



OCTOBER 30, 2015

Dear Friends,

Here is the 130th 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. . . Email your thoughts to: lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com. Thanks so much for your interest.

Please or sign yourself up to receive this newsletter by clicking the "Join Our Mailing List" link just below. We will never sell or share our mailing list to protect the privacy of our subscribers.

Enjoy!

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GARDENING WITH - UGH! . . . EDIBLES MENTALITY CHANGE? . . . HERBS TO PLANT NOW

BY BRENDA BEUST SMITH

I have to say, this is a first for me - gardening with rats?

Blech!

Reader Judy H. wrote that she loved [Jere Noerager's squirrel story in last week's newsletter](#). Judy said she was told to throw bananas into staghorn ferns to feed them. But then she was also warned rats will occasionally nest in them.

What's the true story?

Jere, a fern expert, reports he's never heard of rats or mice setting up housekeeping in a staghorn fern. Jere says, and I quote (*since I have zilch experience in this arena*):

"There's no science known to me or any other 'fermophile' I know, regarding the efficacy of (feeding staghorns) banana peels - or any other part of a banana. The loudest complaint I've heard about rodents (rats & mice) is their propensity to 'steal' the sphagnum moss to line their nests, and to cut the fishing line that most of us use

to secure the plant to a plaque."

Any periodomantics out there have other experiences with this?



Being tasty doesn't mean edibles aren't also great in the flower garden! Judy Barrett recommends, above, 1 to r, rosemary, bay laurel, onion chives & garlic chives. Below, 1 to r, mint, oregano, thyme, squash, melons & peppers.



THINKING OF REPLACING LESS SHOWY GARDEN PLANTINGS WITH FRUITS, VEGETABLES & OTHER EDIBLES? Take some tips from Judy Barrett, creator of free organic email newsletter [HomeGrown](http://HomeGrownTexas.com) (HomeGrownTexas.com). In her new book **Easy Edibles - How to Grow & Enjoy Fresh Food** (Texas A&M University Press, www.tamupress.com), Judy includes these recommendations of edibles to use in general landscaping or flower garden beds:

* **ROSEMARY.** Evergreen, use to replace ligustrum or other green shrubs. Pretty flowers and foliage useful in so many ways. Tolerant of drought and poor soil, loves hot sun, doesn't need fertilizing. As Judy points out, however, rosemary needs to be EXTREMELY well drained. To protect it from our Gulf Coast spring and fall monsoons, raise the bed or, even better, plant rosemary in a large pot and sink the pot half-way down into the soil. Presto! Great drainage, beautiful plant.

* **BAY LAUREL** (*Laurus nobilis*). Small tree or large shrub, usually evergreen, often pruned for topiary. Drought-tolerant, insect-free, sun or shade.

* **ONION and/or GARLIC CHIVES** look a lot like monkey grass or liriopse. Onion chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*) have bright pinky-purple flowers. Garlic chives have pinky-purple blooms.

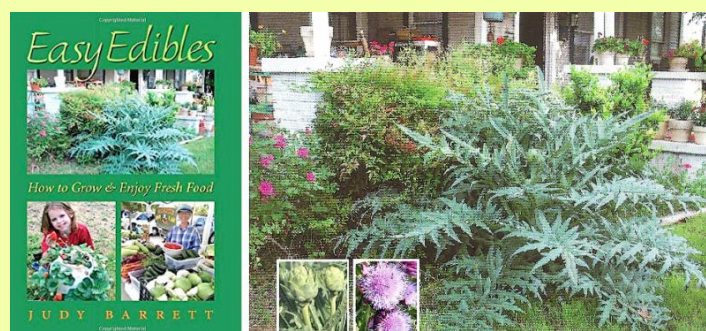
* **MINT. OREGANO, THYME, SQUASH & MELONS** make great groundcovers.

* **TOMATOES & PEPPERS** work well in among almost any informal garden plantings.

* **GLOBE ARTICHOKE** (below). The first time I ever saw artichoke blooming & bearing here was in the garden of good friend and fantastic gardener, the late Odette McMurray.

Talk about show-stoppers! Odette's artichokes were like living sculptures.

Judy says her artichokes do best in poor soil, are rarely watered and even more rarely fed. They don't want to be pampered. But they do need good drainage. They have terrific purple thistle blooms and are guaranteed to draw "What's that?" from passers-by. And, a bonus to using herbs among the flowers? Many emit scents that discourages invading insects.



Above, Judy's book, left. Right, the artichoke, besides being a cover plant, is an eye-popping edible

with beautiful purple flowers and delicious fruit that fits well among already-established landscape plants.

SPEAKING OF HERBS . . . IT'S "HERB FAIR" TIME!

Our Spotlight article below by Susan Wood focuses on cool weather herbs. Winter's our best herb-growing season, ergo, now is the best time to plant most herbs in the ground. Susan has been one of my go-to-herb-gurus for years and a prime mover at the Herb Society of America/South Texas Unit's big annual [Herb Fair](#) - this area's premier herbal event.

The [2015 43rd Annual Herb Fair](#) is Sat., Nov. 14, 9am-2pm, at the West Gray Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray. As always it will include blends, jellies, books, crafts, garden supplies, this area's largest Herb Plant Sale and three free classes:

- * 10 a.m. - "How to Grow & Harvest Cool Weather Herbs" by Susan Wood (Everyone attending Susan's herb talk will get a free seed packet of one of her favorite cool weather herbs.)
- * 11:30 a.m. - "America's First Holiday – Thanksgiving" by Annette Mullendore
- * 1 p.m. - "Pure & Simple: Natural Skin Care Products You Can Make" by Karen Cottingham

New this year is an enticement to purchase many Fair offerings online at [herbsociety-stu.org](#). Anyone who does before Nov. 9 will be admitted early (8am) to the actual Herb Fair. Log on for details. This is a big deal. If you've ever attended an Herb Fair, you know how long that line will be when doors officially open at 9!

Herbs listed in Susan's Spotlight article below will be available at the plant sale, with the exception of borage which will be available as seed in the fair's Sweet Organic Solutions booth.

Susan told me she does have some small borage volunteers blooming in her garden right now . . . "Kind of like [your rogue amaryllis blooms](#)," she added.

Don't you love it? The most predictable aspect of gardening in the Greater Houston area is its all-too-often almost total lack of predictability!

* * *

TIP O' THE TROWEL TO [PECKERWOOD GARDENS](#), the beautiful, world-recognized, 39-acre estate of artist John G Fairey in Hempstead. A [Garden Conservancy](#) site, Peckerwood is one of the 30 American gardens spotlighted in [Rescuing Eden - Preserving America's Historic Gardens](#) by Caroline Seebohm with incredible photography by Curtice Taylor (The Monacelli Press). Caroline will discuss the book's evolution Thurs., Nov. 5, 6-8pm, at Canopy, 3939 Montrose. [Reservation](#) (\$20) deadline is Nov. 2. Peckerwood Garden Conservation Foundation, info@peckerwoodgarden.org.

**AUNTIE MAME: "Peckerwood? Who's Peckerwood?"
BEAU. "Why, that's the name of my little ol' plantation. . ."**

Did you know Peckerwood is named after the Georgia plantation in "Auntie Mame," as well as for the woodpeckers that so love this property?

Who else would tell you these things? Watch our calendar below for Peckerwood's next Conservancy Open Garden Day.

Brenda's column in the "LAZY GARDENER GUIDE ON CD" is based on her 45+ years as the Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener. This PDF book-on-CD is a month-by-month guide on when to do what (plant, fertilize, prune, etc.) in the Greater Houston Area, along with lazy gardener plant recommendations and sample garden designs for sun, shade, butterflies, hummers, herbs, etc. For details, email Brenda at lazygardener@sbcglobal.net





Plant now in our herb gardens: dill, cilantro, nasturtiums and fennel.

MY FAVORITE COOL WEATHER HERBS

by Susan Gail Wood

Herb Society of America/South Texas Unit

I enjoy growing lots of herbs year round to use for fragrance, cooking and beautiful bouquets. My favorite herbs to plant in the fall garden are: cilantro, nasturtiums, borage, fennel and dill.

* Harvest basil before it blooms for best flavor. This means taking cuttings several times during the warm growing season to keep blossoms at bay.

* Fresh **CILANTRO** can be used in place of basil for a delightful pesto. Late October and during November are perfect times to start cilantro from seed or plants in your garden. Cilantro has leaves that resemble flat leaf parsley until the plant is ready to flower.

Start harvesting before the second, thinner set of leaves appear. This is a sign the herb is about to bloom, set seed and die back as is typical of annuals. Cilantro will bolt once the weather warms up next spring. Leave ripe seed on the plant to fall back in the garden and this herb will be your best volunteer next fall.

All the above mentioned favorites will withstand a freeze except for nasturtiums. Water and mulch all your herbs before a hard freeze and cover the nasturtiums. If they don't survive you can always plant more when the danger of frost passes next March. I love the cheery flowers they produce which are edible as well as the peppery leaves.

* **BORAGE** is my favorite herb that you might not be growing, but should. It is the first herb to bloom in early spring with delightful, blue, five pointed star flowers that attract more bees than you can imagine. Everyone talks about saving the bees, but do something - plant borage!

* **FENNEL**, for me, is all about the parsley swallowtail butterflies. They love this herb and you will see lots more of these butterflies if you grow fennel.

* **DILL** and fennel look similar, but dill has a bluish-green leaf whereas fennel is more yellow-green. I love fresh dill on a grilled cheese sandwich. Fennel, not so much, as licorice is not my favorite flavor - I'll leave the fennel for the butterflies!

SAT., NOV. 14: 43rd ANNUAL HERB FAIR, 9am-2pm, West Gray Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray., Free. Herb Society of America/South Texas Unit event. herbsociety-stu.org/annual-herb-fair.html

Herbs listed in Susan's article will be available at the Herb Fair as plants with the exception of borage. Since it's a little early for this favorite, it will be available as seed in the "Sweet Organic Solutions" booth.

JOHN'S CORNER

"What Is A Healthy Soil"



(Part 1)

Several times over the last couple weeks the question "What is a healthy soil?" has come up.

So, what is a healthy soil and how do we get there? Almost every gardening book I read has some definition of a healthy soil. We go to the garden center and we see all these colorful bags making wild claims about how wonderful and great the product is. But is it really?

How many of us have torn a hole in the bag when no one is looking so we can see what is inside? Experienced gardeners know that the large majority of these products are worthless.

So again, what is a healthy soil?

Most folks would say it is a mix of sand, silt, and clay (topsoil) with some organic matter mixed in. But is that always true? What about the microbial content or the air and water in the soil? What about the available nutrients? What form are they in and how are they delivered?

What about the type of organic matter? Is it high quality humus that one gets from good compost or is it sawdust from the local sawmill?

In the last 15 years as our understanding of the tremendous importance of soil microbiology and the role it plays in plant growth and health has changed, it has caused our understanding of a healthy soil to change. I hope every gardener reading this newsletter has read the book "[Teaming With Microbes](#)" by now.

Is a healthy soil for cactus and succulents the same as a healthy soil for blueberries? Is a healthy soil for turf grass (ex. St. Augustine) the same as for trees? Is a healthy soil for bluebonnets the same as a healthy soil for swamp mallows or gingers?

As you can see from the questions above the answer varies depending on what we are growing.

To have healthy soil we have learned that there is three major aspects that need to be looked at:

- 1st. We need to define, what is a healthy soil in relation to the plants we wish to grow
- 2nd. We need to quit destroying it
- 3rd. We need to nourish and replenish it

Hence the answer to the question (What is a healthy soil?) is a combination of the components below:

- 1) Organic matter from almost fresh to totally decomposed in the form of humus (humins, humic and fulmic acids)
- 2) Minerals (nutrients, sand, silt and clay)
- 3) Soil life (microbes and macrobes)
- 4) Air & water
- 5) Plant choices
- 6) Care for and do not destroy the health of the soil one has

Over the next few issues we will look at each of these components in detail as fall and winter are some of the best times for improving one's soil.

Note: On Tuesday December 2nd in the evening the Museum of Natural Science will be showing the new documentary in the I-Max Theater called, "Symphony of The Soil" as part of the year 2015 being called The International Year of The Soil.

* * *

WEEKLY GARDENING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR

TO SUBMIT EVENTS - PLEASE - USE OUR FORMAT!

Find a similar event in our calendar below and copy the format EXACTLY.

Then you can add additional information. Email to lazygardener@sbcglobal.net.

Not using our format will result in a delay in publication! Events will not be picked up from other newsletters.

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

THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS NEWSLETTER!

SAT., OCT. 31: HIGH DENSITY ORCHARD. 9-11am. University of St. Thomas, Malloy Hall, Room 14, 3918 Yoakum Blvd. \$45. Urban Harvest event. 713-880-5540 or urbanharvest.org

SAT., OCT. 31: FRIGHTFUL FUN IN THE GARDEN WITH CLINT THE SNAKE MAN. 10am-noon. Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond, 281-937-9449 and at 2-4pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, Richmond, 281-341-1206. Free. myenchanted.com

SAT., OCT. 31: HOUSTON BONSAI SOCIETY ANNUAL FALL SHOW, 9am-5pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

SAT., OCT. 31: GUNTERS HEIRLOOM VEGETABLES, 9am-1pm, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Rescheduled date. Reservations: <http://arborgate.com>; 281-351-8851

SUN., NOV. 1: HOW TO ROOT A ROSE BY GAYE HAMMOND, 11am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Rescheduled date. Free but reservations required: <http://arborgate.com>; 281-351-8851

MON., NOV. 2: NATIVE PLANTS BY LINDA KNOWLES, 10-11:30am, Amegy Bank Community Room, Tomball. Free. Tomball Garden Club event. tomballgardencub@gmail.com

THURS., NOV. 5: RESCUING EDEN: PRESERVING AMERICA'S HISTORIC GARDENS BY CAROLINE SEEBOHM, 6-8pm, Canopy, 3939 Montrose Blvd. [Reservation \(\\$20\) deadline Nov. 2](#). Peckerwood Garden Conservation Foundation event. info@peckerwoodgarden.org

MON., NOV. 2 & 9: GARDEN DOCENT TRAINING BY JENNIFER GARRISON, 9am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

THURS., NOV. 5: SHADE GARDENING WITH ELIZABETH BARROW. 9:30am, Municipal Utility Building #81, 805 Hidden Canyon Drive, Katy. Free. Nottingham Country Garden Club event. nottinghamgardenclub.org

FRI.-SUN., NOV. 6-8: FALL FESTIVAL OF ROSES, 10am Fri.; 9:30am Sat; 11am Sun. Antique Rose Emporium, 10000 FM 50, Brenham. antiqueroseemporium.com; (979) 836-5548

SAT., NOV. 7: PECKERWOOD GARDEN OPEN DAY. 10am-3pm. Peckerwood Garden, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. Garden Conservancy event. peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; info@peckerwoodgarden.org

SAT., NOV. 7: STARTING A COMMUNITY OR SCHOOL GARDEN WORKSHOP, 8:30am-2:30pm. University of St. Thomas, Malloy Hall, Room 14, 3918 Yoakum Blvd. \$20. Urban Harvest event. 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org.

SAT., NOV. 7: FALL PLANT SALE: DAYLILIES AND OTHER PLANTS, 10am-2 pm., St Andrews Episcopal Church's Fall Festival, 1819 Heights Blvd. Free. Houston Area Daylily Society Event. 281-332-2965 or leslie.j.wong@gmail.com

SAT., NOV. 7: TEXAS ROSE RUSTLERS' FALL CUTTING EXCHANGE, 12:30(ish), Independence General Store, 9400 Lueckemeyer Rd, Independence. Free. TheTexasRoseRustlers@texasroserustlers.com

TUE., NOV. 10: LAKE CREEK CONSERVATION BY GLEN BUCKLEY. 9 am. South County Community Center, 2235 Lake Robbins Dr., The Woodlands. Free. Woodlands Garden Club event. thewoodlandsgardencub.org

WED., NOV. 11: FIRE ANTS & CRAZY ANTS BY DR. PAUL NESTER, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

WED., NOV 11: EDIBLE LANDSCAPES. 10am-2pm. Houston Museum of Natural Science, Moran Hall, 5555 Hermann Park Dr. \$45. Urban Harvest' event. 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org

WED., NOV 11: SUCCULENTS & LICHENS OF KATY PRAIRIE CONSERVANCY LANDS BY WALLACE WARD, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society event. hcsstx.org

THURS., NOV. 12: NEXT YEAR'S WEEKS ROSES, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Houston Rose Society event. www.houstonrose.org

THURS., NOV. 12: PLANTING A WINTER GARDEN & CONTAINER GARDENING FOR THE HOLIDAYS BY DIANE NORMAN, 9:30-11am, Quail Valley Rec and Tennis Center, 2701 Cypress Point Dr., Missouri City. Free. QuailValleyGardenClub.org

FRI., NOV. 13: MOTHS OF TRINITY RIVER REFUGE - GOOD, BAD AND UGLY BY STUART MARCUS, 10:15 am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Dr. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs. houstonfederationgardencubs.org

SAT., NOV. 14: PRUNING/PREPARING FRUITING TREES & VINES FOR WINTER BY BILL ADAMS, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free. arborgate.com; 281-351-8851

SAT., NOV. 14: EDIBLE LANDSCAPES. 9-11am, Houston Museum of Natural Science, Moran Hall, 5555 Hermann Park Dr. \$45. Urban Harvest' event. 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org

SAT., NOV. 14: 43rd ANNUAL HERB FAIR, 9am-2pm, West Gray Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray., Free. Herb Society of

America/South Texas Unit event. www.herbsociety-stu.org

SAT., NOV 14: TREE SALE, 8 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. Kingwood Garden Club, Kingwood Library, 4400 Bens Branch Rd, Kingwood. Free. 281-414-7134. kingwoodgardenclub.org

THURS., NOV. 14: HERBS IN THE GARDEN BY CINDY CROFT, 1-3pm, AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Free. Galveston County Master Gardener event. 281-534-3413; galv@wt.net, www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

SAT., NOV. 14: PRUNING & PREPARING FRUITING TREES & VINES FOR WINTER BY BILL ADAMS, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Reservations: arborgate.com; 281-351-8851

MON., NOV. 16: THE RIGHT TOOL FOR THE RIGHT JOB WITH TRICIA BRADBURY, 6:45-8pm, Brightwater Clubhouse, 2410 Brightwater Dr., Missouri City. Free. Brightwater Garden Club event. brightwatergardenclub.com; 281-403-9269

MON., NOV. 16: OPEN GARDEN DAY & PLANT SALE, 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Free. Harris County Master Gardeners Precinct 2 event. hcmga.tamu.edu

TUES., NOV. 17: THE RIGHT TREE IN THE RIGHT PLACE BY WILLIAM HALDIK, 10am, St. Basil Hall, 702 Burney Road, Sugar Land; 10 am; free; Sugar Land Garden Club event. Sugarlandgardenclub.org

THURS., NOV. 19: CITRUS & HOMEOWNERS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY MONTE NESBITT, 6:30-8:30pm, AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Free. Galveston County Master Gardener event. 281-534-3413; galv@wt.net, www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

TUES., NOV 24: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS OPEN GARDEN DAY & SEMINAR: HOLIDAY PLANT CARE, 9-11:30am, 3033 Bear Creek Dr.. Free. hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/docs/2015-open-garden-days.pdf; 281-855-5600

SAT., DEC. 5: CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE, 3-7pm, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free. arborgate.com; 281-351-8851

SAT., DEC. 5: GROWING CITRUS IN HOUSTON, 9-11am. University of St. Thomas, 3918 Yoakum Blvd. \$45. Urban Harvest event. 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org

SAT., DEC. 5: HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE, 10am-4pm, Buchanan's Native Plants, 611 East 11th Street, free, buchanansplants.com/calendar/events

SAT., DEC. 5: BACKYARD BASICS: FRUIT AND NUTS, 9-11am, Extension Office, 1402 Band Rd., Rosenberg. \$15. Fort Bend AgriLife Extension Service/Fort Bend Master Gardener event. Registration: 281-342-3034, fortbend.agrilife.org/backyard-basics

WED., DEC. 9: CHRISTMAS CRAFTS USING NATURAL PLANT MATERIALS, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

FRI., DEC. 11: A WARM GARDENING WELCOME BY BARBARA BAKER, 10:15 am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Drive. Tickets required. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

SAT., DEC. 19: CHRISTMAS GARDENS BIRD COUNT, 8am, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register at 713-274-4160.

MON., DEC. 21: OPEN GARDEN DAY & PLANT SALE, 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Free. Harris County Master Gardeners Precinct 2 event. hcmga.tamu.edu

FRI., JAN. 8: PERSONALIZING YOUR GARDEN FOCAL POINTS BY DARNELL SCHREIBER, 10:15am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Drive. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

TUE., JAN. 12: FOREST ECOLOGY / TREE CARE BY JOHN ROSS. 9 am. South County Community Center, 2235 Lake Robbins Dr., The Woodlands. Free. Woodlands Garden Club event. www.thewoodlandsgardenclub.org

WED., JAN. 13: TOP BAR BEEHIVES BY DEAN COOK. Noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

THUR., JAN. 14: FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS PREVIEW OF THE FRUIT & CITRUS TREE SALE, 6:30-8:30pm, Bud O'Shieles Community Center, 1330 Band Rd., Rosenberg. Free. 281-341-7068; www.fbmg.org.

SAT., JAN. 16: FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ANNUAL FRUIT & CITRUS TREE SALE, 9am-1pm or sold out, Fort Bend County Fairground Barn-H, 4310 Highway 36S, Rosenberg. 281-341-7068; www.fbmg.org

MONDAYS., JAN. 25-FEB. 29: TEXAS GULF COAST GARDENER, TIER III: THE ART OF LANDSCAPE DESIGN. 9am-3pm. Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. 713-274-4160

SAT., JAN. 30: WALLER COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ANNUAL FRUIT & NUTTREE SALE (and presale pickup), 10am-2pm, 850 Bus 290 N. Hempstead. txmg.org/wallermg

TUE., FEB 9: SHADE BARDENING BY GUDRUM OPPERMAN. 9 am. South County Community Center, 2235 Lake Robbins Dr., The Woodlands. Free. Woodlands Garden Club event. www.thewoodlandsgardenclub.org

WED., FEB. 10: SPRING INTO YOUR LAWN - ORGANIC LAWN CARE & SPRINGTIME PREP BY BOB DAILEY. noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

FRI., FEB. 12: THE HOLISTIC GARDEN, BY DR. JOE NOVAK, 10:15am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Drive. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

SAT., FEB. 20: FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS PREVIEW FOR THE VEGETABLE- HERB PLANT SALE, 9-11am, Bud O'Shieles Community Center, 1330 Band Rd., Rosenberg. Free. 281 341-7068, www.fbmg.org

SAT. FEB. 27: FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ANNUAL VEGETABLE-HERB PLANT SALE, 9am-noon, Fort Bend County Extension Office, 1402 Band Rd., Rosenberg. 281 341-7068, www.fbmj.org

TUES., MAR. 8: EASTER FLORAL DESIGN CONCEPTS BY TONY HUFFMAN. 9 am. South County Community Center, 2235 Lake Robbins Dr., The Woodlands. Free. Woodlands Garden Club event. www.thewoodlandsgardenclub.org

WED. MAR. 9: MARCH MART VOLUNTEER TRAINING, 10:30-11:30am, MARCH MART PREVIEW OF SALE PLANTS, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

FRI., MAR. 11: BULLET PROOF VIBURNUMS FOR THE GULF SOUTH BY DR. DAVID CREECH, 10:15am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Dr. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

WED. MAR. 12: MARCH MART VOLUNTEER TRAINING, 9:30-10:30am, and MARCH MART PREVIEW OF SALE PLANTS, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

FRI.-SAT., MAR. 18-19: MARCH MART, 8am-4pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

TUE., APR. 12: PLANT PROPAGATION TECHNIQUES. 9 am. South County Community Center, 2235 Lake Robbins Dr., The Woodlands. Free. Woodlands Garden Club event. www.thewoodlandsgardenclub.org

FRI., APR. 9: XPLORING CREATIVITY BY LILLIAN RICO, 10:15am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Drive. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

FRI., MAY 13: NIGHT SOUNDS - TWILIGHT WALK THROUGH THE GARDEN BY DEBBIE BANFIELD, 10:15am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Dr. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs; houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

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

THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS NEWSLETTER!

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Events will not be picked up from newsletters.**

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<http://natureswayresources.com/>

ABOUT US

BRENDA BEUST SMITH

WE KNOW HER BEST AS THE LAZY GARDENER . . .

. . . but Brenda Beust Smith is also:

- * a national award-winning writer & editor
- * a nationally-published writer & photographer
- * a national horticultural speaker
- * a former Houston Chronicle reporter

When the Chronicle discontinued Brenda's 45-year-old "Lazy Gardener" print column a couple of years ago, it ranked as the longest-running, continuously-published local newspaper column in the Greater Houston area.

Brenda's gradual sideways step from Chronicle reporter into gardening writing led first to an 18-year series of when-to-do-what Lazy Gardener Calendars, then to her *Lazy Gardener's Guide* book and now to her *Lazy Gardener's Guide* on CD (which retails for \$20. However, \$5 of every sale is returned to the sponsoring group at her speaking engagements).

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

Brenda recently ended her decades-long stint as Production Manager of the Garden Club of America's **BULLETIN** magazine. Although still an active horticulture lecturer and broad-based freelance writer, Brenda's main focus now is **THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER** with John Ferguson and Mark Bowen of Nature's Way Resources.

A native of New Orleans and graduate of St. Agnes Academy and the University of Houston, Brenda lives in Aldine and is married to the now retired Aldine High School Coach Bill Smith. They have one son, Blake.

Regarding this newsletter, Brenda is the lead writer, originator of it and the daily inspiration for it. We so appreciate the way she has made gardening such a fun way to celebrate life together for such a long time.

JOHN FERGUSON

John is a native Houstonian and has over 27 years of business experience. He owns Nature's Way Resources, a composting company that specializes in high quality compost, mulch, and soil mixes. He holds a MS degree in Physics and Geology and is a licensed Soil Scientist in Texas.

John has won many awards in horticulture and environmental issues. He represents the composting industry on the Houston-Galveston Area Council for solid waste. His personal garden has been featured in several horticultural books and "Better Homes and Gardens" magazine. His business has been recognized in the Wall Street Journal for the quality and value of their products. He is a member of the Physics Honor Society and many other professional societies. John is the co-author of the book *Organic Management for the Professional*.

For this newsletter, John contributes articles regularly and is responsible for publishing it.

MARK BOWEN

Mark is a native Houstonian, a horticulturist, certified permaculturist and organic specialist with a background in

garden design, land restoration and organic project management. He is currently the general manager of Nature's Way Resources. Mark is also the co-author of the book *Habitat Gardening for Houston and Southeast Texas*, the author of the book *Naturalistic Landscaping for the Gulf Coast*, co-author of the *Bayou Planting Guide* and contributing landscape designer for the book *Landscaping Homes: Texas*.

With respect to this newsletter, Mark serves as a co-editor and periodic article contributor.

PABLO HERNANDEZ

Pablo Hernandez is the special projects coordinator for Nature's Way Resources. His realm of responsibilities include: serving as a webmaster, IT support, technical problem solving/troubleshooting, metrics management, quality control, and he is a certified compost facility operator.

Pablo helps this newsletter happen from a technical support standpoint.



COUPON: Nature's Way Resources. 20% off our: Garden Mix Light Plus. <http://natureswayresources.com/products.html>

(Offer good for retail purchases of this product by the cubic yard at Nature's Way Resources (101 Sherbrook Circle, Conroe TX). Expires 11/07/15.

COUPON: Nature's Way Resources. 30% off all trees & shrubs including fruit trees, shade trees, antique roses and much

more. (Offer good for retail purchases of this product by the cubic yard at Nature's Way Resources (101 Sherbrook Circle, Conroe TX). Expires 12/31/15.