



October 4, 2013

Dear Friends,

Here is the 30th 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](mailto:lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com). Thanks so much for your interest.

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Enjoy!

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HEY, SEINFELD! "RE-GIFTING" IS A-OK FOR GARDENERS  
- & THE WOODLANDS TOUTS WILDFLOWERS



Top row, view of the Intracoastal Canal from Rita Moseley's balcony and yellow thryallis. Bottom, *Plumeria pudica* 'Bridal Wreath,' Mexican oleander and thryallis close up.

## by BRENDA BEUST SMITH

*Old Wives Tale: "Never say thank you for a plant someone shares with you, or it will die for sure."*

Does anyone know what possessed the "Old Wives" to decree this? I've tried for years to find out. No one seems to know. But it's carved in stone, folks.

Chances are, many of the friends Rita Moseley shared her wealth of flowers with did say thanks. And many of those shared plants survived to make the return trip home as Rita - like all the gardeners on Bolivar Peninsula - rebuilt her devastated gardens after Hurricane Ike.

Re-gifting may have upset the Seinfeld folks. But among gardeners, this is the way it should be.

Now Rita now not only has many of her original plants back, she'll have lots to share at the upcoming plant sale during the Jane Long Festival on Bolivar on Oct. 12. More on that later.

These re-gifted plants make Rita's garden a very feel-good place to be - like the coral fountain plant (*Ruellia*) she gave Paula, a friend-of-a-friend in Beaumont, and the Curcumba (crepe) ginger she gave Vicky Lemonrond of Houston, daughter of Bolivar gardener extraordinaire Gloria Bratton.

Rita has a name to go with so many of her plants - even if all weren't re-gifts. Karen Cantrell of Houston helped her restock rainlilies, amaryllis, variegated shell gingers, hibiscus, blood lilies and her Hong Kong orchid tree. Paula Kay provided a confederate rose, mock orange, bird of paradise and butterfly ginger. Reba Stevens of Spring donated plumerias; Jim Pennington of Vidor a curly willow tree; and Sherrill Shaw of The Woodlands an *esperanza* (*Tecoma stans*) an *esperanza*. Sea hibiscus, shell ginger, butterfly ginger and more plumerias came from down the Jane Long Highway at Gloria Bratton's canal-side garden.

This is what gardening is all about. Looking at your garden and seeing the love of friend misting around the flowers.

That's not to say Rita lost everything forever, altho in the aftermath of Ike, only the palms greeted her return, including Canary Island date palms, San Saba palm and Pigmy Date Palms.

But eventually, from roots and bulbs that survived untold hours under untold feet of salt water, new sprouts appeared from sites that once produced bottle trees, coral tree, erythrina, crinums (giant and pale pink), paperwhite narcissus, gloriosa lilies, amaryllis, Louisiana iris, bleeding heart vine and Norfolk pine. That's truly amazing and a good guide for anyone gardening near salt water.

By the way, as a P.S., Rita's sister Gerry Lang, who lives next door, said her Knockout Roses breezed through Ike with barely a yawn. This is proving a truly amazing plant.



A few of Rita's current September bloomers, clockwise from lower left: white/purple giant crinum, duranta (5-7 foot!), purple duranta, purple *Tibochina grandiflora*, white 'Elephant Ear' hibiscus and orange coral fountain plant.

Bolivar gardeners will share their survivor plants and other donations at the Bay Vue United Methodist Church booth's Plant Sale Oct. 12 during the 4th Annual [Jane Long Festival](http://www.janelongfestival.org) 11am-4:30pm. The free festival is held at historic Fort Travis Seaside Park, near the Bolivar-Galveston ferry landing. A highlight this year will be tours of the re-opened Fort Travis battery and bunker. Details: [www.janelongfestival.org](http://www.janelongfestival.org). Or, email me for an info kit on Jane Long herself plus festival information: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net)

Among the plants they hope to have for sale are bleeding heart vine, esperanza, aloe, ferns, plumerias, agave, milkweed, ice plant, schefflera, hopefully, orchid trees, curly willow trees and a number bulbs including crocosmia (montbretia) and pink and other crinums.

Personal P.S. - If I hadn't given our cousin Dan Smith starts of my beautiful 'Colorado' waterlily for his Tulsa, OK, pond, he wouldn't have been able to 're-gift' it back to me after our new dog pull-out/ate almost every plant in my water garden.

Those are - were! - my pre-dog 'Colorado' waterlilies in the insert shot, and our shared plant blooming so

happily in Dan's water garden.

\* \* \*

Meanwhile, if you've got the plant shopping itch right this minute, the [Bulb and Plant Mart](#) is underway over by Reliant Stadium. Details: <http://www.gchouston.org/>. Time your visit so you can also learn from these great demonstrations:

TODAY (Saturday, October 5) - 11am: Randy Lemon, "The Garden Guy"; 11:30am: Terrariums, Ruthie Kelly, and 1:30pm: Fairy Gardens, Emily Wilde



**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!** The Woodlands Wildflower Festival is set for Saturday, Oct. 19, 10am-2pm at Rob Fleming Park in Village of Creekside Park, The Woodlands. Free wildflower seed is distributed, vendors offer locally-appropriate native plants and exhibits educate about local projects. The key to success with wildflowers is to pick varieties that do well in your area. The seeds they will give away at this festival are great planting suggestions our area, (above, l to r) Texas bluebonnet, cornflower, scarlet flax, and Drummond phlox.

More information on all these sales is included in our **WEEKLY EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR** below.



## PLUMERIAS . . . BIG MOVE . . . FALL INVASION?

Rita did have a plumeria question about what she was seeing on the backside of her variegated leaf variety (above). Perfect timing!

The Plumeria Society of America (based in Houston!) wants everyone to know now that the Garden Center in Hermann Park is closed for exciting renovations, PSA meetings will be held at the West Gray Multi Service Center, 1475 W Gray St, Houston, TX 77019

If you have plumeria questions, this is the place to go. Experts galore who are growing plumerias in your part of town. The next meeting is Tuesday, Oct. 8, 7 p.m. Free and visitors are always welcome.

PSA's Paula Furtwangler says Rita's plumeria has a rust fungus, very common in plumerias in the fall. Spread by wind. Serious plumeria growers often defoliate (remove leaves) from their (often-very-special) plants before storing them for the winter, so they don't have to treat for this. If you're among the many who now just leave their plumerias in the ground all winter, Paula warns it really does no actual harm to the plumeria, it's just unsightly, and it's almost impossible to eliminate all of it. If you only have a little bit, you could try Neem oil.

Another plumeria question came in from Sandy Smith whose plumeria looks like it has burn marks/holes on the leaves. But only on one of four adjacent plants.

Paula wanted to know if she'd sprayed a foliar feed in the middle of the day? Best to do this, she says, early in morning or late in evening. Holes might be a grasshopper or snail. Check undersides of leaves.

The fact that only one of four was affected makes her wonder about:

- \* a drainage problem in that spot?
- \* something in soil at that spot (someone poured something there)?
- \* defective plant in the first place? (Insects/disease attracted to weak plants)

If you take damaged leaves/flowers to the meeting for diagnosis, be sure they're in sealed plastic bags.

\* \* \*

Need a gardening/environmental speaker for your group or school program? Brenda has list of dozens of great horticulture/ecology Upper Texas Gulf Coast area speakers, many of whom are free. Email her for a free copy or for criteria to have your name added as a speaker: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net).

Questions aimed at me can be emailed to [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net) (altho I'll get any you send to this newsletter as well).

#### ARCHIVES OF BRENDA'S COLUMNS:

Link to archives: <http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs172/1112503958110/archive/1112822112421.html>

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

For correspondence that is specific to Brenda, feel free to email her directly at [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net).

## MULCH CORNER

BY JOHN FERGUSON



## MULCH CORNER - LIVING MULCHES

Last Saturday at the Woodlands Landscaping Solutions garden event I was asked by several people how they could economically improve their soil on large acreages. We can do this by using what is known as Living Mulches. Depending on the goal it is also known as cover crops, green manures, etc., and it is done by growing plants just for the purpose of creating organic matter for the soil and they serve very similar purposes hence; many functions and benefits overlap. In general Living mulches are to be mowed and left on top of the soil or left standing, while green manures are to be tilled in. These mulches are generally used in agriculture; however, they can be also be used whenever one wants to improve the soil quality on larger areas.

Living mulches are showing greater and greater promise as we begin to understand natural systems better. Living mulches have many positive environmental aspects that we are beginning to measure and quantify, from reducing erosion, to increasing beneficial insects and microbes, to increasing water infiltration into the soil, and to increasing soil organic matter (humus), and many more. Living mulches are very cost effective for large areas as seen in agriculture such as orchards and vineyards.

For example, an appropriate cover crop (or living mulch) planted in late fall will:

- keep the garden green all winter,
- prevent erosion,
- prevent soil compaction,
- control winter weeds,
- add large amounts of organic matter to the soil,
- control certain insect pests,
- reduce erosion,
- reduce surface water pollution (natural filtration system),
- some species fix large amounts of nitrogen into the soil,
- improve soil structure and tilth,
- store and recycle nutrients,
- increase soil productivity and carrying capacity.
- many types attract beneficial insects which help control pests
- reduces pest species
- facilitate biofumigation to reduce pathogens

New studies have shown that some living mulches (cover crops like crimson clover) can reduce weed seed germination by 27% even after being worked into the soil. The studies also showed that if the nitrogen supplied by the clover was supplied by ammonium nitrate chemical fertilizer, then weed seed germination increased by 75%! Penn State University has been researching living mulches since 1975. New data indicates that living mulches tend to reduce frost damage on many species of plants.

Studies have shown that even a grass cover crop can add over a dry ton of organic matter per year to the soil just from the root mass. In some case this can reach over 5 tons/acre per year with another 1-2 tons from the above ground leaves and stems. Many living mulches can add several times these amounts of organic matter. In addition these plants produce root exudates to stimulate the growth of beneficial microbes (another type of organic matter).

For years many people have sworn by living mulches (cover crops, groundcovers, etc.). Researchers at the USDA in Beltsville, Maryland [HortScience 32(4):659-663 1997] have done studies comparing hairy vetch (*Vicia villosa*, a winter hardy legume) and plastic. The vetch plots had a longer season and produced up to twice as many tomatoes. Vetch is less expensive, more environmentally friendly, and enriches the soil by adding organic matter and nitrogen. Note, ARS scientists found that on tomatoes, growers using vetch had an average increase in profits of 65% compared to those growers using plastic. Other crops that had a strong positive response to vetch mulch were melons, snap beans, peppers, and eggplants. For southern gardens crimson clover (*Trifolium incarnatum*) is a good option (also attracts several beneficial insects). Additional research at the USDA in Beltsville, Maryland [HortScience 31(1):65-73 1996] has shown higher yields and nitrogen levels in tomatoes when a living mulch was used when compared to black plastic even when twice the amount of fertilizer was used.

The USDA has found that snap beans yield in mulches from mixed annual winter legumes were comparable to those when synthetic fertilizer was used and for over 3 years, the yields were higher than conventional tillage systems (HortScience, December 1997). Additionally, the living mulch systems required no water, herbicide, fertilizer or other treatment until they were mowed. Other benefits from the mulch system included no runoff or erosion (HortScience, Vol.32 (7):1191-1193, December 1997).

Research at Kansas State University has shown that yields from muskmelons were much higher when beef manure was combined with living mulches (hairy vetch, Austrian winter pea, alfalfa, and winter wheat) than by using synthetic nitrogen fertilizer (HortScience, Vol. 31(1):62-64, February 1996).

Other studies have found that the type of living mulch affects the availability of nutrients in successive crops. For example, it has been found that red clover produces twice the amount of available nitrogen to successive crops

(i.e. corn) when compared to oats, rye, oilseed radish, etc. Yields of successive crops were also increased.

New research is finding that certain plants when used as living mulches suppress soil borne diseases. For example researchers have found that Sudan grass and sweet corn suppress pathogenic fungus such as Verticillium wilt.

Many types of pathogenic nematodes are suppressed by sudan grass, rapeseed, white mustard, elbon rye, canola, etc. These plants also produce chemicals that are allelopathic or toxic to other plants, hence they can also be used for weed control. Using Tagetes sp. as living mulch has been found to reduce populations of root-lesion nematodes in a few months to a level where they do not cause significant damage. The effects have been found to persist for several years. It was also found that the seed cost for living mulch was about half that of chemical fumigation.

Other studies in the Salinas Valley of California have found that low cost cover crop methods can reduce soil nitrate leaching by 37-70% in intensive vegetable production systems without hurting yields.

In commercial agriculture other factors come into play when using living mulches. Tillage, compaction from farm vehicles, preservation of beneficial insects, etc. are all factors and are beyond the scope of this article. Many new research studies on these issues have been published in the last couple of years and can be found in journals at the local library.

Remember that in using living mulches, as in all plants, repeated use of one species, in one spot, will over time increase the chance that certain diseases may develop in the soil. It is a good practice to rotate the living mulch and even use multiple or mixed species at the same time.

### Using Living Mulch

Living mulch is often used as a cover crop while the main crop is growing. The cover crop will produce old leaves, stems, spent flowers, seed and seed pods, etc. as the plants grow. These are often mowed to keep the cover crop from competing with the main crop, adding organic matter to the soil, and to help build a soil surface mulch layer.

Hay fields, orchards, vineyards and other types of large plantings are getting good results from "Living Mulches". Some types fix nitrogen for the primary crops, others provide a home or attract beneficial insects that control pests in addition to enriching the soil. We need to remember that plants and their root exudates affect the microbes that live in the soil. These affects can often be carried over to the next crop. For example if the living mulch or previous crop stimulates more beneficial microbes then disease or even supplemental nitrogen requirements on the next crop can be reduced. Some of the beneficial metabolites produced can result in enhanced growth of the next crop.

Researchers are also learning that cover crops and living mulches can alter the amount and types of pathogens in the soil. Sometimes the cover crop will release anti-microbial volatile compounds which have a biofumigation effect. This has been well documented with members of the Mustard family (Cruciferae). The gaseous chemicals produced by the plant while it is growing or when it is turned under and decomposing can kill some types of soil microbes including many pathogens. Hence, when the next crop is grown it will experience less disease pressure. Research is beginning on different aspects of natural biofumigation. Biofumigation uses soil microbes to biodegrade a organic material (mulch, root exudates, etc.). Depending on the type of organic matter some of the breakdown products are volatile gases that adversely affect soil borne pathogens. The cruciferae family mentioned above contains compounds called gluosinolates that in the presence of the enzyme myrosinase (occurs in the tissues of microbes or produced by microbes), break down into isothiocyanate, nitriles, carbon disulfide or thiocyanate. Many of these are chemical fumigants with the potential to kill pathogens in the soil. For example a recent study showed that volatile compounds released from soil amended with meadow foam seed meal, completely suppressed sporulation by Phytophthora ramorum and Pythium

irregulare. Soil potting mix amended with only 1% meadow foam seed meal showed striking growth enhancement of conifer seedlings. Another experiment with papaya (*Carica papaya*), meadow foam seed meal at 1% by volume greatly stimulated plant growth without suppressing mycorrhizal formation.

Limitations: Living Mulch is not suitable for crops or plants that are short, shallow rooted, or sensitive to low moisture or drought conditions that could be enhanced by the Living Mulch. Also if the soils are very sandy or other types of low fertility the effects of competition may make living mulches unsuitable.

If used in vegetable production, several studies have found it is best to delay planting of the living mulch until the primary crop is established. It has been found that about 1/3 of the way through the crop cycle works well for many crops.

Some living mulches have different effects on the soil hence different benefits. One type may improve water infiltration into the soil better than another. A courser type plant material may reside on the surface longer since it decomposes at a slower rate. Living mulch with strong tough stalks (lignin) may encourage fungi in the soil while a soft grass living mulch may decompose quickly and encourage bacteria in the soil.

Living mulch can be planted similarly to any other plant seed. A loose friable soil makes a good seedbed. For small areas after the seeds are spread around, lightly raking the soils can help cover the seed and ensure good soil-seed contact. For large areas follow standard agricultural practices for your area.

Some living mulch can be used in winter while others are best suited for hot weather. Also, it is best to keep the living mulch mowed to prevent seeds from forming unless the land is going to lie fallow for a while.

Your local Agricultural Extension offices are often a great source of information on what types will work best on any given soil and appropriate for the time of the year.

## IN THE NEWS:

[Fall maze, pumpkin patch opening in Cleveland](#)

## WEEKLY EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR

October 4-5: Bulb & Plant Mart at Holly Hall Retirement Community, 2000 Holly Hall St. 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Oct. 4; 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. Oct. 5. New this year: a Garden Garage Sale of garden treasures. Sponsored by the Garden Club of Houston. Details: [www.gchouston.org](http://www.gchouston.org)

October 5: Nacogdoches: The SFA Gardens at Stephen F. Austin State University will host its annual Fabulous Fall Festival Plant Sale from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. Saturday, October 5, at the SFA Pineywoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St. in historic Nacogdoches. A wide variety of hard-to-find, "Texas tough" plants will be available, including Texas natives, heirlooms, tropicals, perennials, shrubs, trees, and exclusive Greg Grant and SFA introductions. Most of the plants are extensively trialed in the gardens before being offered to the public and most are produced by the SFA Gardens staff and volunteers. This popular event benefits the SFA Mast Arboretum, Pineywoods Native Plant Center, Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden, Gayla Mize Garden, and educational programs hosted at the gardens. The educational programs at SFA Gardens reach more than 15,000 students ages 1 to 100 on a yearly basis. The public is encouraged to arrive early and bring a wagon. For more information, call (936) 468-4404, or visit [www.sfagardens.sfasu.edu](http://www.sfagardens.sfasu.edu) two weeks before the sale for a list of available plants.

October 5: Enjoy the rustic settings, traditional harvest themes and wholesome fun at either Cornelius Nursery location all day (9 a.m. - 7 p.m.), at our annual Fall Harvest Festival. Your family will find lots of fun activities to do including: Pumpkin Decorating, Story Corner, Mad Science, Pansy Pottin' Station, Birding Craft, Picture Takin' Place, Scarecrow Village, and Creating Fall Landscape Displays" Gardening Clinic at 10:15 a.m. This event takes place at both Cornelius Nursery locations. Learn more a <http://www.calloways.com/cornelius-events>.

October 5-6: Spring Branch African Violet Club, Annual Fall Sale, West Gray Multiservice Center 1475 West Gray Street, Houston, Saturday, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and Sunday, 10:00a.m. - 3:00p.m., Free Admission, Violets of all types such as standards, miniatures, semi-miniatures, and trailers will be available. Other Gesneriads such as Episcias and Streps and supplies such as potting soil, pots, and fertilizers will also be featured. Club members will be available to answer general questions on growing African Violets. For further information, contact Karla Ross, 281-748-8417, [kjwross@yahoo.com](mailto:kjwross@yahoo.com).  
Note: This is our fall sale and does NOT include a show.

October 6: Urban Harvest's Sustainable Living Through Permaculture, Class 2, noon - 5:00 pm. \$50. UH Central Campus, 4361 Wheeler St. Room/Building TBA. For more info: 713-880-5540 or [www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org)

October 8th, 10 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Harris County - Texas A&M AgriLife Extension presents: Growing and Cooking with Herbs, Location: Buchanan's Native Plants, 611 East 11th Street, Houston, for more information: phone: 281-855-5624 or email [Dinora.Galaviz@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:Dinora.Galaviz@ag.tamu.edu)

October 9: Montgomery County Master Gardeners will present "Landscaping with Texas Natives", 7-9 p.m., at the Thomas LeRoy Education Center, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. "Landscape Design with Texas Natives" will be presented by Wm. Alan King, Registered Landscape Architect. "Why Choose Natives?" and "Native Alternatives" will be presented by Diana Foss, Texas Parks and Wildlife. Registration is \$20 per person, due by October 1. Late Registration will be \$25. Door prizes! Registration form and more information available at <http://www.mcmga.com/>, [www.facebook.com/montgomerymastergardenerassociation](http://www.facebook.com/montgomerymastergardenerassociation) or by calling 936-539-7824.

October 10, 2013 at 7:30 p.m - 9:30 pm. "A Vision of Roses...A vision of ARS" will be the topic of the Houston Rose Society Meeting. Note new meeting location: the Parish Hall of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 1819 Heights Blvd, Houston, Texas 77008. Entrance to parking lot is on W 19th Street near Yale St. Our speaker is Pat Shanley, the Vice President of The American Rose Society. Free admission. [www.houstonrose.org](http://www.houstonrose.org)

October 10: Landscaping with Trees at the Pearland Library from 7:00pm - 8:30pm. The class is hosted by Pearland Community Gardens, a program of Keep Pearland Beautiful. Our speaker is Ricky Bryant, former Master Gardener and Tree Enthusiast. Attendees can RSVP at [www.PearlandCommunityGardens.com](http://www.PearlandCommunityGardens.com)

October 12: Plant Sale at the Fourth Annual Jane Long Festival, 11am-4pm, Fort Travis Seashore Park, Bolivar Peninsula, near the Ferry Landing. [www.janelongfestival.org](http://www.janelongfestival.org).

October 12: 2:00 p.m., Class/Workshop at Clown Alley Orchids, "Dividing and Mounting Plants", Lecture,

Demonstration & Workshop. Each student will mount a free plant to take home. Tuition \$25 includes the blooming size plant and mounting materials. Where: Clown Alley Orchids, 3119 Lily Street, Pasadena, 281-991-6841, [www.clownalleyorchids.com](http://www.clownalleyorchids.com)

October 12: 10 a.m., The Calendar Garden Program: Natives for Fall with Mark Bowen. Mark is the General Manager of Nature's Way Resources and a native plant and organic specialist. He will be showing us some great natives to use for fall gardening. Location: 30730 Old Hockley Rd. Magnolia. \*Counts as CE Hours for Master Gardeners. [CLICK HERE to register now!](#)

October 12: Fall Garden Day, A morning of demonstrations, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Office and Gardens, 3033 Bear Creek Drive, Houston, TX 77084, Registration and Refreshments 8:30 a.m. - Demonstrations 9:00 a.m. - noon include:  
Grow Your Own Groceries, Thrillers, Fillers and Spillers, The Scoop on Composting, Fall Lawn Secrets \* Invest in Trees, Coats and Sweaters for Plants, Reproduce with Style. Preregistration \$15.00 - Morning of the event \$20.00 (Includes info booklet and self-propagating Crawford lettuce seedlings for the first 200 registrants). Call David Parish at 281-855-5600 or [dwp@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:dwp@ag.tamu.edu)

October 13: Urban Harvest's Designing Bountiful Gardens Using Permaculture. 12:30 - 5:00 pm. A series of 6 individual classes. \$286 members. \$404 non-members. Various locations. For more info: 713-880-5540 or [www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org)

October 13: Urban Harvest Children's Series: Amazing Cucurbits & Pumpkin Painting. [2 classes] 12:30 - 1:00 pm & 1:30 - 2:00 pm. Free. Urban Harvest Farmers Market, 3000 Richmond Ave @ Eastside. For more info: 713-880-5540 or [www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org)

October 15th, 10 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Harris County - Texas A&M AgriLife Extension presents: Making Living Arrangements with Indoor Plants,  
Location: Buchanan's Native Plants, 611 East 11th Street  
Houston, TX 77008, for more information: phone: 281-855-5624 or email [Dinora.Galaviz@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:Dinora.Galaviz@ag.tamu.edu).

October 16: 10:00 a.m., Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 - 3rd Wednesday Lecture Series will present Gaye Hammond, Houston Rose Society as the speaker. She will be giving a "hands-on" rose propagation class. Free and open to the public. Clear Lake Park meeting room, (on the lakeside), 5001 Nasa Parkway, Seabrook Texas 77586. For more info: 281 855 5600 or <http://hcmga.tami.edu>.

October 17: Urban Harvest's Winter Vegetable Gardening. 6:00 - 8:30 pm. \$24 members. \$36 non-members. United Way Community Resource Center, 50 Waugh Dr. 77007. For more info: 713-880-5540 or [www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org)

October 18th, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Harris County - Texas A&M AgriLife Extension presents: Juicing, Drying & Freezing, location: Culinary Institute LeNotre, 7070 Allensby  
Houston, for more information: phone: 281-855-5624 or email [Dinora.Galaviz@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:Dinora.Galaviz@ag.tamu.edu)

October 18-19 - 41st Annual Herb Fair, South Texas Unit, Herb Society of America, (new location) Bethany Christian Church, 3223 Westheimer, Houston. Oct. 18, 4-7pm; Oct. 19, 8am-1pm. Herb plants, herbal products, crafts, jellies, blends, books, garden supplies, etc. Free growing advice. Special classes: 9 a.m.: Lois Sutton & Pam Harris, "Sitting Pretty - Assembling Herbal Chairs" and 10:30 a.m.: Beth & Jim Murphy, "Small Space Herb Gardens featuring Containers, Sprouts and Propagation Tips." Proceeds benefit local and national herb gardens and education. Details: [www.herbsociety-stu.org](http://www.herbsociety-stu.org)

Oct. 18-19 - Jerry's Jungle Garden Open House and Plant Sale, 9am-5pm both days. Rare and unusual tropical plants. 712 Hill Rd., Houston (832-978-5358 or [jerrysjungle.com](http://jerrysjungle.com)).

October 19: Urban Harvest's Backyard Chickens. 9:00 - 11:00 am. \$24 members. \$36 non-members. Private

Residence East of downtown near Clinton/Waco. For more info: 713-880-5540 or [www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org)

October 19: Free Clinic - Fall Grasses for Texas Gardens, 10:15 a.m. at both Cornelius Nursery locations, 1200 N. Dairy Ashford and 2233 S. Voss, <http://www.calloways.com/clinics>

October 19-20: Peckerwood Garden in Hempstead, TX, would like to let everyone know of their upcoming Fall Open Days. We will be open two weekends, October 19 & 20 and November 9 & 10. Plant sales are from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. Guided garden tours are at 1:00 & 3:00 pm. Tours are \$10.00. The garden is not wheelchair accessible and please, no young children. The Garden is not a "wander at will" type location and is only available through the guided tours. Peckerwood Garden is located at 20571 Hwy. 359 in Hempstead, TX. The phone number is 979-826-3232 and e-mail is [info@peckerwoodgarden.org](mailto:info@peckerwoodgarden.org). We can also be found on Facebook.

October 21: 8:30 a.m.- 11:00 a.m. Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 will host Open Garden Day at their Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd., Houston, TX 77034. Master Gardeners will be on hand to answer your gardening questions. Hours are 8:30 am - 11:00 am with a program on dividing Daylilies, Canna Lillies and Iris at 9:30 am. Free and open to the public. Children invited! For more info: 281 855 5600 or <http://hcmga.tami.edu>

October 22: Urban Harvest's Compost & Compost Teas. 7:00 - 9:00 pm. \$24 members. \$36 non-members. United Way Community Resource Center, 50 Waugh Dr. 77007. For more info: 713-880-5540 or [www.urbanharvest.org](http://www.urbanharvest.org)

October 23 at 7:30 pm - Lecture on "Endangered Cactus & Succulent Species in México and the United States." Presented by Houston Cactus & Succulents Society member Liliana Cracraft at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray, Houston, TX 77019. Free.

Oct. 25: 2nd Annual Sustainable Landscape Conference - A Catalyst Landscapae: Taking the LEED with SITES, 8am-2:15pm, Big Stone Lodge, Dennis Johnson Park. Co-hosted by Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens, this daylong conference will address Houston's explosive growth and the need for the longterm energy and resource-efficient building techniques promoted by the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) developed to encourage low-impact landscape development schemes. For fees and other details, contact The Mercer Society at 281-443-8731, or [msociety@hcp4.net](mailto:msociety@hcp4.net).

Oct 26th OHBA's 'OktOHBAfest'! OHBA's annual party that raises money for college scholarships. This year it is at Buffalo Brewery 6:30 pm - 9:30 pm. Coming in costume gets you a discount. Please go to [www.ohbaonline.org](http://www.ohbaonline.org) to register and see details.

November 1-3: Antique Rose Emporium's 25th Annual Fall Festival of Roses. Free. Programs: Nov. 1 - 11am, Propagation by Glenn Schroeter; 1pm, Grow Roses by Judy Barrett; 2:30pm, Psycho Lighting by Linda Lehmusvirta; 3:30pm, Afternoon Tea. Nov. 2 - 11am, Grandma's Garden by Greg Grant; 1pm, Lawn Gone by Pam Penick; 2:30pm, Bulbs by Chris Wiesinger; 4pm, Fearless Gardening 101 by Felder Rushing. Nov. 3 - Behind Scenes Tour by Mike Shoup. Details: [www.antiqueroseemporium.com](http://www.antiqueroseemporium.com)

November 9th, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Harris County - Texas A&M AgriLife Extension presents: Jams & Jellies for the Holidays Location: Culinary Institute LeNotre, 7070 Allensby, Houston, for more information: phone: 281-855-5624 or email [Dinora.Galaviz@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:Dinora.Galaviz@ag.tamu.edu).

November 9-10: Peckerwood Garden in Hempstead, TX, Fall Open Days. Plant sales are from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. Guided garden tours are at 1:00 & 3:00 pm. Tours are \$10.00. The garden is not wheelchair accessible and please, no young children. The Garden is only available through the guided tours. Peckerwood Garden is located at 20571 Hwy. 359 in Hempstead, TX. The phone number is 979-826-3232 and e-mail is [info@peckerwoodgarden.org](mailto:info@peckerwoodgarden.org).

Submit calendar items to [lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com). Events must be submitted by the sponsoring organization. Please note: "garden calendar request" in the subject line. We list calendar items up to two months ahead of time.

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

## 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 the editor.

## 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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