



# NEWSLETTER

## Help Us to Beautify Bucks!

We provide Community Grants to encourage nonprofits, schools, garden clubs and local municipalities to host public garden or tree plantings in Bucks County. These include:

- Plantings at public places as well as 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](mailto:grants@bucksbeautiful.org). Proposals need to be for a location within Bucks County, PA. The Spring submission deadline is 3/31/26 and the Fall submission deadline is 8/31/26.



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## **Board Member Mike Feeney Honored with Prestigious Industry Award**

Bucks Beautiful is proud to celebrate board member Mike Feeney on receiving the 2026 Fredrick J. Mummert Distinguished Service Award from Pennsylvania Landscape & Nursery Association.

This distinguished award—PLNA's highest membership honor—recognizes individuals whose careers reflect exceptional leadership, professional excellence, and a lasting commitment to advancing the green industry. It is granted only with unanimous approval from the organization's Board of Directors, underscoring the significance of Mike's contributions.

For more than 40 years, Mike has been a driving force within Pennsylvania's horticultural community. Through his longstanding involvement with PLNA, including service on the Government Relations Committee and as a past Chairman and Board Member, he has played a critical role in shaping policy, strengthening industry standards, and advancing the association's mission.

His advocacy work has made a meaningful impact at the state level. Mike has testified before the Pennsylvania Senate Agriculture Committee and collaborated with State Senator Art Hershey on the development of the state's ACRE law. He also remains actively engaged in initiatives that support the future of the industry, including serving as an original TreeVitalize donor and representing PLNA on the State Invasive Plant Committee.

Closer to home, Mike's passion for stewardship and community is equally evident. Since purchasing a 55-acre farm in 1984 and expanding it to 325 acres—later recognized as Bucks County Farm of the Year—he has demonstrated a deep commitment to land conservation and responsible growth. His leadership with Bucks Beautiful, including service as a board member and past president, has helped advance beautification and environmental initiatives throughout the region.

While Mike's influence is far-reaching, he is known for his humility and quiet dedication—often working behind the scenes to support causes he believes in.

We are honored to have Mike as part of the Bucks Beautiful family and extend our heartfelt congratulations on this well-deserved recognition.





# Cultivating Connection Through Education



We were thrilled to welcome 70 guests on February 12th for an inspiring evening with David Hughes, RLA as he presented Creating Wildflower Meadows. David delivered an engaging and informative lecture filled with practical how-to guidance and beautiful real-world examples—perfect inspiration for anyone looking to add habitat, color, and ecological value to their landscape. Learn more about David at [www.weatherwooddesign.com](http://www.weatherwooddesign.com).

Our Educational Lecture Series continues on April 30th with “Composting for a Sustainable Future,” presented by Heather Guidice, Founder of Kona Compost Company.

Food and yard waste are an inevitable part of life, but they can also be a highly valuable resource. Composting is an environmentally friendly way to handle your organic refuse.

Heather will guide you on the various ways to transform your waste into a nutrient-dense soil amendment that your plants, garden, and soil will love.

Learn about the benefits of compost, the dos and don'ts of composting, and the variety of composting options available as you begin your journey or further refine your composting skills.



## COMPOSTING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

*Speaker Heather Guidice  
Founder, Kona Compost*



**Thursday**  
4-30-26



**James-Lorah Memorial Home  
Auditorium**  
100 N. Broad Street, Doylestown



**6:00 PM Mingle**  
**6:30 PM Lecture**



**General Public:** \$10  
**BC Master Gardeners:** \$5  
**Free Admission:** Bucks Beautiful  
and VIA Members

Donations welcome for the Bucks Beautiful Scholarship Fund



# Hollow House

## FARMS

by Bryce Sanders, Board President

Hollow House Farms are big in local terms, yet small enough to be manageable in the farming world. With a focus on regenerative small-scale agriculture, they prove people can live alongside the farms that grow your food, participate in the process and enjoy the benefits. I spoke with Lisa Braud, who co-owns the farm with her husband Matt.



**Tell us about your business.** Hollow House Farms is a working farm in Buckingham Township — a living, breathing classroom for modern agriculture — where innovation, sustainability, and education come together in one place.

Aligned with the USDA Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), we actively implement regenerative and conservation-focused practices that protect soil health, improve biodiversity, and strengthen our local ecosystem.

We steward 12 owned acres and lease an additional 84 acres, allowing us to farm at meaningful scale while remaining deeply connected to our community. As more people seek transparency about where their food comes from, Hollow House Farms provides that connection. We grow with integrity and sell our produce directly through our on-site farm store and at the Wrightstown Farmers Market — shortening the distance between field and consumer.

**How did you get started?** We are a farming couple. Matt has been an expert in aquaponics and has been actively involved in this area of farming since 2011. This is the technique where plants are grown in water. It might sound new, but the technique was developed hundreds of years ago. From a farming standpoint, it reduces the risk. “You get out what you put in.” In Texas he grew and sold 10,000 heads of lettuce a week to local restaurants. Every lettuce grown had a place to go. Then Covid hit and everything changed. Restaurants were shut down.

This was opportunity to plan the next stage of our life. Since I am a Bucks County native, we decided to move back and buy land to farm there. The focus would be on spreading the message of sustainable farming, both by teaching others and selling produce.

*Matthew and Lisa Braud*





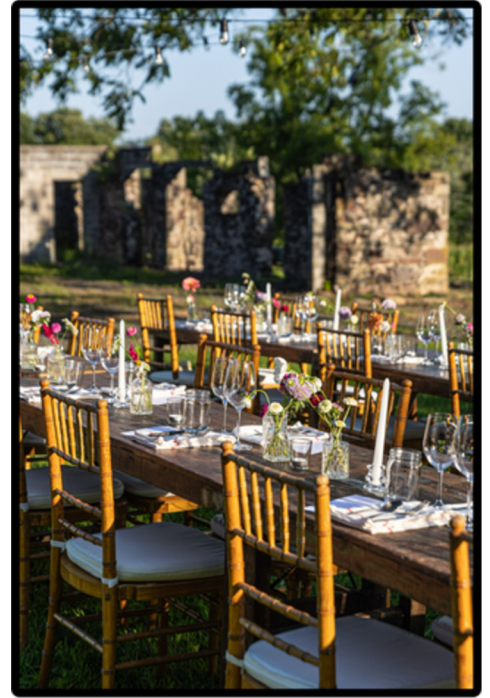
**How does what you do benefit local residents?** People want to know where their food comes from. Produce shipping from overseas incurs the environmental cost of air miles to reach the market, and freshness is lost along the way. Fruits and vegetables you buy from a local farmer taste fresher and are better for the environment. In addition, sustainable farming means we are chemical and pesticide free. Local residents can see the chickens that lay our eggs, the bees that make our honey and the land that produces our vegetables. For children wanting the hands-on experience, we have segmented an area where they can touch plants and pick their own vegetables.

**How can local residents get involved?** The simplest way is to visit our farm store, or stand at the Wrightstown Farmers Market. We host a Farm Club people can join, which includes hands-on activities, farm to table dinners presented by local chefs and experiences like live fire cooking. We have harvest days for members. At this point, with 45 members, the Farm Club is full with a waiting list.

Membership is priced by the season, June to October, then October to February, with couples pricing offered. We aim to partner with local businesses, like Calico bread, neighbors who recently launched a sourdough business.

**How did you find out about Bucks Beautiful?** The first point to mention is Bucks Beautiful has a spectacular social media presence. This introduced us to the projects you do, specifically in Buckingham Township where we are located. We saw how Bucks Beautiful partners with townships, such as the donation of trees. They produce tangible results. Bucks Beautiful is doing important work. We had to join!

**What other ways do you give back to the community.** There are many. We work with students of all ages when schools visit the property to learn about farming. It might be future farmers studying at Delaware Valley University or elementary aged children. We also donate food to local food banks on a regular basis.



# Preparing Your Garden for the Season - The NEAT Way

By Tiffany Lynch, Business Member - NEAT Method Bucks County

As the days get longer and the weather warms, garden season calls. Before you start planting, take time to organize your tools and supplies. An organized garden space doesn't just look better — makes the entire season more enjoyable.

## 1. Start with a Full Reset

Pull everything out of your gardening space — tools, pots, gloves, fertilizers, seeds. Group like items together and edit down what's broken, rusted, or expired.

*Pro Tip: Most seeds remain viable for 1–3 years. Check expiration dates before storing them for another season.*

## 2. Create Simple Categories

Organize your supplies into clear zones. Keeping categories tight prevents the “garden shed avalanche” mid-season. Top categories include:

- Hand tools
- Pots & planters
- Seeds & bulbs
- Gloves & small accessories
- Soil, fertilizers & treatments

## 3. Contain

Small items create the most clutter. Prevent time-wasting searches mid-planting by using stackable bins for:

- Seed packets
- Drip irrigation parts
- Plant food
- Twine, plant markers, and ties
- Labels

Think vertically and take advantage of your wall space. Getting tools off the floor instantly creates order. Install:

- Pegboards for small hand tools
- Hooks for shovels and rakes
- Wall-mounted baskets for gloves





#### 4. Label

Label broadly. This creates sustainable systems that easily adapt as your inventory changes, preventing the need for constant reorganization.

#### 5. Create a “Grab & Go” Caddy

A small handled bin becomes your daily gardening kit — no rummaging required. Stock it with:

- Gloves
- Clippers
- Twine
- Plant markers

#### 6. Maintain Monthly

A five-minute reset once a month prevents a full overhaul next season.

The NEAT Method philosophy: systems should feel natural, not rigid. If it's easy to put away, it will stay organized.



#### BUCKS BEAUTIFUL MEMBER DISCOUNT!

Free organizing services consultation; 10% product discount during organizational services. Call 267-240-6135 or email [buckscounty@neatmethod.com](mailto:buckscounty@neatmethod.com).



## Free Trees

Pennsylvanians can replace up to three invasive trees and shrubs with native species for free through the statewide Pennsylvania Invasive Replace-ive Program.

Residents can participate by removing an invasive tree or shrub from your property or with permission from a property owner (e.g., park, library, school), taking a photo of the removed plant(s), and attending an event to receive a replacement tree or shrub, available on a first-come, first-served basis while supplies last.

Preregistration will open March 31 and is required to participate.

# Upcoming Events



## Celebrate Arbor Day with our RePlant Bucks initiative at Peace Valley Park

Whether you're a seasoned gardener or just want to lend a hand, your help planting trees makes a lasting impact.

The meeting location is the Angler's Pier Parking Lot, Creek Road, Doylestown, near the intersection of Cheese Factory Road.

Registration is suggested but not required.

## Just a Few Spring Fling Tickets Remaining!

Join us for an unforgettable evening steeped in rustic elegance where guests will enjoy:

- Complimentary valet parking
- Cocktail hour with open bar and hors d'oeuvres
- Seated three-course dinner
- Silent and live auctions
- Raffles
- Live entertainment



## A Sunday Walking Tour through Historic Doylestown Borough

Marvel at remodeled kitchens and lovingly tended landscapes. Garden Gift Bags while supplies last.

Members receive free VIP tickets with early access. Not a member yet? Join today for great perks!

Sponsorships Available - email [info@bucksbeautiful.org](mailto:info@bucksbeautiful.org) or click the button below.

**Tickets on sale - Advance Discount through 5/31.**





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## PREMIER LEVEL

