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Nation's Only Natural-Habitat Refuge Where Sick,
Old and Needy Elephants Can Once More
Walk the Earth in Peace and Dignity



# After Four Years of Hoping, Bunny Is Here!

A PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF BUNNY BY CAROL BUCKLEY

In 1994, a friend told me about a solitary elephant living in a small zoo in Evansville, Indiana.

For 40 plus years Bunny had charmed Mesker Park Zoo visitors, staff and the local media. Every person who met Bunny never forgot her. In the four years since I first met Bunny, I, too, could not forget her...

She stood only a few feet from the public viewing area, oblivious to the visitors yelling her name. She was content to fiddle with a large brown ball, which was later explained as her favorite toy. Some keepers compared the ball to Bunny's companion or baby. One visitor took this literally and questioned when Bunny's egg would hatch. The ball appeared to be special to Bunny as she gently rolled it along side when she walked and protectively placed it underneath her huge belly as she stood. In this herdless situation, the simple brown ball was, indeed, her constant companion, her pacifier, her security.

As I leaned up against the exhibit railing I hoped that she might notice me. I thought that if I think hard enough she might sense that I am different from the others; that I have big plans for her. Bunny shuffled down the hill from her barn, undistracted by the occasional fan. Her target was a patch of grass, but it was sectioned off from her with a single strand of low current hot wire.

Nevertheless, Bunny was clever and able to avoid the hot wire. With her nimble trunk she stretched to reach and pick a



Baby Bunny at 3 years of age

few blades of the succulent grass growing in the keep-out zone.

"Pastures" grazed, she wandered to the opposite side of her small enclosure. A large concrete depression with steps, once a wading pool, was empty except for a fountain of water that disappeared into the drain below. Gingerly, Bunny made her way to the bottom of the empty pool and drank. Her trunk, much larger in diameter then any I had seen, took a long time to fill. Then with a coordinated swing of her trunk and a loud swosh the process would begin again: place end of trunk under waterfall, wait, wait, wait, effortlessly place trunk into mouth and tilt gigantic head back, SWOSH. It took several fill-ups to satisfy Bunny's thirst. Then it was back to the

I said to myself, "I will stay until she notices me." By this time, the zoo was nearly empty. No one had wandered past Bunny's exhibit in almost an hour. It was then that she paused and for the first time glanced in my direction. I froze,

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## AFTER 4 YEARS...continued from pg. 1

not wanting to forget a microsecond of the glance. Her look of curiosity seemed to say, "Are you still here?" I remembered hearing that research has determined that zoo goers spend less than 3 minutes at each exhibit. So, to her, I was now making a spectacle of myself. I had stayed an unusually long time; therefore, I was noticed. I wanted to yell out her name, but I felt that would be as rude as a stranger yelling for attention from the sidewalk in front of your home. I did not want to make a bad first impression for what I hoped to be a lifelong relationship.

Over the past four years, Bunny was discussed at every Sanctuary Board meeting and strategy session. She was highlighted at Sanctuary annual meetings and in our newsletters. The questions were always the same: What is the status of Bunny? Is she going to move to the Sanctuary? What is the hold up? Why can't you make this work? My reply remained constant: Not yet. Our members knew as much about Bunny as they did about the privileged elephants already living at the Sanctuary. I explained that Bunny was the darling of the Evansville community, an icon, an ambassador of the zoo, adored by all. The thought of her leaving the zoo was too painful for most to even discuss. That said, I reassured everyone that I would not give up.

In early 1998, Mesker Park Zoo officials finally accepted my invitation to come visit the Sanctuary. I knew this was a breakthrough. Unbeknownst to me, they were tired of my badgering and had decided to view the facility and say NO. They could not imagine any place where Bunny would be more comfortable than at her home in the Mesker Park Zoo. Unbeknownst to them, they were about to experience a place like no other. A place that once they had seen, I hoped, they could not deny Bunny. And so the plans began...

The first official zoo visit to the Sanctuary was November 3, 1998. The next 10 months were a flurry of excitement and a myriad of disappointments, joy, frustration and disbelief. Lessons to be learned in patience and trust. There were those who knew Bunny was being offered a rare gift. Others preferred to have her stay in the "only home she has ever known." Through it all, zoo management continued to provide the media and community with the documentation necessary to relieve what fears they might have. A host of experts from the elephant management community confirmed that Bunny would, indeed, be better off in a natural-habitat setting, living with other elephants, than in her current situation. Regardless of what would be best for

Bunny, hearts were breaking at the thought of her leaving. As we all know, elephants have a way of getting under your skin and occupying your heart. Bunny was no exception—she was dearly loved.

The decision was postponed and then postponed again until it appeared those fighting for Bunny would give up. One last push was in order and those knowing that Bunny deserved this opportunity rallied around her.

On September 1, 1999, Mesker Park Zoo management made a formal presentation to the Parks and Recreation Department recommending that Bunny move to the Sanctuary. The presentation took 75 minutes and included pleas from zoo staff to "let Bunny go." It was a heartwrenching confirmation of affection for this amazing animal who had touched and possessed so many hearts. Those in opposition had equal time to express their views. Although opinions were split on how to best serve Bunny, all in the room were determined to protect her from what they felt was an injustice. There I sat, the bad guy to some, savior to others. I knew Bunny would benefit from moving, but it was hard to look into the eyes of those who saw me as taking away their jewel. I sat mostly in silence and listened.

Prior to the meeting, the overflow crowd was told a decision would not be made for days, so when the board called for a vote everyone gasped. Those wanting her to stay felt the threat of the unthinkable. Others held a collective breath that their hope for Bunny would be realized. They announced the unanimous vote: Bunny would move to the Elephant Sanctuary in Hohenwald. Tears of joy! A quiet Bunny supporter, watching from behind the scenes, approached and handed me a single long-stem red rose and a knowing hug. I thought my heart would burst. Bunny was coming home.



Shirley, Jenny and Bunny in the pond

#### "Our Girls" - At Last Out in Video — Makes a Great Holiday Stocking Stuffer

Many endearing video/photo opportunities and heartwarming exchanges of affection occur daily at the Sanctuary. So with cameras in hand, the Sanctuary staff has been recording these precious moments.

The result is this ten-minute amateur video directed and choreographed by the elephants themselves and recorded by those who are fortunate to be privy to their world. All proceeds from this video go toward the daily operations of the Sanctuary, which ensures the elephants' permanent residency.

To order send \$15.00 per video to: The Elephant Sanctuary "Our Girls" video P.O. Box 393 Hohenwald, TN 38462

## IN ALL HER GLORY

September 29. Dawn. The first overcast drizzly morning in weeks. The air was chilly but not cold. Bunny's keepers huddled. The go ahead was given. Karen, Eric, John and Syd all took a deep breath and said, "Let's do this." While Bunny's competent and compassionate family were preparing for her last walk through her exhibit yard, Melanie, Ted, Ron and Lisa were making sure the media followed the rigid guidelines imposed for Bunny's sake. It was a joy to see the care taken for Bunny's big move.

The media was attentive and receptive, following the guidelines without question. Quietly asking, is she coming out yet? How long will it take for her to go into the trailer? Does she know something is going on? All speculation, they were told, "Not yet," "As long as she wants," "Most likely." There was a hushed buzz with everyone careful to protect the sacredness of this moment. One station had conducted their morning show from the zoo via satellite. The moving of Bunny was big news to Evansville, and everyone wanted the best for her.

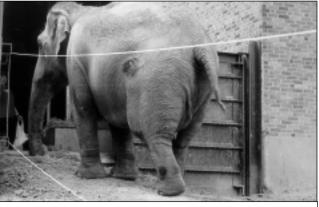
With a squeak, the heavy metal door of her enclosure slowly opened. Bunny shuffled with no urgency into the morning. Everyone held a collective breath while, in hushed tones, a reporter gave a running commentary of the unfolding event. "Bunny is walking...she has stopped. Her keepers are here...there, she is moving again. She appears to be heading toward the trailer...." The keepers appeared calm. Bunny was not concerned until Karen attempted to place the front leg bracelet around Bunny's leg. Bunny balked. Eric moved into position and encour-



Bunny's keepers from the Evansville Mesker Park Zoo

aged Bunny to allow the bracelet to be attached. Bunny cooperated and Karen succeeded. Without hesitation, Bunny moved forward toward the transport trailer, her keepers encouraging her all the way. As an appendage to her yard that she had spent considerable time investigating over the past month, the trailer was very familiar to Bunny. As she walked up to the trailer, she placed her front feet inside and stopped. She glanced back momentarily and then walked directly into the trailer.

Encouraging words could be heard streaming from the trailer as her keepers secured her for transport. The onlookers exhaled in unison and cheered, with hugs and



Bunny entering transport trailer

smiles all around. She put on a breath-taking, uneventful show. No thrills, no spills. She simply walked right into the trailer as if to say, "Let's go." Her attentive crew of keepers pampered her through the entire process. Any number of things could have gone wrong: a distraction from the farewell crowd, the early hour, the smell of something different in the air. But no problems, no delays. Bunny was on her way.

Bunny left Evansville flanked by a caravan of supporters. Surprisingly, Bunny settled in quickly. Radio communication conveyed a mandatory pit stop for Bunny's travel companions. The trailer door was opened to reveal Bunny covered in hay and shavings, munching away. The Interstate rest area was quickly overrun by dozens of giddy adults chattering about Bunny. But she was calm, and content, showing no signs of anxiety, which might be expected from an elephant being transported for the first time in over 40 years. Seeing Bunny cool, calm and collected made the entourage relax. Bunny was fine. Like the early morning trek to the trailer, the 4 hour trip was uneventful.

At 1:30 PM CT Bunny and company drove up the Sanctuary drive to the barn. An anxious crowd of Sanctuary staff, volunteers and media werewaiting. The trailer was expertly backed into position and the trailer's back doors opened. A quick huddle with keepers and Sanctuary staff and Bunny was untethered. After a moment's hesitation getting her footing in this new place, Bunny backed out of the trailer. Five minutes, ten minutes, fifteen, twenty five. Some whispered, is she ok? Is she afraid? What should be done? Should we all leave? Bunny was insecure because less than 100 feet away stood four piercing sets of elephant eyes, eager to say hello. Bunny was not ready. She ate a little, clutched her ball, interacted with keepers and ate a little more. She ran her trunk along the corral pipes and wall taking in every smell. Still the piercing eves watched. Tarra was the most impatient of all. She reached over and through the corral, enticing Bunny to interact. No way. Bunny was not interested. After close to two hours the decision was made to enter Bunny's spacious stall. The idea was that

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## IN ALL HER GLORY...continued from pg. 3

Bunny needed to experience that Tarra was not a threat. Immediately, Bunny turned her back, a submissive posture, and Tarra ran her trunk along Bunny's side and back. Bunny extended her stump of a tail in Tarra's direction. Contact, Bunny touched her. Nothing bad happened. Her fear subsided. Slowly, Bunny turned toward Tarra. Within minutes Bunny and Tarra were exchanging caresses and food. Tarra had won her over. Bunny was no longer afraid.

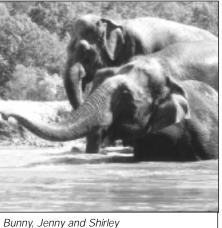
That crowd and media left and everything returned to normal. The other elephants were kept separate from Bunny as she was given time to adapt to this new situation. Tarra and Bunny shared a sleeping space and Bunny stood close as Tarra laid down to sleep. They touched and interacted all through the night. At 4:00 AM, Bunny approached the far corral where Barbara was on the other side. Dozing, Barbara did not notice Bunny's approach, but soon she turned and walked right up to Bunny. Bunny reached through the bars and wrapped her trunk around Barbara's trunk, pulling it to her. Barbara cooperated and shared touches all over Bunny's face and back. They both reached into each other's mouths and a friendship was forged.

The next morning everyone was a bit wired; no one had slept. Jenny was anxious to meet Bunny. Bunny stood her ground fairly well as Jenny advanced with great intent. She was not running, but she was eager. They, too, intertwined trunks and shared caresses. Shirley followed and they were soon all milling around in the same stall, which due to their great presence, appeared quite small.

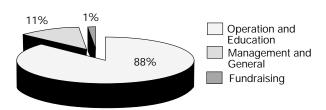
Bunny's acclimation to the Sanctuary and herd life was immediate and profound. She is vocal and playful. Although she spends most of her time with Jenny and Shirley, she interacts with Barbara and Tarra throughout the day. She shares the barn's sleeping space with all the other elephants, not content to be separated from anyone.

Check out Bunny's daily progress in her diary on page 6.





Functional Expenses 1998

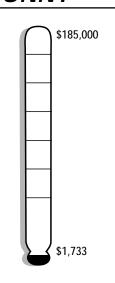


## Bunny & Shirley Fever

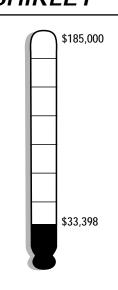
Every degree of donation counts toward Shirley and Bunny's lifetime endowments of food and care at The Elephant Sanctuary.

\$185,000 Where we need to be

\$1,733 Where we are with **BUNNY** 



\$33,398 Where we are with SHIRLEY



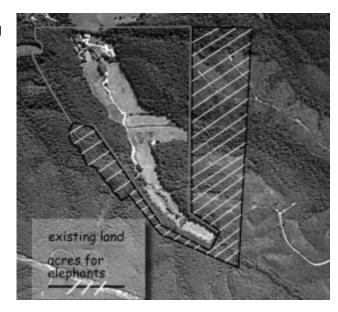
## ACRES FOR ELEPHANTS — A HOLIDAY GIFT IDEA

The Sanctuary now has an opportunity to add nearly 100 acres to its existing property. Champion Paper has offered to sell 96 adjoining acres. These additional acres will not only ensure that the Sanctuary elephants have plenty of space to walk and eat, but they will also serve as a buffer from the outside world and help the elephants maintain a peaceful existence.

The current status of this fundraising program is \$19,606.50, or 19.75 acres.

You, or your group, can help us reach these goals by "purchasing" one or more Square Elephants—the space necessary for an elephant to stand at rest from trunk to tail (approximately 6 ft X 12 ft)—for a mere \$2.00 per square. Certificates will be provided to give as personalized gifts.

For those wishing to contribute to relaxation, Sleepy Square Elephants—the space necessary for an elephant to lie down and take a nap (approximately 9 ft X 14 ft)—



can be purchased for only \$3.00 each. For those wishing to contribute more space, we offer a Dumbo—20 SqE, or 1440 square ft, which is house size, for only \$35.

Also available is a Jumbo—151 SqE, or 1/4 acre, for \$246 and a Mammoth—1 acre, for \$984.

You can be the first in your group, neighborhood, classroom, or office to "purchase" real estate and help the Sanctuary provide a safe, comfortable refuge for retired Asian elephants. As they say in the elephant retirement and real estate business, "Location, location, location."

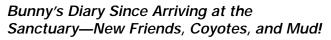
SqE	Square Elephant Order			
@ \$2.00 = \$	Your Name:			
SSqE	Address:			
@ \$3.00 = \$	City:			
Dumbo	State: Zip:			
@ \$35 = \$	Telephone:			
Jumbo	Number of certificates you would like:			
@ \$246 = \$	The certificate is designed so that you can personalize your gift.			
Mammoth	Choose one: □VISA □Mastercard			
@ \$984 = \$	Card Number:Expiration Date:			
	Payment can be made via phone: 931-796-6500 or fax: 931-796-4810 or			
TOTAL \$	e-mail: elephant@elephants.com or_			
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	Hohenwald, TN 38462			
	Please make checks payable to: The Elephant Sanctuary			

ART EXHIBIT REMINDER— Zeitgeist Gallery in Nashville, Tennessee, is looking for artists who are interested in elephants and would like to draw, paint or interpret the elephant image. Zeitgeist has announced a CALL FOR ARTISTS to participate in "2000 ELEPHANTS," an art exhibition of elephant images for the benefit of The Elephant Sanctuary. The artwork will be juried, awards will be made to selected artists, and an exhibition of 2000 works will be open to the public in January 2000. The artwork will be limited to two dimensional 4" x 6" images. Artists interested in more information should send a SASE to Zeitgeist Gallery, 1819 21st Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212.

### ELEPHANT UPDATE

Shirley's welcome arrival was quickly followed by Bunny's. Because of Shirley's immediate attachment to Jenny and easy assimilation into Sanctuary life, her day in the spotlight was inadvertently shortened. Jenny and Shirley continue to be as inseparable as conjoined twins. They are amazing to watch, movement handicaps and all. They move gracefully side by side, constantly aware of the other's every move. Lately, Jenny has started heralding her desires with a deep guttural sound, which is Shirley's signal to move, now! Shirley always responds. Jenny is becoming quite spoiled, often wanting to lie down in the same spot where Shirley is lying. All she has to do is utter the guttural noise and Shirley jumps out of her way. Jenny folds to the ground in the spot she desires. Then, with extreme care and gentle positioning Shirley slides her foot under Jenny's ear and head, getting as close as possible and standing guard as Jenny naps.

When Bunny arrived, she immediately wanted to be part of this caring duo. Jenny and Shirley were happy to include her. But Jenny continues her spoiled ways—when Jenny utters her gutteral signal, both Bunny and Shirley move, presenting the perfect place for Jenny to lie down. Now as Jenny



**September 29** - Bunny arrived at The Elephant Sanctuary. Bunny met and accepted Tarra.

**September 30** - Bunny met and accepted Barbara, Jenny and Shirley. Bunny experienced the great outdoors of the Sanctuary for the first time.

October 1 - Bunny abandoned her pacifier, the simple brown ball.

October 2- Bunny discovered that a simple blast of music through her trunk can roust Jenny and Shirley from their naps.

**October 3** - Bunny perfected her rock throwing skills, effectively keeping the Sanctuary dogs from invading her comfort zone

**October 3** - At 9 PM Bunny got her introduction to life in the country—coyotes. Between the coyotes' song and the elephants' chorus, the night was alive with a magnificent symphony of sounds.

**October 4** - Bunny laid down to sleep for the first time since her arrival to the Sanctuary.

October 6 - Bunny entered the woods for the first time.

October 7 - Bunny discovered THE POND.

October 10 – With her mighty head, Bunny struck and toppled a tiny hickory tree.

October 12 - Bunny found and experienced the mud hole.

**October 20** - Bunny stepped out in front of Jenny and Shirley, leading the herd.

October 22 - Bunny discovered the waist-high vegetation in the back 60 acres of the habitat.

Follow Bunny's progress on www.elephants.com



naps, she is flanked by both Shirley and Bunny. Because her mammoth bodyguards are so close, Jenny has difficulty getting up from her nap. Perhaps this is why she instigated the signal.

Barbara and Tarra spend more and more time with Jenny, Shirley and Bunny. Throughout the day they meet at the pond, mud hole and the middle of the pasture for raucous-raising time. Bunny loves to trumpet and Tarra loves to get the others to play. Add a moving tractor and manure spreader into the mix and you have a hilarious chorus of bellows, squeaks and trumpets, with elephants darting here and there. Shirley's arrival helped to create a herd. Bunny's presence has only expanded that endlessly interesting social behavior.

#### News Flash

The National Geographic documentary, which will feature the amazing reunion of Jenny and Shirley, is scheduled to air in the Fall of 2000.

The Sanctuary will be featured in an article in the Wall Street Journal in November.

#### LASHOMA WEIGHS IN WITH A WINNER!

The Guess Shirley's Weight contest gave Sanctuary members a chance to learn more about elephant anatomy by researching the average weight of female Asian elephants. The challenge was to estimate what Shirley's weight was when she arrived at the Sanctuary on July 6.

Lashoma Clayton of Monroe, Louisiana, weighed in with a winning guess of 8,250 lbs, which, of the entries received, was the closest to Shirley's actual weight of 8,180 lbs.

Congratulations, Lashoma! We hope you enjoy your prize—a 19" television set.

## **Bunny's Entourage**

We are grateful for so many people who helped with Bunny's preparation, move and arrival:

- Ron Young, Director of the Mesker Park Zoo.
- Ted Grannan, Assistant Director of the Mesker Park Zoo.
- · Mesker Park Zoo staff and volunteers.
- · Friends of the Mesker Park Zoo staff.
- Landstar Ligon, Inc. of Madisonville, Kentucky, and US trucking of Nashville provided, free of charge, a truck and driver.
- Alton Henson, Stewardson, Illinois, donated his professional services to transport Bunny.
- Chuck and Rise Pankow, Nashville, Tennessee, provided, free of charge, a custom elephant transport trailer.
- Randy Workman and Richard Fee of Landstar Ligon coordinated arrangements prior to the move
- Landstar Ranger (sister to Ligon) donated the transportation of a semi-truck load of Timothy hay from Wyoming for Bunny's arrival.
- Jay Folladori and Dan Workman of Landstar Ranger made sure the hay arrived on time.
- Jack and Judi Hawes of Action Trailer, Evansville, Indiana, donated their services to replace tires and wheels on the transport trailer.
- Southern Indiana Tire of Evansville, Indiana, donated tires and wheels for the transport trailer
- David Huff and Berry Williams donated their services to replace tires.
- Morrow's Food Town, Hohenwald, Tennessee, donated flowers to grace the Sanctuary office for Bunny's arrival.
- McCartney Produce pampered Bunny with a fruit basket for her arrival.
- Sanctuary volunteer staff and Executive Council made sure the arrival day ran safe and smooth.



A Very X-tra Large Sweater for Barbara

With the coming of colder temperatures, Barbara will soon be sporting her new winter wardrobe—a custom-designed sweater created for her unique cold weather needs. Because Barbara doesn't withstand the cold as well as the other elephants, she sometimes chooses to remain inside the barn on chilly winter days. Of all the Sanctuary elephants, Barbara appears to most enjoy the freedom to roam the meadows and woods, but the onset of cold weather often stopped her from enjoying her freedom. With the specially designed sweater, she can now spend more time outside during the winter enjoying what she likes to do best.

To create the two-layer sweater, the outdoor clothing manufacturer, Patagonia, has donated 60 yards of fabric. The inner fleece will help insulate Barbara from the cold, while the water resistant outer layer will protect her against wind and rain.

A very x-tra large thank you to Janet Wilson, Nashville, Tennessee, for providing her expertise/services to fit and create the sweater and to Patagonia for their generous donation of fabric.

#### Land Mine Accident Victim

Motola, a Thai elephant, has been the victim of a severe land mine accident, leaving her with lifethreatening injuries. While taking a break from work at a logging camp along the Myanmar-Thai border, the elephant stepped on a mine. It exploded leaving her front left foot shattered.

Motola was admitted to Lampang Hospital where surgeons amputated her damaged foot.

The operation was a success, but her future remains uncertain.

The Elephant Sanctuary has offered to provide a home for Motola once she is able to travel. The offer has been received by Dr. Soraida Salwala, Foundress and Secretary General of Friends of the Asian Elephants, who currently owns Motola and is responsible for her excellent care.

#### Help the Elephants Roam Free in Tennessee!

DONOR SO _\$10,000 + _\$5000 to \$9,999 _\$1000 to \$4,999 _\$500 to \$999 _\$100 to \$499	CIETY Founder Benefactor Patron Sustainer Supporter	\$50 \$30 \$10	ENDS Family Individual Student/Senior		Paintings by Tarra the Elephant	(unframed print) 11" x 14" S25 Purple or Red/Blue S S25 pe S2 each
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#### FEED AN ELEPHANT FOR A DAY — A UNIQUE HOLIDAY GIFT



For \$30 you can feed Bunny, Shirley, Jenny, Tarra, or Barbara. For \$60 you can feed two of them; and for \$150 you can feed all five of them for a day. Or you may choose to feed one elephant for several days.

With the donation you (or the person receiving the gift) will receive a certificate, a picture of the elephant(s) you choose to feed, and information about what the elephants eat. If this is a gift to someone

who is not a member, the recipient will also receive a copy of next year's newsletters and membership for 1 year.

Call the Sanctuary at (931) 796-6500. Say, "I want to feed an elephant for a day!" Be prepared to say which elephant(s) you want to feed, the amount of the gift (\$30, \$60, etc.), the recipient with complete name and address, and your name and address as the gift giver.

Trunklines Contributors: Designer: Jerry Points, The Outside Source

Writers: Carol Buckley, Judy Jones, and Polly Points

Editor: Polly Points





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