



# LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS

Houston Garden Newsletter



April-15-2022 | Issue 432

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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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## IRISES TO DELIGHT, NEARBY NATIVES, SAD TREE FAREWELL LOVING CACTUS CARE

*"I'm like the trunk of a cactus... I take in a dose of culture  
and time with friends, then I retreat and go live on it  
for a while until I get thirsty again."*

*-- Nancy Horan, American author)*

**By BRENDA BEUST SMITH**



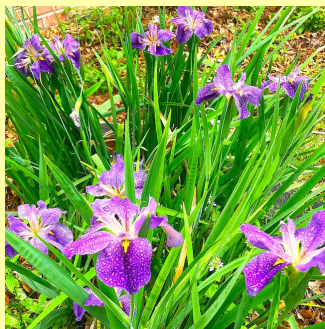
**LOVE NEW WAYS TO USE OLD FAVORITES** — First **DEANY MEINKE** sent in a picture of her walking (or wandering) iris in a basket, cascading over a tree stump she refused to let be cut to the ground. An elegant statement!

Deany's picture recalled the late **JOSEPHINE SHANKS**, for decades Houston's (and the nation's) go-to Louisiana iris expert. She had gorgeous hanging baskets filled with LA iris. They didn't cascaded like walking iris do, but rather fanned outward beautifully. I'd never seen them grown that way before or since!

Coincidentally, Garden Club of Houston's **DORIS HEARD** sent in a reminder that Josephine's wonderful video "**Growing Louisiana Iris**" is posted on the [Garden Club of Houston's Education Page](#). Two hybridized LA irises are named for Josephine, whose daughter, **CAROL PRICE**, with **LOUISE JAMAIL**, will continue her legacy by offering a huge selection of Louisiana irises at the 2022 Bulb & Plant Mart, Oct. 13 - 15. This will be [Garden Club of Houston's 80th Bulb Mart anniversary](#) — amazing achievement! (Pictured:



"Louisiana iris JosephineShanks" by Barry Blyth)



Back to these two favorite Lazy Gardener Plants, both the taller LA iris and the lower-blooming\* walking/wandering iris (*Neomarica gracilis*) prefer areas with morning sun and afternoon shade. LA iris are especially useful where water stands after a rain, although do well in other areas too. Actually, "LA iris" includes 5 separate species:

*Iris brevicaulis*, *I. fulva*, *I. giganticaerulea*, *I. hexagona* and *I. nelsonii*. (Pictured, (my late mother Carmita Beust's LA

iris blooming now).

\*Walking/wandering iris are so named because when new plantlets form at a stalk's tip, it bends over so the plantlet can root in soil. A massive spread of these were a highlight at [Bayou Bend Museum and Gardens](#) until wild rabbits discovered them, reports **BART BRECHTER**, Head of Gardens and Landscape Operations. So if yours suddenly disappear . . .

\* \* \*

## POTPOURRI

- **KNOW \AREA'S NATIVE PLANTS?** Naturalists worldwide want to. Houston ranks #1 in the US for number of observed plant/animal species observed. Texas Parks & Wildlife's [City Nature Challenge](#) joins a global competition (April 29-May 2) will see who can catalogue the most plants, animals and fungus over a three-day period. Scientists rely on annual data for conservation projects (aka funding!). Details at above link or join a [Jesse H. Jones Park and Nature Center](#) naturalist April 30, 9am or 1pm for a hands-on lecture. (Pictured:: [Texas Parks & Wildlife FaceBook page photo](#))



- **SAD, SCARY NOTE FROM KINGWOOD — SUZANNE CHAPMAN**, retired Mercer Botanic Gardens Botanical Collections Curator, reports a botanical tragedy in this North Harris County community. Texas redbay (*Persea borbonia*) — shapely evergreen trees vital to Palamedes and swallowtail butterfly larva — are dying at a rapid rate from "laural wilt." No known cure or treatment is



available to stop damage. *Raffaelea lauricola* is a fungal symbiont of the tiny *redbay ambrosia beetle*, an Asian import spreading across the South.

\* \* \*

- **NEED TO REPLACE A TREE? GO NATIVE!** Trees For Houston, LyondellBasell and The Astros Foundation will give away 2,500 native trees on Sat, April 23, 8-10:30 am in a drive-through at Minute Maid Park 503 Chartres St. Species include American Beautyberry, American Sycamore, Buttonbush, Common Persimmon, Loblolly Pine, Pecan, Sweetgum, and White Oak. [Trees For Houston planting/tree care](#)



**SPOTLIGHTING CACTUS & SUCCULENT CARE** Literally thousands varieties of these exist on Earth. Not all march to the same drummer, not even just in our Greater Houston Area. Below HCSS members offer great growing advice. If your plant isn't doing well, or not sure exactly what it is, the [Houston Cactus & Succulent Society](#) is a great resource. Take the plant (or a leaf) in sealed plastic bags to either (or both) HCSS's upcoming meeting or sale, both at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray:

- **Wed., Apr. 27: HCSS Preview of Sale Plants by Wally Ward, 7 pm.**  
[www.hcsstex.org](http://www.hcsstex.org)
- **HCSS Spring Sale, FRI.-SAT., MAY 6-7, 9am-5pm (cash preferred)**

\* \* \*

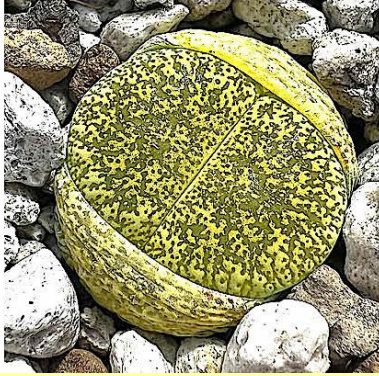
*Brenda Beust Smith's column in the  
LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER  
is based on her 40+ years as Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener  
Email: [lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com)*

\* \* \*

**FAVOR? IF SUBMITTING EVENTS FOR CALENDAR . . .**  
*Event notices limited to 3 lines type. Type info, in exact calendar format,  
format, directly into email. so it can be copied/pasted into next issue.  
NO event notices as pdf or jpg flyer. Otherwise, expect publication delay.  
[lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com)*

\* \* \*





*Among stars at the May 6-7 [Houston Cactus & Succulent Society Spring Sale](#), above l to r, Echeveria Raindrop, Lithops and Cactus Shack Hybrid Haworthia.  
Below: Lithops and Friends (All photos by Richard Stamper)*

## CACTI & SUCCULENTS

NOT ALL ARE CREATED EQUAL — DOING  
HOMEWORK PAYS OFF IN LONG RUN

By Houston Cactus & Succulent Society

[hcsstex.org](http://hcsstex.org)

It will seem that most succulent plants come from full-sun locations. True in many cases, but other factors, like putting plants on a west side, can be a death sentence.

Most nurseries have precise conditions for growing their crops. Full sun is usually not one of these. Some level of shade covers plants; accurate watering keeps nursery stock growing in a specially prepared soil

Then we introduce them to a whole new set of conditions. One result of too much light too soon is that the soil in the container heats up to the point where the roots cook.

Eventually we can introduce plants to higher levels of light. Indeed, many Cacti, Agaves, etc. will get along well in full sun. The best practice is to gradually introduce plants into higher light levels. Close observation is necessary to determine what level of light will be needed. If growing indoors, a southern window with bright light is best.



### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

#### What is a good standard soil mix to grow C&S?

- 1/3 Easy GRO Premium potting soil or equivalent
- 1/3 large perlite or pumice
- 1/3 coarse sand or fine gravel (like aquarium gravel)

#### What are the watering considerations?

Each plant has its own water requirements; find out what these are. Is the plant water-sensitive, is it a spring or fall grower, will it be grown in the house or outside in the elements, or in a greenhouse?



### General Rules

- Water thoroughly and allow to dry out completely before watering again. During warmer months (Mar. to Oct.) water every 7 - 10 days.
- In cooler months (Nov. to Feb.) water carefully every 3 - 4 weeks. However, some cactus should be kept completely dry during this dormancy period.

### When is it too hot or cold for Cacti & Succulents?

Although many of these plants are native to areas that may freeze, they are often not as cold-proof when we grow them. Many succulents are found in tropical areas and cannot tolerate even a hard freeze overnight. So, the safe bet is . . .

- Start protecting your plants if temperatures are forecast to get below 40 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Conversely, many succulent plants occur in temperate regions where it doesn't get really hot as it does here.
- With these plants shade and careful watering can help them through the hot months. Close observation is necessary to determine what level of shade and water will be needed.
- Water when the soil is dry, as often as weekly during the growing season. Plants in clay pots dry out faster than those in plastic or ceramic pots. Test with your finger or a moisture meter. Starting in the fall, begin to water every 3-4 weeks. In cooler months, some cacti should be kept completely dry during their dormancy period. Learn the individual needs for each of your plants.

### What kind of pots should I use?

- **Clay** - Clay dries out faster than plastic or ceramic pots. Use shallow azalea pots, or bulb pots.
- **Plastic** - Black, dark green, or gray if possible.
- **White and bright colors** have a tendency to degrade and break while being handled.
- **Ceramic** - Expensive but dresses up your collection. Avoid highly decorated pots.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *More questions? Two opportunities to meet Houston Cactus & Succulent Society experts, both at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray:*

- *Wed., Apr. 27: HCSS Preview of Sale Plants by Wally Ward, 7 pm.  
<http://www.hcsstex.org>*
- *HCSS Spring Sale, FRI.-SAT., MAY 6-7, 9am-5pm (cash Preferred.)*

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## John's Corner



**A** study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (2021) has found that there are more tree species on Earth than previously believed. Previously it was believed that there were about 64,100 tree species on Earth. The new study suggests that there are 73,300 species of trees. This means there are around 9,200 tree species yet to be discovered.

I recently read a paper from King's College in London on the gut microbiome. Gardeners have known for years that if we want healthy plants, we need beneficial bacteria and fungi in the soil along with many other species of microbial life.

The study found that when three species of bacteria were present in one's gut microbiota, it nearly doubled the chance of survival from the cancer melanoma. We know that many species of microbes in our gut come from the soil as we spend time in the woods or our gardens. These species are found in healthy soils, **IF** they have not been killed off by artificial fertilizers, fungicides, and other toxic chemicals. Nature Medicine (2022).

The reasons to use modern organic methods based on soil biology continue to increase as they cost less, give better results and are good for our health and the environment.

The bible teaches us that we are to study nature and let it teach us. A magazine I enjoy is Life Extension which is reviewed and published by about 50 medical professionals and researchers. The April 2022 issue had an article on reducing "brain fog". A few excerpts are:

- Mango leaf extract contains a compound called mangiferin which "improves our reaction time, reduces mental fatigue, and boosts attention, performance and working memory".
- Peppermint oil "significantly reduces the development of mental fatigue and improves aspects of attention and memory". Peppermint has been used in traditional medicine for thousands of years for its health benefit.

Maybe this is one of the reasons I love to grow peppermint every year as I enjoy the fragrance when I break off a piece and just smell it.

Another article was on the benefits of chromium (Cr) in lowering blood sugar. The herbs Amia (Indian Gooseberry) and Shilajit have been used for centuries for their health effects.

Shilajit is high in fulvic acid a compound that is also found in good compost, that is known for its health promoting benefits.

Another plant, brown seaweed is rich in iodine (I) and has been shown to reduce the conversion of glucose. It also improved after-meal cognitive function.

When we are growing fruits, vegetable or herbs, it shows the importance of re-mineralizing our soil. If these elements are not in the soil, they do not get into our food supply.

**We** have talked about rubber tire mulch on several occasions, how toxic it is



and how it harms plant growth. New research from Oregon State University has found that small particles from tires inhibited the growth and caused adverse behavioral changes in aquatic ecosystems.

These micro-plastic tire particles leached synthetic rubber, oils, filling agents, etc. into the environment. Journals Chemosphere and Journal of Hazardous Materials 2022

Tire mulch also leaches large amounts of zinc (Zn) into the soil causing a chemical imbalance in the soil that leads to many gardening problems.

**My** Crop Science, Soil Science and Agronomy news magazine had a recent article on ecosystem benefits in an urban environment (2022), that pulled data from many studies. On numerous occasion I have mentioned forest bathing and other benefits of green space in our gardens.

A study in the Journal of Happiness (2022) found that food forests can fight food insecurity and have a positive psychological benefit of green space also. A study in the journal Urban Forestry & Urban Greening (2021) found that more biodiverse, natural-looking urban green spaces contributed most positively to mental health by city dwellers.

The Detox Project published a recent report titled “**The Poison in Our Daily Bread**”. The link below takes one to the summary and go to the click “Here” at the bottom to get the full report.



### **The Poison in Our Daily Bread: Glyphosate Contamination...**

The results of the most comprehensive glyphosate testing of food products ever conducted in the U.S. were released by The Detox Project on Tuesday, in a detailed report that shows the true levels of weedkiller contamination in essential foods...

This report is about glyphosate, a toxic chemical found in herbicides like Round-Up that ends up in our food supply. It is well established that this chemical causes cancer, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, organ damage and more.

Animal studies have shown that as little as **1/10 of one part per billion** can cause organ damage. This toxic chemical is in our water supply and in many food items.

This report list brands (companies) tested and the amount of this herbicide in their products! Companies from Wal-Mart, Target to Whole Foods and many more are peddling contaminated food items.

It also shows many brands that do not contain this dangerous chemical (have no detectable residue). To protect our families these are the brands we need to purchase and support.

For example, they found that the two most contaminated products were bread. The brand Village Hearth from HyVee grocery stores tested at *1,150 ppb* and the whole wheat sandwich bread, 365 brand from Whole Foods tested at *1,040 ppb*!

In animal studies less than 0.5 ppb caused liver damage, this amount is 2,000 times higher.

This report illustrates the need to grow more of our own food organically for the health and safety of our families.

The Alliance for Natural Health newsletter (The Pulse of Natural Health) reported on a study by a senior university MIT researcher on autism. For the last three decades autism has been steadily increasing, and by 2025 one-half of all children born will be autistic.

From the newsletter:

Children with autism have biomarkers indicative of excessive glyphosate, including zinc and iron deficiency, low serum sulfate, seizures, and mitochondrial disorder.

A fellow panelist reported that after Dr. Seneff's presentation, "All of the 70 or so people in attendance were squirming, likely because they now had serious misgivings about serving their kids, or themselves, anything with corn or soy, which are nearly all genetically modified and thus tainted with the herbicide Roundup and its glyphosate."

Dr. Seneff noted the ubiquity of glyphosate's use. Because it is used on corn and soy, all soft drinks and candies sweetened with corn syrup and all chips and cereals that contain soy fillers have small amounts of glyphosate in them, as do our beef and poultry since cattle and chicken are fed GMO corn or soy.



Wheat is often sprayed with Roundup just prior to being harvested, which means that all non-organic bread and wheat products would also be sources of glyphosate toxicity. The amount of glyphosate in each product may not be large, but the cumulative effect (especially with as much processed food as Americans eat) could be devastating. [A recent study](#) shows that pregnant women living near farms where pesticides are applied have a 60% increased risk of children having an autism spectrum disorder.

The full report can be found at:



### **Half of All Children Will Be Autistic by 2025, Warns...**

Editor's note: This article was originally posted in 2014. At that time, autism prevalence was 16.8 cases per 1,000 children; the latest data from 2018 show autism prevalence to be 23 cases per 1,000 children, an increase of 37% since the time...

[Read more](#)  
[anh-usa.org](http://anh-usa.org)

The bible tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves. These means do them no harm. When we garden with the obsolete toxic chemical rescue model of gardening, we are harming our neighbors in direct violation of God's word.

I bet Satan smiles every time someone uses Round-Up.

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## LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS

### ***SUBMITTING EVENTS? PLEASE READ!***

- *Only events submitted specifically to LG&F calendar are used*
- *Use our exact format, type into email, no pdfs/jpgs/flyers*
- *3 lines max allowed per entry. We will edit down if you don't.*
- *Too long links activated by word "Details."*
- *Submit events to: [lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com)*

***EVENTS ARE ON-SITE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED***

**SAT., APR. 16: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ONLINE PLANT & SPRING VEGETABLE SALE.** [hcmga.tamu.edu/plant-sales/](http://hcmga.tamu.edu/plant-sales/). Pickup Mon., Apr. 18, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd., on-site sale.

**MON., APR. 18: GENOA FRIENDSHIP OPEN GARDEN DAY & PLANT/VEGETABLE SALE**, 8:30-11am., 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Free. Harris County Master Gardener event. [Advance online orders.](#)

**TUES., APR. 19: CREATING SIMPLE GARDENS WITH NATIVE PRAIRIE PLANTS** by **BETH CLARK**, 5-6pm: Sip and Stroll Garden Tour: 6-7pm: Program. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org/education/classes/](http://urbanharvest.org/education/classes/)

**MON., APR. 19: COMPOSTING** (virtual) by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 11am-noon. Free. HCMG/Harris County Public Library event. [facebook.com/harriscountyp/1/events/](https://facebook.com/harriscountyp/1/events/)

**TUES., APR. 19: CARE, PROPAGATION AND CULTURE OF FAMILY** by **LINDA GAY**, 10am, St. Basil's Hall, 702 Burney Road, Sugar Land. Free. <https://sugarlandgardenclub.org>.

**TUES., APR. 19: WATER CONSERVATION** (virtual) by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 11am-noon, HCMG & Harris County Public Library event. Facebook Live [facebook.com/harriscountyp/1/events/](https://facebook.com/harriscountyp/1/events/)

**THURS., APR 21: FLOWERING PLANTS FOR FOUR SEASONS** (virtual) by **FORT BEND MASTER GARDENERS**, 2-3pm, Register: [us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZErd-yprT4sHdyJOti3t](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/zoom.us/meeting/register/tZErd-yprT4sHdyJOti3t)



**THURS.-FRI., APR. 21-22: GARDEN CLUB OF HOUSTON "COLOR" FLOWER SHOW**, noon-4pm Thurs.; 10am-4pm Fri. Contemporary Arts Museum, 5216 Montrose Blvd. Free. [gchouston.org](http://gchouston.org)

**SAT., APR. 23: 2022 OLEANDER FESTIVAL**, 9am-1pm, Betty Head Oleander Park, 2624 Sealy Ave., Galveston. Free. International Oleander Society event. [oleander.org/](http://oleander.org/)

**SAT. APR 23: INCREDIBLE EDIBLE HERBS** by **GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**. \$10. Register: [galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/mgseminars/](http://galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/mgseminars/)

**SAT., APR. 23: NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY SALE**, 9:30-2:30, New World Botanical, 2701 Lone Star Parkway, Montgomery. Pines and Prairies Chapter - NPSOT event. Availability list: [npsot.org/wp/pinesandprairies/](http://npsot.org/wp/pinesandprairies/)

**SAT-SUN, APR. 23-24: HERITAGE GARDENERS SPRING TOURS/MARKET**, tours (\$15) 1-5 pm. Markets Sat. & Sun, 9am-5 pm, 112 W. Spreading Oaks, Friendswood. Heritage Gardeners on Facebook.

**SUN., APR. 24: TEXAS SUPERSTARS**, by **DEBRA STALLINGS**, 2-3pm. Plants for All Seasons, 21328 SH 249. Cypress Creek Daylily Club event. Free. [cypresscreekdaylily.wixsite.com/ccdc](http://cypresscreekdaylily.wixsite.com/ccdc)

**TUES., APR.26: THE WORMERY** (Zoom) by **MEG TAPP**, 5-6pm. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org/education/classes/](http://urbanharvest.org/education/classes/)

**WED., APR. 17: SAMPLE OF HCSS TABLE SMORGASBORD AT THE SPRING SALE** by **WALLY WARD**, 7pm, Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W Gray. Free. Houston Cactus and Succulent Society event. [hcsstex.org](http://hcsstex.org)

**FRI.-SUN, APR. 29 - MAY 1: KINGWOOD GARDEN CLUB GARDENSAPES TOUR & PLANT SALE**, Fri: 10am-4pm; Sat: 10am-4pm, Sun: 12pm-4pm. \$25. [kingwoodgardenclub.org](http://kingwoodgardenclub.org)

**SAT., APR. 30: BROMELIAD SOCIETY/HOUSTON SPRING SALE**, 9am-4pm, Metropolitan Multi-services Center, 1475 W. Gray. Free. [bromeliadsocietyhouston.org](http://bromeliadsocietyhouston.org)

**FRI.-SAT., MAY 6 & 7,: HOUSTON CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY SPRING SALE**. 9am-5pm Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray. Cash Preferred. [hcsstex.org](http://hcsstex.org)

**SAT MAY 7: HOUSTON HEMEROCALLIS SOCIETY ANNUAL DAYLILY SALE**, 9am-2pm, 5705 Pinemont Dr. Inventory: [ofts.com/hhs/plantsales.html](http://ofts.com/hhs/plantsales.html)

**MON., MAY 9; SUCCULENTS** (virtual) by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10-11:30am. Free. HCMG & Houston Community College event. Register: [hccs.edu/community-learning-workshops](http://hccs.edu/community-learning-workshops)

**TUES., MAY 10: GROWING PLUMERIAS**, 7pm, (ZOOM & in-person), Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. [theplumeriasociety.org](http://theplumeriasociety.org); 281-796-7185

**FRI., MAY 13: NATURE'S BURIAL, NATURAL LANDSCAPE AS YOUR LEGACY**, by **KATY PRAIRIE CONSERVANCY**, 10am, Trinity Episcopal Church. 1015 Holman. Free. Federation of Garden Clubs event. ([Details](#))

**SAT.-SUN., MAY 21-22: BROMELIAD SOCIETY/HOUSTON ANNUAL SHOW-SALE**, 9am-5pm Sat.; 11am-4pm Sun., Judson Robinson, Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Drive. [bromeliadsocietyhouston.org](http://bromeliadsocietyhouston.org)

**SAT., JUN 11: PLUMERIA SOCIETY SHOW & SALE**, 5002 NASA Parkway, Bay Area Community Center, Seabrook, [theplumeriasociety.org](http://theplumeriasociety.org), 281-796-7185

**TUES., JULY 12: GROWING PLUMERIAS**, (Zoom & in-person), 7pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. [theplumeriasociety.org](http://theplumeriasociety.org); 281-796-7185

**SAT., JULY 23: PLUMERIA SOCIETY SHOW & SALE**, 5002 NASA Parkway, Bay Area Community Center, Seabrook. [theplumeriasociety.org](http://theplumeriasociety.org), 281-796-7185

**TUES., OCT 11: GROWING PLUMERIAS**, (Zoom & in-person), 7pm, Cherie Flores Garden Pavillion, 1500 Hermann Dr. Free. Plumeria Society of America event. [theplumeriasociety.org](http://theplumeriasociety.org); 281-796-7185

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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-project to reporting, it then ranked as the longest-running, continuously-published local newspaper column in the Greater Houston area. The name, she says, is not just fun, it's true.

Brenda's gradual sideways step from 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.

Brenda became a Harris County Master Gardener and, over the years, served on the boards of many Greater Houston area horticulture organizations. She 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 Assistant 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.

