

LAZY GARDENER AND FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

HOUSTON GARDEN
NEWSLETTER



Sep-15-2023 | Issue 505

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Nature's Way Resources owner John Ferguson, "The Lazy Gardener" Brenda Beust Smith and Pablo Hernandez welcome your feedback and are so grateful to the many horticulturists who contribute their expertise

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Blanket of Purple bee balm (Monarda) are superstars among the successful (finally!) wildflowers blooming in [LEAGUE CITY GARDEN CLUB's](#) community-involved highway median plantings. (Far right, bee balm bloom center. (See below) Lisa Lafaro and Jamie Hart photos

Highways to home plots -- heat, drought putting natives in spotlight

"The weather seems wild to us, but it's nothing our native plants haven't seen before."

-- JANE SEN GUPTA, [Houston Chapter - Native Plant Society of Texas](#)

(QUOTE ON FACEBOOK)

By Brenda Beust Smith

A TREAT! -- for all of us — lessons and suggestions from two knowledgeable folks addressing some of our toughest challenges after this past summer. Don't kid yourself, folks, this may well be harbinger of things to come! Read on...

- Below, **BOB BAILEY** from [Native Plant Society of Texas Pines and Prairies Chapter](#) spotlights great natives to replace our wimps that couldn't take the heat and drought this past summer.

- But first, **LESLIE WONG** of [League City Garden Club](#) will hopefully inspire more groups to be as pro-active as these ambitious gardeners in creating "wildflower heavens" along their local highways. My hat's off to them, What an incredible bunch of never-say-die wildflower lovers!

* * *



WILDFLOWER HIGHWAY PLANTING -- OVERCOMING CHALLENGES!

By **JAMIE HART**

[LEAGUE CITY GARDEN CLUB](#)

Although a project to plant wildflowers along stretch of Hwy 96 at State Highway 3 in League City was initiated in 2012, it never got a good start. Over several years birds ate wildflower seeds tossed into grass, seed balls didn't germinate in the dense-packed soil, accidental mowings . . . yet year after year, a few flowers came up but were very sparse.

In 2020 LCGC joined with City of League City's Vegetation Division. Two signs already announced: "[League City Garden Club's Wildflower Project](#)" Research began to find wildflowers to catch eyes of passersby spring through summer.

We turned to established experts:

- **Katy Prairie Conservancy:** (now [Coastal Prairie Conservancy](#)) how to plant in a prairie;
- [Native Plant Society Of Texas](#): Prairie flower recommendations.
- [TexasPrairie.org](#). who gave us a referral to ...
- [Wildlife Habitat Federation](#) who referred us to ...
- [The City of Fulshear, TX](#) who had created a successful wildflower planting along the Texas Heritage Pkwy. [thpid.org/](#)

Armed with THP's advice to scalp grasses in September and plant seed in October, we adapted plans to our coastal location. We would scalp in October, clear grasses and sow in November to give seed time for needed cold stratification. Seed purchased in bulk

included Texas native and pollinator mixes with an abundance of Bluebonnets. (right)



To ensure color through May, "Texas Natives" included Bluebonnet, Plains Coreopsis, Black Eye Susan, Claspings Coneflower, Indian Blanket, Mexican Hat and Prairie Coneflower. A second mix insured a longer bloom period and more pollinator plants: Purple Prairie Clover, Lemon Mint, White Prairie Clover, Bundleflower, Golden-Wave, Partridge Pea, American Basketflower, Cutleaf Daisy and lots of Butterfly Weed.

The first planting, Winter 2021, bloomed in Spring, 2022. The second year we expanded to Hwy 3's west side. So not to disturb prior year seeds, hand spreaders and a seed drill were used. Soil was tilled on the west side. In the future we will hand-plant and use seed drills so not to disrupt roots or seeds that have fallen from previous plants.

The city crew did the heavy equipment work, scraping the area of all grass and grass seed, tilling and running the seed drill. Fabulous garden club volunteers came out with handheld tools, push seeders, rakes, hoes and bags of seeds. Neighbors donate buckets and bags of native wildflower and milkweed seed.

We had to cross a major thoroughfare, kind of League City's "Autobahn." Once safely across, we began, greeted with whoops and hollers, honks and cheers! Quite a spectacle each November.

We could not be prouder of our patch of Heaven in Spring for our birds, bees, butterflies and all the little pollinators. Two very successful years of beauty — a very impressive show — have resulted in citizen donations in honor and memory of loved ones for Wildflower Project's continuation. With our wonderful city employees, we volunteers are dedicated to making our city a premier destination.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Hwy 96 at SH 3 in League City has no parking or stopping sites to see Wildlife Plantings. Drive-by viewing tips and club members to answer questions can be found at **League City Garden Club's Sat., Sept. 30, 12th Annual "ALONG THE WILDFLOWER TRAIL" Garden Walk**, \$15, 10am-4pm, League City, leaguecitygardenclub.org, leaguecitygardenclub@gmail.com.

* * *

And now, spotlighting folks helping Houston-area gardeners who need to replace summer-killed plants and/or want to become more pro-environment!



IF YOU HAVEN'T YET, TRY NATIVE PLANTS IN YOUR GARDEN!

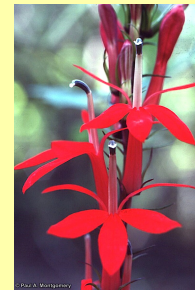
by BOB DAILEY

[Pines and Prairies Chapter of
the Native Plant Society of Texas](#)

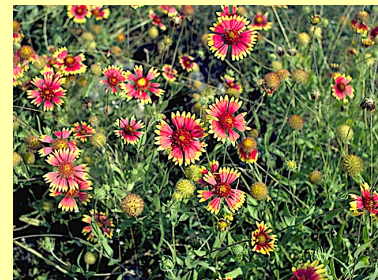
They're diverse. They're beautiful. They're hardy. And they've been around well before humans ever set foot on this continent.

Native plants are drought-tolerant which is great for our gardens, and a great way to save precious water. Bees, butterflies, birds, and countless other wildlife species rely on natives for food and habitat. Native plants don't need fertilizer or other soil amendments. Here are some examples of these magnificent plants.

CARDINAL FLOWER (*Lobelia cardinalis*) is a perennial that can grow up to 6 feet and has bright-red flowers. Native to Montgomery, Grimes and Walker counties, it is also native to parts of Harris County. Hummingbirds especially love the long, tubular flowers. The plant blooms from May through October. Cardinal flowers are cold and heat-tolerant and makes a wonderful addition to your landscape.



GAILLARDIA (*Gaillardia pulchella*), also known as Indian Blanket and Firewheel, is an annual, but it reseeds readily. It can grow up to two feet high, but is usually shorter. Gaillardia can bloom throughout the year if there is enough rain. Without abundant rain, it will generally flower in May through August.



PRAIRIE GAYFLOWER (*Liatris pycnostachya*). Gayfeather has a lot of names – prairie blazing star, Cat-tail blazing star, and the less poetic – Hairy button snakeroot. A member of the Aster Family, gayfeather blooms June through December. The flower spikes vary from pink to purple. It can grow up to six feet tall, but usually reaches three to four feet. It grows well in most soil and is highly drought- and heat-tolerant.



SCARLET SAGE (*Salvia coccinea*). Other names for it are Tropical Sage and Indian Fire. A member of the mint family, scarlet sage can bloom all year, with showy red (or sometimes pink or white) flowers. It grows in full sun, partial shade, or full shade. It can grow in dry or moist soil, even in caliche. It reseeds very easily and is fairly deer-resistant.



GULF MUHLY (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*) A favorite accent or partial edging plant, Gulf muhly

can grow from 1.5 feet to 3 feet. It has a mounded shape when mature. The seed head of muhly is very light and airy and grows on thin stems. When it flowers the purple plumage appears to float above the plant, wafting in the wind. In late fall, the purple flowers will turn to pink.



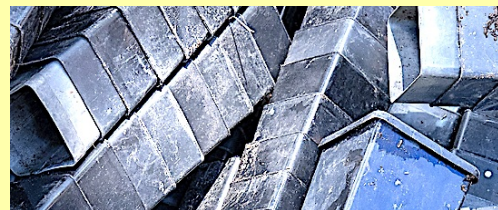
These are only a few of the hundreds of plants that are native to our area. They provide beauty and accent to your garden, can withstand drought and high heat, flourish on the poorest soil and help support our wildlife.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The plants detailed above are among 100+ native plants indigenous to our area selected by the **Pines and Prairies Chapter, Native Plant Society of Texas** for its **SAT., SEPT. 30 FALL PLANT SALE**, 9am-noon at Woodlands Landscaping Solutions, 6464 Creekside Forest Dr., The Woodlands. npsot.org/event/fall-plant-sale/

* * *

Potpourri

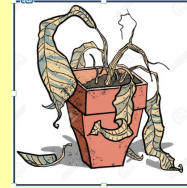
- **TIP O' TROWEL TO WILDSAPES WORKSHOP** for adding a **ZOOM** option to its popular lectures & annual native plant extravaganza meet & plant sale Sat., Sept.23. [DETAILS](#)
- [BAYOU PRESERVATION ASSN.](#)'s [POTS FOR PLOTS](#) project is joined by [HOUSTON BOTANIC GARDEN](#) for a collection of our used and usually-discarded plastic plant pots.



Hopefully **POTS FOR PLOTS** will cut down on the vast number of plastic nursery sale pots that end up in our Bayous, where they wreak a wide variety of havoc, including potential flooding of our homes! For this collection day only (**Sat., Sept. 16, 9am-5pm**) **HBG** is offering free garden entry tickets to the first 50 folks who drop off used plastic pots at **HOUSTON BOTANIC GARDENS** entrance, One Botanic Lane. info@hbg.org. Tickets are valid until Dec. 3 but myriads of HBC activities are planned for Saturday. Pots can also be dropped off at an accessible collection bin near the garden entrance 9am-5pm Fri., Sept. 15-, to Mon., Sept. 18.

- **HUG YOUR HOUSEPLANT WEEK** starts Sunday. Just kidding. It's actually [National Indoor Plant Week](#). (Boring!) Jackie in Pearland asked if it's true potted plants might cause fires. They can, if old potting soil is left in

pots for so long it starts to break down.



Potting soil's aging mixture of chemicals and wood products may well become flammable, especially given our recent heat and drought (or through unthinking disposal of still-smoldering cigarettes, etc). Better to empty out soil.

- **REMEMBER DEWEY COMPTON**? The late radio agriculture/gardening star was a major influence '50s-'70s. Dewey's daughter is searching for daylilies named her dad: *Hemerocallis* 'Dewey Compton' and mom, H. 'Curtis Compton.' Houston at one time was ringed with daylily farms, but so far longtime growers haven't been able to help. Hopefully, a generous reader has some and is willing to share. Records list hybridizer as "Wheeler-B." Strike a cord, Anyone? Email me at lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com.



* * *

Brenda Beust Smith's column is based on her 40+ years
as *Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener* Email: lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com

-- Note: This column's gardening advice focuses **ONLY** on
the Greater Houston area. Personal reports **MUST** include your area.

* * *

* **BRENDA'S "LAZY GARDENER GUIDE"** is no longer sold. However,
free pdf copies available upon request at lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com

NOTE: When sending pictures for potential use in column, please make sure
they are jpegs no larger than 10" wide AND each is identified by its NAME.

* * *

NATURE'S WAY RESOURCES

Fall Garden Festival

DRINKS - SCAVENGER HUNT
FOOD - LIVE MUSIC - VENDORS
DOOR PRIZES

Q&A FEATURING

SKIP RICHTER

Gardenline
with Skip Richter

101 SHERBROOK CIR.
CONROE, TX 77385

OPEN GATE
8 AM

SEPTEMBER 30 | FREE ENTRY



ENJOY THE BEST OF FALL

JOIN US AT THE FALL GARDEN FESTIVAL

SPECIAL GUEST ALERT!
Q&A WITH SKIP RICHTER
RENOWNED HORTICULTURIST & GARDENING EXPERT

LATIN FOOD - LIVE MUSIC - LOCAL VENDORS
ADULT BEVERAGES

KIDS' SCAVENGER HUNT
FUN FOR THE LITTLE GARDENERS

MORNING DEMONSTRATION CLASS AT 9 AM
TOPIC: CREATING ENCHANTING FAIRY GARDENS
LEARN THE MAGIC OF MINIATURE GARDENING

MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND INVITE YOUR FRIENDS!

FOR MORE INFORMATION
VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR CALL 936-273-1200

SEPTEMBER 30 | FREE ENTRY



John's Corner



NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS # 255

Subject: plant viruses, fire ants & fungi, antioxidants and Alzheimer's, native mulches and fire ants, tomatoes

A paper published a few years ago found that plant viruses prefer cultivated areas. Around 50% of all plant diseases are viral in nature, a team of international scientists from France and South Africa discovered (ISME journal 2018).

From their work there have now been 1,400 plant viruses cataloged so far with many yet to be cataloged. The researchers found that plant viruses (diseases) were found much more often in cultivated areas.

A new study published in the journal of Alzheimer's disease by researchers at the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, has found that brains with Alzheimer's disease, have lower dietary levels of lutein, zeaxanthin, lycopene, and vitamin-E.

The report by the Dorey Craft team found that carotenoids which are powerful antioxidants, which are found in colorful plants. Lutein is especially abundant in kale and spinach, and zeaxanthin is highest in corn and orange peppers.

The title of a recent article caught my attention: "Odors produced by soil microbes attract red fire ants to safer nest sites"

For decades we have known that aged (partially composted) native mulches tend to discourage to outright suppress fire ants' populations, while other mulches like barks and dyed mulches since they lack the beneficial fungi, they effectively attract or make good homes for fire ants.

We now know the reason why this occurs.

Newly mated fire ant queens (*Solenopsis invicta*) select nest sites with relatively low pathogen risk by detecting odors produced by soil bacteria that inhibit the growth of the ant infecting fungi.

The researchers found that the fire ant preferred to nest in locations containing actinobacteria, which produce compounds that inhibit the growth of pathogenic fungi harmful to the ants. PLOS Pathogens 2020

Many of us have observed that we do not find fire ants in the forest where there are lots of fungal species present. However, in the sunny grassy areas (bacteria dominated) soils, we also have lots of fire ants (*Solenopsis invicta*).

A new study from researchers at UC Berkely has found that spraying tomatoes with microbes (bacteria) from healthy tomatoes helped protect it from disease. There were two surprises from the study -

1. artificial fertilizers reduced a plants ability to protect itself from disease
2. They discovered that lower doses of transferred bacteria gave better disease suppression than high doses

Journal Current Biology (2023)

God's creation is amazing!

1 Timothy 4:4 (NIV) For everything God created is good, and **nothing is to be rejected** if it is received with thanksgiving,

Job 12:7 (NIV) "But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds of the

air, and they will tell you; 8) or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish of the sea inform you."

YEAR ROUND HARVEST SEASONAL PLANTING OF VEGETABLES & HERBS AND A TOUR OF THE BETTY AND JACOB FRIEDMAN HOLISTIC GARDEN

OHBA

Saturday, October 14th 9-11 AM

The Betty and Jacob Friedman Holistic Garden at Rice University produces over 60 types of vegetables & herbs each year. Planting schedule and choice of variety are essential to the success of this small urban farm. Join us for a tour to learn about plant production, aerobic composting system, structure and management of the solar greenhouse and use of natural areas to include beneficial insects and pollinators.

Rice University at Alumni Drive and Rice Blvd.
6100 University Blvd Houston, TX 77005



FEATURING
JOE NOVAK

LECTURER + DIRECTOR OF THE
BETTY AND JACOB FRIEDMAN
HOLISTIC GARDEN



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LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS
HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER
CALENDAR EVENTS

CALENDAR SUBMISSION RULES PLEASE READ!

- Use **ONLY** this (3-line max) format & style for notice
DAY, DATE: TITLE by NAME (*if talk*), time, address, Fee/free.
Sponsoring group (if not in title). website/phone (**NO MORE!**)
- Only events submitted specifically for LG&F calendar are used
- Actual gardening/plant events only. No harvesting, cooking, etc.
- No events picked up from flyers / NO PDFS! TYPE IN EMAIL
- Submit: lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com. Check published entry!
- All events on-site and in Houston unless otherwise noted

SAT., SEPT. 16: BACKYARD COMPOST WORKSHOP, 9-11am, Missouri City Rec & Tennis Center, 2701 Cypress Point Dr., Missouri City. \$40, Missouri City Green, missouricitygreen.org/upcoming-events.html

SAT., SEPT. 16: THE HOME ORCHARD (Zoom & live class) by **ANGELA CHANDLER**, 9:30-11:30am. Urban Harvest event. urbanharvest.org/stec_event/the-home-orchard/

SAT., SEPT. 16: BULLET PROOF PLANTS by **MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9-11am, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. \$5. 935-539-7824 MCMGA.com.

SAT., SEPT. 16: ORCHID REPOTTING by **JENNIFER BUCKNER**, 10am-noon, Shangri La Botanical Gardens, 2111 West Park Avenue, Orange. \$25. Register: shangrilagardens.org/lecture-workshop-series/

SAT., SEPT. 16: LEARN TO GROW YOUR BEST ORGANIC VEGGIE GARDEN by **MIKE SERANT**, 9-10am, Beauty's Community Garden, Independence Heights area, \$10. [Register](#).

MON, SEPT 18: GENOA FRIENDSHIP OPEN GARDEN DAY, 8:30-11am, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd., Free. Harris County Master Gardeners. hcmga.tamu.edu/open-garden-days-precinct-2-satellite

TUES, SEPT 19: GROWING ROSES IN TEXAS (virtual), 11am-Noon, Free. Harris County Master Gardeners with Harris County Public Library. On Facebook: facebook.com/harriscountypub/events

FRI-SAT., SEPT. 22-23: HOUSTON CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY FALL SHOW & SALE. Friday 9-5 pm, Sat. 9-3 pm. At the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray. hcsstex.org

SAT, SEPT 23: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER WESTSIDE FALL PLANT SALE, 9am-1pm, 3000 Bear Creek Dr. facebook.com/HarrisCountyMasterGardeners

WED., SEPT. 27: XEROPHYTIC BROMELIADS - TOUGH PLANTS YOU MAY LEARN TO LOVE by **DAVID WHIPKEY**, 7pm. Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray.. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society hcsstex.org

SAT., SEPT. 30: 'ALONG THE WILDFLOWER TRAIL' 12th ANNUAL LEAGUE CITY GARDEN CLUB WALK, 10-4, League City. \$15, leaguecitygardenclub.org, leaguecitygardenclub@gmail.com

SAT., SEPT. 30: NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY PINE & PRAIRIES CHAPTER FALL

PLANT SALE, 9am-12pm. 6464 Creekside Forest Drive, The Woodlands.
Woodlands Landscaping Solutions. npsot.org/event/fall-plant-sale/

SAT., OCT. 7: FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FALL VEGETABLE & HERB PLANT SALE, 9am-noon (or sell-out) Bud O'Shieles Community Center, 1330 Band Rd, Rosenberg. fbmg.org; 281-341-7068.

SAT., OCT 7: SFA GARDENS FALL PLANT SALE, 9am -2pm, Stephen F Austin St University's Pinewoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St., Nacogdoches. sfasu.edu/academics/colleges/forestry-agriculture/research. 936-468-4404.

SAT., OCT. 7: MEMBER PROPAGATED PLANT SALE & EXPO, 9am-1pm, Shepherd Community Center, 10251 TX-150, Shepherd. San Jacinto County Master Gardener event. Free. txmg.org/sjmg/calendar-of-events/plant-sale-10-7-23/

MON, OCT 9: TREE AND TREE CARE, 10-11:30am (virtual). Free. Harris County Master Gardeners with Harris County Community College. Register for link: hccs.edu/community-learning-workshops

THURS-SAT. OCT. 12-14: THE GARDEN CLUB OF HOUSTON BULB & PLANT MART, 5-7pm Thurs., 9am-3pm Fri., 9am-1pm Sat., The Church of St. John the Divine, 2450 River Oaks Blvd. Free. gchouston.org

SAT.-SUN., OCT. 14-15: 2023 SOUTHWEST BROMELIAD GUILD SHOW & SALE, Show — 2-5pm Sat. & 11am-3pm Sun., Sale — 9am-5pm Sat. & 11am-3pm Sun., Holiday Inn, 18530 State Hwy 249. Free. bromeliadsocietyhouston.org

SAT, OCT 7: ETHNIC VEGGIES WORKSHOP, 9-10am, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd, \$15. Harris County Master Gardeners. Register: <https://bit.ly/45BAWVd>

SAT. OCT 14: SEED STARTING by **SHARON STINSON**, 10-11:30am. UH Teaching Garden. Urban Harvest event. urbanharvest.org/stec_event/seed-starting/

MON, OCT. 16: GENOA FRIENDSHIP OPEN GARDEN DAY, 8:30-11am, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Road. Free. Harris County Master Gardeners. hcmga.tamu.edu/open-garden-days-precinct-2-satellite

TUES, OCT. 17: TREES AND TREE CARE (virtual), 11am-noon. Free. Harris County Master Gardeners with Harris County Public Library. Watch on Facebook at facebook.com/harriscountypub/events

FRI.-SAT. OCT. 20-21: CLEAR LAKE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY FALL SALE, Fri. 4-6pm; Sat. 8-10am, UH Clear Lake 2700 Bay Area Blvd.

SAT., OCT. 21: THE WOODLANDS GARDEN CLUB ANNUAL FALL PLANT SALE, 9 am, The Woodlands Farmer's Market, 7 Switchbud Pl., The Woodlands. Free. thewoodlandsgardenclub.org

SAT., OCT. 21: 2nd ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL & PLANT SALE, 9am-1pm, Galveston County Master Gardener Discovery Garden, Carbide Park, 4102 Main Street (FM 512), La Marque. txmg.org/galveston, 281-534-3413

SAT, OCT 21: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FALL PLANT SALE

9am- 1pm, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Houston. Pre-orders open online Oct 1-19.
Pickup at sale. hcmga.tamu.edu/shop/

TUES. OCT. 24: NATIVE PLANTS OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS by **MARK MORGENSTERN**, 6-7:30pm. Urban Harvest event.

urbanharvest.org/stec_event/native-plants-of-southeast-texas/

WED., OCT. 25: CACTI OF THE BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, by **JOSEPH RODD**, at 7pm. Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society, hcsstex.org

THURS. OCT. 26: GROWING RARE FRUIT by **RANDALL MOSMAN**, 6-7:30pm. Urban Harvest event. urbanharvest.org/stec_event/growing-rare-fruit/

SAT., OCT. 28: LANDSCAPE DESIGN, 9-11am, \$5. Montgomery County Texas AgriLife Extension 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe. 935-539-7824. MCMGA.com

SAT., OCT. 21: PLANT SALE FUNDRAISER, 9am-1pm, Tapestry UU Church of Houston, 17115 Rustington Rd, Spring. fb.me/e/3RhCuEBHS

WED., NOV 15: PUERTO VALLARTA BOTANICAL GARDEN, by **JOSIE WATTS** and **BRUCE MOFFET**, 7pm. Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society hcsstex.org

FRI., NOV 17: LANDSCAPE SUCCESS - WINTER PROTECTION (virtual) by **FORT BEND MASTER GARDENERS**, 2-3:30pm, Register: [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

*If your event didn't get in right away, one possible reason is you didn't submit it in our **EXACT - NEVER CHANGING** format.*

*These usually take longer to be re-formatted
SEE TOP OF CALENDAR FOR DETAILS.*

* * *



If we inspire you to attend any of these,
please let them know you heard about it in . . .

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lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.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 general feature 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 -- started in the early '70s as a fun side-project to reporting -- it became ranked as the longest-running, continuously-published local newspaper column in the Greater Houston area. The name, she says, is not just fun, it's true.

Brenda's gradual sideways step from general reporting into also doing gardening reporting led first to an 18-year series of when-to-do-what ***Lazy Gardener Calendars***, then to her ***Lazy Gardener's Guide*** book which morphed into her ***Lazy Gardener's Guide on***

CD, which she now emails free upon request.

Brenda became a Harris County Master Gardener and, over the years, served on the boards of many Greater Houston area horticulture organizations. She hosted local radio and TV shows, most notably a 10+-year Lazy Gardener specialty shows on HoustonPBS (Ch. 8) and her call-in "EcoGardening" show on KPFT-FM.

For over three decades, Brenda served as Assistant Production Manager of the **GARDEN CLUB OF AMERICA'S "BULLETIN"** magazine. Although still an active broad-based freelance writer, Brenda's main focus now is **THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER** with John Ferguson and Pablo Hernandez of Nature's Way Resources.

A native of New Orleans and graduate of St. Agnes Academy and the University of Houston, Brenda lives in Humble, TX, and is married to the 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.

About her column, Brenda says: "I don't consider myself a 'garden writer.'" I started out 50+ years ago as a very lazy "gardening reporter." I still feel that way today. I hope my columns inspire/help newcomers, but I do not write to them. I write to very experienced gardeners who want to expand their horizons.

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.

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 and quality control.

Pablo helps this newsletter happen from a technical support standpoint.



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