



February 8, 2010  
[www.GardeningVolunteers.org](http://www.GardeningVolunteers.org)

## Calendar

**Saturday-Sunday**  
**February 13-14**  
**9a-8p**  
**Texas Experience Pavillion**  
**at the Rodeo**

GO TEXAN™ Tomato Sale

**Monday**  
**February 22**  
**12n-3p**  
**Garden Center**

Essentials of Gardening Class  
"Freeze Recovery Workshop"

**Saturday**  
**February 27**  
**10a-4p**  
**Leon Valley Civic Center**

Leon Valley Earthwise Living Day

**Saturday**  
**March 6**  
**9am-12n (approx)**  
**Wounded Warrior Center**  
*next to BAMC*

Landscape Workday

**Friday-Saturday**  
**March 12-13**  
**9am-4pm**

**San Antonio Garden Center**

Annual Plant Sale

**Saturday**  
**March 13**  
**8am-1pm**  
**SAWS Hdqs.**

SAWS Spring Bloom

## Essentials Class, February 22

### Freeze Recovery Workshop

Tired of winter? Anxious to get out and start cutting, removing and planting the first bright sunny day--*and gosh, we had one Saturday--?*

Before you get started, attend our Freeze Recovery Workshop. We're inviting a panel of experts to discuss and answer your questions about perennials and shrubs, roses, cactus & succulents, palms and cyads. Bring pictures of your freeze-damaged plants.



### This Year's Rodeo Tomato: "Phoenix"



Phoenix is an early mid-season hybrid hot-set tomato. The determinate plant is a vigorous grower with good leaf cover for fruit protection. The high quality, firm, globe-shaped tomatoes are uniform in color with jointed pedicles. The tomato matures mid-season and the size ranges from large to extra-large.

GVST will sell the tomatoes in the GO TEXAN area of the Texas Experience Pavilion this coming Saturday and Sunday, February 13-14. (If you signed up to sell, check page 3. There are still a few more slots open Saturday evening, Sunday morning and Sunday evening, see page 4).

We will have 500 tomatoes to sell in individual 4-inch pots for \$3 each.

A brief history of the "Rodeo Tomato"~

About 10 years ago, long-time chairwoman of the San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo asked the Bexar County Extension Service to develop a new tomato that could be introduced, promoted and sold at the rodeo. **Dr. Jerry Parsons** was a County Horticulturist with the Extension Service at the time, so the tradition began.

GVST sells the tomatoes one weekend a month, as members of the Texas Department of Agriculture's GO TEXAN program.

## New Board Members Elected At Annual Meeting

Friday, January 15. It was a dark and stormy night. News reports said the Texas National Guard had been put on stand-by for high-water rescues along the I-35 Corridor.

But inside the San Antonio Garden Center, a rousing crowd of about 80 volunteers and guests gathered to chow down on three kinds of pizza--proving that it takes more than heavy rain to keep GVST volunteers away from a good box-wine party!

But we did take care of business with the election of three new board members: **Bob Carter**, **Ron Csehil** and **Shirley Gebhardt**. They join **Rob DeRocher**, **Cheryl Gorhum**, **Melody McMahon**, and **Jeanette Martin**.

Board officers will be elected at their first monthly meeting on Monday, February 8.

Bob, Ron and Shirley are replacing two who were stepping down--**Jane Rackley** and **Mary Quandt**, and **Tom Harris**, who had served two consecutive, two-year terms.

Tom was presented with a commemorative gift, which include this inscription:

**Dr. Tom Harris**  
*The Hill Country Gardener*

Presented by Gardening Volunteers of South Texas in appreciation for your service as past President, and your continuing support. Your educational outreach in behalf of our organization about all things gardening helps us to fulfill our mission~

*That we were organized exclusively for charitable, civic, scientific and educational purposes, primarily to participate in the research and development of horticulture and agricultural products, promote environmental awareness and water conservation, and serve as an educational resource for the community.*

January 15, 2010

In the last year alone, Tom presented 34 Continuing Education gardening classes for NEISD and NISD. These classes benefit GVST as outreach prescribed in our contract with San Antonio Water System. When you multiply this year times the past five or six years, Tom has been an integral part of our success, and I think it goes without saying that he's a much valued and appreciated part of our organization.

We also recognized Rob DeRocher--ever ready to be the go-to guy for all things that involve transporting cargo to events, heavy lifting and even dumpster diving at a

local grower's back lot so that we can often have free plants as parting gifts for Essentials classes attendees.

He also scrambled to save the GVST plants at Ol' Peterson's greenhouse before the hard freezes of December.

We presented Rob with the "Silver Trowel" award--inscribed with:

JUST ROB  
GARDENING VOLUNTEERS OF SOUTH TEXAS  
JANUARY 15, 2010

(If you've ever received E-mails from Rob--"Just Rob" is his *signature subject line* so hopefully it's not as insulting as it sounds!)



**Dr. Jerry Parsons**  
*talked winter freeze and described the plants GVST will sell at our upcoming spring events.*

*New Board Member*  
**Bob Carter** and wife, **Wanna**.



*Returning Board Member* **Cheryl Gorhum** and husband, **Beauford**.  
-- PHOTOS BY **TOM HARRIS**

# "I Know I Signed Up for something--BUT WHAT ????"

Normally, page 3 is where you find the Volunteer Bulletin Board where we post upcoming volunteer opportunities. However, this issue, you'll find them on page 4. We've had brisk sign-up for the first of our Spring events at the Annual Meeting and the first Essentials class January 25. So, here's a recap of who's signed up for what so far:

## **RODEO TOMATO PLANT SALE**

(Rob will be there all day both days)

### **Saturday, Feb. 13**

#### **8:30a-12n**

Josie Waddell  
Chas Lorenz

#### **12n-3p**

Bob Carter  
Alton & Lynda Fischer  
Terry Chandler

#### **3-7p**

Sharon Peterson  
Nancy & Mac McClintock  
Sherry Cardenas

### **Sunday, Feb. 14**

#### **8:30a-12n**

Jo Genzer  
(need at least one more volunteer)

#### **12n-3p**

Helen Nolen  
Carl Nentwich  
Maggie Harlan

#### **3-7pm**

Don Brooks  
(need at least one more volunteer)

## **EARTHWISE LIVING DAY**

Leon Valley Civic Center

(Rob and Dee Emory will be there throughout the day)

### **Saturday, February 27**

#### **9-11:30am**

Bob Carter  
Sharon Hughes  
Pete Mendiola  
Josie Waddell

#### **11:30-2p**

Virgie Vargo  
Terry Chandler

## **SAS SHOE OUTLET STORE LANDSCAPE WORK**

Exact Dates in March TBA

(Project Chair and on-site contact: Diane Dondero)

Melody McMahan  
Jeanette Martin  
Mary Quandt  
Bob Carter  
Josie Waddell  
Jo Fletcher

## **WOUNDED WARRIOR LANDSCAPE WORK DAY**

(Wounded Warrior Center next to BAMC)

On-site Contact: **Melody McMahan**

Bring pruning tools, rakes, shovels and gloves

### **Saturday, March 6**

#### **9a-12n (approx)**

Jeannette Martin	Maggie Harlan
Anne Schiller	Cheryl Gorhum
Bob Carter	Doug Tomasini
Rob DeRocher	Shirley Gebhardt
Cal Eichler	Jo Genzer
Josie Waddell	

## **SAWS SPRING BLOOM**

(SAWS Hdqs. at 281 N. and Mulberry)

(Rob and Dee will be there throughout the day)

Help SAWS distribute free xeric plants; work at GVST booth

### **Saturday, March 13**

(exact times TBA)

#### **8-11a**

Melody McMahan	Josie Waddell
Sharon Hughes	Jo Fletcher
Manny Zamora	Sandra Lyssy
Cal Eichler	
Pete Mendiola	

#### **11a-2p**

Douglas Tomasini  
Maggie Harlan  
Don Brooks  
(need at least 4 or 5 more volunteers)

## **GARDEN CENTER PLANT SALE**

(not GVST plants)

(Anne Schiller will be on-site contact both days)

### **Friday, March 12**

#### **8:30-11a**

Loretta Van Coppenolle  
Josie Waddell  
Don Brooks

#### **11am-2p**

Manny Zamora  
Maggie Harlan  
Maggi Kautz

#### **2-4:30p**

Cheryl Gorhum

### **Saturday, March 13**

#### **8:30-11a**

Douglas Tomasini

# Volunteer Bulletin Board



## Rodeo Tomato Sale

*Texas Experience Pavilion, Rodeo Grounds*

**Date: Saturday, Feb. 13**  
**Shift: 7-9p**

Need one volunteer to back up **Rob DeRocher** on last shift of the day. Generally slow after Rodeo performance starts at 7... good weather on Valentine's weekend could bring a heavier than normal crowd.

**Date: Sunday, Feb. 14**  
**Shift: 3-7p**

Need one or two more volunteers.

**Date: Sunday, Feb. 14**  
**Shift: 7-9p**

Need one or two volunteers to back up Rob on last shift of the weekend. Generally slow after Rodeo performance starts at 7, but Rob will need help with pack-up and take-down.

*Volunteers can enjoy the rodeo grounds before or after your shift free of charge. Bexar County Master Gardeners allow us to ride their shuttle from the SAWS center parking lot directly to the back door of the pavilion. GVST donates \$50 to the MG's for the favor, which they use toward shuttle expenses.*

## Wounded Warrior Landscape Workday

*3628 Rawley E. Chambers Road at Ft. Sam Houston  
(map and directions provided closer to workday)*

**Date: Saturday, March 6**  
**Time: (approx) 9am-12n**

For the past 8-9 months, **Melody McMahon** has been the lone volunteer working on the project, which at first gathered a lot of attention among several gardening groups. This can develop into a very meaningful once a week, twice a week or once a month project for our "dirt digger" volunteers. Already a good group has signed up, but more will be appreciated.

Questions? Contact Melody directly at [melodym1222@yahoo.com](mailto:melodym1222@yahoo.com) or 481-2923.

## SAWS Spring Bloom

*SAWS Headquarters  
2800 Hwy 281 N. at Mulberry*

**Date: Saturday, March 13**  
**Shift: 8-11a (approx)**

Need 2 or 3 more volunteers to help SAWS distribute free xeric plants to attendees.

**Shift: 11a-2p (approx)**

Need 4 or 5 more volunteers to help distribute free xeric plants and work in GVST booth.

## Earthwise Living Day

*Leon Valley Civic Center  
6427 Evers Road*

This year's event is only 4 hours, **10am-2pm**. **Rob DeRocher** and **Dee Emory** will be there all day. We have 5 people signed up for the morning, need two more for the afternoon. If you can change from morning to afternoon, please let Anne Schiller know at [anne@anneschiller.com](mailto:anne@anneschiller.com) or call the GVST phone at (210) 251-8101.

Sell plants and publications, distribute SAWS water conservation and GVST information.

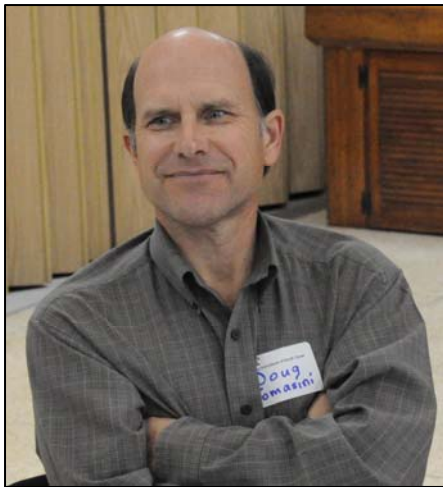
## SAS Shoe Landscape Project

*101 New Laredo Highway  
Intersection of New Laredo Hwy  
and S. Zarzamora*

**Date: TBA, plan on weekday mornings for about 3 weeks**  
**Time: TBA**

GVST is returning to SAS to help the "enthusiastic about gardening" employees to spruce up their parking lot "pocket gardens". Bring tools and gloves. Questions? Contact **Diane Dondero** at [donderoj@att.net](mailto:donderoj@att.net) or 826-5751.

To sign up for any of these events, contact **Anne Schiller** at [anne@anneschiller.com](mailto:anne@anneschiller.com) or the GVST phone at (210) 251-8101.



**Douglas Tomasini** at the Annual Meeting

PHOTOS BY  
**TOM HARRIS**

## COMMUNITY GARDEN

Floral Design classes start Tuesday, March 6 at Garden Center. Six classes 1-4pm each Tuesday through April 6. Taught by **Henry DeLeon**...not your standard FTD flower arrangements. \$135 covers all flowers, greenery and containers to take home finished projects each week. Registration deadline is Friday, Feb. 26. 824-9981.

This note from Volunteer **Mary Kay Stewart** with The Friendship Bridge. The 3rd Annual Buffet and Wine fundraising event takes place Thursday, February 25, 6:30-10pm at Los Patios. The Friendship Bridge provides small business loans and educational programs to help Guatemalan women find their own solutions out of poverty. So far, micro-credit loans have been given to more than 17,000 women. Tickets are \$45 and include food, wine, a silent auction and Latin American crafts, along with music by singer/songwriter **Michael Waid**. Buy tickets online (only) at [www.friendshipbridge.org](http://www.friendshipbridge.org) where you can also begin bidding on silent auction items.

The Guadalupe County Master Gardeners present their 2nd annual "Grow Local" Festival Saturday, February 27 at the Schertz Civic Center on Schertz Parkway. [www.growlocafestival.com](http://www.growlocafestival.com).

Mitchell Lake Audubon Center is looking for volunteers to help spruce up the native plants Saturday, February 20 starting at 9am. Call 628-1639 for info, or <http://tx.audubon.org/Mitchell>.

### Tom Harris February Classes

Tues, Feb. 9 "Organic Gardening". 6:30p. O'Connor HS. 397-8100 or [www.nisd.net/ace](http://www.nisd.net/ace)

Tues, Feb. 16 "Grow Anything Anywhere in a Container". 6:30p. O'Connor HS. 397-8100 or [www.nisd.net/ace](http://www.nisd.net/ace)

Tues, Feb. 23 "All About Lawn Care". 6:30p. O'Connor HS. 397-8100 or [www.nisd.net/ace](http://www.nisd.net/ace)

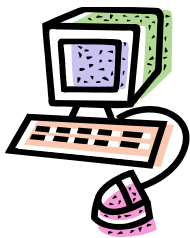
*Tom also teaches weekly classes in Boerne and Kerrville. See his website: [www.thehillcountrygardener.com](http://www.thehillcountrygardener.com) for a complete schedule.*

### Ron Csehil February Class

Thurs, Feb. 25 "Water Friendly Gardening with Colorful Perennials". 6:30p. O'Connor HS. 397-8100 or [www.nisd.net/ace](http://www.nisd.net/ace)

*Plus, learn about "A Time for Roses" from San Antonio Rose Society President **Ed Bradley** Tuesday, Feb. 9 at Clark High School. 397-8100 or [www.nisd.net/ace](http://www.nisd.net/ace). The Rose Society will also be offering rose pruning demonstrations in the Botanical Garden Rose Garden Saturday, Feb. 20 from 9a-12n and again on Tuesday, Feb. 23. Bring tools and gloves.*

**Harriet Aristeguieta** at the Annual Meeting



Thanks to You~

## 2010 Volunteer Census a Success!

We are starting the new year with 92 volunteers. And since then, we've added a few more.

If you were not able to attend the Annual Meeting, we will connect you with your Volunteer Directory and Discount ID Card soon. If you ordered a plastic, pin-on or magnetic name badge, you can pick it up at the February 22 Essentials class, or the next few events you work.

If you still do not have one of the freebie, laminated lanyard nametags--we're working on them.

You can order a plastic (pin-on or magnetic) name badge at anytime. Just mail a check for \$8.00 (pin-on) or \$9.00 (magnetic) to:

GVST  
6338 N. New Braunfels Ave. #252  
SA, TX 78209

...or pay at any Essentials class. Sorry, no CODs.

--Anne Schiller

## Spring Garden Trivia Quiz

Found this online when digging through the archives of the Travis County Master Gardener newsletters "The Compost Bin". Compiled by TCMG Rebecca Matthews.

1. On the first day of spring, the hours of daylight and of darkness are equal. T or F?
2. During the vernal equinox, around March 21, an egg will stand on its small end. T or F?
3. The ancient Greeks celebrated Mother's Day in spring. T or F?
4. Finding a 4-leaf clover is thought to bring good luck. T or F?
5. The area along the California-Oregon border is known as the "Easter Lily of the World." T or F?
6. Baby birds must learn how to sing. T or F?
7. Arbor Day, which encourages the planting of trees and celebrates the role trees play in the environment, is traditionally celebrated on the last Monday in April. T or F?
8. Spring fever is a real physical condition. T or F?
9. An emerald represents spring. T or F?
10. William Wordsworth wrote a famous poem about daffodils. T or F?

### ANSWERS

- 1) True. Around March 21, the earth's position in its orbit around the sun. This time period is called the "vernal equinox" and is the first day of spring in the Northern Hemisphere. "Vernal means spring and "equinox" means equal.
- 2) False. Although some people would swear that an egg will stand on its small end during the vernal equinox, there's no scientific evidence to support these claims.
- 3) True. The ancient Greeks celebrated Rhea, "Mother of the Gods", with honey-cakes, beverages, and flowers at dawn--the earliest known Mother's Day celebration.
- 4) True. Four-leaf clovers are thought to bring good luck, but there's no scientific evidence to support that claim.
- 5) True. An area along the California and Oregon border produces 95% of all bulbs grown in the world for the potted Easter lily market. They produce more than 11 million bulbs annually.
- 6) True. Though baby birds are born with the ability to sing, they must learn the songs of their species. An isolated baby bird will learn simple songs, but not the complex songs of its species. A bird must hear in order to learn. Only a few birds can sing the songs of other species. The mockingbird seems to be the best at imitating the songs of other birds.



- 7) True. Arbor Day is traditionally celebrated on the last Monday in April; however, each state can select its own date, depending on weather conditions. The first Arbor Day Celebration was held on April 10, 1872 in Nebraska.
- 8) True. Spring Fever is a real physical condition which commonly occurs when a sudden warm spell follows a long cold period. When the temperature rises, the body has to get rid of heat; thus there's a dilation or expansion of the blood vessels so that blood can be carried to the body surface where heat can be lost quickly. Some people experience an energetic feeling when this change happens due to the body's reaction to the great amount of internal work going on.
- 9) True. An emerald represents spring, rebirth, hope, peace and tranquility.
- 10) True. William Wordsworth wrote the poem, "I Wandered Lonely As a Cloud", which was about yellow daffodils.



## Welcome New Volunteers~

**Linda Tarin**  
7219 Grass Valley  
SA, TX 78238  
(210) 725-8964

*Linda is president of the Forest Oaks Garden Club.*

**W. Jean Johnson**  
6031 Walking Gait Dr.  
SA, TX 79240  
(210) 543-1005  
[satjean@earthlink.net](mailto:satjean@earthlink.net)

*Jean is program chairman of the Forest Oaks Garden Club and a three-time winner of the Leon Valley "Yard Beautification Award".*

**Bill LaVergne**  
11511 Elijah Stapp  
SA, TX 78253  
(210) 621-8815  
[bill.lavergne@gmail.com](mailto:bill.lavergne@gmail.com)

*Bill is in industrial sales with Egglehof, Inc. and is interested in trees and landscaping with native plants.*

**Kathleen Curry**  
106 Five Oaks Dr.  
SA, TX 78209  
(210) 822-4270  
[kcurry@gmail.com](mailto:kcurry@gmail.com)

*Kathleen is interested in learning more about organic vegetable gardening.*

# September Gardening Calendar

Compiled by Dr. Tom Harris

[www.TheHillCountryGardener.com](http://www.TheHillCountryGardener.com)

## Color

- Mid-February is rose-pruning time (Valentine's Day—remember?) Leave 4-5 pencil-width stems arranged around an open center. Reduce height to approximately 36 inches. Begin your insecticide and fungicide weekly sprays if your roses are prone to black spots and bugs. Fertilize with rose food or slow-release lawn fertilizer.
- Do not cut back the daffodils until the leaves turn brown. It doesn't matter with tulips; they are an annual in the San Antonio area.
- Divide summer-, fall-blooming perennials, including cannas, mallows, fall asters, mums, coneflowers, and perennial salvias before growth begins.

## Fruits and Nuts

- Pruning is the key activity for fruit trees. The trees need to be opened up to allow sun, air, and pesticides to penetrate. Use thinning cuts (whole branch) rather than hedging cuts (mid-branch)...peaches and plums to an open vase shape, apples and pears to a modified central leader shape.

## Ornamentals

- Fertilize winter bedding plants such as pansies, snapdragons, calendulas, dianthus with a slow-release lawn fertilizer at the rate of 1 pound per 10 square feet of bed area.

## Shade Trees and Shrubs

- February is the ideal time to fertilize healthy trees. A simple calculation is based on trunk diameter - use one pound of a high nitrogen fertilizer (slow-release type such as 19-5-9) per inch diameter of tree trunk. Spread the fertilizer evenly throughout under the drip zone of the tree. Fertilize evergreen trees, such as live oak, at the rate of 1-3 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of root area. Fertilize deciduous trees (oaks, cypress) at the rate of 6-8 pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet.
- This is a good month to plant trees and shrubs. Fall and winter are better, but February still gives the root systems time to become established before the stress of summer sets in. Dig the hole as deep as the container and 2-3 times as wide. Add back the native soil and cover with 3 inches of mulch leaving a 6" clearance around the trunk. Consider cedar elm, Chinese pistache, bur oaks, Montezuma cypress, Arizona cypress, Monterrey oak, and desert willow for planting. Water deeply once per week.
- Prune trees and shrubs this month. Paint wounds larger than ¾ inch on oaks.
- Use oak leaves for mulch in the gardens or add them to the compost pile.
- Use Bt to control caterpillars on mountain laurel.

- Remove browned tissues from Asian jasmine, liriope and mondo grass. Reshape lanky nandinas by pruning the tallest one-third of canes back to within 2 inches of the ground. New shoots will fill in from beneath.
- Wait for a time period that will ensure temperatures above freezing for at least 48 hours to apply a dormant oil spray to euonymus, hollies, oaks, pines, pecans, and fruit trees which are prone to scale. To prevent damage, cover any actively growing flowering annuals or overseeded lawn areas to avoid contact with the dormant oil spray. Follow label directions carefully to ensure good results without damage.

## Turf Grass

- There is a lot to do for your lawn, but fertilizing is not one of them. Wait until April or May. Don't use weed-and-feed products. All that is growing now is the weeds and there is no need to fertilize them, is there? Grass is still dormant. Don't waste water and fertilizer. You can, however, still aerate and top-dress. Spring weather and fall fertilization determine when grass greens up in the spring, not excessive watering or spring fertilization.
- This is a good month to apply pre-emergent herbicides to prevent warm weather weeds.
- "Scalp" the lawn late in the month to remove winter-killed stubble. Set the mower down one or two notches.
- Apply broadleaf weed killer on warm days to eliminate henbit, chickweed, dandelions, clover and non-grassy weeds.

## Vegetables

- "Pot-up" your tomatoes and peppers into 1-gallon pots to maximize growth before stable weather arrives. For tomatoes, the "hot" named tomatoes do well in this area. Move the plants into cover if cold weather is predicted. Plant the potted-up plants in April.
- Plant radishes, spinach, beets, carrots, and onion sets this month.
- Perk up your garden with the addition of rotted manure or compost. Two to four inches spread over the surface and tilled to a depth of 8-12 inches will improve the spring garden.
- February is the month to begin spring gardens with crops such as asparagus, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower (transplants only), Swiss chard, collards, kohlrabi, lettuce (leafy), mustard, Irish potatoes, radish, and turnip. Use disease-free transplants of recommended short-day onion varieties such as 1015Y, Granex (Vidalia) and Grano. Onion transplants can be mail-ordered from <http://dixondalefarms.com> if plants cannot be found in local nurseries. Use a pre-planting application of a slow-release fertilizer at the rate of 2-3 pounds per 100 square feet of planting area.

## 2010: What's In, What's Out

According to the Gardening Media Group, we are becoming a nation of farmers. Trend spotter Susan McCoy says, "Our relationship with money has changed. Hard work, common sense and are turn to small-town values are causing a shift in priorities from boardrooms to backyards. The rewards of 'growing your own' are boundless". A few observations:

1. Edible gardens are in. Lawns are out.
2. Slow gardening is in. Instant gratification is out.
3. Eco-boosting is in. Chemical-dependent gardens are out.
4. Multi-tasking is in. Single-purpose gardening is out.
5. Perennials and shrubs are in. Divas are out.



**Gardening Volunteers of South Texas**

6338 N. New Braunfels Ave. #252  
San Antonio, Texas 78209

*Last...*

*But Certainly Not Least!*



A note of thanks to all those who have contributed to GVST~ Daylily grower **JoNelle Zagar** spoke to the Essentials of Gardening class in December. **Sarah Smith** of SAS Landscape Designs and **Mark Peterson** of SAWS spoke to the class in January. **Dr. Jerry Parsons** spoke at our Annual Meeting. So many of you have donated your time by preparing hospitality refreshments and door prizes. We appreciate all that you do. It has become a real team effort.



Happy Valentine's Day. Visit the Rodeo and Buy Your Sweetie a Tomato Plant!