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*DECEMBER 14, 2018*

*Dear Friends,*

*Here is the 277th 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. (John is with Nature's Way Resources). We also have a great supporting cast of contributing writers and technical specialists who will chime in and tweak away regularly. We would love to keep receiving your input on this newsletter . . . . comments . . . . suggestions . . . . questions. . . .Email your thoughts to: [lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com](mailto: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!*

**JOIN OUR MAILING LIST!**



## TIME TO PLANT TREES FOR NEXT FABULOUS FALL & ALL OUR WINTER EDIBLE OPTIONS!

*I think that I shall never see / A poem lovely as a tree.  
 A tree whose hungry mouth is prest / Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;  
 A tree that looks at God all day, / And lifts her leafy arms to pray;  
 A tree that may in Summer wear / A nest of robins in her hair;  
 Upon whose bosom snow has lain; / Who intimately lives with rain.  
 Poems are made by fools like me, / But only God can make a tree.  
 -- "Trees" by Joyce Kilmer (1886-1916)*

By **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

I'll use any excuse to reprint one of my most favorite poems and was there ever a more expressive phrase than "...Who intimately lives with rain"? Gives me goose bumps!

Speaking of trees, hope you enjoyed one of the most colorful fall seasons we've had in a while . . . thanks to the sudden deep cold spell that triggered a sudden drop in chlorophyll production (unusual for us), making the color green disappear and voila! We have that yellow to orange and red leaves known as fall splendor.

Not all trees produce gorgeous fall color here. [Trees for Houston](#) recommends these for the Greater Houston area . . . and now through spring is the best time to plant:



*L to r: Texas Persimmon, Crape Myrtle ('Muskogee'), Japanese Maple, Winged Sumac and Mexican Plum (or anything in the prunus family).*

Native dogwoods also have beautiful fall color but are not generally recommended for areas south or west of downtown Houston. If you want to try, make sure you plant in an extremely well-drained site, ideally around pine trees since they like a slightly acidic soil.

Unfortunately, most of our fall color comes from Chinese tallows that have become dangerously invasive. Seeds are spread by birds and wind. Those who care about wildlife are begging us NOT to plant these and, in fact, to remove them whenever possible. Chinese tallows are literally wiping out habitat so vital to both our native plants and wildlife.

Tip o' the trowel to Trees for Houston and Aramco employees, who planted 50 native trees along the [Columbia Hike and Bike Trail](#), not only beautifying, but also providing shade and helping to reduce air and water pollution for decades to come. Since its founding in 1983, Trees for Houston has planted over 570,000 trees in the Greater Houston area and maintain tens of thousands of our trees. Membership in this group would make a great Christmas gift that will keep on giving and benefit all of us. [treesforhouston.org](http://treesforhouston.org)

Speaking of easy-to-give Christmas gifts, another great one would membership in organizations that offer continuous advice, like our largest one: [Urban Harvest](#). A smaller group that has attracted a lot of members because of it's focus on smaller urban gardens/landscapes is [Urban Houston Gardeners](#) . In addition to great programs, the monthly newsletter, produced by Linda Foss, is full of great tips. For example, December's issue reminded me of:

### HUG'S December Garden To-Dos for Houston

(excerpted from [December 9, 2018 issue](#))

- Collect leaves for compost & mulch to improve soil & protect plants from winter cold.
- Two links included:
  - [epicgardening.com/composting-leaves/](http://epicgardening.com/composting-leaves/)
  - [sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0929139314001528](http://sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0929139314001528)
- Prepare for a freeze.
  - Gather sheets, blankets or frost cloth to protect plants.
  - Save jugs to be filled with water and tucked under blankets to help regulate temperatures.
- For pollinators:
  - Cut tropical milkweed (that hasn't already died back) to about 6" from ground (will return from roots).
  - Some native bees nest in dead stalks (sunflowers, etc.). Leave them a foot or so high.
- Time to plant:
  - Peas such sugar snaps & snow peas.
  - Try succession planting herbs & greens such as cilantro, radishes, beets, lettuce, bok choys, arugula, spinach & mizuna, etc.
  - Plant the slower growing brassicas such as kale, collards, cabbage, broccoli if you hadn't already done so.
  - Leeks & onions can also be planted now & over the next few months.

Check out HUG's great website: <http://www.houstonurbangardeners.org/>

And Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/houstonurbangardeners/>

\* \* \*



**NEED HELP DECIDING WHICH CITRUS TO PLANT?** -- January and February are our best tree planting months, which is why gardening groups are holding big sales of fruit, nut and other trees early in 2019. New to growing fruit in the Greater Houston area? Urban Harvest's big CitrusFest is a great place to find out which varieties of which fruits do best here (key to success!) Dr. Bob Randall will be on hand to offer advice and tasting opportunities will abound at the free Sat., Dec. 15, 8 am-noon event at 2752 Buffalo Speedway.

Then you can drop by Urban Harvest's annual Fruit Tree Sale Feb. 9 or one of the many other sales listed in our calendar below. The Jan. 1 edition of this newsletter will include a listing of fruit tree sales.

Speaking of the calendar below, don't forget to check out our new "HAVE YOU TRIED ..." exceptional plant suggestion right after John's column.

\* \* \*

**HOUSTON BOTANIC GARDEN**, scheduled to open in 2020, will hold two Volunteer Orientation sessions. **Preregistration forms (required)**. (Details: [volunteers@hbg.org](mailto:volunteers@hbg.org))

- SAT., JAN.12, 9-10:30 am, 3701 Kirby, Ste. 992.
- TUES., FEB. 12: 6:30 - 8:00 pm, 8205 N. Bayou Dr.

\* \* \*

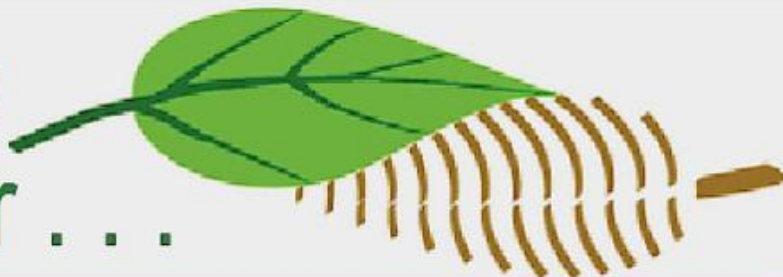
***DON'T FORGET TO CHECK "LG&F CALENDAR" AT END OF NEWSLETTER FOR MORE GREAT UPCOMING EVENTS!***

\* \* \*

*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 find past issues and/or download PDF copies, go to [www.natureswayresources.com](http://www.natureswayresources.com)*

\* \* \*

John's  
Corner . . .



# NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS # 70

In past issues we have reported on the dangers of fluoride from hurting plants, killing microbes and inducing disease into animals and humans. A article in the magazine Pharmacognosy stated that according to the CDC 66.3% of the USA population is being subjected to fluoride poisoning. A research study from Mohanial Sukhadia University has found that the spice turmeric (curcumin) offers powerful benefits in terms of protecting the human brain against fluoride poisoning. The European Journal of Clinical Nutrition published a study that found the fruit from the Tamarind plant can help the body rid itself of fluoride compounds. By eating only 1/3 ounce per day of this fruit for just 18 days greatly increased fluoride excretion from the body in the boys tested.

In issue #69 we discussed some of the issues with sewage sludge on our soils and health. Another issue has emerged dealing with artificial sweeteners that pass through ones digestive system into the sewage sludge or waste water (purple pipe). These chemicals can cause good microbes in the soil to turn toxic (or become pathogenic) when compost from biosolids or waste water is applied to the soil.

Another issue with sewage sludge (biosolids) is that it now contains radioactive isotopes from both medicine and industry that bio-accumulate in the sludge. These radioactive compounds cause DNA damage and increase the damage from natural gamma radiation. In addition there are now many petrochemical derivatives in the sewage sludge and over 80,000 different chemicals have been identified. There has been NO testing on how they interact. Compost made from the sludge like "Dillo Dirt" or fertilizer pellets like "Milorganite" (dried and pelletized sewage sludge) contain chemicals that cause many health problems from birth defects to cancer. Additionally, over 2 dozen human pathogens can survive the standard treatment process. These toxic products have no place in gardening or horticulture, however many companies think our gardens and yards are a great place to dump this toxic waste (This is why the PR folks give it the friendly name "Biosolids").

The Dr. Mercola's e-newsletter had a recent article on this issue and it can be [found here](#).

A study in the Soil Science Society of the American Journal by researchers at South Dakota State University that compared applying the same amount of nutrients with artificial fertilizers and by manure. They found the manure worked far better and gave many improvements to the soil:

- manure help balance and maintain correct pH
- manure increase soil organic carbon which created better soil structure
- manure significantly increased total nitrogen (N) stored in the soil
- manure increased water stable aggregates that prevent erosion (artificial fertilizer decreased these aggregates)
- manure did increase soil electrical conductivity (salts) which was the only negative result but less than the artificial fertilizers.

Note: Other studies have shown that manure increases earthworm activity (a very good thing) and beneficial microbes while artificial fertilizers kill earthworms and many beneficial microbes reducing their activity and soil benefits.

We are learning that many of the plants we call "weeds" have a role in nature. Soils that are deficient (or the nutrient is chemically tied up and unavailable) will often be found with clover and broadleaf species growing. Many plants have a role in nature, the plants above are trying to correct a magnesium (Mg) deficiency in the soil. Modern farmers know that these weeds are critical to herd health as they are full of magnesium. These plants are able to collect many times the levels of magnesium than other plants. Being deep rooted annuals they collect magnesium from deep in the soil layer and when they die they release the magnesium into the soil trying to correct the problem. Using the herbicide glyphosate (think Round-Up) actually causes these weed problems to increase. One of the patents on glyphosate was a pipe de-scaler as it binds tightly to magnesium and prevents it from being absorbed or utilized. When one uses this type herbicide product they set themselves up for increased weed problems in the future that may take years to correct.

[Here is a link](#) to a short interview with a man dying from cancer caused by using Round-Up.

Speaking of Round-Up, due to the recent lawsuits against Monsanto, the Journal Critical Reviews in Toxicology has issued corrections to articles previously published. It turns out that several papers published in the journal, on the safety of glyphosate, were actually written by Monsanto. The authors (scientists) were paid \$20,000-27,000 each for putting their names on the papers. Additionally, the citations listed to increase credibility were other papers written by Monsanto

## Have You Tried . . .



**FRINGED DUTCHMAN'S PIPEVINE** (*Aristolochia fimbriata*; white-nerved Dutchman's Pipevine, left above & center) is an often-hard-to-find member of this host plant for pipevine swallowtail butterflies (right above). Now's a perfect time to start this root-hardy vine with the 4-inch pots currently available at Nature's Way Resources.

This woody vine, with its late spring/summer "What is THAT!" blooms, likes a partially sunny, moist-but well-drained area, Larva eat foliage, but plant quickly recovers. It may die back in winter, but returns in spring. It can also be grown in a pot with adequate vertical support.



Above, l to r, pipeline swallowtail eggs, chrysalis and caterpillar.

*In addition to Nature's Way Resources, check with independent nurseries in your area to see if they carry this plant. Or try some of these on this list:*

[npsot.org/wp/houston/files/2016/05/List-of-Texas-Native-Plant-Nurseries-in-Houston-Area.pdf](https://npsot.org/wp/houston/files/2016/05/List-of-Texas-Native-Plant-Nurseries-in-Houston-Area.pdf)

\* \* \*

## LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER

# CALENDAR EVENTS

**NOTE! NO EVENTS ARE PICKED UP FROM NEWSLETTERS, MASS RELEASES, OTHER PUBLICATIONS, ETC.**  
 SUBMIT TO: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net) SPECIFICALLY EARMARKED FOR THIS CALENDAR

*Events **NOT** submitted in **EXACT** written calendar format below may take 2+ weeks to be posted.*  
*Adult gardening/plants events only -- If you don't see your submitted event, email us immediately.*

**IF WE INSPIRE YOU TO ATTEND ANY OF THESE EVENTS, PLEASE TELL SPONSORS YOU HEARD ABOUT IT**

**SAT., DEC 22: PECKERWOOD GARDEN OPEN DAY, 10am-2pm tours, 20559 FM 359 Road, Hempstead. \$10.**  
[peckerwoodgarden.org](http://peckerwoodgarden.org), 979-826-3232

**WED., Jan. 2: GROWING GREAT TOMATOES by IRA GERVAIS, 9-11 am, Clear Lake United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall, 16335 El Camino Real. Free. Gardeners by the Bay event.** [gbtb.org](http://gbtb.org)

**TUES., JAN. 8: GROWING CAMELLIAS IN OUR AREA WITH TOMMY WEEKS, COUSHATTA CAMELLIA SOCIETY, 9 am, Shenandoah Municipal Complex, 29955 I-45 North, Shenandoah. Free. The Woodlands Garden Club event.** [thewoodlandsgardenclub.org](http://thewoodlandsgardenclub.org)

**TUES., JAN 8: GARDENING IN THE GREATER HOUSTON AREA & PLANT SALE, 10-11:30am, Genoa Friendship Gardens Educational Center Building, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Road, Pasadena. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)**

**FRI., JAN.11: THE HISTORY OF THE PEGGY MARTIN ROSE by PEGGY MARTIN, 10am, First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd. Free. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)**

**SAT. JAN 12: GROWING BLUEBERRIES by DR. DAVID COHEN, 9-11:30am, AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main/Hwy. 519, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free-but-register: [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com); 281-309-5065; [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)**

**SAT. JAN 12: BACKYARD CITRUS by ROBERT MARSHALL, 9-11 am. Crystal Beach Fire & Rescue, 930 Noble Carl Drive, Crystal Beach. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free-but-register: [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com); 281-309-5065; [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)**

**SAT-SUN., JAN. 12 -13: 45th ANNUAL CAMELLIA SHOW & SALE, 1-4pm, First Christian Church, 3500 North Loop 336 West, Conroe. Free. Coushatta Camellia Society. [coushattacamelliasociety.com](http://coushattacamelliasociety.com)**

**TUES., JAN. 15: PREPARING GARDEN BEDS & LAWNS, 6:30-8:30pm, Spring Branch Memorial Library, 930 Corbindale. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)**

**TUES., JAN 15: BEAUTIFUL, EASY CARE, TEXAS-TOUGH PLANTS FOR YOUR LANDSCAPE by SKIP RICHTER, 10am; St. Basil's Hall, 702 Burney Rd., Sugar Land. Free. Sugar Land Garden Club event. [sugarlandgardenclub.org](http://sugarlandgardenclub.org)**

**THURS., JAN. 17: PREPARING GARDEN BEDS & LAWNS - 6:30-8:30pm, Freeman Branch Library, 16616 Diana Ln. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)**

**THURS, JAN. 19: 10 GARDENING BASICS FOR THE GULF COAST by Beverly Welch 7pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston Rose Society event. Free. [houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org)**

**SAT., JAN. 19: PREPARING GARDEN BEDS & LAWNS- 10:30am-12:30pm, Maud Smith Marks Library, 1815 Westgreen Blvd., Katy. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)**

**SAT. JAN 19: KITCHEN GARDENING by MARY DEMENY, 1-3pm. AgriLife Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free-but-register: [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com); 281-309-5065; [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)**

**FRI., JAN. 25: MONARCH TRAIN THE TRAINER WORKSHOP, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.**

**SAT., JAN. 26: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FRUIT TREE PLANT SALE, 9am-noon (or sellout), 19110 Longenbaugh, Cypress. Free. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)**

**SAT. JAN 26: "TEXAS TOUGH" PLANTS by MARIA LEAL, 9:30-11:30am; HERBS FOR THE GULF COAST by NANCY LANGSTON-NOH and BRIANA ETIE, 1-3pm. Rosenberg Library, 2310 Sealy Street, Galveston. Master Gardener event. Free-but-register: [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com); 281-309-5065; [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)**

**SAT., JAN. 26: WEDGE GRAFTING by SUE JEFFCO, 9-10:30am, Extension Bldg, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main (Hwy 519), La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free-but-register: [galvcountymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountymgs@gmail.com); 281-309-5065; [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)**

**SUN., JAN. 27: THE SECRET LIFE OF SOIL- FEED YOUR SOIL & IT WILL FEED YOUR PLANTS! by SHERRI HARRAH, 2pm, Klein United Methodist Church, 5920 FM 2920, Spring. Free. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. [cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com](http://cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com)**

**FRI: FEB. 8: PLANT SALE and speaker CORRIE TEN-HAVE, 10am, First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd. Free. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)**

**SAT, FEB. 9: 13TH ANNUAL CITRUS & FRUIT TREE SALE with BRAZORIA COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 8am-11am, Brazoria County Fairgrounds, 901 S. Downing St., Angleton. Free. [txmg.org/brazoria/](http://txmg.org/brazoria/)**

**TUES., FEB.12: LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVE PLANTS TO SAVE WATER BY MARK BOWEN, HORTICULTURIST, 9 am, Shenandoah Municipal Complex, 29955 I-45 North, Shenandoah. Free. The Woodlands Garden Club event. [thewoodlandsgardenclub.org](http://thewoodlandsgardenclub.org)**

**SAT. FEB 16: GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER SPRING PLANT SALE; 8-8:50am Sale Plant Seminar; 9am-1pm - plant sale, Fair Grounds, Jack Brooks Park - Rodeo Arena, Hwy 6 @ Jack Brooks Rd, Hitchcock. Free. [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)**

**SAT., FEB. 23: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FRUIT TREE & TOMATO PLANT SALE, 9am-1pm (or sellout), Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fairgrounds, 7600 Red Bluff Rd., Pasadena. Free. 713-274-0950; [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)**

**SAT., MAR. 2: VEGETABLE & HERB SALE with presentations by JUDY BARNETT & WALLER COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 9am-Noon, Extension Office, 846 6th St., Hempstead. Free. [txmg.org/wallermg/events](http://txmg.org/wallermg/events)**



**SAT., MAR. 2: SPRING BRANCH AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB ANNUAL PLANT SALE & WORKSHOP, Sale: 10am-4pm. Workshop: 1pm. Free. Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Park Dr. 281-682-1073; cseverson57@comcast.net.**

**FRI: MAR. 8: NATIVE PLANTS ARE BEAUTIFUL TOO! by Linda Gay, 10am, First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd. Free. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org**

**SAT., MAR. 9: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS PLANT SALE: TOMATO/PEPPER, HERBS, VEGETABLES, ROSES & PERENNIALS, 9am-1pm (or sellout), 19110 Longenbaugh, Cypress. Free. 713-274-0950; hcmga.tamu.edu**

**FRI.-SAT., MAR. 15-16: MARCH MART PLANT SALE, Fri., 10am-4pm; Sat., 8am-4pm. Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.**

**SAT., MAR. 30: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS PLANT SALE: PEPPERS PERENNIALS & PLANTS, 9am-1pm (or sellout), Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fairgrounds, 7600 Red Bluff Rd., Pasadena. Free. 713-274-0950; hcmga.tamu.edu**

**FRI: APR. 11: PLANT SALE and REFUGEES FROM THE ANIMAL KINGDOM by MARGARET PICKELL. 10am, First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd. Free. 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!  
& please patronize our Newsletter & Calendar sponsors below!**

**PLEASE READ BEFORE  
SUBMITTING AN EVENT FOR 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](mailto: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**

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**Come Visit the Plant Nursery at Natures Way Resources for End of Season Clearance. 50% off most plants; the following exceptions apply: Does not include cool season color or herbs, 25% off citrus and 75% off Pomegranates. All cool season vegetables are now \$1.00 (4" pots).**

## 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 Pablo Hernandez 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.

### **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 and quality control.

Pablo helps this newsletter happen from a technical support standpoint.



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Click the "Like" button.