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NOVEMBER 10, 2017

Dear Friends,

Here is the 229th 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.

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## ***I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S POSSIBLE TO HAVE A 50-YEAR LOVE AFFAIR WITH A HOUSE . . .***

**By BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, after Hurricane Allison, I wrote in an article for the *Houston Chronicle* . . .

*I don't know if it's possible to have a love affair with a house, but it sure feels like I've had one for the past 35 years.*

*Actually it's more a love affair with a house, a yard and even the neighborhood -- an eclectic community with a kaleidoscope of nationalities, incomes and housing styles on oversized wooded lots.*

*When I look at this grand old house that sheltered and protected my family all these years, I wish I had arms big enough to wrap around her. But we have been flooded one time too many, and I know we must part sooner than I planned . . .*

*(full article: <http://www.chron.com/news/article/State-Lines-Flooded-one-time-too-many-2087644.php>)*

As it turned out, we didn't leave, much to the irritation of many who loved us. We understood their frustration. But our acre of wooded land, a unique "rural" enclave inside the North Belt, on the banks of Greens Bayou, was a treasure it was almost impossible to give up.

Harvey and Harris County Flood Control have changed all that. We aren't be allowed to go back even if we wanted to, which we don't. We're older now, with challenges that go far beyond anything we were experiencing back then.

We've left for good and my (this year) 50-year-old Lazy Gardener's Laboratory will forever be lost as a blessed resource to me and to my garden writing. Too late now to continue that tradition. Too late to reproduce it.

I never set out to be a garden writer. It was a fluke, an opportunity that turned into a lifetime of delight. I was a reporter, no experience whatsoever in gardening. But I wanted to write humor as brilliantly as June Benefield and Erma Bombeck did.

I often had to edit their columns but it couldn't be done. Both wrote so tightly, changing one word meant changing meaning. What a lost art that has become!

My chance at humor writing came when Alice Hodges, then Chronicle garden columnist, moved away. The editor asked for a garden writer volunteer until he could hire a "real horticulturist." My hand shot up . . . on one condition: call it The Lazy Gardener, so it could be funny and no one would take me seriously.

That, folks, is the true story behind the "Lazy Gardener" name.

It was the right approach for the right time. Oil companies were moving en masse to Houston. Women's Libbers were burning their bras. Most readers didn't have time to seriously "garden." Mostly they wanted easy advice to keep their front yards alive so neighbors wouldn't hate them.

I wrote the column as any good reporter did. When specialty plant groups had their sales, or famous speakers, I did interviews. I learned from them (*& later became a Harris County Master Gardener*).

As a reporter, I knew if I recommended garden chemical treatments, and someone got hurt using them, I (and the Chronicle) could be sued. They wouldn't win, but who wanted to be sued? My first rule became: My first rule: **No chemicals!** I would only write about plants that didn't have insect or disease problems, ergo, they didn't need treating.

As a fulltime Chronicle writer, I didn't have time to garden either. Already a wildflower lover, I quickly realized no one watered, fed or treated these native plants. Aldine was so rural back then. No one cared if I dug up wildflowers out of ditches and transplanted them to my garden. (*Although they were constantly tattling to Husband (Aldine Head Coach Bill Smith) that "I saw your wife digging in a ditch the other day . . ."*)

The Chronicle sent me to Rodale Farms in PA, mecca for organic gardeners at the very beginning of that movement. I learned a lot, although my main motivation was to eliminate the workload of chemical treatments. So much easier to just let bugs have the plants they wanted. I'd use ones they didn't like.

As a result, quite by accident, I was slightly ahead of both trends: organics and native plants . . . both for entirely the wrong reasons!

I had a writing career, a son with challenges and a husband climbing the Texas high school football success ladder -- all of which left little time for gardening. When, (much to my surprise) the Chronicle elected to continue the column (for over four decades it turned out), I quit referring to my "garden" or "landscape."

I began calling it a "Lazy Gardener Laboratory." My Lazy Gardener motto became:

***If you have a plant with unacceptable levels of insect/disease damage,  
DON'T TREAT!  
Replace that plant with one that doesn't have unacceptable levels  
of insect/disease problems in your area!***

I took neglect of my plants as a serious duty. While writing that column & blog, I never had a watering system or gardening help. How could I recommend something as good for Lazy Gardeners if I was constantly watering, fertilizing, treating for problems, etc.?

Over the years, many plants I tried died. But many survived and survive to this day. I'll take a few of each with me, but I don't have to take many. Almost everything I have reproduced easily in my Lazy Gardener Laboratory.

That doesn't mean, of course, they will in every garden in the Greater Houston area. We have far too huge a variety of soil types, drainage issues, etc.

But I have proven over these past 50 years that it is possible to have a mish-mash mix of really great color without pampering plants. Maybe it's not the most elegant of landscaping. In fact, it's a rather higgledy-piggledy array with little attention paid to design. Ok . . . NO attention paid to design.

But the flowers are plentiful almost year-round, attract a delightful array of wildlife and make (made) driving up or sitting in our back yard a true pleasure. That's really all that matters.

We'll start over. But it will never be the same.

So, to which plants am I saying farewell in my 50-year-old Lazy Gardener Laboratory? Maybe some of these bloomers will be as faithful to you as they have been to me.

Although not all these are in bloom now, as I walk around our yard on this (really warm!) November day, I see my favorite Lazy Gardener friends (in alphabetical order):

Amaryllis, American beautyberry, antique roses, Rangoon creeper, bleeding heart, cannas, Carolina jessamine, coral vine, crinums, crepe myrtles, duranta, firespikes, four o'clocks, giant coneflowers, giant white spider lilies, gingers, hummingbird bush (hamelia), indigofera, iris, lantana, luffa vine, mistflowers, Mexican bauhinia (orchid tree), Mexican heather, oleander, oxalis, Peruvian lily, pink magnolia, plumbago, serissa, shrimp plants, snowbells, sparaxis, swamp sunflowers, sweet autumn clematis, thryallis, Turk's cap, wedelia.

This column will continue in this Newsletter, of course, as I will start a new Lazy Gardener Laboratory and hopefully will continue to receive feedback from such wonderful readers who so generously share via email their gardening experiences, joys & frustrations.

I'd especially like to thank those of you who have written in comments and questions in the past three months since Harvey hit. You made it possible for me to continue this column (never missing a posted deadline) when the rest of my world was falling apart. You'll never know how grateful I am.

In the meantime, might as well end this particular column as I ended that Houston Chronicle article 15 years ago. It still applies as we say goodbye to our 50-year-old home and face a brand new future in a new (to us) home:

*"All that's certain is that we will not be able to grow old in this house as we planned.  
But I still think of her a grande dame. No matter what,  
I'm so grateful she came into my life"*

\* \* \*

***Brenda's column in the LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER  
Is based on her 40+ years as the Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener. To sign up for this free,  
weekly Greater Houston area gardening report or to read past issues, go to www.natureswayresources .com.***

## JOHN'S CORNER

## NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS #29

New studies have found that seeds treated with widely used neonicotinoid's killed or impaired soil life like predatory beetles that eat slugs. As a result, damage from slugs greatly increased, eliminating all benefits and causing harm from the poison treated seeds (Journal of Applied Ecology 2015). A worldwide study has found these toxic chemicals in 75% of all honey samples tested worldwide. These chemicals have now shown up in honey on remote islands with little agriculture (Science News October 2017). Over 800 studies have shown there is limited if any benefit to neonicotinoid treated seeds, and usually they created an economic loss when used. The studies found strong evidence of non-target damage to butterflies, bees, and birds.

In a new book by David Montgomery, PhD, (Growing a Revolution), he reports that farmers using cover crops increase their yields by 79% on average around the world. David Montgomery and his wife Anne will be speaking in Houston in March of 2018. The subject will be the link between the soil microbiome and the human microbiome in our guts.

Speaking of biomes, researchers at the University Medical Center Groningen, The Netherlands has found that imbalanced gut bacteria is the likely cause of many age related diseases linked with chronic inflammation (dementia, cardiovascular issues, strokes, etc.). Toxic chemicals on our food is a major cause of problems with our gut biome. Researchers at Washington University in St. Louis has found that maintaining healthy gut flora helps prevent weight gain, strengthens our immunity to disease, and help prevent other metabolic disorders. This is another reason to raise one own food or shop at local farmers markets and buy only organic.

An article in Dr. Mercola's newsletter reported that broccoli has many chemoprotective properties, and the compound called indolocarbazole (ICZ) binds to and protects our gut lining. Broccoli is an excellent source of phytonutrients, glucosinates, flavonoids, antioxidants, and many other health-boosting compounds. <https://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2017/10/30/broccoli>.

Several studies have recently been published that found the antidepressant Prozac and others, is affecting marine life from crabs to shrimp causing reckless behavior and causing them to fight more. The drugs come from the sewage treatment plants that dump the liquid residue into our rivers and streams without treatment for these drugs, where these streams then flow into the ocean (Journal of Ecology and Evolution). Many crustaceans have relatives that live in the soil hence it is probably affecting them also. Many companies are now composting sewage sludge, which has these same dangerous chemicals, along with toxic heavy metals and selling it for use in our gardens.

More and more research is talking about the benefits of the element silicon (Si) in promoting plant health. Silicon is the second most abundant element in the earth's crust. Silicon has been shown to promote plant growth, increase crop yields, and reduce insect and disease damage. The problem lies in that most of the silicon is combined with oxygen to form quartz minerals, hence the silicon is not available to plants. In the series of article on minerals, we talked about how many trees have the ability to absorb silicon from the soil where it accumulates in the leaves. Well-aged compost made from leaves and produced over a long period of time, is a good source of silicon in a form that plants can absorb. e.g. The "Leaf Mold" compost from Nature's Way Resources.

Some recent studies have found that nitrates dissolve structural silicon in citrus plants, which weakens transport vessels and connective tissue. This makes the host citrus more susceptible to citrus greening disease. The good bacteria *actinomycetes* has been found to help protect citrus trees. This bacterium is found in a well-aged compost like the Leaf Mold mentioned above.

The organization "The Truth About Cancer" states that mineral deficiencies alone can be responsible for many cancers and other diseases. I talked about this issue on the series of articles on the elements. They also state that glyphosate (active ingredient in Round-Up) not only is a carcinogen but that it ties up minerals and prevents us from absorbing them from our food. The most dangerous foods are GMO's that have been modified to have extra glyphosate on them. These include corn, alfalfa, sugar beets, papaya, squash, and potatoes. Some of these also have the BT gene in them that produces a toxin that eats a hole in an insect's guts killing them. I wonder what the BT toxin is doing

to our guts and our biome (contribute to leaky gut syndrome)? Note: Sixty-four (64) countries including China now require labeling of GMO produce due to the dangers they present. Other countries will not even allow GMO's to be grown or sold.

The nutrition issue is why I always recommend to those whom are growing plants for food including fruits to use amendments that have trace minerals. An excellent combination is 50% greensand, 25% basalt sand and 25% granite sand. Typically, one would use about 40 pounds per 1,000 square feet every 4-5 years. I use mineral amendments on all plants from turf grass, to herbs, and even my bananas. It just helps plants grow strong and more resistant to insect and disease problems.

Consumer alert - The Arctic Apple is one of the first GMOs to be marketed directly to consumers instead of farmers. It was created for purely cosmetic purposes to never brown, no matter how old or rotten it is. Browning is one of the ways we know that an apple is going bad and soon may be unsafe to eat. The Arctic Apple was developed using a technology that many scientists worry may have unintended, negative consequences-for our health, and the environment. In other words, it's completely unnecessary. So why make a GMO apple that consumers do not need or want? To generate profits for companies like Intrexon. The only way to show companies like Intrexon that we don't want their GMO apples is to not buy them-and convince grocery stores to not sell them. Paraphrased from The Organic Consumer Association newsletter.

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## LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PLEASE READ BEFORE SUBMITTING AN EVENT TO THIS CALENDAR.**  
**NO EVENTS ARE PICKED UP FROM NEWSLETTERS! SUBMIT WITH REQUEST FOR CALENDAR PUBLICATION**

Events **NOT** submitted in **EXACT** written calendar format below may take 2+ weeks to be posted. After that point, if your event does not appear, please email us. Adult gardening/plants events only

**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!**

THURS., NOV. 16: ANNUAL NATIVE TEXAS PLANT & SEED SWAP & POTLUCK DINNER, 6:15-8:40pm, Houston Arboretum, 4502 Woodway Dr. Free. Native Plant Society of Texas/Houston Chapter event. [npsot.org/wp/houston](http://npsot.org/wp/houston)

SAT. NOV 18: SOIL HEALTH & EVALUATION by JIM GILLIAM, 1-2:30 pm; Galveston County AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free, but reservations requested: [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, for additional details visit [www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

SAT., NOV. 18: PECAN CELEBRATION, 10am-noon Houston Arboretum & Nature Center, 4501 Woodway. \$35. Register: 713-681-8433, [houstonarboretum.org](http://houstonarboretum.org)

SAT., NOV. 18: WINTER WEEDS & PRE-EMERGENT CONTROLS by CINDY CHAMPION, 10am, Wabash Feed & Garden, 4537 N. Shepherd. Free, 713-863-8322, [wabashfeed.com](http://wabashfeed.com)

SUN., NOV 19: MOUNTING PRESSED FERNS ON ARTIST CANVAS by JAN KRAMER, 2pm, Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Dr. Free. Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society event. [tgcfersoc.org](http://tgcfersoc.org)

MON., Nov 20: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER PREC. 2 OPEN GARDEN DAY, 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Houston 77034. Free. Master Gardeners will answer gardening questions. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

TUE., NOV. 21: BROMELIADS IN PASTELS by MARY CINOTTO AND JOHN EDMONSON, 7:30pm, West Gray Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray. Free. Bromeliad Society / Houston event. [bromeliadsocietyhouston.org](http://bromeliadsocietyhouston.org)

WED., NOV. 29: SOIL FOOD WEB - HOW AND WHY ORGANIC METHODS WORK TO SAVE TIME & MONEY by DANIEL MILLIKIN, 6pm, McGovern Centennial Gardens, Hermann Park Conservancy, 1700 Hermann Drive. 713-360-1469

SAT. DEC 2: TURNING DIRT INTO SOIL by JIM GILLIAM, 1-3pm; AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free. Register: [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com), 281-309-5065; [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html)

TUE., DEC 5: CITRUS SEMINAR & TASTING by MONTE NESBITT, 6:30pm; AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free. Register: [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com), 281-309-5065; [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html)

FRI., DEC. 8: 'HOLLY JOLLY' LUNCHEON GALA. SPEAKER: BILL MCKINLEY. 9 am, White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine. Tickets \$30. Houston Federation of Garden clubs event. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)

SAT., DEC 9: GROWING TOMATOES FROM SEED by IRA GERVAIS, 9-11am; JOURNEY OF TWO FRUGAL MASTER GARDENERS: IN THE BEGINNING - PROPAGATION by NANCY LANGSTO & BRENDA SLOUGH, 1-3pm; AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free. Register: [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com), 281-309-5065; [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html)

THURS., DEC. 14: THE YEAR IN REVIEW by DAVID CREECH, 7pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Pineywoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St, Nacogdoches. 936-468-4404 or [sullivanfa@sfasu.edu](mailto:sullivanfa@sfasu.edu)

FRI., JAN. 12: A CAMELIA COLLECTION - RESTORING IMA HOGG'S CAMELIA COLLECTION AT BAYOU BEND by BART BRECHTER. 10 am. White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine, Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)

SUN., JAN. 28: AVOID STARVATION: DEVELOPING THE RIGHT FEEDING PROGRAM FOR PLANTS AND FACTORS THAT MAKE FERTILIZERS INEFFECTIVE by GAYE HAMMOND, 2-3pm. Klein United Methodist Church, Christian Life Center, 5920 FM 2920, Spring. Free. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. [cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com](http://cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com)

FEB 17, 2018: SPRING PLANT SALE PRE-SALE PRESENTATION, 8-8:50am; SPRING PLANT SALE, 9am-1 pm, Location: Galveston County Fairgrounds, Jack Brooks Park-Rodeo Arena, Hwy 6 and Jack Brooks Rd, Hitchcock. 281-309-5065.

SUN., FEB. 25: DAYLILY BLOOM DESCRIPTION by JEANNIE MALLICK, 2pm-3pm. Klein United Methodist Church, Christian Life Center, Room #C112, 5920 FM 2920, Spring, TX 77388. Free. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. [www.cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com](http://www.cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com)

MON., FEB. 26: SOIL FOOD WEB & COMPOST AND MULCHES, 9am-noon, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble. Texas Gulf Coast Gardener program. Register: Jennifer L. Garrison, 713-274-4160

FRI., MAR.9: THOSE ADDORABLE HUMMERS by SUE HEATH. 10 am. White Oak Convention Center., 7603 Antoine. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. houstonfederationgardencubs.org

SUN., MAR. 25: STEWARDSHIP OF THE SOIL by JOHN FERGUSON, 6pm, Sunday Evening Conversations on Creation Webinar, Lisa Brenskelle, brenskelle@aol.com

SUN., MAR. 25: HIBISCUS CARE by MARTI GRAVES, 2pm-3pm. Klein United Methodist Church, Christian Life Center, Room #C112, 5920 FM 2920, Spring, TX 77388. Free. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. www.cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com

FRI., APRIL 13: THE WORLD OF SEED by ANGELA CHANDLER. 10am., White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine, Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. houstonfederationgardencubs.org.

MON., MAY 14: INTRODUCTION TO THE SOIL FOOD WEB by JOHN FERGUSON, 6:30pm, University of Houston at Clear Lake, Forest Room on East of Bayou Building. Native Plant Society of Texas at Clear Lake Martha Richeson, 713-962-7747

FRI. MAY 11: HONEY BEES - JAMES AND CHARI OF BLUEBONNET BEEKEEPERS. 10am. White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. houstonfederationgardencubs.org.

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

**IF WE INSPIRE YOU TO ATTEND ANY OF THESE EVENTS, PLEASE TELL SPONSORS YOU HEARD ABOUT IT IN  
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## Local Farmer Meet And Greet

**Public · Hosted by Nature's Way  
Resources and Peach Creek Poultry**

**Saturday, November 11th from 9am-  
1pm at Nature's Way Resources, 101  
Sherbrook Circle, Conroe TX  
936-321-6990**



Come meet your local farmer and see what they are growing for you. Sign up for weekly pick ups, taste samples, and support your local sustainable farmer.

Peach Creek Poultry will be at Nature's Way Resources on Saturday with their pasture raised, non-gmo, non-soy fed chickens, and will have whole chickens for sale. They will be promoting a weekly pick up at NWR of fresh chicken and eggs, come in and check out their deals.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/146691672617911/>

<https://www.peachcreekpoultry.com/>

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## 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.



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