



Sep-25-2020 | Issue 357

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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



Thanks to Beverly Malcom/imgflip.com for this wonderful cartoon that's all over Facebook these days!

**GARDENERS KEEP ON
PLANTING ... BIRD LANDSCAPING
MISTAKES EVEN EXPERTS MAKE!**

"Gardening is not a rational act."

– Margaret Atwood, Canadian poet, novelist & much more

Sympathies to everyone who suffered plant and other damage during Beta. True, we needed the rainfall, but as Oscar Wilde once quipped, "*When the gods choose to punish us, they merely answer our prayers.*"

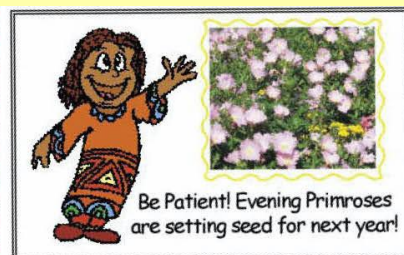
Oddly enough, our driest month is usually February with an average 2.98 inches of precipitation. June, averaging 5.35 inches, is the wettest month. Doesn't always seem that way, tho, does it?

At the very least, these rains will trigger plant growth and blooming for fall, which is what we want going into winter. Hope you downloaded the [Urban Harvest Fall Planting Guide](#) (a pdf), and have taken advantage of Fall Plant Sales, including:

- **NOW - THURS., OCT. 8: 2020: 78th ANNUAL BULB & PLANT MART** (online sales ONLY). Details: gchouston.org. Be sure to download the Mart's free *Horticultural Guide*, a wonderful local reference book for bulbs and plants.
- **SAT., SEPT. 26: 23rd ANNUAL WOODLANDS LANDSCAPING SOLUTIONS** (drive-through event). 9am-noon. Sterling Ridge Park and Ride, 8001 McBeth Way, The Woodlands. Free. 281-210-3800
- thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov/Calendar.aspx?EID=8289
- **SAT., OCT 3: BRAZORIA COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FALL ONLINE PLANT SALE**, 9am-4pm, Plant Pick Up: 585 CR 443, Angleton. Brazoria County Master Gardeners event. 979-248-8257. smshanks195@gmail.com; <https://txmg.org/brazoria/home/>
- **SAT. OCT.10: HOUSTON FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS PLANT SALE & FOOD DRIVE**, on site, 10am-1pm, 1501 Sunset Blvd. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs & The First Christian Church event. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org/special-events, 281-352-3370

LET THEM DIE! Dolly in Kingwood understands why folks pinch back now to encourage more fall flowers. But as we move into winter, she will want many of hers to go

naturally to seed she can collect. That's when neighbors start urging her to "*cut back those ugly dying plants.*" She recalled signs I published a few years ago to help non-gardeners understand "dying back" is normal? Could I run them again? She needs ideas. Here they are - maybe a fun project for children too?



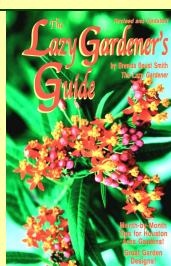
TWO GREAT SPOTLIGHT ARTICLES BELOW:

- Houston Federation of Garden Clubs's Sandra Evans shares a few of the great plants members wish more gardeners would try from [HFGC's upcoming Plant Sale & Food Drive](#) (Sat. Oct.10, 10am-1pm, 1501 Sunset Blvd. HFGC & First Christian Church event). [Details](#); 281-352-3370

- **Native Plant Society of Texas – Houston Chapter's** Margaret Gnewuch & Russell Kane reveal some common "*Mistakes Even Experts Make When Landscaping for Birds.*"

- Spoiler! One of the mistakes - Not planting for bird food year-round – will be covered in detail in NPSOT-H's Native Landscapes for Birds online class held on Sat., Oct 24 or Sat., Nov 7 via Zoom, 9am-4:30 pm (npsot.org/wp/nlcp/)
- A great bonus of this class will be a two-hour information session by local bird experts, plus one-hour virtual Plant Walk featuring [Russ Pitman Park's](#) natives, and a birder's layered garden.

A SPECIAL TIP O' THE TROWEL TO NPSOT-H for offering free to everyone this class' spreadsheet of 135 local-area natives highlighting benefits to birds, seasonal interests, soil, sun and moisture conditions and maintenance tips for free to everyone. [Click to download.](#) (NOTE: Link is a direct pdf download)



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

Free PDF download of Brenda's now-out-of-print — "LAZY GARDENER'S GUIDE"

• [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 that you be safe . . .

PLEASE WEAR A MASK! Protect yourself and the rest of us!



A GLOBAL (ON SITE!) PLANT SALE!

By SANDRA EVANS
Houston Federation of Garden Clubs

Like many, who now call Houston home, my gardening experience has been an interesting learning curve. We all came with luggage that incorporated our past life experiences in the garden, etc., and had to just give up on what used to be, to experience what is now. Plants that are hard to find, but well suited for the Houston area will be offered for sale by the Houston Federation of Garden Clubs at a Plant Sale and Food Donation event on October 10th – see calendar for details. Three examples in this category are:

PORTER WEED (*Stachytarpheta verbena*)

Great long-blooming perennial native of Caribbean islands so quite happy in our tropical, humid conditions. Plentiful blue flowers attract birds, bees and butterflies! There is a Red variety also but the blue is more prolific in Houston. Reaches



30" tall so best in middle or back of bed. Half sun/shade, can survive Houston's cold season.

RANGOON CREEPER

(*Quisqualis indica*)

Vigorous vine, but too pretty and productive to accuse it of being invasive. . Tendril-climber, twining stems ideal on fence or pergola. With a little TLC, balanced fertilizer, lots of sun and deadheading, it will bloom non-stop through Houston's growing season. Five petaled flowers grow in a 4-5" cluster, that's white in morning, turning pink and ending up bright red. May die back in hard winter, but hasn't lately. Tends to withhold flowers if a "Heat Advisory" is in effect.



BRAZILIAN RED CLOAK

(*Megaskepasma erythrochlamys*)

This upright growing shrub, native to Venezuela and other South American countries will add some "WOW" to your landscape with its huge blossoms. If you are looking for a shrub that doesn't know when to stop blooming look no further. Much sought after for its large erect heads of conspicuous crimson bracts, and two lipped white flowers. When planting keep in mind it may reach 8' tall.

SAT. OCT.10: HOUSTON FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS

PLANT SALE & FOOD DRIVE -- 10am-1pm, 1501 Sunset Blvd.

Houston Federation of Garden Clubs & The First Christian Church event.

houstonfederationgardenclubs.org/special-events 281-352-3370

* * *



L to r, Turks Cap with hummingbird, warbler seeding on sunflowers, yellow Indian grass, bee on gayfeather, and Indian blankets

MISTAKES EVEN EXPERTS MAKE WHEN LANDSCAPING FOR BIRDS

By **MARGARET GNEWUCH & RUSSELL KANE**

Native Plant Society of Texas, Houston Chapter

npsot.org/wp/houston/

Many experienced home gardeners long for bird visitors to their already established gardens. Sometimes gardeners just hang up a bird feeder or two. This can lead to mistakes that disappoint even seasoned gardeners. Listing them *a la Letterman* . . .

- **Mistakes #s 4, 5 and 6 – USING PESTICIDES, DISPOSING OF LEAVES AND NOT PROVIDING WATER.** These 3 represent lost opportunities that can be easily remedied with gardener attention.
 - Pesticides kill beneficial insects. With plenty of pollen and nectar from native plants beneficial insects will keep deleterious plant pests in check.
 - Leaves and leaf litter provide homes for butterfly chrysalises and insect eggs and larvae, and insect forage for ground feeding birds. Later, this litter breaks down into free plant food.
 - Birds are attracted to water as an essential of life, but if flowing or agitating, they will come to bathe and frolic.
 -
- **Mistake #3 – NOT PROVIDING A MULTI-LAYER HABITAT**
 - There is no shelter, food or water in large lawn areas and ground level gardens. Create layers by using groundcovers and flowers; understory shrubs and small trees; midstory and canopy trees, each layer benefits different birds. Missing layers can be added around existing trees. Unpruned shrubs and trees protect birds from predators and make good nest sites.
- **Mistake #2 – RELYING ONLY ON NON-NATIVE EXOTIC PLANTS**
 - Exotic plants offer a multitude of colored blossoms and leaf variegations that please our human senses. Adding native plants supports more birds and brings diversity.



AND THE #1 MISTAKE?

- **Mistake #1 – RELYING TOTALLY ON BIRD SEED MIXES**
 - Backyard feeders are good for attracting birds, but communal activity may cause problems from infectious diseases to parasites. Furthermore, seeds don't provide a balanced diet needed by birds.
 - 96 percent of terrestrial birds feed caterpillars to their nestlings. Caterpillars are filled with fats, proteins, and carotenoids which stimulate immune system, improve color vision, add brilliant

feather color. Oaks, cherries/plums, River Birch, maples, elms, pines, hawthorn, and ash are major host plants for moth and butterfly caterpillars.

- Birds need berrying shrubs, full of sugar in spring and summer, while fall and winter berries contain fats for cold weather nutrition and migration fuel. They support small vertebrates, insects and larvae for more nutrition. *(Pictured: Robin on yaupon holly and yaupon berries in winter.)*



An extra tip from Russ: Don't stop there! If you've been using seed mixes, you may need to re-educate your city birds to look for native seeds. Collect seeds and berries from native plants and mix them in with your purchased seed to get the birds used to also spotting these are in your yard. *Pictured: red scarlet sage*

Bird gardening is a four-season commitment and plant selection is important so that it offers birds food available all year-round.

The Native Plant Society of Texas – Houston Chapter, through its [Native Plant Landscaping Certification Program](#) Level 1-3 classes, has developed an information-packed spreadsheet of 135 local-area native plants highlighting benefits to bird, seasonal interests, soil, sun and moisture conditions, and maintenance tips. Click [here](#) to access.

PHOTO CREDITS: Indian blanket -- Melody Lytle; gayfeather/native bee – Carolyn Fannon; Indiangrass – Joseph A. Marcus; scarlet sage – Kay Lowery; yaupon holly - Carolyn Fannon; robin & winter yaupon berries -- Ken Thomas; warbler on sunflowers – Theresa Bayoud and hummingbird on turks cap – James A. Giroux.



NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS # 129

In the journal Nature Communications (July 2020) there was a paper where researchers collected a series of seafloor sediments that were dated to be 4.3 million up to 102 million years old. The microbes found in these sediments turned out to be dormant NOT dead. Once the microbes were given some food, they woke up and started to multiply. The researchers estimate that 99.1 percent of the microbes were revived.

Numerous times over the years many people have observed that they do not get fire ants (*Solenopsis invicta*) in their flowerbeds when they use *apropely made* composted (aged) native mulch. Note: Native mulch if made properly is home to thousands of species of beneficial fungi.

A newly published study in the Journal PLOS Pathogens (2020) by the South China Agricultural University has discovered one of the mechanisms why fire ants do not like good quality native mulches.

The ants and their eggs are killed by soil dwelling fungi and the ants can smell chemicals put off by these fungi. As a result, they avoid areas (soils) that are high in these good fungi.

As a result, the fire ants look for homes in soils that are high in bacteria especially the actinobacteria which produce compounds that inhibit the growth of the pathogenic fungi that attacks fire ants.

Note: This is why folks have noticed they get a lot of fire ant mounds in their lawn after applying a fungicide for brown patch or other turf disease (they killed off the natural controls). The reasons to use modern organic methods based on biology continues to increase.

A few years ago, we talked about the importance of having “nurse logs” in our gardens and flowerbeds as these rotting logs provide many benefits. We can add another one to the growing list of benefits. We all know that rotting logs grow many species of fungus. Many of these fungi are required for ground beetles to live and be healthy. This important since ground beetles also love to eat fire ants. This is probably another reason fire ant do not like forests.

I was getting into the truck the other day and noticed out of the window two giant moths mating in the grass. I got out to take a picture and one a bright yellow color flew off but I was able to snap a picture of the other one. It reminded me of another benefit of having nurse logs in our garden is than several species of giant moths require rotting logs for their caterpillars to pupate in.



I often talk about the importance of getting trace elements back into our soil. A paper published in the Journal Food Chemistry (August 2020) by researchers at the University of Utah has found another use of trace element(s). They studied trace elements in arabica coffee from over 21 countries.

They found that coffee beans from different regions had distinct chemical fingerprints and the coffees quality comes down to geology (e.g. the soils they were grown in).

This is important as scientists continue to develop the field of Food Forensics. There are several lawsuits suing 21 companies for making claims

on the type coffee and where it was grown to get a higher price. For example, they will falsely claim that they are “Kona coffee” from Hawaii when they were actually much lower quality that was grown elsewhere. They also discovered that the “terroir” or flavor related to the place they were grown for many crops, from coffee, cocoa, to wine is linked to the microbiology of the soil they were grown in.

Trace elements do not directly affect flavor but they do affect the microbial populations and diversity, not to mention the health of the plant.

Speaking of trace elements, I recently read another paper on rock dusts specifically granite dust as a fertilizer. Granite is a volcanic rock that contains over 60+ elements. It is rich in potassium (K) and many trace elements. Plants that are grown where granite dust has been applied have much higher Brix readings. The higher the brix reading, plants are less susceptible to insects and disease and have higher nutritional density.

This is one of the reasons that granite sand is a major component of our re-mineralizer product.

Urine has been used as a fertilizer for thousands of years as it is a rich source of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K). However, many people are uncomfortable with using urine.

Many products are improved by aging them, wine, whiskey, sauerkraut, compost, native mulch, etc. A study in the Journal Environmental Science and Technology (2020), by the University of Michigan has found that aging urine gets rid of antibiotics and bacteria. By placing urine in sealed containers for 12-16 months they found that ammonia levels in the urine increase lowering acidity levels, killing most of the bacteria and destroying 99% of antibiotic resistant genes so they are not transferred into the environment.

Pomegranates (*Punica granatum*) have been considered a health food for thousands of years. A new study published in the journal Nature Metabolism (2020) have found that they have anti-aging benefits. In addition to polyphenols and antioxidants that help with blood pressure and atherosclerosis they contain urothilin-A which is known for its anti-aging benefits as it help cells stimulate its mitochondrial biogenesis.

A report in Science News (February 2020) found that there were 6,700 species of wild bees in 1950 and today there are only 3,400 species. Bees are critical for the pollination of most plants from fruits and vegetables to our ornamentals. One of the best things we can do as gardeners is to plant pollinator gardens and only use modern biological methods that are often referred to as organic. As an extension of that, is to only purchase organically grown produce and meats. One needs to decide are you going to be part of the problem OR part of the solution.

For decades organic farmers, nutritionist, and functional medicine practitioners

have stated that organically grown plants are healthier. I remember a lecture I attended many years ago at an organic agricultural conference by Jerry Brunetti on secondary plant metabolites. These are the chemicals plants produce to protect themselves when attacked by an insect or disease. They are also many of the anti-oxidant and anti-cancer chemicals.

A study published in the journal Nature Scientific Reports (2020) by researchers at Texas A&M looking at strawberries, has discovered that leaf wounding (like that caused by insects) produces healthier organic fruits by activating the secondary metabolism.

The fern *Pteris melanocaulon* was found growing in very toxic soil contaminated with copper and arsenic at an abandoned mine site. Researchers at the Ateneo de Manila University discovered that this fern is a hyper accumulator of copper and arsenic where it stores them in its leaves and stems. It can live and grow in soils too toxic for other plants. The study was published in the Journal Chemosphere (2020).

Toxic chemical agriculture is costing the environment over **Three trillion dollars** every year. The most liberal estimates of how we have destroyed our soils states that we have only have 60 years of food production left, conservative estimate are less than 30 years.

There are several new documentaries recently released on the extreme problems of toxic chemical agriculture and how it is destroying our health and the planet. By converting agriculture to the modern organic methods (regenerative agriculture), we can solve many of these problems from global warming, to water shortages, to famine and illness due to the poor quality of our food supply.

These movies offer hope as we know how to fix the problem.

“**Kiss the Ground**” is a full-length documentary narrated by Woody Harrelson that sheds light on how [regenerative agriculture](#) can restore balance to our climate, replenish our vast water supplies and feed the world.

The film will be available on Netflix beginning September 22. But you can [watch the trailer](#) now.



Another documentary film is called ***The Need To GROW***. It is narrated by activist and award-winning actress, Rosario Dawson, and it has won a string of audience favorite and best documentary awards at international film festivals. This film delivers a mind-blowing, heart-opening story of people responding powerfully and creatively on behalf of the future of life.



Another documentary also called "The Food Cure" is about six cancer patients decide to fight their disease with plant-based diets. Five of them choose the Gerson Therapy. A filmmaker follows their incredible stories for seven years.

Another trailer for the documentary called [“The Food Cure”](#)

You can find the full film below:
thefoodcurefilm.com

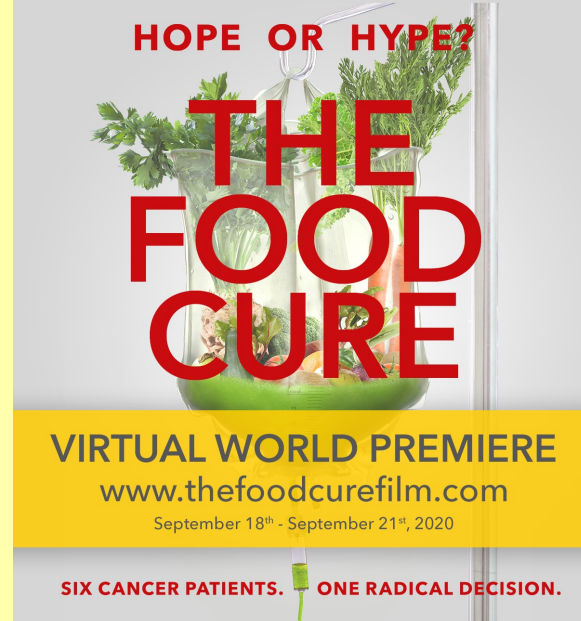
If you have watched these films, it is clear that the modern methods work better and at lower costs with huge environmental benefits. Many people have started asking why does the media and government agencies cover up these success stories?

Now that we have data from millions of covid-19 patients, several patterns have emerged. Countries that have the highest quality food supply have the lowest covid issues. Countries like the USA with one of the poorest quality food supply have the highest incidences and consequences.

The video satire below on how the CDC, media, and our politicians takes a page out of the playbook written by the tobacco, toxic chemical agricultural, and giant food corporations that they used to get us to purchase products that are bad for our health and the environment. It is now being used by the pharmaceutical companies to scare us into accepting things that will do little good and probably harm us.

New Revelations on the COVID Death Count

[Watch More...](#)



HAVE YOU TRIED . . .

PINK SURPRISE SHELL BUSH

(Ocimum labiatum)

[formerly Orthosiphon labiatus]

Stunning drought-tolerant, fast-growing, semi-evergreen ornamental shrub. Aromatic heart-shaped leaves and showy mauve sage-like flowers summer-to-winter. Full sun for best flowering but can take semi-shade. Cut back to 1/3 of current height every couple of years to rejuvenate woody growth. Sage family. Butterflies, bees and other insects attracted to nectar.



*[Pink Surprise Shell Bush](#) 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

All events in Houston unless otherwise specified.

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.
- **FARMERS MARKETS** -- Normally we do not run non-gardening/plant events. During this pandemic, when most gardening events have been cancelled, we are happy to publish a running list of local Farmers Markets. See at end of calendar.

Submit events to: lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com.

ALWAYS put group name in email subject.

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SAT., SEPT. 26: 23rd ANNUAL WOODLANDS LANDSCAPING SOLUTIONS (drive-through event) by The WOODLANDS TOWNSHIP, 9am-noon. Sterling Ridge Park & Ride, 8001 McBeth Way, The Woodlands. thewoodlandstowship-tx.gov/environment

FRI., OCT. 2-SUN., OCT. 4: HOUSTON BOTANIC GARDEN OPENING SEASON – CELEBRATING ASIA, 9am-5pm daily, One Botanic Lane. [Purchase tickets](#)

SAT., OCT 3: BRAZORIA COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS FALL ONLINE PLANT SALE, 9am-4pm, Plant Pick Up 585 CR 443, Angleton. Brazoria County Master Gardeners event. 979-248-8257, smsbanks195@gmail.com;
<https://txmg.org/brazoria/home/>

THURS., OCT. 8: FABULOUS FRAGRANT SHRUB ROSES OF DAVID AUSTIN (virtual program), 7-9pm. Houston Rose Society event. Free.
<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/508500077> access code: 508-500-077. Phone: +1 (312)757-3121.

SAT. OCT.10: HOUSTON FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS PLANT SALE & FOOD DRIVE, 10am-1pm, 1501 Sunset Blvd. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs & The First Christian Church event. houstonfederationgardenclubs.org/special-events, 281-352-3370.

FRI., OCT. 16-SUN., OCT. 18: HOUSTON BOTANIC GARDEN OPENING SEASON – CELEBRATING AFRICA, 9am-5pm daily, One Botanic Lane, [Purchase tickets](#)

SAT., OCT. 17: FRUIT TREES-WHAT TO GROW IN FORT BEND COUNTY, online class. 9am. Fort Bend County Master Gardener event. \$15. Register at least 2 days prior; fortbend.agrilife.org/grow-your-own/. 281-342-3034 or Brandy.rader@ag.tamu.edu

SAT., OCT. 24: NATIVE LANDSCAPES FOR BIRD (Zoom program), 9am-4:30 pm. Native Plant Society of Texas - Houston Chapter event. \$52. Details/Registration: www.npsot.org/wp/nlcpnps

FRI., OCT. 30-SUN., NOV. 1: HOUSTON BOTANIC GARDEN OPENING SEASON – CELEBRATING THE MEDITERRANEAN, 9am-5pm daily, One Botanic Lane. [Purchase tickets](#)

SAT., NOV. 7: NATIVE LANDSCAPES FOR BIRD (Zoom program), 9am-4:30 pm. Native Plant Society of Texas - Houston Chapter event. \$52. Details/Registration: www.npsot.org/wp/nlcpnps

SAT., NOV. 14: COMPOSTING - BENEFITS & HOW TO COMPOST (virtual class). 9am. Fort Bend County Master Gardener event. \$15. Register at least 2 days prior; fortbend.agrilife.org/grow-your-own/. 281-342-3034 or Brandy.rader@ag.tamu.edu

TUES., NOV. 17: HEIRLOOM PLANTS (Zoom program) by GREG GRANT, 10am. Sugar Land Garden Club event. sugarlandgardenclub.org

* * *

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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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.

