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March 30, 2018

Dear Friends,

Here is the 245th 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 [click here](#) 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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ON YOUR MARK . . . GET SET . . . SALE PLANTS ARE A'WAITIN'!

"If you aren't killing plants , you aren't really stretching yourself as a gardener."

-- J. C. Raulston (1940-1996), Director, North Carolina State University Arboretum (now the J.C. Raulston Arboretum)

by **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

Got your running shoes on? 'tis the season for GREAT plant sales. Organizational sales offer some very special advantages:

1. Generally speaking, the money you spend on these plants will be recycled back into community-beneficial projects.
2. As with locally-owned nurseries, you have the assurance sale plants are (almost always) hardy choices for our area.
3. These sales are easy to find if you just keep checking our calendar at the end of this newsletter
4. These sales are great places to learn about new-to-you plants. For example, have you tried these three major butterfly-attractors?



THE COCKRELL BUTTERFLY CENTER'S April 14 Spring Plant Sale will include, l to r above, gaura, cat's whiskers and blue butterfly bush among myriads of others to attract butterflies and more jewels of nature.

One of the fastest-spreading trends I've seen in the decades I've been writing about gardening is the steadily-growing appreciation of how interwoven our landscapes are with the natural world around us. Habitat gardens are now everywhere, including in almost every elementary school and, as with everything in nature, they are a deeply interwoven thread in the waves of healthier eating, saving our ecology, organics and, best of all, teaching children the importance of such a global view.

Want to know more about habitat gardening? Ask a 10-year-old! Or . . . go to the Cockrell sale!

The Cockrell Butterfly Center has long been a leader in not only teaching gardeners the value of native and other wildlife-beneficial plantings, but making the right varieties available! Nothing is more frustrating than

to read about an exciting plant and then not being able to find it. This year the April Sale will also include a Festival, lady bugs and caterpillars (for those of you looking for these). The April 14 sale itself will be open 8:30-noon. The festival will run from 8:30am-4pm, both at the Houston Museum of Natural Science, 5555 Hermann Park Drive. Details: hmns.org or 713-639-4742.

PASS-ALONG PLANTS IN BRAZORIA COUNTY - - So glad to see this phrase back in vogue. Pass-alongs are almost always great lazy gardener plants. Once planted in the right spot (sun/shad, drainage, heat/cold tolerance) and watered until you see new growth, pass-alongs are plants that will continue to thrive for decades with minimal gardener input. They're the ones usually "passed along."

No such thing, you say? Actually, there are many such plants! Typical are these listed by Dana Morisse Arnold as pass-along plants that will be offered (along with many other great choices) at Brazoria County Master Gardener's April 13 plant sale:



L to r, amaryllis, cannas, kalanchoe, jade plant and wandering Jew, to name just a few of the proven Pass-along plants at the Brazoria County sale

I love Dana's added note, "... my Mama told me to never thank the giver for the plant as passing it (a good thing) along was thanks enough!" I often wondered where that saying started.

**SAT., APR. 14: SPRING PLANT SALE, 8am-noon, B.E.E.S. 799 Hospital Dr. Angleton
Brazoria County Master Gardener Event. txmg.org/brazoria, 979- 864-1558**

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PLANT SALES abound in our Calendar. More are added each week. Check the Calendar below for details on these:

- SAT., APR. 7.: WHITE OAK GARDEN SPRING PLANT SALE
- SAT., APR. 14: BROMELIAD SOCIETY/HOUSTON SALE
- SAT.-SUN., APR. 14-15: HOUSTON ORCHID SOCIETY SHOW & SALE
- SAT., APR. 28: OLEANDER FESTIVAL & GRAND OLEANDER SALE
- SAT., APR. 28: GARDEN CONSERVANCY OPEN DAYS PROGRAM TOUR & PLANT SALE
- SAT., JUNE 9: PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SHOW & SALE

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WHENEVER WE DISCUSS A POTENTIAL SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE FOR THIS NEWSLETTER, we always stress that most of our readers are experience gardeners successfully growing a wide variety of plants. And that most are mainly interested in expanding their horizons.

For this reason, we want specialty plant groups to share with our readers plants available at their sales which will pop the eyes of their most experienced members and growers. That's what David Whipkey of the Bromeliad Society/Houston is discussing in the Spotlight Article below with his truly WOW! pictures. See if you agree!

* * *

***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 read past issues, go to natureswayresources.com***

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Spotlighting . . .
 Bromeliad Society / Houston
Lazy Gardener and Friends Newsletter



Choice varieties (above & below) at the big April 14 Bromeliad Society Sale will include, l to r, xSincoregelia 'Galactic Warrior', Orthophytum grossiorum and assorted Neoregelias

JOLT YOUR BROMELIAD COLLECTION WITH SUMMER YARD-HAPPY VARIETIES

By **DAVID WHIPKEY**
 Bromeliad Society/Houston

Spring is such a busy time of year, we often forget to tend to our houseplants. Most will probably enjoy an outdoors vacation in the sunshine and fresh air. Bromeliads will enjoy the out-of-doors until late this fall when cold weather comes. Try a few plants other than usual big box varieties. Some of these plants are readily available. Some you will have to search to locate:

- **xSincoregelia.** Crosses between Sincoraea and Neoregelia. They grow upright for much of their life. Mature foliage flattens, color intensifies, and they bloom. Foliage comes in shades of red and purple with frequently speckles or stripes. 'Galactic Warrior' is an old favorite.
- **Orthophytum.** These terrestrial Bromeliads spend most of their lives as flat rather nondescript plants. When hormones kick in, they start to bloom. In a matter of weeks, the stem between the leaves elongates, leaves separate, and small long lasting flowers appear near the top of the plant.
- **Neoregelia.** Some of easiest Bromeliads to grow. Miniatures are the current rage. Try putting together a collection of Skotak hybrids. Many can spend their entire life in a 4-inch pot.



Inline image

L to r, Aechmea 'Shogun', Aechmea nudicaulis v. capitata, Tillandsia ionantha, Tillandsia 'Heather's Blush' and Billbergia chiapensis

- **Aechmea.** 'Shogun' is an old favorite. Always popular, but never common. A beautiful albomarginated plant with silver banding. Red and yellow floral spike are added bonus. If red and green plants are more your style, try *Aechmea nudicaulis v. capitata*.

- **Tillandsia.** You sometimes see *Tillandsia ionantha* in the big box stores. Treated well it will reward you with red foliage and small blue flowers. Want something different? Try the Tillandsia hybrids such as 'Heather's Blush.'
- **Billbergia.** There are many common Billbergias such as *Billbergia nutans*. Look hard and you might find helicoidal Billbergias. Blooms on these plants are spectacular. *Billbergia chiapensi* and *Billbergia zebrina* are two of the more common plants of this type.

Visit <http://bromeliadsocietyhouston.org/> for more information. Remember, when you acquire a new plant, research it, observe it, and most of all enjoy it.

Two big upcoming Bromeliad Society events:

- SAT., APR. 14: BROMELIAD SALE, 9 am - 3 pm, West Gray Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray. Free. Bromeliad Society / Houston event. bromeliadsocietyhouston.org
- TUE., APR. 17: CARNIVOROUS PLANTS FOR HOME AND GARDEN by MIKE HOWLETT, 7:00pm, West Gray Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray. Free. Bromeliad Society / Houston event. bromeliadsocietyhouston.org

* * *

JOHN'S CORNER

NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS #41

A paper in the journal, *Proceedings of The National Academy of Sciences*, has found an unexpected role of large scale fires (grasslands or forest) whether man-made slash and burn or from lightning. The organic nitrogen from those fires is swept up into the atmosphere and then deposited on forests. In nature everything is recycled and not wasted.

Another mystery of nature is how some plants trap and eat insects. Research at North Carolina State has found that Venus Fly traps are pollinated by certain insect species and the Venus fly trap does not trap and eat these pollinators. How the plant distinguishes pollinators from dinner is unknown.

The United States Presidents Cancer Panel (USPCP) has found that of the over 80,000 chemicals in use only a couple hundred have ever been tested for safety. "Their 2010 report written by scientists and medical specialists in the field clearly states that environmental toxins, including pesticides, are the main causes of cancers". This report was published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institute of Health, and the National Cancer Institute. I find it amazing that these independent groups find the chemicals toxic but the EPA, USDA, and FDA whom are run by presidential appointees from the companies that manufacture these dangerous chemicals find them safe.

A growing practice (pardon the pun) is using wastewater for irrigation of plants. A study published in the Journal of Environmental Science, Toxicology and Food Technology showed that irrigating agricultural fields with waste water, may result in the hazardous build up of heavy metals (copper, lead, zinc, nickel, chromium and cadmium). The pesticides, agrochemical and chemical fertilizers are also known to be major sources of heavy metals. Comment: It amazes me that so many companies and government regulators think our food supply is a great place to get rid of toxic chemicals. The reasons to grow as much as possible of one's own food organically continues to increase.

A paper in Nature Ecology & Evolution found that weed resistance to herbicides is increasing faster than new more toxic products can keep up. These super weeds are reducing crop yields and lowering profits for farmers. The toxic chemistry rescue methods have failed miserably from agriculture to our back yards. It is time for people to wake up and only use the modern methods based on soil biology that we call "Organic". These modern methods give better results, at lower cost and do not have negative health and environmental consequences.

A few weeks ago the Dr. Mercola e-newsletter had a good article on the microbes in our guts and our immune system. When our microbiome falls out of balance or loses its diversity, it can impact many of the processes in our bodies and place one at risk for chronic disease. The result is we get sick and have major health problems. The biggest risk factors are antibiotics, heart burn pills, fluoridated and chlorinated water, processed and refined sugar, processed and refined foods, bioengineered foods like GMO's and agricultural chemicals, NSAIDs (Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, stress, and pollution. The book "The Hidden Half of Nature - The microbial Roots of Life and Health", by David Montgomery and Anne Bikle explore the link between the soil microbiome and the human microbiome. David and Anne will be speaking at the OHBA educational event March 21 at the United Way on regenerative agriculture - healing the soil & human microbiome.

The organization, "The Truth About Cancer" had a recent paper on the element Iodine (I). Iodine deficiency has reached epidemic proportions worldwide over the last 20 years. The World Health Organization (WHO) now estimates that *two billion* people are now iodine deficient. The propaganda of our officials is "The issues of physical and intellectual development have been virtually eliminated through the iodization of salt". Several factors prevent this from being a true statement. First the RDA that was set in the 1940's was only enough to prevent goiters, not to maximize health. The amount of iodine in Americans' urine between the decade of the 1970's and the decade of the 1980's dropped by 50%.

Several things have happened since then. Health conscious individuals began avoiding commercial sources of salt because of the toxins used to make it. Today's table salt has harmful halides in it such as fluoride sodium bicarbonate added to it. Toxic chemicals like fluoride, chlorine, bromide and others prevent the body from absorbing iodine! If you remember from our study of the elements last year these halides are in the same chemical category as iodine and can replace it. Bread manufacturers have replaced iodine with bromide as a dough softener. Fluoride, chlorine and bromide are found in swimming pools that we expose our skin to. Another chemical called perchlorate that contains chlorine is now found in many products, and of course chlorine and fluorine is in our public water systems. A few symptoms of low levels of iodine are: swelling or soreness in the throat, weight gain, fatigue, muscle soreness, brain fog, mood disorders like depression or anxiety, hair loss, dry skin, several types of cancers, etc. The above coupled with a lack of iodine in our food supply from growing on nutrient depleted poor soils are a few of the reasons. Foods high in iodine include seafood, kelp, cranberries, strawberries, and green leafy vegetables. This is why more and more gardeners are growing their own organic vegetables on soils that have had trace minerals added to them so their plants can absorb them. Good sources of trace minerals are greensand, basalt sand, and granite sand that can be added to any soil to increase its fertility. Other products from the ocean like fish emulsion and seaweed products can also provide some iodine for the soil. The Microlife line of organic products includes Ocean Harvest (fish emulsion) and Super Seaweed that are both great products that I use personally.

A study published in the journal Food Science & Nutrition confirms other studies that have shown that dairy products (milk, cheese, butter) from grass fed beef are of much higher quality than products from feedlots where the cows were fed grain and GMO contaminated feed. They found the organic milk was perfectly balanced between Omega 3's and Omega 6 fatty acids. The organic milk from grass fed cows also had a lot more CLA (conjugated linoleic acid) which helps protect our brains from dementia. While raw milk has the most of these good fats, the pasteurization process required by the USDA destroys a lot of the benefits.

Another article in Dr. Mercola's newsletter mentions the "farm effect" where children raised on a farm have less allergies than those who were not. European children whom consume raw milk have stronger immune systems with more "T" cells which help with allergies and asthma. The Amish which regularly drink raw milk, are among the least allergic populations in the world.

* * *

LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PLEASE READ BEFORE SUBMITTING AN EVENT TO THIS CALENDAR.

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

DO NOT CREATE LINKS IN YOUR SUBMISSION!!! WE WILL DO THAT.

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!

WED., APR. 4: BIRD FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES - CREATING HABITAT STRUCTURE & PLANT DIVERSITY FOR BIRDS by SARAH FLOURNOY, 6pm, Jones State Forest, 1328 FM1488, Conroe. Free. Texas Master Naturalists/Heartwood Chapter event. 281-381-3281.

WED., APR. 4: BIRD FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES - CREATING HABITAT STRUCTURE & PLANT DIVERSITY FOR BIRDS by SARAH FLOURNOY, 6pm, Jones State Forest, 1328 FM1488, Conroe. Free. Texas Master Naturalists/Heartwood Chapter event. 281-381-3281.

THUR S., APR. 5: HISTORY OF MERCER ARBORETUM by JACOB MARTIN, 10 am, MUD Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr, Katy. Free, Nottingham Country Garden Club event. ncgctx.org

FRI., APR. 6: SOILS by JOHN FERGUSON, Liberty Garden Club, Ellen Gossett, (409) 350-1109

SAT., APR. 7.: WHITE OAK GARDEN SPRING PLANT SALE, 10am-2pm (or sell-out); SALE PREVIEW by HEIDI SHEESLEY, 9am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Dr. Free. nmd.org

SAT., APR 7: SPRINGTIME ACROSS THE CREEK AT PECKERWOOD GARDEN, 10am, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$15. Register: eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org; peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232

THURS., APR. 12: SAVE THAT ROSE FOR NEXT WEEK by Diane Sommers 7pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillon, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston Rose Society event. Free. houstonrose.org

THURS., APR. 12: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS SATELLITE OPEN GARDEN and DAY COYOTES IN OUR AREA by Jason Naivar, 10-11:30am, Genoa Friendship Gardens Educational Center Building, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Road. Free

THURS., APR. 12: BEGONIAS; PROPAGATING & POTTING by CHERYL LENERT. 10am-1pm. Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet @Hillcroft. Free. Houston Area Daylily Society. Event 281-723-7409

FRI., APR. 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., APRIL 14: COCKRELL BUTTERFLY CENTER SPRING PLANT SALE, 8:30am-noon, & GARDEN FESTIVAL, 8:30-4pm, Houston Museum of Natural Science, 5555 Hermann Park Drive. hmns.org, 713-639-4742.

SAT., APR 14: PECKERWOOD GARDEN OPEN DAY, 10am-2pm tours, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

SAT. APR. 14: GARDENING IN SHADE, 8-10am; HERBS!, 10:30-12:30, AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Rd, Conroe. \$5 per session; \$8 both. Montgomery County Master Gardener event. 936-539-7824; mcmga.com

SAT., APR. 14: BROMELIAD SALE, 9am-3 pm, West Gray Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray. Free. Bromeliad Society / Houston event. bromeliadsocietyhouston.org

SAT., APR. 14: BRAZORIA COUNTY MASTER GARDENER SPRING PLANT SALE, 8am-noon, B.E.E.S. 799 Hospital Drive Angleton. txmg.org/brazoria, 979-864-1558

SAT.-SUN., APR. 14-15: HOUSTON ORCHID SOCIETY SHOW & SALE, Sat. 9am-5pm, Sun. 11am-4pm, Memorial City Mall - Dillard's Court, 303 Memorial City Way. Free. Houstonorchidsociety.org.

SAT.-SUN., APR. 14-15: HOUSTON ORCHID SOCIETY SHOW & SALE, Sat. 9am-5pm, Sun. 11am-4pm, Memorial City Mall - Dillard's Court, 303 Memorial City Way. Free. Houstonorchidsociety.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

SAT., APR 21: PECKERWOOD GARDEN, 7pm, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. Register: eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org. peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232

SAT., APR. 21: ARMAND BAYOU NATURE CENTER PARTY FOR THE PLANET, 8500 Bay Area Blvd., Pasadena. Register: abnc@abnc.org; 281-474-2551

SAT., APR. 21: EDIBLE LANDSCAPES, 9:30-11:30am, Houston Museum of Natural Science. \$30. Urban Harvest event. Register: 713-880-5540; urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar

SUN., APR. 22: DEADLINE TO REGISTER for APR. 28 35TH ANNUAL HERBS, HIVES & HONEY HERB DAY, 8:45am-3pm. \$50. Herb Society of America, South Texas Unit event. Register: herbsociety-stu.org.

SUN., APR. 22: DEADLINE TO REGISTER for APR. 28 35TH ANNUAL HERBS, HIVES & HONEY HERB DAY, 8:45am-3pm. \$50. Herb Society of America, South Texas Unit event. Register: herbsociety-stu.org.

WED., APR. 25: PECKERWOOD GARDENS TOUR, 8:15am - 4:30pm, Senior Adult Botanic Bus Trip, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield. \$1. Register: 713-274-4160

FRI., APRIL 27: INTERNATIONAL OLEANDER SOCIETY FESTIVAL KICK-OFF LUNCHEON, 11:30am-1pm; Hotel Galvez, Galveston. \$35. Register islandtime8@gmail.com

SAT., APRIL 28: OLEANDER FESTIVAL & GRAND OLEANDER SALE, 10am-4pm, Moody Mansion grounds, 2618 Broadway, Galveston. Free. Lydia Miller 409-770-4312 lmiller4511@att.net.

SAT., APR 28: PECKERWOOD GARDEN OPEN DAY, 10am-2pm tours, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10. peckerwoodgarden.org, 979-826-3232; eventregistration@peckerwoodgarden.org

SAT. APR 28: GROWING CUCUMBERS, SUMMER SQUASH, CANTALOUPE & OTHER CUCURBITS by HERMAN AUER, 9-10:30 am; Galveston County Bayside Community Center, 4833 10th St., Bayside Park, Bacliff. Master Gardener event. Free. Register: galvcountymgs@gmail.com, 281-309-5065. aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html

SAT., APR. 28: GARDEN CONSERVANCY OPEN DAYS PROGRAM TOUR & PLANT SALE - HOUSTON, 10am-4pm, \$7 per garden; children 12 & under free: Begin at Itchy Acres, 405 Martin Street, Houston. <https://www.gardenconservancy.org/open-days/open-days->

[schedule/houston-tx-open-day-2](#). 888-842-2442.

SAT. MAY 5: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENER OPEN GARDENS DAY, 9-11am, AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Rd, Conroe. Free. 936-539-7824; [mcmga.com](#)

TUES., MAY 8: PLUMERIAS!, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, Hermann Park Conservancy, 1500 Hermann Dr. Plumeria Society of America event. Free.

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. [houstonfederationgardencclubs.org](#)

SAT., MAY 12: SQUARE FOOT GARDENING, 9:30am-11:30am, Houston Museum of Natural Science. \$30. Urban Harvest event. Register: 713-880-5540; [urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar](#)

SAT., MAY 19: STARTING A COMMUNITY OR SCHOOL GARDEN WORKSHOP, 8:30am-2:30pm, University of St. Thomas. \$20. Urban Harvest event. Register: 713-880-5540; [urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar](#)

SAT., JUNE 9: PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SHOW & SALE, 9:30am-3pm, Bay Area Community Center, 5002 Nasa Road One, Seabrook. Free. [theplumeriasociety.org](#)

SAT., JUNE 9: LOW VOLUME IRRIGATION (HMNS), 9:30-11:30am, Houston Museum of Natural Science. \$30. Urban Harvest event. Register: 713-880-5540; [urbanharvest.org/classes-calendar](#)

TUES., JULY 10: PLUMERIAS!, 7:30pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, Hermann Park Conservancy, 1500 Hermann Dr. Plumeria Society of America event. Free.

**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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**PLEASE READ BEFORE
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**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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