



March 14, 2014

Dear Friends,

Here is the 49th issue of our weekly gardening newsletter for Houston, the Gulf Coast and beyond. This a project of The Lazy Gardener, Brenda Beust Smith, John Ferguson and Mark Bowen (both John and Mark are with Nature's Way Resources). We also have a great supporting cast of contributing writers and technical specialists who will chime in and tweak away regularly. We would love to keep receiving your input on this newsletter . . . comments . . . suggestions . . . questions. . . Email your thoughts to: lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com. Thanks so much for your interest.

Please or sign yourself up to receive this newsletter by clicking the "Join Our Mailing List" link just below. We will never sell or share our mailing list to protect the privacy of our subscribers.

Enjoy!

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Left: A March Mart treat: Four Nerve daisy (*Tetraneuris scaposa*), a low-growing Texas native (well-drained, sun, part-shade) has been in bloom at Mercer Arboretum & Botanical Gardens for over a year! Two choice hibiscus plants available at local Hibiscus Society sales: 'Gold Rain,' center, and 'Erin Rachael.' See Calendar for March Mart and hibiscus sale dates.

**PLANT SALE EXTRAORDINAIRE ...FREE GARDENING
RESOURCES ... GORGEOUS HIBISCUS**

by BRENDA BEUST SMITH

Spring is nature's way of saying, "Let's party!"

~Robin Williams

Thursday, March 20, is the Spring Equinox. Normally we can laugh at folks who say this is the start of spring. Usually by March 20, when days and nights are equal in length, our average temp is 73, and we've been seriously gardening in shorts and tank tops since mid-February.

Not this year.

For once, we can truly celebrate the coming (we hope!) of spring with the rest of the country. Check out our Garden Calendar below for an incredible listing of events and plant sales. To get you started . . .

* * *

OUR LIVING PLANT LIBRARY IS HAVING A GARDENING SALE!

It's hard for me to imagine that any area gardener has not been to [Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens](#) in North Harris County. But if not, today and Saturday's March Mart is a great time to start what will certainly become a love affair with this great resource.

March Mart is the botanic garden's huge annual plant sale where varieties proven good for our area are available to gardeners. Many, if not most, are plants not yet found in area nurseries. But Mercer's endorsement means that in the future, they certainly will be.

Click here for all the details you'll need: <http://www.hcp4.net/mercer/pdf/2014MarchMart.pdf>

* * *

Given the number of plants lost to freezes, our area AgriLife Extension Centers and county Master Gardener Open Garden Days are not-to-be-missed opportunities. The demonstration gardens in participating counties are perhaps the best resources for gardening advice geared specifically to your specific plant needs. Think how different a garden in Galveston is from a garden in Katy or Kingwood!

Each AgriLife Extension Center has loads of free printed materials on every kind of planting, fertilizing, insect/disease treatments, and other advice geared to its specific environmental setting. While the Master Gardeners are self-supporting, your tax dollars pay for the AgriLife Centers. Your county extension horticulturist is there to diagnose your plant problems.

At the Harris County's March 29 Spring Gardening Seminar in Bear Creek Park, for example, you can learn how to give your lawn a "tune-up," what flowers and vegetables to put in now and how to propagate your own plants. The \$15 fee includes take-home plants, guided tours of the county's demonstration gardens and lots of answers for your gardening challenges. Registration/details: <http://harris.agrilife.org/program-areas/hort/harris.agrilife.org/program-areas/hort/>, call 281-855-5600 or like HCMGA at www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners.

Check our calendar below and/or these county Master Gardener websites for more events:

Brazoria: <http://txmg.org/brazoria/>

Fort Bend: <http://www.fbmga.com/>
Harris: <http://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/>
Jefferson: <http://txmg.org/jcmg/>
Montgomery: <http://www.mcmga.com/>

If your county isn't listed, log onto <https://mastergardener.tamu.edu/county-programs/>. Most Master Gardener sales/events are open to the public regardless of county of residence.

NOTE: SUBMITTING EVENTS TO LG&F NEWSLETTER COLUMN - we do NOT pick up events from newsletters, general publicity releases or other publications. All events must be submitted in our exact format (see below) and earmarked specifically for inclusion in the Lazy Gardener & Friends Newsletter Calendar. Submit to lazygardener@sbcglobal.net or lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com.

A TIP O' THE TROWEL TO:

* [The University of Houston's Bonner Leaders](#) program's exciting garden project that will donate produce to area food banks. I am proud that my alma mater has Texas' first chapter of this national "service learning" organization and that they're getting excellent advice and support from Urban Harvest. The garden is on the corner of Cullen and Wheeler, next to Law Hall (for us older alums) and (for younger alums) next to Cougar Woods Dining Hall. Exciting plans on the drawing board include an expansion onto a rooftop garden that will be used for science and research in addition to produce.

Pictured at right are, left to right, garden leaders Isme Correa and Lydia Liou, super-active UH alums Josanna Smith and her husband, former UH Board of Regents President Bo Smith, Honors College Associate Dean Andrew Hamilton, Ph.D., and Bonner Leaders Program Director Alison Leland. Garden stalwarts not pictured: Michael Little and Casey Hall. Exciting to see such a garden on our campus. Interested in supporting this garden with donations, supplies or another helping hand? Email me at lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

* [The Glazier Senior Education Center's Senior Gardening program](#). The neat thing about Accessible Gardening (for those with age, bending, lifting, or just lazy-inclination challenges) is how the advocates have made popular techniques that benefit all of us. This 16600 Pine Forest Lane garden is a great example worth observing. Director Lisa Rice reports the garden, with its well-raised beds is active now with thriving herbs, spices and plants that attract butterflies. Classes are free to seniors 55 and older.





Glazier's community garden - seniors hard at work!



Also available among the many choice varieties at upcoming Hibiscus Society sales will be 'Rum Runner,' left, and 'Herm Geller.'

Spotlighting Our Plant Societies.
*Lone Star Chapter
 Hibiscus Society of America*

10 MISTAKES NEWCOMERS MAKE WHEN GROWING HIBISCUS

BY MARTI GRAVES

American Hibiscus Society, Lone Star Chapter

DON'T . . .

1. Plant too deep. Don't smother your new plant. Allow the top of the root ball to show.
2. Mulch too close to the main trunk. Mulch is good but not touching the bark.
3. Under-fertilize enough or use wrong fertilizer. Use a fertilizer with a low middle number especially formulated for Hibiscus.
4. Plant in the wrong place. Best in the Houston area is South and East. Avoid the West hot sun.
5. Plant in too-heavy a soil. Best: work perlite and mulch in with a rose mix soil.
6. Prune. Hibiscus bloom on new growth so a light pruning can and should be done any time of the year.
7. Protect from wind. Northwest winds can dehydrate the plant causing stress.
8. Worry about yellow leaves and bud drop. Leaf loss is normal as long as you see new leaves emerging. Some double blooms drop buds in hot weather.
9. Forget hibiscus can be single, double or crested singles. There are thousands of varieties.
10. Think miniature means the plant will stay small. Miniature refers to the bloom size of less than 5 inches not

the size of the plant.

To learn more about Hibiscus visit this area's two American Hibiscus Society chapters:

* **Lone Star chapter/AHS** meets the fourth Tuesday of each month March to October, 7:30apm, at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray. Next meeting: March 25. Details: Chapter President Jeanette Elliff, 281-208-0614, www.lonestarahs.org

* **Space City chapter/AHS** meets the first Tuesday of each month February to November, 7:30pm, at the East Harris Co. Activity Center, 7340 Spencer Highway (behind the Court House) in Pasadena. Next meeting: April 1. Details: Chapter President Joyce Melebeck, 281-332-7360, www.spacecityahs.org

To make sure you buy the best varieties for this area (it DOES make a difference!) and get the best growing advice, mark these sales on your calendar. All are 1-4pm:

* Sun., April 27, East Harris Co. Activity Center 7340 Spencer Highway, Pasadena; www.spacecityahs.org

* Sat., May 10, Nessler Center 2010 5th Ave. N. Texas City; www.spacecityahs.org

* Sun., May 18, Knights of Columbus Hall 702 Burney Rd. Sugar Land; www.lonestarahs.org

* Sun., June 1 East Harris Co. Activity Center 7340 Spencer Highway Pasadena:

<http://www.spacecityahs.org/>

* Sun., June 8 Bellaire community Center 7008 S. Rice Blvd. Bellaire, www.lonestarahs.org

Need speakers for your group? Brenda's "Lazy Gardener's Speakers List" of area horticultural/environmental experts is available free for the asking. Email your request to: lazygardener@sbcglobal.net.

"THE LAZY GARDENER'S GUIDE ON CD" - Specifically for Houston Area gardens - WHAT TO DO EACH MONTH - when to fertilize, prune, plant what where, best plants for sun, shade, butterflies, hummingbirds, etc. Based on Brenda's quirky 40+ year Houston Chronicle Lazy Gardener column. PDF format, print out only the month you need. \$20 total, checks payable to Brenda B. Smith. Mail to: Lazy Gardener's Guide on CD, 14011 Greenranch Dr., Houston, TX 77039-2103.

John's Corner

Biosolids or Sewage Sludge



Over the last few weeks we have had several customers asking about Bio-Solid compost or stating that they were using sewage sludge products (Milorganite, HouActinite, etc.) in their gardens. This has worried me so I thought it was time I wrote about this type of soil amendment.

Bio-solids is the politically correct name for sewage sludge developed by Public Relations firms (Biosolids = sewage sludge). As one moves up the food chain the manures produced become more complex and richer. Hence, humans at the top of the food chain have one of the richest manures that should be great to make compost or fertilizer for our gardens. Right?

The problem occurs when all kinds of industrial waste, cleaning products, pharmaceuticals, hazardous materials, pathogens, etc. are dumped into our sewage lines. This material goes to a sewer plant for treatment where it is digested or processed in some form or fashion and then de-watered. The left over material is called sewage sludge.

There are two basic types of sewage sludge, Type-A and type-B.

Type-A: It goes through some degree of, digestion, composting, heat treatment, chemical treatment, etc. that reduces the level of pathogens. These products can be pelletized, used as fertilizer, applied to fields or gardens, bagged and sold to the public without any restrictions or labeling of the source of the material.

Type-B: It goes through far less stringent treatment but is similar to the material described above but still contains bacteria, toxic chemicals, etc. This end product can still be applied to a field or used as a fertilizer but with some restrictions.

As a society we produce millions of tons of sewage sludge each year, and it has to be disposed of. For many years it was dumped into the oceans until that was proven to be very bad for the environment. When this approach was made illegal, the treatment plants had to find other ways to dispose of the sludge. It was often taken to landfills and buried (expensive), but it was found to cause problems there also. As a result many landfills no longer accept sewage sludge.

Sewage sludge has been found to contain medicines from anti-depressants to steroids, flame retardants, detergents, fragrances, disinfectants like triclosan, antibiotics, hormones like estrogen, PCB's (poly chlorinated biphenyls), asbestos (2/3 of the sludge tested), pesticides, heavy metals (arsenic, mercury, lead, nickel, cadmium), dioxins, naphthalene, and other POP (persistent organic pollutants). Note: Each industry is allowed to dump 33 pounds of hazardous waste per month into the sewer without having to report it. The amount and type of toxics in sludge depends on the source and the treatment it has received.

So what are we going to do with this waste product?

Can sewage sludge (bio-solids) be composted?

Yes. Composting of sewage sludge can be done but the factors involved are much more complex, both from a scientific and regulatory point of view. The potential for foul odors is higher, and the cost is higher than regular compost made from non-toxic feedstock's (due to extra government regulation). Additionally, the chance of pollutants contaminating the sludge is higher, but it is less costly than land applying it or land filling (especially if you can trick some consumer into buying it). With proper planning and site preparation some of the extra

problems can be overcome.

Several studies have shown that compost made with sewage sludge can be of good quality and beneficial in special cases (IF properly produced). The risk in using sewage sludge is that viruses and other microbes can survive the high temperatures for some time, and complex chemicals such as polybrominated biphenyls (PBB's), and heavy metals (lead, cadmium, arsenic, etc.) cannot be removed from the compost. If the material entering the sewage system is regulated at the source, preventing contamination from occurring, then composting can be a very good solution, and long time frame composting ensures that some of these chemicals are broken down.

Most modern water treatment facilities, in compliance with current regulations, produce a sewage sludge that can be used for composting. In a community without industry dumping toxic chemicals into the sewer it will be of a better quality with lower risk factors. Hence the toxicity of sewage sludge compost varies greatly.

Many communities have found that co-composting of sludge with ground brush or leaves is a preferred solution when compared to land application or land filling. This approach can transform a nasty waste disposal problem into a product that may have some benefits. It all depends on HOW it is composted. If long time frames and big piles are used, then some of the toxic material in the sludge can be biodegraded. Unfortunately, most sludge composting operations use the fast windrow methods that does not allow this to occur.

Biosolids compost is a commercial grade product that can have some beneficial uses when used appropriately. It is appropriate for re-vegetation projects, erosion control, highway right of ways, mine waste site reclamation, bioremediation of waste dumps, forest re-vegetation projects and many other industrial and commercial projects where only one application is required. The high organic matter content will tend to lock up the heavy metals and prevent them from leaching into the environment IF it is only used one time. It should never be used for any application where food crops are grown or on pasture where livestock will eat the grass.

The current EPA regulations are outdated and no longer protect the public. Many of the diseases and illnesses reported in the media over the last few years have come from conventional crops fertilized with sewage sludge. This is another reason to buy organic produce as sewage sludge is not allowed to be used.

Warning signs of sewage sludge compost are the following Buzz words as the producers rarely tell you:

- Natural organic nitrogen
- Naturally grown plants
- Recycling symbol on the bags
- Pictures of a mother and child or beautiful flowers
- A big seal from some certifying agency
- Meets strict EPA standards
- EPA's exceptional quality compost (means it is sewage sludge)

Note: Often good products use the same buzz words listed above. Ask questions and research the product before you buy it.

PROS:

- good source of organic matter
- contains essential plant micro and macro nutrients
- improves soil physical properties
- increases a soils water holding capacity
- improves a soils aggregation porosity and tilth
- relatively inexpensive

CONS:

- quality and risk varies greatly
- bacterial pathogens may reactivate when applied
- many endocrine disrupting chemicals often survive the composting process
- genetically modified organisms and other mutant strains of bacteria
- viruses often survive the treatment process
- many disease causing microbes
- over 500 synthetic chemicals
- heavy metals
- nano-particles
- toxic materials build up over time
- toxic materials are absorbed by plants and enter the food chain (either by humans eating the plants or eating animals that ate the plants)

The book "Toxic Sludge Is Good For You", by John Stauber and Sheldon Rampton, 1995, Common Courage Press, ISBN: 1-56751-060-4 is about the public relations industry and how they try to green wash the risk factors of sewage sludge compost.

WEEKLY EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR

(Events in Houston unless otherwise noted)

Fri.-Sat., Mar. 14-15: March Mart, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Friday: 8am-4pm.; Saturday: 8am-3pm. Cultivation and care info available. Details: 281-443-8731 or www.hcp4.net/mercer

Sat., Mar. 15: The Grass is Always Greener-Organic Lawn Care by Mike Serant, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2 pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat.-Sun., Mar. 15-16: Houston Arboretum & Nature Center Spring Native Plant Sale, 9am-5pm, 4501 Woodway. Details: 713-681-8433 or www.houstonarboretum.org

Sun., Mar. 16: Invasives Beware (volunteer removal), 2-4pm, Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature, 20634 Kenswick Drive in Humble. Details: 281-446-8588 or www.hcp4.net/jones

Mon., Mar. 17: Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2's Open Garden Day, 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. 9:30am: "Pruning and Garden Cleanup" program. Master Gardeners Q&A. Free. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubP2.aspx>

Mon., Mar. 17: Spring Native Plant Seminar "Texas Tough Top 50" by Steven Chamblee , 6:30pm, Angelina County Extension Office, 2201 S. Medford Dr., Lufkin. Details: 936-634-6411

Tues., Mar. 18: Honey Honey! - Where's the Bee? by Nancy Hentschel, Master Naturalist and beekeeper. 10am, Knights of Columbus Hall, 702 Burney Road, Sugar Land. Free. Sugar Land Garden Club event. Details: www.sugarlandgardenclub.org

Wed., Mar. 19: "How to Grow Peppers in the Southeast Region" by Gene Spiller, 10am, Clear Lake Park Meeting Room, 5001 Nasa Parkway, Seabrook. Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 event. Free. Details:

<https://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubP2.aspx>

Wed., Mar. 19: Gardening Daze, 8:30-10:30am, Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature, 20634 Kenswick Drive in Humble. Details: 281-446-8588 or www.hcp4.net/jones

Wed., Mar. 19: Plans for Memorial Park by Jay Daniel, Houston Parks Dept., 7pm, Judson Robinson Community Center, 2020 Hermann Dr., 713-284-1997. South Texas Unit of The Herb Society of America event. Details: www.herbsociety-stu.org

Fri., Mar. 21: "Farmed and Dangerous" film and **"Community Gardening"** by Joe Iket, 8:15pm, Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney St. Free. Details: www.discoverygreen.com

Sat., Mar. 22: "Planting" Porches and Patios, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat., Mar. 22: 13th Annual Nacogdoches Azalea Trail Symposium, 8am-3pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Stephen F. Austin State University's Pineywoods Native Plant Center in Nacogdoches. Includes **Heat-Tolerant Maples for the South** by Matt and Tim Nichols. \$40. Details: 936-564-7351, info@visitnacogdoches.org or sfagardens@sfasu.edu

Sat., Mar. 22: Backyard Basics - Vegetable Production by Master Gardener Vegetable Specialists, 8:30-11am, Fort Bend County Extension Office, 1402 Band Rd, Rosenberg. \$15 (\$25 couple). Registration required: Details: 281-342-3034 or brandy.rader@ag.tamu.edu, <http://fortbendagrillife.org> or www.fbmj.com

Sat.-Sun, Mar. 22-23: Peckerwood Gardens 2014 Open Week, 20571 FM 359, Peckerwood (near Hempstead). \$10, no reservations required. Plant sale noon-5pm, guided tours at 1pm and 3pm. 979-826-3232, <http://peckerwoodgarden.org/events> or 979-826-3232

Wed., Mar. 26: Gardening Daze, 8:30-10:30am, Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature, 20634 Kenswick Drive in Humble. Details: 281-446-8588 or www.hcp4.net/jones

Wed., Mar. 26: Houston's Wild West by Jaime Gonzalez of Katy Prairie Conservancy, 7:30 pm, Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray. Free. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society event. Details: www.hcsstex.org

Mar. 29: Nottingham Country Garden Club Plant Sale, 9am-1pm, Villagio Center, Westheimer Parkway at Peek, Katy, TX. Free admission. Details: 281-579-7017, 281-578-5558 or www.nottinghamgardenclub.org

Sat., Mar. 29: "Planting a Butterfly Garden" with Soni Holladay, 9-11am, Houston Museum of Natural Science, 5555 Hermann Park Dr., Tickets \$23, Members \$17. Details: <http://www.hmns.org/>

Sat., Mar. 29: Spring Fairy Garden Workshop, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. Free but reservations required. www.myenchanted.com

Sat., Mar. 29: Plant and Garden Accessories Sale, 9am-1pm, Garden Villas Paetk Community Center, 6720 S. Haywood. Free. Details: bburns50@aol.com or 713-545-2926

Sat., Mar. 29: Harris County Master Gardeners Spring Gardening Seminar, 9-11am, Texas AgriLife Extension gardens, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. \$15. Reservations/details: harris.agrilife.org/program-areas/hort, 281-855-5600 or www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners

Sat., Mar. 29: Texas Invasives Citizen Scientist Training, 9am-4pm, Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature, 20634 Kenswick Drive in Humble. Reservations/details: http://www.texasinvasives.org/invaders/workshop_results.php

Sat., Mar. 29: Garden Villas Garden Club Annual Plant and Garden Accessories Sale, 9am-1pm, Garden Villas Paetk Community Center, 6720 S. Haywood. Free. Details: bburns50@aol.com or 713-545-2926

Sat., Mar. 29: Memorial Northwest Ladybugs Garden Club Annual Garage and Plant Sale, 8:30am-2:30pm,

Memorial Northwest Community Center, 17440 Theiss Mail Route Rd., Spring

Sat. Mar. 29: The Garden Conservancy's Open Days tour of six private Houston gardens (18 West Lane; 3640 and 3965 Del Monte Dr; 2109 Quenby St; 1 West 11th Place; 1202 Milford St; 1236 Studewood St.), 10am-4pm. \$7 per garden; \$35 all six; age 12 & under free. Details: www.opendaysprogram.org or 1-888-842-2442

Sat., Mar. 29: Brazoria County Master Gardeners, Brazoria County Fair Grounds, 901 South Downing, Angleton. 8-9am, Heidi Shesley lecture; 9am-1pm, sale. Details: 979-864-1558 x110 or txmg.org/brazoria

Sat., Mar. 29: Lantrip Outdoor Garden Plant Sale, 8:30-11:30am, Lantrip Elementary School, 100 Telephone Rd. Details: 281-451-5223, lantripblooms@gmail.com

Wed., Apr. 2: Gardeners By The Bay Annual Plant Sale, 9:30am-noon, University Baptist Church, 16106 Middlebrook Dr. Details: Marjorie, 281-474-5051 or <http://gbtb.org>

Sat., Apr. 5: Cockrell Butterfly Center Spring Plant Sale, 9am - noon (or sold out!), Houston Museum of Natural Science, 5555 Hermann Park Dr., 7th level of the parking garage, Details: <http://www.hmns.org>

Sat., Apr. 5: Easy Care Roses by Robbi Will, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat., Apr. 5: Fort Bend County Master Gardener Open Demonstration Gardens, 9-11am, Agriculture Center, 1402 Band Rd., Rosenberg. Details: 281-341-7068 or <http://www.fbmga.com>

Sat., Apr. 5: Bromeliad Society/Houston Plant Sale, 9am - 3pm, Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray. Free workshops 11am & 1pm. Details: 713-858-3047, bromeliadsocietyhouston.org

Tues., April 8: Landscape Maintenance/Lawns, 6:30pm, Clear Lake Park Meeting Room, 5001 Nasa Parkway, Seabrook. Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 event. Free. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubP2.aspx>

Thurs., April 10: "Hybridizing - A Simple Experiment for the Garden Owner" by Houston Rose Society President Mary Fulgham, 7:30 pm, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 1819 Heights Blvd. Free Houston Rose Society event. www.houstonrose.org or Facebook.

Sat., Apr. 12: Attracting Hummingbirds by Mark Klym, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sat., Apr. 12: Tomball Garden Club Annual Plant Sale, 201 Market St., Granny's Korner, Tomball. 9am-2pm. Details: tomballgardenclub@gmail.com

Mon., Apr. 14: Grand Prizes for Small Sizes flower show, 1:30-3:30 pm; Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray St. Free Far Corners Garden Study Club event.

April 15: I Love a Rainy Night - Water Collection, Conservation and Gardening for Drought by Boone Halladay, 10am, Knights of Columbus Hall, 702 Burney Road, Sugar Land. Free. Sugar Land Garden Club event. Details: www.sugarlandgardenclub.org

Wed., April 16: Crazy Ants by Extension Specialist Paul Nester, 10am, Clear Lake Park Meeting Room, 5001 Nasa Parkway, Seabrook. Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 event. Free. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubP2.aspx>

Wed., Apr. 16: Herbal Skin Magic by Karen Cottingham, 7pm, Judson Robinson Community Center, 2020 Hermann Dr., 713-284-1997. South Texas Unit of The Herb Society of America event. Details: www.herbsociety-stu.org

Mon., April 21: Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 Open Garden Day, 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. 9:30am: Educational Program. Master Gardeners Q&A. Free.

Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubP2.aspx>

Sat., Apr. 26: Choosing the Right Vine by Margaret Sinclair, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com>

Sat., April 26: Backyard Basics - Fruit Production by Deborah Birge, 8:30-11am, Fort Bend County Extension Office, 1402 Band Rd, Rosenberg. \$15 (\$25 couple). Details: brandydrader@ag.tamu.edu, 281-342-3034, www.fortbend.agrilife.org or www.fbmga.com.

Sat.-Sun., Apr. 26-27: "Through the Garden Gate" Heritage Gardeners of Friendswood Spring Garden Tour, Sat. 12-4pm, Sun. 1-5pm, five gardens in Friendswood, 112 W. Spreading Oaks; tickets \$10. Details: 281-992-4438 or www.heritagegardener.org

Sun, Apr., 27: Space City Hibiscus Society Sale, 1-4pm, East Harris Co. Activity Center 7340 Spencer Highway, Pasadena; www.spacecityahs.org

Sat.-Sun., May 10-11: Houston Cactus & Succulent Society Spring Sale, 9am-5pm, Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray. Details: www.hcsstex.org

Sat., May 3: Know Your Enemy (garden bugs), 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. www.myenchanted.com

Fri.-Sat., May 3-4: Houston Pond Society and Lone Star Koi Club, 2014 Water Garden and Pond Tour, 10am-6pm. Self-guided tour. Tickets \$10 available at 30± water gardens and (starting April 26) at Nelson Water Gardens in Katy (<http://nelsonwatergardens.com/>). Details: <http://houstonpondsociety.org>, <http://lonestarkoi.com> or 713-822-5515.

Sat., May 10: Sugar Land Garden Club Annual Spring Garden Tour, East New Territory Subdivision, Sugar Land. 9am-3pm. Map and details: <http://sugarlandgardenclub.org/>

Sat., May 10: Space City Hibiscus Society Sale, 1-4pm, Nessler Center, 2010 5th Ave. N. Texas City. Details: www.spacecityahs.org

Sat., May 17: Creating a Backyard Wildscape by Tricia Bradbury, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. <http://myenchanted.com/>

Sun., May 18: Celebration of Daylilies, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., Payne's in the Grass Daylily Farm, 2130 O'Day Road, Pearland, Texas 77581. Details: 281-419-6661, 281-485-3821. Details: <http://paynesinthegrassdaylilyfarm.com>

Sun., May 18: Lone Star Hibiscus Society Sale, 1-4pm, Knights of Columbus Hall 702 Burney Rd. Sugar Land. Details: www.lonestarahs.org

Sat., May 24: Enjoy a Night Blooming Garden, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Details: 281-937-9449. Repeated: 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond. Details: 281-341-1206. Details: <http://myenchanted.com/>

March 29: Meet & Greet KTRH Garden Radio Host Randy Lemmon, 11am, Kingwood Garden Center, 1216 Stonehollow Drive, Kingwood. Free. Details: www.KingwoodGardenCenter.com

Sun., June 1: Space City Hibiscus Society Sale, 1-4pm, East Harris Co. Activity Center 7340 Spencer Highway, Pasadena. Details: www.spacecityahs.org

Sun., June 8: Lone Star Hibiscus Society Sale, 1-4pm, Knights of Columbus Hall 702 Burney Rd. Sugar Land. Details: www.lonestarahs.org

Sat., June 14: Bolivar Peninsula Plant Sale and Bazaar, 11am-4pm, free, Bay View United Methodist Church, 1441

Jane Long Highway (Hwy 87), Crystal Beach. Details: 409-684-2634

NOTE: PLEASE SUBMIT EVENT NOTICES - IN THE EXACT FORMAT LISTED ABOVE - TO: lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

*Need speakers for your group? Or tips on getting more publicity for events?
Brenda has two free booklets that might help: "Lazy Gardener's Speakers List"
of area horticultural/environmental experts, and "Lazy Gardener's Publicity Booklet"
(based on her 40+ years of her Houston Chronicle "Lazy Gardener" coverage of area events)
Both are available free for the asking. Email specific requests to: lazygardener@sbcglobal.net.
Please help us grow by informing all your membership of this weekly newsletter!*

ABOUT US

BRENDA BEUST SMITH

WE KNOW HER BEST AS THE LAZY GARDENER . . .

. . . but Brenda Beust Smith is also:

- * a national award-winning writer & editor
- * a nationally-published writer & photographer
- * a national horticultural speaker
- * a former Houston Chronicle reporter

When the Chronicle discontinued Brenda's 45-year-old Lazy Gardener" print column a couple of years ago, it ranked as the longest-running, continuously-published local newspaper column in the Greater Houston area.

Brenda's gradual sideways step from Chronicle reporter into gardening writing led first to an 18-year series of when-to-do-what Lazy Gardener Calendars, then to her *Lazy Gardener's Guide* book and now to her *Lazy Gardener's Guide* on CD (which retails for \$20. However, \$5 of every sale is returned to the sponsoring group at her speaking engagements).

A Harris County Master Gardener, Brenda has served on the boards of many Greater Houston area horticulture organizations and has hosted local radio and TV shows, most notably a 10+-year Lazy Gardener run on HoustonPBS (Ch. 8) and her call-in "EcoGardening" show on KPFT-FM.

In addition to her position as Production Editor on the Garden Club of America's magazine and her freelance writing career, Brenda's latest venture is "THE LAZY GARDENER'S & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER" with John Ferguson and Mark Bowen of Nature's Way Resources.

A native of New Orleans and graduate of St. Agnes Academy and the University of Houston, Brenda lives in Aldine and is married to the now retired Aldine High School Coach Bill Smith. They have one son, Blake.

Regarding this newsletter, Brenda is the lead writer, originator of it and the daily inspiration for it. We so appreciate the way she has made gardening such a fun way to celebrate life together for such a long time.

JOHN FERGUSON

John is a native Houstonian and has over 27 years of business experience. He owns Nature's Way Resources, a composting company that specializes in high quality compost, mulch, and soil mixes. He holds a MS degree in Physics and Geology and is a licensed Soil Scientist in Texas.

John has won many awards in horticulture and environmental issues. He represents the composting industry on the Houston-Galveston Area Council for solid waste. His personal garden has been featured in several horticultural books and "Better Homes and Gardens" magazine. His business has been recognized in the Wall Street Journal for the quality and value of their products. He is a member of the Physics Honor Society and many other professional societies. John is the co-author of the book *Organic Management for the Professional*.

For this newsletter, John contributes articles regularly and is responsible for publishing it.

MARK BOWEN

Mark is a native Houstonian, a horticulturist and organic specialist with a background in garden design, land restoration and organic project management. He is currently the general manager of Nature's Way Resources. Mark is also the co-author of the book *Habitat Gardening for Houston and Southeast Texas*, the author of the book *Naturalistic Landscaping for the Gulf Coast*, co-author of the *Bayou Planting Guide* and contributing landscape designer for the book *Landscaping Homes: Texas*.

With respect to this newsletter, Mark serves as a coordinator and occasional article contributor.

PABLO HERNANDEZ

Pablo Hernandez is the special projects coordinator for Nature's Way Resources. His realm of responsibilities include: serving as a webmaster, IT support, technical problem solving/troubleshooting, metrics management, quality control, and he is a certified compost facility operator.

Pablo helps this newsletter happen from a technical support standpoint.



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Save 20%: Redeem this coupon for a big discount on Nature's Way Resources "Tropical Mix" (<http://natureswayresources.com/>). Please note: this offer is for bagged or bulk material purchases by retail customers only at Nature's Way Resources, located at 101 Sherbrook Circle, Conroe TX.

Offer Expires: 03/23/14