

■ TOMATOES from page 16

drop. Pinhole sized black dots appear in the center of the spots as they mature, and splashing water, insects and wind can spread the fungal spores that ooze from these dots.

To avoid spreading fungus and blight, space tomatoes three feet apart when planting, water in the morning when plants can dry easily, and avoid overhead watering. Water at the plants' root surface or irrigate by soaker-hose buried under ground. Remove infected leaves and wash hands before touching other plants. Mulch with black plastic to avoid the fungus from splashing from the soil to the lower leaves.

In future years do not plant tomatoes, eggplant, potatoes, vine crops, strawberries, or raspberries in the same area for four years. Remove all tomato or potato debris in the fall. Do not compost infected plants, but dispose of them in the trash.

CSU extension lists fungicides such as Chlorothalonil (Daconil2787, Ortho Multi-purpose fungicide) and EBDC (such as Mancozeb and Maneb) as effective if used at the first sign of spotting on the lower leaves. When the disease yellows the leaves, the fungicides lose effectiveness. These fungicides require protective clothing such as rubber gloves, long sleeved shirts, and pants. They are toxic to aquatic life and should not be used near wetlands, lakes, ponds, or streams.

Aphids: Aphid damage is usually minimal on tomatoes, and can often be ignored. The tiny winged black, green, or rosy insects can cause leaf yellowing and leave behind a sticky trail called honeydew. If problematic, a strong spray of water will flush them off, or use insecticidal soap.

Blossom end rot: A brownish, leathery spot on the blossom end of a tomato is not uncommon on the first tomatoes of the year. Temperature fluctuations

in spring can cause a calcium deficiency that leads to rotting on the blossom-end of the fruit. Watering, fertilizing properly, mulching (to lessen the effects of temperature fluctuations), and keeping moisture even can reduce blossom end rot. Later tomatoes often do not have it.

Birds: Birds peck large gashes into the nearly ripe tomatoes. I suspect the magpies (Curses! Yet, who can blame them?). Draping your plants with bird netting can reserve your tomatoes for you.

Fertilize: Fertilize lightly when fruits are two inches in diameter, and once a month thereafter. Over-use of fertilizer can cause lots of vine growth at the expense of fruit development. Use no more than one level tablespoon of dry granular fertilizer per plant, per month. Sprinkle it in a wide circle 12-20 inches out from the plant, then water it in. Alternatively, spray with a fish emulsion solution every two weeks.

The best defense against pests and disease is to nurture a healthy plant. Injured plants attract disease and insects. By planting in good soil, watering regularly, rotating crops, mulching, and fertilizing appropriately you give your tomatoes an edge against many problems.

For Healthy tomatoes:

- Choose disease resistant tomato varieties (look for VFN, TSWV or INSV on the label.)
- Space plants 3 feet apart
- Check plants often for disease or pests
- Plant tomatoes in a different place each year
- Improve your soil at planting time
- Mulch
- Avoid overhead watering
- Keep tomatoes weed-free

Colorado's first all-female bike ride to benefit Greenhouse Scholars.

by Caitlin Dean
The Lyons Recorder

Venus de Miles, Colorado's first all-female bike ride will be held on August 17, beginning and ending in Prospect Park/Prospect New Town in Longmont, which will also be the site of the community picnic after the ride. Riders will have two courses to choose from taking. A 35-mile route will coil through the rural towns of Longmont, Hygiene, and Niwot, and if riders wish for a more challenging route they can take the 65-mile course through Lyons and Jamestown.

Creator and organizer, Teresa Robbins, created the milestone ride in order to capture the same camaraderie that she felt in previous rides. "I moved from the Bay Area and was used to participating in the Cinderella Classic that raised money for charity," remarked Robbins. "I was impressed by the sisterhood,

charity, and community of the ride."

Robbins goes on to explain that she feels there are two things that make a bike ride successful; the organization, and the charity it supports. She is drawn especially to woman-specific events because of the sisterly connection she feels when riding in them. The feeling of sisterhood, and the charity are the reasons she decided to found the Venus de Miles. "I was surprised that Colorado didn't have a woman's ride until now, and I wanted to organize one, but I didn't have the charity or the means just yet," explained Robbins.

Robbins found her charity when she volunteered to help at a summer symposium for Greenhouse Scholars, the non-profit affiliate of Greenhouse Partners. "I joined Greenhouse Partners in October of 2006 because of their affiliation with the non-profit Greenhouse Scholars," said Robbins.

Demolition Derby!
Friday, August 1
 The smashing starts at 6:30 pm - Boulder County Fair
 Adults \$15, 10 years old & under \$8, Pit passes \$25
 Full Fair Events Schedules at www.BoulderCountyFair.org
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 Smashing Cars
 Rising Stars
 Steel Guitars

Carnival!
August 1- August 9
 Opens 4:00 pm on weekdays,
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 Full Fair Events Schedules at www.BoulderCountyFair.org
 Tickets onsite, at King Soopers & TicketsWest.com
PLUS 150 FREE EVENTS!
 Smashing Cars
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 Steel Guitars

"I want to raise awareness about Greenhouse Scholars, to have riders connect with the cause and the scholars," said Robbins. "The scholars will be on the course handing out waters, helping with registration, and cheering on the riders. I want people from the beginning of the ride to get excited about what we're doing. Meeting the kids and connected to their

stories is important." Greenhouse Scholars creates leaders in the community, not only by offering financial assistance, but peer-to-peer assistance and mentor programs for high-performing under-resourced students. "When I volunteered at the symposium, I really identified with the kids," commented Robbins. "Their stories are a lot like mine, and what

they bring to the table is amazing. They are really smart kids." After realizing that she had found her charity for her perfect bike ride, Robbins approached the CEO of Greenhouse Partners, and was immediately given the green light. Using the company's resources really helped Robbins

REAL ESTATE

■ RIDE from page 17



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gain momentum, and assured that she could accomplish her goals the way she desired. Greenhouse Partners help with volunteer hours and manpower, as well as helping to organize the event. "Very few events have the opportunity to work with experts in the fields of marketing and branding, so this was a great opportunity for us," explained Robbins.

Approximately 12 scholars are enrolled in the program each year, this year there are 15 new students in addition to the 37 students currently enrolled. The participating students are enrolled in undergraduate programs, in colleges and universities all over the U.S. including; Stanford University in California, Georgetown University in Washington D.C., Columbia University in New York, and Dartmouth College in New Hampshire.

So far, 211 bike riders are registered and Robbins expects there to be a final count of around 500. "That's a good number for the first year and we want to keep growing," said Robbins. And with the support of many well qualified sponsors such as Born Fit, El Dorado Natural Spring Water, LUNASport, Mix 1, Niwot Cycles, Odwalla, Pridemark, Skirt Sports, StormLab, Sullivan Photography, Oskar Blues, TONIC PR, Wheat Ridge Cyclery, and Zeal Optics, future success seems likely.

Robbins hopes that the community will embrace Greenhouse Scholars in the same way she has. "My goal is to really have the Lyons community embrace this by being on the course cheering the riders on, or volunteering at the ride," said Robbins. "We really want to get the community involved."

Venus de Miles is looking for volunteers of both genders to help with everything from refilling water bottles to spreading the word about the cause, to volunteer e-mail Carrie Thigpen at carrie@venusdemiles.com. You can also contribute by donating funds through www.schoolfunder.com, or sign up to be a sponsor. For more information about becoming a sponsor, email Lauren Maynard, lauren@venusdemiles.com. Venus de Miles has currently raised around \$18,000 for Greenhouse Scholars and they hope to raise around \$10,000 more.

For more information about the ride, go to the website www.venusdemiles.com or contact Teresa Robbins at Teresa@venusdemiles.com or (303) 460-1745.