

# TUXEDO PARK MAGAZINE



# The New York Times

**Tuxedo Park's Spencer Trask  
Backed Thomas Edison and saved the New York Times**

Issue # 112 [netuxedo123@gmail.com](mailto:netuxedo123@gmail.com)  
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# TUXEDO PARK'S SPENCER TRASK



**Spencer Trask & Co. founded the laser light venture 100 yrs ago, that powers the Internet today**

*From Diaries, Memories, & Social Clippings*

Spencer Trask had his estate, "Trayaddo" built in Tuxedo Park around 1900. A stone and timber mansion that would eventually be sold to fellow financier Alfred Loomis who made a portion of it the famed Loomis Laboratories, where he conducted ground-breaking scientific research. Prior to living in Tuxedo Park the Trask's purchased a 400-acre estate in Saratoga Springs, New York. Later, upon the premature death of the Trask's four children, Trask decided to turn the estate into an artist's retreat as a gift to his wife and called it "Yaddo". The retreat eventually became a well-known, beautiful artist's and writer's community.

Trask was an American financier, a generous philanthropist, venture capitalist and a leading patron of the arts. Mr. Trask was born in 1844 in Brooklyn, New York. His Father was a direct descendent of Captain William Trask, who was a leader in the formation of The Massachusetts Bay Colony. Upon graduating from Princeton University, he joined his uncle and formed the investment firm "Trask and Brown" which later became Spencer Trask and Company.

He married Miss Katrina Nichols, a famous author of her time. He reorganized The New York Times, of which he was the largest owner, as well as president.





Around 1896, Adolph Ochs, who became the publisher of The New York Times, came to meet with Spencer Trask and his chief associate, George Foster Peabody. Peabody and Trask were leaders of an investment group that had recently bought The New York Times, which was near bankruptcy. With Ochs as publisher and Trask as the financier, The New York Times succeeded greatly with the motto, "All the news that's fit to print." Spencer Trask was often a supporter of new inventions while they were in their experimental stages. He foresaw the potential such as the Marconi wireless telegraph, the telephone, the trolley car, the phonograph and the automobile. He gave to all of these inventions his money, time and judgment

The inventor of the light bulb, Thomas Edison was financed and supported by Mr. Trask, and for over twenty years Trask was president of The New York Edison Company, later known as Consolidated Edison, one of the world's first electric power companies. He was also part of the Edison illuminating business throughout the country as well as one of the original trustees of The Edison Electric Light Company, the predecessor to the General Electric Company and a member of its executive committee. Spencer Trask was also a director in the Rio Grande Western Railroad and his partner, George Peabody, was vice president. Trask was also president and largest stockholder in the company that owns The Bowling Green building. Truly, this was a man who moved many forms of progress that moved Wall Street. .

With no close heirs, the Trasks began to entertain the idea of turning their 400-acre, Saratoga Springs estate into a working community of artists and writers. Twelve years after Spencer's death, Mrs. Trask married George Peabody, and launched the Corporation of Yaddo. This artist community has operated continuously ever since. Yaddo, the name of the estate, is said to have been coined by the Trask's young daughter Christina, who amused her father by her mispronunciation of the numerous dark spots on the lawn caused by the towering trees' shadows.

The results of the Trasks' legacy have been historic. John Cheever once wrote that the "forty or so acres on which the principal buildings of Yaddo stand have seen more distinguished activity in the arts than any other piece of ground in the English-speaking community and perhaps the world".

Collectively, artists who worked at Yaddo have won 61 Pulitzer Prizes, 56 National Book Awards, 22 National Book Critics Circle Award, a Nobel Prize, and countless other honors. Many books by Yaddo authors have been made into films.

Visitors from Cheever's Day include Milton Avery, James Baldwin, Leonard Bernstein, Truman Capote, Aaron Copland, Philip Guston, Patricia Highsmith, Langston Hughes, Ted Hughes, Alfred Kazin, Ulysses Kay, Jacob Lawrence, Sylvia Plath, Katherine Anne Porter, Mario Puzo, Clifford Still, and Virgil Thomson.

Spencer Trask was a founder and chairman of the board of trustees for Teachers College, the school of pedagogy of Columbia University. He was also actively interested in the Kindergarten Association, and for many years was closely identified with the General Theological Seminary.

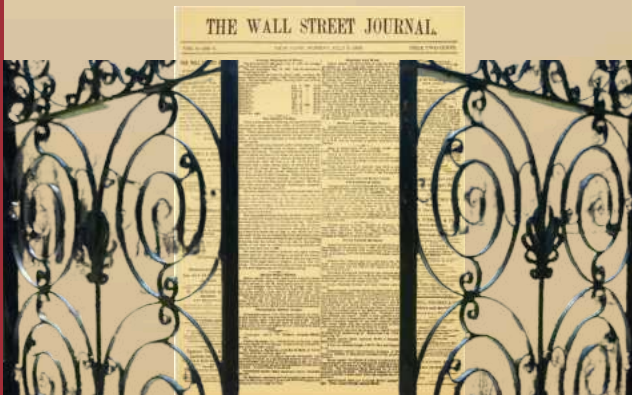






# T. P.

**SPENCER TRASK, PRESIDENT OF NEW YORK EDISON, FOUNDER OF SPENCER TRASK & COMPANY – THE LARGEST STOCK-BROKER IN THE COUNTRY- AND HE LIVED ON THE HIGHEST HILL AVAILABLE IN TUXEDO PARK.**



## *Stories From The First Gilded Age Society... Tuxedo Park* *Footnotes*

Many stories shared with us over the years were gleaned from diaries, memories, and social clippings from archival literature. Stories from direct descendants of the original Gilded Age Cottagers in Tuxedo Park.

Vocal memories accompanied a twinkle in the eye of several, as they unfolded their tales willingly. In front of grand fireplaces, on white wicker furnished veranda's, and formal gardens over one hundred years old, stories unfolded and carried a clear glimpse of life in the first Gilded Age Society known as Tuxedo Park.

Many of these story-tellers were direct descendants of captains of finance and industry in the Gilded Age. Legendary icons enabling this country to become strong and independent. Industrialists and philanthropists revolutionized industry and defined the structure of monetary gain. They walked through the finest clubs in America, where money was "aged", and "new" money balanced on that noble money, became ripe. The blue bloods of iconic industry, their gilded empires appeared like legendary fairytales of capital worth, and sent echoes of success down the corridors of Wall Street. The old clubs which still exist such as the Tuxedo Club, the Union Club, and the old Knickerbocker Club, where once these men shared visions of industry and wealth with one another over fine brandy and cigars. Some of the corridors of these clubs still display an old portrait or two of the club's founding fathers. These portraits are a tangible glimpse into the world of the Gilded Age, and the men who moved it.

Many wonderful stories of the grand women are also in our collection.

*By Tuxedo Park Magazine  
& Design Studios*

# FROM MEDICINE TO MONTESSORI

## FIRST FEMALE PHYSICIAN IN ROME DEVELOPS MONTESSORI EDUCATION



Montessori education debuted in 1907 with Maria Montessori's first school, the Casa dei Bambini, part of an urban renewal project in a low-income district of Rome. The school's success resounded throughout Italy, and additional schools soon opened in Rome and Milan.

In 1909, Dr. Montessori published her landmark book, "Il Metodo della Pedagogia Scientifica applicato all'educazione infantile nelle Case dei Bambini— known by its English-translation title as The Montessori Method. By 1910, news of the innovative technique had spread beyond Europe, and teachers throughout the world were eager to learn it.

Dr. Montessori herself taught early Montessori educators. Her courses drew students from as far as Chile and Australia, and within a few years there were Montessori schools on 5 continents.

In the United States, the fledging movement caught on quickly. The first Montessori school opened in 1911 in New York, and others followed in rapid succession. Prominent figures, including Thomas Edison and Alexander Graham Bell, lent their support, and popular journals galvanized the public with articles on the "miracle children" who emerged from Montessori schools. In 1916, more than 100 Montessori schools were operating in 22 states. Maria Montessori is often referred to as being "ahead of her time". Born in Italy in 1870, she moved to Rome with her parents in 1875 at the age of five. Although her father embraced traditional views of female education, it was the more liberal approach of her mother that encouraged her to explore her natural inclination to learn, regardless of the social restrictions placed on women in the male-dominated society of the day. In so doing, her mother played an active role in her daughter's upbringing, and indeed, the whole philosophy behind what is now known as the "Montessori Method."

Studies in math, physics, natural sciences, biology and medicine led Maria Montessori to apply to the College of Medicine at the University of Rome, and she became the first female certified physician in Italy in 1896, graduating at the top of her class. In addition to her duties as a doctor, Maria Montessori conducted research work in psychiatric medicine and continued her education in philosophy, psychology and education. She was appointed professor of anthropology at the University of Rome in 1904.

Throughout, her interest in the development of children grew, first from her experience with disabled children and the deplorable state of their care at the time, then further with mentally challenged children in her care. As she learned from the work of others already accomplished in the area of early childhood education, her own theories evolved, embracing elements, ideas and methods of all disciplines she had studied.



In 1906, at the age of 36, Maria Montessori founded the first Casa dei Bambini, or “Children’s House” for children of the industrial revolution’s working-class in one of the city’s worst slum districts. With 60 children in her care, Maria Montessori began their education by instructing the older children on how to help out with everyday chores. Sense materials that she had developed previously were introduced, and to her surprise, Montessori discovered how naturally young children adapted and enjoyed learning everyday tasks. The structure of work and constructive activity gave the children a sense of self-worth that they had never before experienced. One of Dr. Maria Montessori’s first major hurdles to improve the lives of these children was accomplished by encouraging parents to recognize that their children were special and of great value.

From this reverence for the individual, beauty and potential grew the Montessori method. Critical periods of early childhood development were identified through her observations, and the methodology evolved to address these periods with age-appropriate learning tools and activities. Further development of the methodology embraced what Montessori described as the “cosmic education”, where children would be given the environment and guidance to become the peacemakers of the future, existing in harmony with all living beings in a sustainable world. From this time to her death in 1952, Maria Montessori continued her work, which became widely recognized and embraced throughout the United States, Europe, and India. She conducted and founded training courses on these continents, established a research institute in Spain, and developed Montessori Training Centers in the Netherlands and London. Maria Montessori was a three-time nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize- in 1949, 1950, and 1951.

Yet, the movement in the U.S. burned out as quickly as it had spread. Language barriers, World War I travel limitations, anti-immigrant sentiment, and the disdain of a few influential educators—all contributed to the decline. By the 1920s Montessori had all but disappeared, except for the occasional school or practitioner. Elsewhere in the world, however, Montessori education continued to prosper and grow. Dr. Montessori traveled widely, giving courses and lectures and encouraging the launch of new schools. In 1929, together with her son, Mario, she established the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) to oversee the many national organizations and their schools and to supervise the education of Montessori teachers worldwide.

Dr. Montessori’s early research focused on educating young children, but in the 1920s she turned her attention to adolescence. At this stage of development, she observed, students need activities that help them to understand themselves and to find their place in the world. In time, Dr. Montessori also wove peace education into her curriculum, a result of having lived through 2 horrific world wars. “To teach details is to bring confusion; to establish the relationship between things is to bring knowledge.” Maria Montessori





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Charles Dickens was born in 1812 to impoverished surroundings. When he was twelve years old, his father was imprisoned for debt. Charles was taken from his home and put to work at Warren's Blacking Factory, a workhouse for children. His mother and siblings all were sent with the father to Marshalsea Prison. When the family finances were partially settled, the family was released, and Charles was able to reunite with them. Charles had already been scarred psychologically by the terrible experience of being in the factory. It was to haunt him all of his life. In later years he only spoke of it to his wife and his closest friend. The dark secret became a source of creative energy with the themes that would eventually emerge most notably, in his works, "David Copperfield" and "Great Expectations". In later years, his father was able to enroll Charles as a pupil in a school in London. When he was fifteen he began work as an office boy for an attorney's office while he studied shorthand at night, eventually becoming a free-lance reporter, and a very successful shorthand reporter of Parliamentary debates in the House of Commons. His first published literature appeared when he was twenty-one, followed by a good number of other stories and sketches. He adopted the pen name of "Boz". The character, Mr. Micawber, in "David Copperfield", was fashioned after his father, and when his father was once again imprisoned for debt, Charles came to his aid. The first series of "Sketches by Boz" was published in 1836 followed by, "The Pickwick Papers" which became enormously popular and was published in monthly parts. After the success of "Pickwick", Charles embarked on a full-time career as a novelist, producing work at an incredible rate. He began work on "Oliver Twist" which also was published in monthly parts.

One of Charles Dicken's most famous works, "A Christmas Carol" began in 1843 and ran in parts through July of 1844 and was intended as he phrased it, "A whimsical sort of masque intended to awaken loving and forbearing thoughts".

It was known as "His little Christmas book" and became instantly successful, selling over six thousand copies in one week. It was originally written under stress to help him pay off a debt to avoid debtors' prison, and it has been said, the story's popularity played a critical role in redefining the importance of Christmas and the major sentiments associated with the holiday.

"In "A Christmas Carol", "I have endeavored in this ghostly little book, to raise the ghost of an Idea, which shall not put my readers out of humor with themselves, with each other, with the season, or with me. May it haunt their houses pleasantly. "God Bless us, one and all"  
Charles Dickens, December, 1843

## CHARLES DICKENS







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## CHRISTMAS IN TUXEDO PARK LATE 1890'S

Garland dressed with holly and ivy was carried through the kitchen from the pine grove, as the snow dusted onto the floor like flour while being carried down the corridor to decorate the hall mantles. Clouds of steam escaped from the lids of huge pots nestled on the stove as delicious scents from stuffing and hearty winter soup drifted through the kitchen. Icicles framed the wide windows, and the dark, threatening sky could not be relied upon for light, despite the early afternoon hour.

Holiday preparations were near completion in the mansion kitchen where this jovial prelude seemed as festive as the holiday itself. In the corner of the kitchen near the butler's pantry, a massive woodstove balanced two kettles of steaming apple cider. The vapors rich with the scent of cinnamon and cloves softened the threat of an impending snowstorm. The cooks bustled around one another with trays of candied Christmas cakes, pans of gingerbread and dishes piled high with homemade ribbon confections.

Hands moved swiftly, preparing baked goods as if assembling the pieces of a puzzle to complete this feast for Christmas. The door to the butler's pantry swung like a fan as huge platters were retrieved from the highest closets where they rested between holidays. Rows of pies were pushed into ovens with wide aprons serving as potholders against the cast iron doors.

Teakettles whistled, pots clanged and the head cook shouted orders. Suddenly as if on cue, all was silent. Everyone gazed at the wide windows that tilted upward toward the cloud-covered sky.

Against the backdrop of thick, green pine trees, the wind shifted toward the kitchen as it carried snow, like a white thin veil. Cascading flakes, resembling the down on a thistle, began to sweep against the glass panes, and you knew...Christmas was truly here.

*Tuxedo Park Magazine*





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## How Saddle River Day School Offers Insight into Navigating the Complex College Admissions Landscape

Over the past five years, the college admissions process has undergone enormous changes; submitting test scores was optional but now it might not be anymore, AI has entered the conversation and the future of the college essay is in doubt, the value of Advanced Placement classes and tests has been questioned, and the cost of a college education has continued to increase.

For parents and students, the constantly shifting landscape of college admissions has become even more stressful and uncertain. Which is why it's comforting to have a knowledgeable, experienced partner for a process and choice that will certainly be one of the most consequential of most high school student's lives up to this point. Beginning this fall at Saddle River Day School, there will be not one, but two full time college admissions counselors in the College Counseling Office to help families navigate the process successfully.

Most Saddle River Day School families are familiar with Director of College Counseling, Karen Ferretti. This fall, she is joined full time in the CCO by Ms. Jackie Williams. A veteran on both sides of the college admissions process, Jackie comes to Saddle River Day from Ma'ayanot Yeshiva High School where she has worked since 2022. Prior to that, Jackie spent time in college admissions at Stevens Institute of Technology, the College of Mount Saint Vincent, and NYU. She has an undergraduate degree from Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania, and a Master's Degree in public administration from NYU. Her extensive knowledge and her network of contacts make her an invaluable and welcome addition to the Saddle River Day School community.

continued next page



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Karen and Jackie have already been hard at work, devising a framework within which they will have the opportunity to really get to know each SRDS Upper School student on an individual basis. Because seniors are so deep into the admissions process, Karen will be their main point person this fall. But Jackie will be teaching the Junior's fall seminar and then moving on to working with the Sophomores as they start their college process this winter, when Karen transitions to instruct the Junior seminar. Their intention is to have a comprehensive understanding of each student's academic record, extracurriculars, and personality in order to help develop a list of colleges and universities that suit their unique needs and preferences.

So how does a student begin to narrow down their choices, and what exactly is the latest on what's happening with all the changes in the college admissions process?

Karen Ferretti says the best way for students to start to understand their choices for college is still to visit the campuses. Students will very quickly begin to identify the factors that will be important to them during their process. These factors include, but are not limited to: location, distance from home, degrees conferred, research opportunities, campus culture, facilities, investment in career counseling services, and cost. Karen says that often, the university of a student's dreams is just that - a dream. When faced with the reality of a campus in a rural area that's difficult to travel to, or an urban area without a true campus, or a campus that's sprawling (or too compact), students will reevaluate their preferences and priorities. It is the ultimate goal of the College Counseling Office to educate students enough that they go into the application process with more than one ideal school. To this end, Karen and Jackie will be taking the entire Junior class to NYU so they can experience an information session and tour as they begin their process.

There is also, according to Ms. Ferretti, a trend back toward requiring ACT or SAT test scores as schools shrink their admissions departments and need to efficiently differentiate between applicants. She suggests that the fears about AI taking the place of a good, old fashioned personal essay, crafted by a student, are premature. It's still pretty easy for a savvy admissions counselor to tell the difference between an essay written by a student, a robot, or a well-meaning parent. Advanced Placement (AP) classes will still exist and, she suggests, even more of them might be developed as colleges and universities grapple with how to value these test scores and assess college credit for them.

She hopes that the oversaturation of applications to the same small number of well-known schools will trickle down to students paying attention to often overlooked colleges that have interesting, innovative programs, committed and creative faculty and staff, or other unique, differentiating factors. To foster this, one of the first assignments for students in her seminar is for them to choose a lesser known college to research and present to their class. This exercise often leads students to discover a school (or schools) that would never have been on their radar otherwise.

In the end, the college application process is all about finding the place from which a student can launch their career. Karen Ferretti believes that Saddle River Day School students have a distinct advantage because in their classrooms and with their friends, SRDS students have developed an acute self-awareness, and a confidence in their intelligence that enables them to assess critically, question rigorously, and choose decisively. This is the hallmark of a Saddle River Day School education, and this is one of the many factors that set SRDS students apart from their peers.





# ARCHITECTURE

# & Poetry

The two art forms are similar because of their interest with form, their use of meter or structure, and their stance toward their environments—poets such as Wordsworth, for example, went into nature for inspiration, and, similarly, architects are often inspired by place. Both poetry and architecture involve our perception and how that perception is translated into a created, or built, environment.

Architecture and poetry share a paradoxical sense of “room.” A poem has both space and boundary: room within a room. Similarly, a building achieves a perception beyond its limits.

Both the method and the myth speak to the latent connection between poetry and architecture. There’s the obvious connection that many poems rely on the built environment as memorable, resonant backdrops for their narratives and lyrics. But the more powerful, subtle connection relates more to structure. In Chinese, the character for poetry is composed of two symbols: “word” and “temple.”

Words are the stones, precisely chiseled and laid, to create the sacred, culturally resonant whole. Both poems and buildings achieve their effects through attention to detail, texture, and structure; awareness of cultural and historic resonance; and spatial and temporal (not to mention emotional and conceptual) development.

The latter, spatial and temporal, connection can be seen in the dual meaning of “stanza”: a group of lines in a poem and a room in Italian. By this combination of meanings, a poem is a walk through rooms. Some poems have only one stanza and thus occupy one room. But what happens when a poem has several stanzas? What happens in the spaces between rooms? An architecture professor might say, “You need to articulate the joint.” Let us know you have stepped from one room to the other. This can be as simple as giving a door its jambs or as complex as Frank Lloyd Wright’s play of contraction and expansion. Poets love thresholds and allowing things (temporal, emotional, among other transformations) to occur within them, within an enjambment between lines and stanzas.

With this framework said, I want to share a poem by my 13 year old son Gregory called “To Build a House”. It was developed as a final 8th grade English project before his graduation in June. I was very proud to see and hear his performance at the Suffern Middle School Poetry Jam. I hope you enjoy it as much as my wife Lori and I do.



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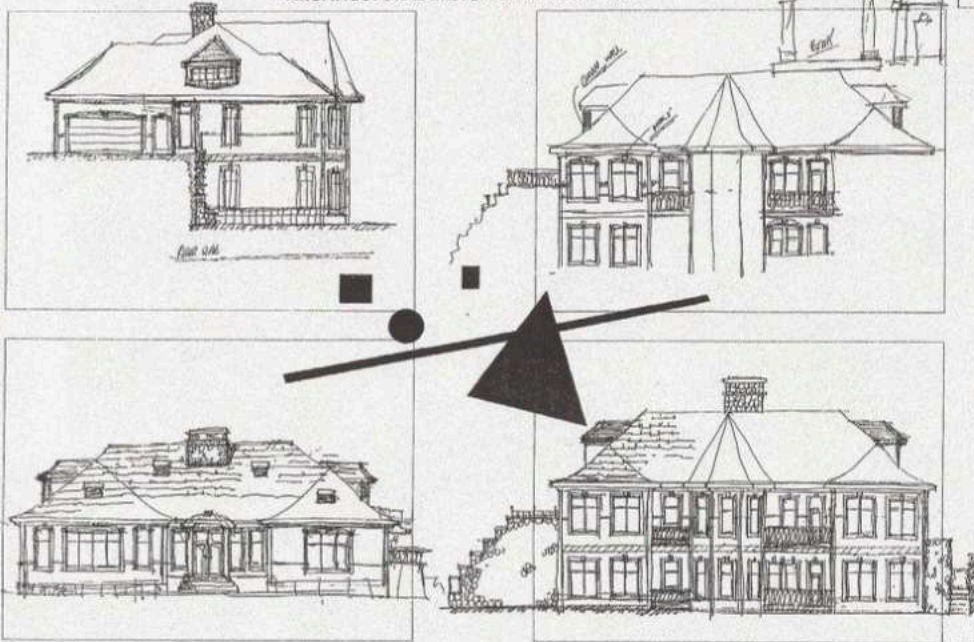
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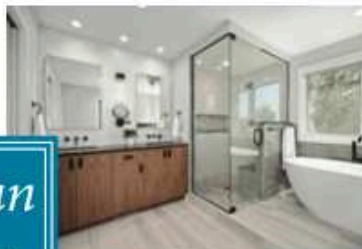
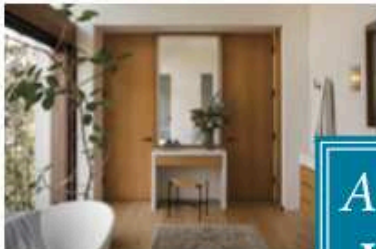
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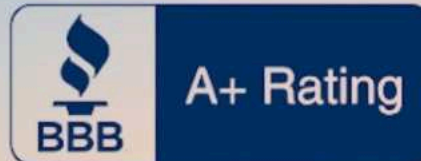


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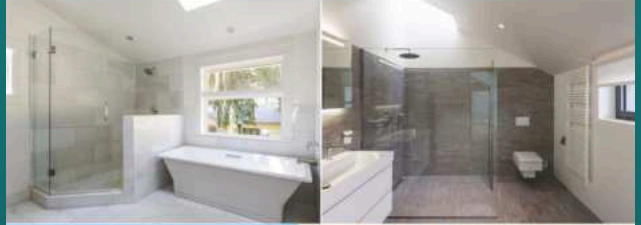
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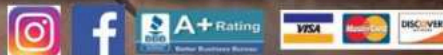
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