



LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS

Houston Garden Newsletter



Oct. 25, 2019 - Issue #314

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owner John Ferguson, "The Lazy Gardener" Brenda Beust Smith and Pablo Hernandez welcome your feedback and are so grateful to the many horticulturists who contribute their expertise.

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GOOD GUY – GOLDENROD
(Pictured here with brown-eye sunflowers)



BAD GUY - RAGWEED
(ah-choo!)

GOLDENROD'S BAD WRAP & DON'T WHACK LIVE OAKS!

"We blame Walt Disney for goldenrod's undeserved bad name. Despite Sneezy's pronouncement, plants such as goldenrod with heavy, insect-carried pollen rarely cause allergic reaction."

--Janet Macunovich

BY BRENDA BEUST SMITH

It's true. That's where the first known mass public "blow" to goldenrod's reputation happened. The movie: "Snow White."

- Doc says. "Look . . . Goldenrod!"
- Sneezzy cries, "Take them away! My Nose! My hay fever! You know I can't stand it!"
- And then he sneezes. And goldenrod has been branded ever since.

GOLDENROD DOES NOT CAUSE ALLERGIES! When you start sneezing at the sight of the masses of yellow goldenrod now lighting up left-to-nature sites all over the Greater Houston area, chance are really high that the true culprit is ragweed, which usually prefers to grow among goldenrod stalks.

Goldenrod, a cousin of daisies and sunflowers, is no more likely to cause allergies than the majority of our most common, favorite garden plants.

<https://blog.nwf.org/2014/09/the-goldenrod-allergy-myth/>

On the contrary, according to Doug Tallamy, author of *Bringing Nature Home*, goldenrods support more than 100 species of butterflies and moth, including providing incredible food and shelter benefits to birds. In winter, they are one of the few food sources to migrating birds.

But not all goldenrods are equal! For landscape use, don't dig up just any wild goldenrod and transplant it into your garden. As a young and clueless gardener, I did this with one of our local varieties, and spent the next 10 years digging up the nonstop, rapidly spreading stalks.

Instead, opt for one of the dwarf and/or clumping varieties now available in retail trade, such as 'Fireworks' goldenrod (*Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks'), right, pictured at right being admired by Bart Brechter, Museum of Fine Arts/Houston Director of Gardens and Landscape. This 'Fireworks' goldenrod is in the Trials Plantings at Stephen F. Austin's SFA Gardens, Nacogdoches. (Photo from [SFA Gardens Facebook page](#)).



Dwarf, mounding, and other noninvasive goldenrod varieties share their *au natural* cousin's more friendly attributes (herbaceous perennials, drought-tolerant, sun-loving, spectacular color) and are just as ideal for flower arrangements. The steadily increasing demand for pollinator plants, especially for butterflies, is providing incentive for growers to get more garden-friendly varieties into retail trade.

'Fireworks' goldenrod took a couple of season to produce the beautiful gold florescences (flowers) pictured above at the SFA Gardens at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches. Whether that was because of a need for more chill hours or just an aging thing, Dawn Stover, Research Associate at SFA Mast Arboretum, isn't quite sure. But it's a beauty now as you can see.

Dawn thinks other good goldenrod garden-friendly choices for southern Gulf gardeners could be these below:



L to r, goldenrods ok for gardens — Solidago petiolaris, S. nitida & S. odora

If you order online, check the variety's [garden zone listing](#). The Greater Houston area is Zone 9-A & B for cold-tolerance. The Heat Tolerance Zone Map is more pertinent to our plants' survival but it's not widely used or promoted. Maybe that will change in the future if this P.S. note I received from SFA Gardens Director Dr. David Creech is an accurate prediction:

Dr. Creech, an internationally-recognized horticultural expert, opined: *"I think winters will slowly be averaging warmer until one day your area will enter an era of no freezing temps - 2050? 2080?"*

Let's see, I'll be 107 in 2050. Hope I'm around and still gardening. I don't like winter much! However, speaking of aging gracefully . . .



IF YOU'RE EVER NEAR ROCKPORT & see this sign pointing to **"BIG TREE"** or similar signs in Brazoria County touting a "relatively-new" state champion, visit both! The "Big Tree" near Rockport in Goose Island State Park is believed to be the 2nd oldest tree in America —1000+ years! ([Read more](#))



However, after almost 4 decades of also being a Texas State Champion tree, the ancient Big Tree (above) lost its Lone Star title in 2003 to the San Bernard Live Oak in Brazoria County's Goose Island State Park. The current champion, at 43' tall & 9' wide, is 1' wider and nearly 20' taller than Rockport's "Big Tree." ([Read more on San Bernard Live Oak](#)). Now, *who else would tell you these things?*

* * *

"OAK DEATH BY PRUNING" is how Ann titled her emailed follow-up query to [Laura Medick's Spotlight Article](#) on tree care last week:

Ann wrote in part: *"In my neighborhood, folks hire anyone with a chainsaw to*

raise the canopy and thin their oak trees. One 40-year-old house in particular has two very large live oaks that appear to be near death several years after a severe pruning that left just a small ball of leaves at the end of the remaining branches. It will be a miracle if they survive another year.

"Another neighbor complained about the thin grass under his lovely oaks and in June 2018 had them severely pruned and thinned. By July 2018 those trees were dropping acorns like crazy and the trees did the same this year in June . . . maybe I'm wrong but I believe that folks tend to follow the trend and believe that's how live oaks are to be pruned."

Ann's comments to last week's tree care discussion hits close to home.

Since both are no longer with us, I feel comfortable revealing Mother-in-law hit the roof after Father-in-law pruned their magnificent backyard live oak tree (right) in Rose City, just east of Beaumont.

The branches were hitting him when he mowed. He didn't follow the advice of Laura below and the results are still visible over 50+ years later. So thanks to Ann Cole for suggesting this addition to Laura's column last week:



MERCER BOTANIC GARDEN ARBORIST LAURA MEDICK ADDRESSES ANN'S CONCERNS . . .

"The live oak is one of those hardy species that can keep on, but it will have a better chance if a majority of the foliage is left for producing the sugar resources. It is recommended that dead, broken, or hanging branches be the first line of priority for trimming while avoiding stubs and topping at all times.

It sounds like these pruners left stubs which would trigger sprouters all around the cut. Another mistake here is when the interior canopy is trimmed so much so that you end up with a "lion's tale" type of lever, creating a branch with more foliage weight at the tips that would make it more likely to fail as the wind sweeps it back and forth more heavily at the tips.

Instead, we should focus to reduce branches either from the top down or from the outside in by picking out the leaders or dominant branches we would like to focus on, and trim around these while not creating lions tales or stub branches. Look for buds too!! Consider lateral buds which may become active and create funky branches if a tree has been improperly pruned.

When it comes to trimming the sprouters, it is good to wait for them to get a little bigger before deciding to trim the ones that you don't want as a leader just so the branch doesn't get too much stress again all at once right after a hacking.

If your oak has been hacked, then choose which of the new sprouters would be best to become the new leader and trim around it to manage so as to keep

other branches from dominating that newleader. Keep an eye out for dead branches after a hack attack happens since likely they will no longer have sufficient foliage resources to keep it living which is why the branch will respond with these many sprouters.

* * *

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE UPCOMING EVENTS to learn more about the best tree choices for your area:

- **FRI.-SAT., OCT. 25-26: HOUSTON ARBORETUM FALL NATIVE PLANT SALE,** 9am-4pm, 120 West Loop North. Free. houstonarboretum.org; 713-681-8433
- **SAT., NOV. 2: TEXAS ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION.** Mercer Botanic Gardens, Houston Area Urban Forestry Council, and Texas A&M Forest Service, with the help of Spring Creek Education Society will celebrate at Mercer's West Side Arboretum. Free tree saplings will be available as long as supplies last.
- **MON. NOV. 11: ARBOR DAY CEREMONY & BLUE STAR MEMORIAL BY-WAY MARKER DEDICATION.** 1.30pm, Fisher House III, 2002 Holcombe Blvd. A District IV Coastal Prairie Council & Texas Garden Club event.
- **FRI., NOV 15: HOUSTON URBAN TREE CONFERENCE,** 8am-3pm, Weekly Community Center, 8440 Greenhouse Road, Cypress. \$45. harris.agrilife.org/event/houston-urban-tree-conference-2/

PS. SPEAKING OF WORKING WITH HOAs & POAS (see John's column below), if your neighborhood encourages the planting of natives, xeriscaping, or other ecologically-beneficial landscaping, please let me know. I'd love to spotlight such ecological awareness and find out more about compromises utilized. Thanks! Brenda -- lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

* * *

"LAZY GARDENER SPEAKER LIST" & "PUBLICITY BOOKLET"

are free — Just email lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

Brenda's column in the **LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER** is based on her 40+ years as the Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener

* * *



NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOILS AND PLANTS #100

A question we often get asked is about removing grass and planting drought tolerant and low maintenance plants. Often the customer tells us, their HOA prevents them from practicing environmentally-friendly landscaping like xeriscaping.

If one hears this from a HOA representative, they are either ignorant of the law or not telling you the truth. As a result of the benefits of environmentally friendly landscaping, the State of Texas passed a law a few years ago preventing HOAs from keeping folks from practicing conservation, rainwater harvesting, and recycling.

Texas is considered a drought-prone state and we are also running out of cheap water from our aquifers. To protect our future, we need to conserve water and use other environmentally friendly options. That's why just a few years ago the State of Texas passed a law that gives homeowners living in an HOA community more control over landscaping their yard with water-saving alternatives.

Below are a few links to the statutes itself and a few articles on the subject one might find interesting:

[CHAPTER 202. CONSTRUCTION AND ENFORCEMENT OF RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS](#)

[Xeriscaping and Your Texas HOA](#)

[Xeriscaping can no longer be prohibited by homeowners associations](#)

[Xeriscaping no longer prohibited by homeowners associations in Central Texas](#)

Senate Bill 198 (2013) – Protection of Drought-Resistant Landscaping and Water-Conserving Natural Turf (also HB 449 – 2013)

“SB 198 modifies Section 202.007 of the Texas Property Code. Section 202.007 restricts HOAs from enforcing a provision of a Dedicatory Instrument that would prohibit or restrict a Homeowner from using drought-resistant landscaping or water-conserving natural turf on his or her property. A HOA may still require a Homeowner to obtain pre-approval of such landscaping or turf from the HOA to ensure, to the extent practicable, maximum aesthetic compatibility of such landscaping or turf with other landscaping in the subdivision, but a HOA's approval may not be unreasonably denied or withheld”.

It amazes me how many of our local politicians, bureaucrats and HOA boards are so ignorant of these issues. For example, I read the other day that the state of Minnesota is now paying homeowners up to \$500 per home to remove their lawn grass and plant Urban Meadows (native grasses, forbs and wildflowers).

Note: The Woodlands Water agency offer rebates to purchase drought tolerant native plants. For additional information see:

[Woodlands Water Rebates](#)

A few weeks ago, we talked about the importance of the simple plant we call algae from improving soils and sequestering carbon to the tremendous nutritional benefits that algae can provide. I even did a book review on a book about algae called “Slime”.

Researchers have found another use for algae (that thin soft slimy green stuff we

see in ponds). Thomas Brück of the Technical University of Munich, Germany, and his team developed a process that uses algae oil to create carbon fibers. These fibers can be used to develop industrial-strength material that's as hard as steel but only a fraction of the weight. These lightweight materials can then be used in making cars, airplanes and buildings.

The creation of these carbon fibers uses far less energy and produces far less carbon pollution than making concrete or steel. But that's not its only climate benefit. Algae absorb CO₂ as they grow, so when algae oil is used as a raw material for carbon fibers, the CO₂ gets locked inside. At the end of the products life when those carbon fibers need to be disposed of, they can be ground up and permanently stored underground where the carbon is locked up indefinitely.

The researchers stated that scaling up production will require big investments in algae cultivation. But once that's in place, this new technology could create strong industrial materials that also benefit the climate.

A mega study by the University of Nebraska and the Union of Concerned Scientists analyzed 89 studies from 6 continents and found that having a high plant density to create continuous roots, were the most effective in helping the soil absorb water. This simple practice performed better than other techniques like no-till, cover crops, crop rotations, perennial plantings, and crop land grazing. They also were able to withstand heavy rainfall better and were more resistant to drought or flooding.

Along the same lines Louisiana State University found that when warm-season grass was over seeded with cool-season annual cover crops, it greatly increase soil organic matter along with improved nitrogen management, fixed carbon, increased enzyme activity and soil microbial activity creating a healthier soil. A study published in the Journal of The Soil Science Society of America, 2019 has found that cover cropping annually, no matter the species of plant grown, greatly provides benefits to the soil.

Bottom line, if we want to have a very healthy soil, we need to have lots of plants growing in it. Contrary to what we used to think, the more plants the better.

The Dr. Mercola newsletter had a good article on how a corrupt marketing agency is changing its name after being fined for money laundering. The Grocery Manufacturer's Association (GMA) was the brazen trade and lobbying group for junk food makers and biotech and GMO seeds companies. They were also responsible for the DARK act (Deny Americans the Right to Know) a few years ago to prevent the labeling of GMO products.

[Read More](#)

An excerpt from “**Health Newsletters**” is interesting. “Over 250 million pounds of weed killer (herbicides) is used on American produce each year. These toxic chemicals make their way into American homes through the food supply and affect families across the country. Urine samples collected between 1993 and 2016 showed **weed killer toxin levels in Americans had gone up 1,208%** .

While all the side effects are not yet fully known, experts believe the rise of issues like **diabetes, bloating, diarrhea, constipation, weight gain, and fatigue may be related to the increase of these toxic products**. The worst part is that almost nobody knows about it, even most doctors”.

Another problem with glyphosate has been discovered by researchers at the university MIT. They discovered that glyphosate causes a sulfate deficiency and impairs the heme pathway. Sulfates are used in many biological processes such as building amino acids and proteins. A functioning heme pathway is required for healthy blood. Another reason not to eat GMO's plants which are high in glyphosate (Round-Up) if one wants to be healthy.

The reasons to start your own fruit and vegetable garden or at least purchase organic foods increase almost daily.

Natural News has tested a common soil amendment called “Leonardite” which is often found near coal deposits. It is often crushed up and sold as a source of humates in gardening. It is also used in dietary supplements like probiotics as it has a high humic acid content. They tested one brand of probiotics that uses Leonardite purchased on Amazon and found that it contains over 5,000 ppm lead (Pb) and over 3 million ppb Aluminum (Al) which was not disclosed.

A story from Sustainable Pulse reports that the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) regulators have approved a new type of GM cotton, the seed of which is to be used for human and animal consumption. The cotton was developed by researchers at Texas A&M University. As a society we really do not need more health destroying GMO plants that require even more glyphosate or other toxic chemicals.

[Read More](#)

New research from the advocacy organization [Healthy Babies Bright Futures](#) (HBBF), which bills itself as an alliance of scientists, nonprofit organizations and donors trying to reduce exposures to neurotoxic chemicals during the first three years of development. The researchers commissioned by HBBF looked at 168 different baby foods that spanned 61 brands commonly found on grocery store shelves. From that large sample, 95 percent were contaminated with one or more of four toxic heavy metals — arsenic, lead, cadmium and mercury. The high prevalence of the toxic metals meant that 26 percent of the foods tested had all four of the heavy metals. "Arsenic, lead and other heavy metals are known causes of neurodevelopmental harm." Heavy metals that may damage a developing brain are present in 95 percent of baby foods on the market. The reasons to grow our own food or purchase from organic farmers markets continue to increase daily.

Research from the research-based Aarhus University in Denmark has found that ants inhibit at least 14 different plant diseases. The ants secrete antibiotics from glands on their bodies. This supports other studies that found that when wood ants were added to apple plantations, the major diseases like scab and apple rot

were reduced.

In past issues of this newsletter we discussed the culinary benefits of Elderberries. The article below from the Dr. Mercola website discusses the health benefits and why elderberries are considered one of the super foods. They are rich in many nutrients like zinc, full of vitamin-C, and the flavonoid anthocyanin known for its ability to boost immune function and prevent or at least inhibit colds and flu.

Elderberries are beautiful plants, bloom with large clusters of edible white flowers and they attract many pollinators and others that eat pest insects. They are drought tolerant and will grow well in moist areas. Our native (local) elderberry can thrive in full sun, laughs at heat and humidity, and does not have any significant disease or pest problems. Note: At Nature' Way Resources we propagate native elderberries but call for availability as they sell out quickly.

The demand for elderberries is high and growing, hence this plant can be grown as a cash crop which is an opportunity for market growers.

[Read More](#)

We have talked about regenerative agriculture many times in the past from our farms to our backyard gardens. Below is an excerpt from an article by David R. Montgomery, PhD.

“Regenerative agriculture is not just about restoring the life of the soil. By making smaller farms profitable once again, it could bring more people back to the land and thereby boost the economy in small towns across America.

For each field, LaCanne and Lundgren measured the amount of organic matter in the soil, pest insect populations, corn yield, expenses, and profit. What they found directly contradicts key tenets of conventional agriculture. They found that pest insects (such as corn rootworms, European corn borers, Western bean cutworm, other caterpillars, and aphids) were 10 times as abundant on conventional farms that used insecticides than on farms that relied on regenerative, pest-resilient cropping systems with no insecticides.

The lower pest abundance in regenerative fields was likely due to competition from greater insect diversity, and because insecticide use kills predatory insects (like ladybugs) capable of keeping pests in check. This becomes a problem because pest populations rebound before their predators.

LaCanne and Lundgren also found that regenerative corn fields were almost *twice as profitable as conventionally managed corn fields* due to lower seed and fertilizer costs, a price premium if the crops are organic, and the added value of cover crop grazing for meat production on the regenerative fields. The profitability was unrelated to grain yield, but positively correlated with soil organic matter. In other words, restoring soil paved the way to restoring farm profitability. A profitable farm was less about how much the farmer grew and more about how they treated their soil”.

For the full article see:

TEAMING WITH MICROBES
The Organic Gardener's Guide to the Soil Food Web
REVISED EDITION
JEFF LOWENFELS & WAYNE LEWIS

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Come discover the fascinating world of soil microbiology with the most entertaining, Jeff Lowenfels. He is the author of the Teaming Series featuring the award-winning book '*Teaming with Microbes*'. As a world renowned soil microbiology expert and leader in the Organic movement, Jeff will blow your mind with his findings from the soil food web.

Come join us as one of the most enlightening and captivating lecturers in the Organic Movement comes to Houston for this can't miss event.

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ITINERARY
5:00-6:00PM
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JEFF LOWENFELS

Have You Tried . . .

PASSION VINE

(*Passiflora incarnata*)

Wonderfully fragrant, exotic passion vine blooms are as fascinating to gardeners as to butterflies and other pollinators. A host plant

for Gulf Fritillary, Zebra Longwing, and other butterflies, passion vines are pollinated by bumblebees. Early missionaries immediately saw in the unique passion vine [multiple symbols of Jesus Christ's crucifixion](#), hence the common name. Passion vines are enthusiastic growers, 15-20', ideal for fences or other very sturdy supports. Full sun best but tolerates partial shade. Bloom summer through fall. Cutting back in spring helps keep it in bounds. Drought-tolerant, so needs good drainage in our rainy periods. Bone meal helps promote heavier flowering.



*PASSION VINE is carried by Nature's Way Resources ([Map](#)).
Or . . . contact our sponsor, Montgomery Pines Nursery in Willis, our other
sponsors below or your neighborhood nurseryman for possible sources.*

* * *

LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS

ADULT GARDEN / PLANT EVENTS ONLY **PLEASE READ BEFORE** **SUBMITTING AN EVENT FOR THIS CALENDAR**

Events **NOT** submitted in the **EXACT** written format below may take 2 weeks or longer to be reformatted/retyped. Submit to: lazygardener@sbcglobal.net.
• No pdfs please! • Type text into email. • Put your group name on the 'Subject' line.

FRI.-SAT., OCT. 25-26: HOUSTON ARBORETUM FALL NATIVE PLANT SALE, 9am-4pm, 120 West Loop North. Free. houstonarboretum.org; 713-681-8433

SAT., OCT. 26: HOUSTON ROSE SOCIETY FALL SHOW, 12-4pm, Memorial City Mall, 303 Memorial City Way. Free. houstonrose.org

SAT. NOV 2, TEXAS ARBOR DAY, 1pm – 4pm, Mercer Botanic Gardens, West Side Arboretum, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

SAT., NOV. 2, MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENER OPEN GARDENS, 9-11:30 am, AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. Free. 936-539-7824, mcmga.com

SAT., NOV. 2: BULB CLASS by J JIM MAAS & MARGARET CHERRY, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$45. 281-474-2488, maasnursery.com

SAT., NOV. 2: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENER OPEN GARDENS, 9-11:30 am, AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. Free. 936-539-7824; mcmga.com

SAT. NOV. 2: WHAT IS A GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER by DIANE SCHENKE, 1-2:30 pm; Extension Office, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St./FM 519. Free. Register: galvcountrymgs@gmail.com, 281-309-5065; aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html

TUES., NOV. 5: ALL ABOUT SALVIAS by PHOEBE LAKE, noon-1pm, Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. 713-274-0950. hcmga.tamu.edu

THURS., NOV. 7: HOLIDAY LOOK AT THE GARDEN by FRANKIE GREEN & ALICE BROWN, 10am, MUD Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr, Katy. Nottingham Country Garden Club event. Free. ncgctx.org

FRI., NOV.8: CREATING A BIRD-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY by ANNA VALLERY, 10am, First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. Free. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

FRI., NOV. 8: NATURE'S KALEIDOSCOPE: A HORTICULTURE SPECIALTY SHOW. A Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event at The First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd., 12.30p.m. – 2 p.m. Free. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

SAT., NOV. 9: THE WOODLANDS GARDEN CLUB ANNUAL PLANTS SALE, 10am, The Woodlands Wildflower Festival, Recreation Center, Rob Fleming Park, 6464 Creekside Forest Dr. Free. thewoodlandsgardenclub.org

MON. NOV. 11: ARBOR DAY CEREMONY & BLUE STAR MEMORIAL BY-WAY MARKER DEDICATION. 1.30pm, Fisher House III, 2002 Holcombe Blvd. A District IV Coastal Prairie Council & Texas Garden Club event.

TUES., NOV. 12: MONARCH BUTTERFLIES IN YOUR GARDEN by AMY STODDARD, 9am, Shenandoah Municipal Complex, 29955 I-45 North, Shenandoah. The Woodlands Garden Club event. Free. thewoodlandsgardenclub.org

WED. NOV. 13, GARDENS (MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS COLLECTIONS), noon–2pm, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

THURS., Nov.14:GROWING HEALTHY ROSES IN CONTAINERS by Donald Burger 7pm, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church,1819 Heights Blvd. Houston Rose Society event. Free. www.houstonrose.org

FRI., NOV 15: HOUSTON URBAN TREE CONFERENCE, 8am-3pm, Weekly Community Center, 8440 Greenhouse Road, Cypress. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, HAUFC and ISA-TX event. \$45. harris.agrilife.org/event/houston-urban-tree-conference-2/

SAT., NOV. 16: MINIATURE FAIRY GARDEN CLASS by JIM MAAS, PAT CORDRAY & BRENDA HESSE, 10am, Maas Nursery, 5511 Todville Rd., Seabrook. \$45. 281-474-2488, maasnursery.com

TUES., NOV. 19: HECHTIAS by ANDY SIEKKINEN, 7pm, West Grey Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Grey. Bromeliad Society/Houston event. Free. bromeliadsocietyhouston.org

WED., Nov. 20: CACTI IN HABITAT PART III by DAVID VAN LANGEN, 7:30 pm, Metropolitan Multi-Services Center, 1475 West Gray. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society. Free. hcsstex.org

SAT. NOV 23: THE GREAT PEPPER EXTRAVAGANZA by GENE SPELLER, 1-4 pm; AgriLife Extension Office, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St./FM 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. 14, 2019: CHAPPELL HILL GARDEN CLUB CHRISTMAS HOME & GARDEN TOUR, 10am-5pm., Chappell Hill. \$20 advance/\$25 tour day. 713-562-6191; 979-337-1200

FRI., JAN. 10, 2020: RECYCLE, REDUCE, REDUCE by Native Plant Society of Texas, & PLANT SALE. 10am, First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. Free. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

FRI., APRIL 10, 2020: EXCITING UNDERUTILIZED PLANTS ADAPTABLE TO HOUSTON REGION by ADAM BLACK. 10am, First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd. Federation of Garden Clubs event. Free. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

FRI. MAY 8, 2020: THINGS I WISH I HAD LEARNED SOONER (ABOUT ROSES) by BAXTER WILLIAMS. 10am, First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. Free. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

If we inspire you to attend any of these,
please let them know 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, it then 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 which morphed into her Lazy Gardener's Guide on CD. which she now emails free upon request.

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 specialty shows on HoustonPBS (Ch. 8) and her call-in "EcoGardening" show on KPFT-FM.

For over three decades, Brenda served as 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.

