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JUNE 9, 2017

Dear Friends,

Here is the 209TH 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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SAGA OF THE SWEET POTATO AND THE CARROT ... AND HOME CLEANSING TIPS FROM THE JUNGLE

*"I was just sitting here enjoyin' the company.
Plants got a lot to say, if you take the time to listen."
-- Eeyore in "Winnie-the-Pooh" by A. A. Milne*

By BRENDA BEUST SMITH

The best thing you can grow in your garden is a smile. If your plantings don't invoke a grin when you look at, or think about, them, they're not living up to their full potential.

I smiled all through this next related episode. A lthough longtime friend Ron Megow's gardening foray might have "tightened his jaws," it did at least partially fulfill its planting potential.

Ron decided to turn his hand to horticulture. Naturally he asked advice of a "lazy friend expert." Something easy for a hanging basket and a container pot, he said. Something that wouldn't take a lot of effort.

I recommended carrots and sweet potatoes. Not for eating. For easy, fast-appearing, quite attractive foliage that tends to take care of itself with just a little watering. *(Should make his grandchildren smile!)*

Buy a couple of carrots with a bit of greenery at top and several sweet potatoes, I said. Cut off carrot foliage end of the carrots leaving several inches of orange meat. Plant with carrot in soil, greenery above with just a hint of orange carrot meat showing. Plant the sweet potatoes half-in and half-out of the soil.

His carrots sprouted right away. They make lovely upright ferny foliage.

His sweet potatoes rotted. Oops!

Forgot to tell him to plant sweet potatoes whole. Don't peel. Don't cut in half!



Obviously Ron's got the "right stuff" (aka patience) to make a good gardener. Didn't fuss at me at all. He just bought more sweet potatoes and started over.

This time, they worked. All's well that ends well!



P.S. from Ron: *The open bowl at the corner of my house is beginning to flourish. It gets more sun and is more exposed to the weather. It has been at least six years since anything had been grown in this location as Marilyn used to have the green thumb."*

* * *

A TIP O' THE TROWEL TO . . .



L to r, Buffalo Bayou Park, proposed Bolivar Peninsula Nature Trail and proposed Houston Botanic Park.

- **BUFFALO BAYOU PARTNERSHIP.** Buffalo Bayou Park (left above) is one of 25 international finalists in the [Urban Land Institute \(ULI\) 2017 Global Awards for Excellence](#). This year's finalists include three locations in Asia, two in Europe and twenty in North America. Winners will be announced in October. Need a great gift item? ***From Rendering to Reality: The Story of Buffalo Bayou Park*** traces the concepts, people, and unique public private partnership that shaped Buffalo Bayou Park into one of this country's great urban greenspaces. buffalobayou.org
- **BOLIVAR PENINSULA NATURE TRAIL.** Nothing we can do to help Buffalo Bayou Park win. But we can support Houston Audubon Society and its public & nonprofit partners' grant request to establish a Bolivar Peninsula Nature Trail to connect 13 world-class sites on Bolivar Peninsula. Bolivar Peninsula (a ferry ride from Galveston) is on the International Flyway and is a focal point for birders world-wide. The grant sought is part of the State of Texas' coastal restoration campaign. Help with an encouraging email to: rcomments@tceq.texas.gov. Details: houstonaudubon.org/conservation/bolivar-trail.html.
- **HOUSTON BOTANIC GARDEN.** This exciting project proposed for a 120-acre site on I-45S (Gulf Freeway) & Sims Bayou -- between downtown Houston and Hobby Airport -- is right on target calendar-wise but still in the fundraising stage. I'll be sharing more updates, hopefully, in the near future. If you're not already familiar with this ambitious, incredible project, log onto: hbg.org

* * *

OUR SPOTLIGHT BELOW focuses on plants for good health, in particular those a NASA study highlighted as the most efficient on combating " [sick building syndrome](#)." This collective term spotlights the fumes, etc., emitted by modern home and commercial building techniques, products used, furniture processing, etc.

Most recommended plants are commonly listed as houseplants, but in our subtropical climate, they can also serve as patio plantings, and some even as in-ground choices. So don't raise your eyebrows at the listing of gerbera daisies, which is in the NASA recommendations.

Linda Gay is one of our foremost area horticulturists. Former director of Mercer Botanic Gardens, Linda is now a frequent expert consultant on horticulture projects, popular guest speaker and a regular blogger/presenter at The Arbor Gate in Tomball.

Love the clever "Jewels of the Junglelow" title of her upcoming free look at ways to use beautiful tropical plants to clean our indoor spaces: Sat., July 8, 2017 at 10 am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. arborgate.com

* * *

Brenda's column in the **LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER**

Is based on her 40+ years as the Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener

Email questions, comments to her at lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

* * *



L to r, gerbera daisy, maranta (prayer plant), Calathea (zebra plant), Dracaena 'Lemon Lime'

JEWELS OF THE JUNGLELOW

USING BEAUTIFUL TROPICAL PLANTS THAT CLEANSE YOUR INDOOR SPACE

By LINDA GAY

Beauty and Breath is what tropical plants create in our home. You could say we have a symbiotic relationship with plants. They breathe the carbon dioxide we exhale and convert it to crisp, clean air necessary for our health and well-being.

The beauty, the greenness, the delicate and intricate patterns on the leaves of Maranta and Calathea are design worthy and humans recreate their beauty in art form.

Think of your garden outside. Trees and shrubs are protecting you and your property from pollutants and particulates by filtering and dissolving these unseen irritants of our health. Plants have a greater role than to keep the HOA from sending us letters! We must keep our plants healthy so they can successfully continue their role as our green protectors.

This is why green spaces and green plants are so important in densely populated cities, to reduce the toxic emissions of humans. As a city quickly grows and develops, the trees and greenscapes shrink and

disappear.



L to r, green spider plant, bamboo Palm, Dracaena 'Janet Craig' and Spathiphyllum

Building highrises to house us has created new challenges such as indoor pollution caused by materials used to build the structures, resulting in a rise in asthma and respiratory problems with children and immune compromised adults.

Houseplants are regaining popularity because their "special skills" were identified and published by NASA and BECAUSE we LOVE the look and feel of plants in our home.

<https://ntrs.nasa.gov/archive/nasa/casi.ntrs.nasa.gov/19930073077.pdf>

In 1970 NASA's think tank was trying to alleviate the fuel energy crisis by making homes more energy efficient by using superinsulation and reducing fresh air exchange. These redesigned buildings became so airtight coupled with synthetic building and furniture materials started making people sick with itchy eyes, skin rashes, drowsiness, respiratory and sinus congestion, headaches, and other allergy related symptoms.



L to r, Sansevieria (mother-in-law's tongue), Pothos (devil's ivy) and Chinese Evergreen

When growing and caring for these indoor purifiers, we need to keep them healthy by watering well when we do and let soil dry out before watering again. Use a liquid fertilizer half strength and add to the water. Wipe the leaves or shower them off in the sink to keep pests down and the dust off the leaves.

Some of the best indoor plants are: Bamboo Palm, Dracaena Janet Craig, Pothos, Sansevieria, Spathiphyllum, Green Spider Plant and Chinese Evergreen.

* * *

You can contact Linda at lgay4756@gmail.com or talk with her in person at her free "Jewels of the Jungelow" Saturday July 8, 2017 at 10 am, The Arbor Gate , 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. arborgate.com

JOHN'S CORNER

MINERALS - The Elements and What They Do

Part 26



34) Selenium (Se) - In general selenium is found in igneous rocks at 0.05 ppm, shale at 0.6 ppm, sandstone and limestone at 0.05-0.08 ppm, fresh water at 0.02 ppm, sea water at 0.00009 ppm, and soils at 0.2 ppm. However, selenium is not evenly distributed hence much higher levels can occur in some areas while some areas of the earth have none.

Marine plants can have 0.8 ppm, land plants can have 0.2 ppm, and land animals at 1.7 ppm. Selenium has an electrical oxidation state that ranges from -2 to +6, which allows it to combine with many elements creating over 50 known minerals.

The lowest amounts of selenium occur in light sandy soils. Clay soils have the ability to absorb selenium as do organic soils. Soil microbes play an important part in making selenium available for plants to absorb. Selenium is another element that has the property "hormesis" which means small amounts are beneficial and large amounts are bad. It was first discovered that selenium was critical to human health in 1975 by a researcher in Galveston, Texas.

Selenium was first used in pottery to give a red glaze and later as a pigment for dyes to get an orange and maroon color. Selenium was used in many solid-state electronics before silicon and germanium semi-conductors became available.

Selenium photocells were used in photographer's light meters and Xerographic photocopiers and laser printers. They use selenium in a form that when dark it acts as an insulator but when exposed to light it becomes a conductor of electricity.

Selenium sulfide (Se_3S_5) is a common ingredient in dandruff shampoos.

Selenium is an efficient anti-oxidant (anti-peroxidant) and is found in the molecule glutathione peroxidase enzyme system. It prevents body fats from going rancid.

Higher levels of selenium in the blood are associated with a decreased risk of developing liver cancer (American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, International Agency for Research on Cancer, 2016). Many areas of the United States (Texas, southwest, lower southeast, and northwestern mountain states) have very selenium deficient soils hence plants grown in the are also selenium deficient. Medical studies have found that America's "Stroke Belt" runs right across America where selenium content in soils is low. Selenium is important in protecting humans against chronic degenerative diseases, as it is required in the production of powerful antioxidants such as vitamin E and glutathione peroxidase.

The amount of beta-carotene and vitamins C and E contained in herbs (mints), are linked to the amount of selenium in soil. The effectiveness of anti-oxidants in our bodies have also been linked to the presence of this element. Animals and humans obtain selenium from the foods they eat, however, if it is not in the soil then it will not be in the food.

A lack of the mineral selenium leads to muscular dystrophy, cancer, heart disease, cirrhosis of the liver, and cataracts along with cardiomyopathy and joint problems.

Selenium is a co-factor for at least 25 enzymes that cannot function without it. It helps protect the body from DNA damage, and it helps eliminate toxic heavy metals from the body. As long as the body has adequate levels of selenium then the body also rids itself of excess beryllium. Selenium helps protect the body against toxic metal poisoning as it can block heavy metal bioavailability and reduce the toxicity.

Mercury can cause a depletion of selenium in our bodies. Methyl mercury blocks selenium related enzymes from functioning correctly.

Studies show that those with lower selenium levels have much higher incidence of all forms of cancer. Studies of colon cancer survivors with highest levels of selenium were found to be the least likely for reoccurrence.

The body cannot absorb selenium very well in some forms like L-selenomethionine, however one of the best forms for the human body to absorb selenium is from selenium enriched yeasts (fungi).

Cardio-myopathy (heart attacks), white muscle disease in animals, liver spots and age spots are all linked to selenium deficiency. Low levels of selenium have been associated with pancreatic cancer. As we get older, we tend to lose the ability to absorb selenium. As men's level of selenium decrease, their sperm count does also. Some of the health problems and diseases that have been linked to a selenium deficiency are:

- HIV (Aids)
- Anemia (RBC fragility)
- Age spots and Liver spots,
- Fatigue
- Muscular weakness
- Myalgia
- Scoliosis
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Cystic Fibrosis
- Cardiomyopathy
- Multiple Sclerosis (associated with mercury poisoning)
- Heart palpitations
- Irregular heartbeat
- Liver cirrhosis
- Pancreatic atrophy
- Lou Gering's Disease (also with mercury poisoning)
- Alzheimer's disease (with high vegetable oil consumption)
- Infertility, Low birth weight babies
- High infant mortality
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Cancer
- Sickle Cell Anemia

As one Doctor stated, "a high intake of vegetable oils, cooking oils, and margarine concurrent with a selenium deficiency is a quick way to a heart attack".

Most of the selenium we absorb, 50-80% is excreted in our urine. It is not common but excess selenium can cause garlic breath and is the first sign of selenium poisoning.

Selenium in the form hydrogen selenide gas (H_2Se) is extremely toxic.

A few sources of selenium are sodium selenite a simple chemical salt (Na_2SeO_3), Selenium-methyl L-selenocysteine, and high selenium brewer's yeast.

Gardening and Landscaping Problems Associated with Selenium (Se)

Some plants require selenium while other does not. Members of the *Astragalus* family tend to colonize selenium rich soil, as they require it. Some members are known as "Locoweed" due to the high levels of selenium they absorb and its effects on animals whom eat it. Its presence often indicates soils with high selenium levels.

Rhizobium bacteria and root exudates stimulate the oxidation (adds an extra oxygen atom to the molecule) of SeO_3 to SeO_4 which increases the availability of selenium to plants.

Some studies have found that adequate selenium in the soil stimulates the growth of grasses and other plants, while too much can be toxic.

Brassica plants have a high ability to absorb selenium from the soil, as do many mushrooms and ferns that can absorb selenium in larger amounts. The mushroom *Albatrellus pes-caprae* that is a popular food in Italy can have 3,700 ppm of selenium.

Sources: Brazil nuts, free-range turkey and pork, fish, free range eggs, shellfish, some coal ash (10-6,000 ppm), Coconuts

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LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

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., JUNE 10: PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SHOW & SALE, 9:30am-3pm, Bay Area Community Center 5002 E Nasa Pkwy, Seabrook. Free. theplumeriasociety.org; 281-438-3653

SAT., JUNE 10: HOUSTON ARBORETUM AT NIGHT: FROGS by CHRIS BEDNARSKI, 7pm, 4501 Woodway Dr. \$45.
houstonarboretum.org/events/arboretum-at-night-frogs-2017

SAT., JUNE 10: AQUAPONICS: TRY IT AND LIKE IT!, 9-11am, AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe.
 Montgomery County Master Gardener event. 9 until 11. \$5. 936-539-7824; mcmga.com

WED., JUNE 14 : CARNIVOROUS PLANTS, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register:
 713-274-4160.

THURS., JUNE 15: PROPOGATION & SEED SAVING, 6:30pm, Freeman Branch Library, 16616 Diana Lane. Free. Harris County
 Master Gardener event. hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/docs/2017-green-thumb.pdf; 281-855-5600

THURS., JUNE 15: "WATER U DOING HOUSTON?" - WATER CONSERVATION/HARVESTING & RAIN GARDEN by Daniel
 Cunningham, 6:45-8:30pm, Houston Arboretum, 4502 Woodway Dr. Free. Water University, Texas A&M AgriLife; Native Plant
 Society of Texas - Houston event. npsot.org/houston

SAT., JUNE 17: PROPOGATION & SEED SAVING, 10am, Maud Smith Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd. Katy. Free. Free.
 Harris County Master Gardener event. hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/docs/2017-green-thumb.pdf; 281-855-5600

SAT., JUNE 17: FUN WITH FERNS, 10am-noon, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. \$40. Register: 713-
 274-4166.

SAT., JUNE 17: "NEW CALEDONIA - FASCINATING SCIENTIFIC STUDY & BOTANIC RESEARCH TRIP" by ADAM BLACK,
 5pm, 20559 FM 359, Hempstead. \$10. Garden Conservancy event. peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232;
eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

SAT., JUNE 17: PECKERWOOD GARDEN VOLUNTEER TRAINING, 9 am, 20559 FM 359, Hempstead. \$15. Register: Garden
 Conservancy event. peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

SUN., JUNE 18: PLATYCERIUMS: THE STAGHORN FERNS by LARRY RUCKER, 2pm, Judson Robinson Jr. Community
 Center, 2020 Hermann Dr. Free. Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society event. tgcfersoc.org

MON., JUNE 19: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER PRECINCT 2 OPEN GARDEN DAY 8:30 - 11am, Genoa Friendship
 Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Free. hcmga.tamu.edu

TUES., JUNE 20: PROPOGATION & SEED SAVING, 6:30pm, Spring Branch Memorial Library, 930 Corbindale. Free Free. Harris
 County Master Gardener event. hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/docs/2017-green-thumb.pdf; 281-855-5600

TUES., JUNE 20: BROMELIADS DOWN UNDER 2017 by CHARLES BIRDSOING, 7:30pm, West Gray Multi-Service Center, 1475
 W Gray. Free. Bromeliad Society / Houston event. bromeliadsocietyhouston.org

WED-THURS., JUNE 21-22: CULTIVATING THE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM WORKSHOP, 8am-3pm, Gregory Lincoln Education
 Center, 1101 Taft St. \$50. Urban Harvest event. 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org

SAT, JUNE 24, REPOT YOUR 'SPECIALTY PLANT' WORKSHOP by LINDA GAY, 10am. The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920,
 Tomball. Supplies fee. arborgate.com

SAT., JUN 24: SHADE GARDENING , 9-11am, AgriLife Extension Office, 1402 Band Rd, Rosenberg. \$15. Fort Bend County
 Master Gardeners event. fortbend.agrilife.org/gwc/; 281-342-3034; brandy.rader@ag.tamu.edu.

SAT., JUNE 24: PECKERWOOD GARDEN OPEN DAY, AMAZING SUMMER LANDSCAPE. 10am-2pm tours, 20559 FM 359
 Road, Hempstead. \$10. Garden Conservancy event. peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232;
eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

TUES., JUNE 27, HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS OPEN GARDEN DAY & PROPOGATION & SEED SAVING
 SEMINAR, 9-11:30 am, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. Register: ogd.harrishort@gmail.com

WED., JUNE 28: BONSAI WITH SUCCULENTS by RAY GONZALEZ, 7:30 p.m., Metropolitan Multi-Services Center, 1475 West
 Gray. Free. hcsstx.org.

SAT, JULY 1: BUILD YOUR OWN SUCCULENT GARDEN OR REHAB YOUR CURRENT by LINDA GAY, 10am
 Supplies fee. The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball, a rborgate.com

SAT., JULY 1: PECKERWOOD INSIDER TOUR, 10am, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$15. Garden Conservancy event.
 Register: peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

THURS., JULY 6: STROLLER STROLLS, 9-10am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-

274-4160

SAT. JULY 8: CREATE YOUR OWN JUNGLELOW, USING BEAUTIFUL TROPICAL PLANTS THAT CLEANSE YOUR INDOOR SPACE by LINDA GAY, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. arborgate.com

SAT., JULY 8: ALL ABOUT GINGERS, 10-11am, Buchanan's Native Plants, 611 E 11th. Free. 713-861-5702; buchanansplants.com/events

SAT., JULY 8: RAINWATER HARVESTING AND IRRIGATION BY THE HOMEOWNER! 9-11am, AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. \$5. Montgomery County Master Gardener event. 936-539-7824; mcmga.com

SAT., JUL 8: PECKERWOOD GARDEN OPEN DAY, AMAZING SUMMER LANDSCAPE. 10am-2pm tours, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. Garden Conservancy event. peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

TUES., JULY 11: GROWING PLUMERIAS, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org; 281-438-3653

WED., JULY 12: EASY EDIBLES, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

THURS., JULY 13: A BRIGHT SPOT IN THE HEART OF TYLER by GREG GRANT, 7pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Pineywoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St, Nacogdoches. 936-468-4404 or sullivanfa@sfasu.edu

THURS., JULY 13: HOUSTON ROSE SOCIETY ICE CREAM SOCIAL, 7-9pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. houstonrose.org

SAT., JULY 15: GREAT PEPPER EXTRAVAGANZA - PRESENTATION & TASTING, 9am-Noon, AgriLife Extension Bldg., Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free, but pre-register: galvcountrymgs@gmail.com, 281-534-3413, www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html

SAT., JUL 15: EVENING AT PECKERWOOD, 5pm, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. Garden Conservancy event. Register: peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

SAT., JULY 15: PATIO, PORCH AND POOL CONTAINER GARDENING by LINDA GAY, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. arborgate.com

SAT., JULY 15: TEXAS ROSE RUSTLERS ANNUAL MEET, 9am-4pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: texasroserustlers.com

SAT., JUL 15: FRUIT TREES , 9-11am, AgriLife Extension Office, 1402 Band Rd, Rosenberg. \$15. Fort Bend County Master Gardeners event. fortbend.agrilife.org/gwc/; 281-342-3034; brandy.rader@ag.tamu.edu

WED., JULY 19: OHBA: ORGANICS AT MERCER, 5:30pm-8pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. \$15. Register: ohbaonline.org

SAT., JULY 22: GINGERS IN YOUR GARDEN, 10am-noon, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. \$40. Register: 713-274-4166.

SAT., JULY 22: PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SHOW & SALE, 9:30am-3pm, Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, 4310 TX-36, theplumeriasociety.org; 281-438-3653, Rosenberg. Free.

SAT., JUL 22: PECKERWOOD GARDEN DAY, 10am-2pm tours, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. Garden Conservancy event. peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

WED., AUG. 2: MERCER STUDENT RESEARCH & EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM, 5:30 pm-8pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

THURS., AUG. 3: STROLLER STROLLS, 9-10am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

FRI., AUG. 4: PROJECT LEARNING TREE, 9am-4pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: plttexas.org

WED., AUG. 9: MERCER STUDENT RESEARCH & EDUCATION SYMPOSIUM ENCORE noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

THURS., AUG. 10: THE GREATER ATLANTA POLLINATOR PARTNERSHIP: A MODEL OF URBAN POLLINATOR

CONSERVATION by JENNY CRUSE SANDERS, 7pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Pinewoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St, Nacogdoches. 936-468-4404 or sullivanfa@sfasu.edu

SAT., AUG. 26: GARDEN TO VASE, 10am-noon, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. \$40. Register: 713-274-4166.

THURS., SEPT. 7: STROLLER STROLLS, 9-10am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

WED., SEPT. 13: THE MERCER SOCIETY'S OPEN GREENHOUSE, 10am-noon, and YOUR GARDEN & CLIMATE CHANGE, noon, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free.

THURS., SEPT. 14: FROM OVER THE TOP TO DOWN UNDER, ADVENTURES IN HORTICULTURE by GEORGE HULL, 7pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Pinewoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St, Nacogdoches. 936-468-4404 or sullivanfa@sfasu.edu

THURS., SEPT. 21-24: MASTER COMPOSTER TRAINING, Green Building Resource Center, 1002 Washington Ave. \$40. Green Building Resource Center. Register: 832-394-9050; steve.stelzer@houstontx.gov; codegreenhouston.org

SAT., OCT. 7: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FALL PLANT SALE, Bear Creek Garden, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 281-855-5600

TUES., OCT. 10: GROWING PLUMERIAS, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org; 281-438-3653

THURS., OCT. 12: MOORE FARMS BOTANICAL GARDEN: A GERMINATING SUCCESS by REBECCA TURK, 7pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Pinewoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St, Nacogdoches. 936-468-4404 or sullivanfa@sfasu.edu

THURS.-SAT., OCT. 12-14: 2017 BULB & PLANT MART. Garden Club of Houston event.

THURS., NOV. 9: MAGNOLIAS: QUEEN OF THE GARDEN by ANDREW BUNTING, 7pm, Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Building, Pinewoods Native Plant Center, 2900 Raguet St, Nacogdoches. 936-468-4404 or sullivanfa@sfasu.edu

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

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

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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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ABOUT US

BRENDA BEUST SMITH

WE KNOW HER BEST AS THE LAZY GARDENER . . .

. . . but Brenda Beust Smith is also:

- * a national award-winning writer & editor
- * a nationally-published writer & photographer

- * a national horticultural speaker
- * a former Houston Chronicle reporter

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

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

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

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

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

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

JOHN FERGUSON

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

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

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

MARK BOWEN

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

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

PABLO HERNANDEZ

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

Pablo helps this newsletter happen from a technical support standpoint.



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