

MARYJANES FARM®

Sister Issue

May 2013

With some
added pluck,

we came up with this easy way to click (er, cluck) your way back to the farm in between magazine issues. As with any nesting hen, we prefer to accomplish our work with regularity. That's why, if you're an official member of **MaryJane's Farmgirl Sisterhood**, our Sister Issue (formerly **MaryJane's CLUCK**) will be showing up in your e-mail box on the first day of every month (well, except for January, because we head henchos take a much-needed break every December). With a cluck-cluck here and a click-click there, we're here for you just when you need a sisterly cyber hug the most. Let the braggin' (er, clucking) begin!

Life made us
FRIENDS,
MaryJanesFarm
made us
SISTERS



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{ just a click away! }



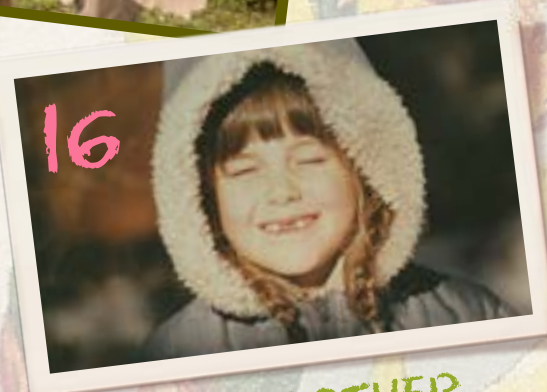
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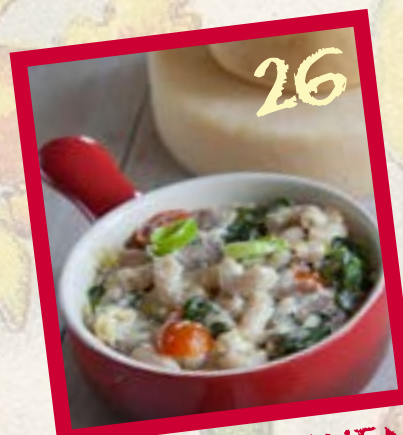
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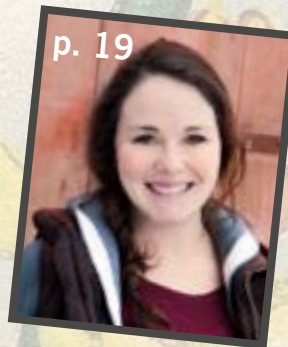
{ staff picks ... only a click away! }

What girl doesn't love to shop, even if all you can afford is some window shopping? In this and future issues, we're treating ourselves and our readers to the things we love most. Come shop with us! Our favorites are only a click away.



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MaryJane



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Molly



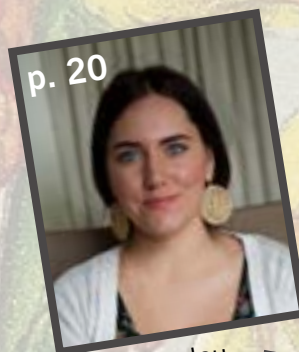
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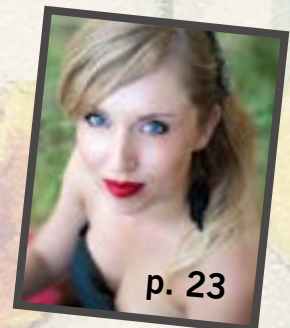
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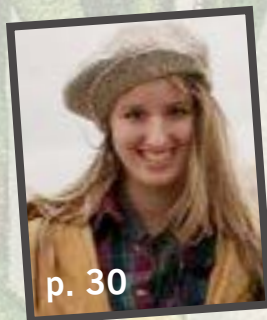
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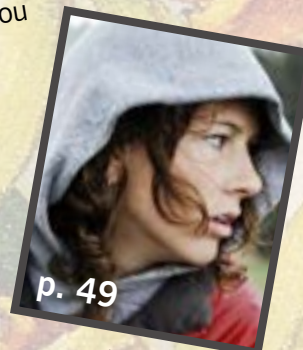
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Kim

Hello from Sister #1



The Power of a Smile

I've felt it, and I know you have, too. The power of a complete stranger to transform your reality using nothing more than a simple smile.

When it happens, it's completely unexpected. You're momentarily taken aback. Who was that? Do I know her? You flash a smile back. Did I reciprocate in time? Did she see it?

You're suddenly giddy, picking out targets left and right, bestowing friendly grins far and wide—paying it forward. I'll smile at him ... and her—not too much, eyes slightly lowered. I don't want anyone thinking I'm strange. Oh, and him! You're a veritable Santa Claus, giving cheer out of the goodness of your heart, for no other reason than it was given to you.

You feel centered and alive. Boundlessly kind. Renewed with purpose and vigor for the day. And, strangely ... powerful and FREE.

Why is it that something so seemingly meaningless as a stranger's smile can restore our sense of control in an otherwise chaotic and dizzying world?

Well, unsurprisingly, I have a theory.


We go around in little independent bubbles, all day long, all week long, all year long, taking care of business and just trying to scrape by. But after a while of doing just enough, we miss the everyday kind of human connections that fuel us. 'Course, we don't really perceive that's what's wrong with us.

All we know is that life's taken on a gray and mediocre form lately. We've become vulnerable, pessimistic, fault-finding, and blame-placing. Our troubles hit us harder. The headlines make us worry. We go looking for bad news, and pass it on. When the weather forecaster says the weather's going to be "bad," we feel inexplicably overwhelmed and darn near ready to burst into tears. Then we shrug our shoulders and say something sarcastic like, "It figures!" We hurry to work and make sure to tell all our co-workers that another bad storm is on its way.

Then out of nowhere, somebody smiles. A smile—the universal sign for love, trust, generosity, friendliness, and anything and everything that's right in this world. And it's not just any somebody—it's a somebody who doesn't know you. It's a somebody who's taking a chance on you. A somebody who trusts, without a guarantee or even a hint, that you're good, honest, and worth the time and effort. And furthermore, that you deserve to know. Imagine that.



"Beautiful Wear" by
magnoliapearl.com



The invisible bucket in your soul labeled “personal connections,” the one that took so long to empty, is suddenly full—no—spilling over. The joy makes your face flush and your neck prickle. Despite the hurt and the skepticism we carry around with us, our walls are down in a flash. Our perspective has shifted. Maybe we can tackle the day, we think. Maybe we can do the things we’ve always wanted to do.

We feel good. And because we are good, we want everyone else to feel that way, too, and we pass it on. Imagine all the lost souls who’ve been put back on their paths because of a smile. Imagine the domino effect of thousands of lives catapulting to better choices and more happiness.

I recently watched the movie *Thirteen Conversations About One Thing*. The film pulled together the seemingly separate lives of a group of strangers, all of them seeking happiness. In the struggle to hold onto success, power, independence, and the requisite 18 inches of personal space, they’d become resentful of others, disconnected from the world, and anything but happy. I won’t spoil the plot for you, but I will tell you that it reinforces what we’ve secretly known all along: we’re never really alone. We’re all in this together. Isn’t that what really makes us happy?

Life’s little bumps and knocks never quite go away. But you know, sometimes the weather forecaster is wrong. Sometimes, when we’re not expecting it, someone turns on the sun.

Mary Jane 



Sister Loves

{ our favorites ... just a click away! }

Mary Jane's PICKS



CEO (QUEEN BEE)
(SISTER #1)

I love it how when you're in the mood for some sort of change in your life, the change drops out of the sky. When I found out that the amazing **Magnolia Pearl ranch** was up for sale, I put a slide show of it up on my blog. About a week later, John Gray, Robin's partner called to thank me. (John and Robin are the master minds behind **Magnolia Pearl**). A few days later, a gift of clothing showed up on my doorstep. To say I am smitten is an understatement. Stay tuned for a feature in a future issue of my magazine.





Sister Loves

{ our favorites ... just a click away! }

Carol's
PICKS
(JUST A CLICK AWAY)



GRAPHIC DESIGNER,
UKULELE ENTHUSIAST
(SISTER #3)

While doing a little research for the magazine, I ran across the three utterly modern crocheted art pieces from Carolina Ponte at the Now Contemporary Art Gallery (www.nowcontemporaryart.com) in Miami that you see at the top. Now there's a new take on Grandma's favorite pastime! A little further searching brought up these other stunning examples of modern artistic crochet. Let your imagination be your guide!



LUSH UPTOWN

BY *erin* michael

**BACK
BY POPULAR
DEMAND**

ARRIVING JULY
2013

moda



modafabrics.com



MaryJane's Home is now available at:



Home sweet home!

BON-TON *Boston Store*

Carson Pirie Scott *Elder-Beerman*

Herberger's *Younkers* *Bergner's*

Exclusively sold in Canada at

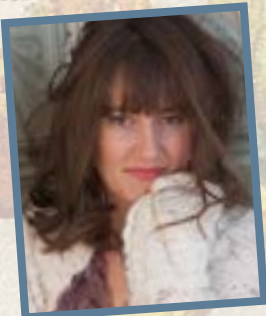
Sears

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Sister Loves

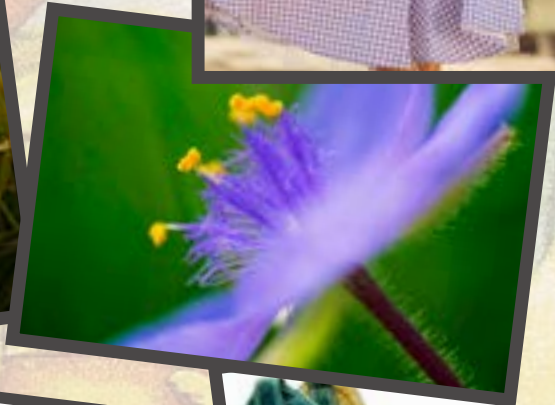
{ our favorites ... just a click away! }

Megan's
PICKS
(JUST A CLICK AWAY)



STAFF WRITER / EDITOR
(SISTER #2)

A few of our sisters are kicking off their summer travel with a trip to Kansas. So we can all live vicariously during the Farmgirls on the Loose "There's No Place Like Home" Campout, here are a few of my favs from Kansas and maybe a Kansas-style glamping get-up, too.





Big welcome to our new and renewing Sisterhood members!

Wandasue Aldridge
Kathy Allaway
Roksanna Anderson
Shirley Andrews
Cassie Angle
Kristi Anne Christensen
CJ Armstrong
Robin Armstrong Miller
Pat Attaway
Loretta Barnes
Kathy Barnes
Annie Barnes
Karen L. Bates
Kay Baucom
Sandra Berard
Mary Berry
Paula Black
Merrilyn Blackmore
Diana Boles
Elizabeth Bollen
Gail Boo
Judith Bradley
Joyce Bradney
Marnie Broady
Faye Brown
Marie Bucher
E. Christiane Buck
Tamara Burger

Christina Butterworth
Kathryn Cartier
Heather Chappell Samland
Sally Cherry
Amanda Childress
Janis Comstock-Jones
Sharon Conrad
Clary Cooke Newcomb
Linda Crain
Victoria Crawford
Jackie Crockett-Ruholl
Sandy Crowe
Tammy Cummings
Sue Dalos
Polly Damon
Sarah Daniels
Rachel Deberdt
Brooklyn Declusin
Twyla Dill
Laurie Dimino
Sheena Dorak
Maureen Duden
Mary Duffel
Denise Dugan
La Verne Duncan
Jane E. Ruth
Judy Fairheart
Denise Edwards
Nancy Edwards

Melissa Eloie
Carol Farrell
Terry Fest
Deb Fischer
Michelle Foster
Christine Frazzini
Linda Freeland
Holly Gardener
Cori Garland
Vicki Garrett
Deb Gaskill
Felicia Genovese
Jane Ghotlos
Linda Gillespie
Kim Gilstrap
Michele Glauber
Denise Godwin
Amanda Godwin
Colleen Gotori
Carol Grant
Rosie Greer
Susanne Griffith
Rene' Groom
Jody Groves
Pat Gstalder
Marsha Gulick
Cherie Hammond
Jolene Hapgood
Deborah Heidel

Stacy Hernandez
Natalie Heyn
Ginny Hillmann
Elizabeth Hillmann
Carrey Hoes
Karen Holderman
Pam Houge
Judith Hovanec
Glenna Huisman
Jennifer Hunter
Rebecca Hunter
Jinks Hunter
Brenda Jacob
Betty Jean Holloway
Cassie Jean McClelland
Valerie Jensen
Mary Jo Scanlan
Janette Jones
Julie Jones
Carolyn Keeler
Margaret Kellogg
Elizabeth Kelly
Hilary King
Jessica Klick
Monica Kovacs
Julie Kram
Lani Kyea
Karen Ladehoff
Sarah Lally

“A true friend
reaches for your hand
and touches your heart.”

— Author Unknown

Christine Lally
 Wendy Lally
 Patricia Laurance
 Tara Layne
 Stephanie Leddon
 Gracie Leinberger
 Vivian Liotta
 Toni Lipp
 Kimberly Lofgren
 Mary Lu McManus
 Rose Lynn
 Donna Manner
 Trish Martin
 Shawna Matos
 Diana McAnal
 Lynette McCutcheon
 Jacki McGinnity
 Kathleen McIntyre Wiley
 Sandra McKinnon
 Sheila McLaughlin
 Sherry Medley
 Vicki Meeds
 Carrie Williams
 Laura Menard
 Linda Mericle
 Nancy Messino
 Deborah Meyer
 Ruth Meyer
 Rebecca Meyers
 Glenda Michaud
 Noelle Miller
 Tiricia Millix
 Shauna Milton
 Sarah Minihan
 Carolyn Missiuna
 Tiris Mjelde
 Georgiaberby Mobley

Libby Morris
 Ciara Neill
 Michelle Nemnich
 Cynthia Neu
 Jodi O'Dell
 Aimee Packard
 Rhonda Parker
 Michelle Parker
 Lynne Parmenter
 Margaret Parsons
 Crystal Pena
 Roxanna Phelps
 Nicole Philip
 Angela Potter
 Janice Powell
 Penny Precopia
 Susan Price
 Sandra Pronsolino
 Paige Rabalais
 Lynne Ramsey
 Amanda Ramsey
 Peggy Raye
 Angela Rhodes
 Rebecca Riccio
 Dona Robben
 Barbara Roberts
 Janice Rogers
 Tara Ronda
 Emily Rose Yost
 Margo Rudder
 Dawnia Sanborn
 Frances Saoud
 Stephanie Schaefer
 Barbara Schatzley
 Lisa Schiwall
 Karen Schoening
 Erin Scholz

Sharon Schrader
 Jan Scott Garlock
 Lisa Seaman
 Traci Selvidge
 Vickie Shaver
 Jill Shaver
 Sheryl Simpson
 Zoe Siperly
 Ruby Slider
 Alice Smith
 Sharon Smith
 Vera Smith
 Peggy Smith
 Brenda Stachowiak
 Rhiannon Stark
 Linda Stark
 Randa Starnes
 Gloria Stelnicki
 Donna Stone
 Angela Strobel
 Sarah Svendsen
 Margaret Taffi
 Sylvia Talbert
 Dana Taylor
 Cat Terflinger
 Mischell Tong
 Karen Traband
 Jill Trowbridge
 Sarah Tucker
 Paula Tutt
 Dori Umphreys
 Virginia Van Royen
 Sara Velasquez
 Melanie Villarreal
 Kim Ward
 Lynne Ward Wallace
 Trudy Wawak-Umscheid

Terri Wedding
 April West
 Syndee Whiley
 Patti White
 Laci Wilcox
 Anita Wiley
 Jeanette Williams
 Janet Williams
 Jade Williamson
 Christina Williamson
 Sarah Winkelman
 Kathy Wood
 Iris Woodfin
 Cynthia Woolf
 Kathleen Wysocki
 Elna Yochim



Each Other



In the Shelter of Each Other



{EACH OTHER} with Megan Rae | to earn a Sisterhood badge in our {EACH OTHER} category, [CLICK HERE](#)



Megan Rae (Sister #2) grew up “on the farm”—MaryJanesFarm. She attended Gonzaga University and received a bachelor’s degree in Journalism. After marrying her college sweetheart, they moved to Kansas and bought their first home on a cobblestone street. Her love for writing, editing, and well, her Mom, finally brought her back to the farm. Raising her 6-year-old and 3-year-old farmgirls and working alongside her husband, mother, and family is the perfect lifestyle mix for Megan. She rounds it out with travel across the country to visit her five dearest college girlfriends who she loves with all her heart (they’ve all been in each other’s weddings), and one of her favorite farmgirls that she met when she lived in Kansas (scheduled around working the cows, of course).

In honor of my mother, whose 60th birthday is this month ...



Have you ever sat and pondered your childhood? Tried to come up with a list of events that really shaped who you are?

They say the traumatic events are the ones you remember. Or the big events. Or the ones you’ve seen photos of.

Sure enough, I can still picture crystal clear where we stood when my little brother got his legs stuck in a hole in the floor of our old beat-up blue Rambler. I also remember the super-human strength my mother mustered to pull him out. I remember my older brother breaking his ankle, and I was sure he’d seen his end—not because he’d broken a bone, but because he’d cussed so mightily.

Of course, the image of flames billowing from my bedroom window the night we lost our house in a fire is forever etched in my mind. Somehow, my mother got us from our beds and safely into our car so she could go back in to help. The firefighters tried to douse it with water, but it was 10 degrees below zero and soon everything was covered in a layer of ice ... a firefighter slipping on the ice ... finding a dirty pair of socks in our car to warm my feet (even though my mother had asked me to clean the car that day) ... a firefighter pulling a crumpled piece of paper from his pocket for Mom, a random piece of artwork my little brother had taped to his bedroom wall that the firefighter had grabbed before it burned.

But what about all the things I don’t remember from that night or from my childhood? The endless nights my mother sat by me after dinner, helping with homework. Or the countless meals she prepared. Or the non-stop shuttling. Or bedtime snacks and a story when she was bone tired. Or the never-ending parental worry about her children’s safety. Yup, it was all there. But it was not for nothing, because now that I have my own two children, I recognize the importance of all of it. All the pieces in between the memorable memories make a child who they are. So yeah, maybe I’ll take a few more photos because it’s easier nowadays, but I’m hoping I can repeat a good portion of all the little unsung pieces my mother gave me.

Meg



Me at 6 years old on Easter Sunday with my two front teeth missing.



Stella at 6 years old the week before Easter with her two front teeth missing.





Each Other



Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to Be Mamas

{EACH OTHER} with Melyssa Williams | to earn a Sisterhood badge in our {EACH OTHER} category, [CLICK HERE](#)



Melyssa Williams (Sister #161) was a homeschooler back in the day. She spent a perfectly ridiculous amount of time reading and writing, usually in a tree, sometimes with pet chickens. Now she stays out of trees, but still reads and writes. There are three small fry in her house that refer to her as Mom, and keeping in tradition, she puts them in trees with good books. She is the author of the *Shadows* trilogy for Young Adults, and can be reached at www.shadowsgray.com.

Whatever, Mom!



Yesterday I was “whatever-ed” by my teenage daughter. I’m not sure who was more surprised, me or her. I just know an obituary was nearly written when the dreaded response came out of her pursed lips,

“Whatever, Mom.”

I think she may have seen her life flash before her and realized it was far too short, for she turned and nearly sprinted from the room. The girl can really move when she’s motivated by her mother and her mother’s crazy eyes.



I never had the guts to use the word “whatever” with my mom. She sprints a lot faster than I do.

Having now grounded Daughter from every activity other than breathing and eating gruel (haha, just kidding ... sorta, I call it “gruel risotto”), we will probably have oodles of time to talk this episode through. I’m not sure how to start: banning the word from her vocabulary, threats to wear my pajamas in public when I pick her up from school, or a tutorial on how to utilize The Crazy Eyes when she has her own rebellious, ornery offspring. Which she had better. If she gives birth to sweet little princesses who never “whatever” their own mother, then Gramma here is going postal, giving them shot-glasses of sugar, keeping them up past their bedtime, spoiling them rotten ...

Wait.

That’s what MY mother does with her grandchildren! Hang on a minute here. Is she cajoling naughty behavior out of my little angels as retribution for having lived through my rebellious teenage years? Hey, now! I said I never “whatever-ed” her ... I don’t think. Maybe her Crazy Eyes erased my memory, blocked it out?

Ah well. In either case, Little Miss Whatever is being mailed to Grandmother posthaste, and they can bond and ... you know ... work on their sprinting.



Sister Loves

our favorites ... just a click away!

Molly's
PICKS
(JUST A CLICK AWAY)



GRAPHIC DESIGNER
(SISTER #1867)

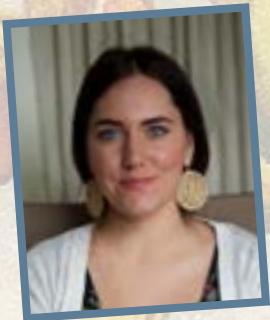
I find inspiration by mixing the vintage, funky, and modern. Take a historic photograph, add a sketchy font, place a green cow on top of it, and you have yourself some uniquely beautiful art. Here are a few of my favorite fonts, colors, photos, printables, and inspirations ...



Sister Loves

{ our favorites ... just a click away! }

Saralou's
PICKS
(JUST A CLICK AWAY)



GRAPHIC DESIGNER
(SISTER #6)

The weather is finally warming up and it's time to bring out your sunglasses and summer boots. Reusable water bottles are the best way to stay hydrated during the warmer months and I love that this has a gorgeous magenta filter! And what girl can do without a feather hair accessory and a pair of gold earrings for spring?



CALENDULA

(*Calendula officinalis*)

NATURAL

ORGANIC



Sunny and familiar, the Calendula blossom is dear to gardeners and herbalists around the world. From the ancient Mayans to medieval European monks, this cheerful herb has provided nutritious food, powerful medicine, and golden fabric dye for ages. A member of the Asteraceae family, the Calendula we grow today is a cultigen of its wild Mediterranean ancestor and has been fashioned through centuries of human preference. Also known as Pot Marigolds, these yellow-orange flowers are greatly valued for their extraordinary anti-inflammatory wound healing and skin rejuvenating abilities.

Traditional Preparations

Calendula can be used as a compress, poultice, extract, or tea. Infusing the dried flowers in oil produces a versatile healing ingredient for creams, lip balms, and other skin formulas.

Herbal Curiosities

Garlands and crowns made with these beautiful and spirited flowers can be found gracing the sacred statues of Hindu gods and goddesses in temples throughout India.

Each Other



Homeschooling with Cathi



{EACH OTHER} with Cathi Belcher | to earn a Sisterhood badge in our {EACH OTHER} category, [CLICK HERE](#)



Cathi Belcher (Sister #1295), who pens our **Mountain Farmgirl Blog**, lives in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. As a "lifelong learner," she fiercely values self-reliance, independence, freedom, and fresh mountain air. She's also a multi-media artist, with an obsession for off-grid living and alternative housing. Cathi is married to her childhood sweetheart, and owns and operates a 32-room mountain lodge.

"Mountains speak to my soul, and farming is an important part of my heritage," says Cathi. "I want to pass on my love of these things to others through my writing."

Home Education:

What About Socialization?

If there is one iconic question that homeschool families get asked, it is this one! Like all homeschoolers, I used to cringe when this inevitable and well-meaning query was posed to me or one of our kids. But over the years, I have come to use it as a way to educate people about what homeschooling actually IS ... and just as importantly, what it is NOT.

So what's my response? It usually goes something like this: "If I had to pick only ONE of the many reasons why we homeschool, this would be #1!" That usually gets their attention right there; they are not expecting that.

If they seem interested, I continue: "We don't like the 'socialization' we generally see in school settings, and almost universally, homeschool students are well-spoken, friendly, outgoing, and inquisitive. They actually stick out from the crowd."

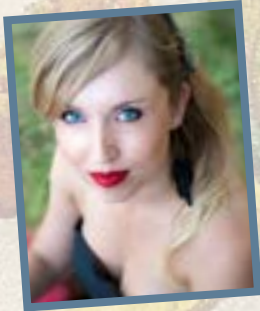
Working from some of the common misinformation of homeschooling, I like to pass on the following:

1. Homeschooling is not isolation. Far from it! Some people may think it is an isolated, "house arrest" type of situation, but in reality, the world is our classroom, and every homeschool family I have ever known has had to make a conscious effort to actually BE home now and then.
2. Homeschooled kids are comfortable interacting with all age groups. Unlike the artificial classroom situation, where grades are comprised of students of almost exactly the same age (and let's face it: where in real life will THAT ever happen again?), homeschooled kids are fluent conversing intelligently and compassionately with everyone from grandparent-aged folks to toddlers. After all, they encounter and interact with them every day.
3. Homeschoolers are fully-functioning members of society. From a young age, most homeschoolers are active members of their communities and beyond, having personal missions to help make the world a better place and concrete working strategies to help make an actual difference.

Fortunately, as the homeschool movement has had time to mature and now has a proven track record of stellar success, public concern over this socialization issue is really a moot point. However, if you are new to homeschooling and find that friends, family, and even strangers are questioning the validity of your decision over the socialization issue, rest assured that although well-meaning, they are just ignorant of the facts. Statistics are overwhelmingly in your favor, making your defense an easy one.

Sister Loves

{ our favorites ... just a click away! }



MULTIMEDIA PRODUCER
(SISTER #42)

With spring finally peeking through the clouds, it's all about glamping. This zinger water bottle will keep you refreshed, while friends ooh and aah over your wanderlust ring. Glamping wouldn't be complete without a flirty dress and a Lotus Belle Tent for the backyard or wherever you choose to travel.



Glamping Greeting Cards

Over tea one morning, my husband and I were talking about our plans for International Glamping Weekend, June 1 & 2, 2013. As I listed all the event descriptions coming in, he said, "Well, you'll know you've arrived when Hallmark offers a card about it."



"Why wait on Hallmark?" I thought. Here are three cards for you to print and send to all your glampin' galfriends. To keep up on what's happening, go to **InternationalGlampingWeekend** and join us for some **Facebook** fun.

Mary Jane ♥



international glamping weekend

5x7 Folded Photo Card

Inside Text:

international glamping weekend
june 1-2, 2013
Campers camp in tents,
glampers glamp in style.
Happy Glamping!

GLAMPERS have s'more FUN ...

5x7 Folded Photo Card

Inside Text:

... on international glamping weekend
june 1-2, 2013
Happy Glamping!

where's the campground at? who's going to tell molly not to bring the preposition? ... grammar queen.

5x7 Folded Photo Card

Inside text:

international glamping weekend
june 1-2, 2013
Happy Glamping!

shabby apple



vintage
clothing
with
quality
& style.



a return
to what
dresses
were
always
meant
to be.



Farm Kitchen

Where the Cookin' Begins!



{ FARM KITCHEN } with Ashely Ogle | to earn a Sisterhood badge in our { FARM KITCHEN } category, [CLICK HERE](#)



Ashley Ogle (Sister #2222) was born and raised in northern Idaho, and has always had an intense interest in anything kitchen. Shortly after marrying MaryJane's son, Brian, at the historic one-room schoolhouse his grandfather attended, Brian and Ashley moved back to the farm and began renovating the 1890 farmhouse that both Brian and his grandmother grew up in. And in keeping with tradition, they've begun to raise a family in the same house—their daughter is now 3 and another baby is on the way.

Ashley works at MaryJanesFarm as a recipe developer/food stylist, and now spends each day inventing and preparing the delicious food you see in our magazines, books, and websites.

Spinach & Leek Macaroni & Cheese

Macaroni and cheese seems to be universally recognized as a vital staple in every kid's diet. Without fail, if I ask my daughter what we should have for dinner, she will reply "mac and cheese." In an effort to break up the monotony and add a little flavor to her favorite dish, I have started to introduce different ingredients, and whatever I add is acceptable as long as it comes with a healthy serving of pasta and cheese. I really know I have a winner when she takes her first bite and finishes with an enthusiastic "mmmm!"

Prep Time: 25 minutes

Cook Time: 1 hour

Makes: 6–8 servings

8 ozs brown rice macaroni
(about 2 cups dry macaroni)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb sweet Italian sausage
4 cups spinach, coarsely diced
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup feta
1 T butter
1 leek, thinly sliced and rinsed

2 t dry mustard
 $\frac{3}{4}$ t salt
 $\frac{1}{4}$ t pepper
2 cups cream
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole milk
2 cups shredded Asiago cheese
2 cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese

1. Bring a pot of water to a boil and cook macaroni until al dente. Drain and pour into an 8" square casserole dish.
2. Cook and slice sausage and mix into macaroni, along with spinach, tomatoes, and feta. Set aside.
3. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Add leek and cook for about 3 minutes. Add dry mustard, salt, pepper, cream, and milk. Bring to a low boil, reduce heat to low, and simmer until cream is slightly thickened and reduced (about 8 minutes).
3. Preheat oven to 350°F.
4. In a medium bowl, combine cheeses. Slowly add cheese to the cream mixture; stirring frequently. Reserve about 1 cup for the topping.
5. Pour the sauce into the dish with the macaroni and stir. Top with reserved cheese and bake for 25–30 minutes, or until cheese is golden brown.



gluten-free!



Garden Gate

Bloom Where You're Planted



{GARDEN GATE} with MaryJanesFarm | to earn a Sisterhood badge in our {GARDEN GATE} category, [CLICK HERE](#)

Drying Food

Soon, we'll be heading into the height of harvest time, and gardens and farmers' markets everywhere will be overflowing with the bounty of the season. At this point, there's always the question of what to do with all of this fresh, fabulous food. There is only so much you can eat, right? Once you've completed a marathon of canning, you probably don't want to see another boiling water bath or glass Mason jar until next year. And freezing, while simple enough to accomplish, requires a lot of space and energy, and it leaves you with limited options for later preparation. So, how else can you preserve those rapidly ripening tomatoes, herbs, berries, and zucchini? That's easy. One of the oldest food preservation techniques is still one of the best: drying. Dried foods not only store well throughout the year ahead, they're also versatile and positively delicious. So, in the words of master food dehydrator Gen MacManiman, "Dry it—you'll like it!"

Back in 1980, when I was seeking healthy snacks for my babies, I bought a food dehydrator designed by Gen MacManiman, an herbalist in Fall City, Washington. The rest, as they say, is history. I've been drying my own food ever since.

Getting Started

Buying the right dehydrator is key to a foolproof startup in food drying. Our ancestors relied on wind and sun to dehydrate their harvests, but most of us are working on super tight schedules these days, and it can be tough to time food preservation with the whims of weather. A good electric dehydrator is virtually trouble-free, allowing you to load it up in the morning before work and safely let it run all day with sure-fire results. I am a forever fan of Gen MacManiman's dehydrators (available at www.dryit.com). The one I bought over 20 years ago is still in production, along with an assortment of her other countertop and commercial driers.





I love them because they're simple, solidly (and attractively) constructed from wood, and they continue to work year after year. AND (this is a biggy with me), they don't rely on a noisy fan that in my opinion sucks in dust to deposit in on your food. Plus, who needs more background noise in their lives? Yes, you can buy cheaper machines, but they're more likely to disappoint. One of Gen's models will likely pay for itself during the first year, providing you with food reserves that are tastier and much more economical than store bought.

If your ultimate goal is more along the lines of grid-less living, you might want to try making your own off-the-grid solar dehydrator (for plans and photos, search "Build a Solar Dehydrator" at www.rootssimple.com).

Five Food Drying Basics

1. Whether you're working with produce from your own garden or buying from your local farmers' market, remember to select the cream of the crop. Look for ripe, firm, unblemished fruits and veggies of the same quality that you would choose for fresh preparation.
2. As a general rule, the weight of food will be reduced by a factor of nine after drying. For example, nine pounds of fresh produce yields about one pound when dry, depending on the weight loss from discarded peels, stones, and stems.
3. For easy access after dehydrating, prepare foods so that they'll be ready for snacking and serving straight from storage. Wash first, then peel if desired, slice, or try pureeing to make chewy fruit leather. Thin, uniform slices that are about 1/8- to 1/4-inch thick will dry quicker and more evenly than thick pieces.
4. To ensure even moisture content throughout your food (particularly fruit), it's helpful to "condition" the pieces before storing. After dehydrating, cool the food completely on the tray, then place in a roomy closed container that will be kept in a warm, dry location for seven to 10 days. Stir or shake the container once daily so the moisture will distribute evenly. Conditioning also helps reduce the risk of mold growth. (Note: If condensation develops in the jar, there is too much moisture in the food. Return the fruit to the dehydrator for additional drying time.)
5. Package dehydrated foods tightly in sealed containers. Try using containers that store meal- or snack-sized amounts to keep each portion as fresh as possible. Store in a cool, dark, dry place. Most dried fruits can be stored for one year at 60 degrees F, and vegetables will keep for six months.

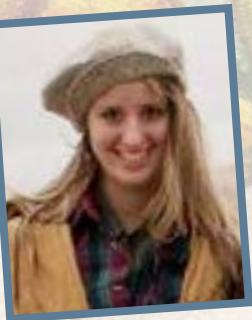
(FYI: Gen MacManiman also offers tips, recipes, and an "everything you need to know" book about drying food on her website).

MaryJane 

Sister Loves

{ our favorites ... just a click away! }

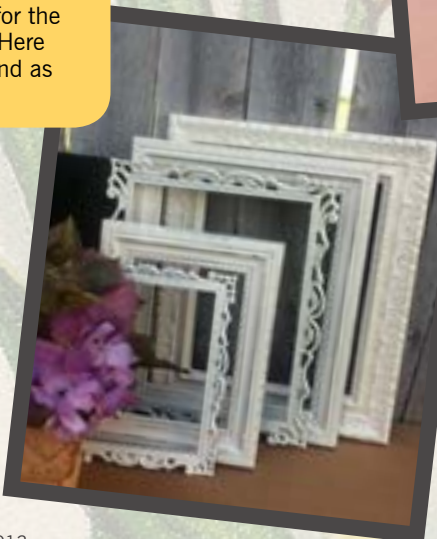
Karina's
PICKS
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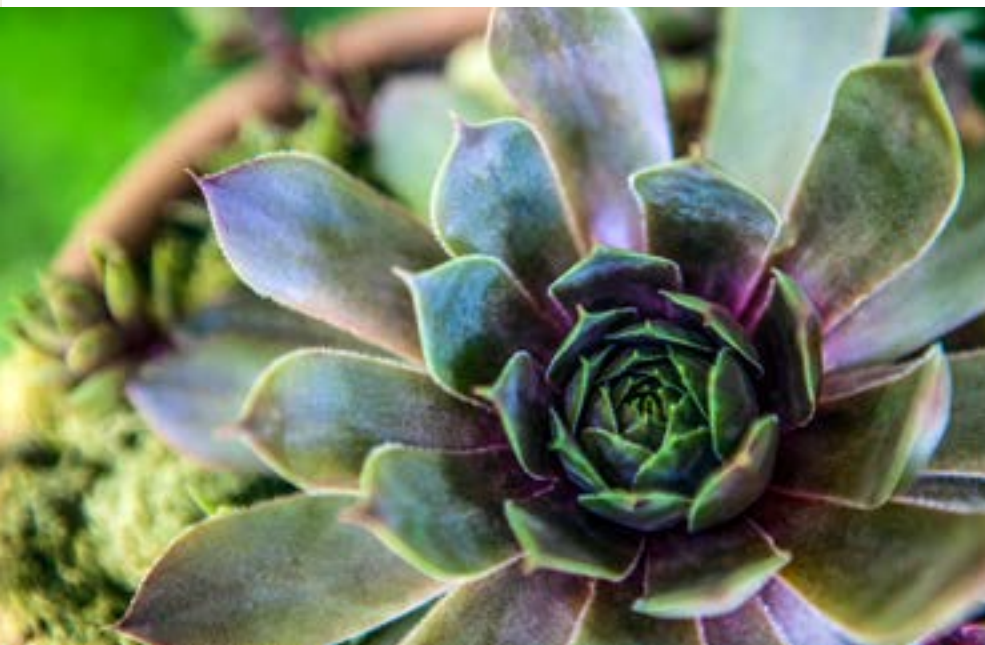
Our finished
save the date!

I'm a small-town girl from Salmon, Idaho. My wedding next August will be outside, surrounded by mountains. I have always loved anything that has vintage inspiration behind it. Now that our save the dates are sent out, I have more time to focus on decorations for the wedding and reception. Here are some fun ideas I found as inspiration.





daily entries fresh from the farm



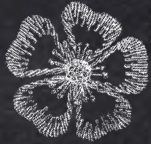
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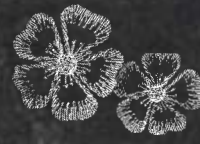
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Stitching & Crafting Room



Stitches of Fun & Laughter!



{STITCHING & CRAFTING} with Rebekka Boysen-Taylor | to earn a Sisterhood badge in this category, [CLICK HERE](#)



Rebekka Boysen-Taylor, (Sister #40) was born in Spokane, Washington, right around the time Mount St. Helens blew her top. She studied Geography at Portland State University and taught grade school in the Bronx and inner-city Los Angeles. She lives with her family on the Palouse. As a stay-at-home mama to two organically growing little ones, Rebekka rounds out her organic lifestyle by volunteering at the Moscow Food Co-op, working as an instructor for MaryJane's Pay Dirt Farm School, embracing a DIY ethic, winning blue ribbons at the county fair, and living simply.

DIY Wallet

I love having a slim wallet to hold my essentials when I run out of the house for a walk or bike ride. A slim wallet has room enough for an ID card, a debit card, and a few dollars cash, but is small enough to tuck into an apron or back pocket. This wallet is made of leather, and if you haven't tried sewing leather before, practice on scraps to get the hang of it—it takes patience, but the result is well worth it.

Start with an 8¼" by 3¼" piece of thin leather, a leather sewing machine needle, and polyester thread. You can purchase leather at a craft store or find an old jacket to repurpose. Cut a small half circle out of the middle of one skinny end. This notch will allow you to remove cards once your wallet is complete. Now fold the leather in half with the notched end about 1" lower than the unnotched skinny end. Using a stitch length of 4, stitch along each side ¼" from the edge, leaving the skinny end open. The extra leather at the top will help you to guide your leather as you sew. You do not need to stitch along the folded end. Finish the wallet by trimming the excess leather and stray threads.

This wallet makes a handy gift for the men in your life, so whip up a few. Father's Day is just around the corner!





Get a daily dose of Farmgirl Romance on my journal, **Raising Jane**, by adding our photo of the day to your RSS feed ... or just pay us a visit first thing every morning!



Make it Easy



Happy Hearts Make Light Work

{MAKE IT EASY} with Shery Jespersen | to earn a Sisterhood badge in our {MAKE IT EASY} category, [CLICK HERE](#)



Shery Jespersen (Sister #753) is a Wyoming cattle rancher who's been horse-crazy all of her life. Shery is a leather and lace cowgirl. Her other interests include "junktiques," creating eclectic "make do" arts and crafts, collecting antique china, and cultivating mirth.

The Farmgirl Glamper Caddy

The glampy fashionista is almost invariably a collector of vintage items that are both kitchy-cute and score a 10 on the utilitarian scale. It isn't enough that glamper goodies are decorative. Oh no, glamper embellishments should be just as useful as they are glamporous. All a girl has to do to acquire a bevy of useful pretties is to look around at an assortment of various vintage objects with farmgirl-colored glasses and glamping on the brain. Pretty soon, you'll see things for what they could be, not necessarily what they might have been.

Case in point: the humble canning-jar holder. There are so many glampy things you can do with this handy little farmgirl kitchen tool!! I'll share a handful of ideas with you. Afterward, I'm betting your imagination will flare and you'll come up with half a dozen more ideas. Vintage canning jar holders are very easy to find, and you can, of course, buy a new one.

Morphing a Canning-jar Holder into a Glamper Caddy

Put a candle holder in the middle jar slot (I used an old feed scoop), then place goblets, glasses, and mugs in the jar sections. This can go right to the table. You can also use a quart jar, fill it halfway with sand, and place a tealight candle in it.



Place a vintage thermos bottle in the middle jar slot. Fill it with a beverage appropriate for the season, and then place canning jars as glasses in the jar sections. Tie a cute label around the thermos along with a fresh cutting of evergreen, bittersweet, or twigs.

Repeat the above idea, except use the thermos as a vase. Place seasonal greens, branches, and/or flowers in it. And, instead of putting glasses in the jar sections, use canning jars



for individual silverware settings. Wrap each fork, knife, and spoon in a bandana or vintage dishtowel as a napkin.

This time, place a quart jar in the middle as a vase. Fill it with whatever arrangement fits the occasion. Place wide-mouth jars in the outer jar sections and fill them with condiments, homemade sauces, salad dressings, etc.

Make a glampy candleabra out of the jar holder by putting a quart jar in the middle slot and filling it half full of sand. Place wide-mouth “squatty,” pint-size canning jars in all of the outer sections. Fill them with sand and then put tealights in all of the jars. Perfect for the middle-of-an-evening picnic table.

Use the same set of jars (quart and wide-mouth pint jars), but this time you’re going to make a marshmallow caddy for a group. Fill each pint jar with large marshmallows (firmly, but not mashed). Place long twigs or kabob spikes in the quart jar. The campfire caddy is ready to go to the fire, and everyone will have their own supply of marshmallows.

Lastly, make a jar of your favorite salad dressing and place it in a canning jar. Then, fill wide-mouth, pint-size jars with pre-made tossed salad. Put them in the jar caddy and keep chilled in the ice chest until serving time. Tie a fork onto each jar if you like. Take the caddy to the table and serve. You can eat salad from the jar or dump it onto a plate.





Irene Wolansky (Sister #1144) is the Marketing Director at Mountain Rose Herbs. Born and raised on the Oregon coast, Irene spent her childhood learning about beekeeping, growing and preserving fruits and vegetables, building forts in the forest, and going on adventures with her dog. She has many interests, which include making her own body care products, mushroom harvesting, gardening, arts and crafts projects, nature photography, mead and beer making, camping, herbal medicine, baking, traveling, hiking, and spending time with her boyfriend and friends. **Click here** to visit Mountain Rose Herbs on the Web.

Springtime Harvest: Stinging Nettle

Nettle (*Urtica* spp.) is one of my all-time favorite herbs. Yep, that weedy plant that stings! This nutritious botanical can be cooked, steamed, baked, pickled, brewed into tea or beer, and it can even be made into hemp-like rope, woven into fabric, and used as a natural dye. Stinging nettle has many medicinal uses, and it contains a host of vitamins and minerals including calcium, iron, potassium, magnesium, silicon, sodium, iodine, manganese, phosphorus, vitamin C, beta-carotene, and B vitamins. In addition, it has high levels of amino acids, chlorophyll, tannins, and is 10% protein (more than any other vegetable).

Spring is the perfect time to harvest the tender, tasty, nutrient-packed tips. Stinging nettle grows wild throughout North America and Canada. They usually grow in the same places every year, so once you find a good stand, you can return to it every year. Look for nettles in rich soil and partially shaded areas, often in moist forests, along rivers, and in disturbed areas. It's



important to harvest the plants from clean and unpolluted areas, and not in industrial or agricultural areas, roadsides, or where pesticides have been sprayed. The plants will absorb heavy metals and other impurities, so harvesting them in an uncontaminated area is of utmost importance. Pick the fresh tender tips in the springtime, before they go to flower. Be careful when handling this plant, it stings! Harvest the top 4–6 inches of the plant safely with a pair of gloves, and make sure to fully cook, boil, or steam the plant before consuming it. If not fully cooked, they may irritate or sting the mouth and throat.

Fresh nettles are so versatile in the kitchen, they have a flavor and consistency similar to spinach when cooked, and can be used in many of the same dishes. They are especially tasty in spanakopita, frittatas, soups, stews, breads, omelets, casseroles, pesto, quiche, and other culinary treats. You can dry or freeze nettles for later use, but one of my favorite



ways to preserve fresh nettles to enjoy year-round is through pickling. The pickled tips can be enjoyed as a tasty treat straight from the jar, or can be added to salads, sandwiches, frittatas, with crackers and cheese, as a fun garnish for hors d'oeuvres, and even atop pizza and baked goods. Once you've finished your jar of pickled nettle tips, the remaining infused vinegar is calcium and mineral rich, and may be incorporated into salad dressings, marinades, stir fries, sautéed vegetables, or even applied as a hair rinse to cleanse and invigorate the hair and scalp.



Pickled Stinging Nettle Tips

Carefully harvest the fresh tender tops of stinging nettle plants. The top 2–4 inches is the best part to use for pickling. Pack into glass Mason jars, and completely cover with white wine vinegar or apple cider vinegar (or experiment with other vinegar types). You can cut the vinegar with 50% water for a less vinegary flavor if you wish. You can even use fermented brine if you'd like. Last year, I pickled nettles with my own fermented kimchee brine and it was delicious! Add peppercorns, peeled garlic cloves, hot peppers, fresh herbs, or any other flavors that you desire. Cap tightly, and refrigerate for 8–12 weeks. Keep the pickled tips stored in the refrigerator where they'll last for years and will be ready whenever you need a green springtime treat!

Nourishing Nettle Infusions

When fresh Nettle tips are not in season or if they're not available in your area, you can still enjoy Nettle's beneficial properties by utilizing the dried leaves. My favorite method of preparing dried Nettles is with a simple herbal infusion. I don't weigh anything, but simply place a handful of dried Nettle in a glass quart jar, pour boiling water on top, cap the jar, and then let them sit overnight. In the morning, strain the mixture, and then drink throughout the day. You can also make an infusion early in the morning to enjoy in the afternoon. It's best to allow the infusion to sit for at least 4–6 hours in order to extract all of the vitamins, minerals, and other herby goodness. Drinking Nettles gives a nice energy boost which is nourishing and tastes delicious. I find myself craving Nettle infusions when sick, run down, tired, stressed out, or simply in need of Nettle's restorative, wholesome, and healthful properties.



continued ...

continued ...

Nettle recipes from the Mountain Rose Blog:

Savory Nettle Chips

Nettle Garlic Buttermilk Biscuits

Make a Garden Frittata

Nettle information:

Wildman Steve Brill, Nettles

Wild Foods & Medicines, Stinging Nettle

Ryan Drum, Three Herbs: Nettles, Horsetail and Mullein

Todd Caldecott, Nettle

Susun Weed, Energize and Enjoy with Nettle

Kiva Rose, The Allies, Stinging Nettle

Jim McDonald, Nettles, Oats and You

Eat the Weeds, Stinging Nettles

Mother Earth News, The Complete Nettle



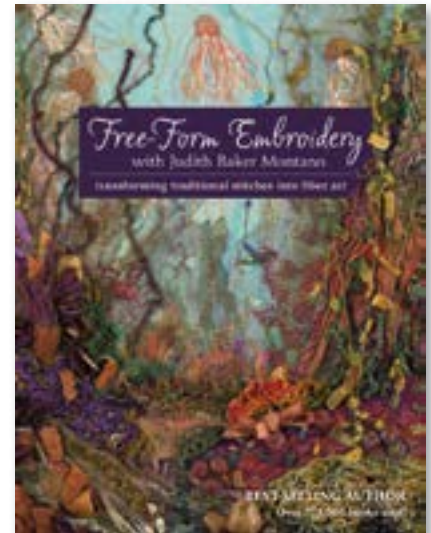
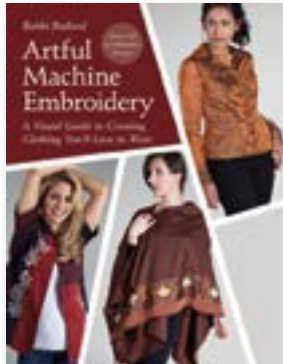
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IN 1997, I took over stewardship of The Barron Flour Mill, a four-story, 116-year-old building on the National Register of Historic Places. Joseph Barron, the third-generation miller who spent his life there milling grains, eventually pioneered the first certified organic flour in the Northwest. I created this easy-to-use organic baking mix in honor of Joseph and all the frugal farm women who served their families wholesome food ... on a budget.

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Outpost

Unleashing Your Inner Wild



{OUTPOST} with Shery Jespersen | to earn a Sisterhood badge in our {OUTPOST} category, [CLICK HERE](#)



Shery Jespersen (Sister #753) is a Wyoming cattle rancher who's been horse-crazy all of her life. Shery is a leather and lace cowgirl. Her other interests include "junktiques," creating eclectic "make do" arts and crafts, collecting antique china, and cultivating mirth.

Glampecycle It

I'm speaking to the glamping-inclined farmgirl who has accumulated or is in the process of collecting a glamer full of Igloo coolers at a secondhand shop, but, dang, the faucet leaks or is plugged. So what! Put a sack in it and call it a garbage can. It has a tight lid when not in use and varmints can't get into it. And, if that weren't enough, use it as a Christmas tree holder or a vase at home ... place a big bunch of sunflowers in it for a summer party. Old galvanized goodies are so "in."

Next, take a square lunchbox and turn it into napkin holder. If you're a "spring chicken" farmgirl, you'll have to rescue a square vintage lunch box while you're out scouting for finds. I happen to be an old hen and I already have one! Anyway, a generous pile of square napkins fits just right inside. I also cut a branch off of a tree so that the twig would prop the lunchbox open. (See photo).



I've collected several pieces of vintage tartan containers and coolers. They aren't just "for cute." I put MaryJanesFarm instant packaged meals in my picnic tin. The various coolers I've collected work for beverages, of course, but they also let me have plenty of ice on hand. In the heat of summer, you can't have too much ice around a glampsite! A chubby gallon cooler makes a glamperific vase for a large bouquet.

Likewise, vintage-patterned thermos bottles make cute vases. A flock of small ones are fun to use as individual mugs for guests. They keep hot things hot and cold things cold. They're inexpensive and easy to find.

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Blankets

Gotta have 'em. Nothing makes an evening at your glampsite more cozy than being wrapped in a woolly blanket or quilt. Secondhand shops are great places to find crocheted afghans, wool stadium blankets, etc. Old cotton mattress pads make good wraps, too. (Hand-stitch vintage crocheted potholders all over one and it will no longer be so plain.) Instead of folding blankets, roll them up and wrap old belts around them. An old belt can also pull dual duty by being used as a garment hanger. Hang the buckle end on a hook and the wire hanger hooks fit snugly into the belt holes. Garments hung vertically take up less room.



Galvanized Washtubs

Can have a hundred and one uses at a glampsite. I use one as a step into my glamp. It doesn't tip over. Of course, you can also wash things in it and store several other things inside of it on the trip to and fro. You can fill it with ice and fill it with beverages, too. Likewise, an old washboard is just as useful while glamping. It makes a kitschy serving platter for all kinds of finger food or a loaf of quick-bread with a side bowl of honey butter.

The Humble Stump

A short tree stump is another item that comes in mighty handy for several things. It, too, can be a step into your glamp, but you might also need it to place your hitch on. Stumps make campy-looking end tables, and you don't have to worry about damaging them. And here's my favorite glamping idea for 2013: The "stump stove"—it's also a one stump "neat and tidy" glampfire! If you plan on making one, you might as well make several.

One Stump Glampfire

At an angle, drill three 1½" burn holes in the top of the stump so that they will all meet about 4" up from the bottom of the stump. Drill a 1½" vent hole about 4" up from the bottom of the stump to meet the bottom of the burn holes. Light the "stump stove" by dropping a fire starter stick into the top of one of the burn holes. To see a stump stove at work and how-to photos, go to [this link](#).

Now, place a large funnel on top of your noggin. We'll call it a thinking cap. Tug on your ear to turn the light on. Pretty soon, you'll be brimming over with bright ideas on how to morph all kinds of everyday items into useful and glamorous wonders.



In this Sister Issue, we'd like to welcome guest writer and apronista, CJ Armstrong, (Sister #665). CJ, who was Farmgirl of the Year 2010, is the one woman we know who's capable of stealing anyone and everyone's heart. CJ, along with her side-kick daughter, Robin, can be found in campgrounds around the country glamming up their tricked-out tent wearing one of CJ's tricked-out aprons. CJ makes the world a MUCH better (and properly aproned) place!



{OUTPOST} with CJ Armstrong | to earn a Sisterhood badge in our {OUTPOST} category, [CLICK HERE](#)

CJ's Skillet Breakfast for Two Hungry Glampers

This is one of our favorite glamping breakfasts—it's easy, hearty, and yummy.

NOTE: I precook the potatoes in the microwave at home before leaving and then toss them into the cooler box. That way, we don't have to wait for the potatoes to cook before breakfast.

- 2 small (or 1 large) potatoes, precooked and cubed
- 4 slices bacon (we like thick-cut), cut into 1" pieces
- ¼ cup diced onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 T diced poblano pepper (if you don't care for spicy peppers, you can use bell pepper)
- 2 eggs
- salt, pepper, and any other spices you like
- butter
- olive oil

1. Cook the bacon in the skillet until nearly done. Add the potato cubes, onion, garlic, and pepper and cook, stirring to blend well and keep from sticking. I like to add bits of butter during this cooking process to add a bit of buttery flavor. Add salt, pepper, and other seasonings you might be using.
2. Make two hollows in the potato mixture, add about 1 t olive oil in the bottom, and crack an egg into each hollow. Let them cook to your preferred doneness, turning them if necessary. I always turn ours, as we prefer them in the early stage of "hard."



You can top with your favorite condiment, such as salsa, and a bit of grated cheese and serve with tortillas, toast, or whatever you like, with a hearty cup of good camp coffee, some homemade jam on whole-grain toast, and perhaps a side of fruit. And we have extra fun with serving this on REAL plates with REAL silverware and cloth napkins. A glamper's breakfast delight!

From the "4871 Glamping Farmgirls"



Lisa Kivist (Sister #5) and her family run a farm and bed and breakfast in southwest Wisconsin, **Inn Serendipity**, completely powered by the wind and the sun. Co-author of **Farmstead Chef**, **Rural Renaissance**, and **ECOpreneur**, Lisa also directs the **Rural Women's Project** of the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service, supporting women farmers and food-based entrepreneurs.



{OUTPOST} with Lisa Kivist | to earn a Sisterhood badge in our {OUTPOST} category, [CLICK HERE](#)

Hook & Cook

Farmgirl Casts an Ocean Line

Two pieces of advice for you after my first fishing experience: Take along a handsome fisherman guide and some motion sickness prevention pills and you'll be hooked.

While I grew up in a household that loved to eat fish and a momma who cooked up all the fixings, my suburban family's idea of "fishing" consisted of grabbing a shrink-wrapped package in the fish aisle of a supermarket. Flash forward to today and I've evolved to a 40-something farmgirl on five acres in the green hills of rural Wisconsin. While my husband and son and I raise most of what's on our plates on our farm, I'm still in the land-locked Midwest and my favorite mahi-mahi or snapper are nowhere to be found. I'm not the type who would feel comfortable handling a gun to hunt, but a fishing pole while gliding smoothly over turquoise blue waters? That idea cast possibilities. So this past winter as snow blanketed our farm, we escaped as far south as we could get in the continental U.S. for some fun in the sun like nothing I have ever experienced: ocean fishing off the Florida Keys.

Cue that handsome fisherman: Kevin Johnsen, owner of Florida Keys Reel Adventures, a fishing charter operation out of Hook's Marina & Dive Center in Marathon, right in the heart of the Keys. Good looks aside, I highly recommend hiring a seasoned guide if you're new to navigating the waters like me. An experienced guide not only will make you feel comfortable and safe, but your investment will exponentially increase your odds that luck will travel with you and you'll come home with dinner for a couple days.



"It takes a few minutes to get your sea legs," called Captain Kevin as we boarded his 24-foot catamaran. "The center of the boat is the most stable," he advised as he saw me apparently already turning a little green as we cruised out toward the open crystal blue Atlantic. Another piece of advice from me: seasickness can be a mental game. Don't Google it the night before or the idea will be planted in your mind throughout the following day. And take Captain Kevin's recommended fix, Bonine, to prevent seasickness; it doesn't make you drowsy.

"This is where we put on your training wheels, and the first step is chum," Captain Kevin said with a smile as we stopped in the 16-foot deep and calm waters about a mile off shore. Between the shallow waters and adding chum (ground up North Atlantic Menhaden fish with fish oil that attracts fish), my first-time fisherwoman success ratio went up—way up.



A few rounds of casting practice, and even our 11-year-old son, Liam, was channeling his inner Ernest Hemmingway. Hemmingway called Key West home for many years, prolifically writing in the mornings and heading out to fish at sea just like us.

"If you're a good listener, you can be a good fisherman," advised Captain Kevin.

"Once you feel a bite on the line, quickly close the bail, then reel in the loose slack on the line, and set the rod with a rapid jerk upward that allows your hook to be caught in the fish's mouth. While keeping the line taught, reel the fish in."

As I practiced the casting process, I strengthened what he called "muscle memory": do it a few times and it becomes second nature. I was initially so focused on just getting the line in the water, I don't think I fully wrapped my mind around the end result: that pull, that tug at the end of your line that means something bit your bait.

Fishing could easily be the Vegas equivalent for practical homesteading gals like myself. You have all the elements of chance, luck, and drama over the one that got away, but at the day's end, you'll have something to show for your four-hour ocean adventure. In our case, under Captain Kevin's care, we managed to catch more than 50 fish of numerous species, tossing back any that were not large enough or were out of season. Liam even managed to hook a mahogany snapper, a fish more commonly found in the Bahamas.

"Fishing is all about putting the puzzle pieces together, from the wind to the current to the weather," reflected Captain Kevin as we admired our final catch, which resulted in 15 pounds of read-to-use fresh fillets once we got back to shore. "While the elements are constantly changing, there are those moments like you had today when it all comes together. It's a beautiful thing."

Beautiful, indeed. As an adult going through such a fishing experience for the first time, I can totally understand people who grew up with this as part of their family outing fare. It's something that they cherish and tap into the rest of their lives. For those of us shoreline girls who catch up on fishing midlife, just remember to take that Bonine early and cast often. You'll be hooked, too.

To head out with Captain Kevin, check out his website for **Florida Keys Reel Adventures**.





Cleaning Up

The Work of Our Hands



{CLEANING UP} with MaryJanesFarm | to earn a Sisterhood badge in our {CLEANING UP} category, [CLICK HERE](#)

Sweeping Away Stress

In today's results-driven world, a person's value is often equated with the work she produces. Be it handmade goods, a small business, or a bestselling book, it's all about creating things that turn a profit. Pressure to capitalize on creativity is stressful for even the most ambitious professional, diminishing her wellspring of inspiration and leaving her thirsty for something more, or maybe ... something less.

Pause for just a moment, and let your thoughts drift to summers of childhood, to the days when there was no greater achievement than building a castle of sand, a corral of twigs, or a miniature dam of river stones. You knew that nature would soon come to claim your masterpiece, and yet you worked in earnest, laboring over intricacies that would crumble before your eyes.

As a child, you understood that the creative process was more than a means to an end. It was the essence of time spent doing something you enjoyed. Sure, there were tears shed over the indifference of rain and the tides, but you did it all over again the next day. Why? That's easy: because it feels good to create, just for the joy of it.

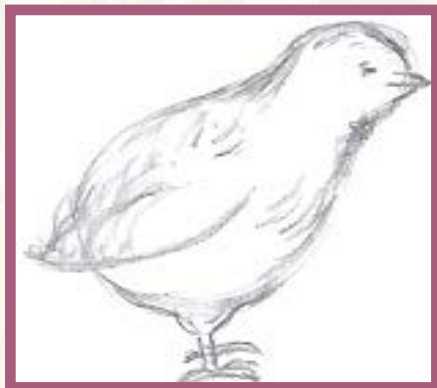
People have long incorporated ephemeral, or short-lived, artistry into sacred rituals. Consider the incredible effort with which Buddhist sand painters create sand "paintings." These elaborately detailed and colorful designs, which could be ruined by a single breath, can take a team of monks several weeks to build. And once finished, the painting is systematically swept away, collected in a jar, and cast over the landscape. Releasing the work is thought to spread the many blessings that went into it, and the act of willingly letting go also inspires acceptance of the ephemeral nature of all things. Imagine the exhilaration of setting a precious creation free and sharing that sweet sense of liberation with the world. Pretty amazing!

Of course, not all of us have the time or artistic inclination to create sand paintings, but there are countless little works of whimsy at your fingertips—even during a work day—that can sweep away the stress building up in your brain, your shoulders, and your lower back and fuel your creative fire. Here are a few ideas from some awesome blogs to get you started (just remember to gather the good vibes you generate and set them and you free!).

1. Play in the Sand

You can still have fun "playing" in the sand—all you need is a mini Zen garden. Make your own with basic household materials and the instructions found at [TheMagicOnions.blogspot.com](#).





Or go all out and **Zentangle** (www.zentangle.com)! With the Zentangle method, anyone can create beautiful images from repetitive patterns. Our very own CeeJay (sister #665) sent Carol this beautiful Zentangle birthday card made by her daughter, Birdie (Sister #1301)—thanks, CeeJay! See more of Birdie's creations on CeeJay's Etsy site [here](#).



3. Stack Sticks and Stones

I love this option because it's a great excuse to get outside. Spend some downtime balancing a stack of stones, or incorporate leaves and twigs into a work of woodland art. Find a whopping dose of inspiration at JRLandArt.blogspot.com. combalancing a stack of stones, or incorporate leaves and twigs into a work of woodland art. Find a whopping dose of inspiration at JRLandArt.blogspot.com.



Mary Jane 



The Scoop

MaryJanesFarm News



Index Available!

We have all the back issues of *MaryJanesFarm Sister Issue* available for download on our website.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read back issues.

[TIP] Use the search/find tool in your browser to look up keywords in back issues.

Farmgirls Unite!

If you are hosting a farmgirl event, open to all farmgirls, send the event description, date, location, and contact info to megan@maryjanesfarm.org. Megan will keep Sisters up-to-date on upcoming gatherings.

Upcoming Events:

Farmgirls on the Loose, Lindsborg, Kansas, May 2–5, 2013 (see p. 53)

Glamper-ific Gathering, Hayden, Idaho, June 7–9, 2013 (see p. 53)

Glamping, Walla Walla, Washington, June 14–15, 2013 (see p. 53)

Glamping, West Bend, Wisconsin, September 20–22, 2013 (see p. 53)

If you're a Sisterhood member, **click here** to download a FREE Farmgirls on the Loose logo!

Enter your Sisterhood number;
password is: FGLoose (case-sensitive)

(Fun logo ideas: frame it, use
it for transfers on shopping
bags, totes, and pillows, or
make it into a sticker
for your trailer!)



Sister Loves

{ our favorites ... just a click away! }

Kim's
PICKS
(JUST A CLICK AWAY)



LIVESTOCK MANAGER
(SISTER #666)

Having a farm, vacation time from work usually means I work on the mile-long projects list I have at home. BUT ... NOT THIS YEAR! On May 10, I am flying off for my first real vacation in ... I can't remember when—it's been years. My big sis is working in Costa Rica and has asked me to come travel with her for 10 days. YAY! For 10 days, I get to trade in my boots and jeans for flip-flops, a swimsuit, and a sarong. We are travelin' light and going cheap. While camping and staying in hostels, these finds will help me do it in style.



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Farmgirl Sisterhood

Share in the Fun!

Farmgirl Chatter



What are farmgirls chatting about?

Check it out at The Farmgirl Connection link [here](#)!

Farmgirl Calendar

Farmgirls on the Loose, Lindsborg, Kansas, May 2–5, 2013

It's time for the Farmgirls on the Loose to follow the yellow brick road and go to Lindsborg, Kansas, "Little Sweden USA," the land of the Wild Dala, Swedish meatballs, shopping, and more! We'll be glamping along the Smoky Hill River from Thursday, May 2, to Sunday, May 5, 2013. Click [here](#) to learn more

Glamper-ific Gathering, Hayden, Idaho, June 7–9, 2013

Plans are in the making for a "Glamper-ific Gathering" in northern Idaho on June 7–June 9. Come on Friday, the 7th, stay over until Sunday morning/midday, on the 9th. Home of our own Kathy O'Hara ... aka "Idaho Shamrock" ... in Hayden, Idaho, which is just a bit north-ish of Coeur d'Alene. Come one, come all farmgirls from Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Montana ... or wherever! To learn more, click [here](#).

Glamping, Walla Walla, Washington, June 14–15, 2013

June 14–15, 2013, is a great opportunity to get together with our trailers and do some junkin' at the same time. "Love of Junk" is coming to Walla Walla, Washington, on a beautiful family farm on Valley Chapel Road. For more info, please click [here](#). Our goal is to get 40 fabulous trailers and spend the weekend farmgirl-style.

Glamping, West Bend, Wisconsin, September 20–22, 2013

Calling all WI, IL, MN, and everyone else. I would like to do a glamping weekend here at my place in West Bend. September 20–22. Weather here in Wisconsin will still be very nice. I wanted to get the date out there so that you can plan ahead. We have room for campers and tents. We have a small, one-car-garage-size cabin, and hopefully by then, a composting toilet. TeeHee!!! We already have a fire pit for cooking and every other luxury we need. Crafting classes and a trunk sale along with games, and I am sure, LOTS of YUMMY FOOD, and farmgirl chitchat!!! West Bend has a wonderful Farmers' Market on Saturday morning and close-by antique shops, resale shops, and lakes for fishing. Hope to see you all in September! For more information, click [here](#).

Farmgirl Chatter

A Farm of My Own: At Odds and Ends. Submitted by MrsTracy

Have you ever had so many things going on in your head that you can't grasp one long enough to make any sense out of it? I almost feel as though I'm going through a midlife crisis. So many things I want to do but I just can't seem to "get" it.

The community that I live in is pretty mainstream. People work and struggle just like the rest of the world, but they

continued ...

53



continued ...

seem to think that everything has to be done a certain way and anything outside of it is weird and laughable. Simple things like shopping local and growing your own produce (we live in a rural area), downsizing, and living a more relaxed life just seem to be something only hippies do.

Many days, I go back and forth between homemaking and all that entails to academia (I'm a full-time student). I want to write (not sure what yet, maybe historical fiction) and do some crafting, tend to my precious grandbabies, and help my husband find what he wants to do with the rest of his life (his job is very labor intensive). In the end, my days are spent running around with my head cut off.

Am I the only one who feels this way? I was raised to be a part of the rat race. Then I left the rat race to stay home and raise the kids and homeschool, then I got the back to school bug, and while I thoroughly enjoy it, I'm almost done and I need to settle into something that can garner a small income and bring fulfillment. I'm not sure what I'm really expecting, but I definitely needed to vent. Any advice for a soon-to-be 45-year-old grandmother? Share your story [here](#).

A Farm of My Own: Advice on moving out to the country. Submitted by Antb

For quite a while now, I've dreamed of living a more rural life. Right now, I live in Rockford IL. We live here because, at the time, my kids were grown, the house was cheap, and the yard was big for a garden.

Now we have a granddaughter living with us, and our neighborhood—which was pretty safe, working class, and mixed ethnicity with things like street vendors in the summer and wonderful ethnic grocery stores within walking distance—has now had most of the houses divided into apartments with high turnover. Crime is high here, and there have been three shootings here ON MY BLOCK in the last year. One morning last winter, we woke to find a dead body in our neighbor's yard! Since then, we've been trying to sell this house, with the hopes of moving out to the country. And I think we finally have a buyer!! I'm so excited! I found a house on three acres in a very small scenic town an hour or so away from here.

While I am THRILLED (I get to have chickens!!) to be moving, I'm also scared! I would love any advice on making the transition from urban, mostly walking to things, to a rural life. To give your advice, click [here](#).

Across the Fence: Name 3. Submitted by Calicogirl

I thought it would be fun and encouraging to share three blessings every day.

I'll start :)

1. Sleeping in.
2. My honey making me a chai latte this morning.
3. Hearing the Meadowlark's song.

How about you? Share yours [here](#).



Barnyard Buddies: Milking Chores. Submitted by SandraM

Just curious what you use for milking. I saw a milk bucket in the Hoeggers Magazine I would love to have. I just use a stainless steel pan right now that has a lid. I have heard of some bringing coolers out and putting the milk right in a cooler when they are done milking. I have never thought of that. Would love to hear how you handle your milking chores. Does anyone have the Hoegger milk bucket? What do you do with your milk after you milk one goat and are getting ready to milk another? Do you keep it in one bucket? Do you cool it down right away? I did buy Hoeggers natural wormer to put in their feed once a week while we are milking. Thanks for letting me pick your brains! Share your methods [here](#).



Barnyard Buddies: Best cutting of hay for sheep and goats? Submitted by kristin Sherrill

I am wondering what is the best cutting, 1st or 2nd, for goats or sheep? I just drove past a farm that cuts hay and theirs looks really good. No weeds or flowers or bushes. They do fertilize with chicken manure and probably spray with Graze-On for weeds. But that's ok with me. I just need a better quality hay for my sheep and goats for next fall and winter. What do y'all like best ... 1st or 2nd cuttings? Share [here](#).

Cleaning Up: Extreme Clean—Join in—Get'M Done! Submitted by FieldsofThyme

For the next two months, I am going to update our extreme clean and hold this thread for encouragement for any farmgirls struggling to get their "spring" cleaning done. It doesn't have to be "spring" cleaning, either. It can be a gigantic pile of unread magazines you can't find time to go through or that gigantic pile of printed recipes you can't seem to try out. Anyone want to join in? I don't have farmgirls close enough to form a group of women to go house to house, so I thought I could post here for a positive encouragement for progress with whatever you need finished.

I wrote up my own list for cleaning, and each member of my family gets to pick and choose their jobs. We have already completed the clean-up in the utility room and porches, but have more to do. Next on the list for me is cleaning off the outside of the fridge. It's cluttered with coupons, notes, and just plain junk. I'll be back to post when it's done.

Photos are optional. Share [here](#).

Farm Kitchen: Mason Jars. Submitted by Jess_Quinn

Does anyone know if Ball (Mason) jars will bust in the freezer???? I am making ice cream and I want to store individual-size portions in the jars if possible. Thanks! Give your information [here](#).

continued ... **55**



continued ...

Farm Kitchen: Anyone ever made sauerkraut? Submitted by nature

I'm attempting to make my first batch of sauerkraut. Started this batch on the 17th. I was wondering who else has made it and how it came out? Share [here](#).

Garden Gate: Farming is hard. But I LOVE it! Submitted by Kristin Sherrill

I am exhausted, y'all. I mean, I can hardly move right now. I get up like an old lady. It takes awhile to get to walking normal. Farming is hard work. I have been hauling wagon loads of hay mulch and wagons full of good humusy soil from out back. It's heavy! But thank goodness, I had an empty wagon going up the little hill to get the soil. So all down hill when full. That helped a lot.

So just got 3 beds worked today. It took nearly all day. I'll till some more tomorrow and plant beans, field peas, squash, zucchini and cucumbers. I'll be getting peppers, tomatoes, and eggplant from my friend up the road around the first part of May.

Plus, working for all these animals is hard too. Seems like that's all I do lately, work for them. Fencing, moving chickens and rabbits, feeding ... It is never ending.

BUT, I LOVE IT! I would NOT want to be doing anything else. I love to see the results of all this hard work in the gardens. I love to harvest all the things I've planted and weeded and mulched. I love going to markets and selling and meeting people and talking about how to prepare all this food for their families. I love knowing that people will be eating good, healthy, organic food that I, with God's help, grew for them. Very satisfying for sure ...

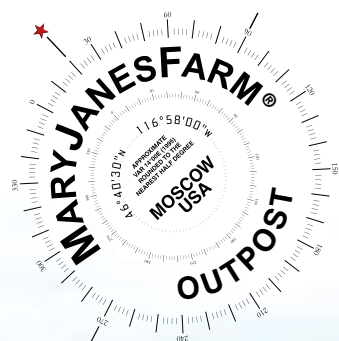
So yes, farming IS hard work. I am dirty ALL the time. I stink most of the time too. Today, my hands smelled like sheep pee and poop from all the old hay I got from their stalls to put on the garden. I am not complaining at all. I read somewhere that in the spring, you should smell like dirt. Well, I do. And I love it! Share your farming stories [here](#).

Outpost: Fishing Submitted by FieldsofThyme

I got my fishing license today! I hope to do a lot of it this summer.

Share your fishing stories [here](#).





Are you prepared for an emergency?

MaryJane's just-add-water organic meals—everything from instant pastas and grains to soups to breads to desserts—are available in 3-lb bulk oxygen-free bags for emergency preparedness long-term storage. Shelf life: 15+ years; breads: 5–8 years.

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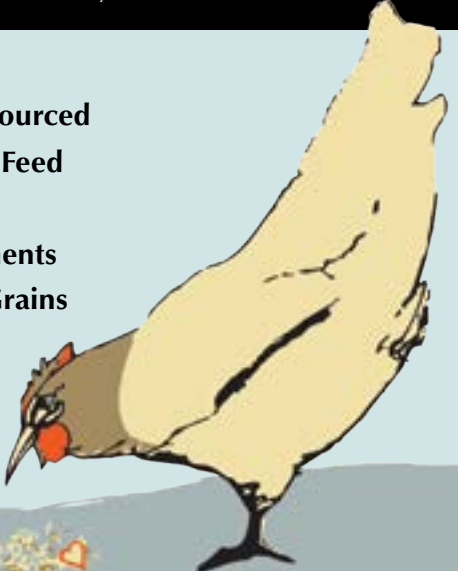
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Farmgirl Sisterhood



Social Media

I'm doubling back to make sure you're aware of all the social media happenings at MaryJanesFarm, because you won't want to miss a thing—especially the moment when YOU'RE the sister featured on one of our Facebook pages simply because you're just so farmgirl awesome or you've earned a badge or your blog post from our Sisterhood blogging community over at **www.GirlGab.com** was featured. (This is my favorite daily pleasure. I LOVE GirlGab!)

As ladies of the Sisterhood, now numbering 5,091 (and counting), we've earned an amazing number of Merit Badges so far—6,887 total! We've recently started alerting earned Badges daily on our MaryJanesFarm **Facebook** page. We started out alerting just the expert-level earners, but decided recently to alert all levels AND add photos if you include them. We're just so durn proud! Can you hear the clucking?

My blog, **www.raisingjane.org**, is a little bit more of the fun and frilly that you've come to expect from MaryJanesFarm, and is my outlet for conversation in between magazines.

If you're a Facebook or Twitter kind of gal, you'll find my posts teased on my **Twitter** account and my **Facebook** account. Updates for all things glamorously glampifying for International Glamping Weekend can be found **here**, at its Facebook fan page.

Facebook and Twitter not your thing? Then, our **Pinterest** page can keep you up-to-date with recipes, projects, products, and beautiful images captured here at my farm.





Exclusive for Sisters!

Sisterhood Necklace

We've partnered with Elaine Tolson of Washington to offer this lovely bit of vintage-style jewelry—for Sisterhood members only. Your necklace will be emblazoned with your own unique Sisterhood number, setting your braggin' rights in stone. Whether you wear it as a secret code for those in-the-know, or as a conversation starter about the Sisterhood, is up to you. **Click here to order yours.**



Hello Elaine!

Thank you so much for my beautiful charm. I received it last week and have enjoyed wearing it and showing it to my friends and family. Can't wait to get our Chapter off the ground here in Cherry Valley.

Thank you again,
Mary Bronson



Elaine!!!

Thank you so very much for the beautiful Farm Gal necklace!!! I beyond love it! I really feel part of something grander when I wear it. You made my day when I opened my little burlap bag, truly.

kindness counts,
Kim



Sister Hoodies



Get Your Sister Hoodie On!

I'm a hoodie aficionado. The first thing I do when I get ready for some down time is evacuate my bra, put on a baggy cotton shirt, some loose tights, comfy socks, a pair of **Tom's shoes**, and a HOODIE!!!! But not all hoodies are created equal. Some are a bit too heavy and stiff, especially after they've been washed the first time. Some are too thick and bulky. Those hoodies that are partially synthetic, pill over time. (Gross.) Some are too tight or too short in the arms, or baggy going into the banding on the waist. Some are ...

See what I mean? I'm a hoodie fussbudget. Speaking of budget, I went on a mission. I wanted to come up with a *100% organic* hoodie that didn't cost a fortune and met all my fussy particulars. I wanted it in several different colors to suit my mood and the season (I wear a hoodie in all four.) I wanted ...

There I go again. Fussy. When I finally came up with my dream hoodie, my husband said, "You should share them with your Sisters and call them Sister Hoodies." (Now you know why I love him.)

Here SHE is ... and with a SISTERHOOD embellishment thrown in (for you to attach). Read on ...





With your Sister Hoodie, you'll receive one washable 4 1/2" printed muslin square, some embroidery floss, and a needle. For now, we have four different embellishment choices (below). Then, you decide where to announce your Sister Hoodie uniqueness! Think top of arm, middle back, lower sides (for the more trendy, groovy Sisters—I mean younger), lapel, or why not, she even looks “**good in the hood.**”

One last thing: Because each hoodie is a custom order, please be patient with us. It may take a couple of weeks before we can ship it, but we'll let you know the minute it's on its way to you.

Choose
from:

1



2



your Sisterhood
Number HERE

3



4



continued ...



continued ...

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hood with drawstring
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	S	M	L	XL	2XL
Front Body Length (from HPS)	27"	28"	29"	30"	30"
Bust Measurement (1" below armhole from armhole to armhole, NOT around chest)	19.5"	21.5"	23.5"	25.5"	27.5"

Colors



Please note:

- Front Body Length could vary 1" up or down in length.
- Chest Measurement could vary 1/2" up or down on width of chest.
- Because dye lots may vary, color matching on all shipments not guaranteed.

Laundry instructions:

Cold wash, like colors.
Line dry preferred or dryer/very LOW heat.

Meg is wearing
a size small

HPS
(high point shoulder)

BUST
(1" below armhole)





Order your Sister Hoodie!

(CLICK HERE)

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Merit Badge

Awardees



Merit Badge Awardees

Alisha Grinus: Redsmoondesigns #3338
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Sew Wonderful

Autumn Day: #3964
Beginner badge: Each Other / Farmgirl Gratitude
Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / Icing on the Cake

Ciara Neill: infinite_wallflower #5005
Beginner badge: Each Other / Farmgirl Shutterbugs

CJ Armstrong: Ceejay48 #665
Expert badge: Outpost / Glamping

Darla Armstrong: cowgirlup@21 #4391
Intermediate badge: Make it Easy / Carp-hen-try
Expert badge: Make it Easy / Carp-hen-try

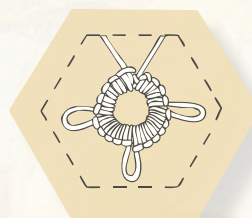
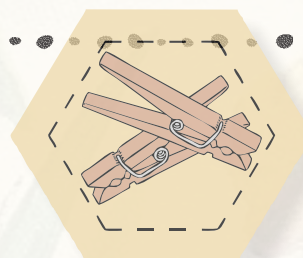
Dawn Perry: #2493
Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / Get it Together
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Birds
Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Get it Together
Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Quilting
Expert badge: Stitching & Crafting / Quilting

Diana Boles: Many Feathers #4980
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Gaining Ground

Erin Rockafellow: Erin Rock #4131
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / The Secret Life of Bees

Gracey Larson: Gracey #3697
Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Backyard Farmer

Heather Neeper: #4701
Beginner badge: Each Other / Farmgirl Shutterbugs
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Backyard Farmer
Beginner badge: Make it Easy / Make it Pretty





Jennifer Mackey: Jen Mackey #4218
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Backyard Farmer

Juanita Massey: needy #1020
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Aprons
Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Aprons

Justine Thompson: JThomp #2904
Beginner badge: Outpost / First Aid

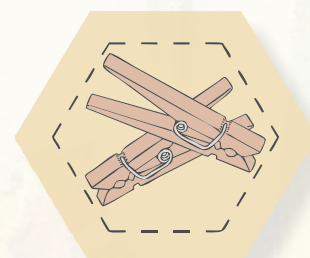
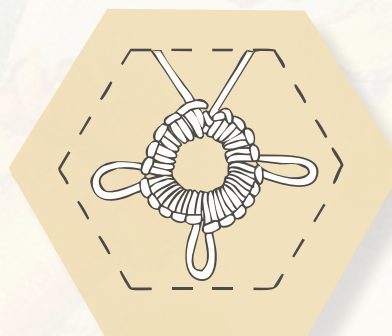
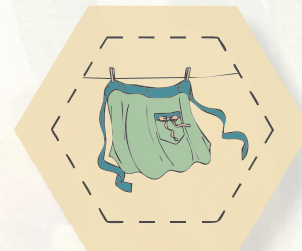
Kathleen Horton: #2695
Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Green Energy
Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Bustin' Out

Katrina Smith: Kat-Nina #4813
Beginner badge: Each Other / Farmgirl Grammar
Beginner badge: Each Other / Farmgirl Shutterbugs
Beginner badge: Each Other / Families Forever
Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / Self-Sufficiency
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Horse Dreams
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Aprons
Intermediate badge: Each Other / Families Forever
Intermediate badge: Each Other / Farmgirl Gratitude
Intermediate badge: Each Other / Farmgirl Shutterbugs
Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Get it Together
Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Aprons
Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Embroidery

Kristina Nelson: FieldsofThyme #800
Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Water Conservation
Expert badge: Garden Gate / Gaining Ground
Expert badge: Garden Gate / Heirlooms Forever

Kyla Hill: HoneysuckleHill3 #4640
Beginner badge: Each Other / Farmgirl Spirit
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Gaining Ground
Beginner badge: Outpost / Fishing
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Origami

Laurel Wise: # 4875
Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling
Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green



continued ...

continued ...

Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service
Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling
Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green
Intermediate badge: Each Other / Community Service

Laurie Conner: Montrose Girl #1587

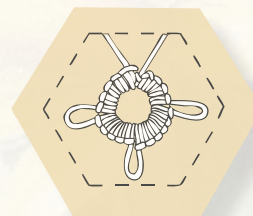
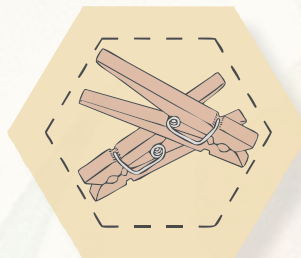
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Herbs
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Safe Toys
Intermediate badge: Each Other / Languages-Culture
Intermediate badge: Each Other / Plant it Forward
Intermediate badge: Garden Gate / Herbs
Expert badge: Each Other / Greatest Generation

Lori Day: #4829

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green

Lyn Szabo: Iszabo #4905

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green
Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling
Beginner badge: Each Other / Greatest Generation
Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / Get it Together
Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / Recipes
Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / Unprocessed Kitchen
Beginner badge: Make it Easy / In the Garden
Beginner badge: Make it Easy / Make it Pretty
Beginner badge: Make it Easy / Relaxation
Beginner badge: Outpost / Woman-At-Arms
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Aprons
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Buttoned Up
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Nellie Make-do
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Quilting
Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling
Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green
Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Get it Together
Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Recipes
Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Unprocessed Kitchen
Intermediate badge: Make it Easy / Make it Pretty
Intermediate badge: Make it Easy / Relaxation
Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Aprons





Expert badge: Garden Gate / Birds
Expert badge: Stitching & Crafting / Aprons

Mary Ellen DeWitt: Carolina Farm Girl #4730
Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green

Mary Fitzpatrick: BusyBeeMary #3232
Intermediate badge: Make it Easy / Make It!

Michelle Foster:
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Sew Wonderful

Michelle Garwood: mjarwood #3860
Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green
Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling
Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling

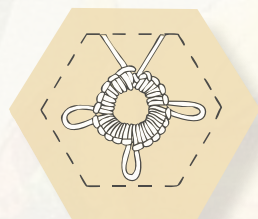
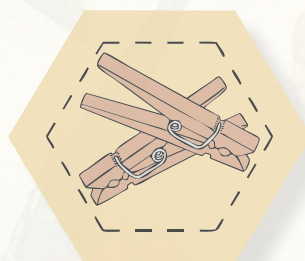
Norma Hart: njhart #1661
Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / ChillOver ComeOver
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Quilting
Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / ChillOver ComeOver

Peggy Smith: forever young #1815
Beginner badge: Each Other / Languages-Culture
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Heirlooms Forever
Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Recipes
Expert badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling

Rebecca Riccio: ladybek9756 #4932
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Crochet

Sarah Houlihan: houligan19 #3828
Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Going Green
Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / Cheesemaking
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Bee Good to Your Mother Earth
Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Going Green
Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Bustin' Out
Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Homespun Christmas

Sherrilyn Askew: Sherri #1350
Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling
Beginner badge: Each Other / Farmgirl Gratitude



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Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / Get it Together
Beginner badge: Make it Easy / Let's Get Physical
Beginner badge: Make it Easy / Make it Pretty
Beginner badge: Make it Easy / Relaxation
Beginner badge: Outpost / First Aid
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Buttoned Up
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Cross-Stitch
Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling
Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Cheesemaking
Intermediate badge: Make it Easy / Make it Pretty
Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Buttoned Up

Tammy Burger: GrammyTammy #2495

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling
Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / Cheesemaking
Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling
Expert badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling

Tammy Whitney: TammyW #4946

Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Knitting

Teri Henningsen: TeriSue #4773

Beginner badge: Each Other / Farmgirl Shutterbugs

Terri Wedding: teacups #5009

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Going Green
Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Going Green

Tiffany Joss: #4517

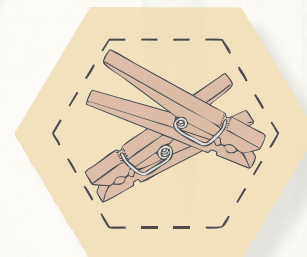
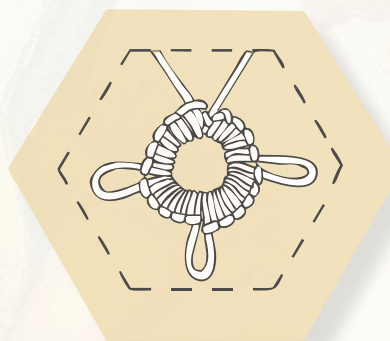
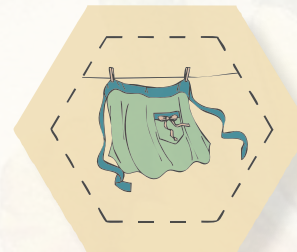
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Aprons
Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Aprons

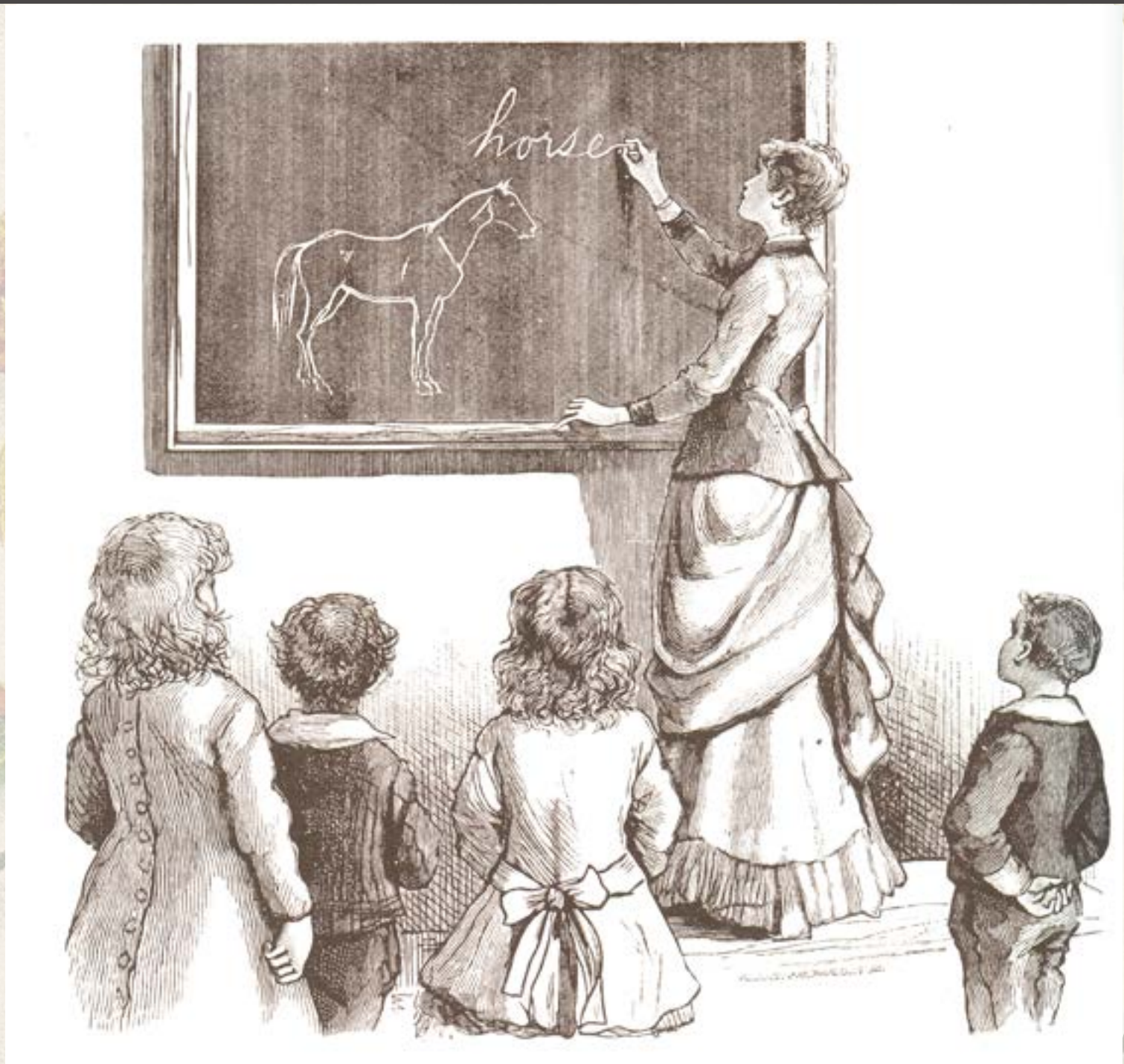
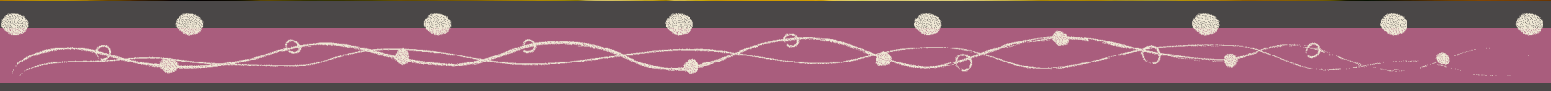
Tina Shillington: BlackRabbit #4511

Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Birds
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Crochet

Wendy Darnielle: Wdarnielle #4858

Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Knitting
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Scrapbooking
Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Scrapbooking
Expert badge: Stitching & Crafting / Scrapbooking





Farmerettes & Young Cultivators

What's a Farmerette?

Farmerettes are young farmgirls-in-training between the ages 14–18. They can earn the same Merit Badges as adult Sisters, so long as there is a Farmgirl Sisterhood member nearby to work with them. **Click here to find out more.**

What's a Young Cultivator?

Young Cultivators are girls and boys between the ages 6 and 13. They can work with Farmgirl Sisterhood members to earn badges, but have their own unique program. **Click here to find out more.**

Aubrey-Ellen Smith: Young Cultivator of #4813
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Horsing Around

Elizabata Wilbur: Young Cultivator of #2495
Expert badge: Farm Kitchen / All Dried Up

Emma Yochim: Young Cultivator of #2983
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Gone to the Birds
Intermediate badge: Garden Gate / Gone to the Birds
Expert badge: Garden Gate / Gone to the Birds

Nicole Yochim: Young Cultivator of #2983
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Gone to the Birds
Intermediate badge: Garden Gate / Gone to the Birds
Expert badge: Garden Gate / Gone to the Birds

Rosalie Elliott: Farmerette of #4854
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Origami
Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Origami
Expert badge: Stitching & Crafting / Origami

Woo-Hoo!





Young Cultivators Group

Rebekka Boysen-Taylor, our Stitching & Crafting columnist, also coordinates a Young Cultivators group. She'll report on their activities here and in future issues.

Cultivating Early Literacy

In my job as a reading teacher, I often think about how to help small children grow into avid readers. There are endless programs created to help your baby or toddler learn to read, but the best thing you can do to grow a reader is to model reading what you love as an adult. Read with your child every day and take some time to play with letters and words together. When my son entered kindergarten this year, we passed on traditional magnetic plastic letters and made our own set, repurposing the bottle caps collecting in our kitchen.

To make your own ABC magnet set, you'll need the following supplies:

52 bottle caps (enough to make 2 of each letter)
 2 colors of craft paint
 52 magnets
 hot glue gun
 ABC stickers in a font that you like

1. Affix a magnet securely to the inside of each bottle cap with hot glue.
2. Paint 10 bottle cap tops using one paint color—these will be your vowels. Once they are dry, add stickers to make 2 each of the following letters: A, E, I, O, U.
3. Paint the remaining tops with the other paint color and add consonant stickers (2 of each).
4. Now play! Start by helping your child name each letter. Teach them the sound each letter makes and begin to create simple words (start with 2-letter words and work up from there).

Tip: A baking sheet makes a lap-size magnetic surface that is a snap to store.





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home



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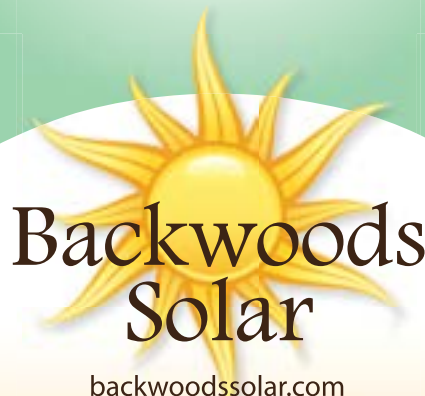
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Meet our Bloggers

Being a farmgirl isn't where you live, but how you live!

Farmgirls are tapping away at their keyboards to bring you news from the homefront, no matter where you live or what your interests. Rebekah Teal, a former judge, writes about being a farmgirl in the city; Alexandra Wilson blogs from the rural perspective; Nicole Christensen gives you the suburban viewpoint; Cathi Belcher shouts-out from her mountain top, Shery Jespersen shares the ranch view from Wyoming, and Debbie Bosworth writes from the beach. You can click to our farmgirl blogs right on our home page (www.maryjanesfarm.org). While you're there, sign up for our e-mail blog alerts and recipe of the week.

city FARMGIRL



Rebekah Teal is a farmgirl from a large metropolitan area who recently made her dreams come true by moving to a farm. Given her dyed-in-the-wool city-girl background, she still writes our **City Farmgirl Blog**. She's a lawyer who has worked in both criminal defense and prosecution, and she has been a judge, a business woman, and a stay-at-home mom. She's not only down-home citified, she's a true-blue farmgirl ... in (the occasional) pair of stilettos!

Mustering up the courage to do the things you dream about, she says, is the essence of being a farmgirl. Learning to live more organically and closer to nature is Rebekah's current pursuit.

rural FARMGIRL



Alexandra Wilson is a budding rural farmgirl living in Palmer, Alaska—the agricultural seat of the last frontier—and she shares her adventures on our **Rural Farmgirl Blog**. Alex is a graduate student at Alaska Pacific University, pursuing an M.S. in Outdoor and Environmental Education. She is focused on developing a program to inspire young women to become beginning farmers. She lives and works on the university's 700-acre educational farm. When Alex has time outside of graduate school, she loves to rock climb, repurpose found objects, cross-country ski on the hay fields, travel, practice yoga, and cook with new-fangled ingredients.

suburban FARMGIRL



Nicole Christensen, our current **Suburban Farmgirl Blogger**, calls herself a “knitter, jam-maker, and mom extraordinaire.” Born and raised in the great state of Texas, she now resides in suburban New England in picturesque Connecticut, just a stone's throw from New York state.

Married for 18 years to her Danish-born sweetheart, Nicole has worked in various fields and has been a world-traveler, entrepreneur, knitting teacher, and homemaker, but considers being a mom her greatest job of all. Loving all things creative and domestic, Nicole considers her life's motto to be “Bloom where you are planted.”

mountain FARMGIRL



Cathi Belcher, who pens our **Mountain Farmgirl Blog**, lives in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. As a “lifelong learner,” she fiercely values self-reliance, independence, freedom, and fresh mountain air. She's also a multi-media artist, with an obsession for off-grid living and alternative housing. Cathi is married to her childhood sweetheart, and owns and operates a 32-room mountain lodge.

“Mountains speak to my soul, and farming is an important part of my heritage,” says Cathi. “I want to pass on my love of these things to others through my writing.”

NEWS FROM THE HOMEFRONT ...

whether that home is
city, rural, suburban, mountain,
ranch, or beach

www.maryjanesfarm.org



ranch
FARMGIRL



Shery Jespersen, Wyoming cattle rancher and outpost writer, shares the view from her saddle in our **Ranch Farmgirl Blog**. Shery is a "leather and lace cowgirl" who's been horse-crazy all of her life. Her longtime love is Apple Pi "Dolly" Rose, a 20-year-old Morgan otherwise known as "The Best Darn Horse in the Universe."

Her other interests include "junktiques," creating eclectic "make do" arts and crafts, collecting antique china, and cultivating mirth.



beach
FARMGIRL



Debbie Bosworth left her lifelong home in the high desert of northern Nevada 10 years ago and washed up on the shore of America's hometown, Plymouth, Massachusetts, where she, her "beach-bum Yankee" husband of 20 years, and her two homeschooled kids are now firmly planted. Debbie writes our **Beach Farmgirl Blog**.

"I found a piece of my farmgirl heart when I discovered MaryJanesFarm. Suddenly, everything I loved just made more sense! I enjoy unwinding at the beach, writing, gardening, and turning yard-sale furniture into 'Painted Ladies'! I'm passionate about living a creative life and encouraging others to 'Make Each Day their Masterpiece.'"



Nicole's FAVORITES

suburban
FARMGIRL

Did you know that there can be over 500 chemicals in a product, lumped into a catch-all word in the ingredients list called "fragrance"? So many bath, body, and room fragrances are made with synthetic chemicals that can be toxic in numerous ways and cause a host of health problems. It's better to stick with products that freshen using essential oils. I was recently introduced to the natural aromatherapy line of **Adivasi Bath and Beauty products** at a local organic grocery store. Handmade in small batches in suburban New Milford, Connecticut, the all-vegan products are petrochemical- and phthalate-free. I'm loving the relaxing **Lavender Body Polish** (\$15) to get rid of winter dry, flaky skin, and their fresh-scented **"Sweet Sky" Room and Body Spray** (\$12), a blend of lavender, Italian bergamot and lime. Packaged in a beautiful royal-blue glass bottle, it's pretty enough to sit on my vanity.



Coming Soon to a Magazine Near You

I'm such a tease ...

Now, haven't we all been told not to judge a chair by its cover, especially when you can paint the fabric a different color? I kid you not. I'll show you how in the next issue of *MaryJanesFarm*. Our June/July issue (Midnight Hour) will hit newsstands on May 14 (if you're a subscriber, you should receive yours by about May 10). You'll also find chalkboard décor, rebel quilting, DIY bedskirts, E-Z homemade feta cheese, and wading-pool gardening. Don't risk missing *MaryJanesFarm* magazine on newsstands. Subscribe [here!](#)

Chalkboard Art



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My name is Linda Stritzel and I'm the one attached to this jar of jam! The results were amazing. I actually like it more than traditional pectin recipes—I didn't realize how much flavor pectin robs from the fruit! The color, taste, and texture are perfect. I'll be sure to have plenty of ChillOver powder ready for the next jam season! ”
Your Midwest farmgirl,
Linda

ChillOver Strawberry Jam

2 lbs strawberries, washed,
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4 cups crushed berries
2 cups organic cane sugar
2 packets MaryJane's
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1. Combine crushed strawberries and sugar in a large pot. Bring to a boil, stirring to dissolve sugar.
2. Sprinkle and stir ChillOver Powder into liquid and boil rapidly for 3 minutes, stirring constantly.
3. Remove from heat and can in sterile jars (refer to a canning manual for complete canning instructions).

ChillOver Raspberry Jam

Substitute raspberries for strawberries.

ChillOver Blackberry Jam

Substitute blackberries for strawberries.

❖ You'll find recipes in every box. For more ChillOver recipes, buy our "8th Issue, Farm Kitchen" at www.maryjanesfarm.org/backissues.asp.

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Magazines, Books & More



Our June/July issue (Midnight Hour) will hit newsstands on May 14. In it, you'll find recipes for muffin-tin meals, bite-size party food, DIY feta, and kale chips; meet a rebel quilter and a 12-year-old that's giving back; learn how to make a wading-pool garden and a backyard greenhouse; paint an upholstered chair and make faux-silk flowers; and more.

[Click here](#) to subscribe to *MaryJanesFarm* magazine.

Our June/July issue will hit newsstands on May 14. If you're a subscriber, you should receive yours any day now! (Those of you near postal hubs get faster delivery; rural delivery takes a little longer.) If you don't receive your magazine, you can call our publisher's subscription department at 800-476-4611 to check on your delivery.

MaryJanesFarm Calendar

Our **2013 calendar** is now available! Each month's top page features a full-color image from our farm and each calendar page includes dates, holidays, inspirational sayings, lunar phases, and fabulous farmgirl culture. This is a Project F.A.R.M. (First-class American Rural Made) product. All 26 pages are printed here at the farm on 8 1/2" x 11" card stock and are bound with black spiral wire, unfolding to 11" x 17".

Current Holidays:

May 1 ~ Global Love Day
May 3 ~ World Press Freedom Day
May 4 ~ Chicken Day
May 5 ~ World Daughter Day
May 7 ~ National Teachers' Day
May 12 ~ Mothers' Day, International Nurses' Day
May 15 ~ International Day of Families
May 16 ~ Love a Tree Day, Wear Purple for Peace Day
May 18 ~ Armed Forces' Day
May 19 ~ Neighbor Day
May 27 ~ Memorial Day
May 29 ~ Learn About Composting Day

Magazine "Goodies" on the MJF Website

"For those who are looking for the magazine portion of the website, here is the place to find additional patterns, instructions, recipes and such! Yum!" – Alee, Farmgirl Sister #8
To find the goodies, [click here!](#)



**5091 Sisterhood members and
6,887 Merit Badges earned —
growing stronger every day!**

THE HOUSE AT THE END OF THE ROAD

by Shirley Jean Pierce, Florida

Adapted from Sam Walter Foss' poem,
The House by the Side of the Road, 1897.

There are gentle souls that give each day
With the peace of talents spent.
There are souls, like stars, that dwell to shine
In their loved ones' sweet content.
There are pioneer souls that blaze their paths,
The wagon ruts still call —
But let me live at the end of the road
And make a home for all.

Let me live in a house at the end of the road
Where the walk of life draws nigh —
Where folks who work hard and have calloused hands,
As good and as bad as I,
Can live and not judge another's heart
Or cast a critic's eye
Let me live in a house at the end of the road
And open my door to sky.

I see from my house at the end of the road,
The rolling fields of life,
I see women who press with the ardor of hope,
Their aprons stained with strife.
But I turn not away from their smiles nor their tears —
Both part of the infinite plan;
Let me live in a house at the end of the road
And be to all a kind woman.

I know there are lark-filled meadows ahead,
And mountains of wearisome height,
There are gardens to tend and children to mend
And day simply turns into night.
But still I rejoice when my sisters rejoice,
And weep with the women that moan,
With the dream of a farm at the end of the road
For a little girl too quickly grown.

Let me live in my house at the end of the road
And welcome the women who try —
They are good, they are bad, they are weak, they are strong,
Wise, foolish—so am I.
Then why should I look with a critic's eye
Or judge another's call?
Let me live in a house at the end of the road
And make a home for all.

