



# LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS

Houston Garden Newsletter



Apr-8-2021 | Issue 382

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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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[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](mailto:lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com)



## SMILES IN GARDEN HELP GROW PATIENCE

*"Earth laughs in flowers"*

-- "Hamatreya" (1847) -- Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 – 1882)

by **BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

**NATIONAL GARDENING DAY IS WED., APRIL 14.**

Given what we've been through, maybe injecting a bit of humor into our gardens might be just the pick-er-upper celebration we all need right now.

Smiling at some of these sassy garden signs? Google the wording (in quotes) of ones you like. Usually several site options will pop up as the same ones are carried by

various companies. Some that make me laugh out loud:

**"FREE WEEDS — PULL YOUR OWN"**

**"I DON'T REMEMBER  
PLANTING THIS!"**

**"DON'T P... OFF THE FAIRIES!"**

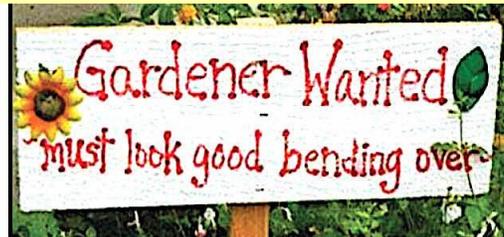
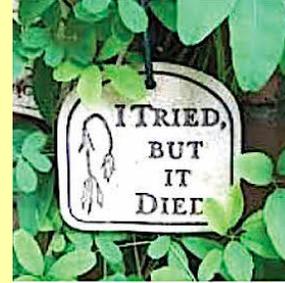
**"TRESPASSERS WILL BE COMPOSTED"**

**"NOW ENTERING THE SEEDY PART OF TOWN"**

**"LOAM WASN'T BUILT IN A DAY"**

**"TO WEED OR NOT TO WEED  
... THAT IS THE QUESTION"**

**SMART STONE -- IF THIS ROCK IS:  
WET... IT'S RAINING • MOVING... EARTHQUAKE  
WHITE... IT'S SNOWING • NOT HERE... IT'S  
STOLEN**



If you want to sound more erudite, look for these plant labels online . . .



**"PLANTUS UNKNOWNUS"  
"PLANTUS WHYDIBUYUM"  
"WEEDUS VICTORIUS"  
"FLORA FALILFORSURUM"  
"ET TU, INSECTUS?"**

**MY ALL TIME FAVORITE** (pictured): On her apron is a quote from JC Raulson (1940-1996), beloved namesake of JC Raulston Arboretum at North Carolina State University

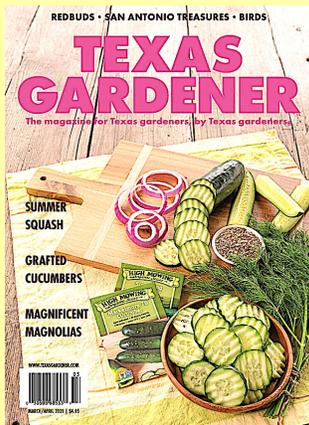
**"IF YOU AREN'T KILLING  
PLANTS, YOU AREN'T  
REALLY STRETCHING  
YOURSELF AS A GARDENER."**

Amen! If anyone comes across this fun fairy online, would you let me know the website link? I lost her in Harvey and can't seem to find another.

**NOW THAT WE'RE ALL SMILING . . .** how about working on "Hope." I love these returning plants-after-despair reports from readers:



- **ROSE WHERRY** (SW Houston): butterfly vine, shrimp plant, firespikes and *Cleyera japonica* (pictured file photo).
- **NANCY MACROBERTS** (SW Houston): 'Conversation Piece' azaleas and cleyera, too.
- **PATTY ALLEN** (Aldine area): Moy Grandes hibiscus along with White and Red Star Hibiscus
- **DAN SEBESTA**: Sweet potatoes (2nd year from tubers left in ground!)
  
- **GENE POWERS**: Three clematis plants, two in pots, one in ground. The flower at right (mine) just appeared on a 3-year-old vine that dies back in winter, returns in spring but never bloomed . . . until this week! Gene's pretty sure it's a clematis! More on clematis from Gene next week!



\* \* \*

### **TIP O' THE TROWEL TO TEXAS GARDENER MAGAZINE**

on its 40th Anniversary and the distinction (as far as owner/publisher **Jay White** can discover) of being this country's very last independent regional gardening magazine not associated with a larger botanical or horticultural organization. These good guys generously allow Master Gardener organizations to submit TG subscriptions and keep a portion of the money as a fundraiser. And even better . . .

. . . Greater Houston area gardeners will have a chance "Zoom" with Texas Gardener publisher and owner Jay White Tues., April 20, when Sugar Land Garden Club presents Jay and his "Pest Free, Organically" program at 10am. Details: [Sugar Land Garden Club](#).



In the meantime, in our Spotlight Article below, check out Jay's tips on preventing and eliminating pest invasions with cultural practices. And click this link to order the [Texas Gardener 2021 Planning Guide](#).

\* \* \*

### **UPDATES:**

- **MONTGOMERY COUNTY VIRTUAL SPRING SALE** has been rescheduled to **TUES, APR. 27**: 8am – Wed noon, Online at [mcmga.square.site](#). Pickup: AgriLife Extension, 9020 Airport Rd, Conroe. [mcmga.com](#); 936-539-7824
- **HOUSTON BOTANIC GARDENS** is getting back into the [swing of things](#). Click for upcoming events.

\* \* \*



## GARDEN LIKE PROS CULTURAL PRACTICES TO KEEP PESTS AWAY

by **JAY WHITE,**  
*Publisher, Texas Gardener*

When I was doing my graduate work at A&M I had the opportunity to work in some of the university's greenhouses. One thing that quickly stood out to me about the greenhouses I worked in was the lack of pests. These growers used many cultural practices to keep their pests away. With small modifications, you too can use many of their practices to keep your garden "pest free organically." Below are some of my favorite methods.

- **MULCH!** The only difference between mulch and compost is six months! Mulch often and deeply. Mulch suppresses weeds, conserves water and feeds the soil microbes and microorganisms that nurture our plants
- Water in the morning and water at the base of the plant
- Sanitize tools, stakes and cages twice a year in a light bleach solution
- Clean up mulch and debris

- Many vegetables self-pollenate or do not need pollination. Grow beans, black-eyed peas, brassicas and greens under row cover
- Use the sun to kill weeds and weed seeds in the soil. Cover soil with opaque plastic, seal around edges and leave in place throughout the summer
- Block the sun to kill weeds and weed seeds in the soil. Cover soil with heavy materials like wood, metal or even cardboard and leave in place for several months. This deprives plants of the light, and to some extent the moisture, they need to germinate

NOTE: Jay can be contacted through *Texas Gardener magazine* or the *Texas Gardener Facebook Page*. Even better, tune in to his Houston presentation:

**TUES., APR. 20: PEST FREE, ORGANICALLY by JAY WHITE,  
Zoom event, 10am. Details: *Sugar Land Garden Club*.**

\* \* \*

APRIL  
22  
2021



GET HEALTHY

AN AMAZING LECTURE!



## DR. MAYA SHETREAT THE DIRT CURE



Maya Shetreat M.D. is author of the New York Times Best Selling Book, **The Dirt Cure: Healthy Food, Healthy Gut**. She is a pediatric neurologist, herbalist, & urban farmer. Learn from her how to heal ourselves & family through what we eat.

### TICKET PRICES:

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- Build greater immunity & personal resilience
- You are what you eat: Healthy soils, Healthy food, Healthy People

Learn more about OHBA & upcoming events at [ohbaonline.org](http://ohbaonline.org)

Brought to you by:

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OHBA est. 2004 is a 501-c-3 non-profit focusing on Organic education. We advocate for healthy humans & a healthy environment. Each year we host a variety of events featuring local & international experts. Help the good cause, join OHBA.

[ohbaonline.org/joinohba](http://ohbaonline.org/joinohba)

### JUNE

ZOOMINAR WITH  
**JEFF LOWENFELS**,  
Author of *Teaming  
with Microbes*

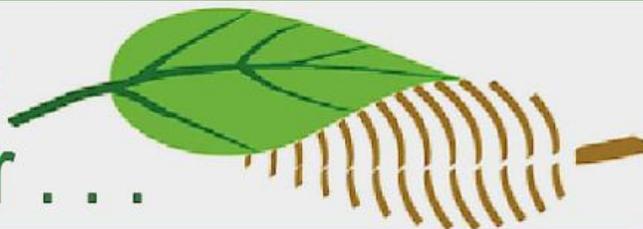
### JULY

ZOOMINAR WITH  
**DOUG TALLAMY**,  
Author of *Bringing  
Nature Home*

### SEPTEMBER

LIVE Foraging with **Dr.  
Mark Merriwether**  
Author of *Idiot's  
Guide: Foraging*

John's  
Corner . . .



## NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS # 149

We often talk about gardening and planting trees as a way to sequester carbon to help fight climate change. I read a thought-provoking article the other day on another way of carbon sequestering by growing aquatic plants (farming seaweed).

The study was published in the journal Science Advances (2020) by the University of Virginia. They seeded an area of about 500 acres with eelgrass seeds. Every indicator of ecosystem health rapidly improved, from water clarity and quality, more and diverse life, to better carbon and nitrogen storage.

The 20-year study found the seagrass (seaweed) beds stored an average of 3,300 tons of carbon and 660 tons of nitrogen per year. The coastal ecosystems are some of the most efficient storers of carbon on earth.

This should be a good way to help clean up the Galveston bay ecosystem and protect it from the load of toxic chemicals coming down the ship channel and remove sediment. It is also a good way to fight climate change by reducing atmospheric carbon.

On many occasions we have talked about the dangers of the disinfectant chemicals in our public water supply and how they can hurt plant growth and lead to fungal diseases in one's soil. Over the last couple years many cities in America have sent out warnings to their residents about contaminated water supplies.

As a result of Covid, many water supplies are using much higher levels of disinfectants like chlorine. These disinfectants combine with organic compounds from many natural sources from the decay of leaves and animal matter to create many toxic disinfection byproducts.

There are now 700 disinfection byproducts identified in our water supply. These range from things like bisphenol A (BPA), trihalomethanes, haloacetic acids, iodoacetic acid (damages DNA) and many more. They are all toxic and hurt life from microbes and earthworms to humans.

For gardeners this means the more one waters with municipal water the more problems one is likely to have. This is another reason why it is so important to use the modern organic methods to develop healthy soil where watering is rarely required. The bonus is, the organic methods give better results, at far lower costs than the toxic chemical methods.

I have often talked about the importance of healthy soils to have healthy plants (and healthy humans) and how microbes and why trace and micro-nutrients (elements) are required. Below is a link to a very nice article on healthy soils.

**The Crucial Connection: Human Wellbeing Can Only Happen With Healthy Soils** *By Jessie Emerson.*

“There is a direct relationship between minerals in the soil and minerals in the body. There is a direct connection between nutrition and optimal health. Nutrition is the foundation of a healthy body that resists disease. The mineral content of the soil determines the mineral content of food. Cancer, diabetes, heart disease, premature births, birth defects and immune suppression are all related to nutrition and the nutrient content of the soil. There is an old saying among farmers: “The soil makes the animal.” For the full article see:

- [ecofarmingdaily.com](http://ecofarmingdaily.com)

Due to lockdowns from Covid the past year, there has been a large increase in psychological issues from depression, sexual abuse, domestic violence, crime, to suicide and more. One of the best ways to counter this negativity and improve one's mental health is to garden. Or at least visit a nursery and just walk around.

To help people out, at Nature's Way Resources, we have added benches, picnic tables, etc. throughout the nursery, so folks can come and enjoy the flowers, read a book or just walk their dog and enjoy nature.

Over the last few years, we are learning that our connection with nature is critical for our health and gardening is one of the easiest ways to connect with nature. Below are a couple links to the mental health benefits of gardening.

- [Psychology Today](http://Psychology Today)
- [consciouscontent.org](http://consciouscontent.org)
- [dherbs.com](http://dherbs.com)

A good book on the subject is:

**"Your Brain on Nature - The Science of Nature's Influence on Your Health, Happiness, and Vitality"**, by Eva M. Selhub MD and Alan C. Logan ND, Collins Publishing, 2012, ISBN: 978-1-44342-808-8.

This book is for anyone whom loves gardening or nature. On many occasions I have wrote about studies that show how gardening drastically improves one's health and well-being. Numerous scientific studies have shown that natural environments can have remarkable benefits for human health. Natural environments are more likely to promote positive emotions, and viewing and walking in nature have been associated with heightened physical and mental energy. Nature has also been found to have a positive impact on children who have been diagnosed with impulsivity, hyperactivity and attention-deficit disorder.

Speaking of gardening and health, a paper published in the journal Nature Medicine (2020) by researchers at the German Research Center for Environmental Health has found another health connection with nature.

They found that children growing up on a farm have a much lower risk of developing asthma. "Farm life boosts gut microbiome maturation in children".

This beneficial health effect for is associated with the children being exposed to microbes from animals to microbes in the soil. The greater the exposure to different microbes the stronger the effect.

This is another good reason for children to play and roll around in the dirt and have pets. To protect our children only use organic methods.

# Have you tried . . .

## AGASTCHE



A hummingbird favorite and deer-resistant, agastche maintains a fresh-looking, long-blooming shrubby habit. Also known as dwarf hummingbird mint, agastche's dense flowers beloved by many pollinators. Orange, lavender, blue and additional colored blooms delight summer into fall. This long-time medicinal plant likes full sun, fast grower, great cut flowers. 10-13" high, 15" wide.

*Poquito Orange (pictured), Poquito Lavender and Fortune Blue agastche are carried by Nature's Way Resources ([Map](#)). Or contact 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](mailto:lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com).*

**PLEASE ALWAYS** put group's FULL name in email subject.

**NOTE: IF YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT MASKING  
POLICIES AT EVENTS, CHECK WITH CONTACTS LISTED**

THURS., APR. 8: JOURNEY TO INTRODUCTION AND EXCITING NEW ROSES FOR TODAY'S GARDEN by KRISTEN SMITH (virtual), 7- 9pm, Houston Rose Society/Houston event. Free. Meeting link: [houstonrose.org](https://houstonrose.org)

SAT., APR. 10: JOHN FAIREY GARDEN TOURS, 10 & 11am, Hempstead. \$10. Conservation Foundation event. No registration needed. [jfgarden.org](https://jfgarden.org)

SAT.-WED., APR. 10-14: COCKRELL BUTTERFLY CENTER PLANT SALE (virtual). [hmns.org/plantsale](https://hmns.org/plantsale)

FRI., APR 16: GROWING CUCURBITS by HERMAN AUER (Zoom), 10-11:30. Pre-register: <https://galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/mgseminars/>

SAT., APR. 17: JOHN FAIREY GARDEN TOURS, 10 & 11am, Hempstead. \$10. Conservation Foundation event. No registration needed. [jfgarden.org](http://jfgarden.org)

TUES., APR. 20: PEST FREE, ORGANICALLY by JAY WHITE, Zoom event, 10am, Sugar Land Garden Club. [sugarlandgardenclub.org](http://sugarlandgardenclub.org)

FRI., APR 23: BEST PRACTICES OF WATERING by KAROLYN GEPHART (Zoom), 10-11:30. Register: [galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/mgseminars/](http://galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/mgseminars/)

WED., APR. 24: INTERNATIONAL OLEANDER SOCIETY (Zoom event), 7pm. Free. [Join meeting](#). (Meeting ID: 952 433 8090. Passcode: 006790)

SAT., APR. 24: HOUSTON MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE AT SUGAR LAND PLANT SALE , 9am-12pm, HMNS Sugar Land, 13016 University Blvd, Sugar Land. [hmns.org/sugarland](http://hmns.org/sugarland)

TUES, APR. 27: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENER VIRTUAL SPRING SALE, 8am – Wed noon, Online at [mcmga.square.site](http://mcmga.square.site). Pickup — AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com); 936-539-7824

FRI.-SAT., APR 30-MAY 1: GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER MAY DAY SALE. Online. Browse beginning Fri, Apr 23. Shopping Noon Fri-Noon Sat. <https://store.galvestonmg.org>

SAT., MAY 1: QUAIL VALLEY GARDEN CLUB SPRING PLANT SALE, 10am-3pm, The Tee Garden, 2880 LaQuinta Drive, Missouri City. [QuailValleyGardenClub.org](http://QuailValleyGardenClub.org)

SAT., MAY 1: BROMELIAD SOCIETY/HOUSTON SALE, 7am.-4pm, Jimbo's Nursery, 15019 W. 8th Street, Santa Fe. Jimbo's 409-925-6933; allyn pearlman 713-858-3047

WED., MAY 5: GULF COAST ANNUAL HERB FAIR, 9am-3pm, Moody Gardens Grand Ballroom, 2903 Dominique Dr., Galveston. Luncheon, \$40. [pelicanway88@att.net](mailto:pelicanway88@att.net)

THURS., MAY 6: BENEFITS OF BATS by BRANDI KELLER, virtual, 10am. Harris County Master Gardener event. Register: [eventbrite.com/e/home-grown-lecture-series-tickets-143797162183](https://eventbrite.com/e/home-grown-lecture-series-tickets-143797162183)

SAT., MAY. 8: DAYLILY PLANT SALE, 10am-2pm, 5705 Pinemont, Houston. Houston Hemerocallis Society event. List of varieties posted at [ofts.com/hhs/](http://ofts.com/hhs/)

MON., MAY 10: INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT, virtual, 10-11am. Harris County Master Gardener event. Register:: [hccs.edu/community-learning-workshops](http://hccs.edu/community-learning-workshops)

THURS., MAY 13: BENEFICIALS AND PESTS IN THE ROSE GARDEN by SUZANNE WAINWRIGHT-EVENS, virtual, 7-9pm, Houston Rose Society event. Free. Details: [houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org)

TUES., MAY 18: INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT, virtual, 11am-noon. Harris County Master Gardeners & Public Library System event. Live at: [facebook.com/harriscountyp/live](https://facebook.com/harriscountyp/live)

THUR., MAY 20: GROWING FABULOUS HOUSEPLANTS by PAUL WINSKI (virtual).  
10am. Harris County Master Gardener event. Free. Register: [eventbrite.com/e/home-grown-lecture-series-tickets-143797162183](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/home-grown-lecture-series-tickets-143797162183)

FRI., MAY 21: COMPOSTING by JIM GILLIAM (Zoom), 10-11:30. Pre-register: [galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/mgseminars/](https://galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/mgseminars/)

FRI., MAY 28: RAINWATER HARVESTING by NAT GRUESEN (Zoom), 10-11:30. Pre-register: [galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/mgseminars/](https://galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/mgseminars/)

SAT.-SUN., JUNE 5-6: GALVESTON HOME & GARDEN SHOW, Galveston Island Convention Center. [galvestonhomeandgarden.com/](https://galvestonhomeandgarden.com/)

### 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 do 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](mailto: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 . . .

**THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS NEWSLETTER!**  
& please patronize our Newsletter & Calendar sponsors below!

**THIS NEWSLETTER IS MADE POSSIBLE**

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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 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.

