November

August 5 - Facult

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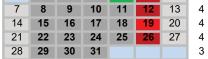
11 - Veterans Day Program

26-27 - Thanksgiving - NO SCHOOL

Student Contact: 16; Inservice: 3

December

- 10 MS/HS Christmas Concert (7:00)
- 22 Elementary Christmas Concert (1:00)
- 22 Early Dismissal (2:00)
- 22 End of 1st Semester (37/73)
- 23-31 Christmas Break NO SCHOOL
- Student Contact: 13; Inservice: 3



April 2021									
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Student Contact: 19; Inservice: 3

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Good Friday - NO SCHOOL - Pops Concert (2:00 & 5:00) - PROM

- Middle School Spring Concert (7:00)
- Faculty Inservice

Student Contact: 19; Inservice: 2

May

- 4 Elementary Spring Concert (7:00)
- 6 End of 2nd Semester (38/74)
- 6 HS Concert/Awards Night (7:00)
- 16 Graduation (2:00)
- 31 Memorial Day

Student Contact: 4; Inservice: 0



All missed instructional days will need to be made up either during the year or at the end of the year.



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A Historic Day at Mount Rushmore

On July 3rd, South Dakota got to showcase our state to not only the rest of the nation but also the world. For the first time in more than a

decade, we celebrated America's birthday with fireworks at Mount Rushmore. The excitement leading up to the event could be felt by everyone in attendance. Over just three days, more than 125 thousand people tried to get tickets to the event, and the lucky 7,500 who witnessed it in person saw quite a show.

South Dakotans know just how beautiful and magnificent the Black Hills and Mount Rushmore are, but it was wonderful to share them with millions of viewers from around the globe. Early estimates suggest more than 5.5 million people tuned in to watch our celebration on just one cable news network.

Our team at the Department of Tourism spent countless hours pulling together this great event. The Department of the Interior's Secretary David Bernhardt was instrumental in helping us overcome countless obstacles to make it a reality. And of course, none of this would have been possible without President Trump's dedication to making this event happen. Before I was even sworn in as Governor, I asked for his help to bring fireworks back to Mount Rushmore, and he went to work on it immediately.

In addition to the wonderful fireworks display, we were also thrilled to be the audience for President Trump's best ever speech. It was unifying and focused on his dedication to the things that make America the greatest country in the world. But he also warned of a sinister threat to that greatness: the radical movement to re-write American history.

Make no mistake, this movement is not about equality. This movement's attempt to "cancel" the founding generation is an attempt to cancel our own freedoms. Our Founders had

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their flaws, certainly. But every person has flaws. Without our Founders' words, ideals, and sacrifice, the world would not have a ringing example of true freedom. We can write, worship, work, defend ourselves, and even protest as we see fit because of these men and their ideals.

That's what the celebration of America's birthday is about. It's about our core American ideal: "All men are created equal." It's about the day our ideal was forever enshrined in one of the most important statements of purpose ever written, the Declaration of Independence. It's about the work of countless brave men and women, including the four presidents enshrined on Mount Rushmore, to live up to that ideal and make America the greatest country ever.

Everyone who tuned in for our celebration also learned about South Dakota's commitment to that American ideal, to freedom, and to trusting our citizens to exercise their personal responsibility to do what's best for themselves and their loved-ones. Let us, like our Founding Fathers, pledge our own lives, fortunes, and sacred honor to the cause of liberty and self-government, so that we may continue to have the freedom to follow our consciences, build our lives, and live in peace. And let's continue to celebrate America's birthday with fireworks at Mount Rushmore!

South Dakota reports no surge after Independence Day parties

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota health officials on Monday said they have not seen an uptick in community spread of the coronavirus after thousands of people gathered for Independence Day celebrations in the western part of the state.

Gov. Kristi Noem has encouraged public gatherings in recent weeks, holding an outdoor fireworks celebration without social distancing at Mount Rushmore on July 3 and pushing for a Professional Bull Riders competition that allowed fans into a Sioux Falls arena this weekend. She even appeared at that event on horseback, wielding the American flag.

While other states in the South and Midwest have broken records in the number of daily cases reported, South Dakota's report of 25 cases was one of the lowest since April. There are currently 63 people hospitalized with the virus, a number that Noem has said drives her coronavirus strategy.

The state says 7,524 people have tested positive for the coronavirus. Almost 87% of those people have recovered, but 109 have died.

As the number of hospitalizations declined in recent weeks, the Republican governor has been emboldened to cast doubt on the science behind wearing masks to prevent transmission of the coronavirus. She called it "very mixed" last week.

Noem's Secretary of Health Kim Malsam-Rysdon lent some support to Noem's doubts on masks while also pointing to guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that people wear cloth masks when in public or in close proximity to people outside their household. Near the beginning of the pandemic, officials gave conflicting advice on masks, and the issue has opened up a political divide among many Americans.

"The science is not unequivocal about maskwearing," Malsam-Rysdon said. "There are differing opinions, but right now the consensus from CDC is that mask-wearing is appropriate in certain circumstances."

A number of scientific studies, experiments and analyses indicate wearing a mask helps block the respiratory droplets that carry coronaviruses, but the current research is missing randomized control trials — considered the gold standard of scientific proof. Those types of experiments are underway in Canada and Denmark, in which masks are tested in randomly assigned groups of nurses and the general public.

Studies have also shown that wide-spread mask-wearing is associated with slowing the spread of COVID-19 infections. An analysis published in a leading medical journal last month reviewed 172 studies and found masks and social distancing can help control the coronavirus but hand washing and other measures are still needed. When asked about the state's advice on wearing masks, Malsam-Rysdon pointed back to the Department of Health's website for coronavirus information. The website makes it clear that masks are not required but advises people to consider the CDC recommendation to wear them in public. One document from the Department of Health's website says to "wear a mask when feasible" during social activities. The South Dakota State Medical Association has also urged people to wear a mask when they can't avoid being close to people in public.



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Brown County July 7, 2020

Meeting Minutes JULY 7, 2020 – GENERAL MEETING

Meeting called to order by Commission Chair Kippley at 8:45 A.M. in the Commission Chambers, Courthouse Annex, Brown County, SD. Present were Commissioners Wiese, Feickert, Sutton, and Fjeldheim. Commissioner Feickert led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES:

Moved by Sutton, seconded by Feickert to approve the general meeting minutes of June 30th, 2020. All members present voting aye. Motion carried. CLAMS/PAYROLL:

Moved by Feickert, Fjeldheim to approve the following claims and payroll:

Payroll: Commission \$4,285.10; Auditor \$8,720.99; Treasurer \$13,507.28; SA \$20,521.90; SVAWA \$1,193.49; Maintenance \$6,501.59; As-Maintenance \$6,501.59; As-sessor \$12,798.96; Register of Deeds \$8,983.40; VSO \$2,221.82; GIS \$2,387.50; IT \$7,735.00; HR \$2,173.85; Sheriff \$40,799.74; Jail \$45,850.59; Court Security \$5,751.89; JDC \$22,586.71; Welfare \$2,077.70; Museum \$7,573,78; Parke/Fair Museum \$7,578.78; Parks/Fair-grounds \$6,463.58; Fair Board \$4,562.86; 4-H \$614.00; Weed \$4,436.87; Planning & Zoning \$4,546.49; Highway \$46,392.51; Dispatch \$24,621.27; Emergency \$4,119.58; Teen Court \$639.85; DAL 41 506.02; 24/7, Cobrist JDAI \$1,596.93; 24/7 Sobriety \$573.42; Landfill \$12,994.76; Matching Benefits: FICA \$19,401.87, Medicare \$4,537.58, Discovery Benefits HSA \$275.00.

Claims: Professional Fees: Confidential Investigative Services \$1,627.62; Haar Law Firm \$21.20; SHI International Corp. \$957.00. Rentals: Dakota Electronics \$481.65. Repairs & Maintenance: Crawford Trucks & Equip. \$6,293.90; Contractor Tool & Equip. Repair \$202.00; Dacotah Country Masonry \$2,330.70; Dakota Electronics \$928.10; DFP \$12.98; Double A Plumbing \$227.96; Ecolab Pest Elimination \$117.60; I-State Truck \$13.00; Jensen Rock & Sand \$8,317.50; Pauer Sound \$1,700.00; Pomp's Tire Service \$750.00; RDO Equip. \$5,037.42; Schwan Welding \$1,428.00; Trinity Services Group \$100.00. Supplies: Bakken Build Maint. \$500.00; Cash-Wa \$1,784.55; Century Business Products \$49.62; Cole Papers \$78.00; Crawford Trucks & Equip. \$3,148.84; DFP \$1,389.45; Fastenal \$196.48; GovConnection \$89.89; Graham Tire \$86.95; Great Western Tire \$11,478.80; I-State Truck \$20.99; Interstate Battery \$135.95; Jensen Rock & Sand \$7,765.35; Mac's \$24.34; Menards \$122.44; Midstates Printing \$310.00; Nebraska State Fair \$12.00; Pantorium Cleaners \$70.00; Pomp's Tire Service \$2001.78; Productivity Plus \$20.00; RDO Equip. \$8,895.07; Running's \$683.43; Schwan Welding \$589.00; Zas-trow's Sales & Service \$105.73. Travel & Conference: Doug Fjeldheim \$218.08; Rachel Kippley \$225.60; Mark Milbrandt \$464.00; Duane Sutton \$100.58. Utilities: AT&T \$176.01; Centu-ryLink \$260.68; Midcontinent \$503.81; NWPS \$12,710.32. Other: Cooper Bebo \$100.00; Ron Beckler \$200.00; Rob & Stacy Dutenhoffer \$200.00; Robin Fallgatter \$100.00; Joann Frerichs \$225.00; Kelly Gederos \$200.00; Heather Glov-er \$100.00; Kristen Gonsoir \$200.00; Carol Haar \$200.00; Évan Haar \$200.00; Marlene Hearnen \$160.00; Richard Huettl \$160.00; Aaron Johnson \$160.00; Kelly Kenser \$160.00; Paul & Dianne Lapka \$225.00; Steven Lindquist \$100.00; Jo Miller \$200.00; Harley Mohr \$200.00; Scott Norman \$200.00; Robert Perman \$225.00; Lisa Roach \$100.00; Todd & Donna Rozell \$225.00; Kaitlyn Sandmeier \$100.00; Kurt Schentzel \$225.00; Jan Stiegelmeier \$160.00; Jeff Stolle \$200.00; Śwansoń Electric \$320.00; Darin Swanston \$225.00; Becca Tullar \$260.00; Amy Wanous \$225.00; Mike Weber \$225.00; Bruce Zeller \$200.00; Matt Zeller \$200.00; A Spice Above Dakota \$175.00; Aberdeen Curling Club \$320.00; Amazing Grace Mission \$400.00; Amazing Life Products \$1,390.00; Applied Water Technologies \$695.00; Artz Equip. \$585.00; Avera Health Plans \$320.00; Bethlehem Lutheran Church \$320.00; Black Knight Pools \$200.00; Brit Concessions \$1,100.00; Cleary Building Corp. \$320.00; D's Nuts \$400.00; Designer Homes \$320.00; God's Food for Life Ministry \$320.00; Kenny Gutierrez \$375.00; K.O.

Lee Library \$320.00; Karl's TV & Appliance \$320.00; La Vie Marketing \$640.00; M & E Sales \$640.00; Monkey Balls \$250.00; Norstar Steel Buildings \$320.00; Okoboji Soda Co. \$800.00; OZ Motorz \$500.00; Pro Line, Inc. \$500.00; Rainbow Concessions \$1,900.00; Star-T-Gifts \$1,015.00; Swede's Steeds Pony Rides \$800.00; Teri Lynn's Closet \$375.00; The Midnight Jewel \$320.00; Tran Concessions \$900.00; TranSource Truck & Equip. \$585.00; U Can Click It \$320.00; U.S. Senator Mike Rounds \$320.00. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

carried. HR REPORT: Moved by Sutton, seconded by Wiese to approve the following HR Office Report, which includes the following personnel changes: Acknowledge resignation of Acknowledge resignation of Damian Bahr, Brown County Highway Department, full-time, effective June 30, 2020; Ac-knowledge resignation of Cam-eron Refsland, Brown County Jail Correctional Officer, fulltime; effective August 7, 2020. Request to fill; Acknowledge retirement of Lora Schaunaman, Brown County Museum Curator, full-time; tentatively effective November 27, 2020. Request to fill. All members present voting aye. Motion carried. CLAIM ASSIGNMENT

Moved by Fjeldheim, seconded by Feickert to authorize the chair to sign documentation to assign claim against an individual to Credit Collection Bureau for the purpose of collecting liens. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

LEASE: Moved by Sutton, seconded by Fjeldheim to approve the follow-ing lease: Tina Hubert for lease of Youth Camp July 10th- 12th, 2020. All member present voting aye. Motion carried.

TONNAGE REPORT:

Moved by Fjeldheim, sec-onded by Wiese to acknowledge the landfill tonnage report. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

GRANT AGREEMENT-MOS-QUITO CONTROL: Moved by Feickert, seconded

by Sutton to approve and authorize chair sign grant agreement with the SD Dept of Health for mosquito control efforts effective July 1, 2020 through January 1, 2021 in amount of \$15,000. All members present voting aye. Motion carried. FAIR CONTRACTS:

Moved by Feickert, seconded by Sutton to approve 2020 con-tract amendments for sponsorship agreements due to the postponement of the 2020 Brown County Fair. All members present voting aye. Motion carried. FIREWORKS PERMIT:

Moved by Fjeldheim, sec-onded by Feickert to approve the fireworks display permit for Tyson DeHoet for outdoor aerial show July 10th, 2020. All mem-bers present voting aye. Motion carried.

SUMMER FEST LEASES:

Moved by Sutton, seconded by Wiese to approve the following leases during Brown County Summer Fest: Hub City Radio for lease of Grandstand Saturday August 15th, 2020; Stacy Gossman for lease of Clubhouse August 12th, – August 16th, 2020; National Professional Rodeo Association for lease of Grandstand August 13th-14th, 2020. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

2021 WELFARE BUDGET: Roxy Hilgenberg (Welfare Director) met to discuss 2021

Groton Raises New US Flag



budget request including parttime help scanning records. No Action Taken.

APPLICATION FOR OCCU-PANCY:

Moved by Wiese, seconded by Sutton to approve application submitted by Northern Electric REA Cooperative for occupancy of Brown County Highway Number 16, in section SE1/4 17, Township 125N, Range 62W, Brown County Highway Number 13, in section NE1/4 19, Township 124N, Range 62W, Brown County, Brown County Highway Number 13, in section SE1/4 17 Township 124N, Range 62W, Brown County, South Dakota for buried electric distribution cable. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

Moved by Fjeldheim, seconded by Sutton to adjourn the Brown County Commission at 9:56 a.m. All members present voting aye. Motion carried.

Cathy McNickle, Brown County Auditor

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Doug Hamilton puts the clips on the rope as the prep work is getting done to errect the new US Flag. Hamilton is pictured on the left, Joe Foertsch is in the background and David McGannon on the right. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Groton Independent \diamond Wed., July 15, 2020 \diamond 5

2019-20 Season Volleyball Team Awards Team MVP: Nicole Marzahn and Eliza Wanner MVP Offense: Kaylin Kucker MVP Defense: Tadyn Glover ACE award: Payton Colestock Most improved: Stella Meier Rookie of the Year: Madeline Fliehs (Photo by Chelsea Hanson)





L to R: Stella Meier, Payton Colestock, Eliza Wanner, Tadyn Glover, Indigo Rogers, Kaylin Kucker, Nicole Marzahn, Madeline Fliehs. (Photo by Chelsea Hanson)

Coach Chelsea Hanson said, "It was pretty cool actually, this team kind of chose to do the awards this way, they just wanted to get in the gym and play again!"

HELLO GROTON AND LANGFORD, WELCOME TO THE TERRITORY.

On Friday, July 3rd Dacotah Bank acquired First State Bank of Claremont. Your favorite and familiar Groton and Langford bankers will be working through the conversion process over the coming days and weeks. We appreciate your patience as we work diligently to bring all of our products and services to these great towns and great people. Please go

to dacotahbank.com to learn more about our culture, history, **ARE OPEN.** Lobbies are open by appointment only and will reopen for walk-in traffic on July 14th.



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