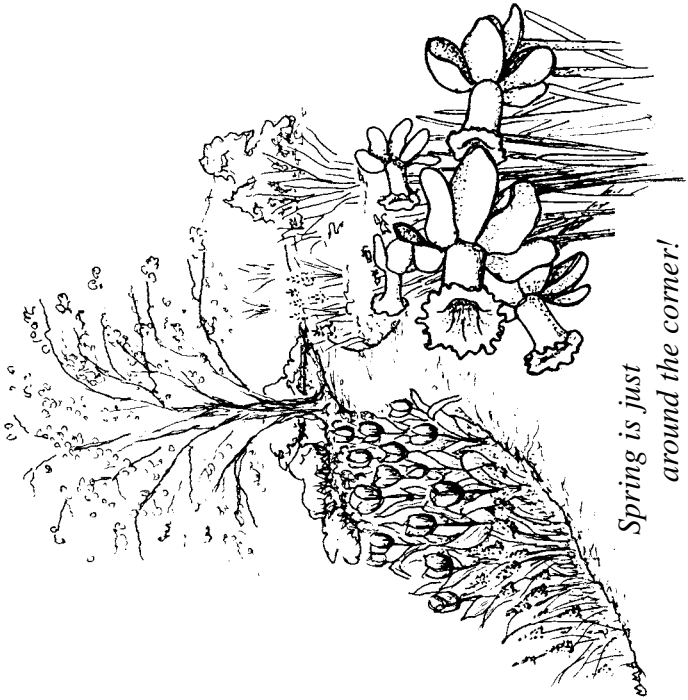


W.D. Wells & Associates, Inc.

Design/Build Landscape Contractors and Professional Garden Care
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*Spring is just
around the corner!*

Spring '06 Semiannual Newsletter

Spring at last!

I always welcome spring. Winter has held us hostage indoors too long. This winter has been especially difficult because it was so mild in January. I kept on reminding myself that winter still had a couple of months to go. We have filled the winter with many needed house-keeping projects and planning for an even greater year in 2006. As you look out at your dreary winter landscape and dream of warmer days to come, keep in mind that we can make that dream patio, garden or outdoor kitchen a reality. Please speak to one of our many talented designers- stop dreaming and start enjoying what your heart desires!

One of the key points in our mission statement stresses “community involvement” where we live, where we work, and within our industry. My parents, Bill and Kay, have been demonstrating this value for as long as I can remember. They frequently say “you get back in this life what you give.” This newsletter has an article highlighting but one of our many local, outreach efforts. We’ll tell you about others in years to come. At present, our employees serve on fifteen national and state industry boards and committees.

As an employer, we encourage our staff to grow on a personal level. At the request of one of our many outstanding employees, we are offering in-house Spanish classes to facilitate personal development. Our meeting room is packed biweekly with designers, managers and foreman, all eager to improve their communications skills. A long-time foreman, Jim Donohoe, asked if he could have six months off starting in spring to fulfill a life-long dream and hike the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine. We gave a resounding ‘Yes!’ but we’re jealous! We’re paying him a small stipend to help offset the cost of granola along the way.

Our founder, Bill Sr., was inducted into the **Pennsylvania Landscape and Nursery Association** Hall of Fame this February. This prestigious award is given annually to a single person whose contribution to the Association exemplifies service to the industry above self. Designer Mark Sheme received an **Excellence in Landscape Design Silver Award** from the Association for our display garden at last year’s Vassar College Showhouse.

I would like to congratulate Shipley Allinson on his new title of “Senior Designer.” This acknowledges his many years of service and, more importantly, his extensive experience within the landscape field. Additionally, he has received the title of “**Certified Landscape Designer**” from the **Association of Professional Landscape Designers**. Certification is given only after extensive review of plans and documents by a national panel which determines that the individual has superior knowledge in this field.

Lastly I’d like to congratulate my partner and brother, David and his wife Heather, on the arrival of a new family member, Cassidy Ann.

Spring is a time for renewal and commitment to the important things in life: family, friends and community.

Thank you all for your continued support and confidence.

Bill H. Wells

P.S. Please inquire about extending your new plant guarantee by signing on for regular visits from our **Professional Garden Care** Division.



Notes from the Nursery: Growing Green

W.D. Wells and Associates, Inc./Water Crest Farms is very pleased to announce two major environmental conservation initiatives. We have switched our entire electrical supply to **100% wind generation**, and we have started to use **BioDiesel** to fuel our large fleet of trucks and farm equipment. These measures will augment our existing efforts to recycle and re-use materials generated by our offices, our farm, and by our landscape installation processes. The move supports part of our mission to be environmental stewards.

While recycling of metal cans, plastic bottles and scrap metal are routine, we have always been looking for additional, innovative, earth-friendly outlets. Waste oil, pesticide containers, greenhouse film, organic materials and concrete are being recycled and re-used. 'Green' waste such as sod, weeds, leaves and shrub trimmings is composted and re-applied to our nursery beds; Concrete and asphalt are crushed and re-used under roadways; Stone and brick rubble are used to stabilize watercourses and erosion washes on our 70 acre nursery; Waste oil heats our mechanical shop during winter months; Greenhouse film (plastic) is baled and recycled after use.

We were excited when wind energy finally reached the mid-Atlantic region; the technology has been in use in Europe and in other parts of this country for some time. Community Energy, Inc. has two wind farms in Pennsylvania generating power for PECOWind customers. Residents of New Jersey, Maryland, New York and Virginia can obtain wind-generated electricity through their local suppliers. Delaware is not yet on line.

Wind is a completely renewable, non-polluting way to reduce our country's dependence on foreign oil. It creates no emissions such as those created from burning oil or coal- thus, no smog, acid rain and other climate changing factors. There are no environmental hazards with wind generated power such as those associated with nuclear power and its long-term waste storage problems. More information is available at www.communityenergy.biz and www.pecowind.com

BioFuels are most commonly derived from soybeans. The conversion ratio is such that for every one energy unit used to produce BioDiesel, over three energy units are gained in return. Best of all it's a renewable fuel source. With no equipment modification we can run a B20 Blend (20% BioFuel and 80% diesel) in our fleet. Use of BioFuel reduces hydrocarbons by 30% which results in a reduction of 20% carbon monoxide, and 15% of particulate emissions.

BioFuels are also now available for home heating if you are using a oil fired furnace or boiler. Information is available at www.amerigreenbio.com, and fuel is available locally at the Goodfuels Company in Lancaster, PA, www.goodfuels.us.

Our company is convinced that our philosophical and financial commitment to using wind-generated electricity and alternative truck and equipment fuel is one more way we can reduce our impact on local and global pollution. We encourage our clients and neighbors to consider alternate power sources household and business. These technologies won't continue to become more efficient and affordable unless we all make a commitment to conserve resources and protect our environment.

David V. Wells

Vice President/Nursery Operations



Outstanding Team Members: Jim Donohoe

Jim Donohoe has been working with W.D. Wells & Associates, Inc. as a foreman since graduating from the Williamson Trade School's Ornamental Horticulture and Landscape Design program in April 2002. He also studied horticulture while enrolled in the two year high school program at Longwood Gardens and the local vocational high school.

Jim is a native to Kennett Square, PA where he also currently resides. Outside work, Jim spends most of his time with his girlfriend and dog backpacking, camping, hiking, mountain biking and gardening.

Beginning on March 22, 2006, Jim plans on taking his first steps of the needed 5,000,000 to be one of few to attempt an end to end hike of the 2,174 mile Appalachian Trail. Starting in Amicalola Falls State Park in Georgia at the summit of Springer Mountain, Jim will hike northbound with the seasons. Jim will hike through the summer, intent on making the summit of Mt. Katahdin, Maine in time for breathtaking fall color.

The “Journey” will take approximately 6 months to accomplish, averaging 12–15 miles a day; carrying 30–35 lbs of gear and food over mountains, through streams, and yes, even over boulders. He will camp in the woods almost every night and visit a nearby town approximately once a week to pick up a package containing more food at the post office. Town will bring a hot shower and contact with those at home.

Jim has been dreaming of this trip for twelve years and making plans for the past three. We, here at W.D. Wells, will welcome his weary feet back in Spring 2007! Jim will journal his trip at www.trailjournals.com/cheesewhiz. Jim welcomes financial support, flat rate...or by the mile. Anyone interested in supporting Jim may contact Tony Dufour, at 610.869.3883 x 12 or tdufour@wdwells.com.



*Do you know where this
garden photograph was taken?*



The first correct respondent will receive (1) *Hamamelis x intermedia* ‘Diane’ or ‘Jelena’, Witchhazel. Please call or email Tony Dufour, 610.869.3883 x 12, tdufour@wdwells.com.

Heading Out: The Morris Arboretum



The Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania began in 1887 as “Compton,” the summer home of John and Lydia Morris, brother and sister. The I.P. Morris Company, an iron-manufacturing firm founded by their father and later run by John Morris, was a source of family wealth.

The land the Morrises purchased in Chestnut Hill was barren, with poor soil that drained too quickly; but with diligent care they surrounded their home with a landscape and plant collection devoted to beauty and knowledge. “Two Lines,” a sculpture by George Rickey, marks the former mansion site. The Widener Visitor Center was formerly the carriage house.

John was a noted plantsman and community leader who explored the new world of knowledge available to Victorians. John and Lydia traveled widely in America, Asia and Europe bringing ideas, artwork, crafts and plants back to Compton. They shared a love of history and art and established a tradition of placing sculpture in the garden that continues today. The Morrises were active in civic affairs and preservation and believed in the power of education. It was their earnest hope to be judged ‘worthy stewards.’

John and Lydia Morris laid plans for a school and laboratory at Compton devoted to horticulture and botany. Through the stewardship and vision of the



Quaker family, Compton became the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania in 1932. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it is an interdisciplinary resource center for the University, and is recognized as the official arboretum of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Science, art, and humanities are pursued through a variety of research, teaching and outreach programs that link the Arboretum to a worldwide effort to nurture the earth's forests, fields and landscapes.

The Arboretum is open all year, except for Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Hours, April through October, 10 am - 4 pm weekdays, 10 am- 5 pm weekends. November through March: 10 am- 4 pm every day. For further information on admission fees, guided tours, etc. please visit the website, www.morrisarboretum.org, or call 215.247.5777.

We are grateful to the staff of Morris Arboretum for sharing their garden with us. Landscape Designer, Tony Dufour, ASLA was privileged to serve as both arborist, and urban forestry intern at 'The Morris' where he gained a deep appreciation for horticulture and tree preservation through intensive study and applied learning.

Outstanding Plant: *Aesculus octandra* Yellow Buckeye



Aesculus octandra, sometimes referred to as *Aesculus flava*, is commonly known as yellow buckeye. Often we select smaller landscape trees and shrubs to feature in our newsletter, but this tree is well worthy of mention. I use the word ‘tree’ in definitive terms; this tree can exceed 120 feet in height at maturity.

As a Genus or Family, this group of trees varies greatly in form and function. There are species in the genus *Aesculus* that form 10 foot tall, broad clumps such as *A. parviflora* bottlebrush buckeye; smaller flowering trees ranging from 20 to 40 feet tall with comparable widths, in the case of (*A. pavia* and *A. carnea*) . and large shade trees *A. turbinata*, *A. hippocastinum*, *A. glabra*, and *A. octandra* ranging from 50 to 100 feet tall.

All of the species in the genus *Aesculus* have similar flower inflorescences, in the form of an upright panicle, but they vary in scale and color. The flowers mature into a range of different size and color fruits which are encapsulated in a tender skin; these are the long sought after buckeyes and horsechestnuts. The characteristic leaf form of *Aesculus* is a broadly palmate leaf with 5 to 7 elongated leaflets. All of the plants in this family are worthy of being specimens in your landscape or garden, but *A. octandra* stands alone.

A. octandra, as we will refer to it, is indeed a grand tree, growing 50 to 70 feet tall in most cases, although it has been recorded up to 140 feet tall. The outline form of the tree is a broad, spreading oval form, generally exhibiting high branching, which allows us to view its beautiful plated bark and clean branching habit.

This species has leaves that are made up of 5 six inch, oblong, elliptical leaflets with a serrate leaf margin. The leaves are medium green on the top with a white underside. The leaves are typically free of pests, clean and exhibit good tolerance to drought and leaf scorch. Fall color ranges from yellow-gold to a rusty orange which adds to the appeal of this native to the North and Southeast United States.

A. octandra . boasts beautiful flowers set against the deep green foliage. The inflorescences are tall, upright yellow panicles standing 7 to 8 inches tall, allowing them to be easily seen even on the largest of trees. They resemble yellow candlebrabras in May, standing out against the rich, green lustrous foliage. This amounts to an incredible display and an irresistible attraction to our early pollinating friends. An outstanding specimen of this plant can be seen at The Morris Arboretum . Take an opportunity to see this tree in May (usually around the time of their plant sale), and we are certain you’ll understand why we think so much of *Aesculus octandra*. Have a Wonderful Gardening Spring!

Matthew White, Nursery Manager PCH, DNP

Trends in the Garden: Containers



Container gardens have become one of the most popular forms of gardening in both public and private settings. Containers are fun, creative and easy to put together. Possibilities are endless!

Planting is easy: Choose the container you like, fill it with potting soil, pick some plants that you would like to see combined together and your container is ready for display. Make sure your container has holes in the bottom for drainage. You'll find ideas for plant combinations in gardening magazines, books and at your local garden center.

Annuals make great container plants. They bloom all summer and make great fillers in any container. The latest trends are now showcasing perennials, bulbs and even shrubs. Shrubs?! With the right size container, shrubs work very well with perennials and annuals as accents. Tropical plants such as Cannas, Bananas, Elephant ears and Hibiscus are great plants that work very well, especially in hot, sunny areas. Mixed with summer blooming annuals, they render an exotic container!

W.D. Wells would love to help you with your container gardens. We have developed seasonal containers that give color all year long. We plant bulbs or cold tolerant annuals for late winter or early spring, rotate them out with summer blooming annuals and finish off the season with a fall assortment. We can even extend the season into winter for holiday color. Call your Professional Gardener today to help you with this growing trend!

Outstanding Gardens: The Miller Residence

The owners envisioned a naturalistic garden setting that mimicked a rugged woodland valley. Mrs. Miller is an avid gardener and wanted plenty of room to experiment with plants and plant combinations, as well as ample space for her family and friends to gather. The Millers wished this to be a natural space that incorporated all of the areas they desired, such as entertaining space, gardening



space and a swimming pool. Landscape Designer Danilo Maffei recommended a landscape master plan that would allow the owners to implement portions of the work themselves (primarily the planting and some landscape construction), as well as facilitate accurate installation of other features by their pool contractor and W.D. Wells.

The completed landscape is an example of the successful collaboration between landscape designer, owner and craftsmen. Adhering to the guiding aesthetic determined by the owner, we selected materials that would best reflect those characteristics of a rugged woodland valley. The drainage swale became a unifying element in the landscape, representing the stream bed of the valley and the backbone upon which all other elements were placed. Large boulders from the Pocono Mountains were placed at points where the swale changed directions and at the intersection of two swales, effectively implying that erosion carved away the surrounding soil and exposed the boulders. Various sizes of ‘river jack’ stones were placed in the swale to prevent displacement of soil and to be an attractive focal point when storm water is not running through the area.

Retaining walls were a necessary component in order to place the swimming pool in the sloping back yard, but walls by their nature were not appropriate to the design intent. To be successful in the use of a wall in this garden, we selected a very large, chunky stone from the same mountain range as the boulders so as to give the wall a rugged, almost random character. Boulders were placed randomly in the wall to give the impression that the boulders were naturally occurring and the walls were built around them.

In the patio area, large, irregular flagstones were selected to complement the color ranges present in the boulders, retaining wall and river jack swale. Jagged shapes and stone dust-filled joints give a fractured bedrock impression, as if the



patio were unearthed, rather than built. A cedar deck descends to the patio as an extension of the home and offers an architectural link between the house and the garden.

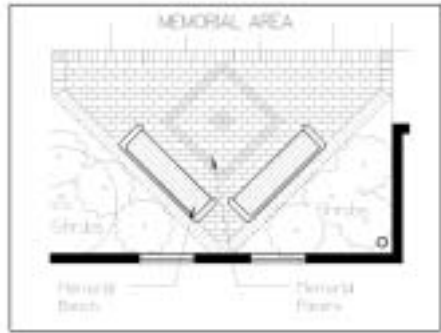
Since they are avid gardeners, all plantings were done by the owner. The landscape master plan addresses conceptual use of space and the owner selected species to correspond to these spaces. One embankment area near the pool was planned and planted by us, which was designed to offer interest during the peak of the swimming season. This garden space has combinations of plants that offer

interest with form, foliage, texture and flower color that are at maximum interest from June through September, coinciding with peak pool season.

This garden is now a summertime attraction, affectionately referred to as “Club Miller” by the scores of neighbors and other friends that gather there. W.D. Wells and Associates and Dan Maffei wish to thank the Miller family for their generosity in sharing their garden and for the delightful experience of working with them. We are appreciative to have them as clients and blessed to have them as friends.

Outstanding Neighbors: Po-Mar-Lin Fire Station, Unionville, PA

Embracing a long tradition of volunteerism supported by the Board and employees of W.D. Wells and Associates, landscape designer Rich McGowan donated his expertise to one of our local volunteer fire companies. During the past few months, Rich developed a master landscape plan for the recently constructed Po-Mar-Lin Fire Station located on West Doe Run (Rte. 82) in Unionville. 'Po-Mar-Lin' is a truncated name for Pocopson, Marlborough and Newlin (townships served by the fire company).



Preliminary meetings with Fire Chief Ricky Tuel revealed his vision of creating a memorial area dedicated to those citizens who have volunteered selflessly for their community. Another idea Chief Tuel envisioned was a sitting area near the garage bays where volunteers could socialize after responding to an emergency call or after washing a truck. As construction costs have exceeded the budget, Chief Tuel noted that the fire company has no funding to support his vision. Ideas were explored on how to raise money for the memorial area and surrounding landscape. Some successful fundraising campaigns have centered on donations toward specific memorial trees. Recent technological advances have led to the personalization of various landscape elements, specifically concrete pavers and wood benches. The ability to remember a loved one, or list a benefactor in this permanent fashion has also been attractive to potential donors in similar fundraising situations.

With these elements in mind, Rich created several memorial areas in the front of the fire station. The areas include fundraising opportunities for the engraved pavers and benches. The pattern of the pavers takes a cue from the brick façade; the positioning of the benches will promote conversation. The areas directly adjacent to the building will become gardens with plants providing seasonal color and interest. Evergreen screening will be planted between the post office / banquet hall to help shield vehicular headlights from entering the sleeping quarters windows. Numerous shade and flowering trees will be located on the grounds for fundraising opportunities. Along with the memorial areas in front of



the station, a separate sitting area is located near the radio room, where volunteers will relax and socialize with one another.

Chief Tuel and all the volunteers are excited about the plans and are looking forward to a short successful fundraising campaign. Anyone interested in contributing toward the garden installation may call the Chief at 610.347.2179.



A Little Technical Advice: Paver Sealers

In order to protect your concrete paver patio and/or walkway investment, you might wish to consider having a sealer applied. A sealer will protect against loss of color or surface quality from the sun, acid rain and the ‘elements’ in general. The color dyes of pavers are enhanced and treated surfaces will look more vibrant and even wet.

Sealers may be applied immediately after paver installation. A cleaning solution may be utilized to remove any stains or residues. Once dry, the sealer is applied, and the walkway or patio is ready to enjoy for years to come. Your designer can answer specific questions about sealers and protecting your investment.

Protecting your Investment: Japanese Beetles & Bagworms, Oh MY!

The last gardening season was a big year for these two plant insect pests and there may be more trouble ahead in 2006. Here is some information to help you get ready for the coming battles!

First of all, pest management is about preventative measures, not knee jerk reactions to putting out a fire. Having stated this, let's look closely at the life cycles of Japanese beetles (*Popillia japonica*) and bagworms (*Thyridopteryx ephemeraeformis*) to determine what gardeners can do preventatively.

Japanese beetles are a familiar garden pest which have a voracious appetite for over 300 plant species including trees, roses and perennials. They generally appear in large numbers around the middle of May. The adult beetle emerges from the ground where it has spent the winter in the larvae (worm) stage known as a grub. The beetles tend to feed on plant foliage from the top down creating a skeletonized look to the leaf. They will not usually kill a plant- but do create an unsightly mess! Once the adult beetle is gone, the plant will rebound and produce new foliage.



Often, plant selections can make the difference in damage control. Control of beetles is difficult and hand picking may still be the best approach in small gardens with limited plantings. Most IPM (integrated pest management) practices tell us that we need to "live" with this pest rather than attempt to spray pesticides each time it returns. If you decide that chemical spraying is part of your IPM program, consult with your local extension agent first before any pesticide applications are made to determine the best products and when to apply them. Finally, you can use beetle traps, or bags to attract and capture the beetles; be sure to place these well away (in order to draw the beetles away, rather than toward your plants!) from the host plants in your garden, and clean the traps often. The captives can be smothered in vegetable oil.

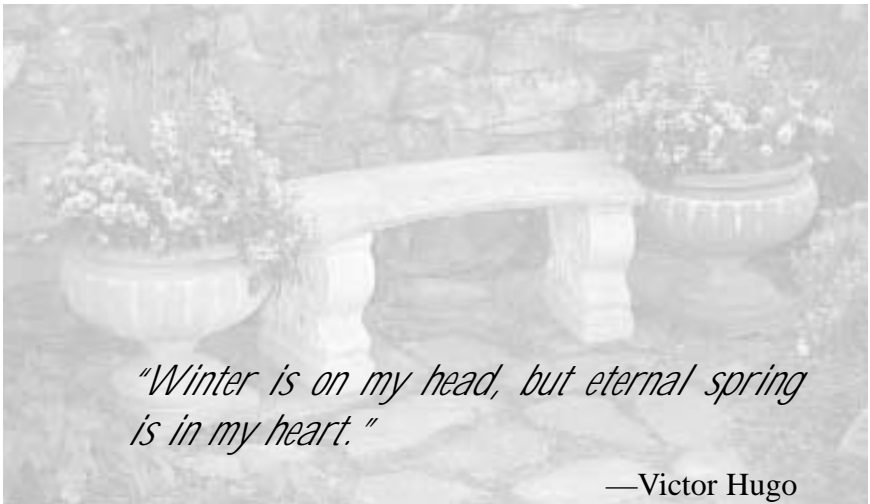
Bagworms are caterpillars that build small 1.5–2" long spindle shaped "bags" in which the caterpillar moves about the host plant. They are often mistaken for small 'pine cones' on evergreen trees. They attack both deciduous and evergreen plant species, but are usually most damaging to evergreen trees and shrubs. The bagworms appear in July & August and feed on the growing tips of



the plants; they are easy to find. These critters can defoliate a tree in less than a week! The female adult will lay 500–1000 eggs in the bag before she dies and the eggs will then over-winter in the bag on the host plant.

In mid spring (May) the eggs will hatch and the caterpillars will spin new bags from the host plant foliage and then begin heavy feeding. Control is best handled by hand picking the bags off of your

landscape plants. You can do this scouting in summer and fall, *but make sure you remove them before spring when all those eggs will hatch!* Get them all or you will have them again next year. Do not just throw them in the perimeters of your landscape or they will return! As always, if you decide to use a chemical approach to your IPM—consult with your extension agent first. Finally, there is a wealth of information on the internet if you would like to do more homework on these and other plant pests. Your W. D. Wells landscape designer or professional gardener can answer additional questions or get you pointed in the right direction. Good luck and happy gardening!



*“Winter is on my head, but eternal spring
is in my heart.”*

—Victor Hugo



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Our sincere appreciation to Mary Allinson for the cover art!

Note: Please visit our web site to see the photos in color!