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JANUARY 6, 2017

Dear Friends,

Here is the 187th issue of our weekly gardening newsletter for Houston, the Gulf Coast and beyond. We really appreciate all of our readers hanging in there with us, sharing stories and inspiring us in so many ways.

Thanks so much!

This newsletter is a project of The Lazy Gardener, Brenda Beust Smith, John Ferguson and Mark Bowen (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. . . E mail your thoughts to: [lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com). Thanks so much for your interest.

Please [click here](#) 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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## PRUNING/PLANTING FRUIT TREES

### NEW FOCUSES FOR THE NEW YEAR

By **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

*To prune or not to prune, that is the question.  
Whether 'tis nobler in the garden ignore  
Those freeze-dead limbs and drooping flowers  
Or to take arms against them  
And, by whacking them off, to perhaps trigger new growth  
That might be even more cold-susceptible,  
Killing plants that might otherwise have survived winter's bitter sky  
(My apologies to William Shakespeare!)*

Sorry. Couldn't resist. January is our prime tree pruning period, especially for fruits.

(Don't prune spring blooming shrubs. You'll cut off developing flower buds!)

I don't prune anything so am not a good advisor in this arena (which probably gives me more poetic license!)

If you want to know about pruning/grafting fruit trees, don't mess around. Listen to the experts. Start with Linda Gay who, coincidentally, has written one of our Spotlight articles below. But she's focusing on pruning in the Jan. 2017 issue of [Houston House and Home Magazine](#) (page 74). Read & heed!

Here's a couple of more great pruning education opportunities (check Calendar below for more):

- THU, JAN 19: FIG TREE PRUNING & PROPAGATION, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free, but pre-register: [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)
- SAT., JAN. 21: FRUIT & NUT TREES: PRUNING TO PLANTING!, 9-11am, Montgomery Co. AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. \$5. Master Gardener event. 936-539-7824; [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

Or, drop by any AgriLife Extension Office in the Greater Houston area on a weekday. Chances are Master Gardeners will be working the gardens. Or pick up volumes of free printed pruning info sheets.

Speaking of fruit trees, the secret to success in this area is variety, variety, variety. Best place to find them? Our many local organizational sales in the next few months.

**URBAN HARVEST'S FRUIT TREE SALE:** The nation's largest and most diverse one-day fruit tree sale will

be Urban Harvest's on Sat., Jan. 14, 9a.m.-1p.m. in the Rice University Parking Lot, 5600 Greenbriar Drive.

Whether you can make this sale, or one of these listed below, [Urban Harvest's](#) pre-sale talk tomorrow, Sat., Jan. 7, 9:30am-noon will be an excellent short course for novices and expert growers in new and favorite varieties that do well in this area. No registration needed, \$5 donation, at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Pecore Hall, 1805 Alabama. No plants for sale until January 14.

Here are just a few more already sent in:

- SAT., JAN. 14: FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FRUIT TREE SALE - FortBendmg@ag.tamu.edu, 281-733-7068. [www.fbmga.org](http://www.fbmga.org)
- SAT., JAN. 28: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FRUIT TREE SALE - Bear Creek Garden, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. hcmga.tamu.edu, 281-855-5600
- SAT., JAN. 28: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FRUIT & NUT TREE SALE, 936-539-7824; [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)
- SAT, FEB 18: GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FRUIT TREE & PLANT SALE. [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)
- SAT., FEB. 18: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER PRECINCT 2 FRUIT TREE AND TOMATO SALE - hcmga.tamu.edu.
- SAT., MAR. 4: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER TOMATO-PEPPER SALE, hcmga.tamu.edu, 281-855-560



The sales above all carry a wide variety of fruit trees. If you're looking for something specific, give them a call or check through the websites. At the Jan.14 Fort Bend Master Gardeners sale, for example, among the many varieties they'll carry, they're particularly excited about, left to right above, Ischia fig, Eldorado Miniature peach, Pink Lemonade blueberry and Rhode Red Valencia orange.

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**GOOD REASON TO ALWAYS USE LOCAL ADVICE!** National Arbor Day is always the last Friday in April. Great example of why we should ALWAYS doublecheck any national gardening advice against local advice. By late April, our soil is already too warm for optimum tree root development.

Recognizing this conflict, Houston and the National Arbor Day Foundation (NADF) set Sat., Jan. 21 as the Bayou City's Arbor Day. On this day, hopefully, hundreds of Houston area volunteers will turn out on the 21st at Herman Brown Park, 200 Mercury Dr., to plant 1000 trees. What an incredible legacy to give the children in your world, a tree he/she planted and can watch grow the rest of their lives! Register at [houstontx.gov/parks](http://houstontx.gov/parks); [askparks@houstontx.gov](mailto:askparks@houstontx.gov), or [Oneika.shelby@houstontx.gov](mailto:Oneika.shelby@houstontx.gov).

\* \* \*

**REFOCUSING ...** The start of the new year is also good time to take a minute to refocus our horticultural perspectives. And taking a long and short view to help us are two local horticultural experts.

- **ZOOMING OUTWARD WITH SHAWN MCFARLAND:** Shawn pulls our focus upward and outward -- a la McDonald Observatory's "Power of 10" - with a plea to become more familiar with, and comfortable with, Permaculture. Shawn, a green architect with Environment Associates is a board member of both Urban Harvest and the Citizens Environmental Coalition and a 15+ year teacher of Permaculture Design. (*Clubs take note: this is a great topic for meeting speakers.*)
- **ZOOMING IN WITH LINDA GAY:** Before Shawn widens our mental horizons, horticulturist extraordinaire Linda Gay is going to start us off with a close in view of the "Power of Flowers" immediately around us. Or more accurately, the impact of overall impressions we should consider first, over and above the actual choice of specific varieties.

Linda's extensive resume includes Mercer Botanic Garden director, Hermann Park's McGovern Centennial Gardens staff trainer, Master Gardener instructor and, now, The Arbor Gate staff horticulturist. Linda's Spotlight on "Thriller, Filler and Spiller" below is a preview of her free upcoming free, 4-class "Master Your Garden" series, starting Jan. 19 at [The Arbor Gate in Tomball.](#)



*Left: purple petunias; tall thin Cordyline (dracaena); white, pink & red geraniums and yellow African daisies. Center: "Thriller" can be glass. Right: Sometimes all you need is a "thriller"!*

## THRILLER, FILLER, AND SPILLER by Linda B. Gay

Creating colorful container combinations can be fun, therapeutic, and beautiful. The recipe for a successful combination involves using a Thriller, Filler, and Spiller and this is fun to say!

First is the Thriller and is the WOW plant in the container, it is what your eye sees first. It can be architectural OR have exotic colorful foliage OR be a continuous bloomer and is the tallest plant in the combination.

Second comes the Filler and does just that and fills up the container and grows 6 -12" tall. This is a colorful spreading plant that acts as a base plant for the Thriller.

Third is the Spiller and this plant prefers to grow outside and down the container, spilling out of the pot. This can be an ivy or a cascading flower that softens the hard lines of the container.

When creating combinations make sure plants chosen have like requirements such as light, soil and water.



*Left: yellow "string-like" carex, pale green linear-leaved hosta, red-/orange-leaved heuchera, yellow-flowered cimicifuga. Center: geraniums and petunias. Right: this container could be your "thriller."*

Contact Linda Gay at [lgay4756@gmail.com](mailto:lgay4756@gmail.com) or speak with her in person during her upcoming free, four-class "Master Your Garden" series at The Arbor Gate (Jan. 19: "Growing Veggies, Shrubs and Flowers in Clay Soils; Jan. 26: "Right Tree Right Place-Don't Overplant"; Feb. 2: "Ornamental Shrubs" and (today's preview) Feb. 9: "Container Gardening: Thriller, Filler & Spiller, Oh, My!" (Classes are free but register at [arborgate.com](http://arborgate.com). Details in Calendar below.)

\* \* \*



## WHAT EXACTLY IS PERMACULTURE?

**SHAWN McFARLAND, AIA, LEED AP**  
**Urban Harvest Advisory Board Member**  
**Teacher of Permaculture ([houstonperm@aol.com](mailto:houstonperm@aol.com) )**

The simplest answer is that Permaculture is a method for designing sustainable human habitats. Permaculture involves a holistic , multi-disciplinary approach to evaluating and solving problems.

The word Permaculture is a conjunctive of two words -- Permanent and Agriculture. The Permaculture concept founder, Bill Mollison (who died Sept., 2016) -- working with his student, David Hollgren -- came up with the definition in the early 70's. Bill Mollison would say that the two words he really meant to combine were Permanent and Culture: the very definition of Sustainability, designing human habitat for permanence for all time forward.

Whatever that conveys to you, it means we don't wreck the planet for our future generations to provide for themselves and their children.

Learning Permaculture revolutionizes how we think about the way we live our lives. So many positive actions we can all take will conserve resources or use them more wisely. We aim to invent and formulate better methods to get more bang from our bucks.

For instance, now:

- Our buildings have become more energy efficient.

- Our cars drive longer on a gallon of gas.
- Electric cars use no gas at all.
- Renewable energy sources are exploding our ability to generate power with no dangerous emissions.
- We have more compact cities and generally better transit options.
- We are a very connected society with the internet, media and our relationships with others.

The positivity that the Permaculture principles describe always amazes me. Permaculture formulates ways to design human habitats and live our lives with less waste: We learn to grow our own food because:

- Our own food is healthier, more nutritious and more flavorful
- The process gives us exercise, therapy, sunshine, community with others and ways of being more resilient.
- It is such a joy to eat fresh fruit and vegetables not treated with pesticides and forced into a simulated state of ripeness.
- We recycle our waste because we know there is still energy in the product.

The apple cores go into the compost, the big green recycle bin goes to the street. We buy many recycled products without even knowing it. And we give back to our communities because we have had a good life.

Contact Shawn at [houstonperm@aol.com](mailto:houstonperm@aol.com). Contact the Permaculture Guild of Houston at <https://www.facebook.com/permaculturehouston>.

*"Transition Houston" ( [www.transitionhouston.org](http://www.transitionhouston.org)) is a Guild offshoot group focusing on garden and community building to educate about peak oil\* and localizing lifestyles. To meet personally with Guild members, attend:*

**SUN., JAN. 29: SUSTAINABLE LIVING THROUGH PERMACULTURE** by Permaculture Guild of Houston, 12:30-5pm, University of Houston Central Campus. \$50. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org](http://urbanharvest.org). Click on "Classes."



*This spiral herb garden — one of the Permaculture Guild of Texas' Facebook profile photos — is a fitting symbol for the movement's emphasis on weaving all activities, and gardening in particular, into the massive interconnected complexities of life on Earth. Spiral gardens, if done correctly, not only allow for vertical plantings, they are hot and sunny on the western side, cooler and shadier on the east, dry at top and moist at bottom. Google "herb spiral garden" for instructions.*

\* \* \*

***SUBMITTING EVENTS TO THE LG&F CALENDAR BELOW? PLEASE READ!  
See calendar for OUR CARVED-IN-STONE format. COPY EXACTLY!  
Events submitted in this EXACT format will be copied & pasted in right away.  
Any necessary re-typing/reformatting may take a couple of weeks***

\* \* \*

***Always check the LG&F Newsletter\* Calendar to make sure your submitted event is listed!  
If not, let me know! Send to: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net)***

***\*Brenda's column in the free, emailed LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER is based on her 45+ years as the Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener.***

## JOHN'S CORNER

### MINERALS - The Elements and What They Do

#### Part 8

15) Phosphorous (P) - The name of this element is derived from the Greek *phosphoros*, meaning bringer of light. Phosphorous is found in igneous rocks at 1,050 ppm, shale at 700 ppm, limestone at 400 ppm, sand at 170 ppm, and soil at 650 ppm, seawater at 0.07 ppm. It can be found in marine plants at 3,500 ppm, land plants at 2,300 ppm, marine animals at 4,000-18,000 ppm, and land animals at 17,000 to 44,000 ppm.

When four oxygen (O) atoms surround an atom of phosphorus (P), it is known as phosphate ( $\text{PO}_4^{-3}$ ) a key component of life and the most common way this element is found and used in nature.

When in a pure form, it is known as white phosphorus, which is very dangerously flammable and a deadly poison. It was used to burn Hamburg, Germany to the ground during WW-II. Also in war, it is used in tracer bullets, flares, incendiary bombs, smoke grenades, and firebombs. Phosphorous is also used to make common kitchen matches due to its flammability.

If phosphorus is combined with chlorine ( $\text{PCl}_3$ ) we get phosphorus trichloride which is used to make the extremely dangerous chemical called glyphosate used in many herbicides (Round-Up). Phosphoric acid ( $\text{H}_3\text{PO}_4$ ), is also added to soft drinks.

Phosphorous is used in many things in nature; it is part of the energy molecule ATP (adenosine triphosphate), it is a major structural element in bones and teeth, and is used in more functions in the human body than any other mineral. It is second only to calcium in the human body, composing 22% of body's mineral content. Deficiencies in animals lead to pica, cribbing, and fractures.

Soil archeologists have found that a lack of phosphorous in the soil throughout history has caused mass starvations.

Phosphorous is known to combine with more than 30 other elements to form many types of minerals. Over 350 different minerals containing phosphorous have been identified. In the soil, most phosphate minerals occur in microscopic forms and in low concentrations. If the phosphate ion ( $\text{PO}_4^{-3}$ ) combines with aluminum (Al) to form the mineral Wavellite, it can cement the soil creating hardpan, particularly in sandy soil. If iron (Fe) is present, the cementation can be even stronger. This is common in soils where artificial fertilizers have been used.

Depending on the soil, it may contain a lot of phosphorous but very little is available for plants as it is chemically bound up. Microbes living on the organic matter do the conversion of phosphorous from mineral forms to available forms in healthy soils.

In many areas, excess phosphorous (P) is becoming a major source of pollution. Excess phosphorous from water soluble artificial fertilizers often runs off into our streams and lakes. This allows for a tremendous growth of algae and aquatic plants that consume all the oxygen in the water. As a result animal life, from

minnows to crawfish dies. Without the predators there are no animal life to eat mosquito larva hence we now have a greatly increased mosquito problem.

Most mined phosphate deposits are often found with arsenic, lead, cadmium, mercury, and other toxic elements. Hence, when one uses artificial fertilizers one is adding these toxic materials to their soil. Fungi in nature are very good at extracting phosphorous from rocks and minerals and making it available to plants. However when one uses a toxic chemical fungicide they lose this benefit. Roots with mycorrhizal fungi can double or even triple the amount of phosphorous available to plants per unit of root length. If one looks at the periodic table, we see that arsenic (As) is directly below phosphorous (P) hence they have similar chemical properties and can be substituted for each other in molecules. A lack of phosphorus in our diets would accelerate our absorption of arsenic, which would then block normal functioning of many enzymes and other systems.

### **Gardening and Landscaping Problems Associated with Phosphorous (P)**

Phosphorus plays a role in the molecules used for energy storage and transfer hence it is important part of the genetic material in plants (part of the molecules that make up genes associated with DNA and RNA). Sometimes phosphorous is called the soil's catalyst, as many processes cannot work without it. For example, without sufficient phosphorous, plants cannot use nitrogen effectively.

In soils phosphorous is often deficient or chemically locked up and unavailable to plants, hence plants concentrates this element in its seeds and fruits. It is involved with stimulating many plant activities (called a "Go" food for plants). All plant tissues contain this element, it is directly related to root and fruit development, required for sugar development and it aids in disease resistance.

Rock phosphate has low solubility along with many other mineral forms found in nature so it is often not readily available to plants. This is why plants store phosphate in their seeds, so new seedlings do not have to depend on finding it in the soil. This is why foods like nuts are a good source of this element.

Many of our area soils have sufficient phosphorous for plant growth, however it is not in an available form. At a pH below five, phosphorous is chemically locked up by aluminum (Al) and iron (Fe). At a high pH (above 7.0) calcium (Ca) and magnesium (Mg) will precipitate the phosphorous into rock phosphate and it becomes unavailable.

One needs to be careful in that high levels of phosphorous can create a zinc (Zn) deficiency. This often occurs when one uses super phosphate or other artificially created forms of this element. Interestingly, a low level of zinc reduces the absorbability of phosphorous by plants. Mineral forms of phosphorous quickly become insoluble and not available to plants while organic forms are readily absorbed, and used by plants (another value of good compost).

For plants to utilize phosphorous efficiently, it requires soils with high organic matter content to provide food and a home for the microorganisms, which then make phosphorus available to plants. Microorganisms excrete acids that release phosphorus from mineral forms. The humic and fulmic acids found in good quality compost, helps release phosphorus.

A phosphorous deficiency shows up in plants as reddish or purplish cast to leaves, tips die off, seeds, tubers, and grains suffer or fail to develop. Other deficiency issues may show up as stunting, slow growth, delayed maturity, short internodes, purple or dark green foliage, old leaves will die back. Problems are more severe in cold weather (lower microbial activity).

Researchers at Pennsylvania State University have found that excess phosphorus is very detrimental to plants, decreasing drought tolerance and stress resistance in general.

For gardeners that grow their own vegetables, most vegetable plants absorb all the phosphate it needs in the first few weeks of growth. This is why small amounts of rock phosphate directly under the seed or a transplant work's so effectively.



For years, bone meal was the best source of this element. Today, most modern bone meal is nutrient deficient, as it has been leached to remove the nutrients for use in other manufacturing processes. However, it is easy to make your own. Save your bones and then dry them in the sun or your oven. When dry place on a concrete surface and use a hammer to break them into tiny pieces.

Sources: compost, native mulches, rock phosphate, phosphoric acid (soft drinks), manures, sewage sludge (Biosolids), bat or bird guano, bone meal, some fish and seaweed by products.

\* \* \*

## WEEKLY GARDENING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR

**PLEASE READ BEFORE SUBMITTING AN EVENT TO THIS CALENDAR.**

Events **NOT** submitted in the **EXACT** written format below may take two weeks or longer to be reformatted/retyped. After that point, if your event does not appear, please email us. Sorry, no children's programs. - Submit to: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net)

**IF WE INSPIRE YOU TO ATTEND ANY OF THESE EVENTS,  
PLEASE TELL SPONSORS YOU HEARD ABOUT IT IN  
THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER**

SAT., JAN. 7: URBAN HARVEST FRUIT TREE SALE PREVIEW by RAY SHER, 9:30am-noon, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Pecore Hall, 1805 Alabama. \$5. (No plants for sale until Jan. 14). [urbanharvest.org](http://urbanharvest.org)

SAT, JAN 7: WEDGE GRAFTING by SUE JEFFCO; 9-11am, & PROPAGATION OF PLANTS BY CUTTINGS by BILL CUMMINS, 1-2:30pm, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free, but pre-register: [galvcountrymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountrymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

MON., JAN. 8: WHAT TO PLANT NOW, 6:30pm, Metropolitan MultiService Center, 1475 W. Gray. Free. Houston Urban Gardeners (HUG) event. 713-524-3542, [houstonurbangardeners.org](http://houstonurbangardeners.org)

TUES., JAN. 10: #TXPLANTS TWITTER TUESDAY EVENT - NATIVE AND PRAIRIE PLANTS FOR THE HOME GARDENER, 7-8 pm, Twitter.com follow hashtag #TXplants. Free. Native Plant Society of Texas-Houston Chapter [npsot.org/wp/houston/2016/12/09/join-us-txplants-twitter-tuesday-native-prairie-plants-home-gardener](http://npsot.org/wp/houston/2016/12/09/join-us-txplants-twitter-tuesday-native-prairie-plants-home-gardener).

WED., JAN. 11: EXPLORING THE PRIMEVAL FLORA OF NEW CALEDONIA, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

THURS., JAN. 12: BACKYARD ROSE HYBRIDIZING by JOHN JONS 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Houston Rose Society event. [houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org)

THURS., JAN. 12: FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FRUIT & CITRUS PREVIEW PROGRAM, 6:30pm-8:30pm,

Bud O'Shieles Community Center, 1330 Band Rd. Rosenberg. [fbmg.org](http://fbmg.org); 281-633-7070; [FortBendmg@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:FortBendmg@ag.tamu.edu)

THURS., JAN. 12: VERMICULTURE, COMPOSTING WORMS by Charlene Perry, 10am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Free. Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 event. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

FRI., JAN. 13: PENNY WISE / POUND FOOLISH: WHEN & WHY TO HIRE A LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONAL by RITA HODGE, 10am, White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)

SAT., JAN 14: URBAN HARVEST FRUIT TREE SALE, 9am-1pm (or sell-out), Rice University Parking Lot, 5600 Greenbriar Dr. [urbanharvest.org](http://urbanharvest.org).

SAT., JAN. 14: FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FRUIT & CITRUS TREE SALE, 9am-noon, County Fairgrounds, Barn H, 4310 TX-36, Rosenberg. [FortBendmg@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:FortBendmg@ag.tamu.edu), 281-733-7068. [fbmg.org](http://fbmg.org)

SAT, JAN 14: GROWING GREAT TOMATOES (PART 2 of 3) by IRA GERVAIS, 9-11:30 am; & SUCCESSFUL SPRING VEGETABLE GARDENING by HERMAN AUER, 1-3:30 pm, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free, but register: [galvcountrymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountrymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

MON., JAN. 16: OPEN GARDEN DAY & PLANT SALE, 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Free. Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 event. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

TUE, JAN 17: GARDENING BY THE SQUARE FOOT by JOHN JONS, 6:30-8:30pm, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free, but pre-register: [galvcountrymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountrymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

TUE., JAN. 17: CRYPTANTHUS by CAROLE RICHTMYER, 7:30pm, West Gray Mutli-Service Center, 1475 W Gray. Free. Bromeliad Society/Houston event. [bromeliadsocietyhouston.org](http://bromeliadsocietyhouston.org)

TUE, JAN 17: GARDENING BY THE SQUARE FOOT by JOHN JONS, 6:30 -8:30 pm, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free, but register: [galvcountrymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountrymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

THU, JAN 19: FIG TREE PRUNING & PROPAGATION by TERRY CUCLIS, 9-10 am, AgriLife Research & Demonstration Garden, 4102 Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free, but register: [galvcountrymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountrymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

THURS., JAN. 19: GROWING VEGGIES, SHRUBS & FLOWERS IN CLAY SOIL by LINDA GAY, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free but register: [arborgate.com](http://arborgate.com)

THURS., JAN. 19: CITRUS DISEASE & PEST UPDATE by ROBERT (SKIP) RICHTER & DWARF SEVERENIA BUXITOLIA DWARF ROOTING STOCK by DR. ETHAN NATELSON, 6:30pm. Extension Office, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Free. Gulf Coast Fruit Study Group event. [Ute.Schaefer@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:Ute.Schaefer@ag.tamu.edu)

THU, JAN 19: FIG TREE PRUNING & PROPAGATION by TERRY CUCLIS, 9-10am, AgriLife GCMG Research & Demonstration Garden, 4102 Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free, but pre-register: [galvcountrymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountrymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

SAT., JAN. 21: FRUIT & NUT TREES: PRUNING TO PLANTING!, 9-11am, Montgomery Co. AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. \$5. Master Gardener event. 936-539-7824; [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

MON., JAN 23-FEB. 27: TEXAS GULF COAST GARDENER TIER III: THE ART OF LANDSCAPE DESIGN, 9am-3pm. Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. \$250. Register: 713-274-4160.

WED., JAN. 25: "SUCCULENT GARDENING PROJECTS AND TIPS FROM MERCER ARBORETUM by JACOB MARTIN, 7:30 p.m., Metropolitan Multi-Services Center, 1475 West Gray, Free. [hcss.tex.org](http://hcss.tex.org).

THURS., JAN. 26: RIGHT TREE RIGHT PLACE - DON'T OVERPLANT by LINDA GAY, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free but register: [arborgate.com](http://arborgate.com)

SAT, JAN 28: GROWING PEACHES IN GALVESTON COUNTY by HERMAN AUER, 9-11 am & KITCHEN GARDENING by MARY DEMENY, 1-3 pm, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main, La Marque. Master Gardener events. Free, but register: [galvcountrymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountrymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

SAT. JAN. 28: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FRUIT & NUT TREE SALE, 8 am presentation, 9am-noon

sale, AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Rd, Conroe. 936-539-7824; [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

SAT, JAN 28: GROWING PEACHES IN GALVESTON COUNTY by HERMAN AUER, 9-11am & KITCHEN GARDENING by MARY DEMENY, 1-3pm, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free, but pre-register: [galvcounnymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcounnymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

SAT., JAN. 28: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FRUIT TREE SALE, Bear Creek Garden, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 281-855-5600

SUN., JAN. 29: SUSTAINABLE LIVING THROUGH PERMACULTURE by Permaculture Guild of Houston, 12:30-5pm, University of Houston Central Campus. \$50. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org](http://urbanharvest.org). Click on "Classes."

TUE, JAN 31: ANYONE CAN GROW ROSES by JOHN JONS, 6:30-8:30 pm; AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free, but pre-register: [galvcounnymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcounnymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

THURS., FEB. 2: ATTRACTING BIRDS AND BUTTERFLIES TO YOUR BACKYARD BY KATHY ADAMS CLARK, 1 0am, MUD Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr, Katy. Free, Nottingham Country Garden Club event. [nottinghamgardenclub.org](http://nottinghamgardenclub.org)

THURS., FEB. 2: ORNAMENTAL SHRUBS by LINDA GAY, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free but register: [arborgate.com](http://arborgate.com)

WED., FEB. 8: MICROGREENS, noon - 2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

SAT, FEB 4: GROWING CITRUS IN YOUR BACKYARD by ROBERT MARSHALL, 9-11:30 am, & GROWING BLUEBERRIES by DAVID COHEN, 1-2:30 pm, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free, but register: [galvcounnymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcounnymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

THURS., FEB. 9: ROSE PRUNING DONE RIGHT by HRS CONSULTING ROSARIANS 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Houston Rose Society event. [houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org)

THURS., FEB. 9: CONTAINER GARDENING: THRILLER, FILLER & SPILLER, OH MY! by LINDA GAY, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free but register: [arborgate.com](http://arborgate.com)

FRI., FEB.10: FLORAL DESIGN INSPIRED BY ART by HOUSTON DESIGNING WOMEN, 10am, White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)

SAT, FEB 11: GROWING AVOCADO & PAPAYA by Jerry Hurlbert, 9-11:30 am, & SOIL HEALTH & EVALUATION by JIM GILLIAM, 1-2:30 pm, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free, but register: [galvcounnymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcounnymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

THU, FEB 16: PRUNING ROSES by John Jons, 9-10 am, AgriLife Research & Demonstration Garden, 4102 Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free, but register: [galvcounnymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcounnymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

SAT, FEB 18: GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ANNUAL SPRING FRUIT & CITRUS TREE, VEGETABLE & PLANT SALE. Seminar 8am; Sale 9am-1pm. Jack Brooks Park Rodeo Arena, 10 Jack Brooks Rd and Hwy 6, Hitchcock. [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

SAT., FEB 18: GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS SPRING 2017 PLANT SALE, 9 am-1 pm with pre-sale seminar 8-8:50 am, Jack Brooks Park Rodeo Arena, 10 Jack Brooks Rd and Hwy 6, Hitchcock, TX 77563 (Galveston County Fairgrounds)

SAT., FEB. 18: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER PRECINCT 2 FRUIT TREE AND TOMATO SALE, Campbell Hall. Pasadena Fairgrounds, 7600 Red Bluff RD., Pasadena. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu).

MON., FEB. 20: STORYTIME IN THE GARDEN, 10:30-11:30 am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

MAR. 4: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER TOMATO-PEPPER SALE, Bear Creek Garden, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 281-855-5600

SAT., SUN., MAR. 4-5: SPRING BRANCH AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB 37TH ANNUAL SHOW & SPRING SALE, Sat. Show 1-5pm, Sale 9am-5pm; Sun. Show & Sale, 10am-3pm; workshop Sat. & Sun. 1pm, Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Park Dr. Free. 281-748-8417, [kjwross@yahoo.com](mailto:kjwross@yahoo.com)

MAR. 18: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER SPRING PLANT SALE, Genoa Friendship Garden, Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fairgrounds. 281-855-5600

SAT., APRIL 1.: WHITE OAK GARDEN SPRING PLANT SALE, 9am program by Heidi Sheesley, 10am-2pm (or till sold out) sale, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Dr. nmmd.org

APR. 22: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER SPRING PERENNIAL SALE, Bear Creek Garden, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 281-855-5600

OCT. 7: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FALL PLANT SALE, Bear Creek Garden, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 281-855-5600

**If we inspire you to attend any of these events, please let them know you heard about it in . . .  
THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS NEWSLETTER!**

**PLEASE READ BEFORE SUBMITTING AN EVENT FOR THIS CALENDAR.**

Events **NOT** submitted in the **EXACT** written format below may take two weeks or longer to be reformatted/retyped. After that point, if your event does not appear, please email us. Sorry, no children's programs. - Submit to: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net)

**IF WE INSPIRE YOU TO ATTEND ANY OF THESE EVENTS, PLEASE TELL SPONSORS YOU HEARD ABOUT IT IN  
THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER**

**THIS NEWSLETTER IS MADE  
POSSIBLE BY THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS**





<http://natureswayresources.com/>

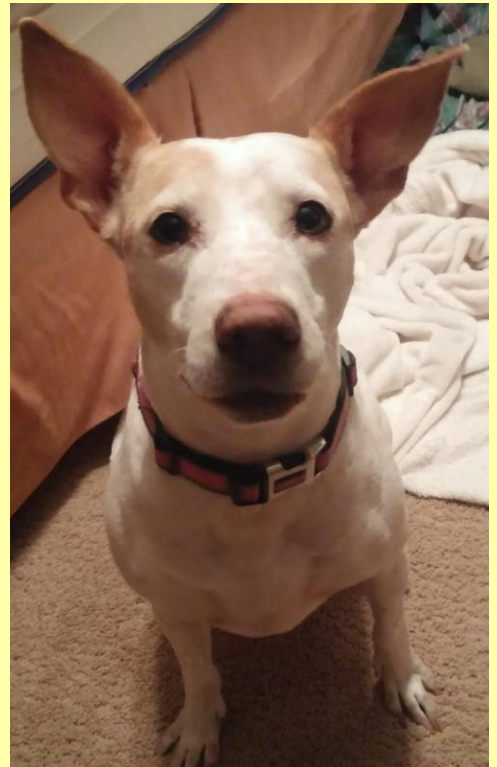
## ADOPTABLE DOG OF THE MONTH

### PEGGY SUE

Please Help Peggy Sue Get Adopted. She is a super sweet Pointer Mix and former shelter dog. She is about three years old. She has been spayed and is current on her shots. She is very social and plays well with other dogs and people including children. She is very mellow most of the time but does love to play and be silly in spurts. She is house trained and is not destructive in nature. She does need a companion dog.

The local rescue A Chance To Bloom helped us save her from the shelter initially, they helped her adapt to life outside of the shelter and helped socialize her. Now they are helping us to find a loving forever home. She is currently in the care of her foster who is unfortunately very maxed out with his own adopted former shelter dogs. Peggy Sue is a super special dog that is sure to bring her future family some really good kisses and good times in general.

If interested, please contact [A Chance To Bloom](#) or her foster Mark Bowen at [markbowenhoutx@gmail.com](mailto:markbowenhoutx@gmail.com)



### 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.

Brenda recently ended her decades-long stint as Production Manager of the Garden Club of America's **BULLETIN** magazine. Although still an active horticulture lecturer and broad-based freelance writer, Brenda's main focus now is **THE LAZY GARDENER & 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, certified permaculturist 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 periodic 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.



**COUPON: Nature's Way Resources. 50% OFF Pomegranates & Pears at Nature's Way Resources (expires 1/15/17)**

**Confirm that you like this.**

Click the "Like" button.