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November 18, 2016

Dear Friends,

Here is the 182nd issue of our weekly gardening newsletter for Houston, the Gulf Coast and beyond. We really appreciate all of our readers hanging in there with us, sharing stories and inspiring us in so many ways.

Thanks so much!

This newsletter is a project of The Lazy Gardener, Brenda Beust Smith, John Ferguson and Mark Bowen (John and Mark are with Nature's Way Resources). We also have a great supporting cast of contributing writers and technical specialists who will chime in and tweak away regularly. We would love to keep receiving your input on this newsletter . . . comments . . . suggestions . . . questions. . . E mail your thoughts to: lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com. 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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CELEBRATE WITH "TURKEY" FLOWERS . . . STILL A'BLOOMIN' FALL FLOWERS . . . SHOULD-TRY FRUIT TREES

By BRENDA BEUST SMITH

*My Naiads filled it full of fragrant flowers
And fruits, and hallowed it. From my horn now
Good Plenty finds her wealth and riches flow."*

— Achelous, the defeated river god in Ovid's Metamorphoses

It's usually fun to try and tie garden flowers into holiday celebrations. Most of the time, it's easy.

But Thanksgiving poses a major challenge. Lots is available about edible turkey companion foods that that we can grow in our gardens.

But very little is said about the flowers that precede these delicious homegrown fruits and vegetables
I guess when you're worried about survival, flowers are a little beside the point.

Most of the plant-grown foods on our dining room tables have beautiful flowers that appear before fruits and vegetables develop? Why don't we use these as much for color as we do for the edible portions?

Why not let your centerpiece celebrate these flowers along with the vegetables you will be serving?

For such a centerpiece, you need a cornucopia, or "horn of plenty," the traditional "vase" for Thanksgiving. One is easy to make by hollowing out a horn-shaped gourd -- which is what they did before so many plastic ones became available.

This American tradition (the cornucopia) is actually traced back to the ancient Greeks and Romans. With both, the horn of plenty was a familiar symbol of abundance, fertility and prosperity.

Of course, some of these flowers probably aren't available this time of year. But maybe the kiddos could create replicas out of colorful construction paper? Or they could hand draw placemats with pictures of the vegetable or fruit, along with the flowers that precede them? Busy work for kids before the meal?

Maybe if more folks were more aware of how beautiful some of these flowers are, more would plant edibles right in among their other landscape flowers.



**Flowers that come before our favorite Thanksgiving foods,
l to r, cranberry, pumpkin, sweet potato and marshmallow (*Althaea officinalis*).**

As beautiful as the cranberry, left, and marshmallow plant (far right) blooms are, don't get excited about growing them here. Cranberry's woody, low growing perennial vine prefers its colder native environs to the northeast with up to three months of 32-45 degree F temperatures.

Marshmallows originally were made from the roots of *Althaea officinalis*. Not now. Even though this U.S. native wild hibiscus closely resembles many of our own area's native (or hardy) wild mallows, this particular one also prefers prolonged colder states, Arkansas and above.

But they'd be great fun to draw!

Pumpkins and sweet potatoes not only like us, they have wonderful flowers with foliage that also makes a striking groundcover. And you should have good luck with avocados, bell peppers, cauliflower and celery



L to r, avocado, bell peppers, cauliflower (we eat the flowers!) and celery

Now that the climate has warmed up so much and our winters are shorter, avocadoes are bearing well. John Ferguson's gorgeous avocado trees at Nature's Way Resources are proof they can do well in North Harris County as well as in more southern regions.



L to r, corn, green beans, potatoes and onions

Okay, corn's bloom isn't really a "flower." But it's a striking plant and would impress neighbors! Green beans do great, so do potatoes and onions. All these would be beautiful in a garden, wouldn't they?

* * *



L to r, Fran's cassia in Kingwood and, from my files, closeup of cassia blooms.

WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE if our still-long-blooming landscape shrubs and trees will hold their flowers after this weekend's predicted cold spell. Whether they do or not, having such spectacular color this deep into November has been a real treat.

Just ask Fran in Kingwood who recently photographed her gorgeous cassia at left above. (The close-up at right is of one I had for decades.) Definitely a plant to consider as an espalier on a fence or wall, as a small ornamental tree, or as a shrub such as Fran's if you have room to let it grow naturally. Even if you don't, it doesn't mind being pruned into a smaller, tighter-growing shrub. That's how hardy and cooperative it is!

There are lots of cassias and most do well for us. This one is *Cassia corymbosa* or flowery senna.

And, for those of you new to this area, who have never seen such prolific blooms this deep in the November, don't assume it will be like this every year. But also don't think a plant has died if suddenly all the leaves fall off. True, some shrubs may continue bloom through spring. But most prefer a slight dormant period here too. We are a SUBtropical area. We are getting steadily warmer. But we will still have cold winters.

* * *



L to r, Desirable pecan, Shinseiki pear, Fuyu persimmon and Joey avocado

MOVING INTO BEST FRUIT TREE PLANTING AREA: Traditionally January is our prime period for Master Gardener and other organization's fruit tree sales. It's the best planting time, and these sales offer the choicest varieties for this area - right variety being the optimum word for success. Watch for sale listings in our calendar below.

Waller County Master Gardeners (WCMG) are allowing those who can't wait get a jump on choice selections to pre-order, an opportunity ends Nov. 30. Pickup day is Sat., Jan. 28. Orders can be placed at the

Waller County Extension office, 846 6th St., Hempstead. Details: 979-826-7651 or txmg.org/wallermg.

Among varieties that WCMGs say should be used more often in Waller and surrounding counties:

- **DESIRABLE PECAN** -- large flavorful nuts, especially when cross-pollinated with a different variety
- **SHINSEIKI PEAR** -- drought tolerant. Medium sized fruit, round, yellow skin, tasty both when crisp (at harvest) and ripened to softer, but still firm, texture after cold storage.
- **FUYU PERSIMMON** -- sweet, low tannin, eat like apple or use in cooking and baking. Flavor grows even sweeter and flesh softer as ripen. Trees small, easy to grow, insect- & disease-free. This one gets especially high recommendations from MGs.
- **JOEY AVOCADO** -- cold hardy, heavy bearer, medium sized Mexican avocado (6-10 oz), thin purplish-black skin, egg-shaped. Hardy once established. Needs sun & freeze protection first couple of years (or until 8+' high with sufficient foliage to protect trunk. Well drained soil.

**Brenda's column in the free, emailed LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER is based on her 45+ years as the Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener. To sign up: [CLICK HERE](#)*

LG&F GARDEN CALENDAR EVENTS submitted in our EXACT format will be copied & added to calendar right away. Any necessary re-typing/reformatting may take couple of weeks. See calendar for format. Always check the LG&F Newsletter Calendar to make sure your submitted event is listed! If not, let me know!*

JOHN'S CORNER

MINERALS - The Elements and What They Do

Part 4



See the October 21, 2016 Newsletter for list of references and the Periodic Table.

9) Fluorine (Fl) - Fluorine is the 13th most abundant element in the earth's crust. Fluorine is found in igneous rocks at 625 ppm, shale at 740 ppm, sandstone at 270 ppm and fresh water at 0.09 ppm, seawater at 1.3 ppm and soils at 200 ppm. Land plants contain from 0.5 to 40 ppm, marine plants at 4.5 ppm, marine animals at 2.0 ppm, and land animals at 150-500 ppm for the soft tissue and 1,500 ppm in bones and teeth. Fluoride is an essential element for animals and humans.

Fluorine is the most reactive of all the elements and is a pale yellow gas under normal conditions. Many people are confused by the terms fluorine and fluoride. Simply put fluorine is the element and fluoride is the

negative ion of the element fluorine (F^-) which is the form in which it combines with other elements. If calcium combines with fluorine, we call it calcium fluoride (CaF_2) and it is the soft colorful mineral we find in nature that we call fluorite.

Fluoride is a component of many products and is used in manufacturing to produce other products. Fluorine was used to separate uranium isotopes to make atomic bombs and the Nazis used chlorine tri-fluoride (ClF_3) as an incendiary agent in flame-throwers.

Fluorine (C_8F_{17}) is used to make water repellent coatings for fabrics to anti-stick products like Teflon, which contains perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) where the "F" stands for fluorine.

Even though fluorine is useful, both fluorine and fluoride are dangerous. Fluorine gas is extremely toxic and breathing it in concentrations as low as 0.1 % for only a few minutes will kill. Fluoride itself is less toxic although it too is highly poisonous. It is so poisonous it is used as an effective insecticide for cockroaches and ants. Over 150 pesticides contain fluoride due to its extreme toxicity. Fluoride is listed as a major chemical warfare agent by the USA military due to its extreme toxicity.

Even though fluorine is an essential element for animals and humans, it cannot be too much or too little, and it must be in balance with other nutrients. For example, studies have shown that too little fluoride or too much increases the risk of hip fractures. Clinical toxicity is observed as dental fluorosis at 8-20 ppm and chronic systemic toxicity appears when fluoride levels reach 20-80 mg per day over several years. A 1977 study found that there were 10,000 excess cancer deaths per year caused by fluoridation of some water systems. In 1990, an animal study on fluoride found an increase in precancerous lesions in mucus membrane cells, an increase in cancers of oral mucus membranes at double the rate for males compared to females, an increase in thyroid follicular cell tumors and liver cancer.

Fluoride has powerful effects on required enzymes, effectively blocking their activity. Over 72 enzymes are inactivated or destroyed by fluorinated water. Due to its toxic nature, fluoride is often used in drugs and pharmaceuticals. Fluoride is used in many antidepressants of the Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRI) type (ex. Prozac or Zoloft). Increased aluminum (Al) levels in our bodies have been associated with Alzheimer's disease; fluoride helps the body absorb aluminum. A recent study in Ireland found that there was a link of fluorosis and cardiovascular disease ("Dental Fluorosis is a biomarker for coronary heart disease (CHD)", 2013, Takamori). Professor Takamori's research team observed that children with dental fluorosis have a higher incidence of heart damage and an increase in abnormal heart rhythm than those without fluorosis.

If one looks at the periodic table of the elements presented in part one of this series, you will notice that Fluorine is in the same column (2nd from the right) as Iodine (I) which means it has very similar chemical properties. Hence, fluorine competes with and replaces iodine, especially in the thyroid gland, which is a contributing factor to thyroid cancer.

Fluoridation of water increases human and animal absorption of lead, which is associated with many physical and mental problems. Elevated fluorine levels are associated with increased risk of several types of cancer. The National Toxicology Program has concluded based on "the preponderance of evidence" that fluoride chemicals are mutagenic meaning they inflict genetic damage that can trigger cancer.

Landscaping Problems Associated with Fluorine (Fluoride)

Fluoride may be tightly bound to some types of clays and accumulate over time. Too much fluoride retards the growth of plants and reduces crop yields. Corn, maize and apricots are very sensitive to fluoride while asparagus, beans, cabbage, carrots are resistant. In some fluoride rich soils, the grass grown on them is toxic to livestock.

Fluorine affects plant metabolism in many ways: reduces oxygen uptake, causes respiratory disorders, assimilation decreases, reduction in chlorophyll content, inhibits starch synthesis, inhibits pyrophosphatase function (prevents plants from utilizing phosphate properly), alters metabolism of cell organelles, injures cell membranes, disturbs DNA and RNA, causes synthesis of fluoroacetate (a extremely toxic compound).

High levels of fluorine destroy soil organic matter and humic mineral complexes, destroy many enzymatic activities of microbes, and prevent nitrogen fixation by microbes. As little as 0.5 ppm will suppress the natural immune system of plants.

Fluoride is an ion and generally remains in solution and plants are exposed to this chemical by water, air and soil. Fluoride is a poison that accumulates in plant foliage and often leads to toxicity symptoms on sensitive plants. Additionally, it strongly inhibits photosynthesis and other processes in the plant. It is absorbed by the roots (or stomata) and moves through the plant accumulating in the leaf margins. As we continue to water our landscapes with municipal water this poisoning slowly happens over time thus we may not realize why are plants are getting sick and declining or just die suddenly. In previous issues of the newsletter, there are several additional and more detailed articles on fluoride and plant health (10/31/14, 6/19/15, and 8/25/15).

We now know that the studies showing fluoride to prevent cavities were falsified by the companies wanting to get rid of an industrial hazardous wastes resulting from the manufacture of aluminum and phosphate fertilizer production saving them billions of dollars in disposal costs of a hazardous waste.

Sources: tooth paste, sewage sludge, bone meal (up to 1,000 ppm of fluoride), some super phosphate fertilizers, burning coal is a airborne source of fluoride contamination of our soils, water from municipal water supplies

10) Neon (N) - Most people associate neon with the colorful neon lights used in advertizing signs or the orange cast of some types of streetlights. Neon is the least reactive of all the elements. Pure neon is a colorless, odorless, invisible gas and is the 5th most abundant element in the universe.

Since it does not react with anything, it is a member of the group of elements called Noble gases on the far right side of the periodic table. These include helium, neon, argon, krypton, xenon, radon, and Ununoctium, element #118, which is predicted to be a noble gas as it was created in a particle accelerator and only a few atoms there has not been enough to test.

Neon is found in igneous rocks at 0.005 ppm and seawater at 0.00014 ppm. It's primacy usage is in scientific applications.

Due to its inability to react with anything neon is a harmless gas with no biological role for microbes, plants, or animals.

* * *

WEEKLY GARDENING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR

PLEASE READ BEFORE SUBMITTING AN EVENT TO THIS CALENDAR.

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

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

SAT., NOV. 19: ANNUAL ENCHANTED OPEN HOUSE & EVENING, 2-8pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM359, Richmond. Free. myenchanted.com

MON., NOV. 21: STORYTIME IN THE GARDEN, 10:30 am- 11:30 am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160

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

SAT., NOV 26: PECKERWOOD GARDEN OPEN DAY, 10am-2pm tours, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. Garden Conservancy event. peckerwoodgarden.org , 979-826-3232; info@peckerwoodgarden.org

SAT., NOV. 26: ANNUAL ENCHANTED OPEN HOUSE & EVENING, 2-8pm, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, Richmond. Free. myenchanted.com

TUE., NOV 29: TOOL CARE by TIM JAHNKE and HENRY HARRISON, III, 6:30-8:30 pm. AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free, but pre-register: galvcountymgs@gmail.com, 281-534-3413,

NOV 30: WALLER COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FRUIT & NUT TREE SALE PRE-ORDER ENDS. 9am-noon, Extension Office, 846 6th St., Hempstead. 979-826-7651. txmg.org/wallermg

SAT. DEC. 3: THE ARBOR GATE CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE, 2-6pm, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. 281-351-8851. Free; register: arborgate.com

SAT., DEC. 3: GROWING CITRUS IN HOUSTON & S.E. TEXAS, 9:30-11:30am, Houston Museum of Natural Science. \$45. Urban Harvest event. 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org

SAT., DEC 3: HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE, 10am-4pm, Buchanan's Native Plants, 611 E 11th. Free. 713-861-5702; buchanansplants.com/events

SAT., DEC. 3: FRUIT TREES by SCOTT SNODGRASS, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM1750; 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM359, both Richmond. Free. myenchanted.com

SAT., DEC 3: GROWING TOMATOES FROM SEEDS by IRA GERVAIS, 9-11:30 am, & SOIL HEALTH & EVALUATION by JIM GILLIAM, 1-2:30 pm, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free, but pre-register: galvcountymgs@gmail.com; 281-534-3413; aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

WED., DEC. 7: SMALL TREES RECOMMENDED FOR SMALL YARDS by SANDRA DEVALL, 9:30am, C.L. United Methodist Church at 16335 El Camino Real. Gardeners By The Bay event. Free. 281-474-5051

FRI., DEC. 9: HOLLY-JUJAH by JIM JOHNSON, 10am, White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine. \$25 advance sale only. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs eve nt. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

SAT., DEC. 10: WINTER AT MERCER BOTANIC GARDEN, 9am-noon, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

SAT., DEC. 10: CITRUS FEST & Q&A BY DR. BOB RANDALL, 8:30AM-NOON, URBAN HARVEST FARMER'S MARKET, 3000 RICHMOND AVE @ EASTSIDE. URBAN HARVEST EVENT. 713-880-5540, URBANHARVEST.ORG.

SAT., DEC. 10: CITRUS TASTING EVENT by BRAZORIA COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 9am-noon, Agrilife Extension, 21017 CR 171. Free. 979-864-1558; aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/brazoria.

MON., DEC 12: CITRUS SEMINAR & TASTING by MONTE NESBITT, TX A&M Extension Specialist, 6-8 pm, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free, but pre-register: galvcountymgs@gmail.com, 281-534-3413, www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston

WED. DEC. 14: CHRISTMAS CRAFTS USING NATURAL MATERIALS, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Gardens , 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

SAT., DEC 17: PECKERWOOD GARDEN OPEN DAY, 10am-2pm tours, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. Garden Conservancy event. peckerwoodgarden.org , 979-826-3232; info@peckerwoodgarden.org

SAT., DEC. 17: CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, 8am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: albbarr@comcast.net.

MON., DEC. 19: STORYTIME IN THE GARDEN, 10:30 am- 11:30 am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

MON., DEC. 19: WALLER COUNTY MASTER GARDENER TRAINING REGISTRATION DEADLINE. 9am-4pm Saturday classes starting Jan. 14. \$160. Waller County Extension Office. txmg.org/wallermg; wallermgardener2013@gmail.com; 979-826-7651

THURS., JAN. 5: SOILS, FERTILIZERS & OTHER ORGANIC LANDSCAPE SOLUTIONS by LOUIS BENNETT, 10am, MUD Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr, Katy. Free, Nottingham Country Garden Club event. nottinghamgardenclub.org

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

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

MON., JAN. 16: STORYTIME IN THE GARDEN, 10:30-11:30 am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

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

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

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

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

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

SAT., APR. 22: EARTH DAY PARTY FOR THE PLANET, Armand Bayou Nature Center, 8500 Bay Area Blvd., Pasadena.
abnc.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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Sorry, no children's programs. - Submit to: lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

IF WE INSPIRE YOU TO ATTEND ANY OF THESE EVENTS, PLEASE TELL SPONSORS YOU HEARD ABOUT IT IN
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THIS NEWSLETTER IS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS



<http://natureswayresources.com/>

ADOPTABLE DOG OF THE MONTH

DIESEL

Diesel was abandoned by his owners when they moved, and he ended up at Montgomery County Animal Shelter.

Diesel is a American Blue Pittbull Mix and is thought to be about 10 years old.

He knows basic commands- is housebroken and crate trained- loves everyone he meets... Loves bones, treats and squeaky toys- even likes a nice jog. He has a good amount of life to live and would love to have somewhere to spend it. If he has siblings- they have to be female.

Diesel loves to play and socialize and is so much fun to have around.

He is fixed and has all of his shots.

If interested in adopting Diesel, please reply to this newsletter and type "Diesel" in the subject line. Diesel is not at the shelter currently. He is in foster care.



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 Garden Mix

Plus Lite. (Offer good for bulk retail purchases only of this product at 101 Sherbrook Circle, Conroe TX only. Expires 11/28/16)

Confirm that you like this.

Click the "Like" button.