

Meet the Members:

Neave Landscaping, Inc.

It's that time again. The weather is getting nicer and if you're a business owner, you might be considering doing something to improve the curb appeal of your firm since having a beautiful exterior can go a long way in boosting your clients' confidence in you. What's more, having your business property professionally landscaped can create a warmer environment for you and your employees.

"Adding landscape features and keeping the property well maintained adds a level of attractiveness that can make you stand out and make people want to visit your business," says Kathy Neave, secretary/treasurer, Neave Landscaping, Inc., a multi-award winning firm located in Wappingers Falls.

Neave Landscaping, Inc. is a family owned business begun in 1973 when Bill Neave (Kathy's husband) started the business with a lawn mower and his father-in-law's station wagon. In 1978, he left his Con Edison job in Westchester as the business demanded his attention full time.

"While the business remained very small for a long time he built a reputation of giving his customers great personal service, attention to every detail, and a great job for a competitive price," says Neave.

In 1993, they added another division, "All County Sprinklers," to meet their clients' need for great customer service and quality products in the irrigation business. Then in 1998, the Neave family built their facility on Airport Drive to house the growing business. That same year son Scott came on board full time after graduating from SUNY Cobleskill and Penn State University with a bachelor's degree in landscape design and contracting. Scott brought to the company a fresh outlook, hard work, and his design and business expertise, says Neave.

Not only has the company's facility expanded, but revenue has increased more than 7 fold since 1998, with revenues now exceeding \$5 million a year. Neave credits Scott's arrival into the family business as a significant factor in the company's growth, and says that her son is currently working towards his landscape architecture license. He holds many other certifications and awards including SUNY



Top: Scott, Kathy and Bill Neave. Right: Creative design by Neave Landscaping, Inc.

Cobleskill distinguished alumni award that he received when he was only 28.

Continuing on their growth trajectory, in 2000 Neave purchased a holiday decorating franchise called "Christmas Décor" to add another service for their clients and in order to make their downtime of the year more productive. This service includes both indoor and outdoor holiday and event decorating. Neave now owns three franchises that include Westchester and Fairfield counties, as well as Dutchess.

In 2002, they restarted their snow and ice management and now service more than 50 commercial accounts in Dutchess, Putnam, Fairfield, Westchester and Orange counties, employing more than 100 people during a winter snow event. During peak landscaping season, the company employs between 50-65 employees.

"Our snow and ice management team is one of the best as you can see from our quick growth and over 95% customer retention rate. We have quickly become one of the leaders in that field," says Neave.

The company has also received numerous environmental and design awards through the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA). Additionally, they have been featured on the cover of *Lawn and Landscape Magazine*, a nationwide publication with over 70,000 readers, and are the recipients of the Business Excellence Award in 2007, Service



Business of the Year, by the Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation.

With a highly trained, courteous staff, Neave Landscaping services both residential and commercial clients and includes such features as Landscape Design and Construction including master plans and complete job management; hardscapes - all types of masonry, concrete, unilock and stonework; lawn care, seasonal clean ups, pest control, decks and fencing, and athletic court installations, among many other things. For more information, visit www.neavelandscaping.com.

While hard work, talent and providing quality goods and services are essential in growing any business, Neave notes that their membership in the Greater Southern Dutchess Chamber of Commerce has been invaluable.

"The Chamber continues to benefit our business by creating networking and educational events where we can meet other businesses in the area. Membership gives us a level of credibility and professionalism since companies that belong to professional organizations show that they are serious about what they do and customers and staff realize and appreciate that," says Neave.