

MARYJANESFARM®

Sister Issue

February 2014

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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February 2014

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Sister Loves

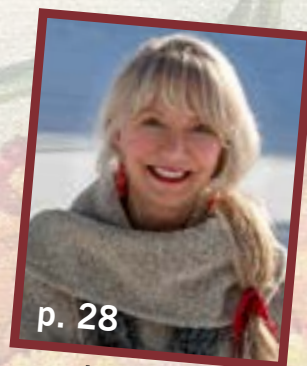
{ staff picks ... only a click away! }

What girl doesn't love to shop, even if all you can afford is some window shopping? Here's where we treat 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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Megan



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MaryJane



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Carol



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Saralou



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Karina

Hello from Sister #1



Sunny Side of Life

I'm happy to announce an installment of new Merit Badges for 2014! Last year, we approved nine new Merit Badges, this year three—two in the Cleaning Up category and one in Garden Gate. I'll announce updates to existing Merit Badges in June and you'll be able to find those **here** once we're finished with the updates.

I can't say enough how the task of approving Merit Badges inspires me on a daily basis. It fills my world with hope, promise, faith, and conviction—all good things! Lucky me. For your very own dose of the sunny-side-of-life, keep these links handy. Merit Badge requirements are **here**. Approved Merit Badges are **here**. And don't miss out on the fun I have with MBA (Merit Badge Awardee) Jane on my blog **here**, where I also spotlight a Merit Badge awardee every Friday under the banner "Hear Ye!"

Garden Gate

Putting Away for Winter

Beginner Level

Learn how to freeze three different types of fresh produce. Put away three different types of produce in your freezer for use later on. Share your knowledge with your Farmgirl Chapter or on The Farmgirl Connection chatroom.

Intermediate Level

Investigate different methods for drying produce. Dehydrate three different types of produce for use later on. Make a dish for your family using a combination of your dehydrated and frozen produce.

Expert Level

Investigate the different methods for canning food. Share this knowledge with your Farmgirl Chapter or on The Farmgirl Connection chatroom. Can three different types of produce for use later on. Can one type of meat using a pressure canner or make jerky using a smoker or dehydrator. Make a dish using a combination of your canned, dehydrated, and frozen produce and share it with a family. Be sure to let them know how you used your home-preserved ingredients.





Cleaning Up

Home Insulation

Beginner Level

- Determine the type of insulation in your walls, attic, and floors. Research how effective your current insulation is compared to other types of insulation.
- Determine the type(s) of windows installed in your home. Research how effective they are compared to other types of windows.
- Contact your power company and find out if there are any rebates or credits available for upgrading the insulation in your home.
- Share your findings on The Farmgirl Connection chatroom or with a neighbor.



Intermediate Level

- Test your home for air tightness. On a windy day, hold a lit incense stick next to your windows, doors, electrical boxes, plumbing fixtures, electrical outlets, ceiling fixtures, attic hatch, and other places where air may leak. If the smoke stream travels horizontally, you have located an air leak that may need caulking, sealing, or weather stripping.
- Seal any air leak that you find. Annie, get your (caulk) gun!

Expert Level

- If you have an un-insulated or under-insulated wall, attic, or floor, install new insulation with a higher R value. If applicable, apply for an energy credit to help offset the cost.

OR

- Help a friend install new insulation in her home.
- Help a friend test her home for air tightness and assist with sealing any air leaks.

{ Annie, get your (caulk) gun! }

continued ...



continued ...

Cleaning Up

My Fair Farmgirl

Beginner Level

- Research the difference between cruelty-free and organic health and beauty products versus commercially made.
- Over time, as you run out of each product, replace it with a healthy, preferably organic version. Examples: toothpaste, shampoo, body lotion.
- Make one simple product like lip balm, deodorant, or scented bath salts. Stay away from synthetic ingredients, using only natural ingredients.



Intermediate Level

- Continue to replace the health and beauty products that you use regularly with healthy, natural products.
- Try your hand at making cold or hot-process soap or a different version of lip balm, deodorant, or bath salts from the beginner level. Again, use only non-synthetic, natural ingredients.

Expert Level

- Now try making your own shampoo, body lotion, or body butter, or another similar item that uses a more complicated recipe than you used in the beginner or intermediate levels.
- Continue to replace the health and beauty products that you use regularly until all the products you use are healthy, natural choices.
- Create a gift basket for a friend with homemade health and beauty products and get her hooked also!

Mary Jane 





“

Nature looks dead in winter
because her life is gathered into
her heart. She calls her family
together within her inmost home
to prepare them for being scattered
abroad upon the face of the earth. ”

– Hugh Macmillan, 1871



Big welcome to our new and renewing Sisterhood members!

Adrienne Card
Allyson Neal
Amber Orcutt
Ande Jelley
Angel Strobel
Angela Pollitt
Anita Geisler
Ann Long
Ann Hughes
Ann Fadeley
Anne Erickson
April Dennis
Aprile Wicker
Audrey Frank
Barb Lykke
Barbara Gant
Barbara Grace
Becky Wickander
Beth Hohensee
Bonnie Ellis
Brenda Puntch
Brenda Kaiser
Brenda Pazar
Caity Frank
Candace Conrad
Carla Querner
Carol Neer
Carol Johnson
Carol A. Norwood

Carol Cownie
Carole Morris
Catherine Livingston
Charlotte Avedikian
Chehala Reed
Cheriann Reeves
Cheryl Severeide
Christine Wolfe
Christine Gravot
Cindy Trotter
Cindy Scott
CJ Armstrong
Claudia Ramsey
Corri Riebow
Cristina Abbenante
Crystal Kelso
Cynthia Sedlak
Cynthia Riegle
Cynthia Graziani
Cynthia Terherst
Dale Ann Staggs
Danelle Jelley
Dawn Bruce
Dawn Perry
Dawn Cox
Dawn Melanson
Dayna Mellberg
Deb Stoller
Debbie Anderson

Debbie Lee
Deborah Fenn
Deborah Queen
Debra Armijo
Deedee Dornback
Dena Corry
Denise Thompson
Diana Prollock
Diana Clark
Donna Oshaughnessy
Donna Kowicki
Dorie Von Thun Knott
Doris Meisell
Dwanna Whitener
Elizabeth Wasson
Ellen Bailey
Ellen Andersen
Erica Sullivan
Erin Bequette
Frances Zuelke
Gail Holzman
Glenda Golden
Heather Boo
Heather Neeper
Heidi Gonzales
Heike Boehnke-sharp
Holly Perdue
Holly Pennington
Iris Banks

Jamie Taylor
Jamie Herzmann
Jamie Sweeney
Jan Carreiro
Jan Scott Garlock
Jana Dewitt
Janelle Komorowski
Janet Coomes
Janice Hall
Jennifer Hamby
Jennifer Venema
Jennifer Lee
Jennifer Eagen-McCloskey
Jenny Simpson
Jessica Yonkovit
Jessica Spurgeon
Jill Frank
Jo Anne Willers
Joanne Clyde
Jodie Hoffman
Josie Bruner
Joy Stanton
Joyce Kuhn
Joyce Meza
Joyce Kinhead
Judi Perkins
Judy L. Goodrich
Judy Miller
Judy Fairheart



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

— Author Unknown



Judy Jones-McCown
Julia Feeley
Julianne Harris
Julie Camell
Kaitlyn Moran
Kara Matson
Karen Hardenburg
Karen Funderburg
Karen Tabloff
Karin Weaver
Kathleen Carpenter
Kathleen Bobbitt
Kathryn Sanderson
Kathryn O'Hara
Kathy Larson
Kathy Bond
Kathyleen Kangas
Katrina Smith
Kelsey Turner
Keri Jensen
Keri Ward
Kim Wingert
Kimberly Galbreath-Fleming
Kimberly Moran
Kiri Fellabaum
Kristen Parkinson
Kristen Braybrooke
Kristin Heisig Pennypacker
Kristina Mumma
Kyla Lenze
Laura Schwemm
Laurel Campbell
Lauren Sorgaard
Laurie Ludke
Laurie Keenan
Leigh Anne Duchene
Lexy Harris
Linda Cole
Linda Petersen
Linda Olivera
Lisa Mikula
Lisa Thielfoldt

Lisa Oller
Lissa Napora
Lora Rosencrans
Loretta Ivory
Lori Nickel
Lorice Amlin
Loyce Krogel
Lynnell Fulkerson
Maggie Walters
Mairi O'Sullivan
Mandi Wright
Margeaux Holland
Marilyn Krause
Marilyn Edlund
Marilyn Black
Marissa Blohm
Marjorie McDonald
Marla Sanders
Marlene Smolinski
Marri Olmstead
Marti Wynne
Mary Ann Baker
Mary Heft
Mary Steitz
Mary Dickey
Mary Turner
Mary Garipey
Mechele Davis
Megan Banks
Melanie Lawson
Melanie Herriott
Melissa Schirmer
Melissa Osborn
Melissa Clarke
Melissa Myers
Melody Larson
Micah Prine
Michelle Kinsella
Michelle Sweet-Foote
Michelle Kirby
Michelle Elick
Michelle Coomes

Michelle Seliga
Molly Norris
Nancy Fitts
Nancy Lee
Nancy Manley
Nancy Diercks
Nicole Jones
Norma Hart
Pam Zak
Pam Schrum
Pam Houge
Pamela McManus
Pamela Criswell
Patricia Walsh
Patricia Waldbillig
Patricia Stout
Penny Precopia
Penny Slater
Phyllis Inglesby
Rachel Neal
Rachelle Painter
Rebecca McGinnis
Rebecca Miller
Rebekka Boysen-Taylor
Renee McCausey
Renee Robinson
Renee Allan
Rita Cromes
Roberta Hunt
Robin Armstrong Miller
Robyn Barney
Ronda Clements
Rose Poole
Rosemarie Adams
Rosemary Schuette
Ruth Taylor
Ruthann Wilkens
Ruthie Cunniff
Sandra Denley
Sarah Frank
Shari Levy
Shari Traughber

Sharon Crosswhite
Sherone Taylor
Sherri Fedora
Sherrilyn Askew
Sherry Parks
Sherry Largent
Sonja Gasper
Staci Wickard
Stella Jack
Stephanie Lauth
Sue Daniel
Sue Szura
Sue Ryno
Susan Morris
Susan Kaar
Susanne Lamoureux
Suzy Maynard
Sylvia Jacobus
Tamara Burger
Tamaya Hoyt
Tammie Katzung
Tammy Trayer
Tara Dirks
Taysha Frank
Teree Lay
Teresa Ojala
Terri Goggin
Terrye Lucas
Theresa Hubbard
Tina Conklin
Tracy Shehab
Vera E. Turner
Vicki Johnson
Vicki Meeds
Vicki Garrett
Victoria Laise Jonas
Victoria Montoya
Vixie Friedman
Wendy Skovo
Yavonne Tudisco

Sister Loves

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

Megan's
PICKS
(JUST A CLICK AWAY)



STAFF WRITER / EDITOR
(SISTER #2)

February is always a favorite of mine. The pinks and reds that dominate the month make me happy. It's a good time for some cheery color because it's often still very cold and wintry here in Idaho. I'm also currently immersed in a novel about Rumi and love how he says things so eloquently.

You can visit Megan's picks by clicking on the photos.



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whiteliliedesigns



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Holidays at Home



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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 4-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).

Valentine's Day Among Friends

The older I get, the more certain I am that friendship is the most blessed gift we can exchange. I won't dispute the charm of romance, whether it's fluttery and fresh or sweetened with age, but no admirer's bouquet of roses can compare to the enduring gift of good friends. Friends offer us laughter, hugs, and a shoulder to cry on. They offer a trusty compass when we're having trouble finding our way. So, what better reason to celebrate this Valentine's Day than friends far and wide?

It's not the norm here in the U.S., but in other countries like Finland and Estonia, Valentine's Day is referred to as “Friend's Day.” In Guatemala and in El Salvador, Valentine's Day is known as Día del Amor y la Amistad, which means “Day of Love and Friendship.” These holidays don't leave anyone pining on the sidelines of unrequited love; rather, they encourage everyone to shower appreciation on friends and lovers alike.

In a nutshell, it doesn't matter if you're happily married or crossing your fingers for Cupid's arrow this Valentine's Day, you can guarantee yourself the rush of true love when you dote on your dearest gal pals. And if you're looking for ways to lavish them with affection but prefer to dodge the commercial candy-and-flowers routine, I have a few sweet notions up my sleeve to help you celebrate.

Grab the Girlfriend Next Door

If you're lucky, you have a few good friends nearby (maybe not next door, but at least in the same town). If so, grab 'em and cook up a Valentine's Day plan fit for a lady. Spare no lace, ribbons, or organic chocolate. Break out the heart-shaped cookie cutters and pink satin. If you ask me, this holiday has “feminine” written all over it, so why not go with it?

1. Organize a “Girls Only” slumber party. Getting silly, frilly, and fun is a wildly entertaining (and inexpensive) way to bond. Sometimes, we forget how therapeutic it can be to let our hair down among other women. Rent favorite movies, bake homemade goodies, and roll everyone's hair into rag curlers. Buy cheap pairs of flip flops and transform them into starlet slippers with ribbons, lace, and faux fur. The sky's the limit—just leave room for lots of laughter and good, old-fashioned girl talk.
2. If you're not a fan of all the frill, think more along the lines of a coffee klatsch, tea party, knitting night, or “mending mixer,” where everyone brings her backlog of clothing to stitch. Getting together for a low-key activity that everyone appreciates is a sure way to treat your girlfriends to the kind of comfort and conversation that we so often lack in our daily lives. Just make sure there are enough heart-shaped cookies to go around!



3. For you “wild” women out there, how about a day hike? If your neck of the woods is blanketed in snow, make it an afternoon of cross-country skiing. Getting “down to earth” is one of the most gratifying experiences girlfriends can share. Between the fresh air and the mutual pumping of blood, there is a certain mix of liberation and dependence on one another that fortifies friendships like nothing else. Of course, in the spirit of Valentine’s Day, your party can wear fluffy pink stocking caps or tie bows around your hiking poles. And don’t forget the organic chocolate for celebrating at the summit.

Catch Up with Friends Afar

Just because your best buddy lives beyond arm’s reach doesn’t mean you can’t make each other’s day special. A token as seemingly trivial as a phone call can make more of a difference than you might expect. Dial her up, establish a good time to talk over cups of rose-hip tea, and make it a date. While you’re waiting for the moment to arrive, doll up your own surroundings for the occasion: a cozy chair, a special cup and saucer, a vase of flowers next to the phone. When you hear her voice on the line, it’ll feel like she’s right there, sharing the love. One friend I know does this with her mother on special occasions over dinner, both of them “meeting up and/or dining out” on Skype.

And what about those long-lost girlfriends from high school? How fun would it be to connect after all these years? These days, it’s easier than ever. One of the biggest perks of modern cyber-surfing technology is connecting with friends who have fallen out of touch. Even if your friends have married since you last heard from them, they will likely be listed by both their maiden and married names, making them that much easier to track down for a virtual Valentine’s Day reunion.

In 1847, Esther Allen Howland was inspired by English valentine cards that her father sold in his Massachusetts stationery store and decided to make some of her own. Little did she know how popular her handmade creations would be, drawing \$5,000 in orders! Undaunted by the challenge, Esther recruited four friends to help fulfill the orders in revolutionary assembly-line style. They cut out small lithographs of sentimental subjects, placed them on glazed paper backgrounds, assembled layers of lace paper, ribbons, and silk to frame the cards, and pasted printed sentiments within. The cards were an instant sensation, and Esther’s business boomed. In 1881, she sold it to the George C. Whitney Company and retired. For more about her history, click [here](#).



- Don’t toss those cardboard take-out containers. Gussy them up and use them to gift things like chocolate or homemade cupcakes or cookies.



Meg

Sister Loves

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

Carol's
PICKS
(JUST A CLICK AWAY)



GRAPHIC DESIGNER,
UKULELE ENTHUSIAST
(SISTER #3)

What girl doesn't like a pretty hat? Here are my Etsy favorites, all wrapped up in hearts for a pretty in pink Valentine's Day!

You can visit Carol's picks by clicking on the photos.

ThinkPinkBows



GoldenDreamFinds



LaHatterieMillinery



PerfectoAccessories



ElisaShine



ArishaHatters



JulietsCapulets



LifesAnExpedition



TheGeekBowtique





moda

BEE MY HONEY

by *Mary Jane* ♥

The beleaguered honeybee needs our love now more than ever. "Won't you *Bee My Honey*, oh tiny wee one? Come look," I whisper. "This year, I've planted extra honeysuckle, dozens of butterfly bushes, patches of phlox, and a field of clover for your nectar needs. Your journey is long and hard; let us help!"

For every yard of my new *Bee My Honey* fabric that is sold, I'm able to continue supporting the important work of TheHoneybeeConservancy.org. Thanks for bee-ing the change with me!

Ask for my 100% cotton *Bee My Honey* fabric at your favorite quilt store, February 2014 or online at FatQuarterShop.com.





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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.

Going to the Dentist

My kids' dentist is one of those pediatric ones. It's decorated with a jungle theme, so picture if you will, dear reader, green walls, a painted starry sky, and tons of stuffed jungle animals all over the place. The entire staff is so fabulously sweet that I'm actually quite stunned you don't acquire cavities while you're there, even if you had none when you walked through the monkey-decorated door. It's their job to make the little kiddies comfy and keep them from melting down in fear, so they will spontaneously break into song or a short, soft-shoe number to keep the tears at bay. It's like being in a musical. Their voices are like what you'd hear if you turned on *Sesame Street*, and I can only imagine that when these professionals get home at night after an eight-hour shift of pretending to be Mr. Rogers on speed, they collapse on their sofas with a bottle of hard liquor and watch hockey all night.

Now, I have to go to a regular dentist, like a grown-up. Last time I got Helga the Hygienist, who made my gums bleed like crazy while she chattered on about her life. Then came the doctor, and here's an excerpt from our conversation:

Doc: Why do you have a chip in your front tooth?

Me: Well, I was sewing a baby blanket for my twin niece and nephew a few years back, and the needle got stuck in the fleece, and I pulled it out with my teeth.

Doc: Oh my gosh! Hey, Helga! You gotta hear this one!

Me, repeating the story three more times to a crowd.

Doc: Doesn't it bother you?

Me: Uh, no, seeing as how I can't see it from my perspective ...

Doc: Well, it bothers me!

Me: Well, by all means, we want you to be comfortable.

Doc: Agreed! Let's file that sucker down.

Filing commences, complete with the smell of something burning. I learn later, this is my tooth.

Doc: Oh my, I feel so much better!

Me: Fladlcoodgelp. (Glad I could help).

“She laughs at everything you say.
Why? Because she has fine teeth.”

— Benjamin Franklin



photo: Wikimedia, Spaarnestad Photo, Dutch Nationaal Archief

Sister Loves

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



GRAPHIC DESIGNER
(SISTER #6)

It's February, and I can't help being excited for Valentine's Day! I've been dying to make a Valentine's Day wreath for my front door. I found two really good tutorials I'm going to try and I encourage you to, as well. Also, I love DIY valentine cards. They are more personal and so much fun to give and receive. Here are three favorite cards I'm going to try. Happy Valentine's Day to all!!!

You can visit Saralou's picks by clicking on the photos.



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GINSENG

(*Panax quinquefolius*)

NATURAL

ORGANIC



American Ginseng is a member of the Araliaceae family and can be found growing with bright red berries under moist, shady canopies. Native to the eastern forested mountains of the North American continent, the Chinese consider it a superior choice to Asian ginseng for improving immunity, increased mental performance, and balance. However, popularity of this root as an adrenal tonic and vitality boosting herb has severely impacted the wild populations in this region, making organically grown American Ginseng the most ecological choice.

Traditional Preparations

American Ginseng can be taken as an extract, tea, or capsule. Some people also enjoy the mildly stimulating effects felt from chewing on its roots.

Herbal Curiosities

The word Panax is derived from the Greek word "pan" which means "all" and "akos" which means "cure". At its peak, wild Ginseng root was harvested and sold for \$1000 per pound.

WWW.MOUNTAINROSEHERBS.COM 800.879.3337

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.”

Homeschool Themes

It’s time for a homeschool reality check, farmgirl moms! And what better time for it than a brand new year, a new semester, and a clean slate (pardon my homeschool pun!). With the first semester and the holidays well behind us, how did it go for you and your students? Did you accomplish the goals you set? Was the process fun? Alive? Did you keep it flexible enough to incorporate spontaneity and serendipity, in addition to the well-planned academics? What, if anything, will you change this semester?

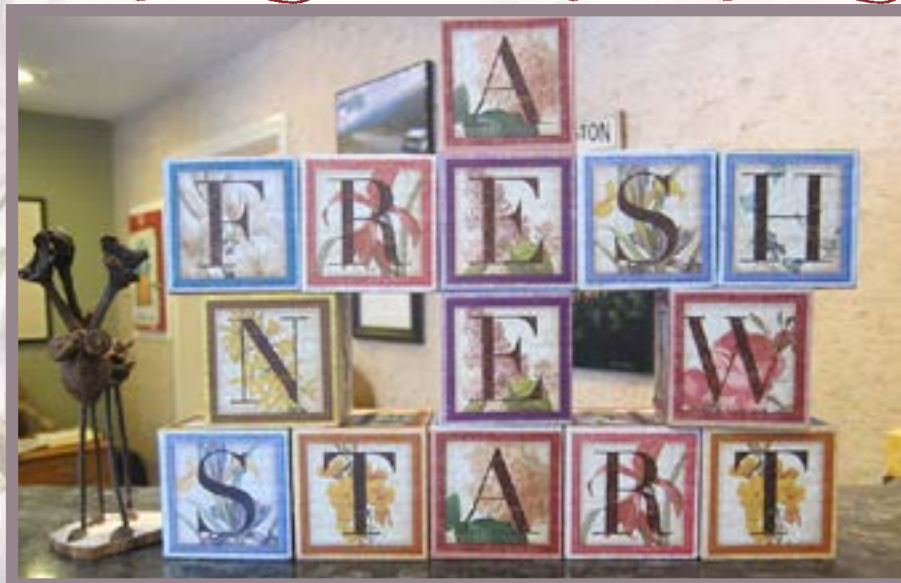
Lesson plans were always valuable guidelines I created for each of my children (as well as for myself) to keep us pointing in the right direction. They are organizational tools that allow me the peace of mind to know I won’t leave any obvious gaps in my children’s education, and also help me structure my day. But often, some of the best yearly “lessons” are thematic rather than specific.

When I was younger, I used to make New Year’s resolutions—specific goals for the year I hoped to accomplish. They were things like losing five pounds, or walking a mile a day, or doing a daily yoga routine. Always gung-ho on January 1, life would often intervene over the course of the year, preventing me from consistently sustaining the activity. Consequently, I would get discouraged and feel like I’d somehow failed, and any enthusiasm I might have started out with would dwindle along with the days of the year. While some people might be fine with resolutions, I have found them to be more a recipe for failure than success.

Somewhere in my 40s, I transitioned over to having a yearly “theme” instead of a resolution. The thing I most needed to focus on would almost always present itself to me without my having to laboriously figure it out. There is a deep, inner part of us that innately knows what our greatest personal needs are, or the lessons we most need to learn. If we are in tune to our small inner voice, we will discover that it is practically screaming these things to us! For me, some of these in the past have been:

- being frugal
- being present (living in the now)
- being kind
- setting boundaries and learning to say “no”
- living simply

Last year, my theme was all about “finding my voice.” It was one of the most pivotal years of my life, and I grew by leaps and bounds. I “found it” in so many ways ... as a homeschool mom, a wife, a business owner, a writer, and an artist.



But also, I discovered my voice as a person unconnected to all those external labels. I found MY voice ... just *mine*! I discovered that I not only had a voice to be “found,” but that it had a LOT to say! As a result, it was a banner year for me.

This year, my theme is “getting down to business.” Not only does this mean focusing on the business I own (an inn), but attending to business in many diverse areas that have a lot of unfinished business and details to attend to.

What's your theme? What are your children's? Do you even have one? Whether it be personal or related to homeschooling specifically, focusing on a theme is a win-win situation all around, and as important as any “real” subject. Would you like more patience, perhaps? To be more organized? Following through with projects to completion? Unlike resolutions, which can be broken, themes are a one-day-at-a-time *process* that are as valuable for your homeschool students as they are for you. Some days, you'll do better than others; some days, you'll appear to fail miserably. But over the course of the year, you will end up further along the path than you ever dreamed possible.

Have your children choose a theme of their own. Give it as a homeschool assignment and a year-long exercise. Have them write about it, possibly keep a journal or a scrapbook of things they do that help them (and you) grow in this area. This “course work” may not be on any Scope and Sequence list for their grade level, but it will be one of the most valuable homeschool lessons learned, and everyone gets an A+ for effort!!





Farm Kitchen

Where the Cookin' Begins!



{FARM KITCHEN} with Ashley 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're raising their family in the same house (two little girls: Adria, 4, and baby Alina).

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.

One-pot Mac & Cheese

Without fail, every time I ask my daughter what she would like for dinner, she replies "macaroni and cheese" with excitement. I think if she had her way, she would subsist entirely off of a combination of macaroni and cheese, broccoli, and raspberries. She has never needed convincing when it comes to fruit. Walks through the produce section in the summer make her eyes light up and send her pinging from one display to the next with glee. Vegetables, on the other hand, are an entirely different animal. Broccoli is the only veggie I can convince her to eat with regularity. If I decide to get a little crazy and serve up some cauliflower or asparagus, our dog thanks me for her portion. It's a small hurdle that has forced me to get creative. She notices the veggies in this dish, but it all tastes so good together that her protests are limited (it also doesn't hurt that the tomatoes stirred in at the end happen to be one of her favorites). My husband and I enjoy it because it is a macaroni and cheese that we *want* to eat. This dish is also super-convenient because it's cooked in one pot, and the whole thing takes only 45 minutes start to finish.

Loaded One-pot Mac & Cheese

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

Makes: 6 generous servings

12 ozs Italian sausage, sliced
3 carrots, sliced
4 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
½ t salt
10 button mushrooms, sliced
1½ cups chicken broth
2 cups elbow macaroni

1 cup cream
6 cups lacinto kale, coarsely diced
1½ cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
1 cup shredded Asiago cheese
1 cup grape tomatoes, halved
½ cup parsley leaves, minced

1. Add sausage, carrots, garlic, and salt to a 5-qt. Dutch oven. Cook over medium heat for 8 minutes, occasionally stirring. Add mushrooms and cook for 4 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Add chicken broth and bring mixture to a low simmer. Add elbow macaroni, stir, and cover. After 4 minutes, uncover and stir to prevent to macaroni from cooking onto the bottom of the Dutch oven. Cover and cook for 4–5 more minutes, until macaroni is al dente.
3. Stir in cream and kale and cook uncovered for 2–3 minutes, or until kale is slightly wilted. Add both cheeses and stir until all cheese is melted. Remove from heat.
4. Stir in grape tomatoes and parsley and enjoy!

Garden Gate

Bloom Where You're Planted



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



MARYJANE
CEO (QUEEN BEE)

February brings a flurry of garden dreams along with snow showers. For us garden girls, it's a tantalizing time to thumb through endless garden catalogs, order seeds and other gardening goodies, and take time to dream our gardens into reality. Here are a few of my favorite finds.



Angela's Garden



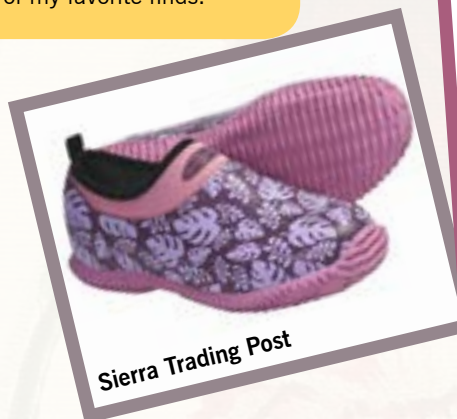
Garden Tool Co.



ArtisanHands



Sloggers



Sierra Trading Post



Apollo Precision Tools

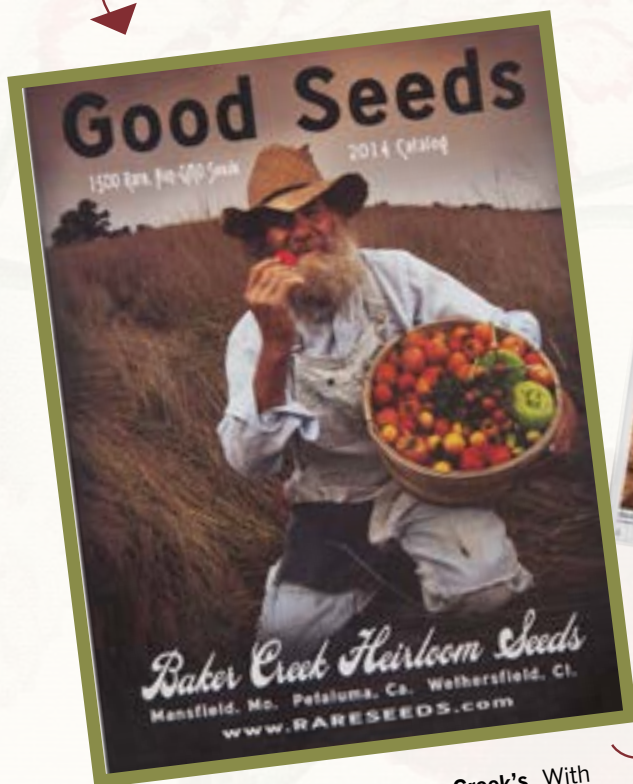


Garden Tool Co.



You can visit MaryJane's picks by clicking on the photos.

I just discovered this great heirloom seeds resource when owner Lisa Von Sauner commented on one of my blog posts. Lisa started **Amishland Heirloom Seeds** about 8 years ago in order to share her heirloom, heritage, exotic organically raised seeds. All of Lisa's seeds come from her own plants, grown on rich central Pennsylvania farmland. Great resource, Lisa!



My favorite seed catalog is **Baker Creek's**. With over 200 pages and hundreds of full-color photos showcasing the variety and beauty of heirloom vegetables, it's the stuff dreams are made of! Baker Creek offers over 1,500 rare, non-GMO seeds. And the owner, Emilee Gettle, is a longtime Farmgirl Connection chatroom friend!



Sister Loves

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

Karina's PICKS (JUST A CLICK AWAY)



Macy's



GRAPHIC DESIGNER
(SISTER #4)

Lately, I've been thinking about adding some fun colors and items to my wardrobe. Why not start this month with classic February colors? Here are some favorites that I would love to add to my closet.

You can visit Karina's picks by clicking on the photos.



LizHutnick



yastikizi



Shabby Apple



TurbanDiva

30

February 2014

Idaho Necklace

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daily entries fresh from the farm



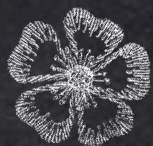
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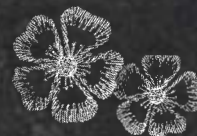
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Stitching & Crafting Room



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.

Redwork Valentine

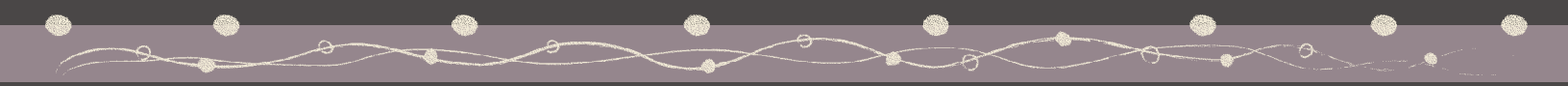
My mom has a talent for making every holiday feel special. On Valentine's Day, she sends handwritten letters, handfuls of chocolates, and incredibly thoughtful handmade gifts. Last year, she made several of these sweet embroidered muslin and velvet hearts, and I knew immediately that I wanted to share them with you. This year, I am inspired to make a few of my own. A basket full of hearts in the living room will be so fun! Whether you make one or a dozen, Mama's hand-stitched hearts make a quick winter embroidery project.

For this project you will need:

- muslin
- velvet
- red embroidery floss
- stuffing
- embroidery needle
- embroidery hoop
- scissors

Begin by drawing a heart on a piece of muslin, making it about 1" larger around than you want it to be when it is finished. Place your fabric in an embroidery hoop and begin stitching your design using red embroidery floss. Making small, even stitches, cover your muslin heart with swirls, stripes, or French knots. Once your embroidery is complete, cut out the muslin heart and a matching red velvet heart. Pin the fabrics to one another with right sides together and stitch around the edge of your heart, leaving a 2"-wide opening on one side. You can use a sewing machine for this part or just stitch it up by hand. Turn the heart inside out and fill with wool or cotton stuffing until quite firm. Hand-stitch the heart closed using a running stitch.







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](#)

Glass Act



Recently, I perused a few sites designed for and by Mason jar collectors. They're usually places for serious collectors to show off their finds, pick up tips on finding new (old) jars, and share stories. Then there's the occasional forum scattered with questions from excited newbies. These people have usually come across old boxes of Mason jars without really knowing what they have. You can practically hear the breathless anticipation in their typed questions: "How much can I get for this jar?" "What's the value on this?" "What's a jar like this worth, anyway?"

The answer is complicated. I'm head-over-heels for my jars, and obviously, I'm not alone. Whether we're pickling pecks of peppers or blackberry jamming 'til dawn, we rely on the Mason jar to keep everything neat, tidy, safe, and beautiful. And the story behind them—well, that's special, too.



In 1810, Francois (Nicolas) Appert, a Frenchman and expert brewer, chef, and food preserver, designed a procedure for putting up food in sealed glass using a heated water bath and the principle of air-exclusion. Those of us who "can" (bottle?) our food will recognize that familiar process—it's one we can practically perform in our sleep. But at the time, it was revolutionary. You have to remember, this was way before we knew anything about bacteria or pasteurization. Appert was taking a guess, one based on experience and a lucky hunch. (Can you imagine discovering such a thing on a whim?)

People began to preserve their food with Appert's system, but things weren't exactly airtight, if you'll pardon the pun. Hand-dripped wax seals, paper circles, and all manner of messy and unreliable methods dominated the canning scene. Then, in 1858, a New York City tinsmith named John L. Mason (bless his heart) invented a machine that could cut threaded lids. He saw the potential for applying this to food preservation, an area that other innovators before him had tried and failed to improve. Mason designed a glass container set-up with a threaded top, zinc lid, and rubber ring. After this, the Mason jar took off in the city and country alike—canning was easier, safer, and more popular than ever. Even hand-crank blenders (glorified egg beaters) were originally designed to fit Mason jars. And they're so useful that the Ball plant produces 585,000 jars (and counting) every day.

So how can we best show our respect for these deceptively basic homesteading accessories? I'd say, by giving them long, practical lives as the multi-purpose workhorses they are. And if you're short on ideas, just lemme bend your ear for a few.

Measuring cups. Salad-dressing shakers. Holders for spare change.

Or spare pickles.



Dried beans and pasta storage. Small toy containers. Drinking glasses. Rings and earrings kept in the small ones. Necklaces and bracelets hung from branches perched in the large ones. Trusty soap and detergent holders. Homes for mines of body salt, clouds of cotton balls, and stacks of Q-tips. A happy sight: all full of candies or candy-colored office doodads like paper clips and rubber bands. Oh! A large Mason jar full of perfectly sharpened, yellow, #2 pencils. Be still my beating heart.

Corrals for tiny hardware bits and pieces. An at-a-glance location for your beads and buttons, spools of yarn, ribbons, and fabric scraps. The vehicle for neat stacks of chocolate chippers or a whimsical jumble of brownie cubes—all tied up with a pink bow and presented with a bashful smile. A beautiful home for bouquets or for a luminous citronella candle on a muggy, buggy summer's night. Flower vases. A big one all full o' lemonade (too big for one person, truth be told, but you're going to drink it on the porch all by yourself anyway—your little secret if there's something extra poured in for luck).

A fermentation cave for sourdough starters or vinegar mothers. Fresh milk from my dairy cow, Maizy, generous sweetheart that she is. With a present tucked inside, your jar's a reusable gift wrap! But with apple-cider vinegar and a squirt of dish soap, it's much less romantic—a fruit-fly trap. A glass encampment for little green plastic army guys. A good way to keep an eye on how much of my **Budget Mix** you have left (overt plug). A home for key collections, seashell collections, or special pebbles that your kids gave you as a collection. A clothespin bin or a soap-bar scrap pile. A sprouting jar. A support for your best-loved wooden spoons. A treasure chest for last season's heirloom seeds.

So back to that question: what is your Mason jar really worth? It's priceless.

MaryJane 



- Check out Pincushion Appeal for other fun pincushion ideas from **Just Another Button Company**.



Erin McIntosh is the Marketing Manager at Mountain Rose Herbs. Born and raised in the sunny Florida swamps, Erin now makes her home in the evergreen Pacific Northwest, where she studied herbalism, botany, and ethical wildcrafting at the Columbine School of Botanical Studies. She spends her days crafting culinary recipes, making botanical illustrations, gardening, hiking, foraging for wild edibles, photographing pretty flowers, and formulating herbal medicine in the magnificent Oregon Cascades.

Homemade Fire Cider

Mmm ... how I love this hot and sweet, zesty, vinegary recipe!

Fire cider is a traditional cold remedy with deep roots in folk medicine. The tasty combination of vinegar infused with powerful immune-boosting, anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, anti-viral, decongestant, and spicy circulatory movers makes this recipe especially pleasant and easy to incorporate into your daily diet to help boost the immune system, stimulate digestion, and get you nice and warmed up on cold days.

Because this is a folk preparation, the ingredients can change from year to year, depending on when you make it and what's growing around you. The standard base ingredients are apple-cider vinegar, garlic, onion, ginger, horseradish, and hot peppers, but there are plenty of other herbs that can be thrown in for added kick. This year, I had lots of spicy jalapeños and vibrant rosemary in the garden, so I used those, along with some organic turmeric powder in the cupboard and fresh lemon peel. Some people like to bury their fire-cider jar in the ground for a month while it extracts and then dig it up during a great feast to celebrate the changing of the seasons.

Fire cider can be taken straight by the spoonful, added to organic veggie juice (throw in some olives and pickles and think non-alcoholic, health boosting Bloody Mary), splashed in fried rice, or drizzled on a salad with good olive oil. You can also save the strained pulp and mix it with shredded veggies like carrots, cabbage, broccoli, and fresh herbs to make delicious and aromatic stir-fries and spring rolls. I like to take 1 T each morning to help warm me up and rev the immune system, or 3 T at the first sign of a cold.

Fire Cider

- ½ cup fresh, organic ginger root, peeled and grated
- ½ cup fresh, organic horseradish root, peeled and grated
- 1 medium organic onion, peeled and chopped
- 10 cloves organic garlic, peeled and crushed or chopped
- 2 organic jalapeño peppers, chopped
- 1 T organic turmeric powder
- zest and juice from 1 organic lemon
- several sprigs fresh, organic rosemary or 2 T dried rosemary leaves
- organic apple-cider vinegar
- raw local honey to taste





Prepare all of your cold-fighting roots, fruits, and herbs and place them in a quart jar. (If you've never grated fresh horseradish, be prepared for a powerful sinus opening experience!) Use a piece of natural parchment paper or wax paper under the lid to keep the vinegar from touching the metal. Shake well. Store in a dark, cool place for 1 month and shake daily.

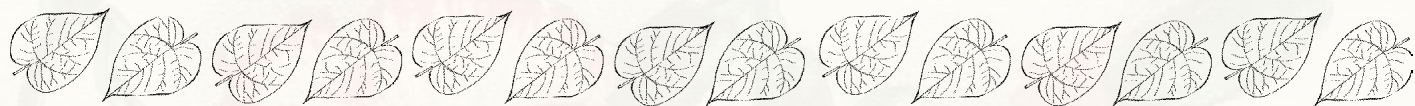
After 1 month, use cheesecloth to strain out the pulp, pouring the vinegar into a clean jar. Be sure to squeeze as much of the liquid goodness as you can from the pulp while straining. Next comes the honey: Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup honey and stir until incorporated. Taste your cider and add another $\frac{1}{4}$ cup honey until you reach the desired sweetness.

Ingredient variations: thyme, cayenne, rosehips, ginseng, orange, grapefruit, schizandra berries, astragalus, parsley, burdock, oregano, peppercorns, beets.

Fire-cider Vinaigrette

- organic Fire Cider
- organic extra virgin olive oil
- prepared mustard
- organic garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
- salt
- pepper

Mix together 1 part Fire Cider, 3 parts olive oil, and $\frac{1}{2}$ part prepared mustard. Add garlic, salt, and pepper to taste. Whirl the mixture together in a blender until combined or shake vigorously in a capped glass jar.





Outpost

Unleashing Your Inner Wild



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

Hand-crafted Twig Letters

Hand-crafted twig letters that speak to the heart are easy to make. They can mount on most any wall or rest in a windowsill. Besides names, create words or phrases like DREAM, WILD at HEART, LAUGH, and HOME.

If you venture outside for a walk this time of year, there's an abundance of dried treasures. Last year's growth is this year's bounty. Using a pair of common garden snips, bring home an array of twigs (from dormant, but still-alive bushes so they're still somewhat supple) at least 1/4" in diameter. As you design your letters, cut and quickly sand the cut ends of each piece. Once you have them all laid out, take 26-gauge wire and 1/2" finish nails and start putting them together, gently tapping the nails into the ends and then wrapping with wire to reinforce (raffia and string also work, or a combination of all four as shown here.) Adorn with treasures found in nature and 16-gauge wire curlicues poked into the ends of the twigs. This is a fun project to do with children.

Mary Jane 







Cleaning Up

The Work of Our Hands



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

Magical Overnight Breakfast Bakes

Want to learn a cool magic trick that's sure to clean out your fridge?

No funny business, I promise. Just tell the fam you're going to clean out your refrigerator and what you find will be tomorrow morning's breakfast. And then, to really make them shake their heads, tell them it's going to happen mostly while you sleep. Watch them scratch their heads. Then whip up one of my overnight breakfast bakes.

You may have thought that the "set-it-and-forget-it" lifestyle was irreconcilable with your choice to eat organic, but you were wrong. All that stands between you and a Sweet French Toast Bake or Savory Strata is a little planning and some sleight-of-hand.

I'm talking about cutting up a few slices of old bread, whisking around some eggs, dreaming up the most delightful of add-ins, and popping the whole thing in the refrigerator to marinate its way to Delicious Land. It's just that easy. And the extra slice of wonderful here is that letting these casseroles sit overnight actually improves their flavor and texture. I should know. My B&B guests over the years have given my clean-out-my-fridge strata and French toast rave reviews, in writing actually, in several of my guest books. So I thought I'd share.

When I write a recipe, I'm all about giving people the power to customize, so I'd like you to think of these as formulas rather than recipes. Strawberries not in season? Blueberries are perfect. Family doesn't like sausage or bacon? Dig through that veggie bin and experiment. You can borrow a tip or two from my suggested variations, but using up what you have on hand works every time.





Sweet French Toast Casserole

Serves 8

12 slices bread
16 ozs cream cheese
1 cup fresh or thawed frozen fruit
12 eggs
2 cups milk
½ cup maple syrup

Cut bread into 1" cubes. Place half of the cubes in a generously buttered 9" x 13" clear glass baking dish (this is important, trust me, otherwise it doesn't bake right). Cut cream cheese into ½" cubes and layer on top of bread. Top with fruit and remaining bread. In a large bowl, mix together eggs, milk, and syrup. Pour over bread mixture. Use a spatula to press ingredients down into liquid. Cover pan and refrigerate 8 hours or overnight. Remove ½ hour before baking, and preheat oven to 350°F. Bake, covered with foil, for 45 minutes. Uncover and bake until top is golden brown and mixture is set in center, 25–30 minutes. Serve with maple or fruit syrups and vanilla yogurt.



Variation Ideas:

Ginger Peach: Use peach chunks. Add ½ t ground ginger to egg mixture before pouring over bread.
Optional: top casserole with ½ cup chopped cashews before refrigerating.

Compote Style: Use ¾ cup mixed dried fruit (like apricots, prunes, raisins, and cranberries) rehydrated for 20 minutes in ¾ cup hot apple cider. Proceed with recipe as usual.

Blueberry Spice: Use fresh or thawed frozen blueberries. Add 1 t cinnamon to egg mixture before pouring over bread.

Cherry Almond: Use pitted cherries. Add 1 t almond extract to egg mixture before pouring over bread.
Optional: top casserole with ½ cup sliced almonds before refrigerating.

continued ...



continued ...

Savory Strata

Serves 8

2 T butter	12 eggs
1 cup diced meat	2 cups milk
1½ cups vegetables	1 t salt
12 slices bread	¼ t black pepper
1½ cups shredded cheese	3 T Dijon mustard

Melt butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add meat and vegetables to pan. Cook, stirring occasionally, until meat is cooked through and vegetables are crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. Cut bread into 1" cubes. Place half the cubes in a buttered 13" x 9" x 2" glass baking dish. Scatter half of cheese and all of meat and vegetables over bread. Top with remaining bread. In a large bowl, mix together eggs, milk, salt, pepper, and mustard. Pour over bread mixture. Use a spatula to press ingredients down into liquid. Top with remaining cheese. Cover pan and refrigerate 8 hours or overnight. Remove ½ hour before baking, and preheat oven to 350°F. Bake, covered with foil, for 45 minutes. Uncover and bake until top is golden brown and mixture is set in center, 25–30 minutes.

Variation Ideas:

Farmhouse: Use Monterey Jack cheese, bulk sausage, sliced mushrooms, and onions. Add ½ t fennel seed and ½ t dried thyme to egg mixture before pouring over bread.

Rueben: Use Swiss cheese, corned beef cubes, sauerkraut, and dark rye bread.

Greek: Use crumbled feta cheese (drained), chopped spinach, and chopped red onion. After casserole is finished baking, top with chopped Kalamata olives.

BLT: Use Cheddar cheese with cooked, crumbled bacon; diced tomatoes; and chopped red pepper. Serve on a bed of shredded lettuce.



Mary Jane ♥



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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To find out more,
scan here with
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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:

Glamping Party & Sleepover, Glendale, Arizona, March 21–22, 2014, (see p. 49)

Farmgirls on the Loose Get-a-Way, Brown County State Park, Nashville, IN, May 30–June 1, 2014, (see p. 49)

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!)



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to what
dresses
were
always
meant
to be
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# February Sister



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February 2014

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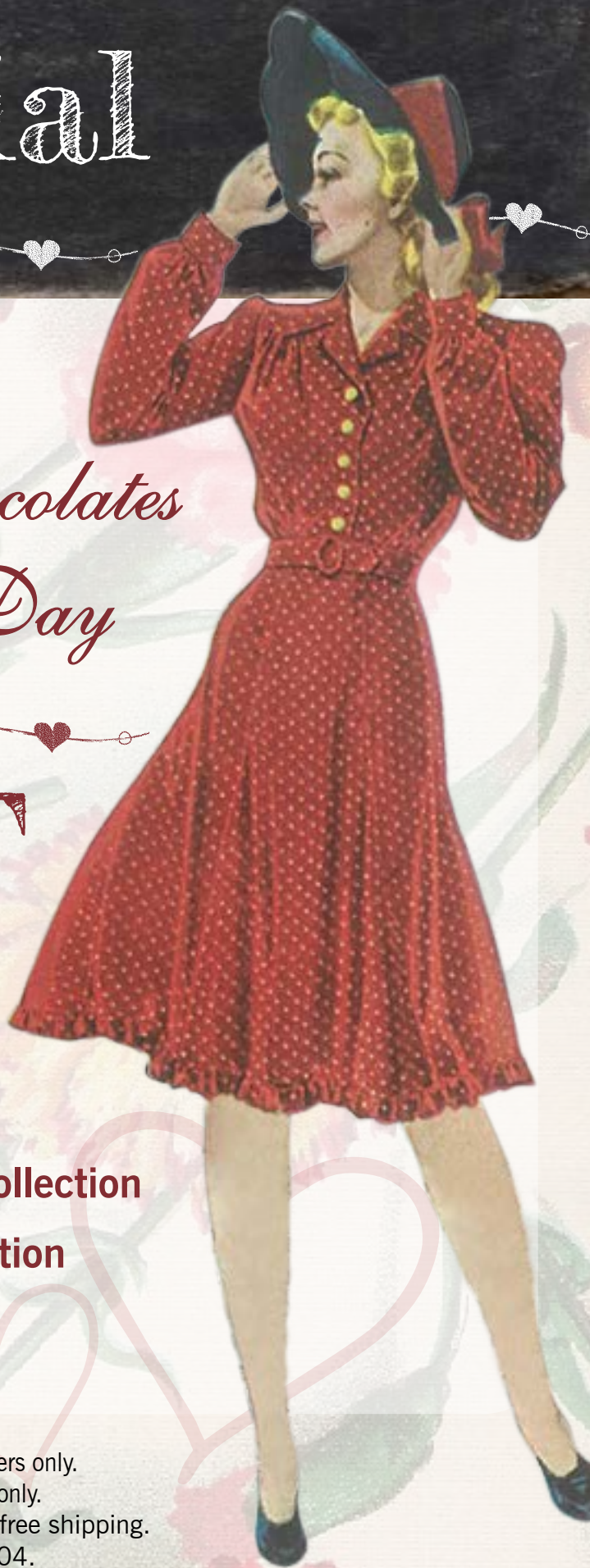
# Sisterhood Special

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Organic cotton is safer for you, for farmers, for your children, and for the environment. My 325 thread count percale sheets feel softer, smell cleaner, and are more hypoallergenic. Not only do they coordinate with the bed sets in my MaryJane's Home collection, the fitted sheet has deep corners that fit even the thickest of mattresses.

farmgirl ingenuity • beauty • humor • honesty

## WHY PERCALE?

In a percale sheet, yarns are woven one over and one under each other to produce a tighter, higher-quality weave than that of standard sheets. Percale sheets are longer lasting, hold up better to washing, and are smoother. They also have that crisp, old-fashioned, delicious feel from an era gone by when sheets were built to last.



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## Farmgirl Chatter



What are farmgirls chatting about?

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



## Farmgirl Calendar

### Glamping Party & Sleepover, Glendale, Arizona, March 21–22, 2014, Submitted by ceejay48

Hey there, glamping farmgirls, The Farmgirls Southwest Henhouse will be hosting their 2nd “BACKYARD GLAMPER PARTY & SLEEPOVER” in 2014.

It will be in Phoenix, Arizona (more specifically, at the home of my daughter, Robin, aka Farmgirl “Birdie71,” in Glendale, Arizona). DATES: MARCH 21–22, 2014. We plan to pitch tents in the backyard, have a tea party, a potluck supper, a craft project, lots and lots of laughter, and farmgirl fun! Details to come. You can e-mail me for more info or if you have any questions. Stay tuned!

CJ, “mother hen” for the Farmgirls Southwest Henhouse

### Farmgirls on the Loose Get-a-Way, Brown County State Park, Nashville, IN, May 30–June 1, 2014

ALL events optional, but plan to have fun!

Friday, May 30: Check-in, you will need to reserve your own campsite. Our group will be camping in Buffalo Ridge Electric Campground. I will have 30 individual bags to give you with what is going on in the surrounding area and Indiana. Friday evening around 5 p.m., we will have a crockpot dinner for any farmgirls who would like to join us. If you would like to bring a crockpot meal/dessert etc., that would be great! The more the merrier, plus some good eatin’! Please bring plate and fork, plus a drink.

Saturday, May 31: We will do a Dutch-oven breakfast—if you have a recipe you just love, bring the fixins along to fix at our campsite, around 9 a.m. Please bring plate and fork, plus a drink. Hiking and/or swimming. Trip into Nashville, IN, 11 a.m. This is only a few minutes from the State Park. There are tons of the cutest shops and restaurants, plus lots of artists who display their works.

Crafting: Farmgirl coaster or any craft anyone else would like to present.

Glamping Prom Night: Saturday night at the Seasons Restaurant. I will ask about reservations for a large group. This is also really close to the park. Please let me know ahead of time if you plan to attend (restaurant needs our numbers).

Sunday, June 1: Morning get-together to share our Indiana Glamping Experience, 10 a.m. We could do a breakfast pitch-in if everyone is in favor of doing so. Say our farewells, “UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN.” Happy trails, farmgirls!

Contact: Farmgirl Linda Sue at [mcallenml@gmail.com](mailto:mcallenml@gmail.com), (812) 988-5245

continued ...





continued ...

**A Farm of My Own: What did you name your farm/ranch and why? Submitted by 1badmamawolf**

When my husband and I first bought our land 36 years ago, one of the first things we did was fence and cross fence, along with pastures and corrals. No matter how hard we tried, and with the proper equipment and many people helping, not one fence here came out straight, so we decided that since we had not named the place yet, it would become "Bent Fence Farm," and the name stuck. Most of my neighbors have been here forever also, and they know the story, but when someone new comes along, I have to tell the story, and they look at me with a total question mark on their faces. But even with crooked fences, they are *my* fences, and I love them all, lol. Share your story [here](#).



**Across the Fence: Seasonal Haiku. Submitted by brightmeadow**

On Monday's snow day here in the Midwest, I was moved to write a haiku. I thought I would share here.

**Wind Chill-Forty Below**

Gusts sculpt frozen dunes  
Hot gas furnace blows warm air  
Just thin glass between

Want to join in? Remember the haiku form is 3 lines with 5 syllables in the first line, 7 syllables in the 2nd line, and 5 syllables in the third line. Other suggestions include nature as a subject, with the first line maybe referencing the season, and the second line having an action or verb, and the last line can express a feeling. But the rules are made to be broken! Share your Haiku [here](#).

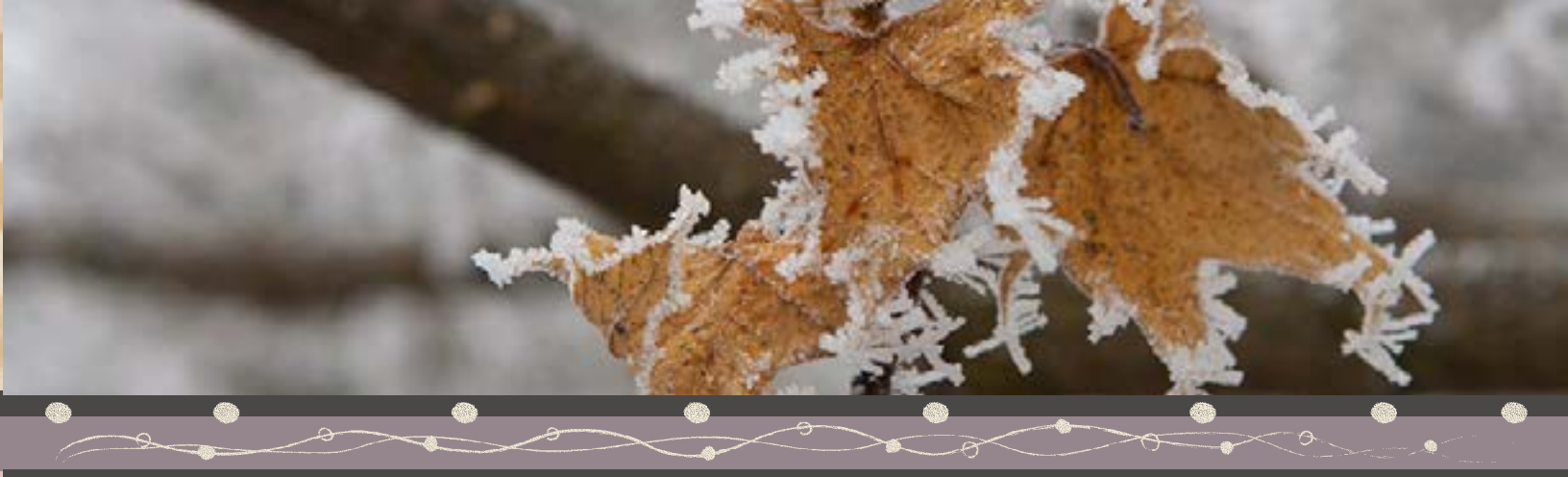
**Barnyard Buddies: 1<sup>st</sup> time with chickens. Submitted by KatTylee**

I get chicks this week! I've never had chickens before. My little brooder is all ready for the call that they are here. I feel a little silly, but I'm very excited. I've had ducks before and I grew up with all sorts of critters, but never chickens. Share your experience [here](#).

**Barnyard Buddies: Bunny Question. Submitted by SheilaC**

My 9-yr-old daughter's Jersey Woolly rabbit just died this weekend :( He was 7 yrs old, so it was not unexpected, but he was just so beautiful, sweet, and friendly. :/





Anyhow, we're looking for another Jersey Woolly for her and have found one that is 6 months old, but it has been in a heated barn its whole life thus far. If we get him, he'll be in a hutch outdoors (in Vermont), which is what our other rabbits live in. :)

So—is it easy enough to transition one to outdoors? Thanks for your info!! :) Share your advice [here](#).

**Cleaning Up: Laundry detergent recipes please. Submitted by naturmaiden**

I'd like to try making my own laundry detergent. I think a liquid detergent would be best for us, but I'm open to suggestions and ideas. Can anyone point me in the direction of recipes and general information on laundry detergent making?

My fears include doing something without enough information and wrecking my machine. We have a front loading HE machine, so any information on that type of detergent would be great.

We have beagles with sensitive skin as well, but I'm sure we all have peeps or pups in our families with that. Thanks ladies! Share your ideas [here](#).

**Cleaning Up: Cleaning a vintage cake tin. Submitted by Dapple Grey Lady**

Well, I had a vintage cake that was all grimy. I had already washed it by hand and it was not coming clean. So I put it in the dishwasher ... well ... the paint was already peeling. So now it is half painted. I am thinking it is aluminum. How would you repaint this? Share your ideas [here](#).

**Farm Kitchen: What have you canned so far?**

**Submitted by naturmaiden**

OK, I'm all excited ... another topic was started about turkey soup, so I thought I'd share what I've canned, and I'd love to see what you all have been canning as well. I love admiring all the jars while they cool on the counter. I feel so proud of myself.

I've been building up my pantry for emergencies. I've been canning stock and soups and I've started with meat. I like the pint jars because they are great for one person, so if the lights are out in a storm, no waste and no worry about saving leftovers. Here's what I've been canning...

Turkey  
Turkey stock  
Turkey soup  
Kidney beans



continued ...





## continued ...

Chicken  
Vension  
Pea soup  
Beef veggie soup  
Beef stock



Share what you have canned [here](#).

### Farm Kitchen: Do you use a juicer? Submitted by texdane

So, DH and I have been thinking we'd like a juicer for a while now. We have been looking and pricing, and goodness, they are pricey! A friend told me about an online local Facebook tag-sale group, and I found a like-new \$100 juicer for half price. Picked it up last night. Love it. Made tangerine-carrot-kale last night. It was good and tasted a lot better than I expected, actually quite yummy! For breakfast, I made myself tangerine-apple-kale. Good again. I got the same juicer my dad and brother have (and paid much more for). Neither one cares for theirs because they think it's hard to clean. I found it not that big a deal. My meat grinder is hard to clean! Anyway, think I got a bargain and will get lots of use. So ... do you have/use a juicer, and do you have any recipes/juice combos you can share? Share your recipes [here](#).



### Garden Gate: Garden Fertilizer. Submitted by danyel

I am looking to add a fertilizer to the garden. Many articles tell you that certain ones are not good, especially if you are trying to stay organic, natural. I am trying to use seeds this year that are GMO-free. Have not heard anything good about GMOs. So I do not want to undo everything by adding a fertilizer that has toxins and chemicals. I also told the family no Miracle-Gro. But I know you need to rotate your garden and watch for mineral depletion. We already do that. So, any ideas? Share [here](#).

### Garden Gate: 2014 Garden Plans. Submitted by Cindy Lou

Has anyone else started their 2014 garden plans?

We used to start getting garden catalogs in January. Now we already have dozens.

We've drawn out garden plans for the coming year and started browsing. Some of the prices have gone up at a frightening rate. I think seed saving had better be part of our future.

Tonight, we ordered two kinds of strawberries: Sparkle and Malwina. Share your garden plans [here](#).







### **Make It Easy: Tee Shirt Yarn. Submitted by Pasthyme**

Has anybody made anything with "tee shirt yarn"? I went to the thrift shop and bought a bag of bright-colored cotton tees (with no side seams) for \$2 a bag.

I cut them into long, continuous strips (around and around), pulled to stretch it into yarn, and rolled it into balls. Now I am crocheting a rug out of the tee shirts. It is coming out really nice and colorful. Share your experience [here](#).

### **Outpost: "Reiver's Rest" projects in progress! Submitted by ceejay48**

Found this cute, little 1971 Sprite, 10-ft. trailer sitting in the yard of some folks up the Dolores River Valley in the mountains. Took a friend up on Thursday to see if it was for sale and something I'd be interested in.

It was for sale!  
I was interested!!

Today, my hubby and I went up and checked it over and over and over ... did I say over?! These were the nicest folks to deal with. The trailer was kinda stuck down in the very thick grass, etc. and had a lot of stuff stored in it. I called the owners last night and told them we'd like to come and look it over again, wanting to look at the underside and tires and the inside, too. I was concerned about being able to do that because of the situation.

Today, when we drove in the driveway, the trailer had been pulled out of where it was, sitting there all prim and proper for me to look at. Tires aired, EVERYTHING removed from the inside, door standing open ... "Come on in, CJ!"

I fell in love!

My hubby and I looked it over, asked questions ... and traded ONLY \$400 for the title and bill of sale. Yes, ONLY \$400.

It needs very little of anything except cleaning. Mostly dead flies, which I can deal with (that's what all the black specks are on the pics of the inside). I saw NO mouse poo or evidence of anything else nasty and ugly, NO evidence of leaks, etc. It is cute, adorable, and I'm tickled all shades of pink!!!!

It now belongs to the "4872 Glamping Farmgirls" ... my daughter and me! Cute, huh?! Share your story [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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farmgirl pets



lessons in  
herbalism



farmgirl love

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ranch, mountain, and beach—at GirlGab.com. You'll also  
find daily posts from 129 (and counting) sister blogs.

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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](http://www.GirlGab.com) was featured. (This is my favorite daily pleasure. I LOVE GirlGab!)

As ladies of the Sisterhood, now numbering 5,730 (and counting), we've earned an amazing number of Merit Badges so far—8,037 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 darn proud! Can you hear the clucking?

My blog, [www.raisingjane.org](http://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







# Merit Badge

## Awardees



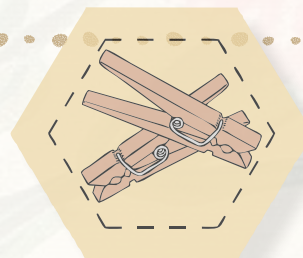
### Merit Badge Awardees

#### *December Awardees*

**Angel Strobel: Miss Angel #2741**

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Going Green

Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Going Green



**Carla Crawford: chappieswife #3366**

Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Quilting

Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Quilting



**Casey Comstock: #5366**

Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Sew Wonderful

Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Sew Wonderful

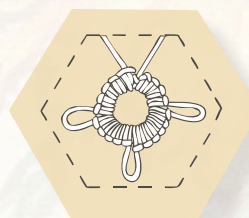
**CJ Armstrong: ceejay48 #665**

Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Quilling

**Deborah Bangert: solarray #4855**

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green



**Emily Rose Yost: emilyrosebud #5070**

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green

Beginner badge: Each Other / Farmgirl Spirit

Beginner badge: Each Other / Get 'er Done

Beginner badge: Each Other / Pay it Forward

Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / Get it Together

Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / Self-sufficiency

Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Herbs

Beginner badge: Make it Easy / Build it Green

Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Crochet

Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Sew Wonderful

Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling

Intermediate badge: Each Other / Farmgirl Spirit

Intermediate badge: Each Other / Pay it Forward



continued ...





## continued ...

Intermediate badge: Garden Gate / Herbs  
Intermediate badge: Make it Easy / Build it Green  
Expert badge: Garden Gate / Herbs

**Janelle Komorowski: ShabinLife #5546**

Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Backyard Farmer  
Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Herbs  
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Buttoned Up  
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Sew Wonderful

**Lynne Parmenter: #5089**

Beginner badge: Each Other / Entrepreneurial Spirit  
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Quilling

**Mary Jo Boyd: Quiltsister413 #5559**

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green  
Beginner badge: Each Other / Civic Heritage

**Peggy Smith: forever young #1815**

Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Homespun Christmas  
Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Aprons  
Expert badge: Farm Kitchen / Recipes

**Rose Poole: #5393**

Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Homespun Christmas

**Shari Doty: sharikrsna #607**

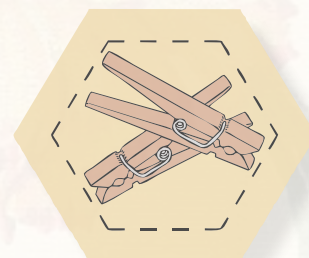
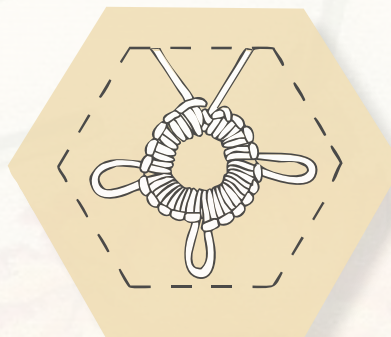
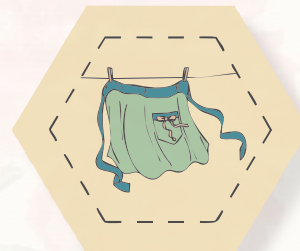
Beginner badge: Outpost / Glamping  
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Quilting  
Intermediate badge: Outpost / Glamping

**Sharon Demers: Calicogirl #5392**

Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Bustin' Out  
Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Unprocessed Kitchen  
Expert badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling  
Expert badge: Cleaning Up / Water Conservation  
Expert badge: Each Other / Blogging  
Expert badge: Farm Kitchen / Recipes

**Sherrilyn Askew: Sherri #1350**

Beginner badge: Each Other / Families Forever







Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / What's Your Beef?  
 Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Homespun Christmas  
 Intermediate badge: Garden Gate / Horse Dreams  
 Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Origami  
 Expert badge: Farm Kitchen / Recipes  
 Expert badge: Stitching & Crafting / Origami

**Yavonne Tudisco: pokey220 #5243**

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green  
 Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Gaining Ground  
 Beginner badge: Garden Gate / In the Garden  
 Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Sew Wonderful

## January Awardees

**Amanda Mathis: Andi #5199**

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling

**Betty Hoffman: Dapple Grey Lady #5589**

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green

**Deborah Meyer: dmeyer #4099**

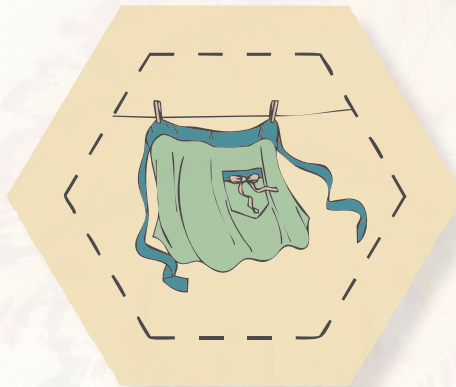
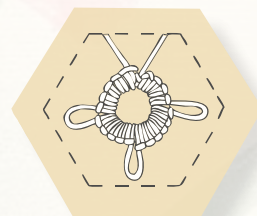
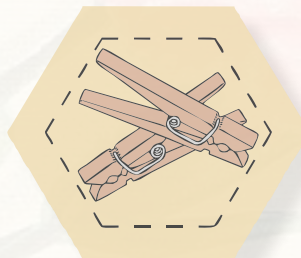
Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service  
 Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / Pay it Forward  
 Beginner badge: Make it Easy / Build it Green  
 Beginner badge: Make it Easy / Carp-hen-try  
 Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Going Green  
 Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Pay it Forward  
 Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Recipes  
 Expert badge: Each Other / Greatest Generation  
 Expert badge: Each Other / Languages/Culture

**Dena Corry: dena91 #5620**

Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / Get it Together  
 Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Buttoned Up  
 Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Get it Together

**Elizabeth Crick: Madinet85 #4915**

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



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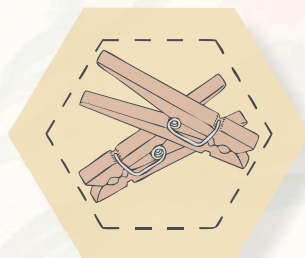




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### **Julia Feeley: JuliaCatherine #5634**

Beginner badge: Farm Kitchen / Get it Together  
 Beginner badge: Garden Gate / Backyard Farmer  
 Intermediate badge: Farm Kitchen / Get it Together  
 Expert badge: Farm Kitchen / Get it Together

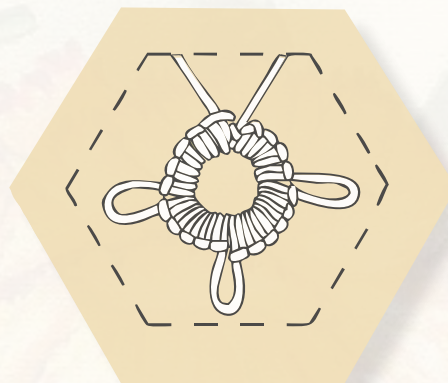


### **Karen Price: kkprice #411**

Beginner badge: Make it Easy / Let's Get Physical  
 Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Weaving  
 Intermediate badge: Each Other / Languages/Culture  
 Expert badge: Each Other / Languages/Culture

### **Melissa Osborn: #406**

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling  
 Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green  
 Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Buttoned Up  
 Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Sew Wonderful  
 Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling  
 Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green  
 Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Buttoned Up  
 Expert badge: Stitching & Crafting / Buttoned Up



### **Nikki Hurlbut: MrsHurlbut #5131**

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling  
 Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Aprons  
 Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Recycling

### **Shelly Schrader: ShellyS #5481**

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Going Green  
 Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / Aprons  
 Intermediate badge: Cleaning Up / Going Green  
 Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Aprons



### **Sherrilyn Askew: Sherri #1350**

Intermediate badge: Stitching & Crafting / Safe Toys

### **Sonja Gasper: opengatefarm #5671**

Beginner badge: Cleaning Up / Shopping Green







# Farmerettes & Young Cultivators

## Merit Badge Awardees

**Savannah Hoffman:** Young Cultivator of Betty Hoffman #5589  
Beginner badge: Stitching & Crafting / All Buttoned Up

**Aidan Ryan:** Young Cultivator of Kerryanne Cummins #5231  
Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service  
Intermediate badge: Each Other / Community Service  
Expert badge: Each Other / Community Service

**Athena Codianni:** Young Cultivator of Kerryanne Cummins #5231  
Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service  
Intermediate badge: Each Other / Community Service  
Expert badge: Each Other / Community Service

**Bryson Chartier:** Young Cultivator of Erin Chartier #5276  
Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service  
Intermediate badge: Each Other / Community Service  
Expert badge: Each Other / Community Service

**Gwyn Sutcliffe:** Young Cultivator of Colleen Sutcliffe #5226  
Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service  
Intermediate badge: Each Other / Community Service  
Expert badge: Each Other / Community Service

**Hunter Codianni:** Young Cultivator of Kerryanne Cummins #5231  
Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service  
Intermediate badge: Each Other / Community Service  
Expert badge: Each Other / Community Service

**James Cummins:** Young Cultivator of Kerryanne Cummins #5231  
Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service  
Intermediate badge: Each Other / Community Service  
Expert badge: Each Other / Community Service

**Karli Chartier:** Young Cultivator of Erin Chartier #5276  
Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service  
Intermediate badge: Each Other / Community Service  
Expert badge: Each Other / Community Service

### 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.**







**Luke Stanger:** Young Cultivator of Kerryanne Cummins #5231

Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service

Intermediate badge: Each Other / Community Service

Expert badge: Each Other / Community Service

**Mason Cummins:** Young Cultivator of Kerryanne Cummins #5231

Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service

Intermediate badge: Each Other / Community Service

Expert badge: Each Other / Community Service

**Nathan Schweighoffer:** Young Cultivator of Erica Schweighoffer #5279

Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service

Intermediate badge: Each Other / Community Service

Expert badge: Each Other / Community Service

**Nina Stanger:** Young Cultivator of Kerryanne Cummins #5231

Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service

Intermediate badge: Each Other / Community Service

Expert badge: Each Other / Community Service

**Pearce Sutcliffe:** Young Cultivator of Colleen Sutcliffe #5226

Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service

Intermediate badge: Each Other / Community Service

Expert badge: Each Other / Community Service

**Shane Foley:** Young Cultivator of Kerryanne Cummins #5231

Beginner badge: Each Other / Community Service

Intermediate badge: Each Other / Community Service

Expert badge: Each Other / Community Service







## 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.

### Celebrating with Children

I love celebrating Valentine's Day with my kids! This year, we are making our cards at a leisurely pace by keeping a basket of materials ready in the kitchen. My hope is that we can make a few each day to avoid the last-minute rush. If you have small children, you might find it helpful to add a list of classmates and neighbors' names. One of our favorite valentine traditions is the family mailbox. You can find a template at **Bird and Little Bird**. We add simple, heart-shaped notes for one another that begin with "I love your ..." This mailbox contains a few years' worth of messages and I love looking back at how the kids' writing and messages have changed over time. When my daughter was small enough to attend Shining Star School in Portland, Oregon, she had the most magical teacher. Ms. Marsha gave us so many good ideas for celebrating holidays through handcrafts and cooking. Here are two favorites:

#### Seed Hearts

Make tiny bird feeders by covering wooden hearts from the craft store with peanut butter and seeds. Teach your child to use a small hand drill to make a hole for hanging before covering the heart in seeds.

#### Pink Fruit Whip

Thaw 8–12 oz of frozen strawberries. Blend strawberries with 1 T honey until liquefied. Whip 1 cup cream until thick with peaks, add strawberry mixture, and stir well. Pour into small jam jars and chill before serving.





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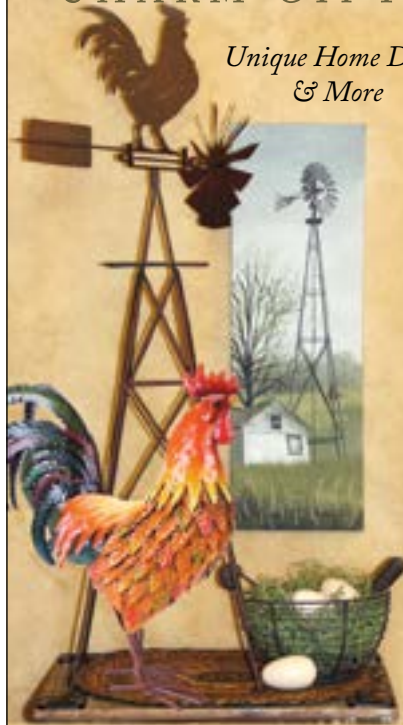


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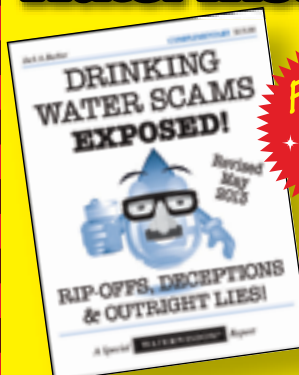
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# Meet our Bloggers

*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](http://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](http://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.'"

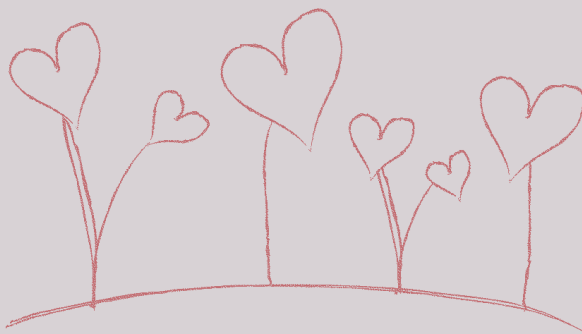


## Nicole's FAVORITES

### suburban FARMGIRL

#### Pacific Shaving Company

Brrrr! February is such a cold month! Warm your sweetie's heart for Valentine's Day with some great pampering products by Pacific Shaving Company. Farmgirls aren't the only ones who can have sensitive, dry skin this time of year. Have your honey start his day with a tube of Pacific Shaving Company's All-Natural Shave Cream. Most conventional shaving creams have irritating and toxic ingredients like sulfates, parabens, synthetic fragrances, and even *butane*. There's none of that nasty stuff in here. With certified, soothing organic ingredients like aloe-leaf juice and white and green teas, your sweetie can have a close shave without any winter irritation. The 3-oz tube costs about \$7.99, but boasts that it contains 100 shaves. This shaving cream lives up to its claim ... a little goes a long way! One tube lasts my husband several months of daily shaving, keeping his skin smooth and calm. His face is hydrated and soft. Instead of chemical-laden, synthetically fragrances "after shave," treat his skin post-shave with Pacific Shaving Company Daily Moisturizer. I've found all of their great products for my husband in the shaving aisle of my local grocer, or find them on the Web at **PacificShaving.com**.





# MaryJanesFarm Marketplace



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# Magazines, Books & More



Our Feb/Mar issue (Piecemaking) hit newsstands on Jan. 7. In it, you'll find recipes for homemade pasta, mini tarts, and more; get ideas for a party fit for a princess; learn why creativity and health go hand-in-hand; meet the Fancy Farmgirl photographer; and more.

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

If you're a subscriber, you should have received your magazine by about Jan. 5. (Those of you near postal hubs get faster delivery; rural delivery takes a little longer.) If you didn't receive your magazine, you can call our publisher's subscription department at 800-476-4611 to check on your delivery.

## MaryJanesFarm Calendar

Our **2014 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:

February 1 ~ National Freedom Day  
February 2 ~ Groundhog Day  
February 7 ~ Wear Red Day  
February 9 ~ National Stop Bullying Day  
February 11 ~ National Make a Friend Day  
February 14 ~ Valentine's Day  
February 15 ~ Susan B. Anthony Day  
February 17 ~ Presidents' Day  
February 20 ~ Love Your Pet Day  
February 22 ~ World Thinking Day  
February 27 ~ National Chili Day

February  
Sisterhood  
Special!  
(see p. 46)

### 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!](#)



**5,730 Sisterhood members and  
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