



August 7, 2020 - Issue # 351

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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.

[Click here to join our email list](#)

[CLICK HERE](#) for PDFs OF PAST LG&F NEWSLETTERS

CORONAVIRUS CANCELLATIONS

If your event in our calendar below is cancelled, please let us know as soon as possible at lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com



ONLINE TO THE RESCUE! IT'S HARD TO KEEP GOOD GARDENERS DOWN

"I think many of the hummingbird feeders were designed by people who never cleaned one."

-- Winnie Burkett, [Bolivar Beach Bloomers Facebook page](#)

by BRENDA BEUST SMITH

TRUST GARDENERS to find unique ways to cope with anything . . . including pandemics. While other businesses were closing en masse, the physical and functional openness of most nurseries and the willingness of most gardeners to protect themselves and others:

- made home gardens "silver lining" focal places to spend time and energy
- turned nurseries and other plant retailers -- where distancing is relatively easy in the usual spread-out design -- into safer destinations than most

With the pandemic charging on with no end in sight, gardening/plant groups are coping in their usual practical manner. Since large congested gatherings are projected to still be too dangerous in coming months, our major fall plant sales are opening their inventories online. Online purchases then can be safely picked up in fall.



For example, the **2020 GARDEN CLUB OF HOUSTON BULB & PLANT MART** at The Church of St. John the Divine, 2450 River Oaks Blvd., is still scheduled for Oct. 15-17. Plants will abound but we can already [order](#) bulbs including these, l to r, l to r, blood lily (*Scadoxus multiflorus*), Byzantine gladiolus and *Crinum* 'Mystery'.

* * *



Wildscapes Workshop 2020 opens registration; sale goes online

The Native Plant Society of Texas traditional Houston [Wildscapes 2020](#) will be a speaker series via ZOOM over four evenings--Sept 1, 3, 8 & 10. Headlining Wildscapes' usual impressive speaker lineup will be Texas firefly expert [Ben Pfeiffer](#).

(More later)

Wildscape's traditional native plant and book sale opens online Sept 12 for Wildscape ticket holders only. On Sept. 13 the sale opens to the public, again online only. Curbside pickup will be Sept 19 & 20. [DETAILS](#).

In the meantime, check out these free NPSOT Houston online resources:

- [NPSOT Houston Chapter YouTube Channel](#)
- [Go Native](#) – How to start with native plants in your garden
- The BIG LIST of [Native Plants and Environmental Events](#) in Houston and around the state.
- [NPSOT Houston Chapter Blog](#) by Lan Shen
- [Follow & retweet on Texas native plants via Twitter \(#txplants\)](#)

* * *

HOUSTON BOTANIC GARDEN is just weeks away from opening. I predict this garden is eventually going to put Houston on the global

map of world class botanic gardens. I hope our super-active garden clubs, world-recognized specialty plant societies and outstanding local horticulturists and nursery folk will become, and will always be, load-bearing walls for future expansion.



Mark your calendar: With all necessary safety precautions, Opening Season Weekends kick off Fri., Sept. 18, with spotlights on the plants and cultural diversity of four world regions to which focal plant collections are native.

- **Sept. 18-20 – Celebrating Latin America**
- **Oct. 2-4 – Celebrating Asia**
- **Oct. 16-18 – Celebrating Africa**
- **Oct. 30-Nov. 1 – Celebrating the Mediterranean**

A range of general admission tickets and memberships will be available online, Check hbg.org for details.

BOTANIC GARDEN VOLUNTEERS NEEDED. HBG is now looking for enthusiastic, friendly gardeners, educators, and anyone else interested in the natural world to serve as volunteer Garden Docents. In-depth training will be provided Aug. 8 or Aug. 12 to lead tours through the Global Collection Garden, Culinary Garden, Susan Garver Family Discovery Garden, and natural ecosystem areas. Details: volunteers@hbg.org.

If you, or your group, plan to donate to the garden, double your impact by doing so before Opening Day, Friday, Sept. 18. Gifts to the Garden's Annual Fund by that deadline will be matched dollar-for-dollar by Friends of Chairman Emerita Nancy S. Thomas, one of my lifelong friends and mentor. Make a gift online. Follow HBG's progress on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/hbg.org), Instagram, and Twitter.

(NOTE: This newsletter's publisher, John Ferguson, and Nature's Way Resources are proud to be major soil contributors to the Houston Botanic Garden.)

* * *



LIKE YOUR PLANTS A LITTLE QUIRKY?

John Fairey Garden (formerly Peckerwood Garden) has a rather unique "thank you" for the first 30 people who renew or join the Garden at any membership level in August.

Not familiar with *Ficus gasparriniana* v. *laceratifolia*? Plant Delights Nursery's Tony Avent recommends this for "folks who like their plants a little quirky."

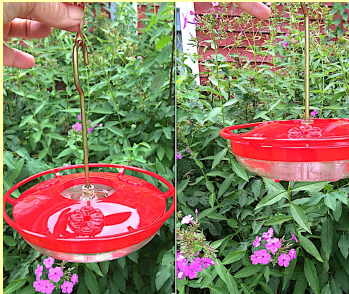
Tony says this fascinating hardy ornamental fig, a small upright shrub, should reach 6' in 5 years. Dark green, oak-shaped scabrous (sandpapery) evergreen leaves beautifully frames the snow pea-sized-axillary fruit that turns bright red in July, continuing to dazzle until Christmas. It is edible, but but it's prized more for its great ornamental value.

* * *

DONNA BRACKETT'S WOW NOW! submission is her cheery red and yellow gaillardia, which (she warned) are still just getting established. An active gardener when she lived outside "The City," Donna's vegetable garden didn't work out so well *"due to squirrels and lack of time."* Donna decided to focus on wildflowers which, to her delight, have proven *"amazing even in their first year."*



* * *



HUMMINGBIRDS ARE ARRIVING !!!!!

[Winnie Burkett](#) really hit home with the quote at the top of this column from her [Boliver Beach Bloomers Facebook post](#). I also have thrown away too-hard-to-clean hummer feeders. Winnie, a biologist, is the now retired Houston Audubon Society sanctuary manager and a prime mover in the addition of 1800 acres to the Houston Audubon sanctuaries on the

Bolivar Peninsula. When Winnie speaks about local and migrating birds, we need to listen, especially now as we move into our best hummingbird season. Keeping feeders clean and full is important.

When it comes to feeders to hang in our gardens, her favorite is the [HummZinger HighView Feeder](#), available online at The Audubon Shop. Remember, don't add red food coloring! Let your flowers and red on the feeders safely attract these jewels of nature. If you're trying to build a bird-friendly environment, best place to start is: [birdfriendlyhouston.org](#), a [Houston Audubon Society](#) website.

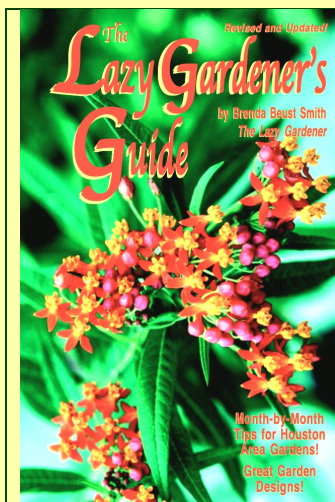
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NOTES:

- **DANY MILLIKEN**, host of [HomeShow Garden Pros radio show](#), (Sat., 7-9am, 610AM) returns in our Spotlight below with a look at growing eggplants -- such a neat, interesting planting we're extending his coverage to a two-parter!
- **HAVE YOU TRIED ... is back**, with a deer-/rabbit-resistant late summer bloomer perfect for supporting butterflies and local bees. Look below!
- **SENDING IN CALENDAR ITEMS?** Pdf & jpg flyers can be beautiful but also more work for media recipients. Always, please, also type or paste important info into email so facts can be quickly copied & transferred without having to be totally retyped. For more tips on making it easier on media to use your info, request a free "Publicity Booklet" at:

lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com

* * *



PDFs of Brenda's now-out-of-print **"LAZY GARDENER'S GUIDE"**

can be downloaded free here

[Lazy Gardener Guide Front Cover](#)

[Lazy Gardener Rest Of Covers](#)

[Lazy Gardener Guide Book Pages](#)

In exchange for this free book, all I ask is
you be safe . . . **PLEASE WEAR A MASK!**
Protect yourself and the rest of us!

* * *



EGGPLANTS LIKE IT HOT!

By **DANIEL MILLIKEN**
HomeshowGardenPros.com

Eggplants are native to southeast Asia (likely India, China, Thailand, Burma, etc), where they have been used for thousands of years and still grow wild as a perennial.

While most enjoy an eggplant's edible fruit, wild eggplant vegetative parts and roots, including the black round fruited *Solanum americanum* and *S. insanum*, that have been documented as a sedative and skin (rashes, sores)



treatment. Crushed seeds were used to treat toothaches. Fruit of our common elongated pinkish-purple *S. melongena* is said to have potential health benefits, like alleviating liver issues.

Grilled, fried, sautéed, baked, breaded, stuffed, as *baba ghanoush* or roasted,

this versatile edible can easily serve as a main dish or side.

THEY LIKE IT HOT, SUNNY, AND FERTILE — Like their Solanaceae family cousins (peppers, tomatoes), eggplants prefer hot weather, only even hotter!

Raised beds are a great option. Loose soil is better for eggplant roots. They can get quite large. Eggplants grow well in containers, too. Use a 5-gallon container per plant and fill with moistened organic potting mix. Use an organic, soil-focused, balanced fertilizer at planting; supplement throughout season.

Rich organic granular fertilizer is a good option for container plantings. In my experience, compost typically results in waterlogged soil over time. Plain, unamended potting soil does not offer any nutrient value. Keep in mind containers dry out faster, need to be watered frequently.

Plants typically grow at least 24" wide and tall. Space appropriately to allow for airflow. Eggplant thrives in 6+ sun hours a day, and fertile, well-draining soil. Mix a couple handfuls of compost into each hole as seedlings are transplanted into garden. The best way to ensure fertile soil is to buy excellent [Nature's Way Resources](#) soil. You can get your soil tested but buying and integrating excellent compost always helps.

If you forego soil improvement efforts, keep an eye on your plants. If they thrive, great! If not, and it's hot and sunny just how they like it, it may be the soil. For the long term, encourage healthy soil by rotating crops, diversifying your plantings, and adding a couple of inches of fresh organic compost each year. In the short term, consider applying 3 pounds of good organic fertilizer to every 100 square feet of planted area.



HomeShow Garden Pros with Dany Millikin

**NEXT WEEK: PART 2
GETTING THE MOST
OUT OF YOUR EGGPLANTS!**

SHARE! -- Have you grown eggplant before? What's your secret to success? Let us know and connect with us at HomeshowGardenPros.com

* * *

OHBA Organic Online Workshop Week

REGISTER ONLINE @
OHBAONLINE.ORG/WEBINAR-EVENTS

6 FABULOUS ORGANIC EXPERTS:



DANIEL MILLIKIN

Do you know about Summer dormancy? This 1 hour webinar will teach you about the transition from Summer to Fall. Daniel will also talk about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities & threats for Fall gardening. Join us for some helpful tips on dealing with the seasonal transition!

**AUGUST 18TH @
5:00PM CST**



BRAD PHILLIPS

Trees are the most valuable plant assets on all properties. Come learn the best practices for sustainable tree care in & out of the landscape. You will learn how to reduce cost, improve results and increase property value of all types in this one hour special presentation.

**AUGUST 20TH @
5:00PM CST**

WATCH 4 OF OUR PREVIOUSLY RECORDED ZOOMINARS ON THE OHBA WEBSITE UNDER 'WEBINAR EVENTS':



Mike Serant
Love Mother Nature



Suzanne Wainwright
The Buglady



Betsy Ross
The Rain Dance



Molly Pikarsky
Summer Plants

Links for live Zoominars will be sent out one day prior to the event, via email. After watching the 6 presentations, take a small quiz & earn the very first OHBA Organic Workshop Week Certificate! Submit your quiz by August 28, 2020 @ 4:00 PM.

For more information head to OHBAonline.org

THE FIRST EVER CERTIFIED ORGANIC WORKSHOP WEEK

August 18TH & 20TH @ 5:00 PM

OHBA
ORGANIC HORTICULTURE
BENEFITS ALLIANCE

From this workshop you will get:

TICKETS

REGISTER ONLINE @
ohbaonline.org/events

OHBA members: \$25

Non-OHBA members: \$50



2 live OHBA Webinars featuring
Organic experts:
Daniel Millikin & Brad Phillips



4 fascinating OHBA Zoominars
(previously recorded)

Take a small quiz to receive an OHBA
Organic Workshop certification!

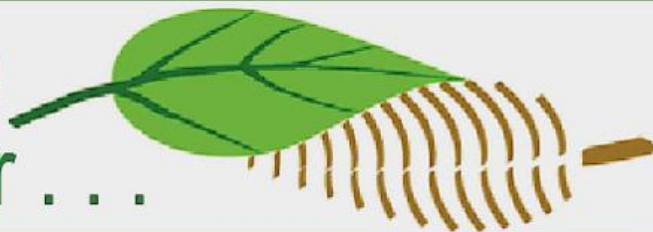
SPECIAL TOPICS INCLUDE:

Summer to Fall transition
Summer dormancy
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats
Organic Tree Management & Maintenance

THANK YOU SPONSORS!



John's
Corner . . .



NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS #126

In issue #125 I referenced a research paper on catnip where they listed catmint and catnip as the same species. Several of our readers pointed out that they are actually different species. That had been my understanding also, but I am

not a botanist, hence I accepted the journal reference. Perhaps what the authors meant was that the active communication chemical is a terpene called nepetalactone and common to both. I did not save the article, so I cannot be sure.

Susan W. shared the following: "...catnip and catmint are 2 totally different herbs. This is a common mistake, just like when people refer to lemongrass by using 2 words: lemon grass. He quoted the correct botanical name for catnip, but catmint is most often *Nepeta mussinii*, or could be *N. faassenii* or *N. racemosa*. There are several reasons I call it totally different.

1. Catmint is generally grown north of here. It has beautiful blue flowers that are spectacular when you see it in full bloom. Leaves are smaller than catnip. Google images is good for to see the plant covered in blooms & used as a stunning ornamental herb.
2. Catnip grows well here, except it doesn't like hot, humid summers. Blooms with a much smaller white flower spike in late spring.
3. I experimented with growing both catmint & catnip in my garden. Grew only catmint in the front yard -- cats that found it there were happy. Grew both catnip and catmint in the backyard - cats that found it there all preferred catnip and wouldn't waste their time on catmint.

So, there you have it. Again, love LG&F! Keep 'em coming!"

Several times we have reported that fires benefit the total ecology of an ecosystem, whether a forest or a prairie, and are essential for their health. A paper in the journal Environmental Entomology (2019) from North Carolina State University found that burned Pine forests have over double (2.3X) of total pollinators than forests that have not been burned. This was especially true for bees and bee species. "For many forests, fire is as essential as rainfall."

A paper by Stanford University in the journal Nature Sustainability (January 2020) outlines the importance of fire in maintaining ecosystems. The massive wildfires in California were caused by mis-management by government programs to prevent forest fire for decades.

As a result, there have been massive accumulations of wood and other fuels, which now lead to catastrophic wildfires as we see on the news. In nature God uses a lot of small wildfires to maintain the health of the forest or prairies.

For example - The Texas Forest Service at Jones Forest on FM 1488 has done a good job of using small controlled burns to maintain the forest.

Whether sliced with a little sea salt or in guacamole salad I love avocados. They are one of the healthiest foods we can eat as they are high in good fat, fiber, magnesium (Mg), potassium (K), B vitamins, vitamin K, vitamin E, carotenoids and chemicals that have anti-cancer properties.

However, there is an environmental issue with growing avocados; each avocado requires almost 19 gallons of water! For comparison an orange only

requires a little less than 6 gallons or a tomato only 5 gallons.

One way to address this issue is to grow avocados in our yard as we have many varieties that do well in our area.

I have two in my yard that are now about 20 feet tall each growing well in our black gumbo clay soil. This year each tree had dozens of avocados and last week were almost fully mature and ready for picking. I was getting excited and looking forward to tree ripened avocados. I went outside a couple days ago and they were all gone! It seems I was visited by tree rats (squirrels) that ate them and stripped the tree clean (the seeds were laying all over the ground). I was hoping there were enough avocados for both of us. It seems that I will have to activate a squirrel management program next year.

Randy Lemon of GardenLine fame, in his book "Texas Tough Gardening" (p. 104-107) had a very nice summary of the varieties that work best in our area and their characteristics.

I have often talked about the issues with chemicals in common tap water hurting our plants as well as hurting our health. The journal Environmental Health Perspectives (January 2020) had an article where the researchers discovered that the cocktail of fungicide residues found in our drinking water, at the level allowed by law, increased all the pathological markers linked to Alzheimer's in the animal studies.

Common sense tells us that using toxic chemical fungicides in our gardens only increases our exposure rates. This is another reason to only use the modern organic methods.

I was reading a paper by researchers at the University of Alabama in Huntsville on electrical signaling of tomatoes. They found that healthy soil is alive with electrical signals being sent from one plant to another. It appears that mycorrhizal fungi act as the circuitry.

Note: Using fungicides removes this network or using artificial fertilizers which dissolves in water as they are salts, shorts out the communication system. They believe that a tomato can communicate with an oak tree or other species this way. They also believe that electrical signals can propagate through the root network also.

The next area of study is to find out what they are telling each other. In physics it is well known that when we have an electrical signal or current, it generates electromagnetic waves in the air, which may also be part of the communication system.

In nature many organisms have antenna (e.g. microarthropods whom live in the soil). For me, it raises the question: Why? The entomologist Dr. Phillip Callahan in many of his books and papers believed that insects use this energy in some form or fashion.

The journal Environmental Pollution (January 2020) did a study and the researchers found that over 11% of infants and young children had glyphosate

in their urine! For infants it rose to 30% of them.

Dozens of health problems have been linked to this dangerous and toxic chemical. Many researchers now believe this chemical is linked to chronic kidney disease. They also believe glyphosate helps transport arsenic and cadmium (both very toxic heavy metals) into the kidneys.

GMO crops have the highest level of these residues on them. More and more reason to buy organic or better yet raise one's own food or at least buy from local farmers markets.

It often comes up in conversation that many folks are they getting sick when they did not years ago. One of the reasons is many crops are fertilized with sewage sludge. There are over 352 pollutants in sewage sludge (Biosolids) plus a lot of micro plastics that we have no idea of how it effects our health. [The Doctor Mercola website](#) has a nice summary of the issues.

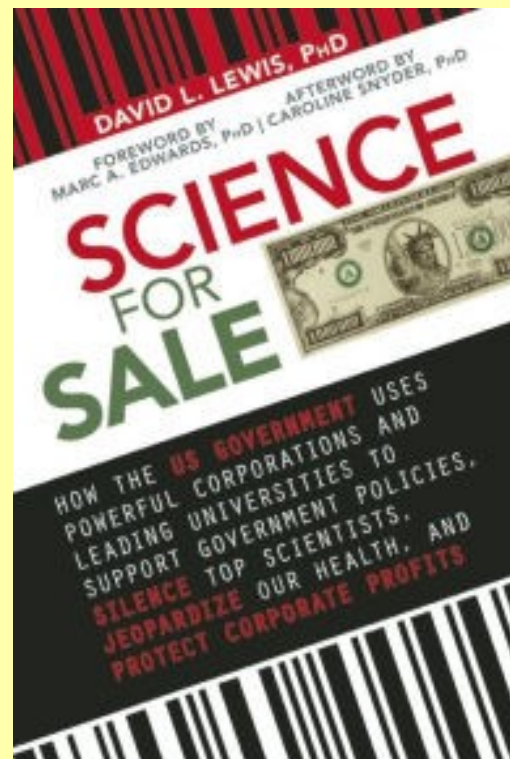
Note: Several companies in the Houston area use sewage sludge in their compost and soil products, and most likely they do not tell you.

As I have stated many times there are more and more reason to buy organic or better yet raise one's own food or at least buy from local farmers markets.

If you would like more information, the book below is about the dangers of sewage sludge and the government cover up by the whistle blower David Lewis, PhD.

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)



HAVE YOU TRIED . . .

MISSOURI IRONWEED

(*Vernonia missurica*)

A Native Plant Society of Texas "Plant of the Month," Missouri ironweed, an Aster family perennial, is a 3-5,' late summer bloomer. A favorite of bees and butterflies, especially late summer visitors, it can handle our heavy rains but appreciates medium drainage. A stout central stem branches at top to produce the large dark fuchsia to lavender blooms. Full to partial sun. Deer- and rabbit-resistant!



LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS

(See Farmers Markets at end of calendar)

ADULT GARDEN PLANT EVENTS ONLY

ALWAYS CHECK TO MAKE SURE YOUR EVENT IS IN! HOWEVER . . .

PLEASE READ BEFORE SUBMITTING EVENTS!

- Events *NOT* submitted in the *EXACT* format below may take 2 weeks or longer to be reformatted/retyped and added to calendar.
- Events in this *EXACT* format (below) are copied/pasted immediately in upcoming calendar. Pdfs or flyers need re-typing - only delay publication.
- Submit to: lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com. Put group name in email subject.

CHECK WEBSITES FOR . . .

- **COVID-19 - RELATED PRECAUTIONS AT EVENTS**
- **UPDATED CALENDAR BEFORE ATTENDING ANY PREVIOUSLY-SCHEDULED**
- **LAST MINUTE CANCELLATION.**

SAT., AUG. 8: BOKASHI – WASTE NOT, WANT NOT , 9:30-11:30am. ZOOM class, Urban Harvest. \$20. Register: urbanharvest.org/education/classes/

MON., AUG10: GARDENING ON THE PATIO by NOAH RATTLER & WHAT ANDREW COBB HAS BEEN UP TO DURING THE PANDEMIC, (virtual event), 7pm. Houston Urban Gardeners EVENT. houstonurbangardeners.org. Free via ZOOM at us02web.zoom.us/j/85791622155

WED., AUG. 12: BIG BEND CAMPING AND COLLECTIONS TRIP (virtual event) by JACOB MARTIN & BRANDON HUBBARD, noon-1pm, Mercer Botanic Garden Free. 713-274-4160. bit.ly/302GAjb

WED., AUG. 12: BIG BEND CAMPING AND COLLECTIONS TRIP by JACOB MARTIN & BRANDON HUBBARD, virtual event, noon-1pm, Online Only. Free. 713-274-4160. <https://bit.ly/302GAjb>

THURS., AUG. 13: DROUGHT, virtual event, 7-9pm, free. Houston Rose Society event. <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/714588565> access code: 714-588-565. Or dial in: United States +1 (646)749-3122

AUG 18: TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST COASTAL PRAIRIE CHAPTERS FALL TRAINING CLASS BEGINS. \$125. Evening & Saturday classes. coastalprairie.org; carol@coastalprairie.org.

THURS., AUG. 27: BIRD SURVEY led by Paul Gregg and Christy Jones, 8am-10am, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160. <https://bit.ly/2On3WdT>

SAT., AUG. 29: THE MERCER SOCIETY - VIRTUAL SPECIALTY PLANT SALE - PLUMERIA, 8am-8pm, Online Only. 713-274-4166. themercersociety.square.site

TUES., NOV. 17: HEIRLOOM PLANTS by GREG GRANT, 10am; St. Basil's Hall, 702 Burney Road, Sugar Land. Free. Sugar Land Garden Club event. sugarlandgardenclub.org

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LOCAL FARMERS MARKETS

- [URBAN HARVEST FARMERS MARKET](#), Saturdays, 8am-noon, in St. John's School parking lot, 2752 Buffalo Speedway.
- [FULSHEAR FARMERS MARKET](#) Saturdays, 9am-1pm, 9035 Bois d'Arc Lane @ FM 1093, Fulshear.
- [THE WOODLANDS FARMERS MARKET AT GROGAN'S MILL](#), Saturdays, 8am-noon, Grogan's Mill Shopping Center Parking Lot, 7 Switchbud Pl., The Woodlands
- [BEAUTY'S GARDEN](#). Acres Homes Farmers Market Saturday, 10am-2pm, 4333 W Little York Rd.
- [WESTCHASE DISTRICT FARMERS MARKET](#), Thursdays, opens 3pm, St. Cyril of Alexandria Catholic Church, 10503 Westheimer Road (at Rogerdale Road, one block west of Beltway 8)
- [MEMORIAL VILLAGE FARMERS MARKET](#), Saturdays, 9am-1pm, 10840 Beinhorn Rd.

Although normally we did not run out-of-garden events, during this pandemic period when most gardening events have been cancelled, we are happy to publish a running list of local Farmers Markets.
Send notices to lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com



For event submission rules, see top of calendar

If we inspire you to attend any of these,
please let them know you heard about it in . . .

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www.bartlett.com



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 -- started in the early '70s as a fun side-, it then ranked as the longest-running, continuously-published local newspaper column in the Greater Houston area.

Brenda's gradual sideways step from reporter into gardening writing -- first as a just-a-fun side Chronicle assignment in the early '70s -- 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 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 Humble, TX, and is married to the 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.

