

MaryJane's Cluck™

Monthly Sisterhood Newsletter ... where the braggin' begins!

December 2012

Life made us FRIENDS, MaryJanesFarm made us SISTERS

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{HELLO FROM SISTER #1} with MaryJane



Merry December!

I hope this issue of the *Cluck* finds you with a cup of mulled cider in one hand and a **delicious turkey sandwich** in the other.

Like collecting eggs from wayward chickens, it can be somewhat of a task keeping up with all of the social media happenings at MaryJanesFarm. So here's a refresher, because you won't want to miss a thing—especially our Sisterhood blogging community over at www.GirlGab.com. (This is my favorite daily pleasure. I LOVE GirlGab!) As ladies of the Sisterhood, now numbering 4,690 (and counting), we've earned an amazing number of Merit Badges so far—6,500 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, 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.

And, if smart phones are your thing, I know you'll be excited to hear about MaryJanesFarm on Instagram. A photo a day keeps the blues away! I hope one of these outlets finds you warm and well for the holidays—and enjoying all that MaryJanesFarm has to offer.

MaryJane



Sister Signature Apron



Big welcome to our new and renewing Sisterhood members!



Catherine A. Dewitz
Lucy Ann Martorello
Ashley Arruda
Patsy Baker
Cindy Barfield
Reetta Bergh
Janice Berreth
Shawna Bornman
Leila Bower
Judy Bradley
Cheryl Brust
Glenda C. Driskell
Lori Cagle
Melissa Carr
Janet Chalfant
Kimberly Cook
Dawn Cox
Catherine A. Dewitz
Lucy Ann Martorello
Ashley Arruda
Patsy Baker
Cindy Barfield
Reetta Bergh

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Melissa Carr
Janet Chalfant
Kimberly Cook
Dawn Cox Pamela Criswell
Beckie Darrington
Penny Dyke
Janie Edwards
Karen England
Tami Erwin
Angie Everson
Karen Frey
Laura Gabrielson
Mary Gariepy
Anita Geisler
Sha Gett
Cassandra Glacy
Larranie Gonsalves
April Graham
Autumn Grasty
Dawn Haas
Sheila Hammons
Carol Hartley
Deb Hartley
Linda Heavel
Suzanne Holland
Julie Jacinto
Diane Kasperzak

Laurie Keenan
Kristen Kingsley
Stacy Klimkowski
Mary Krystinak
Annika Laurea-Wood
Sally Lewis
Barbara Martin
Marjorie Mcdonald
Donna Monti
Cindy Nadolny
Valdeane Odachi
Kathryn O'hara
Dana Okerman
Karen Ownby
Wendellyn Plummer
Karen Price
Chris Pruitt
April Robinson
Gaynelle Rose
Charlotte Schmidt
Cindy Scott
Lisa Shaner
Marguerite Steiner
Shelley Swift
Joy Taylor
Cynthia Terherst
Virginia Thompson
Debra Tinchier-Graves
Portia Troupe
Valerie Verhoeven
Nancy Witko
Ann Woody
Mandi Wright
Glenda Young

MARYJANESFARM



Each

In the Shelter of Each Other

Other



According to MaryJane, the seven aspects for living the farmgirl life are:

EACH OTHER | FARM KITCHEN | GARDEN GATE | STITCHING & CRAFTING ROOM | MAKE IT EASY | OUTPOST | CLEANING UP

{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).

Giving Thanks

I love the look of a completely unified front underneath my tree. The way the presents look when entirely matched up makes me smile as I walk past my tree. But alas, buying a huge pile of matching wrapping paper, ribbons, tags, etc. is a bit un-Christmas-like, if I’m honest. So how do I combine the feeling of perfection under the tree without the expense? Upcycled, please!

I always have lots of odd ribbon kicking around and plenty of red. It’s my favorite color, and works for Valentine’s Day, Christmas, and both girls’ birthdays! I have a glass candy jar that decorates my living-room shelf, and when I receive ribbon tied to a gift, I stuff it in. It’s surprisingly easy to fill because it’s accessible and it looks cute, too!

Anyhow, back to those presents. We have piles and piles of newspaper that we recycle, but it’s always fun to find ways to reuse it, too. I love the contradiction of big, fancy ribbons and newspaper. For added formality, it’s fun to monogram a present instead of using a tag. Then the letters can be reused for other purposes, and Stella and Mia have no problem picking out their presents.

Meg



Whoever has a heart
full of love always has
something to give.

– Author Unknown



MARYJANES FARM





Farm

Where the cookin' begins!

Kitchen



According to MaryJane, the seven aspects for living the farmgirl life are:
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{*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've begun to raise a family in the same house—their daughter is now 2 1/2.

Whether it was watching her mother cook while she was a baby or simply growing up learning that good food nurtures not just people, but relationships as well, cooking remains an important part of Ashley's life. Last year, she came to work 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.

Holiday Dinner Rolls

I haven't the foggiest memory what we ate for breakfast on Christmas morning as a child, but let's face it, it's difficult to focus on anything other than the packages under the tree (that have been taunting you for days). Sustenance? Stocking candy. In an effort to curb the early morning meal of candy canes and chocolate, I thought it would be better to create an effortless and decadent breakfast pastry that is sure to satisfy. The recipe for the pastry is adapted from MaryJane's pie crust recipe, with extra butter folded in to create an even more tender and flaky crust, reminiscent of puff pastry. The best part is that it's easy to make ahead and freeze. The night before using, simply defrost in the refrigerator and you're ready for breakfast!





Blueberry & Cream Cheese Braid

Prep Time: 1 hour, 10 minutes, plus 20 minutes cooking

Cook Time: 50–55 minutes

Makes: 10 servings

Crust

- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 1 t sugar
- 1/2 t salt
- 1 1/2 cups cold butter, divided
- 4 1/2 T water
- 1 1/2 t vanilla extract

Filling

- 8 ozs cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup sugar, divided
- 1 t vanilla
- 10 ozs frozen blueberries
- 1 T cornstarch

Icing

- 2 T milk
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- zest of 1 lemon

1. In a food processor, combine flour, sugar, and salt. Cut 1 cup of butter into pieces and add it to the food processor. Add water and vanilla and pulse until dough forms.
2. Roll dough out into a 10" x 15" rectangle, wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 15 minutes.
3. Soften the remaining 1/2 cup of butter just enough so it is spreadable. Spread it in an even layer over the pastry dough and refrigerate for another 5 minutes to firm up the butter.
4. Fold each 10" side of the dough towards the center, leaving a 1" gap in the center. Fold in half. Roll the dough out to a 10" x 15" rectangle, and repeat the process three more times (if the pastry gets too warm, refrigerate it for a few minutes to firm it up again). After the last fold, roll the dough into a 13" x 16" rectangle, carefully transfer to a cookie sheet, and refrigerate while the making the filling.
5. To prepare the filling, add the cream cheese to a small bowl and stir in 1/4 cup of sugar and 1 t of the vanilla. In another small bowl, combine the remaining sugar, blueberries, and cornstarch.
6. Mark a rectangle that is 4" x 14" in the center of the dough. Spread the cream cheese inside the marked rectangle.
7. At the top and the bottom of the rectangle (the 13" sides), cut 2" x 4 1/2" from each corner, leaving a 2" flap above and below the filling. Cut the other sides into 1" thick strips. Add the blueberries, gently pressing them into the cream cheese so they stay in place.
8. To braid, fold up one of the flaps, and begin overlapping the 1" strips in the center of the pastry. Before the last strips are overlapped, fold up the remaining flap, and cover with the final strips.
9. Freeze until ready to bake.
10. Transfer to the refrigerator 5–8 hours before baking.
11. To bake, preheat oven to 400°F and bake for 50–55 minutes.
12. Remove from oven and cool for about 20 minutes. If filling spilled out during baking, run a small knife around the edges of the pastry to prevent it from sticking to the pan.
13. Mix milk and powdered sugar together for the icing, and drizzle all over the pastry. Sprinkle top with lemon zest.



Garden

Bloom Where You're Planted

Gate



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

Cranberry Cravings

How do I love cranberries? Let me count the ways ...

The tantalizing tartness, the versatility, the nostalgia, and the luscious ruby glow of the cranberry render it irresistible to me—and just in time for the holidays. As the color begins to fade from the hillsides beyond my door, making way for the frosty grays that hail the Earth's slumber, my kitchen radiates life with the fragrances and textures of bountiful food. But year after year, cranberries have been the crowning glory, whether they are tucked into tasty dishes or celebrated as festive centerpieces. Unlike so many other heartwarming seasonal foods, the brilliance of the cranberry's flavor is perfectly matched by its beauty. Something about that sumptuous scarlet hue reminds us that life continues to thrive, rich and warm, even as the world outside is subdued under quilts of snowfall.

A Hint of History

Cranberries are an American original, indigenous to the wetlands of the northeastern United States. Native Americans relied on cranberries for food, medicine, and dye. One of their primary uses for cranberry as a culinary ingredient was pemmican, also one of my all-time favorite trail foods. Back then, pemmican was a mixture of dried ground venison, fat, and dried cranberries. It was pressed into thin cakes and stored in a cool place to provide nourishment when needed. Pemmican was the perfect means of preparing concentrated high-energy emergency rations for lean times because it was a balanced "all-in-one" meal, it traveled well, and it would keep throughout the winter months. In addition to pemmican, the native people of the northeast also cooked cranberries much in the way we prepare our traditional holiday "sauce" today, adding maple sugar or honey for sweetness.

The cranberry has been called many different names throughout history, but the modern name evolved from "crane berry," a term coined by German and Dutch settlers who noticed that the shape of the plant's flowers resembled the head of a crane.

Why We Crave Cranberries

Cranberries lure us with rich color and bitter taste that we instinctively recognize as health boosters. Among their attributes, cranberries boast antibacterial action, which helps prevent urinary tract infections, kidney stones, tooth decay, and bad breath. Plus, their high levels of antioxidants and phytonutrients are thought to help protect against heart disease, balance cholesterol levels, aid in recovery from stroke, and even help prevent cancer. To delve into details of the cranberry's health benefits, visit The World's Healthiest Foods website at www.whfoods.com.

Cranberries in the Kitchen

Annual cranberry harvests begin in the fall when the fruit ripens to its distinctive ruby red. Because firmness is a primary indicator of quality, cranberries are often sorted during harvest by bouncing them against wooden barriers. The firmest berries bounce over the barriers, destined for market.



MARYJANES FARM



continued ...



continued ...

When buying fresh organic cranberries, look for plump, firm fruit with deep color (the deeper their color, the better the taste and the antioxidant content). Dried cranberries retain antioxidants, but watch out for added sugar and preservatives. Also beware of bottled cranberry cocktails that are watered down with other fruit juices and super sweetened. If you're seeking pure preventative benefits in juice form, stick to straight cranberry concentrate—guaranteed to pucker your lips!

The combination of cranberries' high acidity and naturally occurring benzoic acid (a preservative) allows them to stay fresh for months. Within a sealed plastic bag in the refrigerator, fresh cranberries can last two months or longer (be sure to cull mushy berries if you plan to store them for more than a few days to prevent the whole bunch from going bad). When removed from the fridge, berries may "perspire," but rest assured of their freshness unless they're discolored, soft, or wrinkled.

Cranberries may be kept frozen for a full year. To freeze, spread fresh cranberries in a single layer on a cookie sheet and place in the freezer. Within a couple of hours, the fully frozen berries can be transferred to a sealed and dated freezer container. Since cranberries are full of water, it's best not to thaw frozen berries before baking with them.

Creating a basic cranberry sauce couldn't be easier, so there's no need to resort to the canned stuff. Simply combine 2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries, 1 cup sugar, 1/2 cup water, 1/2 t salt, and 2 t lemon juice in a saucepan, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for about 10 minutes until most of the cranberries have burst, stirring occasionally. Transfer sauce to a bowl. Cool, cover, and refrigerate. Makes about 1 1/2 cups.

But don't stop there. Cranberries can enliven all sorts of cold weather comfort food, from baked desserts and savory stuffings to meats and sparkling salads.

MaryJane 





Cranberry Sauce Corn Muffins

Makes: 12 muffins

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Total Time: 40 minutes

Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a muffin tin with paper liners. Set aside.

Streusel Topping:

- 1/4 cup flour
- 1/8 t allspice
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup butter

In a bowl, combine dry ingredients. Cut in butter. Keep chilled until ready to use.

Batter:

- 1/3 cup cornmeal
- 1 1/2 t baking powder
- 2 eggs
- 1 1/2 t vanilla
- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 t soda
- 1/2 cup sour cream

- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 t sea salt
- 2 T butter, melted

In a large bowl, combine dry ingredients. In a medium bowl, combine wet ingredients. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and stir until just moistened. In each muffin cup, put 2 T batter, then 2 t cranberry sauce. Sprinkle with streusel topping. Bake about 15 minutes.

Stitching & Crafting Room

Stitches of Fun & Laughter!



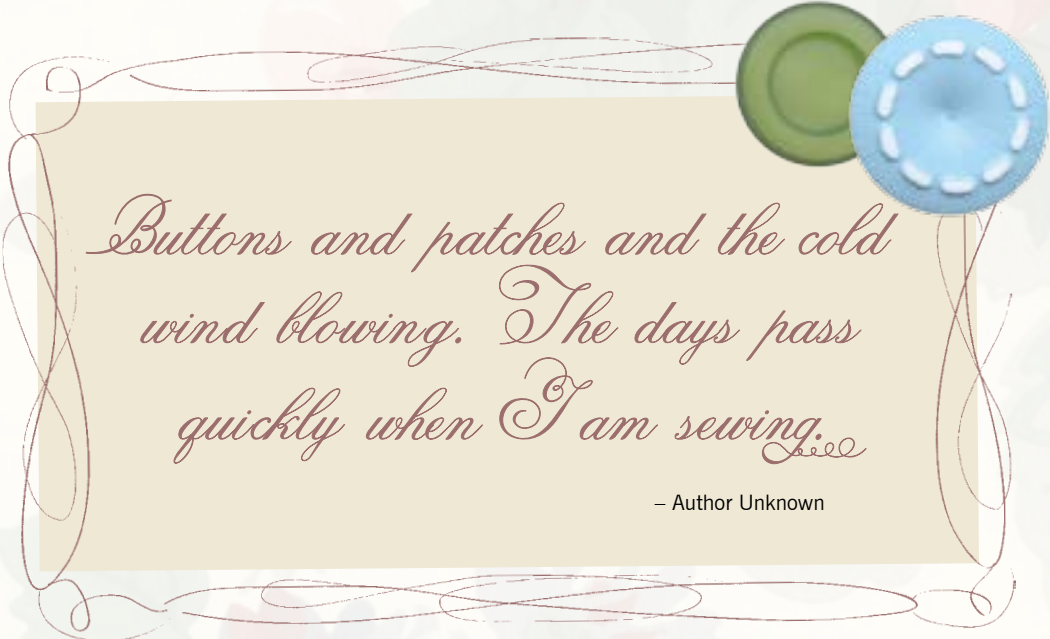
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Rebekka Boysen-Taylor, (Sister #40) was born in Spokane, Washington, right around the time Mount St. Helens blew her top. She studied Geography at Portland State University and taught grade school in the Bronx and inner-city Los Angeles. She lives 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.

Repurposed Sweater Cowl

Giving old sweaters new life in your sewing projects is a quick way to enjoy cozy knits without all the knitting. Often you can find sweaters in a fine merino wool or even cashmere at a thrift store (or in your closet) for a fraction of the cost of buying new yarn. As much as I enjoy knitting, I can't match some of the fun cable patterns and delicate laces I find secondhand. I picked up two shrunken cashmere sweaters at a thrift store this month for \$3.99 apiece. When I got them home, I washed them on the gentle cycle in my washing machine using Eucalan Wool Wash, which contains lanolin to keep the wool in top condition. I use it when I hand-wash my fine woolens as well. I cut this sweater just under the arms straight across the body. To finish the cowl, I ran a zigzag stitch around the cut edge. Save the sleeves to make arm warmers or leg warmers. In the February 2011 issue of the *Cluck*, I shared my method for making either style. One sweater will provide enough fabric to make at least one set of arm warmers or leg warmers and one cowl. There will be a bit of fabric left over from the upper back of your sweater and you can turn this into a super-soft eye-pillow case or a bean bag for a little friend.



*Buttons and patches and the cold
wind blowing. The days pass
quickly when I am sewing.*

– Author Unknown



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{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.

Scrapbook Paper Ornaments

What You'll Need:

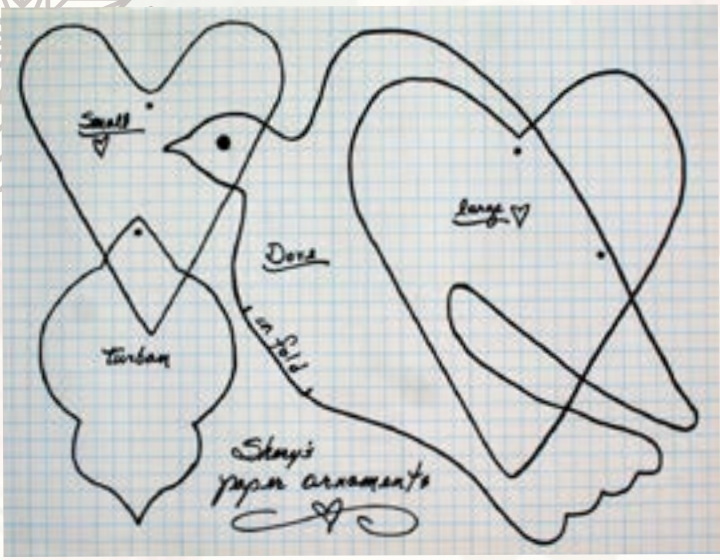
- Heavyweight scrapbook paper
- Black and brown ink pads
- Thin cardboard (for the heart if needed)
- Thread for hanging decorative pins, ribbon, bells, buttons, and clear glitter if desired
- Glue stick or glue-tape dispenser
- Alphabet stamps
- Paper-hole-punch tool

Nowadays, the variety of pretty scrapbooking paper is endless! The decorative, heavier-weight paper is also ideal for making paper Christmas ornaments. You can double the thickness with thin cardboard to make flat ornaments more sturdy if the paper you choose is lighter weight. I used the thicker version and cut two pieces of the dove and the turban ornament. For the heart, I added a backing of thin cardboard.

The patterns for these three ornaments are shown layered on graph paper. First, enlarge the pattern page so that the size of your copy is 8 1/4" x 11" (each square on the grid is equal to 1/4"). Then, trace the patterns, cut them out, and repeat on your decorative paper. I use a pencil so that I can erase leftover pencil marks. Cut out your designs—one of each heart plus one cardboard piece for the back if needed. Cut one dove on the fold as shown; cut two turban pieces. Glue the pieces together using a glue stick or glue-tape dispenser. Smudge ink from the edge of your ink pad onto the edges of the pieces to add antique flavor. Stamp the words onto the tag pieces and onto the dove body; age them also with ink smudge. For the dove, I stacked the "Peace" letters in both brown and black ink. Assemble your decorative add-ons—pins, buttons, tags, ribbon. Glue them in place. Punch hang-holes into the ornaments and insert string loops. I used linen thread and baker's twine. Refer to the photos for details.

Make an assortment of ornaments for your tree; involve your children and make it a family activity. You can add sparkle to these ornaments by spraying the surface with glue, then immediately sprinkle clear glitter onto them. Shake off the excess. A dozen doves in one color or a variety of patterns would make for a lovely theme; stamp various Christmas words on each dove ... Be Merry, Be Kind, Love, Faith, Hope, Joy, etc.

Happy holidays!





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.

Warming Winter Drinks

The chilly wintertime weather brings a yearning for rich, comforting, warming drinks. Here are some of my favorite warming winter drinks for savoring during the winter months!

Warming Winter Chai

I love sharing this spiced tea recipe with friends and family during the holiday season. Many families in India create their own version of this tea, so feel free to play with the recipe.

- 2 slices fresh organic Ginger root
- 2 organic Cinnamon sticks
- 8–10 whole organic Cloves
- 8–10 whole organic Cardamom pods
- 1/4 t organic whole Black or White Peppercorns
- Dash of homemade or organic Vanilla Extract
- 2 T Black Tea (organic English Breakfast, Ceylon, or Assam) or make a decaffeinated version by substituting Red Rooibos or Honeybush Tea
- Organic Honey to taste
- 2 cups water
- 2 cups organic milk or a milk substitute

Lightly crush Cinnamon sticks and Cardamom Pods. Bring 2 cups of water to a boil, and add all spices. Reduce the heat and allow to simmer for 5 minutes or longer, stirring occasionally. Add milk and allow it to heat up, then remove from the stove and add vanilla and honey. Strain and enjoy!





Cacao Hot Chocolate

Not only does this homemade hot chocolate taste incredible, but numerous studies have suggested that the guilty pleasures of chocolate may not be quite so guilty after all. Cacao, the raw material for chocolate, is high in flavonoids, has more antioxidants than most fruits, and contains a host of vitamins, minerals, and even natural chemicals that elevate the mood and help increase focus.

- 1 T organic Cacao powder (Carob may be substituted for a caffeine-free option)
- 2–3 t sweetener of choice—organic raw honey, maple syrup, agave nectar, or sugar
- 1 cup organic milk or milk substitute
- organic herbs and spices (optional), see list below for ideas

Heat milk or milk substitute in a pan until hot, being careful not to scorch. Remove from burner, add Cacao and sweetener of choice to taste, stirring until well dissolved. Use a whisk if desired for a frothier consistency. Pour into a mug and enjoy the pure chocolaty goodness, or add powdered herbs, spices, and flavorings. The Cacao and additional herbs or spices may settle a little as the beverage cools, but you can simply stir with a spoon if necessary.

These herbs and spices are perfect for adding to your hot chocolate during the wintertime and holidays: Pumpkin Pie Spice, Vanilla extract, Vanilla powder, Cayenne (just a small pinch!), powdered Allspice, Anise Star Pods, Cardamom, Maca, Cinnamon, Cloves, and Orange zest. You can also add Peppermint, Hazelnut, or Orange flavoring extract or a liquor like Kahlua or whiskey.

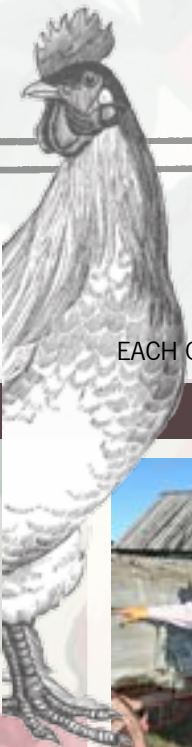
Hot Mulled Cider

Hot mulled cider is one of my very favorite winter beverages. I especially recommend adding a dash of liquor, and sipping it in front of a roaring fireplace.

- 1 quart organic Apple Cider
- 2 organic Cinnamon sticks
- 2 organic Cloves
- 1 tsp fresh organic Ginger root, sliced or 1/4 t ground dried Ginger
- 4 organic whole Allspice berries
- 5 organic whole Cardamom pods
- 2–3 strips of zest from an organic Orange

Combine all ingredients in a pot and bring to a simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from heat, strain out spices, and enjoy! Brown sugar, honey, or maple syrup may be added to taste. Add brandy or bourbon for a special adult twist.





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



Shery Jespersen (Sister #753), Wyoming cattle rancher and outpost writer (rider), shares the “view from her saddle.” Her longtime love is Apple Pi “Dolly” Rose, a 20-year-old Morgan otherwise known as “The Best Darn Horse in the Universe.” In our Make It Easy section, Shery also shares her other love, “make do” arts and crafts.

Lovey Dovey

I’ve been an avid birdwatcher for years, and no matter where I’ve lived, I put appropriate food out for the birds. But, I’ve never owned a pet bird. I’ve entertained the idea many times, believing that a parakeet or a cockatiel would fit my desire for an interactive and affectionate feathered friend. Problem: I’ve always had cats and I just figured it was too risky playing Russian roulette with a pet bird.

In early November, while driving home, I noticed an injured dove on the highway right by our house. I stopped. She was injured, but not seriously. I tucked her into my jacket and went home. I then placed her in a small chicken cage, and within minutes, she was eating and drinking. I thought that if she healed completely in a matter of days or weeks, I would release her. I feed many Collared Doves in open feeders mounted on my garden-yard fence.

I didn’t have a plan for the possibility that she might not mend to the extent that she could fly again. Well, let’s just say that I didn’t have a plan beyond putting her down. Then, I opted to look into keeping a dove as a pet. Come to find out, they’re as popular for a cage pet as parakeets and canaries! I had no idea. In fact, they’re said to be the best choice for a “first bird” because doves are so easy to care for, quiet, and easily tamed.

As I read more (online), I found that there are all kinds of dove breeds to choose from. You can keep them outside or inside and you can even keep them with poultry, which is said to benefit the coop because doves are spider hunters.

If you have an interest in keeping doves, you can find everything you need to know online. In brief, they need nothing more than other pet birds. However, the minimum size cage for a dove or two is 2’ x 2’. I’ve looked into this because I just might be a dove keeper. But, I hope that “my” dove will once again enjoy freedom. That is Plan A. Plan B? We’ll see.



MARYJANES FARM



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Epsom Salt

Epsom salt has taken on the air of an almost forgotten folk remedy, something that might crop up among the creased and yellowing pages of a farmer's almanac. Sure, you can still find it on pharmacy shelves just about anywhere, but what the heck is this stuff, and what is it used for? These days, most people regard it as a medicinal soak for things like sore feet or insect bites. And, yes, it works wonders for both. But that is only the beginning. This multi-purpose miracle salt can help cultivate internal and external wellbeing, and it is also a great go-to ingredient for happy gardens and houseplants.

What Is It?

Unrelated to table salt, Epsom salt (also known as magnesium sulfate) was originally discovered in mineral waters bubbling from a spring at Epsom in Surrey, England. It is a crystallized mineral compound of magnesium and sulfur—both essential to human wellness—that is naturally present in sea water and brine pools.

Health and Beauty Booster

Many people's modern diets are deficient in magnesium and sulfates, minerals that can be hard to come by when processed foods predominate. Enter Epsom salt. Magnesium and sulfates are absorbed right through the skin when we soak in a bath of Epsom salt, and so while we're luxuriating in a warm tub, our bodies are benefiting from a boost in circulatory health and nerve function as well as a reduction in muscle pain and inflammation. Not to mention, Epsom salt is a natural emollient for our skin. Unlike other salts, it leaves the skin feeling soft and silky rather than dry. Here are a few ways to take advantage:

1. Soothing Soak: Add 2 cups of Epsom salt to your bath to soak sore muscles, soothe bug bites, speed the healing of bruises, and help remove splinters.
2. Foot Bath: Add 1 cup of Epsom salt to a basin of warm water as a balm for aching feet.
3. Skin Scrub: Rub a handful of Epsom salt over wet skin for deep cleansing and smoother skin. Rinse and pat dry.
4. Bath Crystals: Mix 2 cups of Epsom salt with a few drops of essential oil to create custom bath crystals. Store in an air-tight container.
5. Laxative: Yes! It can even help with occasional constipation. (Follow directions provided by a pharmacy.)





Green Garden Ingredient

Did you know that Epsom salt can be used as a natural fertilizer? It is most commonly applied to potted plants, or to magnesium-hungry crops like potatoes, roses, tomatoes, and peppers. The advantage of magnesium sulfate over other magnesium soil amendments (such as dolomitic lime) is its high solubility—it melts right into the soil. Here's how to use it:

1. Houseplants: 2 T per gallon of water; feed plants monthly.
2. Tomatoes: 1 T per foot of plant height per plant; apply every 2 weeks.
3. Roses: 1 T per foot of plant height per plant; apply every 2 weeks. Also scratch 1/2 cup into soil at base to encourage flowering canes and healthy new basal cane growth. Spray with Epsom salt solution weekly to discourage pests.
4. Shrubs (evergreens, azaleas, rhododendron): 1 tablespoon per 9 square feet. Apply over root zone every 2–4 weeks.
5. Lawns: Apply 3 pounds for every 1,250 square feet with a spreader, or dilute in water and apply with a sprayer.
6. Trees: Apply 2 T per 9 square feet. Apply over the root zone 3 times per year.
7. Garden Startup: Sprinkle 1 cup per 100 square feet. Mix into soil before planting.



How to Buy and Store

Epsom salt is produced in agricultural, technical, and food grades. Your best bet for safe use around the house and garden is to buy food grade (or USP grade). Mountain Rose Herbs offers pure Epsom salt that is sourced in the U.S. Its coarse texture is great for creating exfoliating bath salts. Visit www.mountainroseherbs.com.

Epsom salt has a shelf life of about 5 years and stores well (high humidity can cause it to cake, but will not affect its quality).



The

MaryJanesFarm News

Scoop

Indexes Available!

MaryJanesFarm Magazine Index in pdf form available for searching and downloading! The index covers issues back to MAY/JUNE/JULY 2008 (She's a Keeper). New magazines will be indexed as they are released.

[CLICK HERE](#) to download the *MaryJanesFarm* Magazine Index.

We also now have all the back issues of *MaryJane's Cluck* available for download on our website.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the back issues of *MaryJane's Cluck*.

[TIP] Use the search/find tool in your browser to look up keywords in the Magazine Index and the back issues of *The Cluck*.

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.

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 Airstream trailer!)



DECEMBER

Sisterhood Special



30% OFF Holiday Items

.....

Holiday Apron Set

Includes: apron, potholder & hot pad



Wine Bag Set

Includes: wine bag & cocktail napkins



More! ▶
on next two pages

.....

FREE SHIPPING PLUS a special limited edition Henrietta logo embroidered *kitchen towel!*

on any order over \$50 (U.S./Domestic orders only)

.....

Get your order in by Dec 14 for standard ground shipping!

(Exclusive to Sisterhood members. Offer applies to UPS Ground and Parcel Post only.)

When checking out, log in to your account to receive free shipping.

For questions, call Brian at 1-888-750-6004

Decorative Holiday Pillows

Includes: Cardinal, "Happy Holidays,"
"Let it Snow," and Lodge Path



Christmas Stockings

Project F.A.R.M.
handmade by Miss Wilma



Embroidered Holiday Towels

Includes: 4 piece guest towel set



Glamping with MaryJane

Get your *Glamping* book here!

3-Book Bundle

Ideabook, Stitching Room, and Outpost
Get your 3-Book Bundle here!



Chocolate Collection

Get your chocolates here!



Farmgirl Chatter

What are farmgirls chatting about?

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

.....

Across the Fence: Any twenty-something Farmgirls out there? Submitted by Flowerfairy136

Most of the ladies I see on here seem a lot older than me, talking about their kids and grandkids. I saw a thread for over 50s and thought it'd be nice to start one to see how many people there were around my age.

A little about me:

My name is Mary. I'm 20 years old and just moved out of the suburbs into the country, to a house smaller than the one we lived in (I live with my parents). I love it here; we're right on the lakefront and it's beautiful. I've started going to a small Baptist church down the road. (A bit of a culture shock from my Assembly of God background.) I also took over the library there, too; no one else seemed to be taking care of it. Anyway, I love to read, sew, play video games, fish, etc. I love animals. I have an English bulldog named Delilah; a cockatoo named Hugo; and four cats: Oliver, Myrtle, Rupert, and Winifred, who is only about 8 or 9 weeks old. (We just adopted her on Halloween day. She's a black cat and named after a witch on one of my favorite movies, Hocus Pocus). I'm not in college yet, but I do plan on studying to become a nurse. Share [here](#).

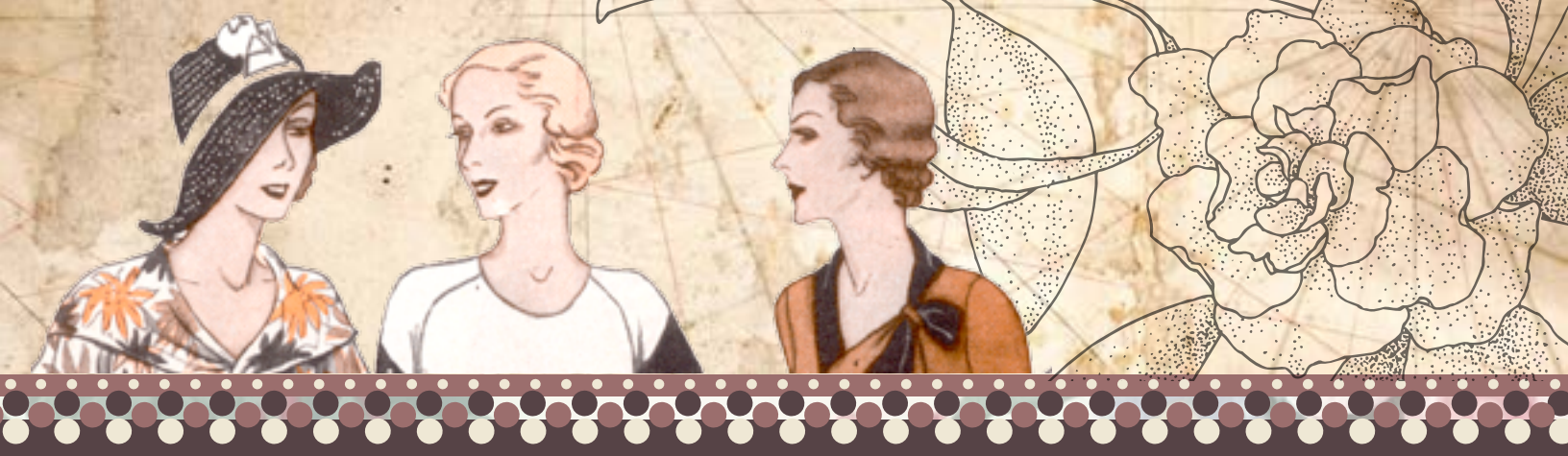
Across the Fence: Blog Advice Needed! Submitted by SunnyJam

I've been wanting to start a blog forever and decided to make it my 2013 New Year's resolution, but I'm trying to get all my ducks in a row ahead of time or I know it won't happen. What I'm wondering is, what would you all recommend for starting a blog? Any site in particular? I'm mostly looking for something that's FREE and easy to customize. I scanned through the Blog Roll Call, and it looks like most folks here use Blogspot. (And it allows you to be the creative geniuses I've known you to be!) Since I'm new, I don't know what other features I might need. Anyone have any advice about how to get started? Share your blog advice [here](#).

Barnyard Buddies: Stud Fees. Submitted by Kristin sherrill

I was just wondering if anyone uses their male farm animals as studs, and if so, what price do you ask? And do you take your animal to the female or does she come to your farm?

Last Sat., a lady I met from an ad I had on Craig's List last year brought her doe to be bred by my buck. She was in standing heat today. I called and told the lady and she asked again how much I was going to charge. I had told her husband last week I thought \$25 was a good price for the doe staying here and me feeding her hay. And a friend charges that much too. I don't think that's too much to ask, really. And she's okay with that. I was just wondering if anyone does this too. I thought maybe I could make a little extra money and keep the buck busy too. And I don't want to take him off anywhere again. I did that last month, and it was not a good situation for him. This way, I know what's going on here. Share your experience [here](#).



Barnyard Buddies: My new little doggie. Submitted by crittergranny

This is Itsy Bitsy. She is a little over a year old. She is a long-haired Doxie. My kids bought her for me last week. She had to live outside in the cold where she was, but sleeps with me now! She is so tiny and sweet. Her and my other Doxie, Emily, are learning to get along and play together pretty good. Share [here](#).

Barnyard Buddies: I'm getting Jersey #3!

Submitted by AliciaNak

I've had Sunny Belle for a little over a year. Hand-milked exclusively until recently. Although I still prefer to hand-milk her. Added Cinnamon 2 months ago. She came from a little Jersey dairy in Idaho. High, tight udder, little teats, sooo glad I got the machine milker, as hand-milking her would take a while. Tomorrow, I head back to Idaho to pick up Cow #3!! Perhaps I've gone a little crazy! hahahaha. The plan is to alternate calving times/drying-up times so I'm never out of fresh milk/cream and all the lovely things we make with it. I'm looking into share milking with a few other families so I'm never drowning in milk either. I'll update with pictures next week! Share your story [here](#).

Farm Kitchen: MJF Bread Baking Day. Submitted by weaverchic

Saturday is MJF Bread Baking day. Anyone interested in joining me by celebrating this delicious event by baking some bread? I plan to bake some Artisan Bread out of my 3-quart cast-iron Dutch oven. It's the best. What kind of bread do you want to bake? I can smell it now! Yummy ... Celebrate MJF Bread Baking day [here](#).



Farm Kitchen: Vegetarianism: For Beginners? Submitted by melody

Any good advice for a "wanna be" vegetarian? I know that it is a completely different lifestyle, but have you noticed how healthy vegetarians look and feel? Is there an easy way to begin and maintain this type of lifestyle or is it best to go COLD turkey—pardon the expression! Any advice or helpful hints for a beginner would be greatly appreciated! Talk to me ladies ... Give your advice [here](#).

continued ...



continued ...

Garden Gate: Gardening with things from the fridge UPDATE. Submitted by Mountain Girl

I've been reading about restarting plants from things in your fridge. If you use the tops of green onions in a dish, you can put the bulb part in water (I think I let it stay until it got roots, then plant it in a pot—the tops will continue to grow and you can use the green parts in recipes. I have been doing this for about 4 months (with the original bulbs). Then, in my CSA, I got a "living" butter lettuce. I used the leaves, and since it has roots, I put it in a pot and it's growing new leaves. Then I read that you can do the same thing with celery. Cut off the bottom, stick it in warm water on the windowsill for a day or so, then put it in a pot (water the hole you make good), then cover with dirt, and it will get stalks—not sure how long that takes, but it's fun. Share your story [here](#).

Garden Gate: High-altitude gardening? Submitted by hialtfarmgirl

I am new at gardening at 4,000 feet. Has anyone done this and do you have tips for me? HELP!!?? Give your gardening advice [here](#).



Garden Gate: Started my winter garden ... Submitted by Dorinda

Planted cabbage, mustard greens, and collards yesterday. Next week, will plant broccoli, carrots, and lettuce. Share about your garden [here](#).

Holidays: Old-fashioned Christmas. Submitted by sherone_13

What is your definition of an old-fashioned Christmas? To me, I am taken back to the stories that my mother told about the Christmas trees of her childhood. The tree was decorated by the family with handmade ornaments and strips of thinly cut aluminum foil. There was a train going around the bottom of the tree. There was a mirror that served as a skate pond for tiny figurines. There were few presents, but lots of magic.

My father tells the story of waking up to a snowy Christmas morning with no presents under the tree. He described his delight when a large box was found on the porch, filled with toys, clothes, and food.

There are foods that I look forward to, like my Grandma's Hjortabakkles (Norwegian Deer Cookies) or Grandpa's Welsh Cakes. An old-fashioned Christmas is something different to everyone. Share those ideas [here](#)!



Outpost: HELP with new “vintage” trailer. Submitted by Mountain Girl

We just bought a 1969 Kit Companion trailer—was told everything worked—couldn't test because the tanks were empty. I knew she was fibbing a bit, but not this bad? Put a propane tank on and the stove and heater don't seem to be getting any propane. We smell no gas outside, so don't think it's a leak. Anybody have a clue what to look at first? Give your advice [here](#).

Stitching & Crafting Room: Cute as a button garland to make. Submitted by Annika

Playing around on Pinterest this evening, I came across just the thing to make for my tree this year. Apparently, these go for a lot of money from some of the artistic upscale design stores, but it looks really stinkin' simple and I already have a lot of buttons in jars. I wanted to show how cute this is! I've used a bunch of big, heavy, burgundy bead garlands for years and it's time for something more simple and fresh. Share your story [here](#).



Girl Gab

Where sisters share.

Have you seen the wondrous array of content and heartfelt sharing on girlgab.com? Updated every day at 3 p.m. PST so you can count on fresh content every day of the week. Farmgirl Sisters are amazing. Come read our personal blogs, all in one place now.

The PLACE where girlfriends gather to gabble, gush, and gadabout ...

MaryJane's Farm
Gabbers & Gushers

MaryJane Buller's
Missing Jane Farmgirl

Rebecca Teal
City Farmgirl

Alexandra Wilson
Rural Farmgirl

Nicole Christiansen
Suburban Farmgirl

Sherry Jessopson
Ranch Farmgirl

Cathy Belscher
Mountain Farmgirl

Debbie Bestworth
Beach Farmgirl

11/23/2012 17:59

Find out what
MaryJane's Farmgirl Sisterhood
is all about.

November, it's not **WIND** you love, but **SNOW** you love.

[Click to find out for more info.](#)

Get a Girl Gab button for your blog!

Add a Cyberbully button to your blog!

Who's Gabbing and Who's Gushing

Miscommunication at its finest

Posted on November 28, 2012 by Amy Dingmann, Sister #1066

Note: I give to you now a humorous story sans pictures, so I apparently need to buy more storage from google in order to continue posting pictures in any of my blogs ... [Read more](#)

GirlGab.com Blogs

- Alice Minszen, Sister #12
Alice's Wonderful Life
- Aloha Omea, Sister #3038
No Red Lipstick
- Amanda Christen, Sister #1180
My Little Country
- Arlene VanDusen, Sister #4117
The Adventures of Billy and Mandoo
- Amber Conger, Sister #3912
Bellevue Industrial Revolution
- Amy Dingmann, Sister #1066
A Farmish Kind of Life
- Amy Dingmann, Sister #1066
The Ninnies ... schooling mom
- Amy Holzapf, Sister #2944
Crafting by Candlelight
- Amy MaryJane, Sister #3794
Far North Farmgirl
- Amy Marquardt, Sister #3286
Solar House Wellness
- Andrea Furber, Sister #4919
Things I get to do today
- Angela Crockett, Sister #2888
Lazy Jo Ranch
- Angie Gatz, Sister #4633

Woolly Moss
Roots

Buttons
Herbals

deep peace

Posted on November 28, 2012 by Camerac Kewasen, Sister #3813

Deep peace of the running waves to you ... [Read more](#)

NEED DIRECTIONS TO
MARYJANE'S FARM STORE?

CLICK HERE

to win the book
MARY JANE

"The journey of a lifetime."



Bread Making Tips

Posted on November 20, 2012 by Candy Conrad, Sister #977



For something a little different today, I thought I would share some of the tips and tricks I've learned baking bread for the last several years for the Farmer's Market. If my loyal, repeat customers are any indication, I must be doing something right! :) ... [Read more](#)



Enjoying the Flint Hills...

Posted on November 20, 2012 by Christina O'neal, Sister #1847



These beautiful fall days just beg us to get outside, take a little hike, and do some exploring with the family ... [Read more](#)



Subscribe to MaryJaneseFarm magazine and save more than 44% off the newsstand rate. [Click here](#)



Thanksgiving 2012 A Time of Remembrance!

Posted on November 28, 2012 by Florence Muma, Sister #359



Rosemary for remembrance. Did you know that rosemary was and is used for remembering something ... [Read more](#)

Help.. I'm at a loss

Posted on November 28, 2012 by Gail Springman, Sister #486

I am at a loss as to what to do. I tried to post pics yesterday and was hit with a "you are at your limit and need to upgrade storage". Yet when I go into my current plan, it shows I have only used 52% for Picasa and 0% for the drive and gmail ... [Read more](#)



The Country Homemaker Hop #48

Posted on November 28, 2012 by Heidi Gonzales, Sister #3844



I've been keeping busy here at the new place. Even camped out in the "tin teepee" we have found many new adventures to keep us busy as we wait for both escrows to close in a few more weeks ... [Read more](#)

Photo Challenge!

Posted on November 28, 2012 by Joy Lujan, Sister #3169



I think I am up for a new challenge this December... a photo a day! ... [Read more](#)



Our Thailand Trip

Posted on November 28, 2012 by Jennifer Hunter, Sister #1872



We're leaving tomorrow!! All packed and ready to go, and I thought, hmmm, maybe my friends would like to know where we're going and what we're doing ... [Read more](#)

Happy, Healthy Skin

Posted on November 28, 2012 by Jennifer Hunter, Sister #1872



Did the title of this post get your attention, or did the beautiful *Na Peoples* get your attention? ... [Read more](#)



Decorative Pillows [\(click here\)](#)

Farmgirl Merit Badges Sisterhood

MARYJANESFARM

Merit Badge Details: Farmgirl Legend

Become a Legend in Your Own Time!

There are now two ways to become a **Farmgirl Legend**. Become a "Schoolmarm" when you complete all the badge requirements in any one category. For example, in Each Other, you would need to complete the beginner, intermediate, and expert levels in Community Service, Community Action, Public Service, Lend a Hand to Families, Lend a Hand to Farm Families, Little Squirts, Plant It Forward, Connecting Growers and Eaters, Farmgirl Gratitude, Get 'er Done, Farmgirl Spirit, Families Forever, and Entrepreneurial Spirit.

Once you become a "Schoolmarm," the next step is to become a "Head Mistress" when you obtain the Schoolmarm title in **ALL** categories.

When you become a Schoolmarm or a Headmistress, you will be awarded a certificate and your new lofty title will be applied to your Farmgirl Connection chatroom I.D.





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!

Hi, my name is Veronica and you made a charm for me. It is a Farmgirl Sisterhood charm necklace and I just had to e-mail you.

First off, I never expected such quality and attention to detail. When I saw my name on the package, I thought it was from someone I knew! Then when I opened the package and saw the little burlap pouch, I smiled and my daughter (who is 3) said, "Mama, what's that?" Then, when I pulled out the necklace, I literally gasped.

It's so beautiful! I knew what it would look like from a photo on the MaryJanesFarm website, but this necklace exceeded my expectations. I loved the length of the chain. I have bought some necklaces on Etsy.com and I'm always disappointed that the ball chains are soooo short. The charm looks small to me on the website, so when I saw it, I was like, this is the perfect size!

I just wanted to thank you personally for such detail and the obvious love you put into your craft. Are you on Etsy? I'm definitely sharing your website with all of my friends. And I am most definitely going to be buying another charm(s) from you in the future.

Thank you again, and I feel like I got a bargain for this necklace.

Sincerely,
Veronica Laviolette



Merit Badge

Awardees



Merit Badge Awardees

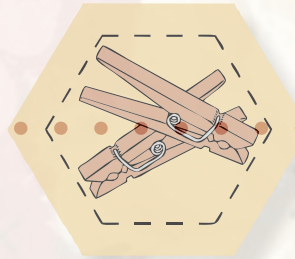
Anita Geisler, neeter302 #522

Beginner badge: Going Green / Cleaning Up

Beginner badge: Know Your Roots / Each Other

Intermediate badge: Going Green / Cleaning Up

Intermediate badge: Know Your Roots / Each Other



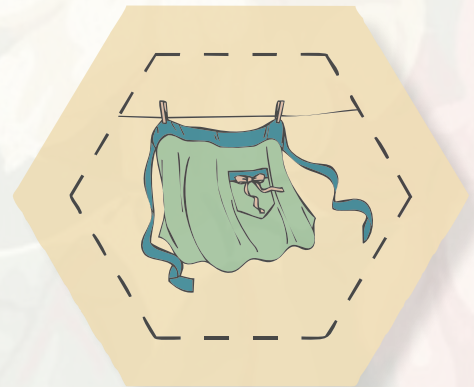
Barbara Roberts, Healthy Eating #2237

Beginner badge: BakeOver MakeOver / Farm Kitchen

Intermediate badge: BakeOver MakeOver / Farm Kitchen

Intermediate badge: The Secret Life of Bees / Garden Gate

Expert badge: The Secret Life of Bees / Garden Gate



Christina Marsden, #4411

Intermediate badge: Crochet / Stitching & Crafting

Colina Washburn, rubyleesmom #3408

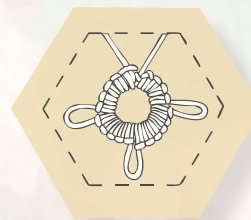
Beginner badge: Get It Together / Farm Kitchen

Darla Armstrong, cowgirlup@21 #4391

Beginner badge: Fishing / Outpost

Intermediate badge: Fishing / Outpost

Expert badge: Fishing / Outpost



Dawn Cox, dawn5556 #4676

Beginner badge: Shopping Green / Cleaning Up

Intermediate badge: Shopping Green / Cleaning Up

Denise Meister, Denisemgm #1976

Beginner badge: Public Service / Each Other

Holli Herndon, #4262

Intermediate badge: Shopping Green / Cleaning Up

Jennifer Mackey, Jen Mackey #4218

Beginner badge: The Secret Life of Bees / Garden Gate

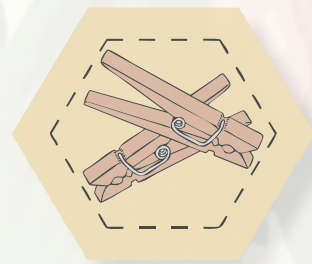
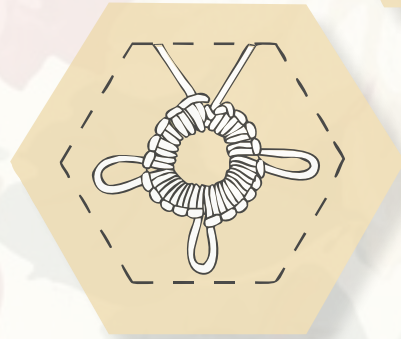
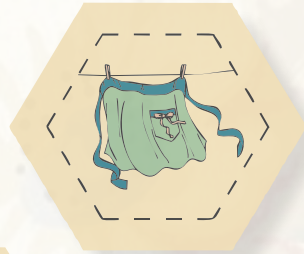


Karla Reinhart, karlee2147 #4476
Beginner badge: Bustin' Out / Farm Kitchen

Kelly Schoff, Kelly Diane #4115
Beginner badge: Shopping Green / Cleaning Up
Beginner badge: Blogging / Each Other
Beginner badge: Bustin' Out / Farm Kitchen
Beginner badge: Get It Together / Farm Kitchen
Beginner badge: What's Your Beef? / Garden Gate
Beginner badge: Buttoned Up / Stitching & Crafting
Intermediate badge: Blogging / Each Other

Kristina Nelson, FieldsofThyme #800
Beginner badge: Pay It Forward / Farm Kitchen
Beginner badge: Know Your Food / Farm Kitchen
Intermediate badge: Pay It Forward / Farm Kitchen
Intermediate badge: Know Your Food / Farm Kitchen
Expert badge: Pay It Forward / Farm Kitchen

Kyla Hill, HoneysuckleHill3 #4640
Beginner badge: Shopping Green / Cleaning Up



continued ...



continued ...

Mary Jane Duffel, Madelena #3153
Beginner badge: Birds / Garden Gate

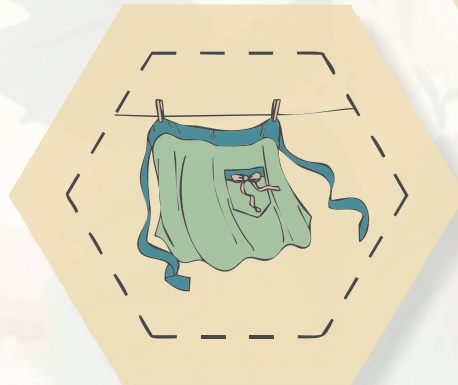
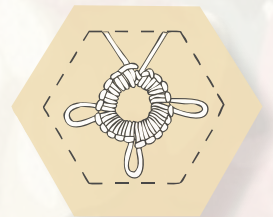
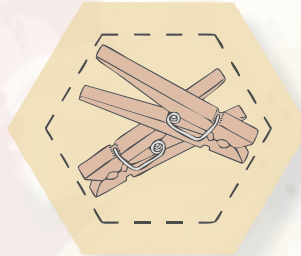
Melissa Warner-Talcott, Melissa Warner-Talcott #3555
Beginner badge: Birds / Garden Gate
Intermediate badge: Birds / Garden Gate

Ruth Ann Kutemeier, Ruthie Ann #4072
Beginner badge: Sew Wonderful / Stitching & Crafting
Beginner badge: Families Forever / Each Other

Suzanne Holland, suzanneh #3608
Beginner badge: Backyard Farmer / Garden Gate
Beginner badge: Get It Together / Farm Kitchen
Beginner badge: Icing on the Cake / Farm Kitchen
Intermediate badge: Get It Together / Farm Kitchen
Intermediate badge: Icing on the Cake / Farm Kitchen
Expert badge: Icing on the Cake / Farm Kitchen

Tamara Burger, GrammyTammy #2495
Beginner badge: Horse Dreams / Garden Gate
Expert badge: Farmgirl Spirit / Each Other
Expert badge: Self-sufficiency / Farm Kitchen
Expert badge: Let's Get Physical / Make It Easy

Terry Steinmetz, teryouth #3600
Beginner badge: Basketry / Stitching & Crafting
Beginner badge: Quilting / Stitching & Crafting
Beginner badge: Homespun Christmas / Stitching & Crafting
Beginner badge: Scrapbooking / Stitching & Crafting
Intermediate badge: Basketry / Stitching & Crafting
Intermediate badge: Scrapbooking / Stitching & Crafting





Farmerettes & Young Cultivators

Merit Badge Awardees

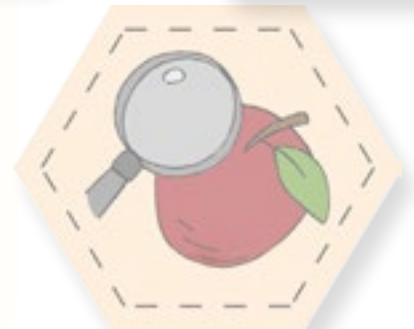


What's a Farmerette?

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.](#)



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 further issues.

The Year Ahead

Another year is winding down and winter is upon us here in Idaho. For my kids, it means fort building in the living room, crafts spread from one end of the house to the other, and yummy hot cocoa with candy canes and marshmallows. For me, it's a time to dream—I pile up inspirational books all summer and fall, creating a stack to read over winter break. This year, I have a mix of parenting books, cookbooks, and novels waiting for me. There are favorites to reread and new books to ponder. Folded up inside *MaryJane's Ideabook, Cookbook, Lifebook* is a handwritten list of the Young Cultivators badges my kids want to earn in 2013. My son, who is 6, will be joining our group full of girls, and he is already working on gathering rocks for his Rock Out badge. Having him in our group will add balance, and his constant enthusiasm will be energizing. We all have wishes for the New Year, and I am being intentional about making space to nurture mine during the long, dark days of December. I want to do the same for my husband and children, so this month we made a paper wish mobile. Each circle of paper has a goal or wish written on it, and I stitched them together using my sewing machine. On New Year's Eve, we will hang them outside in the wind and imagine the year to come.



meet our bloggers

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 a 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.”

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

www.maryjanesfarm.org

NEWS FROM THE HOMEFRONT ...

whether that home is

city, rural, suburban,
mountain, ranch, or beach



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.'"

IT IS CHRISTMAS
IN THE *heart*
THAT PUTS
Christmas
IN THE AIR

- W.T. Ellis



Magazines, Books,

& More



Our Dec/Jan issue ("Self Rising") hit newsstands on Nov. 6. In it, you'll find recipes for winter soups, fabulous fruitcakes, and no-knead bread; make simple burlap wreaths for the holidays; read about knitting with dog hair; see gorgeous art dolls; and more.

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

If you have a subscription, you should have received your magazine by about November 1. (Those of you near postal hubs get faster delivery; rural delivery takes a little longer.) If you 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:

- December 10 ~ Human Rights Day
- December 15 ~ Cat Herders' Day
- December 16 ~ National Chocolate-Covered Anything Day
- December 19 ~ Bake Cookies Today!
- December 24 ~ Christmas Eve
- December 25 ~ Christmas Day
- December 31 ~ New Years Eve

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!](#)



Magazines, Books, and More continues ...

Gift Items

Inspire yourself or inspire a friend with tote bags, Sisterhood memberships, candles, dolls, and other gifts from MaryJane. From the kitchen to the campfire, there's something special here for every farmgirl-at-heart. **Click here** to shop our gift items.

Product Shop

Don't forget to visit our "Product Shop" ...

Click Here. You will find everything from beautiful organic bed sheets and bed sets to aprons, chocolate, and over 60 organic instant or quick-prep meals and desserts as well as much, much more!



Check out our all-in-one tote bags. Each bag contains 2 lbs Budget Mix (unbleached white or whole wheat), "Farm Kitchen Special" recipe issue with Budget Mix recipes, and apron pattern. The cute farmgirl tote comes in two different fabric patterns.



If you know of someone who may be interested in receiving this newsletter, send their e-mail addresses to us at sisterhoodhopeful@maryjanesfarm.org and we'll e-mail them a sample issue.

For other questions or general inquiries, e-mail FarmgirlSisterhood@maryjanesfarm.org.

Over 1,240 Farmgirl Chapters have been started in all 50 states and 8 countries with 4,690 Sisterhood members and 6,500 Merit Badges earned—growing stronger every day!