



LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS

Houston Garden Newsletter



Dec. 20, 2019 - Issue #321

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[Nature's Way Resources](#) 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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LEAVES, PROJECTS, BOOKS & A LADY GARDENER POEM

By Brenda Beust Smith

A POTPOURRI OF EMAILS . . .

- I often get asked what I use for garden fertilizers. The answer is singular, not plural: Fallen leaves & pine needles. (Ok, so that is plural.) This started with a need to both improve and build up soil. For reasons with which every lazy gardener will identify (and will trigger others to sniff), it seemed this was the easiest way—provided some route to get around raking could be identified.

Simple. I told neighbors if would they set out "raked & bagged" leaves on the curb, these would mysteriously disappear and reappear around plants in my start-from-scratch-post-Harvey yard. It's been a delightful success. Almost everything's growing beautifully with minimal support from me.

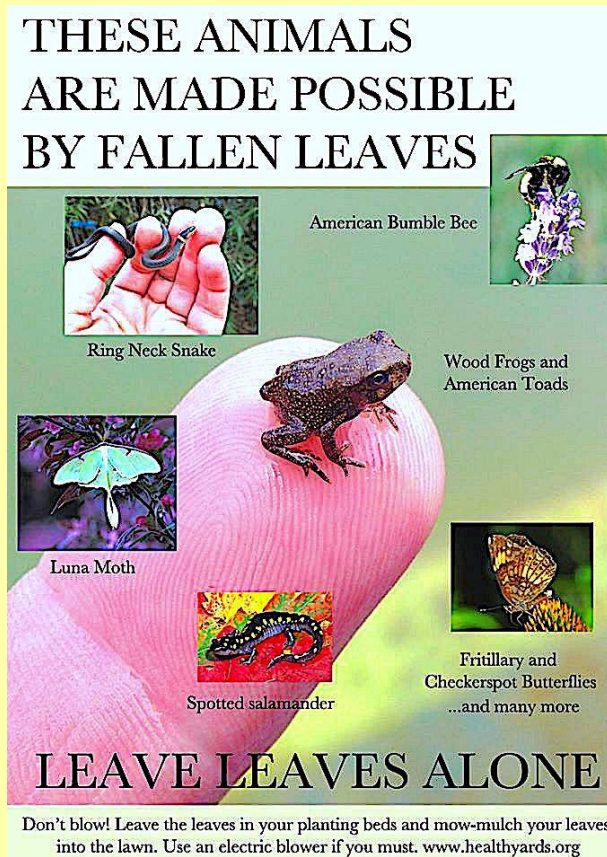
NOTE: One reader to whom I shared this tidbit warned she did same and imported fleas to her yard. We have not had that experience in the past two years of using neighbor's leaves & pine needles. On the other hand, we had to quit bringing in feed store hay for the dog houses for winter for that very reason. A lot depends on using only trusted sources.

* * *

- **"ALL THINGS WILD, NORTH GEORGIA"** really hit home. Captions, clockwise from upper left: Ring Neck Snake, American Bumble Bee, Wood Frogs, Fritillary and Checkerspot Butterflies (and more) and Spotted salamander and Luna Moth. [All things Wild, North Georgia - Home | Facebook](#)

- **CONSUMER REPORTS** Also begs folks to leave leaves on: [Click for article](#)

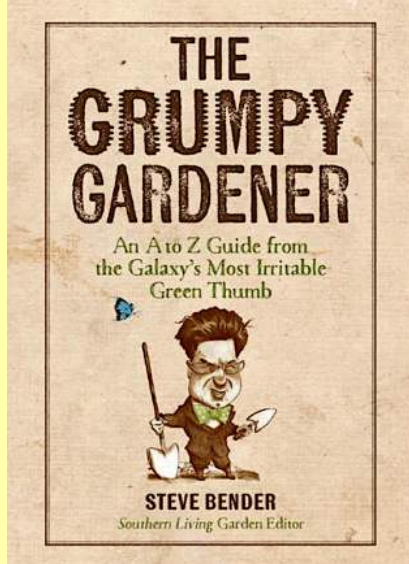
- **A VIEW FROM ABOVE?** In proofing this column for me, John Ferguson recalled totally enjoying [THE LAWN](#). Worth clicking to read!



• **GREAT PROJECT FOR KIDS TOO!** Deany Meinke's left-over purchased green onions "keep on giving" on the window over the sink with amazing results. She says, *"Within less than an hour I see growth – and within a few days, I can 'harvest' more green onion."* PS. This pictures the second crop of green stalks off this root system!

- **NEED LAST MINUTE GIFT IDEAS FOR GARDENERS?** Laughter on nasty cold wet winter days may be the best gift you can give lazy gardeners. I love these humorous-yet-practical approaches:



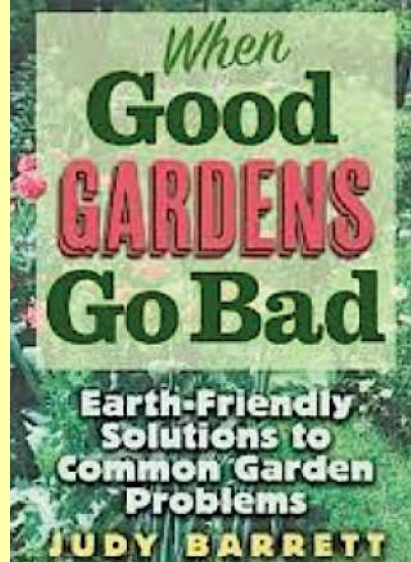


THE GRUMPY GARDENER
--An A-Z Guide from
The Galaxy's Most
Irritable Green Thumb"
by STEVE BENDER

Southern Living Garden Editor

Steve's one of the most fun gardening writers I've ever read. Steve shares his favorite reader's responses to some of his advice, his favorite rules for gardening & lots more.

(Click title for more)



WHEN GOOD GARDENS
GO BAD -- Earth-Friendly
Solutions to Common
Garden Problems"
by JUDY BARRETT

one of Texas' pioneer organic gardeners best known for her "***Homegrown***" newsletter.

Dispelling the belief that gardens should be perfectly controlled environments, Barrett encourages gardeners to embrace the imperfections.

(Click title for more)

- **AND ONE MORE . . .** Longtime friend Conrad Tips "made my day" with this poem, the perfect choice to close out my final column of 2019. Reginald Arkell is definitely a practitioner of logodaedaly:

"A PERFECT LADY" from *Green Fingers -- Quips and Tips for a Good Gardener* by Reginald Arkell, 1936.

A PERFECT LADY
by Reginald Arkell

*I knew a girl who was so pure
 She couldn't say the word Manure.
 Indeed, her modesty was such
 She wouldn't pass a rabbit hutch,
 And butterflies upon the wing
 Made her blush like anything.*

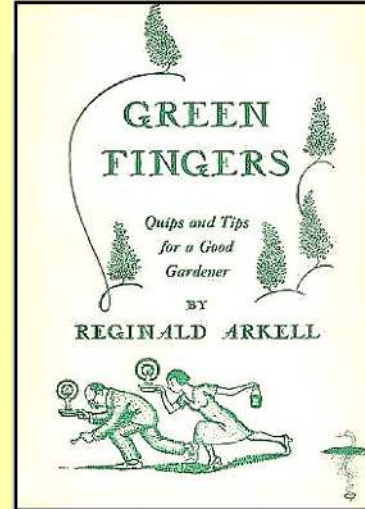
*That lady is a gardener now
 And all her views have changed, somehow.
 She 'squashes' green-fly with her thumb,
 And knows how little snowdrops come.
 In fact, the garden she has got*

Has broadened out her mind a lot.

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(Limited availability on [Amazon](#))



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"LAZY GARDENER SPEAKER LIST" & "PUBLICITY BOOKLET"

are free — email request to: lazygardener@sbcglobal.net

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

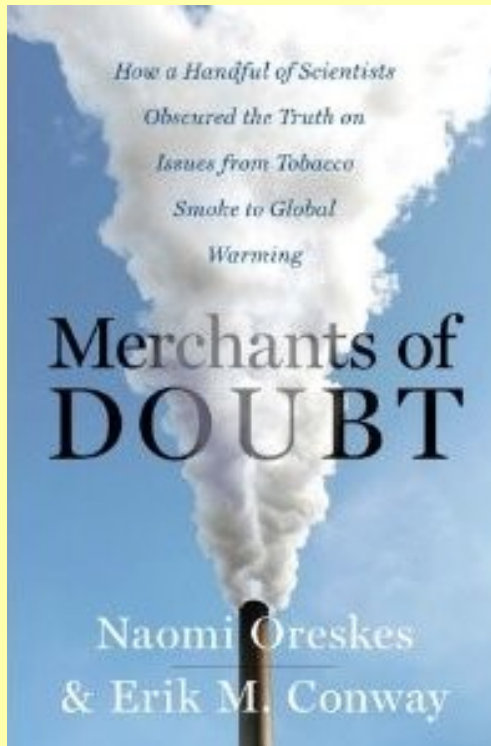


NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOILS AND PLANTS #106

A question I *frequently* get asked is, "Why does the EPA, USDA and FDA allow the toxic chemicals to be sold for gardening?" The main reason is, it is VERY profitable for the manufacturers of these chemicals; hence they will lie, cheat, steal, bribe, etc. and anything else they can think of to protect their profits. The story of Monsanto and the herbicide Round Up clearly reveal this process (see the book called "White Washed").

One of the ways they do this is by hiring scientists to lie about the safety of these

products. The Dr. Mercola newsletter has a nice article on the subject titled "[Why Do Scientists Defend Poison?](#)"

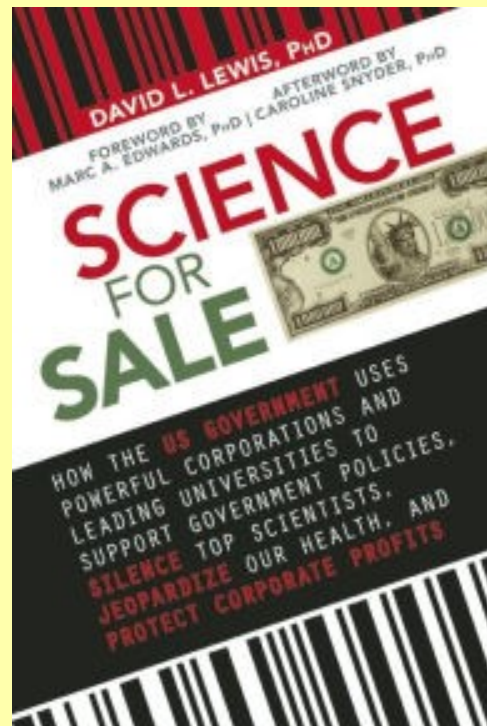


If you would like more information a couple good books on the subject are:

Merchants of DOUBT: How a handful of scientists obscured the truth on issues from Tobacco smoke to global warming, by Naomi Oreskes and Erik M. Conway, Bloomsbury Press, 2010, ISBN: 978-1-59691-610-4

Science For Sale: How the US Government Uses Powerful Corporations and Leading Universities to Support Government Policies, Silence Top Scientists, Jeopardize Our Health, and Protect Corporate Profits, by David Lewis, PhD., Skyhorse Publishing, 2014, ISBN: 978-1-62636-071-6

Note: All proceeds from this book go to the National Whistle Blower's Center (www.whistleblowers.org)



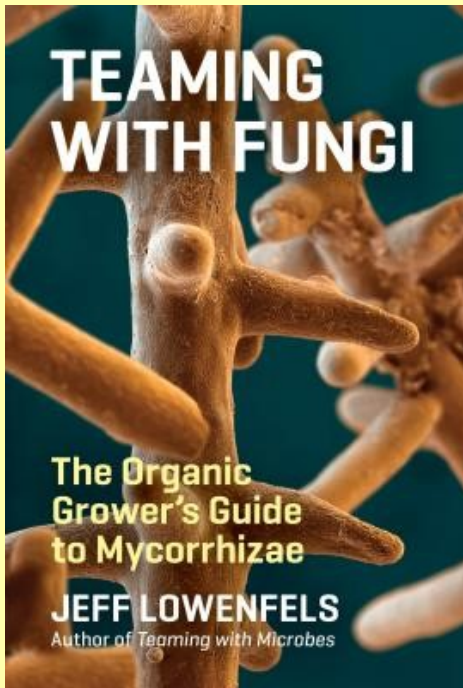
While not a gardening book, it helps explain why so many folks are adding vegetables, herbs and fruits to their gardening to protect their health.

FDA - Failure, Deception, Abuse - The Story of an Out-of-Control Government Agency and What It Means For Your Health, Life Extension Foundation, Praktikoa Books, 2010, ISBN: 978-1-60766-001-9.

I read this book a couple years ago and it is scary in how the FDA suppresses new technology that would save lives. It describes how the FDA uses its power to raid researchers and Doctor's offices, confiscate materials, and suppress any

new life saving therapy. Anything to protect the profits of drug companies.

On a positive note there is a new documentary coming out for naturalists and gardeners that looks fascinating called "Fantastic Fungi". Follow the link to see the trailer for "[Fantastic Fungi](#)"



If you enjoyed the trailer on fungi, another book for gardeners that would make a great Christmas gift, is on the benefits and role of fungi in gardening is:

Teaming With Fungi: The Organic Growers Guide to Mycorrhizae, by Jeff Lowenfels, Timber Press, 2017, ISBN: 978-160469-729.

For those whom want a little more information, these are three fascinating books on fungi:

"Mycorrhizal Planet - How Symbiotic Fungi Work with Roots to Support Plant Health and Build Soil Fertility", Michael Phillips, 2017, Chelsea Publishing, ISBN: 978-1603586580.

Mycelium Running, How Mushrooms Can Help Save the World, by Paul Stamets, Ten Speed Press, ISBN 978-1-58008-579-3. This book is a deeper look at fungus and how it affects the world around us from plants to humans. The second edition was recently released.

Radical Mycology - A Treatise on Seeing and Working with Fungi" by Peter McCoy, 2016, Chthaeus Press, ISBN 978-0-9863996-0-2).

And for those with a serious interest in fungi we have the college textbook: **The Fungal Community – Its Organization and Role in the Ecosystem**, 4th edition, 2017, edited by John Dighton and James White, CRC Press, ISBN: 13-978-1-4987-0665-0.

* * *

Have You Tried ...

MARTHA TURNBULL HIP GARDENIA

(*Gardenia thunbergii* 'Martha Turnbull')

Seed selected by Greg Grant from Rosedown Plantation, St. Francisville, LA. and named in honor of garden owner, horticulturist Martha Turnbull, produced this fragrant, white star-like single gardenia flowering shrub. Spring-summer bloomer, winter orange hips. Also called Cape Jasmine (or Jessamine). well-drained site. Morning sun, bright afternoon shade. Good for containers. 4-5'H x 5-7'W. Deer resistant. (P.S. Lazy Gardener's favorite!)



MARTHA TURNBULL HIP GARDENIAS are 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.

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LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS

**ADULT GARDEN / PLANT EVENTS ONLY PLEASE READ BEFORE
SUBMITTING AN EVENT FOR THIS CALENDAR
THEN CHECK TO MAKE SURE YOUR EVENT IS IN! HOWEVER . . .**

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.

DEC 12-30: CHRISTMAS VILLAGE AT BAYOU BEND, 6003 Memorial Dr. [Ticket info](#).

FRI., DEC. 20: WALLER COUNTY 2020 MASTER GARDENER TRAINING
REGISTRATION DEADLINE. Dates & other details: txmg.org/wallermg/training; 979-826-7651 x 3068.

SAT. JAN 4: WEDGE GRAFTING by NANCY NOH, 9-11am; GROWING AVOCADOS by JERRY HURLBERT, 1-3:30pm; Extension Office, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St./FM 519, La Marque. Free. Register: galvcountymgs@gmail.com, 281-309-5065; www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html

TUES., JAN. 7: FRUIT TREES by HERMAN AUER, noon-1pm, Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. 713-274-0950; hcmga.tamu.edu.

THURS., JAN. 9 :EXTREME BED BUILDING by MARY FULGHAM & RANDY KEEN, 7pm, Cherie Flores Pavilion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Houston Rose Society event. Free. houstonrose.org

THURS JAN. 9: HYDRANGEA'S & GENERAL GARDENING by ANITA NELSON, 10 am, MUD Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr, Katy. Free, Nottingham Country Garden Club

event. ncgctx.org

THURS., JAN. 9:, PRUNING by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 6:30-8:30pm, Barbara Bush Library, 6817 Cypresswood Dr., Spring. Free. 713-274-0950; hcmga.tamu.edu

THURS., JAN. 9: PROPAGATION OF BLACKBERRIES & FRUIT & PECAN TREES by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 10-11:30am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Free. 713-274-0950; hcmga.tamu.edu

FRI., JAN. 10, 2010: HOUSTON FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS PLANT SALE and RECYCLE, REDUCE, REUSE by Della Barbato, 10 am, First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. Free. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org

SAT., JAN. 11: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS IN THE CITY TOURS, 9-11:30am. WORKSHOP: 10:30am, McGovern Centennial Garden, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. 713-274-0950; hcmga.tamu.edu

SAT. JAN 11: GROWING BLUEBERRIES by DR. DAVID COHEN, 9-10:30 am; PLANTING FRUIT TREES by HERMAN AUER, 1-3pm; Extension Office, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St./FM 519, La Marque. Free. Register: galvcountymgs@gmail.com, call 281-309-5065; www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html

SAT. JAN 18: GROWING GREAT TOMATOES, PART 2 OF 3 by IRA GERVAIS, 9-11:30 am; GROWING PEACHES IN GALVESTON COUNTY by HERMAN AUER, 1-3:30pm; Extension Office, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St./FM 519, La Marque. Free. Register: galvcountymgs@gmail.com, call 281-309-5065; www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston/index.html

TUES. JAN. 14: PLUMERIAS IN THAILAND by MARK WRIGHT, 7-9pm; Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org

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SAT.- SUN., JAN. 18-19: 46th ANNUAL CAMELLIA SHOW AND SALE, 1:00-4:00pm, First Christian Church, 3500 North Loop 336 West, Conroe. Coushatta Camellia Society event. Free. cousattacamelliasociety.com.

TUES., JAN 21: GARDENING WITH LOCAL NATIVE PLANTS by MARY SPOLYAR, 10am; St. Basil's Hall, 702 Burney Rd., Sugar Land. Free. Sugar Land Garden Club event. www.sugarlandgardenclub.org

FRI., FEB. 14: HOUSTON FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS PLANT SALE. 10 am, First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd. Free. Refreshments will be served. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org.

SAT., FEB. 15: URBAN HARVEST 20th ANNUAL FRUIT TREE SALE, 9am-1pm, Sawyer Yards, 2010 Winter St. UrbanHarvest.org/fruit-tree-sale

SUN., FEB. 23: CACTI AND SUCCULENTS by JACOB MARTIN, 2pm-3pm. Klein United Methodist Church, 5920 FM 2920, Spring, TX 77388. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. Free. cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com

SAT.-SUN., MAR. 7-8: SPRING BRANCH AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB SHOW & SALE, Sat.: 9am-5pm Sale, 1-5pm show. Sun.: 10am-3pm Sale. Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Dr. Free. kjwross@yahoo.com

TUES. MAR 10, 2020: BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS WITH PLANT SOCIETIES by MARK

WOMACK, 7-9pm ; Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org

FRI. MAR. 13: HOUSTON FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS PLANT SALE. 10 am, First Christian Church, 1601 Sunset Blvd. Free. Refreshments will be served. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org.

SUN., MAR. 22: BIRDS OF THE BAYOU CITY by MARY ANNE WEBER, 2pm-3pm. Klein United Methodist Church, 5920 FM 2920, Spring, TX 77388. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. Free. cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com

SAT., MAR. 28: CYPRESS CREEK DAYLILY CLUB SPRING DAYLILY & PERENNIAL PLANT SALE, 10am-3pm. Wunderlich Historical Farm, 18218 Theiss Mail Route Rd., Klein. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. Free. cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com

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

SUN., APR. 26: HOW TO GROOM A DAYLILY FOR A FLOWER SHOW by MARY GAGE, 2pm-3pm. Klein United Methodist Church, 5920 FM 2920, Spring. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. Free. cypresscreekdaylilyclub.simplesite.com

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

SAT., MAY 9: DAYLILY PLANT SALE 10am-3pm. Gethsemane Lutheran Church, 4040 Watonga, Houston, 77092. Houston Hemerocallis Society event. Free. ofts.com/hhs/calendar.html

TUES., JUL 14: BONSAI by SCOTT BARBOZA, 7-9pm; Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. theplumeriasociety.org

TUES., OCT 13: FALL PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SOCIAL/LUAU 7-9:00 pm; Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. theplumeriasociety.org

If we inspire you to attend any of these,
please let them know you heard about it in . . .
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NATURE'S WAY RESOURCES

an organically based service company

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.

