

## LAZY GARDENER AND FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

HOUSTON GARDEN  
NEWSLETTER



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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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*A few of the many carnivorous plants that do well in our gardens! See Spotlight Article below*

***"It is far, far, far, far cheaper to put a one-dollar plant into a ten-dollar hole than a ten-dollar plant into a one-dollar hole. If one does not get the soil correct it does not matter how much one spends on the plant material."***

**-- John Ferguson quoting Dewey Compton, JOHN'S CORNER" (below)**

## FEEL THE ENERGY'? NO? ADAPTING GARDENING IN SENIOR YEARS

Now I've reached my 8th decade, it's really affecting my gardens. They're full of weeds. Some actually bloom. These stay. Others I glower at, but may/may not remove, depending that second's energy level. I share this so you won't take offense if I (or someone also up in decades) hesitate at offers of free plants.

Chores younger gardeners tackle without hesitation might take more energy, stooping -- or worse -- kneeling (ouch)! And if you gladly accept plants they want to share, a wonderful thank you would be an offer to dig/pull out anything they refer to as a "damn weed."

Another trick I learned decades ago from reporting on horticultural therapy, one

I use myself ever since. It deals with fear of falling (which, trust me, becomes a MAJOR concern). I notice my interviewee had a strange gait when actually stepping around the garden. Turns out he was counting!

*One, two, three, step. One, two, three, step . . .* He said this gives his body time to react to unexpected obstacles, such as a hidden hole filled with easily squashed leaves or a soil-covered branch or wire. I've used it ever since!

Any other tips to help us "mature" gardeners with challenges inherent with tilled soil and/or planted containers? Here's Another one: if you want to garden but can't get past normal challenges at our age, check out "horticulture therapy" resources. They are packed with really workable safety ideas. [Horticulture+therapy+tips+for+seniors.](#)

\* \* \*

## Potpourri

- **SNOWY ORCHIDS --LOOK QUICKLY!!!!** Our native [\*Platanthera nivea\*](#) is hard to catch in bloom, which it does only at the end of May in our area, says **DELLA BARBATO**, [Native Prairies Assn. of Texas](#) Director of Education. Don't get your hopes up on planting some - at least not yet. All attempts to germinate collected seed or transplant have failed. But . . . hope springs eternal! Don't miss an opportunity to see them in full bloom Sat., June 1, at Lawther-Deer Park Prairie, 1222 E. Purdue Lane in Deer Park. Register (must): [texasprairie.org/showy-snowies](#) or 512-392-2288.



- **GOAT-MOWERS RETURNING!** Not sure this qualifies as "gardening," but they're such fun to watch! If you've never taken the kiddos to see a herd of goats at work, [Houston Arboretum & Nature Center](#) says they'll be "baaack" Mon., May 20, to clear overgrown areas. Great viewing areas, [Details](#)



*Houston Arboretum goat photo*

- **MIKE HOWLETT's SPOTLIGHT ARTICLE** (below) on carnivorous plants excited a friend. **"Can I plant some to get rid of whatever's eating my plants?"** Carnivorous plants in exact right spot at exact right nanosecond might catch one or two villains. But generally speaking, that's asking too much of these horticultural delights. **MIKE HOWLETT** (see below) generally thinks ANYTHING that might cut down on pesticides is good thing. Good question to get with carnivorous plant experts at the upcoming . . .



**SAT., MAY 8: TEXAS CARNIVOROUS PLANT SHOW, SALE & SWAP**



10am-4pm, Pavilion at Track Shack House, 26811 W. Hardy Rd., Old Town Spring.

-- 1pm: **"Bog Barrel Building"** demo by Mike Howlett --

[petflytrap.com/texas-carnivorous-plant-show-sale-swap](http://petflytrap.com/texas-carnivorous-plant-show-sale-swap)

[Texas Carnivorous Plant Enthusiasts](#)

\* \* \*

Brenda Beust Smith's column is based on her 40+ years as  
*Houston Chronicle's Lazy Gardener* --- Email: [lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com)

Note: This column focuses **ONLY** on the Greater Houston area.

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*L to r: Sarracenia 'Juthatip Soper' Pitcher Plant, Drosera capensis "Montague Pass"; Red Venus Fly Trap (center) and with typical big traps) and Drosera binata var. dichotoma*

## CARNIVOROUS PLANTS EYE-CATCHING SPECIMEN PIECES FOR A BARREL BOG!

By MIKE HOWLETT

[Texas Carnivorous Plant Enthusiasts](#)

All photos by Mike Howlett, [petflytrap.com](http://petflytrap.com)



"While Carnivorous plants (CPs) are often overlooked for outdoor growing, it's relatively easy to create a wonderful, eye-catching specimen piece for your yard. Creating a barrel bog is both fun and easy:

- Start by finding a suitably-sized plastic container with bottom drainage. Or, drill a few small 1/4"-inch holes about 2 inches up from the bottom.
- Fill to this line with silica sand. We use coarse-grade sand -- more like aquarium gravel. Plug the holes (we use old moss) to prevent soil

from draining out.

- Finish filling with carnivorous plant soil — a mix of 2 parts peat to 1 part coarse-grade sand is ideal.
- Plant your favorite outdoor carnies! Excellent choices for growing in our area are various Sarracenia, Venus flytraps and selected Sundews (part sun or in the shadow of the Sarracenia). Full sun except in extreme heat of summer. Morning sun is perfect in the hottest times of year, while all-day sun is fine when it's not blazing 90-plus days for weeks on end.

\* \* \*

**EDITOR'S NOTE: MIKE HOWLETT** will share many more "Bog Barrel Building" tips (for carnivorous plantings) at a 1pm demonstration during the:

**SAT., MAY 18: TEXAS CARNIVOROUS PLANT SHOW & SALE**

**10am-4pm, PAVILION AT TRACK SHACK ICE HOUSE,  
25811 West Hardy Road in Old Town Spring.**

[petflytrap.com/texas-carnivorous-plant-show-sale-swap](http://petflytrap.com/texas-carnivorous-plant-show-sale-swap)

*Texas Carnivorous Plant Enthusiasts*

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## John's Corner

NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL  
AND PLANTS # 284

### Subject: Healthy Soils – part 6

Continuing our discussion of what is a healthy soil, we are going to continue with the forth section below.

- 1) Organic matter from almost fresh to totally decomposed in the form of humus (humins, humic, ulmic, and fulmic acids)
- 2) Minerals (nutrients, sand, silt, and clay)
- 3) Soil life (microbes and macrobes)
- 4) Air & water**
- 5) Plant choices
- 6) Care for and do not destroy the health of the soil one has

Air & water - this is the 4th major components of a healthy soil. Plant roots and soil life forms require air (oxygen and nitrogen) and water. If oxygen levels drop below 6 ppm (parts per million) most roots start to die.

For the soil to breathe, which healthy soil does, there must be pore spaces for the air and channels that air can flow, sort of like air conditioning ducts in our house, a characteristic we call permeability. As the temperature of the air and of the soil changes during the day and night, air enters or leaves the soil.

Additionally, the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) produced by the respiration of microbes



and other soil life and the breakdown of the carbon stored in the organic matter needs to escape the soil and let oxygen back in or the good and beneficial life dies.

How do we get air into the soil? We have a few options:

**TILLING** - a temporary solution at best, destroys long term soil structure, creates a hardpan layer, and kills soil animal life and the beneficial fungus that makes soil healthy.

From the pictures of fungi we saw last week, the fungal filaments are kind of like the hairs of our heads. When we till, we rip these filaments apart. If someone ripped your arms and legs off you would not be very healthy. This tilling process causes an explosion of the growth of bacteria. Most of our weedy species love bacteria dominated soils, hence you have made a good home for them.

The sudden addition of lots of air into the soil greatly accelerates the breakdown of organic matter causing the soil to lose its ability to hold and store water, nutrients, and creates lots of erosion. The only time one should till is to mix ingredients together when forming a new bed for the very first time.

**CORE AERATION** - another temporary solution which can provide short term benefits especially if fine screened compost is applied to the area and allowed to fill into the holes created by the cores. The compost keeps the holes open and allows the exchange of air and water to enter the soil. The microbes in the compost will break apart the clay particles over time creating a loamier soil with better structure.

If the holes produced are not filled with some good organic matter like leaf mold compost, they will quickly close, and the benefits are lost.

Best usage is on new sod grown in a clay soil. The coring breaks holes in the clay and helps water and air enter the soil. Note: Healthy soil never needs core aeration as the microbes, earthworms and other soil life does it for you.

**DEAD ROOTS** - most plants allow some of their roots to die every year as the soil around the root is depleted in nutrients and new roots grow into fresh areas. As the old roots decompose, they leave tunnels that air and water can use to move through the soil. This type soil structure is common in mature forest and prairie ecosystems.

Also, many of our annual weeds provide the role of improving aeration in soils. For example, Dandelions that have large deep taproots provide this benefit. When they die their roots decay, leaving a tunnel that air and water can use. Nature uses this plant to correct soil problems as they grow best on tight compacted soils low in oxygen. When the problem is corrected the seed does not germinate as its role in nature is complete.

**BURROWING ANIMALS** - the largest amount of aeration is caused by the insects, earthworms, and burrowing mammals. Earthworm tunnels are like the ductwork in our houses and along with the microbes; they produce chemicals that glue soil particles together forming a friable crumb structure, honeycombed with voids for air and water.

WATER is stored in the soil in several ways. First it is bound chemically by the clay and humus in the soil, next it is stored as a film or coating on soil particles and lastly it is stored in the void or interstitial spaces between grains of soil (too much and we call it a water-logged soil as the air is displaced).

There is a 4th way that we are beginning to understand and that is in the life forms in the soil. As these life forms eat each other, the water and nutrients stored in their bodies is released into the soil.

Our largest storage vessel for water is the soil. A soil with only 3% organic matter by weight will have a 60% porosity. If 35% of this pore space is air and 25% is water then the soil will hold over 120,000 gallons of water per acre in the top 18 inches of soil. A real healthy soil will have over 8% organic matter and go down several feet!



I remember as a boy growing up my grandmother would listen on the radio to a gardening guy named Dewey Compton. He had a saying that has stuck with me: "It is far, far, far, far cheaper to put a one-dollar plant into a ten-dollar hole than a ten-dollar plant into a one-dollar hole. If one does not get the soil correct it does not matter how much one spends on the plant material.

Even today, on both of our local radio gardening shows, the hosts are constantly stressing the importance of getting the soil healthy.

This issue is the single biggest mistake that gardeners make! When one uses low quality soils, mulch, fertilizers, etc.; they will get insects, diseases, weeds

and eventually plant death. Then they say, "I have a Brown Thumb".

On the practical side – If 50% of the green waste (organic waste) produced in the City of Houston had been composted and used on parks, playgrounds, stream channels, right of ways, etc. for several years, I suspect enough water during hurricane Harvey would have soaked into the ground to significantly reduce the flooding. This would have saved consumers billions of dollars.

## LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS

### CALENDAR SUBMISSION RULES PLEASE READ! EVENTS MUST BE OPEN TO & CAPABLE OF HANDLING PUBLIC ATTENDENCE

- Use **ONLY** this (3-line max) format & style for **FASTER INCLUSION**.  
**DAY, DATE: TITLE by NAME (if talk), time, address, Fee/free.**  
**Sponsoring group (if not in title). website/phone (NO MORE!)**
- Only events submitted specifically for LG&F calendar are used
- Actual gardening/plant events only. No harvesting, cooking, etc.
- No events picked up from flyers / NO PDFS! TYPE IN EMAIL
- Submit: [lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com). Check published entry!
- All events on-site and in Houston unless otherwise noted
- Making us retype to our required format opens door to errors
- **ALWAYS PROOF PUBLISHED WORDING & TEST EMAIL**
- **YOU** are responsible for telling us about cancelled events

**MON., MAY 8: PLANT PROPAGATION by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10:30am. Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Dr. Free. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**THURS., MAY 9: BEST OLD GARDEN ROSES FOR HOUSTON (virtual) 7-9pm**, Houston Rose Society event. Free. [us06web.zoom.us/j/84372499703?pwd=abhQyD5cxCCgLV](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84372499703?pwd=abhQyD5cxCCgLV)

**FRI.-SAT., MAY 10-11: HOUSTON CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SPRING SALE.** Fri: 9am-5 pm, Sat: 9am-3 pm. Free. Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray. [hcsstex.org](http://hcsstex.org)

**SAT, MAY 11: HOUSTON HEMEROCALLIS DAYLILY SHOW AND SALE**, Sale: 10am-3pm. Show 1-3pm. 4040 Watonga Dr. Free. [Society.www.ofts.com>hhs](http://Society.www.ofts.com>hhs)

**SAT., MAY 13: SUMMER GARDENING by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10am, Fonteno Senior Education Center, 6600 Bissonet St. Free. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**MON., MAY 13: IDENTIFYING "GOOD & BAD" BUGS by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS (virtual)**, 10am- 11:30am. Free. Register to receive link: [hcc.idloom.events/gardening-series/register](http://hcc.idloom.events/gardening-series/register)

**MON., MAY., 13: GINGERS by CEIL DOW**. 6:30-8:30pm. Lake Houston Garden Club event, Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, 2920 Woodland Hills, Kingwood. Free. [lakehoustongardeners.com](http://lakehoustongardeners.com)



**WED., MAY 15: GARDENING FOR BEGINNERS** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9am, Peckham Aquatic and Fitness Center, 5597 Gardenia Ln. Katy. Free. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**TUES., MAY 16: RAISED BED GARDENING** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 11am, Glazier Senior Ed Center, 16600 Pine Forest Ln. Free. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**SAT., MAY 18: WORLD BEE DAY CELEBRATION**, 10-11:30am, Westbury Community Garden, 12581 Dunlap St. Free. [westburycommunitygarden.org](http://westburycommunitygarden.org)

**MON., MAY 20: OPEN GARDEN DAY** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 8:30am- 11am. Free tour of Genoa Friendship Gardens, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**TUES., MAY 21: IDENTIFYING "GOOD & BAD" BUGS** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS** (virtual), 11am- Noon. Facebook Live. No reservation required: [facebook.com/harriscountyp/levents](https://facebook.com/harriscountyp/levents)

**WED., MAY, 22: ASCLEPIADACEAE - MY JOURNEY WITH STINKY STARRY SUCCULENTS** by **PHILIP RICHARDS, PhD**. 7pm. Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray. [Houston Cactus and Succulent Society](http://HoustonCactusandSucculentSociety)

**SAT., MAY 25: THE JOHN FAIREY GARDEN SUCCULENTS SALE**, 10am-3pm, 20559 FM359, Hempstead. [jfgarden.org/](http://jfgarden.org/)

**MON., MAY 29: PERMACULTURE GARDENING** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10am, Fonteno Senior Education Center, 6600 Bissonet St. Free. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**SAT., JUNE 1: WESTBURY COMMUNITY GARDEN 8TH ANNUAL TOMATO TASTING FESTIVAL**, 10:30am-12:30pm. 12581 Dunlap St. [westburycommunitygarden.org](http://westburycommunitygarden.org); (832) 792-5701

**SUN., JUNE 2: GROWING BEGONIAS IN HOUSTON**, 2-4pm, Plants for All Seasons - 21328 State Hwy 249. Houston Astro Branch Begonia Society. [begoniahouston.org](http://begoniahouston.org); [facebook.com/BegoniaHouston](https://facebook.com/BegoniaHouston)

**TUE., JUN. 4: RAINWATER HARVESTING** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 6pm, Pasadena Public Library, 4330 Fairmont Pkwy. Pasadena. Free. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**TUE., JUNE 4: USDA REPRESENTATIVE VISIT** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 11am- 12:30pm, Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd. Free and open to the public. [hcmga.tamu.edu/lecture-series](http://hcmga.tamu.edu/lecture-series)

**THURS., JUNE 6: COMPANION PLANTING FOR PEST CONTROL BY GERALD DUPONT**, ompanion Planting for Pest Control, by **Gerald DuPont**, 1:00 pm, Waller County Extension Office, 846 6th St., Hempstead. Free RSVP 979-826-7651

**SAT., JUNE 8: PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF AMERICA SALE #1**, 9 am -1:30pm Bay Area Community Center, 5002 E. NASA Pkwy, Seabrook, Texas 77586 Free access to sale. [theplumeriasociety.org/](http://theplumeriasociety.org/)



**SAT., JUNE 8: BLACKBERRIES & BLUEBERRIES** by **MONICA MARTENS**, **EdD**, 10am-Noon; Carbide Park, 4102-B Main (FM 512), La Marque. Galveston Cty. Master Gardener event. Free. Register: [galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture](http://galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture), 281-309-5065.

**— MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE FUTURE EVENTS! —**

**MON., JUN. 10: SEED SAVING AND STARTING** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER**

**GARDENERS** (virtual), 10am- 11:30am, Free. Register in advance to receive

link: [hcc.idloom.events/gardening-series/register](http://hcc.idloom.events/gardening-series/register)

**TUE., JUNE 4: USDA REPRESENTATIVE VISIT** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 11am-12:30pm, Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd. Free and open to the public. [hcmga.tamu.edu/lecture-series](http://hcmga.tamu.edu/lecture-series)

**WED., JUN. 12: RAINWATER HARVESTING** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10:30am, Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Dr. Free. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**THURS., JUN. 13: COMPOSTING** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 1pm, Katy Branch Library, 5414 Franz Rd. Katy. Free. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**MON., JUN. 17: GENOA FRIENDSHIP GARDEN- OPEN GARDEN DAY**, 8:30am- 11am, Free tour of Genoa Friendship Gardens, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Road. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**TUES., JUN. 18: SEED SAVING AND STARTING** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS** (virtual), 11am- 12pm. [facebook.com/harriscountyp/1/events](https://facebook.com/harriscountyp/1/events)

**WED., JUN. 20: RESIDENTIAL RAINWATER HARVESTING** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10am, Glazier Senior Ed Center, 16600 Pine Forest Ln. Free. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**TUE., JUN. 25: COMPOSTING** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10am, Steve Radack Community Center, 18650 Clay Rd. Free. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**FRI., JULY 5: ORGANIC GARDENING** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 1pm, Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Dr. Free and open to the public. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**WED., JULY 13: TROPICAL PLANT SYMPOSIUM**, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield. . [friendsofmercer.com/](http://friendsofmercer.com/)

**MON., JULY 8: COMPOSTING** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 12pm, Fonteno Senior Education Center, 6600 Bissonet St. Free and open to the public. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**MON., JULY 8: FALL'S BEST VEGETABLE GARDEN** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS** (virtual), 10am- 11:30am. Register in advance to receive link: [hcc.idloom.events/gardening-series/register](http://hcc.idloom.events/gardening-series/register)

**TUE., JULY 9: IDENTIFYING AND MANAGING BUGS** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 1pm, Glazier Senior Ed Center, 16600 Pine Forest Ln. Free and open to the public. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**WED., JULY 10: FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10:30am, Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Dr. Free and open to the public. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**WED., JULY 10: GROWING AND COOKING MUSHROOMS** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 6pm, Pasadena Public Library, 4330 Fairmont Pkwy., Pasadena. Free. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**WED., JULY 10: PLANT PROPAGATION** by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 6pm, Tuttle Neighborhood Library, 702 Kress St. Free and open to the public. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**WED., JULY 13: TROPICAL PLANT SYMPOSIUM**, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield. . [friendsofmercer.com/](http://friendsofmercer.com/)

**SAT., JULY 13: COMPOSTING** by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 10am, Fonteno Senior Education Center, 6600 Bissonet St. Free and open to the public. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**MON., JULY 15: GENOA FRIENDSHIP GARDEN- OPEN GARDEN DAY** by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 8:30am- 11am, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Free and open to the public. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**TUE., JULY 16: FALL'S BEST VEGETABLE GARDEN** by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS (virtual), 11am- 12pm, No reservation required: [facebook.com/harriscountyp/levents](https://facebook.com/harriscountyp/levents)

**THUR., JULY 18: FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING** by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 10am, Glazier Senior Ed Center, 16600 Pine Forest Ln. Free and open to the public. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**TUE., JULY 23: FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING** by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 10am, Steve Radack Community Center, 18650 Clay Rd. Free and open to the public. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**THU., JULY 25: FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING** by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 12pm, Dr. Shannon Walker Neighborhood Library, 5505 Belrose Dr. Free and open to the public. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

**TUE., JULY 30: GROWING TOMATOES IN FALL** by HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS, 10:30am, Glazier Senior Ed Center, 16600 Pine Forest Ln. Free and open to the public. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

*If your event didn't get in right away, one possible reason is  
you didn't submit it in our EXACT - NEVER CHANGING format.  
These usually take longer to be re-formatted and open doors to errors.  
Your choice! SEE TOP OF CALENDAR FOR DETAILS.*

\* \* \*



*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!*

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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 general feature 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 became 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 general reporting into also doing gardening reporting 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 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.

About her column, Brenda says: "I don't consider myself a 'garden writer.' I started out 50+ years ago as a very lazy "gardening reporter." I still feel that way today. I hope my columns inspire/help newcomers, but I do not write to them. I write to very experienced gardeners who want to expand their horizons.

### 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.



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