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DECEMBER 4, 2017

Dear Friends,

Here is the 232nd 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.

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BOUGAINVILLEA . . . R-E-S-P-E-C-T & PATIENCE, THAT'S THE KEY

By **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

Sometimes it's just really fun to do a column solely for the reason that I love looking at the pictures. This is such a column.

Decades ago I wrote in a Houston Chronicle Lazy Gardener column that fuchsias are wonderful winter bloomers for us. But don't expect them to last through our summer heat. Good friend Clint Horne was amazed. His fuchsia, he said back then, bloomed all summer on his T.C. Jester area patio.

To say I was dubious put it mildly. No gardening expert I knew back then would believe that cold-loving, heat-hating hanging basket favorite of gardens far north of Houston would survive our blasting hot sun. A winter annual, it was recommended back then as we do pansies. I figured Clint was mis-identifying the plant.

Come height of summer, Clint & his wife Mary Alice invited us over for a party. Put me in my place. Hanging from his eaves was one gorgeous fuchsia.

Lesson learned & never forgotten. Never say never when it comes gardening in Houston!

Since then, I've marveled continuously at Clint's steadily growing container garden, now an incredibly colorful patio/ driveway edge enclave in Katy. That fuchsia did survive our summer heat beautifully and then some. But its loss has been overshadowed now by an outstanding collection of neatly controlled bougainvillea, mixed in with other plants bought, received or sentimental, such as the philodendron from Mary Alice's father's funeral. They all seem happy together.



The first bougainvillea was a gift 30 +/- years ago. Clint found them so easy, and so in keeping with the Southwestern décor the Hornes favor, now 17 potted bougainvilleas cycle in and out of bloom all summer and fall. At this writing, he reports, 15 of these are in full bloom. Fall is by far his most productive period.

When a quick freeze is forecast, wife Mary Alice covers them with sheets. When winter gets serious, Clint moves them all into the garage, baskets hanging from rods stretched across the ceiling, potted ones nestled together on the floor.

Clint still waters, but less often. Most of the time they're watered regularly. But the excellent drainage they require is with the well-draining hanging baskets and/or pots with drainage holes (set up on broken pottery to provide good air circulation underneath).

I plan to take a page out of Clint's book and use container far more than I did in my Harvey-stolen 50-year-old [Lazy Gardener's Laboratory](#) -- at least in the immediate future. This will be a new adventure for me. My idea of Lazy Gardening is to put it in the ground (in the right spot) and from that point on, it's between that plant & God. If a plant can't take my total neglect, I just didn't replant it.

So not only is Clint guiding necessary repairs/changes on our newly-purchased house (as he has done all restoration after our multiple floods!), now he's influencing my gardening! Mary Alice Horne (Keller Williams) has been our guiding light Realtor, patiently leading us through the overwhelming labyrinth of paperwork). Between the two of them, we have remained relatively sane, if not always totally coherent, recovering from the loss of our 50-year-old home & landscape.

At the Horne's now Katy-based potted paradise, not surprisingly orange is a prevalent color - and, boy, does bougainvillea provide a "whomp" to warm the cockles of a fanatical UT fan. Here, though, Clint doesn't play favorites. Hot pinks, reds and purples are as vibrant as the Longhorn burnt orange in accessories. The neon bougainvilleas are all the brighter with the use of patio furniture sprayed black. One of his favorite containers is his Happy Horn, a decorative pot holder that keeps a smile in his garden.

Not only is fall the peak bloom period time, Clint worries less about the plants after the beating they take during summer when he waters daily & feeds monthly.



"Happy Horn," center, is a whimsical planter -- a gift from his daughter -- that Longhorn fanatic Clint says always makes him smile!

Patience is the key, he notes. Bougainvilleas are treated rather brutally in order to produce the long-lasting blooms that make them so popular on nursery shelves. Then gardeners get them home, blooms fall off and plants go into a recuperative period. Difficult for gardeners, but necessary for the plants, Clint warns. Just cut off the dead parts and then be patient. He's continued to water and feed "dead-looking" plants for long periods and, he insists, they've always come back.

I suspect one reason Clint's tendency to pinch branch tips is one reason they bloom so well. Constant pinching of overly-enthusiastic growth forces more lush internal growth (translation: more color), and stops plants from grabbing guests walking down the driveway.

But Clint does so with great respect for bougainvillea's thorns. How often does he prune? No schedule. Just whenever a branch reaches out too far. And, no, he doesn't get stuck when he prunes. He pinches tips just from the outside. He's not about to poke his hand down in a plant, he says. "They'd eat it alive!"

* * *

- **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR AUDUBON'S 118th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT.** Experienced and beginning birders of all ages will collect data Dec. 14 to Jan. 5 for the National Audubon Society's national database. Novices are grouped with foremost birding experts. Details: HoustonAudubon.org.
- **TIP O' THE TROWEL TO BUFFALO BAYOU PARK, A WINNER** of the Urban Land Institute's 2017-2018 Global Award for Excellence. Houston's exciting new 2.3-mile long park is one of only Bayou Park has been selected as one of only thirteen international winners. ULI's jury represents a multidisciplinary collection of real estate development expertise, including finance, land planning, development, public affairs, design, and other professional services. Over 15 miles of pedestrian and bike paths explore the restored ecology of the bayou. www.buffalobayou.org.

*Brenda's column in the **LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER** is based on her 40+ years as the Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener. To sign up for this free, weekly Greater Houston area gardening report or to read past issues, go to www.natureswayresources.com.*

JOHN'S CORNER

Book Review: Growing A Revolution - Bringing Our Soils Back to Life

"Growing A Revolution: Bringing Our Soils Back to Life", David R. Montgomery, W.W. Norton and Company, 2017, ISBN: 978-0-393-608328

This is David's forth book that I am aware of and explores the environmental crossroads we are at in agriculture. His research show us the problems caused by toxic chemical agriculture and the solutions that exist right under our noses.

As David explained in the book "Dirt", every civilization that has failed throughout history did so because they did not take care of their soil. Toxic chemical agriculture is failing all over the world, from super weeds, low nutrient density food, chemical poisoning, environmental pollution, and rising costs.

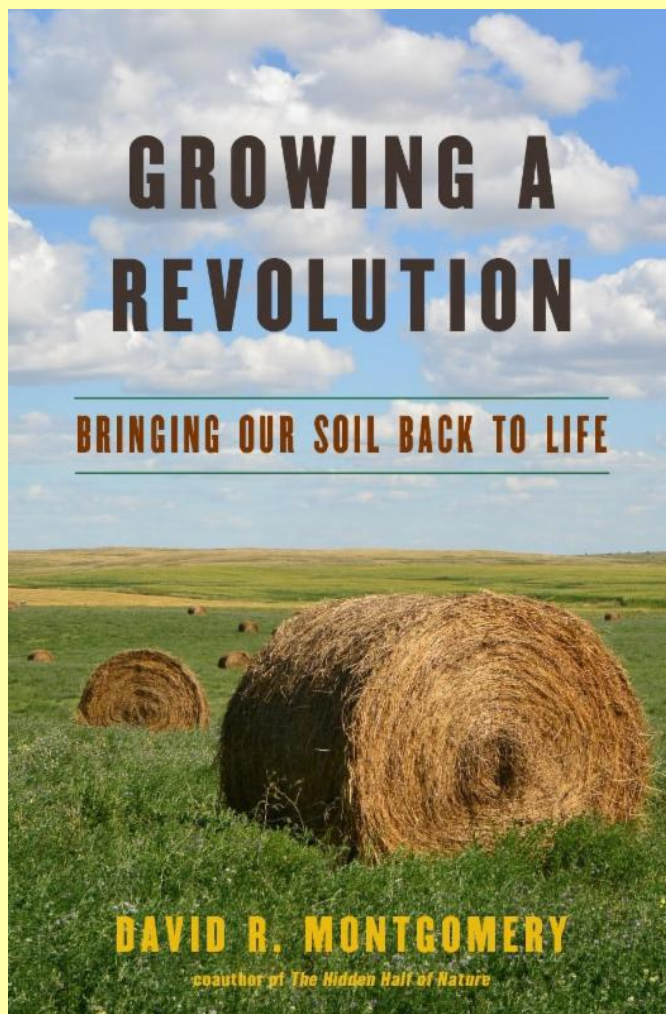
David is very good at explaining complex ideas in an easy to understand format and making them enjoyable to read. This book is about growing food using techniques known as conservation agriculture. It explains how these techniques restores carbon to the soil, eliminates the need for toxic

chemicals, increases yields, lower costs, and increases profits for the farmer. David traveled all over the world studying farmers whom have adopted these modern methods (which are actually ancient methods) to restore soil fertility.

David shares his visits with farmers all over the world whom have adopted these methods and how it changed their soil, bringing it back to life, increasing humus (carbon) and reducing all the common problems we encounter in agriculture and horticulture and even eliminating most of them.

This is another great book for anyone looking to improve his or her soil OR make money growing healthy and nutritious food.

David and his wife Anne will be speaking in Houston next March at the OHBA (Organic Horticulture Benefits Alliance) education seminar in March 2018. They will explore the link between the soil biome and the human biome. The exact location and time will be announced later.



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NO EVENTS ARE PICKED UP FROM NEWSLETTERS! SUBMIT WITH REQUEST FOR CALENDAR PUBLICATION

Events **NOT** submitted in **EXACT** written calendar format below may take 2+ weeks to be posted.

After that point, if your event does not appear, please email us. Adult gardening/plants events only

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!**

TUE., DEC 5: CITRUS SEMINAR & TASTING by MONTE NESBITT, 6:30pm; AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free. Register: galvcountymgs@gmail.com, 281-309-5065; aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html

FRI., DEC. 8: 'HOLLY JOLLY' LUNCHEON GALA. SPEAKER: BILL MCKINLEY. 9 am, White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine. Tickets \$30. Houston Federation of Garden clubs event. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org.

SAT., DEC 9: GROWING TOMATOES FROM SEED by IRA GERVAIS, 9-11am; JOURNEY OF TWO FRUGAL MASTER GARDENERS: IN THE BEGINNING - PROPAGATION by NANCY LANGSTO & BRENDA SLOUGH, 1-3pm; AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102 Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free. Register: galvcountymgs@gmail.com, 281-309-5065; aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html

SAT., DEC. 9: CITRUS TASTING, 9am-noon, AgriLife Extension office, 21017 CR 171 Angleton. Free. Brazoria County Master Gardener event. txmg.org/brazoria; 979-864-1558; aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/brazoria.

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

SAT., DEC 23: PECKERWOOD GARDEN OPEN DAY, 10am-2pm tours, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10.
peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232

THURS., JAN. 4: BEGINNINGS OF ENCHANTED GARDENS & THE LENDERMAN FAMILY by DENISE LOPEZ, 10 am, MUD Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr, Katy. Free, Nottingham Country Garden Club event. ncgctx.org

FRI., JAN. 12: A CAMELIA COLLECTION - RESTORING IMA HOGG'S CAMELIA COLLECTION AT BAYOU BEND by BART BRECHTER. 10 am. White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine, Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org.

SAT., JAN 6: PECKERWOOD GARDEN NORTH DRY GARDEN & ADJACENT PLANTINGS TOUR, 10am, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$15. REGISTER: eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org; peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232

SAT., JAN. 13: BEAUTY'S COMMUNITY GARDEN PEACE THROUGH P.I.E. CONTEST, 10:30am-1pm, St. Matthews United Methodist Church, 4300 N. Shepherd. Free. peace-throughpie.eventbrite.com; beautysgarden1@gmail.com; 832-910-8261

SAT., JAN 20: PECKERWOOD GARDEN EVENING AT PECKERWOOD LECTURE TOPIC TBA, 7pm, Peckerwood Garden, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. REGISTER: eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org. peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232 (I'll fix the Chasse' in the final)

WED., JAN.24: FUN HARDY PLANTS & PRECISION PRUNING by LINDA B. GAY, 7pm, Height's Firehouse, 107 W. 12th. Free. Houston Height's Association. houstonheights.org

SAT., JAN 27: PECKERWOOD GARDEN OPEN DAY, 10am-2pm tours, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10.
peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

SUN., JAN. 28: AVOID STARVATION: DEVELOPING THE RIGHT FEEDING PROGRAM FOR PLANTS AND FACTORS THAT MAKE FERTILIZERS INEFFECTIVE by GAYE HAMMOND, 2-3pm. Klein United Methodist Church, Christian Life Center, 5920 FM 2920, Spring. Free. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com

FEB 17, 2018: SPRING PLANT SALE PRE-SALE PRESENTATION, 8-8:50am; SPRING PLANT SALE, 9am-1 pm, Location: Galveston County Fairgrounds, Jack Brooks Park-Rodeo Arena, Hwy 6 and Jack Brooks Rd, Hitchcock.281-309-5065.

SUN., FEB. 25: DAYLILY BLOOM DESCRIPTION by JEANNIE MALLICK, 2pm-3pm. Klein United Methodist Church, Christian Life Center, Room #C112, 5920 FM 2920, Spring, TX 77388. Free. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. www.cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com

MON., FEB. 26: SOIL FOOD WEB & COMPOST AND MULCHES, 9am-noon, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble. Texas Gulf Coast Gardener program. Register: Jennifer L. Garrison, 713-274-4160

FRI., MAR.9: THOSE ADDORABLE HUMMERS by SUE HEATH. 10 am. White Oak Convention Center., 7603 Antoine. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

SUN., MAR. 25: STEWARDSHIP OF THE SOIL by JOHN FERGUSON, 6pm, Sunday Evening Conversations on Creation Webinar, Lisa Brenskelle, brenskelle@aol.com

SUN., MAR. 25: HIBISCUS CARE by MARTI GRAVES, 2pm-3pm. Klein United Methodist Church, Christian Life Center, Room #C112, 5920 FM 2920, Spring, TX 77388. Free. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. www.cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com

FRI., APRIL 13: THE WORLD OF SEED by ANGELA CHANDLER. 10am., White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine, Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org.

SAT., APR. 21: HOUSTON ROSE SOCIETY ANNUAL SPRING SHOW, Noon-4pm, Memorial City Mall, 303 Memorial City Way. Houston Rose Society event. Free. houstonrose.org

MON., MAY 14: INTRODUCTION TO THE SOIL FOOD WEB by JOHN FERGUSON, 6:30pm, University of Houston at Clear Lake, Forest Room on East of Bayou Building. Native Plant Society of Texas at Clear Lake Martha Richeson, 713-962-7747

FRI. MAY 11: HONEY BEES - JAMES AND CHARI OF BLUEBONNET BEEKEEPERS. 10am. White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org.

**If we inspire you to attend any of these, please let them know you heard about it in . . .
THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS NEWSLETTER!**

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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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