



May 9, 2014

Dear Friends,

Here is the 57th 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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Time for strawberries, left, and bromeliads: *Tillandsia brachycaulos*, center, and an *Aechmea*

STRAWBERRIES AND BROMELIADS - GORGEOUS COLOR PULLS US IN!

by Brenda Beust Smith

One warning about this week's Society Spotlight, below. It's been my experience, over decades of garden writing, that certain plants are addictive. First you have one, then four, then 400 - and you have no idea exactly when the compulsion to have "more! More! MORE!" first hit.

Bromeliad lovers seem to fall into this category. But who can blame them? These are truly living sculptures. The colors are so alluring, the shapes so exotic and they do so well here. Few plants love our summer heat and drought the way bromeliads do. And they're equally as gorgeous in containers as they are hanging from, or perched in, trees.

Below, Gene Powers of the Bromeliad Society/Houston will get you started growing them successfully.

One more warning: Just to further tantalize and tease you, the plants pictured here represent both common varieties and unique, not-generally-available horticulture specimens. Some will be shown and/or sold at the big upcoming Bromeliad Society/Houston Show and Sale May 17-18 at Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens. Others may not be. Go. See. Drool. Buy. But don't say I didn't warn you!

CLARA BARTON AND PASADENA'S STRAWBERRIES

This month Pasadena will celebrate its 41st annual Strawberry Festival - May 16-18 (<http://www.strawberryfest.org/>). I thought about sharing some tips on growing strawberries here, but

1. We don't plant them here until late fall - so who wants to know now? And . . .

2. I got totally sidetracked by all the fascinating trivia I learned along the way:

* Strawberries aren't fruits or berries, but a pseudofruit, or accessory fruit. What we eat is actually the enlarged end of the plant's stamens, with its seeds on the outside (rather than inside).

* Yes, some folks do grow strawberries in Pasadena, but gone are the days when up to 28 train-carloads a day of these red delights left that area for points as far north as Chicago.

* After the Galveston Hurricane of 1900, Clara Barton of the American Red Cross purchased 1.5 million plants to help Gulf Coast farmers.

* Pasadena's strawberries brought premium prices. By the 1920s, Pasadena was known nationwide as the "Strawberry Capital of the South." In fact, all of southeast Harris County was called as "Pasadena Acres."

* No strawberry plants are sold at the festival (wrong planting time for us) but you can buy strawberries and a piece of the World's Largest Strawberry Shortcake.

I couldn't find any pick-your-own farms - strawberries or otherwise - around Pasadena. But we do have many pick-your-own farms in this general area. <http://www.pickyourown.org/TXhouston.htm#listings>

Strawberries are not the easiest of plants to grow in our areas as they prefer a slightly acidic, extremely well-drained soil. This means raised beds for one thing. And planting exactly the right varieties - which may, or may not, be the ones sold locally.

Although many growers lay straw or other mulch-like materials under the spreading strawberry, the name more likely comes from the word "strewn," after the plant runners which "strew" themselves out in all directions from the parent plant. They've been cultivated for thousands of years and used medicinally

If you'd like to give them a try, I'd recommend following the rather extensive directions in Dr. Bob Randall's "Year Round Vegetables, Fruits and Flowers for Metro Houston."

One last time - because folks always want to plant them now when they're so beautiful in the grocery stores: We don't plant them here until fall - Oct.-Dec. So you have plenty of time to read up on growing them in this climate.



A tip o' the trowel to the Bouquettes Garden Club in Southwest Houston and the Kolter Kultivators, Kolter Elementary's after-school student gardening club, above. By holding its "Flower Power" flower show at Kolter, the Bouquettes are helping this school to expand its students' horticultural horizons to include artistic components. The 2014 show on the 9710 Runnymede campus will be open to the public May 15, 1-3:30pm. The Kultivators have an impressive array of accomplishments, including a Native Texas Habitat Garden and pond, a Native Texas Alphabet Garden, a Memorial Garden, a designated prairie and a Monarch Butterfly Way Station designation. Kudos to the Kolter students, teachers, staff and parents and to the Bouquettes who, despite their small numbers, are continuing their 57-year tradition of community involvement in Southwest Houston.

Spotlighting Our Plant Societies.

Bromeliad Society / Houston



The range of bromeliads is endless, left to right: *Vriesea sucerei x formosa* variegated, *Billbergia* 'Hallelujah,' *Vriesea* 'Eva,' *Tillandsia rothii* and (insert) *Billbergia rosea*.

The 10 Biggest Mistakes Newcomers Make Growing Bromeliads in the Greater Houston Area

by Gene Powers, Bromeliad Society/Houston

Throwing it out after it blooms

Almost all Bromeliads bloom and then they die. The good news is that many of these produce pups or offsets before they die. These can be left in place and grown as clumps or removed from the parent and separately potted. When 1/3 to 1/2 size, cut the pup flush with the parent using a serrated knife.

Over watering

The potting mix should be free draining and never soggy. Let the mix dry-down between waterings. But do keep fresh water in "vase" shaped plants.

Letting dissolved salts build up in the vase

Dump or flush water from the vase frequently. Dissolved salts concentrate and cause plant "burn," especially in Houston's summer heat.

Wrong potting mix (not soil!)

Use a free draining potting mix. Topsoil is not appropriate!

Not tailoring care to the genus you have

The Bromeliad family has more than 50 different genera with growth habitats that range from rain forests to deserts. About 8 different genera are available in the nursery trade. A general guide is the softer the leaf, the lower the light requirement. Very, very few Bromeliads can take Houston's summer sun directly.

Planting it in the ground

Very few Bromeliads will survive Houston's winter. If you want your Bromeliad outside in dappled light, sink the pot in the ground, then take it in for the winter.

Expecting it to bloom every year

The cycle from blooming plant to pup to mature blooming pup will take from 2 to 5 years depending on the specie or hybrid. The solution is to have several, and different, Bromeliads. Many Bromeliads have gorgeous blooms, but are plain green otherwise. To have interest between blooms, select some plants with colorful or patterned leaves.

Over fertilizing

Use slow release pellets or none at all. Never put any type of fertilizer in the vase. You will have an overstimulated green or dead plant. Fertilizing bloomed out mother plants will produce more pups.

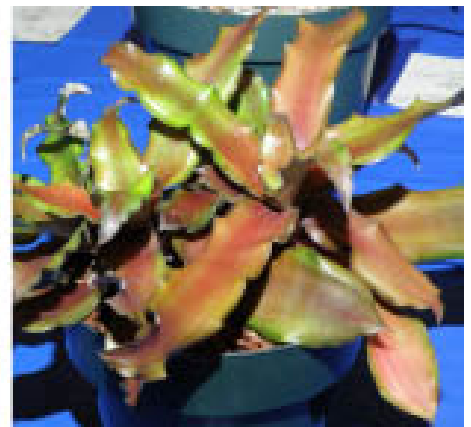
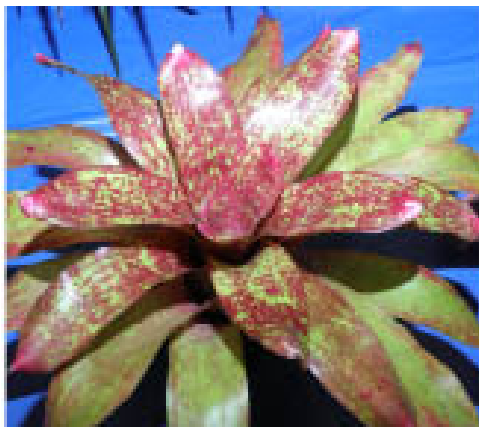
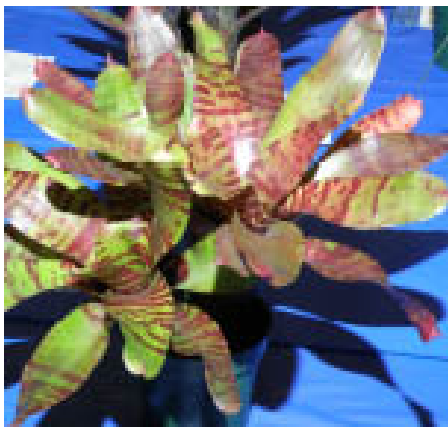
Adequate light

Too much light and your plant leaf will bleach or burn; too little, and a colorful plant will slowly become just green.

Care of Mounted Bromeliads

If you acquire a plant that is mounted: If it has a vase, then the above advice applies (except for potting mix). If it does not have a vase, soak or spray it with water about twice a week.

For more information: Buy "Bromeliads - A Cultural Manual" from <http://www.bsi.org/new/>. \$4 + postage (or this will be available at the plant sale, Mercer Arboretum, 5/17-18/2014.) <http://bromeliadsocietyhouston.org/> We would be happy for you to attend a meeting. <http://fcbs.org>



Careful . . . bromeliads become addictive! Left to right, Neoregelia 'Blushing Tiger,' Neoregelia 'Manoa Beauty' and *Cryptanthus ubairensis*.

The plants pictured here represent both common varieties and unique horticulture specimens not generally available. Some will, but some will not, shown and/or sold at the big upcoming Bromeliad Society/Houston Show and Sale. But definitely this is the place to go to see and buy great bromeliads! Sat-Sun - May 17-18 'Bromeliads - Jewels in the Garden' Show and Sale.

*Note: If you haven't seen your specialty plant group in our "Society Spotlight," it could be we do not have valid email address for you. To make sure your group is contacted, email us at lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

Please read, and consider signing, the petition to establish a Houston Botanical Garden:
<http://www.houstonbotanicgarden.org>

JOHN'S CORNER

Soil Amendments #22 - Rice Hull Ash



Last week we talked about rice hulls as a soil amendment, so this week we are going to talk about another by-product of rice farming, rice hull ash. Many companies burn the rice hulls as a boiler fuel and the end product is rice hull ash. Worldwide there are millions of tons of ash produced that needs to be disposed of.

The volume of the ash varies between 17-25% of the rice hulls that were burned. The ash is mainly composed of silicon (Si) and carbon (C) molecules hence it is very stable in the soil. The ash can have over as much as 90% silicon dioxide (SiO₂) which is the same mineral that quartz is made of hence it is very inert. More commonly it is 65-70% silica with oxides of aluminum and iron that are also relatively inert in the soil.

The burning process changes the chemical structure and leaves the ash with a very high porosity that can reach 90%, hence there is a lot of pore space for water molecules to attach to or microbes to hide in. The ash is slightly alkaline with a pH of 7-9 and very fine in particle size (most often a fine dust similar to talcum powder).

Due to the high porosity and silicon content, it is often used as an amendment in making lightweight concrete, bricks, and other products. It is sometimes added to animal feed as a filler. It is also used as an absorbent due to the high porosity as the ash can hold many times its weight in water. Best usage would be in agriculture to help hold moisture in degraded fields.

Over the last few decades rice hull ash has surfaced several times as a soil amendment in the Houston area under different brand names, each making huge claims on how it works in horticulture to improve growth and plant health and usually at very high prices.

Conclusion: Rice hull ash can be a useful soil amendment for many gardeners in small amounts. The most common usage is to mix it into a potting mix up to 5% by volume to increase its water holding capacity (Note: Rice hull ash works best with the low quality potting mixes sold at box stores and discount garden centers). It can also be tilled into heavy clays to physically change the soil properties before planting a new garden. It tends to be very messy to work with and should be lightly moistened before trying to use it. Provides very little benefit on good soil if any.

PROS:

- increases some potting mixes ability to hold water
- may improve soil physical properties
- may improve a soils aggregation, porosity, tilth
- easy to spread

- renewable resource

CONS:

- quality, type, and value varies greatly
- very dusty and dangerous to breath due to the high silicon content
- nutrient content is insignificant
- blows in wind and can create a mess
- limited availability

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.)

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 Society sale, St. Mark Lutheran Church, Lake Jackson. Details: 979-297-1889, ninaimperial@comcast.net; Nancy Freshour, 979-285-9664, www.facebook.com/brazosportdaylilysociety

Sat., May 10: Cypress Creek Daylily Society Show (no sale), Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, 281-356-2534.

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.fbmjg.com

Sat., May 10: Rainwater Harvesting by Jim Jahnke. 9-11:00 a.m. at Galveston County AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Free. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Email reservations to galv3@wt.net. Details: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/>

Sat., May 10 Shrubs: Roses & Azaleas Clinic, 10:15 a.m. Cornelius Nurseries, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. Contact: www.corneliusnurseries/clinics

Sat., May 10, 2014 - Fun Gardening Projects for Kids by Gaye Hammond, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759; 2pm Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, both in Richmond. Details: www.myenchanted.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

Sun., May 11: Plant a Butterfly Feeder Hanging Basket, 2-4pm, \$65, Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway Dr. Details: www.houstonarboretum.org

Tues., May 13: Insects in Your Garden, 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>

Tues., May 13: Garden Pests - Identify and Manage! by Dr. Joe Novak, 6-8pm, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Dr. \$30 Near Northwest Management District event. Details: 713-895-8021, , info101@nnmd.org or www.nnmd.org/Programs/GardeningWorkshops.shtml

Tues., May 13: Exterior Decorating for your Garden by Susan Wood, 10 am, Metropolitan Multi Service Center, 1475 West Gray. South Texas Unit Herb Society of America meeting open to public. Free. Details: herbsociety-stu.org

Wed., May 14: Butterfly Gardening, noon-2pm, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble. Bring lunch. Details: 281-443-8731, www.hcp4.net/mercer.

Thurs., May 15: Insects in Your garden, 6:30pm, Trini Menenhall Sosa Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. Details: 281-627-6818

Thurs., May 15: Greening the Prairie by Lisa Gray: 7:30-9 pm, Houston Arboretum, 4501 Woodway. Free. Native Plant Society of Texas/Houston chapter event. Details: www.npsot.org/houston.

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 Show/Sale, 1-4pm, Alvin Senior Center 309 West Sealy, Alvin. Details: Details: www.lonestardaylilsociety.org

Sat., May 17: Galveston County Fruit Growers Tour, 9am-noon. Free. Details: Galveston County AgriLife Extension, 281-534-3413; galv@wt.net or www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston.

Sat., May 17: Insects in Your Garden, 10am, Maude Smith Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd., Katy. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. Details: 281-627-6818

Sat., May 17: Perennials Clinic, 10:15 a.m. Cornelius Nurseries, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. Contact: www.corneliusnurseries/clinics

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

Sun., May 18: Shimek's Daylily Bloom Fest Open Garden, 8am-6pm, 3122 County Road 237, Alvin. Free. Details: 281-331-4395, neshimek@comcast.net or www.cityscope.net/~neshimek

Mon., May 19: Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2's Open Garden, 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Program at 9:30am. . Free. Details:

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

Wed., May 21: Birds in Our Area by Paul Fagala, Wild Birds Limited, 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., May 21: I'm Just Wild About Saffron by Irene Potoczniak, 7 pm, Metropolitan Multi Service Center, 1475 West Gray. South Texas Unit Herb Society of America event. Free. Details: herbsociety-stu.org

Thur., May 22: 1:30 pm, Soil- The Ultimate Water Reservoir, Tapping the Potential by John Ferguson. Lone Star Groundwater Conservation District Offices, 655 Conroe Park North Drive, Conroe www.lonestargcd.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/>

Sat., May 24: Butterfly & Hummingbird Gardens & Landscape Design Clinics, 10:15 a.m. Cornelius Nurseries, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss. Contact: www.corneliusnurseries/clinics

Tues., May 27: Insects in Your Garden, 6:30pm, Recipe for Success, 4400 Yupon St. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. Details: 281-627-681

Tues., May 27: Insects in Your Garden / Open Garden Day, 9-11:30am, AgriLife Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. Details: 281-627-6818

Sat., May 31: 10am - noon. City of Conroe Landscape Irrigation Symposium: Irrigating & Landscaping Organically with Water Conservation in Mind. Speakers: Mark Lowry, Mark Bowen, Jeffrey Walls Doug Goodwin & Leslie Keen. 401 Sgt. Holcomb Blvd., South, Conroe. register: waterconservataion@cityofconroe.org.

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

Tues., June 10: Herbs - Garden to Table, 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., June 12: Garden Destinations Within Driving Distance by Debra Bagley, 7:30pm, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 1819 Heights Blvd. Houston Rose Society event. Free. www.houstonrose.org.

www.crystalbeachlocalnews.com

Mon., June 16: Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2's Open Garden Day, 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. 9:30am: Program/MG Q&A. Free. Sale plants for sale every Monday May-Oct. Details: <https://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubP2.aspx>

Tues., June 17: Herbs - Garden to Table, <http://www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners>.

Wed., June 18: Fairy Gardens and Terrariums by Judy Jones of Enchanted Gardens, 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>

Thurs., June 19: Wetland Plants for the Home Garden by Mary Carol Edwards, Wetland Biologist at Texas Coastal

Watershed Program/Texas Sea Grant: 7:30-9 pm, Houston Arboretum, 4501 Woodway. Free. Native Plant Society of Texas/Houston chapter event. Details: www.npsot.org/houston.

Thurs., June 19: Herbs - Garden to Table, 6:30pm, Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter, Houston. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. Details: 281-855-5600, <http://www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners>.

Sat., June 21: 4th Annual Tomato & Vegetable Contest, Kingwood Garden Center, 1216 Stonehollow Drive, Kingwood. Details: 281-358-1805 or www.Kingwoodgardencenter.com

Sat., June 21: Herbs - Garden to Table, 10am, Maude Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd., Katy. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. Details: 281-855-5600, <http://www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners>.

Tues., June 24: Open Garden Day - Herbs, 9am, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension demonstration gardens, 3033 Bear Creek Dr., Houston, Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. Details: 281-855-5600, <http://www.facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners>.

Sat., July 12: Texas Rose Rustlers Meeting, 10am-3pm, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free, open to public. Details: www.texasroserustlers.com or 281-443-8731.

Wed., July 16: Foods from the Americas by Sally Luna, 7 pm, Metropolitan Multi Service Center, 1475 West Gray. South Texas Unit Herb Society of America event. Free. Details: herbsociety-stu.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 co-editor 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.





<http://myenchanted.com/>



<http://microlifefertilizer.com/>



<http://natureswayresources.com/>



COUPON: Buy three antique roses and get one free at Nature's Way Resources www.natureswayresources.com .

Offer Expires: 05/31/14