



NEWSLETTER



A Blooming Success!

Our beloved Kitchen & Garden Tour continues to delight the community and draw strong support year after year. Thanks to the hard work of our dedicated Committee, this year's event showcased a diverse selection of properties—from quaint backyard gardens in the borough to expansive countryside estates.

Nearly 700 guests enjoyed a day filled with inspiration, discovering gardens lovingly cultivated by homeowners and professionally designed landscapes. Generous homeowners graciously opened their doors, offering a glimpse into beautifully restored historic homes and thoughtful renovations.



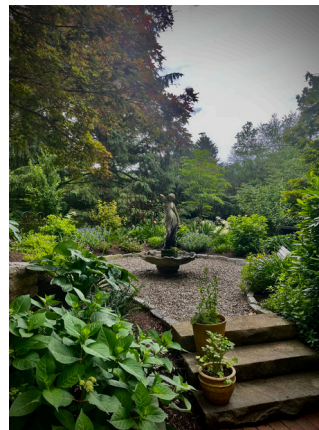
The event wouldn't be possible without the help of our forty incredible volunteers, who managed everything from parking and admissions to security, gift bags, and horticultural guidance.

We're already planning next year's Tour, which will return

to a charming walking format through Doylestown Borough on June 14, 2026—mark your calendars!

If you love the Tour, we invite you to become a Bucks Beautiful Member. Members enjoy complimentary VIP tickets to both the Kitchen & Garden Tour and our November Member Reception, along with exclusive perks like discounts from community partners and free access to special events.

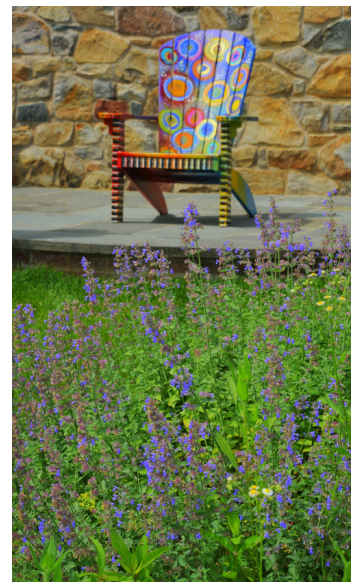
Join us in growing a more beautiful Bucks County!



*Photos by
Carol Ross Photography*

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Trouble in the Canopy: Beech Trees Under Attack

**By Dominic Zimmaro, Bartlett Tree Experts
Bucks Beautiful Board Member / RePlant Bucks Chair**

There has been a lot of buzz about Beech trees this season, and for a good reason. Beech Leaf Disease is on the rise! In this article I will cover some key facts about Beech and what to look for to make sure your trees stay healthy.

American Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) is the only Beech native to North America and can be found in the Eastern United States and Southeastern Canada. They can be generally long-lived trees with an approximate lifespan of two to three hundred years in good growing conditions. Identification is easy by way of their gray/silver, smooth bark that contrasts the usual brown, rough bark of most other trees in the woods and landscape. Considered the “Queen of the forest” by many, it’s future is now uncertain.



Healthy American Beech

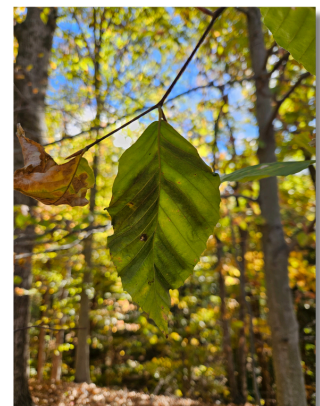
Beech Leaf Disease was first discovered in North America in 2012 where it was observed in Ohio and is still considered to be an emerging disease today. Foliar feeding nematodes (*Litylenchus crenatae mccannii*) that were first observed in Japan caused mild, but survivable, symptoms on the local beech populations. However, in Eastern North America, these symptoms have presented much more severely and healthy Beech trees have been observed dying within five to seven years of initial infection. The symptoms generally present first in the lower canopy as interveinal banding and leaf distortion, but can be scattered throughout the tree.



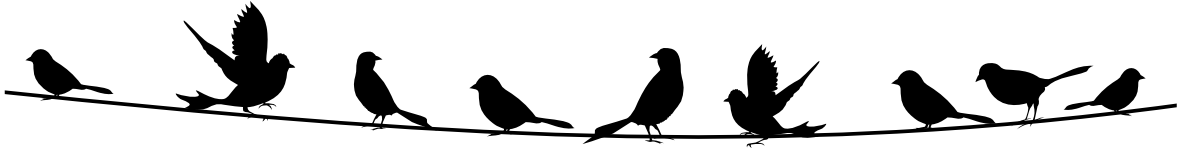
Diseased Beech Leaves

As the disease progresses the leaf distortion becomes more severe. This is dangerous to the health of the tree because it reduces the photosynthetic capability (it’s ability to make food for itself) and eventually, without treatment, the energy reserves used to make new leaves will be depleted and tree will starve.

A likely source of local spread is due to wind-driven rain transporting the microscopic parasites. In addition, there have been reports of nematodes “hitching rides” on mites, insects, and other arthropods. Research on long distance spread is still ongoing. Doctor Matt Borden along with other scientists at the Bartlett Tree Experts Research Laboratory in North Carolina has been conducting extensive research to find effective therapies in combating this devastating disease with success.



Currently, there are two treatment types available that are approved for Beech Leaf Disease. There is a course of foliar applications that occur throughout the growing season, and a systemic root flare injection that can offer protection for up to two years. Good success has been reported both in a trial setting and in a practical setting for both, but tree size, location, and overall health will play a big role in which treatment is right for your trees. For more information on treatment, Dominic can be reached at 215-249-1819.



Welcoming Wildlife in Buckingham's Wetlands

Last summer we partnered with Buckingham Township and students from CB East High School to create a native pollinator space within the Buckingham wetlands. In honor of Buckingham's Bird Town designation, their talented Building Inspector Mark Ciotti went above and beyond handcrafting a bird hotel now installed in the native garden near the wetlands. Mark built the structure using recycled materials, combining craftsmanship with sustainability.

Thank you, Mark, for helping us make Buckingham more hospitable for our feathered friends.



Butterfly Garden of Remembrance

**By Deborah Pomroy, Director, Seasons Garden Center
Bucks Beautiful Business Member**

After a devastating flash flood on July 15th, 2023, the Upper Makefield community has been grieving the loss of seven beautiful lives that ended too soon. In memory of these souls, and in appreciation of the hundreds of first responders who rose to the occasion to save lives and bring the lost home, Upper Makefield Township decided to have a Memorial Butterfly Garden created within Brownsburg Park off River Road. Seasons Garden Center was proud to have been chosen to design and install this garden.

Planning for the garden was a collaborative effort between the Upper Makefield Township officials, Police Officers, the victims' family members and the staff at Seasons Garden Center that developed over the course of a full year. Daniel Piestor, owner of Seasons Garden Center, wanted to create a private area for the public to retreat so they could find joy, discover nature, quietly reflect and remember the lives lost. Every part of the garden was designed with intention. The outer trees and shrubs will mature to create a secret garden effect. Winding trails allow for meandering and mindfulness. All trails lead to a center heart shaped trail feature. The heart is best viewed from above the garden and was created for those lost to look down upon the garden and know they were loved and are missed every day. In the middle of the heart is a water fountain offering a tranquil water sound.



The garden features four benches to allow for rest and reflection. The benches are dedicated to the four families that lost loved ones in the flood. The benches are positioned around the garden to be near the garden features that were donated by the families to the garden.

Susan Barnhart's bench is adorned with butterfly stakes from her garden and to the right of her bench is a statue of two frogs seemingly consoling each other. Her favorite turtle garden figurine is cooling itself off in the base of the fountain.

The DePiero family's bench is positioned in the center area so that someone seated on it can look around to see each of the many birdhouses that the family donated located along the outer perimeter of the garden. Yoko Love's bench overlooks a small water feature that serves as a butterfly puddling station, which allows the butterfly to have a shallow area to rest at and drink from. The Seley/Sheils bench is near a Crape Myrtle tree that the family has donated. When sitting on their bench, this tree is on the same side as your heart and will grow to provide shade for the bench. Just inside the front gate is a plaque thanking the over 100 First Responders and Search & Rescue Team members that assisted in the rescue operation.



When selecting plants, great care was made to incorporate the key elements of a pollinator garden habitat, which are to provide shelter, offer food sources, offer nectar sources and to include host plants. To offer nectar & pollen-rich sources for the butterflies, a diverse selection of trees, shrubs and perennials were carefully chosen. The garden features drifts of perennial plant materials, such as Astilbe, Rudbeckia, Allium, Coreopsis, Nepeta and Lavender, to allow for a greater show of color attracting plants, thus offering a better chance that the pollinators would find the plants.

To ensure future generations of butterflies, as you walk the pathways, you will find Asclepias, which are butterfly larval host plants. The evergreen and deciduous trees incorporated into the garden will provide shelter for the butterflies and shade for those who visit. The Kwanzan Cherry will greet guests with beautiful pink flowers in the spring, while the Crape Myrtle will delight guests with flowers in the summer, then the Serviceberry will offer fall color, and the American Holly will be stunning in the winter.



A major emphasis was put on using native plant species so you will find many included in the garden. The garden was designed to offer a succession of blooms, which allows for alternating plants to be showing color from early spring through fall. The garden has been certified and registered as a Monarch Waystation.

Every time we go to the garden, we are greeted by butterflies, bees and other pollinators. It is said that butterflies are sent from Heaven to let us know our loved ones are watching over us. Seasons Garden Center hopes that this garden will be enjoyed by our community as we come together to remember Katie, Mattie, Conrad, Enzo, Linda, Yuko and Susan.



Bucks Beautiful is proud to partner with Upper Makefield Township with an upcoming Bulbs for Bucks planting at Brownsburg Park this Fall.

Grant Applications Welcome!

Bucks Beautiful provides Community Grants to encourage non-profits, schools, garden clubs and local municipalities to host public garden or tree plantings in Bucks County. These include:

- Plantings are done at public places as well as other non-profits and conserved properties such as hospitals, war memorials, public parks, gateway gardens and town centers
- Supporting garden clubs, community gardeners, home owner associations and other groups who volunteer to do plantings throughout the community
- School garden projects
- Bulbs for Bucks daffodil displays
- Native tree installations through our RePlant Bucks initiative

The grant award is a 50/50 cash match up to a maximum of \$5,000 per year. Funds may be used for the purchase of annuals, perennials, bulbs, shrubs, trees, mulch and garden related materials. We highly encourage the use of native plant materials whenever possible.

Request an application by emailing grants@bucksbeautiful.org.
The deadline for Fall submission is 8/31/25 and for Spring is 3/31/26.

Creature Feature

by Jennifer Finelli, Finance and Programs Director

The relationship between the gardener and garden pests can be a complex one. Take for example, the hornworm. Hornworms chew leaves and can completely defoliate a plant, as well as chew holes in fruit. They are especially drawn to tomato plants, but are also known to target eggplant, pepper and potato plants. There are two main types of hornworm: tobacco hornworms which have a red horn and diagonal stripes, and tomato hornworms which have a black horn and arrow-like stripes. Physical removal is usually the only necessary management, but the gardener must be vigilant. It can be challenging to identify the hornworm as they camouflage quite well on the leaves. On the upshot, once the hornworm completes its metamorphosis, it does become a beneficial nocturnal pollinator. And sometimes, nature takes care of the problem for you by sending in some wasps. If you find a hornworm that already has parasitic wasp larvae (see image) just leave it alone. The larvae will handle it from here!



*Tobacco hornworm
(Manduca sexta)*



*Tomato hornworm
(Manduca quinquemaculata)*



*Parasitic wasp larvae
feasting on a hornworm*



by Bryce Sanders
Volunteer Board Member



New York City is the center of the universe for many people. The city offers access to the finest restaurants and shopping in the world. But can you pet a goat, bottle feed a baby goat or buy locally produced goat yogurt in Midtown Manhattan? The answer is no. You need to visit the Gorgeous Goat Creamery in Stockton, NJ. I chatted with Maria Stewart and Matt Kriegler, the charming young couple who count 108 goats as extended family members.

How did you start the Gorgeous Goat Creamery?

It was almost by accident. In 2018 we realized we had an invasive plant problem on our wooded property. We bought four goats, knowing they eat everything. Then thought: "It might be good to have goat milk in the refrigerator to pour on cereal." Things happened. Goat milk led to goat cheese and goat yogurt. We thought: "Maybe we could make and sell something!" Goat's milk soap is easy! Let's give it a try. The dairy side of the business is more complicated. We did research and learned there are no goat dairies in the state of New Jersey!



Why did you choose to locate in Stockton?

Our move to Stockton came before we owned a single goat! My job in the food industry meant we needed to find a place to live in New Jersey that was commutable to my corporate job. Matt is a ceramic artist. Locating in the Delaware River valley made sense because of the abundance of tourist and artistic towns. When you work in ceramics, you need a wood fired kiln. They need plenty of wood, so finding a forested area made sense. That led us to Stockton. The development of the dairy took all our attention, so we don't have a kiln yet.

What products do you produce?

On the dairy side, we produce goat milk, yogurt and three cheeses: Chevre in plain and herb varieties, Feta, gouda and Cumulus, a brie-like cheese. On the body care side, we produce goat milk soap and also lotion. Goat milk has natural moisturizers.





How did you get involved with Bucks Beautiful?

We realized the mission of Bucks Beautiful aligned with the mission and values at Gorgeous Goat Creamery. Our farming methods are sustainable and regenerative. Bucks Beautiful is enhancing the countryside through natural means. Our values align. During the December holiday shopping season, we choose a cause to support through our soap sales. In 2024 we shared our profits with Bucks Beautiful.

Where can people buy your products?

Visiting our website is the easiest way to see our outlets. In Lambertville, visit the Savour Cheese Shop. We have stands at farmers markets in Flemington, West Windsor, Somerville and Madison. We have a weekend farm shop on our property.

What events do you hold?

Our initial brood of four goats has now grown to 108 goats! Perhaps you would like to meet them! In the Spring we did bottle feeding and snuggling with our baby goats. We also offer “farmer for a day” along with soap making workshops and our Friday evening “Goat Happy Hour.” You bring your drinks and snacks. We provide the penned in goats, tables, chairs and canopies.



Bucks Beautiful Briefs



Whether you're ready to test your green thumb, or you're an experienced gardener, check out this FREE community event.

Sun, shade & native perennials, house plants or trees welcome (please no invasive plants). Please label with Latin names when possible.

Unloading & Plant ID help available from 5-6 pm. Swap starts at 6pm sharp, rain or shine. Any questions, call/text 215-340-3639.



We're pleased to invite you to our Reception at charming Byers' Choice, the birthplace of the beloved handcrafted Caroler dolls created by our very own co-founders.

Join us for an evening of celebration and refreshments in a truly festive setting. More details to follow — we can't wait to see you there!

Not a Member yet? It's easy to enroll - click the button below for information.

Get Ready to Circle 2026!



THE BURPEE

SUMMER OPEN

AT FORDHOOK FARM

DOYLESTOWN, PA



SATURDAY, JULY 26, 2025 | 10AM — 4PM

On Saturday, July 26th we'll open the historic grounds to the public for a behind-the-scenes peek into the magic of Burpee's gardens. We can't wait to show you around!

Fordhook Farm is a private 61-acre farm and garden established by W. Atlee Burpee, the founder of Burpee Seed Co. Today, the site still serves as a Burpee trial station for testing new vegetables, flowers and herbs and has added new ornamental gardens and tree collections.

FREE EVENT!

Whether you're a gardening enthusiast, part of a community group, or someone who simply loves nature, this event is a wonderful way to celebrate gardening.

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