



NEWSLETTER

The Hazy Days of Summer

It's hard to believe that we have past the midpoint of 2023!

How lovely it has been to drive around the county and reap the benefits of over 30 years of Bucks Beautiful efforts. Thriving golden daffodils, an awakening to Spring ---trees in bloom dotting the landscapes of our many streets, streams and rivers, in verdant valleys and parks---our beautification efforts are visible everywhere and continue to be expanded and enhanced.

Bucks Beautiful has been busy. The year kicked off with our annual Spring Fling at the beautiful Barley Sheaf Farm. With your involvement and active participation, I am pleased to report that we hosted one of our most successful events in our history! As many of you know, the Spring Fling is our premier fundraiser, so we were off to a great start with new sponsors and members joining our efforts; thank you all for your support! Funds from this event provide vital resources needed to advance our educational and beautification programs.

June delivered picture perfect weather for the annual Kitchen and Garden Tour. Seven Bucks County homes were featured showcasing some of the most beautiful homes and gardens in the area. Lush greenery, plantings and flowers as well as beautiful multi-function outdoor spaces with gazebos, gourmet kitchens, pools and water features.

Truly a designers' dream providing ideas and inspiration to professionals and amateurs alike.

Best of all, we had over 1,200 visitors—a record breaking success!

A word about Membership. Now in the second year, our Membership Program is showing steady growth. As of this writing, we are "400 strong" including both residential and business levels. Partnering with and communicating to our membership is paramount. It's a two-way dialogue that continues to strengthen and deliver on our overall beautification mission. We need to keep the lines of communication open and active as we go through the remainder of 2023 and beyond; thank you for joining us on this amazing journey!

May you and your families have a happy and healthy Summer. God bless.

Kind Regards,

Gary Mathern
President, Board of Directors



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It is with great sadness that we inform you of the recent passing of our co-founder Carol McCaughan. Bucks Beautiful was the vision of Carol and her husband Jack, along with Joyce and Bob Byers over 30 years ago. It was always a delight to see Carol's smiling face at many of our events throughout the years and she will be missed by all. Our hearts go out to Jack and the entire McCaughan family. Our thoughts and prayers are with them at this time.



Bucks Beautiful provided a grant for 28 trees to create a privacy screen along the new Bike and Hike Path on Buckingham Mountain. The planting, completed by Buckingham Township's crew in May, consisted of Green Giant Arborvitae and Viburnums.

Shady Re-tree-t





***We would like to thank
our retiring Directors
for their invaluable service.***

It is with a mix of sadness and gratitude that on behalf of our Board of Directors we share the news that after over 32 years of dedicated service, **Gerard Caronello** had announced his decision to retire from the board in early 2023.

Since joining the board in 1991, Gerard has been an integral part of the growth and success of the organization. Gerard's generous contribution of his time and talents, has helped lead a transformation that saw Bucks Beautiful grow from a handful of concerned community members to one that now has 400 members and growing.

For many years, Gerard and his wife Rozann, owners of La Bonne Auberge served classic French Cuisine in a 250-year-old farmhouse set amidst impeccably landscaped gardens above the Village of New Hope. The AAA Four Diamond award winning restaurant was a hidden treasure that was renowned as one of the finest establishments in the country. Even after the Caronello's retired and closed their beloved La Bonne Auberge in 2009, they continued to hold exclusive dinners for fundraising events for the benefit of Bucks Beautiful programs, for which we are most grateful.

We cannot thank Gerard enough for the dedication, passion, enthusiasm and expertise he has shared with Bucks Beautiful over the past thirty two years. He will be greatly missed by the staff, board, members and supporters alike.



Jeanne Connelly was on the Board for only a short time, resigning due to personal reasons, however she left a lasting impact. Jeanne was very active with the execution of our Spring Fling and Kitchen & Garden Tour Fundraisers, as well as growing our Membership Program. Throughout her time at Bucks Beautiful, Jeanne's passion for enhancing the community, as well as her deep regard for the importance of the environment, shone through.

Both Gerard and Jeanne will be greatly missed! All of us at Bucks Beautiful wish them a happy and healthy retirement.

Welcome

We're Pleased to Announce our New Appointees to the Board of Directors

Michael Joseph Flanagan grew up in Akron, Ohio and moved to Doylestown in 1997, where he raised his own family. He is a proud Father to Lauren (husband Dustin), Grandfather to Austin and Paxton, and Husband to William Hughes.

In 1982 he embarked upon what would become a 33-year career in the Insurance industry. After serving as Vice President of North American Insurance for a leading group insurance provider, he took an early retirement in 2015.

Michael volunteers in the areas of social action and social justice, advocating for education and programs to benefit Bucks County residents and children. Additionally, Michael works to fight cancers through serving on the Bucks County Chapter of the Board of Associates of Fox Chase Cancer Center. An active member of the Doylestown Pride Committee, he also champions LGBTQ issues for our community.



Michael and William became Charter Members of Bucks Beautiful and have opened their home and property for the Kitchen and Garden Tour fundraiser. They have since served as volunteers at the event, plus Michael was an invaluable member of this year's Spring Fling Committee.

In his spare time, Michael loves to garden, travel and entertain friends and family. He and William have visited over 22 countries and recently crossed the North Atlantic on the Queen Mary 2. Michael credits his mother Rita and father James for providing a sense of respecting others and a strong work ethic, and his siblings for always demonstrating acts of love. His motto is, "Leave it better than you found it."



Kevin Juchno was raised in Yardley and earned a Master's degree in Forest Ecology and Entomology from East Stroudsburg University in 2014. He worked in several states as a traveling arborist, and spent time in Costa Rica working on forest conservation projects. An ISA certified arborist and certified tree risk assessor, Kevin owned a tree care business in the Poconos.

He joined Bartlett Tree Experts in 2020 as a Plant Health Care Specialist and Crew Foreman in Bala Cynwyd. The following year he advanced to manager and arborist representative of Bartlett's Dublin office, overseeing the operation for all of Bucks County and bordering sections of Montgomery County. Kevin is passionate about tree care and soil health, as well as empowering people to be more knowledgeable about maintaining their trees, shrubs and plants.

Kevin became a Bucks Beautiful Business Member, and has continued his support of our nonprofit through attending this year's Spring Fling Gala, plus providing manpower and equipment for our Earth Day Cleanup Project. Additionally, Kevin was a key sponsor of our Kitchen & Garden Tour Fundraiser, and will be teaching a Pruning Class in our Green Scene Series with Doylestown Township Parks and Recreation this Fall.

Outside of work, Kevin is an outdoor enthusiast. He spends time with dogs Timber and Rhea, and enjoys hiking, rock climbing, backpacking and fishing.

Ten Reasons the Kitchen & Garden Tour was Spectacular!

By Bryce Sanders, Board Member

On Sunday, June 11th the 28th annual Kitchen & Garden Tour was held both around Doylestown and throughout the county. To understand why this is an unmissable event, here is what made it spectacular this year:

1. The weather was glorious. On Tuesday, June 6th, the top news story was the smoky air resulting from the Canadian wildfires blanketing the Northeast. The sky was orange in NYC and hazy in Bucks County. By Friday, our skies cleared and were blue on the day of the Tour.

2. Owners opened gardens otherwise not available to the general public. The UK has it's Open Gardens program, where 3,500+ homeowners open their gardens to the public. Things operate on a smaller scale here. Seven homeowners threw open their gates and kitchen doors, allowing the public to visit and be inspired. At the end of the day, they reverted to their status as private gardens.

3. Hundreds of people attended. Land preservation is an important issue in Bucks County because residents value the pristine scenery. Many put plenty of effort into turning their own gardens into an outdoor oasis. They seek inspiration by attending our Tour year after year.

4. Bucks Beautiful Members gained early access. Hundreds of people seeking to see seven gardens means there will be crowds. Bucks Beautiful has a membership of 400 individuals, families and businesses paying modest annual dues to support our mission to beautify the county. Member benefits include complimentary tickets to the K> along with admision one hour sooner than the general public.

5. Seven gardens provided a range of designs. Different people like different styles. One house featured a modern outdoor space with a pavilion, pool, whirlpool and tennis court. Another was built in the Colonial Williamsburg style. A third house fit a voluminous garden into a third of an acre while a fourth might be three times the size, yet designed and planted entirely by the homeowner as a labor of love.





6. Owners were present to answer questions. If you garden, you face challenges. When you see a garden with a similar issue, you want to speak with the owner to get firsthand answers on how they found a solution. Fortunately the owners are often on site, both accepting compliments (lots of them) and answering those pressing questions.

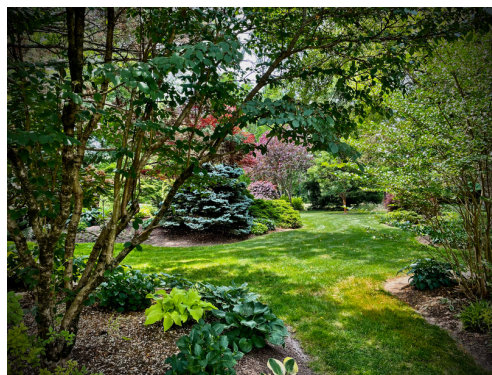
7. Master Gardeners provided technical advice. Owners know a lot, but they don't have all the answers. Why? Because they might have utilized professional design, building and maintenance help. If you want to know "What type of grass is on that hill" or "What is the genus of that silver plant," Master Gardeners are on-site at each property to offer expertise.

8. Parking was not a problem. Hundreds of visitors means hundreds of cars. Fortunately, parking was not an issue. Some gardens were within walking distance of others, some had ample parking nearby. Bartlett Tree Experts (a Business Member) sponsored a bus to shuttle guests safely back and forth. People arrived throughout the day, easing congestion.

9. People on the tour were charming. The type of people who turn out for a garden tour are the type of people you would want to invite over to your house for dinner. Enough said.

10. The goodie bags were excellent. The first 400 guests received a reusable shopping tote, quite helpful as townships enact bans on disposable plastic bags. Each bag contained about a dozen items, each usable in it's own way. This included a keychain flashlight, seeds to plant, Bucks County cultural magazines and a gardening related newspaper.

If you attended the 2023 Kitchen & Garden Tour, thank you for coming. If you missed it this year, we hope to see you June 9th, 2024.



Thank You to our Kitchen & Garden Tour Volunteers

Valerie Akerson
Wanda Andrews
Dana Aycock
Sara Baik
Lisa Baratta
Jeanne Barney
Judy Bergbauer
Maryann Bowman
Meghan Budden
Marie Bushnell
Lisa Caputo
Roberta Chadwick
Jackie Chapman
Melissa Copson
Amelia Cornwell
Sarah Cornwell
Cheryl Dacey

Anna Daly
Deb Daly
Gail Donegan
Sandra Dubois
Melody Eble
Mindy Emerson
Michael Flanagan
Beverly Fulgham
Anna Gingras
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Annie Hall
Delaney Hall
Joanne Heim
Linda Hendershot

William Hughes
Kay Johnson
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Ann Kiefer
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Mia Kok
Abby Kube
Jane Kube
Megan Krause
Marcello Mangano
Jeanne Mantell
Louise Matt
Kathleen McCarthy
Jenna Olanday
Kristin Olanday
Katelyn Olsen
Kristin Olsen

Lindsay Olsen
Joan Pfender
Barbara Price
Susan Priore
Linda Raneri
Jessica Ross
Paige Ross
Marie Seward
Rena Shields
Nancy Stephenson
Virginia Wallace-Mele
Madelyn Peters
Sarah Peters
Alexis To
Jessica Winters
Shelby Winters



Save
THE
Date

2nd Annual Member Reception
November 9th * 4:00-7:00 pm

Hosted By



What's Blooming in Bucks?

by Jennifer Finelli, Community Engagement Manager / Master Gardener

Midsummer in gardens can be challenging, as the heat is frequently persistent and rain often scarce. Some of the earlier summer blooms have come and gone and deadheading needs to be done. I took a tour around to highlight some late July blooms in their glory and capture some shots. There is some outstanding pollinator activity out there alongside some beautiful flora. Take a peek:



Purple coneflower, *Echinacea purpurea* is in full bloom now. It is a beautiful showy herb that is native to North America. Its blooms are long-lasting, vibrant and attract pollinators such as bees and hummingbirds. If you look at the foremost bloom in the photo, you can see a singular bee hard at work. Echinacea is commonly paired in wildflower and woodland gardens with Black-eyed Susan. It spreads easily, is perennial and can grow to 4-5 feet tall.



Sweet pepperbush, *Clethra alnifolia* is a lush native shrub that blooms late in the summer season. Earlier in the season, it boasts sharp green foliage and blooms are found in white or pink. It was given the name pepperbush because the mature fruits resemble peppercorns. Clethra is often suggested as a native replacement for the invasive Butterfly bush, *Buddleja davidii*. It is a fragrant addition to gardens that also draws pollinators and pairs well with many native perennials.



Spider flower, *Cleome hassleriana* blooms in white, pink, lavender or rose and can continue flowering into Fall. Cleome is easily started from seed, and they grow in upright stalks that need no staking. As you can see from the photo it is a very unusual bloom that has relatively no scent, but still draws butterflies and hummingbirds. They do not overwinter in our region but they easily self-seed and are quite drought-tolerant once they are established.



Culvers root, *Veronicastrum virginicum* is another fantastic native that is currently in bloom with feathery white flower spikes with a purplish tinge at the tips. This native perennial is a popular host to butterflies and bees, as you can see in the photo. The adjacent Black-eyed Susan can be found in the understory of this culvers root, enhancing the pollinator and visual appeal.



Blanket flower, *Gaillardia pulchella* and Black-eyed Susan, *Rudbeckia hirta* are blooming in gardens across Bucks, and are making excellent garden-fellows near some tomato plants. *Gaillardia* is native to PA with its russet-colored centers and red to yellow graduated petals. Pollinators such as bees and butterflies are drawn to its nectar. It is relatively easy to grow and can be found in butterfly gardens and landscapes. I winter-sowed *gaillardia* in 2022, and although it did germinate, I was not awarded with flowers until this season. The delayed gratification made it ever more enjoyable when I finally saw their unique blooms emerge. Black-eyed Susans are another popular native perennial to PA and are commonly found in landscapes across our region. They have an extensive root system and spread easily.



Eastern prickly pear, *Opuntia humifusa*. While not “in bloom” this is a very unusual specimen growing in my garden, against most odds. A chunk of this native cactus was given to me in a propagation class I took in the Fall. Truthfully, I abandoned it under a hydrangea canopy and next to a fence. I mostly forgot it was there until, low and behold, I noticed new growth. I will actually be moving this gem to some sun in an effort to entice blooms. This prickly pear has a gorgeous yellow flower and has the distinction of being the only native cactus to our region.



Swamp milkweed, *Asclepias incarnata* is in full bloom now, giving off a slightly vanilla-scented nectar which attracts bees, butterflies and hummingbirds. It is a high-value addition to butterfly gardens with its showy clusters of flowers. This particular milkweed is adaptable to damp to wet soils and is perennial in our region. This plant requires some space, as it can reach heights of 5 feet and spread out to 3 feet.

Special thanks to my friend and fellow gardener, Karen Vecchione, who allowed me to snap photos in her garden when I ran out of variety in my own. Touring other gardens is my favorite way to plan for what I want to plant next season!

*Eastern Prickly
Pear Flower*



The Bradford Pear Tree - A New Invasive Concern

by Kevin Juchno, Bartlett Tree Experts / Board Member

The Bradford Pear has been one of the most common landscape trees for decades, remaining prevalent on many of our properties. This genetic variation of the Callery Pear (*Pyrus calleryana*) has recently been labeled an invasive species in Pennsylvania, making it no longer a viable choice.

This beautiful landscape tree that most of us have come to appreciate has been banned from planting. It was selected for its early white spring bloom in many well-manicured landscapes around Bucks County.

Lining streets in many developments, it provides patio shade, helps accent the features of yards and serves as a focal point to well-designed foundation beds. So why is the Bradford Pear now considered problematic? Those beautiful white flowers are the reason explorers brought the trees to the new world many years ago. Let's discuss the history of this Pear tree before we answer why it is invasive.

The Callery Pear was found by explorers in the highlands of China in the early 1800's. This tree's native home range is from China south to Vietnam. Explorers loved seeing the white blooms as they moved about the valleys. There is mention of their beautiful uniform nature creating a peaceful ambiance. Due to their awe of this tree, samples were sent back to Europe and imported to the United States. This might have been the true introduction of this tree to our new world, but the tale of it populating the landscape does not come about for another 160 years.

In the 1960s the Bradford Pear was created, followed by an agenda to place this cultivar on every street corner and landscape around the eastern United States. The trees became introduced by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) out of their Maryland facility. They were favored for their uniform shape, consistent white flower, fall foliage, cheap pricing and ease of transplanting. The First Lady at the time, Lady Bird Johnson, highly favored this tree and promoted it by planting one in downtown Washington D.C. *The New York Times* even published an article discussing how wonderfully ideal this tree was for everyone's landscape.

With the tone set, jump forward 60 years and the Bradford Pear is now heavily prevalent in 152 counties and 25 states. The tree has started to move into the home of our natural plants as it has dominated landscapes and it is now occupying our natural spaces.



The Bradford Pear alone has very poor reproductive success, but in large stands or close plantings it has become extremely viable. This tree needs a flowering partner less than 300 ft away for pollination. Once this tree lined the streets of America, we set it up for successful reproduction.

This tree has easy seed dispersal through wind and animals. Its high planting success and early seed production has allowed it to usurp open natural spaces, old farms, and regrowing secondary forests.

The Bradford Pear flowers earlier than our Bucks County natives, allowing it to seize a certain ecological niche and outcompete our native flowering trees. For this reason, the trees tend to grow in stands or aggregations, creating a large monoculture planting which only increases their ability for reproduction.

This invasive tree can be found in almost all state and county parks, having populations in Nockamixon, Peace Valley, Tyler State Park and Core Creek Park. With this tree spreading from our landscapes into our beautiful natural spaces it has become problematic for our local ecosystems. The dominance over our native understory flowering trees affects our pollinators and species diversity. Once our natural areas start to become monocultured with any plant species, disease increases and ecological systems fail.

What can we do now? The first step is to keep it out of our environment, therefore Pennsylvania officially banned the Bradford Pear in February 2022. Now it can no longer legally be sold, planted or cultivated on our properties. The next step is trying to control the naturalized wild populations in our forests. Unfortunately, the only real way to handle this is manual removal, typically by volunteer committees. The USDA is working on a control program for this species and more information will come with time.

There are other trees that can be planted as an alternative to the Bradford Pear. Native trees would be highly desirable to help replace the lost species of this native niche. Serviceberry, Fringe Tree, Tree Lilac, Redbud and Flowering Dogwood are all excellent species for our landscapes. They all provide a similar size growth and they each offer a unique flowering to our countryside.

The Bradford Pear was once a highly prized tree in our welcoming suburban landscapes. Even before it was labeled as an invasive species, it has presented several structural and disease related problems. As stewards of our landscapes, natural areas and communities it is our job to not allow another species to run wild like the Bradford Pear. Species diversity is the easiest way to accomplish this goal. By creating a unique environment on our own properties we can help control invasives, pests and disease while offering a rich environment for pollinators and beauty. If we all educate and work together to preserve our natural space, even a small landscape plot can make a difference in our world.



Serviceberry



Dogwood above, Redbud below



Fringe Tree



Supporter Spotlight

by Bryce Sanders, Membership Chair



As of July, Bucks Beautiful passed the 400 member milestone. This includes 63 business members. When you read about nurseries and tree care companies, you can see the connection to the Bucks Beautiful mission. Now it's time to hear about the Holiday House Pet Resort and Training Center, the only Veterinarian owned pet resort in the Doylestown area. Recently I had a conversation with Jennifer Ashenfelter, their Marketing and Communications Manager.

When and how did the Holiday House Pet Resort get started?

The 50-acre property on North Shady Retreat Road was originally a dairy farm. The pet resort was started in the 1960's by Dr. Stuart A. Fox, a local veterinarian. He passed away in 2022 at age 98. Randy and Laura Weis, who are both veterinarians, purchased the pet resort in 2004. Although the title highlights "pet resort," a major benefit is the affiliated, on-site veterinary hospital, also owned and operated by Drs. Randy and Laura Weis.

What services do you offer?

Holiday House Pet Resort & Training Center is an all-inclusive, one-stop pet resort. The resort offers lodging with activities for dogs and cats, dog daycare, professional training programs, and grooming at the resort and at our Spa on State location in Doylestown Boro. With the recent boom in puppies, the resort offers a free puppy social hour every week.

The resort features individual suites, each with an outdoor patio for the dogs. There is a separate, quiet area for the feline guests with spacious condos.



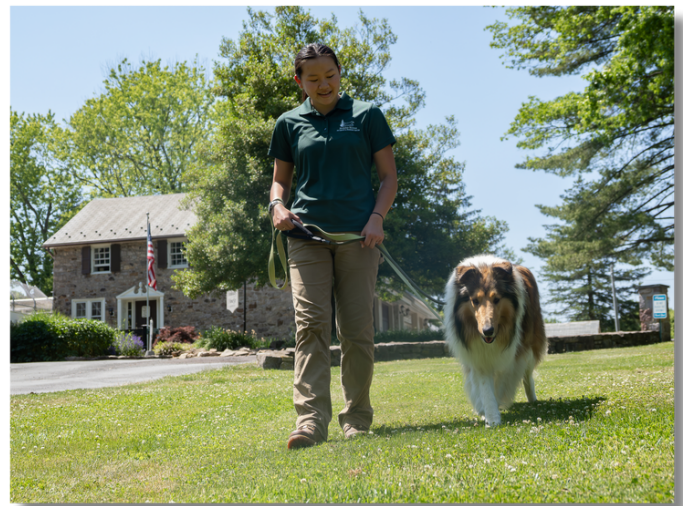
What does it cost?

The base lodging cost starts at \$47.95/night. Pet parents can choose from different discounted activity packages and grooming services to add to their pet's stay. Nature walks and small group play time with compatible dogs are examples of the available activities. How does this compare? Overnight boarding in Manhattan can range from \$55 - \$99/night.



Are you connected to Doylestown Veterinary Hospital?

Yes, Doylestown Veterinary Hospital & Holistic Pet Care are also owned and operated by Drs. Randy and Laura Weis. Having the veterinary hospital next door is a unique feature of the resort. No other pet resort in the area is owned by veterinarians with a hospital on campus. A veterinarian is always available to the staff for any questions or care. This can provide peace of mind for pet parents, knowing their pets are in safe hands.



Are there busy times of year requiring advance reservations?

Have you ever tried booking a hotel room in New York City on New Years Eve? Waiting until the last minute can make finding a suite for your pet more challenging. Because of the boom in “pandemic pups” there are more dogs in the area than you might imagine! The resort is busy year-round, especially for the daycare and training programs. However summer and the holidays are the busiest for lodging. The best advice is to call and book a reservation for your pet the moment you book your own vacation.



How did you hear about Bucks Beautiful and decide to become a member?

Every spring the daffodils that adorn the Bucks landscape are a reminder of the organization. We found out about membership through an e-mail we received as Central Bucks Chamber of Commerce members. The resort shares the property with an organic farm, so the owners also believe in the mission of maintaining a sustainable and healthy environment in the community.

In addition to supporting Bucks Beautiful, how else does Holiday House Pet Resort give back to the community?

The resort holds several fundraising events every year that benefit different area organizations like the Bucks County SPCA, A Woman's Place, and Angel On A Leash Therapy Dogs. Their annual daycare prom (with Woof & Wine Client Appreciation) in April benefitted Kin Wellness & Support Center. The event features official prom portraits, raffles and special activities.





MEMBER BENEFIT

Members will receive a choice of the following for their pet:

Free Night of Lodging
OR

Free Daycare Introduction Day

Simply show your Bucks Beautiful Membership Card.



DELAWARE VALLEY
UNIVERSITY

Delaware Valley University's Center for Learning in Retirement (CLR) Fall 2023 Online Brochure is Now Available at www.delval.edu/clr. Online registration for the Fall 2023 term will open August 1 at Noon ET and the Fall term will run September 6- December 1. There are 90 online course offerings (all with varying start dates and durations) and lots of new and exciting courses from which to choose. Questions? Contact clr@delval.edu | 215-489-4990.

Note: The CLR program tries to keep the online program price low for all participants so there is no additional Bucks Beautiful Membership discount. However, when the non-credit community individual classes for the Fall are released members will once again be extended a discount rate. Please stay tuned for more info on Fall programs.

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