



April 8, 2104

Dear Friends,

Here is the 53rd 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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**Tis the season to watch for poison ivy, left, stock up
on rescued daffodils, center, and pay homage to the bluebonnets, right**

POISON IVY, DAFFS AND, BEST OF ALL, FREE TREES!

by BRENDA BEUST SMITH

"Do as I say, don't do as I do!"

-- John Selden's Table-Talk (c. 1654)

Maybe a better quote for this column would be:

"No Good Deed Goes Unpunished"

--Clare Booth Luce, Oscar Wilde or Andrew W. Mellon (experts can't agree).

I have a bad case of poison ivy. Contact came while we were cleaning out overgrowth around enormous azaleas across the street, once the home of good friend Jerry Smith. FEMA now owns that Allison-flooded lot and wants it to go back to woods. That's fine with us.

But my kitchen window looks out on Jerry's two corner azaleas. I like them. So, every spring, we clean around them . . . *"the better to see you, my dears."*

Many plants, azaleas included, are absolutely spectacular this spring. Look at this great shot from inside (no flash!) at Bayou Bend.

This picture was sent in by Janet Roberts.

Don't you envy Miss Ima this great window view?

Also growing like crazy is poison ivy this year, so , beware.
Learn to identify it (see top photo).
Stems are brownish-red now and will turn red. Leaves are
ALWAYS in clusters of three.

After contact, wash quickly.

Scratching does NOT spread the rash.

The rash breakout rate is already programmed by the concentration of sap touching the skin. You can't change that. Just keep the rash clean and apply topical itch medications. If it's really bad, see a doctor.

Scratching invites infections which can be worse than the rash itself.

Use a shovel to dig out poison ivy growing in the garden. Lift with tongs and throw in the trash can. Then wash the tongs. That sap is very persistent.

Back to Jerry's azaleas, they are much too old to transplant. Besides, I like them where they are.



But rescuing plants from areas about-to-be ravaged for whatever reason is, I think, a great thing.

The only catch is that usually these areas are owned by someone else. If you have experience with rescuing plants, please share the steps you took to obtain permission. I'd love to share them with our readers.

* * *

***And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.***

-- William Wordsworth

Patty Allen of Bayou City Heirloom Bulbs is also high on rescuing plants from old gardens. She is nurturing now a collection of old daffodil species collected (with permission) from a Southern plantation. Many date back to the early 1900s.

It's been my experience that most daffodil varieties sold here will last in Houston gardens for a couple of years and then disappear. (One exception: the ubiquitous paperwhite narcissus.)

Patty disagrees. She says many of her daffodils have been reblooming since she moved into her 5842 Velma Lane site in North Harris County back in 1987. And she's ready to share. Among the plants she'll be selling from her own private collection next weekend are these daffs, which she feels will be great for the Houston area: Chinese Sacred Lily, Italicus, Grand Primo, Paper White, Golden Dawn, Single Campenelle, Double Campenelle, Erlicheer, N.x intermedius (Texas Star) and N. jonquilla.

Don't plant daffodil bulbs now, Patty warns. They need to set strong roots and Houston summers are neither the time nor the place. Patty recommends storing them in a dry spot with good air circulation (in mesh bags hanging in the garage is one option) until fall planting (our best time). They need cold, or at least cool, soil, to get started properly.

Patty is working hard to establish a Houston Bulb Society. She needs help, if anyone's interested. Contact Patty at prallen2@peoplepc.com, 281-441-8646 or 713-471-4383; www.bayoucityheirloombulbs.com. Patty's April 10-12 sale at this site will be open 8am-3pm all three days.



WHY ARE WE SO CRAZY ABOUT BLUEBONNETS?

They're beautiful, to be sure. No one will contradict that. But don't you ever wonder why Texans go so berserk over them?

Husband and I fell under the spell this past week and drove up to Chappell Hill, then on to Washington-by-the-Brazos - boy, has that place become a real treasure to visit! - and then to Navasota.

Red Indian paintbrushes, above, mustard and other yellow wildflowers were gorgeous. The bluebonnets were, I'd say, about 80% open, which means they'll be perfect for the big annual Bluebonnet Festival in Chappell Hill (<http://www.chappellhillmuseum.org/bluebonnet.html>) this weekend (April 12-13). In case you didn't know it, this is the 50th Anniversary for Texas' Official State Bluebonnet Festival (as declared by the Texas Legislature!)

If you're really lucky, you may even spot some of the naturally-occurring white, red or yellow bluebonnets. I

Extension horticulturist first discovered these in a field remember when Jerry Parsons, Bexar County. A staunch Aggie, he proclaimed them "maroon" bluebonnets and said they almost had to call for the heart paddles, he got so excited.

I hate to correct such an important Texas Aggie horticulture icon as Jerry. But these are NOT maroon bluebonnets. These are **COUGAR RED** bluebonnets.

In Houston, bluebonnets do not grow easily, although it can be done. They need to be so extremely well drained, our spring and fall monsoons often do them in. Plant on slopes, in containers or in extremely high areas. They are available in nurseries now. Those planted now in the ground should drop enough seed for future blooms. Only caution: don't mow them down in spring. They look like clover.



And, don't expect a perennial red, white & blue bluebonnet display. They'll all eventually turn blue if you plant them together. Separate the colors.

Another wildflower we have trouble growing here is the wonderful white dogwood tree, which Mary Jo Kruse reports from Livingston is absolutely fabulous this year. Here's a shot she sent in. Dogwoods like slightly acidic soil (ours is slightly alkaline), and want to grow under the canopy of pine trees. Miss Ima had them growing at Bayou Bend, but then Miss Ima could do a lot of things the rest of us could never do! The farther north and east you live, the easier it is to grow them. The farther south and west . . . forget it. (Now, most surely someone in Fort Bend County will write in to say theirs is gorgeous and long-lived!)

Our hort Spotlight is week is on a plant organization: Trees for Houston. This fantastic group has played a prominent role in so many of our public site tree plantings. Now they have a special treat.

Mark your calendars for May 3, 2014. Trees For Houston, in conjunction with The Arbor Day Foundation and Center Point Energy, will be having a FREE TREE GIVE AWAY. But you need to sign up now. For details, log onto www.treesforhouston.org. Below, Brooke Judice gives some tips on what to do with these free trees as well as any you might buy to put in now.

"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.



Spotlighting Our Plant Organizations

Trees for Houston

"The 10 Biggest Mistakes Newcomers Make in Trying to Grow Trees in the Greater Houston Area"

by Brooke Judice, Trees For Houston

Here are a few things to consider when selecting and planting your tree.

1. What role will your tree play in the landscape? Are you planting the tree to provide shade or strictly for ornamental purposes?
2. Trees need room to grow. Always consider the trees size at maturity. At the very minimum, trees should be planted at least 10ft away from any structure.
3. In this age of instant gratification, keep in mind bigger is not necessarily better. Homeowners should seek

the best balance of size versus cost. For example; 30 gallon trees will catch up to 100 gallon trees in a matter of a few short years.

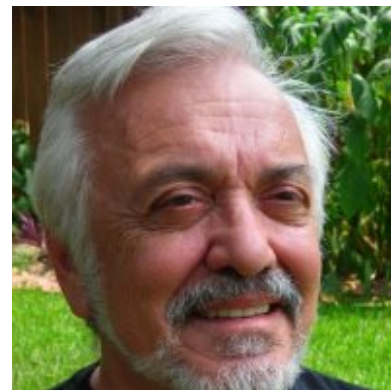
4. Go native. Planting native species will give you a huge advantage in the overall success rate and establishment of your newly planted tree.
5. Carefully consider placement in the landscape and investigate things such as sun and shade requirements for the species that you are considering.
6. Containerized trees may have roots growing in a circular pattern. To encourage lateral root growth, roots should be carefully scored with a shovel or knife before planting.
7. Make sure your planting hole is flat at the bottom and not cone shaped. This will discourage air and water from building up at the base, which can lead to root rot.
8. Trees should be set in the planting hole about 1" above grade. The tree's root flare (point where the roots spread from the base of the tree) should always be visible once in the planting hole.
9. Be careful not to overwater. Soil should remain moist, not soggy.
10. Mulching transplanted trees will reduce water loss, moderate soil temperature and eliminate turf competition. Apply a layer 2-4" deep of mulch keeping it away from the trunk.

To learn more about tree planting and our programs please visit: www.treesforhouston.org

Soil: The Living Layer of Earth

**By Guest Columnist Bob Dailey, Master Gardener &
Water Awareness/Public Education Coordinator
The Woodlands Joint Powers Agency**

The soil in your garden and landscape should be a living layer of earth. That's not a platitude - it's a fact. It should be packed with microbes. A teaspoon of good soil should contain literally billions of beneficial bacteria, thousands of protozoans, and miles of micorrhizal fungi. Billions of bacteria and miles of fungi? In a teaspoon? It may sound like fiction, but it's true...if you have good soil!



These organisms and larger life such as earthworms create a soil food web, devouring small bits of organic matter in the soil, converting it into nutrients. Plant roots can then take in those nutrients to produce leaves, stems, flowers, fruit and seed. Good healthy plants can fend off disease and destructive insects. The absence of these microorganisms and larger organisms such as earthworms, result in compacted, lifeless soil. Lifeless soil, of course, cannot sustain life.

A recent non-scientific study in one Montgomery County community not only indicated that "take-all patch" was common in the sampling, but that all the lawns tested had compacted soil. In fact, a sampling trowel broke during the testing because the soil was so hard.

Solving the compacted soil problem

The absolute best way to give your soil life again is to simply add organic material. You don't need complicated chemicals and fertilizers. You don't need "inoculants." You don't need humates. All you need is simple organic compost. Organic compost contains all the microorganisms needed to inoculate soil, and also contains nutrient-rich material which will not only decompose slowly, but will also feed all the tiny animals in the soil. Here are some typical ways to bring your soil back to life with microorganisms.

Lawns

Spread organic compost evenly throughout the yard about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch deep. If you can't do it yourself, hire a landscape crew to do it. Many of them will also pick up the compost for you as well, if you pay for it beforehand. After spreading, if you feel it looks unsightly, hose it down into the lawn or take a broom and sweep it down.

Do this twice a year - once in the mid fall around the end of October or beginning of November. Add it again about mid-April.

If you've got St. Augustine grass, compost is about all you'll need. You don't need to dethatch. If you mulch your grass clippings, you probably don't need to fertilize. If you've got weeds, you don't need herbicides either. In fact, many fertilizers and herbicides actually kill soil organisms. St. Augustine grass is so aggressive and responds so readily to the microbial-rich compost that in a matter of months it will force out most, if not all, weeds. With a high level of microbes in the soil, the grass will develop deep roots and will become more resistant to insect and disease damage.

For Landscape Plants

Spread compost two to three inches deep around plants about a two foot radius for shrubs and less for perennial flowers. Trees generally do not need to be composted. For beds, spread evenly the same depth. Again, herbicides and pesticides are not necessary and can actually harm the soil organisms.

For vegetable gardens

Spread six inches of organic compost six to eight inches deep throughout the garden. Then either mix it into the soil below or simply leave it on top and set plants in it.

Remember that compost is not mulch. They have two completely different purposes. Compost enriches the soil, and feeds all the organisms beneath the surface. It is made of fine particles of decomposed organic material, generally what will fit through a 3/8 inch screen.

Many gardeners make their own compost. However, they find they never have enough homemade compost, so they purchase more from a reputable compost provider. In order to find a compost operation near you, see this website: findacomposter.com.

Montgomery County Master Gardeners

We educate the community through fellowship and demonstration using research-based information. For information about plant problems, diseases, insects and other gardening questions, contact the Montgomery County Master Gardeners at 936-539-7824.

WEEKLY EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR

(Events in Houston unless otherwise noted. No events picked up from other newsletters or media releases. Submit written in the format below, specifically earmarked for publication in the Lazy Gardener & Friends Newsletter.)

Wed., Apr. 9: Container Vegetable Gardening by Jeremy Kollaus, noon-1pm, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920 Rd, Tomball. Free. 281-351-8851, www.arborgate.com

Wed., Apr. 9: Cypress Creek Daylily Club Plant Sale, 10am-6pm, Klein United Methodist Church, 5920 FM 2920, Spring. Free. Details: 281-363-4385 or agcar@swbell.net

Thurs., Apr. 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.

Thurs., Apr. 10: The Chinese Economic "Bloom" - People, Plans and Plants for a Verdant Earth by Dr. David Creech, 10am, Houston Museum of Natural Science, 5555 Hermann Park Dr. \$18. Reservations required: 713-639-4629, www.hmns.org

Thurs.,-Sun., Apr. 10-12: Heirloom Bulb Sale, 8am-3pm, Bayou City Heirloom Bulbs, 5842 Velma Lane. Details: prallen2@peoplepc.com, 281-441-8646 or 713-471-4383; www.bayoucityheirloombulbs.com

Fri., Apr. 11: Cool Plants for a Hot Climate by Dr. David Creech, 10am. Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. \$18. Reservations required: 281-443-8731, <http://www.hcp4.net>

Sat., Apr. 12: Urban Harvest Final Fruit Sale, 8am-noon, Eastside Farmers Market, 3000 Richmond Ave. www.urbanharvest.org

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

Sat., Apr. 12: Container Herb Gardening by Henry Flowers, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920 Rd, Tomball. Free. 281-351-8851, www.arborgate.com

Sat., Apr., 12: Butterfly and Hummingbird Garden Clinic, 10:15 a.m. at both Cornelius Nursery locations, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. Free. <http://www.corneliusnurseries/clinics>

Sat.-Sun, Apr. 12-13: Houston Orchid Society Show and Sale, lobby, Houston Museum of Natural Science, 5555 Hermann Park Dr. Free. Sat. 9am-5pm Sat., 9am-4pm Sun. Details: houstonorchidsociety.org

Sat.-Sun., April 12-13: 50th Annual Bluebonnet Festival, Chappell Hill. Details: www.chappellhillmuseum.org/bluebonnet.html

Sun., Apr. 13. The Natives Are Restless by Mark Bromstad., 1pm, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920 Rd, Tomball. Free. 281-351-8851, www.arborgate.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.

Mon., Apr. 14: The Economics, Rationale and How-to of Organic Garden Care by Mike Serant, 6:30pm, Houston's Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray. Houston Urban Gardeners event. Details: www.houstonurbangardeners.org

Tues, Apr. 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 NasaParkway, 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

Fri.-Sat., Apr. 18-19: Jerry's Jungle Garden Spring Sale, 9am-5pm both days, 712 Hill Rd. Bring your own wagon. www.jerrysjungle.com, 832-978-5358

Sat., Apr., 12: Proven Flowers for Your Texas Garden Clinic, 10:15 a.m. at both Cornelius Nursery locations, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. Free. <http://www.corneliusnurseries/clinics>

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., Apr. 26: Self-Watering Containers by Angela Chandler, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920 Rd, Tomball. Free. 281-351-8851, www.arborgate.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: brandyrader@ag.tamu.edu, 281-342-3034, www.fortbend.agrilife.org or www.fbmj.com.

Sat, Apr. 26: Orchids Intermediate Class, 2pm, Clown Alley Orchids, 3119 Lily Street, Pasadena. \$35. Details: 281-991-6841 or www.clownalleyorchids.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

Fri., May 2: Oleander Society Kick-Off Luncheon and Silent Auction, Moody Gardens Hotel, Galveston. Reservations and details: 409-770-4312 or www.oleander.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

Sat., May 3: Houston Hemerocallis Society and Houston Area Daylily Society Daylily Sale, St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 1819 Heights Blvd. Details: www.ofts.com/hhs

Sat., May 3: Drip Irrigation by Fort Bend Master Gardeners, 8:30-11am. Demonstration gardens open for tour. Fort Bend County Extension Office, 1402 Band Rd, Rosenberg. \$15 (\$25 couple). Details: 281-342-3034; brandy.rader@ag.tamu.edu; fortbendagrilife.org or www.fbmj.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

Fri.-Sat., May 3-4: 2014 Oleander Festival and Grand Oleander Sale, 10am-4pm, Moody Gardens Visitor Center, 7 Hope Blvd., Galveston. Details: www.oleander.org

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 10: Brazosport Daylily Sale, St. Mark Lutheran Church, Lake Jackson. Details: www.facebook.com/brazosportdaylilysociety

Sat., May 10: Culinary Herbs by Fort Bend Master Gardeners, 8:30-11am. Demonstration gardens open for tour. Fort Bend County Extension Office, 1402 Band Rd, Rosenberg. \$15 (\$25 couple). Details: 281-342-3034; brandy.rader@ag.tamu.edu; fortbendagrilife.org or www.fbmj.com

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 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/>

Sat., May 17: Lone Star Daylily Society Sale, Alvin Senior Center, Alvin. Details:
www.lonestardaylilsociety.org

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/>

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

Sat, June 14 : The Plumeria Society of America Show & Plant Sale, 9 to 3pm, Bay Area Community Center, 5002 NASA Parkway, Seabrook, Texas 77586 - Clear Lake area. Details: www.theplumeriasociety.org

Sat, July 26 : The Plumeria Society of America Show & Plant Sale, 9 to 3pm, Ft. Bend County Fairgrounds, 4310 1st Street, Rosenberg. Details: www.theplumeriasociety.org

WANT YOUR EVENT IN THE LG&F CALENDAR? PLEASE NOTE!

You have to send it to us!

EVENTS WILL NOT BE PICKED UP FROM OTHER NEWSLETTERS OR MEDIA RELEASES.

All submitted events should be written in the exact format used for events above and must be specifically labeled for publication in LAZY GARDENER AND FRIENDS NEWSLETTER. Email to: lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

Need speakers for your group? Or tips on getting more publicity for events?

Brenda's 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) 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.



www.grandifloraservices.com



<http://www.qualityfeedco.com/>



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