

August 2022

## South Schuylkill Garden Club

Third Tuesday of the Month at 6:30

First United Church of Christ, Schuylkill Haven

[www.southschuylkillgardenclub.com](http://www.southschuylkillgardenclub.com)

[www.facebook.com/soschuylkillgardenclub.com](https://www.facebook.com/soschuylkillgardenclub.com)



### Cultivating the Community Newsletter

### Weather Folklore for July

- **If the first week in August is unusually warm, the coming winter will be snowy and long.** If a cold August follows a hot July, it foretells a winter hard and dry.
- [24th] Thunderstorms after St. Bartholomew are mostly violent.
- When it rains in August, it rains honey and wine.
- For every fog in August there will be snow fall in the winter.

### July Meeting

**July 19, 2022**, was a hands-on workshop. We made leaf casting with Dawn Blanton as the instructor.

The workshop was held in the floral building at the Schuylkill County Fair Grounds. We had a hot day as July brought the recorded heat wave of those days 90 degrees and above. Dawn demonstrated and the rest of us followed with hands in the concrete making a leaf casting of our own. Because of the heat, the concrete set up quickly and made it a little harder to work through the process. Hope that all enjoyed the workshop and came out with a successful casting.

Big thank you to Pat, Bonnie and Kim for the light refreshments.

A brief club meeting followed clean-up of the workshop. Check out who we caught on camera. Thank you, Nancy, for taking the photos.



**Dawn Blanton explaining how to make a leaf casting.**



### **Desk of District II/III Director -Jane**

Prin those sweet peas. Deadhead seedpods to encourage new blooms and keep watered during this hot weather. Mark the date of September 14 for the Annual District Meeting hosted by Milford Garden Club. Registration deadline is September 1. Club presidents have registration forms. Plan for a carpool.

If you are unable to attend, have someone transport your sweet pea blooms, sunflowers and zinnias for the mini-hort show. Specifications are sent with registration.

Summer brightens with Standard Flower Shows. Hazleton Area Garden Club is known for its award-winning offering. Held August 13-14 at Holy Name of Jesus Social Hall, 217 W Green Street, West Hazleton, PA from 3-8 on Saturday and 11-5 on Sunday. Cost \$8. Contact Chris Leskosky at [cleskosky@hotmail.com](mailto:cleskosky@hotmail.com) for more information.

Milford Garden Club is holding a Standard Flower Show August 19-20 at St Patrick's Hall on East High and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets in Milford. For more information, contact Carol Comando at [carvin@ptd.net](mailto:carvin@ptd.net).

Much work goes into planning of Standard Flower Shows. Show you support for all their effort.



**Note:** Carol Haldeman has the raffle tickets for the District Raffle to be held in September. Cost of one ticket is \$1.00 or six tickets for \$5.00. **Last call** for the tickets will be at our August Meeting.



**Carol selling tickets at July meeting.**



**District thanks you for your support by purchasing tickets.**

### **Schuykill Herb Society**

Regular third Thursday of the month meeting will be held Thurs. Aug 18 at 6 PM at Tooth of the Lion Herb Farm in Orwigsburg. Tour at 6, followed by short business meeting and shopping at farm store.

### **Master Gardener's FAMILY FUN GARDEN GATHERING**

Family Fun and Education will abound at the Master Gardeners of Schuylkill County Garden Gathering. Tour the Demo Garden of Flowers, buy a bouquet to take home, taste baked/prepared foods made from locally grown produce (blueberry, rhubarb, pawpaw) and plants like lavender, find a bargain at the gardener tool bargain table. Learn about "top or bottom" vegetables, how to grow, harvest and prepare them, and even basic beekeeping from the Honey for Veterans program. Stop in from 10 am to 2 pm, rain or shine, on August 27, at 110 Route 61 South, Schuylkill Haven, at Vietnam Memorial lot. Questions? Call 570-622-4225 Mon-Fri between 8:30am and 4:40pm or ask a Master Gardener in person at their information booth.

### **Scholarship**

Scholarship Chairperson, Pat Wishousky, reported that Haley Bowman from the Tri-Valley area is this year's recipient of the SSGC Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000.00 Haley wrote a note of thank you to the club for receiving the funds to further her education, and she is looking forward to our August Club Meeting to be held at Hope Hill Lavender Farm where she will receive her check.

### **August Club Meeting**

Our August meeting will be held at the Hope Hill Lavender Farm, Wendy and Troy Jochem's farm at 2375 Panther Valley Road Pottsville, PA. Wendy will be giving us a tour of the farm, speaking all about the lavender that they grow on the farm. Enjoy the evenings garden tour, peek at the new pollinator garden, and stroll through the farm store where you will be able to purchase some of the wonderful products that Wendy and Troy produce from the lavender. Bring along **picnic food** to share for refreshments. Don't forget to dress with your sunbonnet as we will gather at 6 PM.



## Schuylkill Haven Borough Days

Schuylkill Haven Borough Day will be held on Saturday, September 24. Now is the time for making the popular jams and jellies with fresh fruit in the season. The jams and jellies are our big sellers. Looking for **ideas** of additional items that can be sold at Borough Day. Bring ideas to the August meeting or give your ideas to the following committee members Linda, Carol, Regina, Bernice, Joan, Mary Ann, Jane Y., Nancy, Kaye, Jeanne, and Frank.

### FYI

Manada Conservancy, Grantville, has native plant sales scheduled for Aug. and Sept. Check their website.

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**Please share photos from your gardens.**

**Email photo to: [kamorgan11@gmail.com](mailto:kamorgan11@gmail.com)**

**or text to 570-617-080**

## Creating a Cutting Garden

Fresh flowers on my dining table, kitchen counter, and desk brighten my home and make me smile. Bringing profuse bouquets into the house, however, means a limited show in the garden.

You can solve this problem by creating a flower garden specifically for cutting. I will explain how to construct and care for a cutting garden using flowers most suitable for the **Pennsylvania**.

### Thinking Beyond Annuals

We tend to associate cutting gardens with annuals like zinnias and snapdragons, but you

should consider perennials and woody plants, too. You need flower varieties with long, sturdy stems and blooms that last a long time in a vase. I also like to include fragrant blossoms in my bouquets, as scent is often missing from store-bought flowers. When buying from a plant catalog or purchasing seeds, you can find varieties best suited for cutting by looking for the scissors icon.

### Choosing the Best Flowers for Cutting

At the Penn State research farm in Landisville, the College of Agricultural Sciences trials flowers for cutting. Here are ten of my favorites from their list of those best suited for our state: black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta* 'Indian Summer'), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium* 'Summer Pastels'), Shasta daisy (*Leucanthemum x superbum* 'Giant Marconi'), bachelor's button (*Centaurea macrocephala* and *C. delbata* 'Aloha Rose'), calendula (*Calendula officinalis* 'Indian Prince'), celosia (*Celosia* 'Cramer's Amazon'), cosmos (*Cosmos* Versailles Series), dahlia (*Dahlia Karma*® Series), snapdragon (*Antirrhinum majus* Rocket Mix), and zinnia (*Zinnia elegans* Benary's Giant Mix.) Other favorites of mine include sweet pea (*Lathyrus odoratus*), ladies' mantle (*Alchemilla mollis*), purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea* 'Magnus'), globe amaranth (*Gomphrena globosa* 'QIS Purple'), sunflower (*Helianthus annuus* 'DoubleQuick Orange'), and larkspur (*Delphinium Pacific Giant Mix*.). Woody plants suitable for cutting are roses (*Rosa* spp.), lilac (*Syringa vulgaris* 'Sensation'), Pinky Winky® hydrangea (*Hydrangea paniculata* 'DVP PINKY'), and forsythia (*Forsythia* spp.) Your choices should continue into fall with bloomers such as goldenrod (*Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks'), blue spirea (*Caryopteris x clandonensis* Sapphire Surf™), and hardy garden mums (*Chrysanthemum* 'Sheffield Pink'). I believe, however, the best fall flower for vases is the dahlia listed previously.

### Preparing the Site

If you don't have available space, you can grow

your cutting garden in pots. Use annuals in containers because you can pack them together better than most perennials. Otherwise, pick a sunny, well-drained site and work in plenty of compost. My cutting garden is part of my vegetable garden, but you can locate it in any sunny corner of your yard. Every other year test your soil fertility with a soil test kit from the Extension office, and then use the results you receive from Penn State to add the recommended amendments. Your flowers will last longer when cut if they have proper soil nutrition.

### **Planting Your Cutting Garden**

Like a vegetable garden, the purpose of a cutting garden is productivity, so the flowers may be planted in widely spaced rows to allow for easy maintenance. You need not be concerned with color combinations or how the plants look together. It is a good idea to plant flowers with similar requirements of sun, water, and drainage together. Do not place taller plants where they will shade out shorter ones.

### **Maintaining the Cutting Garden**

1. Make sure the growing plants receive sufficient water. Use a drip, trickle or soaker hose that places moisture at the root system to minimize disease and rot problems.
2. Discourage weeds and retain water by spreading a two- to three-inch layer of mulch around the plants when they are a few inches tall. You can mulch with straw, shredded newspaper, or leaves.
3. Cut the flowers frequently. This will encourage the plant to keep producing blooms.
4. Remove blossoms when they fade (this is called deadheading) to prevent the formation of seeds. Seed creation slows down flower production.
5. Fertilize at peak times of flowering; I use a diluted solution of liquid seaweed.
6. When the plants stop flowering, pull them out, lightly cultivate the bed and replant. For example, replace dying spring flowers with summer bloomers.

### **Harvesting and Arranging the Flowers**

1. The best time to harvest is in the early morning when the dew has dried and before the heat of the day.
2. Harvest each flower when its buds are just starting to open, or have recently opened, and put the cut stems in tepid water immediately.
3. Strip off the leaves and thorns because when submerged this plant tissue will decay and shorten the life of your arrangement.
4. Put clean water in the vase.
5. The flowers will last longer in acidic water. Use a floral preservative following the directions on the packet. Floral preservatives contain carbohydrates (sugars) that help open buds, kill bacteria, and keep the water clear. Don't add extra water that will reduce the effectiveness of the floral preservative. An over-diluted solution of the floral preservative has enough sugars to feed the bacteria, but it does not contain enough bactericide to control them, resulting in a shorter vase life.
6. Re-cut each stem prior to placing it in the vase to expose fresh tissue that will better take up water. Cut off approximately ½ inch under water in a bowl in the sink, and immediately place it in the vase.
7. Check the water level daily. Recut stems and replace with fresh water every few days.

When arranging flowers, a bouquet should be about three times as tall as its vase. Select three types of flowers for your arrangement: bold blossoms (sunflowers, hydrangeas, peonies, roses, zinnias, or dahlias) to make a statement; spiky blooms delphinium, foxglove, or salvia) to add height and drama; and airy flowers (catmint, ladies' mantle or even the flower or seedheads of dill) for filling. My flower arrangements are very simple, casual even, reflecting the style of my cottage garden.

Indulge yourself with ever-changing combinations of flowers inside your home. They will give you months of enjoyment.

**Note:** Taken from handout from PSU Master Gardner Series. Author unknown as this was from a recording. Reason for the first person.

**So, I started this list below and I would love if all of you experienced gardeners would send me your ideas of “You know you are a Gardner when . . .” Let us keep the ideas flowing and add to the list. Let us see how many ideas we can come up with. Just email your ideas to me at [kamorgan11@gmail.com](mailto:kamorgan11@gmail.com) or text it to me at 5706170808**

### **You know you are a Gardner when:**

- Your gardening gloves fall out of the car door
- You have gardening tools in trunk of your car
- You develop community gardens
- Your gardens are themed
- You weed your neighbors’ gardens
- You dead head your daughter’s flowers
- You empty the dehumidifier and use the water to water your potted plants
- You sprinkle your son’s hair from a recent haircut around your plants to keep the deer away
- Pull weeds in public gardens
- Carry a small set of pruners in your back pocket
- You are constantly checking the weather report.
- You plant by the phases of the moon
- You cover your fall plants to protect them from the first fall frost

- You count on the first frost being in November
- You cover your plants before the frost hits.
- Clean your gardening equipment before putting away for the season
- You stare looking at seed and plant catalogues for next year
- You know you are a Gardner ... When you go to the store for groceries and come home with some plants that just jumped into your cart. – Pat P.
- You know you are a Gardner ... when you can resist everything but temptation in a Garden Center. There is always room for one more. – Pat P.
- You know you are a Gardner ... when you smile YES when a gardener-friend asks you if you could use a few irises or daylilies that she is separating because they need thinning. – Pat P.
- You know you are a Gardner ... when the Plant catalogs arrive in the middle of winter. – Pat P.
- You know you are a Gardner ... when the plants in your garden have come from other gardening friends. Memories ... I plant my friends. – Pat
- You are out on those warm sunny days looking for the first signs of spring popping up from the soil.
- You are looking for the first robin to land in your yard.
- The March winds blow off your sun hat when you are out in the garden.
- You are anywhere that you see drying seed pods on a plant, and you wonder if you can get away with

collecting some and where you can try planting them. -Kathy T.

- You know you are a gardener when your dog digs a hole going after a varmint and then you place a plant in it – Jeanne
- You know you are a gardener when you light 8 candles in your greenhouse so your peppers and tomatoes do not freeze on a cold night. - Carol H.
- When you are walking by the restaurant entrance and see weeds in the flowerbeds. Your husband turns to you and says, “Don’t even think about it.”- Linda
- *When talking in your neighbor’s yard and you bend down to pull weeds.*
- *You know you are a gardener when*  
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## **Gardeners Know All the Dirt**