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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

LAZY GARDENER AND FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER

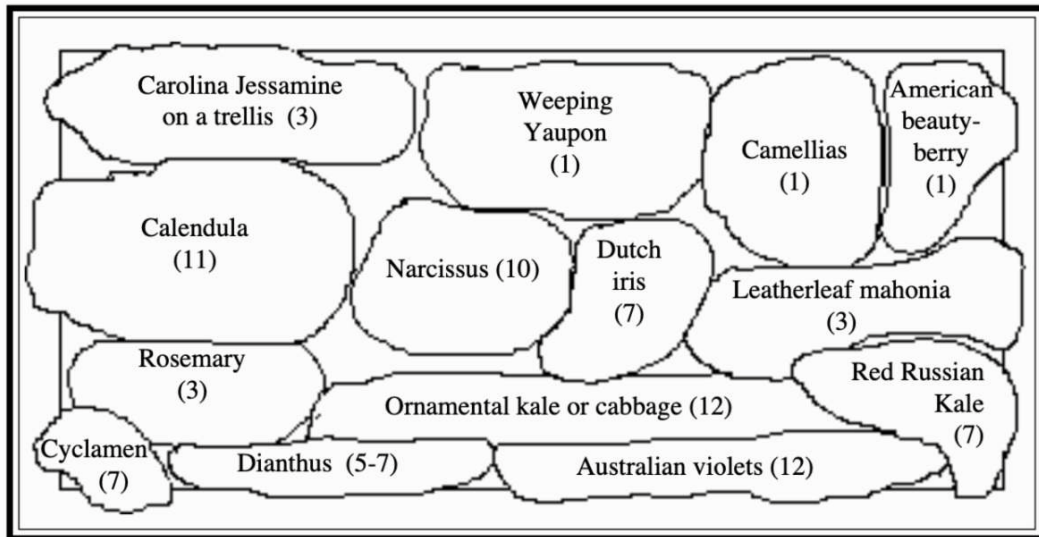


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A Winter Color Garden



Numbers indicate recommended number of plants for 20' x 8' garden.

(Above from Lazy Gardener's Guide page 69 - see below for free copy)

"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow."

– Audrey Hepburn (1929-1993)
British, Dutch, American actress

TIMES WILL BE a'CHANGIN'
-- ONE OF THESE DAYS!

Happy Environmental Month! Summers are now hotter and winters colder than decades ago -- as climate change advocates warned us long ago they

would be. We usually don't have to worry about natives, they've been adapting to change for centuries probably. But for winter beauty, can we still plant the same things for, if not color, hopefully greenery through to spring? Would love to hear from readers about plants that have not only held green during winter, but even bloomed for you.

lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com

Pictured: weeping red-berried yaupon



In the meantime, this WINTER GARDEN design (above) was created by area gardeners and nursery owners back when ***Lazy Gardener's Guide*** was published in 1979. Sometimes really great plants are forgotten as so many new ones hit the market.

Thanks for tolerating my reminiscing last week. I got a great letter from SUSIE C. in Southwest Houston warning us not to think all conflicts with native plants in home gardens are resolved. Apparently a neighbor of hers is turning a blind eye to some natives doing their own thing. Don't want to get involved in specific problems, but there is one very simple fun way to compromise. Signs!



* * *

We all have traumas in our lives. And many folks find nature, or their own gardens, either working in, or just sitting and viewing, a reliable sedative. Touching (healthy) soil has been considered therapeutic since ancient times, and is now easily measured. But how does just sitting and looking help? In our Spotlight Article below, [Fort Bend County Master Gardener SANDRA GRAY](#) gives us for a closer look with a few points from her upcoming talk:

THURS., SEPT. 12: HEALING GARDEN

9:30am, Missouri City Recreation Center, 2701 Cypress Point Dr.,
Missouri City. Free. Quail Valley Garden Club event. 281-235-2992.

* * *

Potpourri

'EXPERT' PEEK! We all drool at the thought of visiting a true local expert's garden (one who isn't "lazy"!). Retired Mercer Botanic Garden's longtime

horticulturist Suzanne Chapman will share video views her own personal landscape (left) **MON., SEPT. 9.** (6:30pm, Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, 2920 Woodland Hills, Kingwood. [Lake Houston Garden Club event](#). Free.)



She's especially delighted with her native Turk's Cap (*Malvaviscus arboreus* var. *drummondii*, above & insert). These, she says "were all grown from cuttings a few years ago ... easy plant, shade-partial sun, may freeze back in winter, drought-tolerant, will take moist soil too. Little fruits are edible as are the flowers. About 4' tall, and only trimmed for shape when needed...haven't cut this one at all this year."

- **SPEAKING OF . . . NATIVE PLANTS**, the big annual Native Plant Society of Houston's traditional **WILDSAPES WORKSHOP/NATIVE PLANT SALE** has a new location: Sat., Oct. 5, 8 am-3 pm followed by plant sale, Northside Columbus Club Hall, 607 E. Whitney St. Early bird discounts end Sept. 23. nativeplantsocietyoftexas.app.neoncrm.com/np/



- **SOMETIMES MOTHER NATURE** just doesn't agree with our gardening wishes. Take pumpkins. If you'd like to harvest your own, the University of Houston's Houston Public Media website has [a list of our greater area Pumpkin Patches](#). These would be the best places, too, to ask for advice on growing pumpkins in time for Halloween harvest in the Greater Houston area. Unfortunately, our subtropical pocket offers so many challenges. Still determined? Too late now. but prepare for next year with advice from many gardeners' best friend, **GREG GRANT** :arborgate.com/blog/uncategorized/producing-pumpkins-in-east-texas/
- **ATTN. GARDEN/PLANT GROUPS** -- In wake of Hurricane Beryl, [Nature's Way Resources](#) offers free guided tours of NWR's extensive nursery/soil/mulch facilities for garden clubs, plant societies and other plant-oriented, organized groups. As usual, NWR's now-expanded meeting site is free to above groups. Reservations a must for both.



* * *

"LAZY GARDENER'S GUIDE" (PDF format) is emaild free.

Request: lazygardenbrenda@gmail.com

* * *

*Brenda Beust Smith's column is based on her 40+ years as the
Houston Chronicle's "Lazy Gardener" column -- lazygardenerbrenda@gmail.com
Brenda's column focuses ONLY on the Greater Houston Area*

* * *



Healing Gardens

*"And into the forest I go, to lose my mind
and find my soul"— John Muir*

By SANDRA GRAY
Fort Bend County Master Gardener
fbmg.org

John Muir well understood the healing power of the outdoors. Healing gardens were used in European and North American hospitals in the 18th and 19th centuries as safe healing spaces. However, over time, the focus of medicine shifted to a focus on sterility, medication, and technology.

In the 1940s, the U.S. government introduced a program using flowers and plant activities to help heal wounded veterans in a veteran's hospital. The first scientific study of the healing effects of nature was published in Science Magazine in 1984 by Robert Ulrich. Numerous studies since then have shown the healing properties of gardens for those suffering from depression, PTSD, dementia, ADHD, and many other maladies.

A healing garden is defined as an outdoor space that promotes the physical and mental wellbeing of a person and also that person's friends, family, and caregivers. Five different types of healing gardens are generally recognized.

1. Healing: uses horticultural therapy and sensory gardens; especially helpful for Alzheimer's patients and brain function disorders
2. Enabling: employs gardening as means to improve strength and coordination
3. Meditative: focuses on natural beauty; especially helpful for sufferers of PTSD, violence, and loss
4. Rehabilitative: healing gardens and environments to promote community and unity
5. Restorative: walking paths and private repose to relieve stress, restore calm, lower blood pressure.

To design your own healing garden, first identify who will use the garden and your healing goals.

- Do you need a place for yoga or tai chi? Will the users of the garden also work in the garden?

- Eliminate anything harmful from the garden. A healing garden must be safe so thorns, poisonous plants, noxious smells, and other distractions should be eliminated.
- Make the garden accessible with seating and lighting.
- Finally, add plants and natural elements that soothe, such as pleasant fragrances, water features, and items that attract wildlife.

Every healing garden will be as unique as the people who use it but repeated studies have shown they can truly heal you.

* * *

EDITOR'S NOTE: Fort Bend County Master Gardener SANDRA GRAY will delve much more deeply into this fascinating topic ...

THURS., SEPT. 12: HEALING GARDEN

9:30am, Missouri City Recreation Center, 2701 Cypress Point Dr., Missouri City. Free. Quail Valley Garden Club event. 281-235-2992. fbmg.org



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John's Corner

NEWS FROM THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SOIL AND PLANTS # 296

Subject: animal manures (part 1 of 3)

PART 1: A question I often get asked is, "Are animal manures beneficial in our gardens? One hundred years ago the answer was easy. Yes, they are good for the garden. Today the answer is more complex as many manures today harm the soil and lead to insects, disease, and weed problems. They also can lead to human health problems.

One hundred years ago the animals fed on grass, forbs, wildflowers, etc. that were in our prairies, very rich soils full of minerals from decades of prairie

grasses collecting the minerals from the sub-soil and moving them into their above ground leaves. When the leaves and some of the root's die, they decompose creating humus and releasing the minerals into the top-soil layer. Typically, the farmer would let the animals out to graze and bring them back into a pen for the evening. They could then shovel up the manure and place it in their gardens as a wonderful organic fertilizer. It supplied nutrients, organic matter, and stimulated the biological processes that helped build soil fertility.

For centuries farmers used animal manure to keep their fields healthy and productive. Over the years repeated studies have shown that manure produces results better than artificial fertilizers without the negative side effects. It is also a good way of recycling. *However, today it is not as simple as the quality, variety, and contaminants vary greatly.*

There are many areas of uncertainty and concern when using manures today:

- nutrient content of the manure
- availability of the nutrients
- application variability
- organic matter content
- microbial diversity
- contaminants (PFAS, heavy metals, salts, pharmaceuticals, parasites, etc.)
- pesticides and herbicides
- pathogens (salmonella, bad E. coli, etc.)
- growth hormones
- stress hormones
- antibiotics
- antibiotic resistant bacteria
- heavy metals
- local availability
- quality
- odors
- handling and transportation
- costs
- amount of bedding in the manure and the type

Note: Some of these problems can be corrected by high temperature and long-time frame composting. 1) However, 95% of the compost operations in the USA do not use the correct methods. 2) Most suppliers do not want to spend the money to try and make a better product.

Hence, today it is a very different story as most of the manure sold in stores comes from factory farms known as Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO's) as it is easy to collect, and a waste issue that they must get rid of, hence it is cheap.

The purpose of factory farms is to create conditions, so the animals grow and gain weight quickly and cheaply. For example, in beef production they feed the cattle agricultural corn and other grains like GMO soy that are not part of a natural diet of which most are now genetically modified organisms (GMO's). The grains are also often full of the herbicide glyphosate that is a known carcinogen.

They also feed the cattle growth hormones, pharmaceuticals, etc. An example is the Bovine Growth Hormone (rBSG) used to increase milk production. There are several papers in the National Library of Health that state when we are exposed to these hormones it greatly increases our cancer risk. This practice leads to diseases in cattle from bloating to mastitis. To treat the health issues, they give the cattle antibiotics which in addition to keeping them alive, also causes the cattle to gain weight faster.

These pathogenic bacteria quickly become resistant the antibiotics. When the manure hits or is applied to the soil the antibiotic genes get passed to other species of bacteria. Aarhus University in Denmark, Scientific Reports (2016).

Manure from CAFO's tend to have far more problems than manure from the backyard or manure from an organic farm. One of the biggest problems is that animal feed used in CAFO's has salts added to them which end up in the manure. Along much of the Gulf Coast we already have a salt issue in our soils and adding manure makes the problem worse particularly with repeated usage.

Also depending on the antibiotic in the manure, it may be absorbed into the plant and if the plant is eaten it may cause an allergic reaction in sensitive people.

Bedding material is used to soak up moisture in the urine and manure, reduces nutrients by dilution, and adds carbon that may cause nitrogen tie-up if there is too much bedding material in the manure. Wood shavings are the worst as they have a very high C:N ratio, straw is not as bad as it quickly breaks down.

Animal manures are often high in certain nutrients like phosphorus (P) or potash and repeated usage can lead to a build up in the soil. These nutrient excesses interfere with the plant uptake of copper (Cu) and zinc (Zn). Excessive potash restricts boron (B), manganese (Mn), and magnesium (Mg).

Most often nitrogen in manures is in the ammonium form which escapes to the atmosphere contributing to global warming and is very water soluble hence leaches quickly and pollutes our rivers and streams.

When I first purchased my farm, a neighbor had a grazing lease for his cattle. I have observed that the cow patties, even after three years, have not decomposed! What were those cattle fed that was so toxic that the manure would kill insects like dung beetles and earthworms to microbes and prevent the decomposers from working?

LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER CALENDAR EVENTS

**WANT YOUR EVENT IN RIGHT AWAY?
FOLLOW THESE CALENDAR RULES!**

ALL EVENTS MUST BE OPEN TO & CAPABLE OF HANDLING PUBLIC ATTENDANCE

- **This (3-line max) EXACT FORMAT/STYLE (reformatting = delay!)**

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. Check published entry!
- All events on-site and in Houston unless otherwise noted
- **ALWAYS** PROOF PUBLISHED WORDING & TEST EMAIL
- YOU are responsible for telling us about cancelled events

WED., SEPT. 4: CONTAINER GARDENING by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10:30am, Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Dr. Free. hcmga.tamu.edu

WED., SEPT. 4: TEXAS NATIVE PLANTS FOR SHADY GARDENS, 9:30-11:30 am, Webster Presbyterian Church, 201 W NASA Pkwy Webster. Parking is at back of church. Gardeners by the Bay event. Free. gbtb.org

FRI.-SAT., SEPT. 6-7: HOUSTON CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY SHOW & SALE. Fri. 9am-5pm; Sat 9am-3pm. Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 W. Gray. Free. hcsstex.org

SAT, SEPT. 7: FALL & WINTER COLOR, 2 pm, Sienna Branch Library, 8411 Sienna Springs Blvd., Missouri City. Free. Fort Bend County Master Gardener event. 281-238-2966

MON., SEPT., 9: NATIVES IN MY GARDEN by **SUZZANNE CHAPMAN**. 6:30-8:30pm. Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, 2920 Woodland Hills, Kingwood. Lake Houston Garden Club event. Free. lakehoustongardeners.com

MON., SEPT. 9: HEIRLOOM AND PASS-ALONG PLANTS by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS** (virtual), 10am- 11:30am, Register in advance to receive link: hcc.idloom.events/gardening-series/register

WED., SEPT. 11: DECORATING FOR GARDENING FUN by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10:30am. Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Dr. Free. hcmga.tamu.edu

WED., SEPT. 11: LANDSCAPE & MORE GINGERS by **CEIL DOW**, noon–1:30pm, Mercer Visitor's Center, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd., Free, Register: pct3.com/MBG

THURS. SEPT. 12: ROSE EXPERT PANEL, 7-9pm, St. Andrew's Church, 1819 Heights Blvd. Houston Rose Society event. Free. houstonrose.org

THURS., SEPT. 12: HEALING GARDENS, 9:30am, Missouri City Recreation Center, 2701 Cypress Point Dr., Missouri City. Free. Quail Valley Garden Club event. 281-235-2992.

FRI., SEPT. 13: MERCER GARDEN TOUR by **JACOB MARTIN**, 9–10am, Mercer Visitor's Center, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd., Free, Register: pct3.com/MBG

SAT., SEPT. 14: RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP by **GALVESTON BAY FOUNDATION**, 10–11:30 am, Mercer Visitor's Center, Mercer Botanic Gardens,

MON., SEPT. 16: GENOA FRIENDSHIP GARDEN- OPEN GARDEN DAY by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 8:30am- 11am, 1210 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Free. hcmga.tamu.edu

TUE., SEPT. 17: COMPOSTING by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10:30am. Glazier Senior Ed Center, 16600 Pine Forest Ln. Free. hcmga.tamu.edu

TUE., SEPT. 17: HEIRLOOM AND PASS-ALONG PLANTS by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS** (virtual), 11am- 12pm. Free, Facebook Live, no reservation required: facebook.com/harriscountyp/levents

TUES., SEPT, 17: FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING by **LAUREN MARTIN**, 10am, : Free, St. Basil Hall, 702 Burney Road, Sugar Land, **FORT BEND MASTER GARDENER** event. Free. sugarlandgardenclub.org

WED., SEPT. 18: FALL VEGETABLE GARDENING by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 12:30pm. Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Dr. Free. hcmga.tamu.edu

THUR., SEPT. 19: A FEW PERENNIALS by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10am. Glazier Senior Ed Center, 16600 Pine Forest Ln. Free. hcmga.tamu.edu

WED., SEPT. 25: UNIQUE CACTI OF COCHISE CTY., AZ by **ROB ROMERO** (also Zoom), 7pm, Metropolitan MF Service Center, 1475 W. Gray. Houston Cactus & Succulent Society event. Free. Zoom Link: kaktoskomments@gmail.com

SAT., SEPT. 28: FALL PLANT SALE by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 9am- 1pm. Alabonson Park, 9650 N Houston Rosslyn Rd. Pre-order online for pickup at the sale, Sept 18-24. hcmga.tamu.edu/plant-sales

SUN., SEPT. 29: CONTAINER GARDENING BY by **HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS**, 10am. Steve Radack Community Center, 18650 Clay Rd. Free. hcmga.tamu.edu

SAT., OCT. 5: ANNUAL HOUSTON BONSAI SOCIETY SHOW, 9am– 3pm, Mercer Treehouse Staff Building, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd. Free. houstonbonsaisociety.com/

SAT., OCT. 5: CLEAR LAKE NATIVE PLANT SALE, 8-11am Clear Lake Native Plant Sale, 2700 Bay Area Blvd, Clear Lake

SAT., OCT 5: PLUMERIA CARE IN WINTER by **GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER**, 1-3 pm, AgriLife Extension Office, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main St. (519), La Marque. Free. Register: galveston.agrilife.org/horticulture/

WED., OCT. 9: THE LOW DOWN ON NATIVE PLANTS IN HOUSTON by **SUZZANNE CHAPMAN**, noon–2 pm, Mercer Visitor's Center, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd., Free, Register: pct3.com/MBG

FRI., OCT. 11: MERCER GARDEN TOUR by Horticulture Staff, 9–10am, Mercer

Visitor's Center, Mercer Botanic Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Rd. Free,
Register: pct3.com/MBG

FRI.& SAT., OCT., 11-12: 82nd ANNUAL BULB AND PLANT MART. Garden Club of Houston event. Free. gchouston.org/

SAT., OCT. 12: VEGETABLE/HERB PLANT SALE, 9am-noon (or sold out). AgriLife Extension Range, 1402 Band Road, Rosenberg. Fort Bend County Master Gardener event. fbmg.org

SAT., OCT. 12: GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL & PLANT SALE, 9 am-2 pm. Discovery Gardens Carbide Park, 4102 Main St (Hwy 519), LaMarque, txmg.org/galveston

SAT., OCT. 19: LONE STAR DAYLILY SOCIETY PLANT SALE, 9am-4pm, 7124 Booth Lane, Manvel. Free, lonestardaylilyociety.org; 281-331-0162.

SAT., OCT. 19: NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF TEXAS PINES & PRAIRIES NLCP LEVEL 3 CLASS, 8am-4pm. Mercer Botanical Gardens, 22306 Aldine Westfield Road, Humble. Signup: npsot.org/our-work/class-schedule/

WED. OCT. 23: GROWING CACTUS & SUCCULENTS FROM SEEDS by **JACOB MARTIN**, 7pm, Metropolitan Multi-Family Service Center, 1475 West Gray. Cactus and Succulent Society event. Free. hcsstex.org

If your event didn't get in right away, one possible reason is you didn't submit it in our EXACT - NEVER CHANGING format. Reformatting delays publication and opens doors for errors. Your choice! SEE TOP OF CALENDAR FOR EXACT FORMAT.

* * *



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 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 back 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 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 had 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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