

March 2026

South Schuylkill Garden Club

Third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM

First United Church of Christ, Schuylkill Haven

www.southschuylkillgardenclub.com

www.facebook.com/soschuylkillgardenclub.com



Cultivating the Community Newsletter

Dear SSGC Members,

As I gaze out my window at the beauty of the latest snowstorm, I find myself wondering if spring will ever arrive. It has been a cold winter with quite a bit of snow to push around lately.

I am counting down the days to spring; as of March 1st, it will be only 21 days away. It is my hope that some signs of spring will begin to peep out even before then.

I hope you are staying warm and doing well.

Best regards,

Kim Morgan

Please find the SSGC 2026 schedule of events listed below:

- March 17: Meeting
- April 21: Tea
- May 16: Plant Sale
- May 19: Meeting
- June 16: Meeting
- July 21: Meeting
- August 18: Picnic
- September 9: District 2/3 Annual Meeting (Hosting)
- September 15: Meeting
- September 26: Haven Borough Day
- October 17: Canal Day (Pine Grove)
- October 20: Meeting

- November 17: Meeting
- December (TBA): Christmas party

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding these dates.

Please find the details below for our upcoming meetings and events scheduled for **March** and **April**:

March 17: Spring has Sprung

- Location: Church
- Speaker: Tom Reed, Master Gardener with PSU
- Topic: The latest trends in gardening.

April 21: Japanese Tea Party

- Location: Church (downstairs)
- Speaker: Rick Watt
- Topic: The Japanese art of Bonsai

Please let me know if you have any questions or need further information regarding these events.

Tea Committee Meeting

If you a recent email from me, it is because you may have signed up for the 2026 Tea Committee. If this is not the case, please accept my apologies as I am currently navigating a very busy year.

Regarding the upcoming April Tea, we have already secured some of the necessary components, such as the caterer and the speaker. However, there are still several details and other items that need to be addressed.

As time is of the essence, we will be having a committee meeting on **Thursday, March 5, at 11:00 AM** at Hosses in Cressona. I hope that many of you will be able to attend.

Thank you for your help and support.

District 2/3 Committee Members

This is a last-minute reminder that there is a District 2/3 Committee Meeting at Nancy R.'s house on March 1 at 1:00 PM.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Tips and Tricks from Paul

Here are the latest tips and tricks from ***Paul James, Host of Gardening by the Yard.***

1. To remove the salt deposits that form on clay pots, combine equal parts white vinegar, rubbing alcohol and water in a spray bottle. Apply the mixture to the pot and scrub with a plastic brush. Let the pot dry before you plant anything in it.
2. To prevent accumulating dirt under your fingernails while you work in the garden, draw your fingernails across a bar of soap and you'll effectively seal the undersides of your nails so dirt can't collect beneath them. Then, after you've finished in the garden, use a nailbrush to remove the soap and your nails will be sparkling clean.
3. To prevent the line on your string trimmer from jamming or breaking, treat with a spray vegetable oil before installing it in the trimmer.
4. Turn a long-handled tool into a measuring stick! Lay a long-handled garden tool on the ground, and next to it place a tape measure. Using a permanent marker, write inch and foot marks on the handle. When you need to space plants a certain distance apart (from just an inch to several feet) you'll already have a measuring device in your hand.

5. To have garden twine handy when you need it, just stick a ball of twine in a small clay pot, pull the end of the twine through the drainage hole, and set the pot upside down in the garden. Do that, and you'll never go looking for twine again.

6. Little clay pots make great cloches for protecting young plants from sudden, overnight frosts and freezes.

7. To create perfectly natural markers, write the names of plants (using a permanent marker) on the flat faces of stones of various sizes and place them at or near the base of your plants.

8. Got aphids? You can control them with a strong blast of water from the hose or with insecticidal soap. But here's another suggestion, one that's a lot more fun: get some tape! Wrap a wide strip of tape around your hand, sticky side out, and pat the leaves of plants infested with aphids. Concentrate on the undersides of leaves, because that's where the little buggers like to hide.

9. The next time you boil or steam vegetables, don't pour the water down the drain, use it to water potted patio plants, and you'll be amazed at how the plants respond to the "vegetable soup".

10. Use leftover tea and coffee grounds to acidify the soil of acid-loving plants such as azaleas, rhododendrons, camellias, gardenias and even blueberries. A light sprinkling of about one-quarter of an inch applied once a month will keep the pH of the soil on the acidic side.

11. Use chamomile tea to control damping-off fungus, which often attacks young seedlings quite suddenly. Just add a spot of tea to the soil around the base of seedlings once a week or use it as a foliar spray.

12. The quickest way in the world to dry herbs: just lay a sheet of newspaper on the seat of your car, arrange the herbs in a single layer, then roll up the windows and close the doors. Your herbs will

be quickly dried to perfection. What's more, your car will smell great!

Lily of the Valley

Lily of the valley is a fragrant plant that blooms in spring or early summer. Unfortunately, once you plant it, it's very hard to get rid of. This plant is very adaptable and spreads quickly, which is why it isn't recommended for most yards. The spreading ground cover fills woodland areas, behaving like a weed.

Think twice before you plant lily of the valley. It could escape the captivity of your backyard and crowd out more beneficial native plants. Consider growing a different ground cover instead. *Rachel Maidl*

Lily of the valley is native to central Asia and Europe and is invasive in parts of the United States and Canada.

Lilly of the Valley is poisonous. Every part of the plant, from the leaves to the roots, contains cardiac glycosides and can cause harm. If its already in your yard, consider removing the plant and keep a close eye on children and pets around it.

Cut back the leaves as soon as they appear and constantly dig up the plants – roots and all – to control these unwanted flowers. Persistence is the key to success. *Melinda Mujers, Horticulture Expert*

