

MaryJane's Cluck™

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

December
2010

*these are a few of
my favorite things*

Life made us FRIENDS, MaryJanesFarm made us SISTERS!

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Hello from Sister #1

A Real Page-Turner

"The Eagle has landed!" Well, not exactly, but turning our Sisterhood newsletter into a "real page-turner" felt like I was shooting for the moon. (You know, I'm always thinking heady things like "Reach for the moon because if you don't make it the first time, you'll land among stars, er, sisters.")

When I first brought up the idea of a new format for our CLUCK newsletter, my computer techies said, "No way MJ, it'll cost a fortune, and getting a comments function for 'members only' is problematic, and WHAT? You want a place for each member's photo!!??" You know, all the usual what if's and maybe not's. But taking no for an answer has never been one of my strong points. They were right about one thing: the time it took to finesse all the behind-the-scenes software, code this and code that, was a white-knuckle ride, kind of like sinking a well for water—once you've started drilling, going-for-it has a way of showing up on your bottom line. But with every new Sisterhood member that joins us, I'm emboldened to continue to put EVERY piece of my dream into action.

I'm on it! From the "command module" (Neil Armstrong speak), mothership, and/or henquarters, I want to say loud and clear, "Thank you for the opportunity to serve you as your apron-toting, badge-wearing, oft-heard-clucking, head hencho." It's a blast-off. And today is our much-anticipated maiden voyage. Make sure you leave a cluck, er, comment.

For those of you earning badges, don't forget our twice-yearly updates that happen in June and January. We've been working on more badges for all age groups, the Madges ... I accidently

continued ...



Sister Jo, www.wherewomencook.com, here's the vintage mink stole I said I'd pack "for-you-to-wear" the next time you leave Utah and I leave Idaho for New York City. Bring some bling!



continued ...

typed Madges instead of badges and I quite like it ... the “Madges” of the Sisterhood (badge earners) can look forward to some new challenges in January. We'll also post new badges and updates for our Farmerettes and Young Cultivators. Such sweetness! Read all about Rebekka Mae's Young Cultivators group on **page 33**.

Connect some meant-to-be dots with Sister Shery from Wyoming. That log cabin quilt you've always wanted to make? Shery shows us how. Sister Alyson has been seduced by Vietnamese coriander on **page 4**, and Sister Irene on **page 10** has all the right stuff for your stockings (by the chimney with care). Sister Rebekka Mae tries to convince us she's playing with a full deck on **page 8**. And never one to forget her bling, Sistah Toni tells us how to clean ours without resorting to toxic cleaners.

Here's to a sparklin' good December! Our Sisterhood Special this month is all about free shipping and spreading some holiday farmgirl cheer. Son Brian and daughter Megan are in the office ready to take your calls (and say Hi or Welcome and Merry Christmas), and hubby Nick is ready to ship (your orders—ship your orders, silly girls—I'm not shipping/sharing MY Saint Nick).

Much love,
Sister MaryJane

P.S. Here's the *Urban Dictionary's* definition of Sistah:

A girl or a woman coming from the same parents, roots, or spiritual state of mind. A female whom you can count on throughout all time. In her truest sense, she is one who will never turn her back on you. She knows you are not perfect, and together you do what you need to do to improve. A real sistah is family. A connection with her is based on mutual love, respect, and consideration. A sistah has your back and you have hers.

A kinswoman.

A fellow member of a tribe, a club, or an organization.

A fellow female who has been through similar situations to what you have been through, thus empowering her to truly empathize, support, and encourage you on your journey as you do the same for her. She gets it. There is no need to strain and explain to a true sistah.

Part of the grand sisterhood or sistahood.

True friend.

“When I need her, my sistah is there for me ... sometimes I don't even have to tell her what's going on. My sistah just knows.”

MaryJane
♥

each 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 3-year-old and 1-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), her stepsister in New York City (the perfect excuse to slip into a pair of stilettos), and one of her favorite farmgirls that she met when she lived in Kansas (scheduled around working the cows, of course).

Just a Dedicated Moment

When it comes to gatherings, December is the busiest month—holiday parties, cookie-exchange gatherings, choir concerts, gift exchanges, family reunions, hosting guests, more parties, more everything.

For some reason, these gatherings leave me slightly amiss. It might be because all the extra “gathering and giving” borrows from my time alone cache. Whether it’s just a cup of tea and a corner of my couch or a bit of shopping by myself, sometimes the hustle and bustle of the holidays happening around me seems happier from afar when observed slowly and quietly. Or maybe a long walk in the frigid night air. I love, love, love passing by cozy window scenes and catching tiny glimpses of *other* people’s ... holiday parties, cookie exchange gatherings, choir concerts, gift exchanges, family reunions ...

So this December, I plan to take the time to slow down. Just a dedicated moment here and there, a bit of time for reflection between it all, a little time, just a moment now and then.

Here’s wishing you a bowl of maple-pecan caramel corn (just for you) AND a holiday moment or two that’s nobody else’s.



ANOTHER GREAT
MARYJANESFARM RECIPE

MAPLE-PECAN CARAMEL CORN

PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 15 MINUTES

MAKES: 10 CUPS

- 8 cups popped popcorn**
($\frac{1}{3}$ cup kernels)
- 1 cup pecans, toasted**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ **cup butter**
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups brown sugar**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ **cup maple syrup**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ **t salt**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ **t baking soda**

1. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Add popcorn and pecans to bowl and toss to combine.
2. Line a large baking sheet with foil and coat with cooking spray; set aside.
3. Combine butter, sugar, and syrup in a heavy-bottomed 6-quart saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly, then cook, without stirring, until mixture reaches 300°F on a candy thermometer.
4. Remove from heat, and stir in salt and baking soda (mixture will foam).
5. Quickly pour caramel over popcorn mixture, and with an oiled spoon, stir until thoroughly coated.
6. Turn mixture out onto baking sheet and spread into a single layer. Allow to cool slightly, then break into bite-sized pieces.

farm kitchen

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FARM KITCHEN with Alyson Oüten To earn a Sisterhood badge in our **FARM KITCHEN** category, [CLICK HERE](#)



Alyson Oüten (Sister #100) is a farmgirl, trapped in a city-girl career. A two-time Emmy-award-winning reporter, Alyson spent 20 years in the hustle and bustle of television news. Alyson recently hung up her microphone and parlayed her professional experiences into a new career as Corporate Communication Strategist for the international semiconductor company, Micron Technology. Alyson lives in a 1910 Craftsman-style bungalow in downtown Boise. She spends as much time as possible cooking for friends and preening and pruning her cottage garden. Alyson is a regular guest at our wall-tent bed and breakfast, where she soaks up our little piece of paradise in a bath under the stars. "It's my happy place!" she says.

Vietnamese Coriander

How can something with so few ingredients taste so ridiculously good ... especially when none of the ingredients is cheese, bread, or wine?

I ask that question every time I eat my friend's Vietnamese Beef Soup. As you can see from the recipe following, it has seven simple ingredients ... but one of them is the "secret" ingredient.

I'd never experienced Vietnamese coriander until I tried this soup. This is not like the average cilantro you find at the grocery store; it is a totally distinct herb that gives many Vietnamese dishes their unique taste.

In order to secure this coveted green, my Vietnamese friend, Thanh, usually rushes to the Asian market first thing on Saturday morning, before the coriander is snapped up by others who've been seduced by its flavor.

Much to my delight, another friend of mine planted the aforementioned Vietnamese coriander (known as rau răm) in her garden this year. I knew once it matured in the garden of friend number one, I could cleverly parlay it into a delicious soup made by friend number two. And my cunning culinary plan worked!

"Soups are mandatory at Vietnamese meals," said Thanh Tan, as she whipped up another batch of broth for me. "Very simple soups like this one."

If you absolutely can't find Vietnamese coriander, go ahead and substitute cilantro. It will still be delicious, but it won't be the same. Conversely, if you ever spot Vietnamese coriander at your neighborhood market ... grab a bunch and make this soup!



recipe next page ...

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FARM KITCHEN with Alyson Oüten To earn a Sisterhood badge in our **FARM KITCHEN** category, [CLICK HERE](#)

Featured Recipe

Vietnamese Beef Soup with Coriander

- 1 T oil
- 1 onion, sliced thinly
- 2/3 lb ground beef
- 2 T fish sauce
- 1 t salt
- 7 cups water
- 1/3 cup Vietnamese coriander leaves, chopped



1. In a soup pot, heat oil over medium heat. Add onions and cook until softened. Add beef and break into smaller pieces. When the beef begins to brown, add fish sauce and salt and cook for 1 minute longer.
2. Add water and increase heat to high until the soup begins to boil. Reduce heat and simmer soup for 15–30 minutes. Turn off heat and add Vietnamese coriander. Serve immediately. (I serve with extra salt, fish sauce, and coriander on the side in order to accommodate individual tastes.)

For amazing nutritional facts about many different types of foods, [click here](#) to visit the website *Self Nutrition Data: Know What You Eat*.

ONIONS make us cry because they have oil that contains sulfur, which converts to sulfuric acid when it comes into contact with the water in our tear ducts.

fun fact

MARYJANESFARM

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GARDEN GATE with Mary Ann Newcomer To earn a Sisterhood badge in our **GARDEN GATE** category, [CLICK HERE](#)



Mary Ann Newcomer, (Sister #246) is a MaryJane Farmgirl, living in Boise, the capital of Idaho. Her great grandparents' homestead was established in 1899 on the Palouse prairie and is still in the family. She learned to cook, garden, can, and sew with her grandmother. Never without a garden or, at the very least, a shelf of plants in an apartment, she followed her passion to become an Advanced Master Gardener, a director of the Idaho Botanical Gardens, and a scribe, scout, and speaker for all things gardening. Click [here](#) to visit her blog.

Christmas Crafting

So, the other day, I am surfing the Web, checking in on some of my favorite stores to see what kind of stuff they are offering up for holiday décor. Lo and behold, I come across a VERY snazzy looking wreath-crown-tree-topper-thingy. Oh my!!??? Titled "forest tree topper," it was a mere \$498. Well, I think those twigs must be dipped in real gold ... real silver ... um, no ... "made of cardboard, glitter, plastic, metal, paper, and cotton." Not a mention of precious metals or fine gemstones.

My next thought? "We'll see about THAT!" and "I'll bet I have all that stuff in my 'dungeon,' er, garage."

Sure enough. I found not one, but several different varieties of wreath forms: wire, straw, Styrofoam, and grapevine—and two of some. (You never know when the spirit will move you to create a crafty masterpiece ... one must be prepared!) I settled on the straw wreath form and then did a little digging in the Christmas decorations, which turned up all kinds of stuff to use: various birds, a cute little birdhouse do-hickey, and some glittery pinecones. I also gathered up some birds' nests and a paper wasps' nest I'd collected over the growing season, as well as some other bits and pieces of nature.

I spray painted the pale straw wreath with some bronze spray paint to tone it down a bit. I'd already collected a couple handfuls of red twig dogwood and snipped the ends of some wispy weeping Japanese maple branches, when I spied the contorted filbert. "Aha!" I thought, "Now we are talking!" The contorted filbert, also called Harry Lauder's walking stick (*Corylus avellana*), has an incredibly interesting twisted shape, perfectly suited to the wonky woodland look I was going for.

Using a kitchen paring knife and a bamboo skewer, I made my way around the wreath form, sticking in the twigs and branches. Hot glue gun at the ready, I poked and prodded, added and subtracted, turned it round and round, until it was JUST right. A little sparkly here, a little tweak there, and ...voila! My inner child had a major play date while snow blanketed the valley and a big pot of soup simmered on the stove.

“ I wish we could put up some of the Christmas spirit in jars and open a jar of it every month. ”

—Harlan Miller

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Way less than \$498 later, I had created a fantasy forest tree topper, using only one long glue stick, decorations from years past, and a bit of nature's bounty. (Note: I was going to use some whole dried mushrooms from the pantry, but they smelled too much like mushrooms.) I used a 12-inch wreath base since I didn't have a smaller one on hand and it just happens to fit my old green vase perfectly. I will put a candle inside the vase to get a glowing woodland silhouette. Note: while the website referred to this as a tree topper, it could be used either way, as a crown for the tree, or with a glass hurricane candle as the centerpiece of your holiday table.



“If one takes pride in one's craft, you won't let a good thing die. Risking it through not pushing hard enough is not a humility.”

-Paul Keating



stitching & crafting room

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STITCHING & CRAFTING with Rebekka Boysen-Taylor To earn a Sisterhood badge in our **STITCHING & CRAFTING** 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.

Playing with a Full Deck

This fall, I pulled out a fresh deck of cards on a camping trip in the Selway Bitterroots. My husband and I tucked the kids into their tent and we sat down to play our first game of cards in 10 years together. With only a vague understanding of the rules, we played our own version of 21 well into the night and got caught up on all the little things that get lost in the shuffle of everyday life. The next day, I played Solitaire and watched the river flow by ... and I realized why my parents and grandparents always had a deck of cards on the table. Card games engage the mind, focus attention, and give adults permission to play. It's the equivalent to getting a hall pass for unstructured, free-flowing conversation. It is relaxing to sit down to a game of cards, and each time I play I walk away with the same calm I get from knitting or yoga. What a revelation!

Grab a deck of your own and give it some farmgirl style. To embellish your deck, gather the following supplies: papers, glue, ribbon, buttons, ruler, scissors, and a pencil. Start by cutting out your background paper—this piece should be 8" x 3.5". Using a thin layer of glue, apply this paper to cover your card box. Now glue your decorative strip around the box—it should be 8" x 2". Along the edge of this strip, you can add some velvet ribbon or a few buttons. Now, cut scrap pieces to cover the flaps on either end. Pair a gussied-up deck of cards with a rule book like Hoyle's and you have a great gift for the holidays. I found several gently used books at my local thrift store for 10 cents apiece. If you are giving cards to someone who might be playing alone, try a Solitaire book. My favorite version of Solitaire is Klondike, since it is the one I watched my family play growing up. When I went to brush up on the rules, I found the passage below.



"It is perhaps a tribute to the indomitable human spirit that this most popular of all solitaires (Klondike) is at the same time the most difficult to win."

-150 Ways to Play Solitaire, published by the Unites States Playing Card Company, year 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.

“Blankets wrap you in warmth, quilts wrap you in love. ”

—Author Unknown

“Fast Lane” Log Cabin Quilt

Years ago, I dog-eared a page in a book about historic quilts. I finally got around to doing the quilt, and I wanted to use it for “everyday.” So, the top would be “speed-pieced” by machine and then machine quilted by a friend. The “how-to” of this quilt is a general guide. There are many online tutorials that will walk you through the speed-piecing process of making a traditional Log Cabin quilt. Yardage requirements will vary, based on what you want the finished size to be (yardage is included in the directions).

I'll share the specifics beyond the basics that went into the making of this particular quilt. I wanted the quilt to be a faithful reproduction of the 1890s scrap quilt in the book, which meant gathering up a vast array of fabrics, some of which would only appear a couple of times in the quilt. The block arrangement that creates this dark versus light pattern is very old and it is called “Barn Raising.”

All of the blocks except one have a red square in the center. That block has a yellow center square. The reason behind it is two-fold. An “off” piece is something the Amish are noted for. By intent, they create a tiny imperfection in their quilts as an expression of humility (“Only God is perfect.”). The yellow center square in one block appears in some old Log Cabin quilts. It represents a candle left burning in the window of a cabin, welcoming guests or someone coming home. I like symbolism, and so there had to be a “candle in the window” on my quilt. I recall reading an old verse about using red, contrast fabrics, and including a candle block in Log Cabin quilts. It went like this: “A fire in the hearth to warm and a light in the window to welcome.”

There are 16 red and black/gray blocks, arranged in the middle (refer to photo). The rest of the blocks are black/gray on one side and lighter prints and plaids on the other side. I chose to use a homespun plaid for the backing fabric and a “buffalo check” homespun plaid for the binding. All of the fabric is 100% cotton. (Don't forget to pre-wash your fabric, and wash and rinse the red fabric separately.)



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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.

Herbal Stocking Stuffers

Items purchased from a store never feel quite as good as giving gifts that have been lovingly handcrafted. Give the gift of herbal healing this holiday season with these simple and unique homemade gifts!

Herb Sachets

Last year, I collected and dried wild Cedar tips from the woods and then packed them into small cotton muslin bags which I stamped with images of birds, owls, trees, and botanicals. They were a hit! Everyone loved them and the lingering herbal aromas that they imparted.

- Herbs or Spices: I used Lavender and Cedar tips, but any fragrant herb or spice can be utilized. Some ideas include Cardamom, Cinnamon, Eucalyptus, Frankincense, Myrrh, Peppermint, Lemongrass, Lemon Verbena, Rose petals, Rosemary, Star Anise, Spearmint, and White Sage.

- Bags: I used pre-made cotton muslin bags from Mountain Rose Herbs, but you can also make your own bags with cotton or muslin fabric.

Directions: Coarsely grind herbs and spices in a coffee grinder to release their scent. The resins and spices will be too dense for a coffee grinder, but you can coarsely break them up using a mortar and pestle. Stamp the bags if desired, then stuff with herbs and spices. Simply add a few drops of essential oil if you'd like a stronger aroma.

Herbal Syrups

Simple to make, these sweet herbal syrups make a lovely, luxurious, and unique gift that anyone is sure to enjoy! Delicious atop pancakes, waffles, ice cream, cakes, strawberry shortcake, fresh fruit, crepes, or stirred into lemonade, iced tea, or cocktails. You can even mix them with soda water to create your own herbal sodas.



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- Herbs and Spices: Fresh or dried organic Basil, Cloves, Cinnamon, Ginger root, Hibiscus flowers Lavender flowers, Lemon Balm, Lemon peel, Lemon Verbena, Lemongrass, Orange peel, Peppermint, Rose petals, Rosehips, Star Anise, Spearmint, Vanilla beans. If using fresh herbs, gather approximately 1 bunch. Dried herbs can be added to taste, but plan on using approximately 1/4 cup per batch.

Directions: Bring 2 cups of water to a boil and then add 2 cups of organic sugar. Allow the sugar to dissolve, then remove from the heat and add herbs. Cover the pot, and allow the herbs to steep until the mixture cools. You can remove the herbs sooner if the syrup reaches the flavor that you desire before it finishes cooling. Or, you can allow the syrup to sit overnight if you prefer a stronger syrup. Once you are satisfied with the flavor, strain out the herbs and pour the remaining liquid into pretty glass bottles. Attach a label with recipes or ideas for usage (optional), and you are finished! The syrup should last for at least 6 months when stored in a refrigerator.

Herbal Infused Sugars and Salts

Herbal infused sugars and salts are a fun way to turn ordinary ingredients into something special! Use in the same manner as unseasoned sugar or salt, or use as a finishing touch to any dish.

Just imagine Cardamom spiced sugar stirred into coffee, Cinnamon sugar sprinkled into a warm cup of Chamomile tea, Lavender sugar sprinkled over Crème Brulee, Clove sugar atop homemade pumpkin bread, or Lemon Verbena sugar sprinkled over shortbread cookies.

Herbal salts are a versatile ingredient delightful in soups, sauces, stews, and roasted vegetables or meats. Savory Rosemary salt may be sprinkled over homemade focaccia, Basil salt atop freshly sliced heirloom tomatoes, Sage infused salt on roasted root vegetables, or enjoy a margarita dressed up with a Chili Pepper salt rim. Yum!

- Organic sugar or sea salt (coarse or fine).
- Herbs for Sugar: Dried organic Basil, Cardamom pods, Chamomile flowers, Cinnamon sticks, Cloves, Ginger root, Lavender flowers, Lemon Balm, Lemon peel, Lemon Verbena, Orange peel, Oregano, Peppermint, Rose petals, Rosemary, Sage, Star Anise, Thyme, or Vanilla Beans.
- Herbs for Salt: Dried organic Basil, Cayenne, Chili Peppers, Chives, Coriander seeds, Cumin, Dill, Garlic, Ginger root, Lavender flowers, Lemon Balm, Lemon peel, Lemon Verbena, Marjoram, Mustard seeds, Orange peel, Oregano, Parsley, Peppermint, Rosemary, Summer or Winter Savory, Tarragon, or Thyme.



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Directions: Use 1 part herb or spice to 4 parts salt or sugar. Crush the herbs in a mortar and pestle, or whirl in a food processor or coffee grinder. Mix the herbs with sugar or salt. When using hard herbs and spices like Cinnamon sticks, Cardamom pods, or Star Anise, simply place into sugar or salt and allow to infuse for 2-4 weeks, then remove the herbs and spices. The sugar or salt will be infused with the delectable flavor and aroma of the herb. Package in pretty, airtight glass bottles, jars, or tins. Add labels and a bit of decorative ribbons or twine, if desired. For a creative presentation, you can layer each herb separately into the jar, with instructions to mix the herbs together before using. To easily transform these into a main gift, give sets of the salts or sugars and include recipe ideas, or pair the salts with jars of whole pink, green, or rainbow peppercorns.

Tea Samplers

A perfect gift for the tea connoisseur or budding tea enthusiast, tea samplers are a fun way to try new teas. They are so simple and inexpensive to create that you can easily give them to everyone on your gift list!

- Teas of your choice, or create your own tea blends.
- Glass jars or aluminum tins.

Place loose-leaf teas into containers and decorate with a label and brewing instructions. To make a set of tea samplers, simply stack the containers and wrap together with ribbon and raffia. You can easily turn this into a main gift by including a tea pot or tea set, tea strainers, and a book about tea.

Here are a few tea sampler set ideas:

Black Tea Sampler: Fill tins with English Breakfast, Earl Grey, and Mango Ceylon. Add aged paper labels, include a mesh tea infuser, and wrap the set in black raffia.

Green Tea Sampler: Fill containers with classic green teas of Genmaicha, Jasmine, Gunpowder, and Pu'erh. Include a little card describing the history of green tea and a bamboo tea strainer.

Herbal Tea Sampler: Fill glass jars with some of these favorite blends from Mountain Rose Herbs: Dawn Chorus Tea, Dream Tea, Echinacea & Roots Tea, Evening Repose Tea, Fairytale Tea, Firefly Chai, Hibiscus High Tea, Peace Tea, or Winter Spice Tea. Include a Celestial Tea Strainer and wrap with the jars with labels and colorful ribbons.

Other stocking stuffer ideas:

- Packets of herbal and medicinal seeds.
- Homemade lip balm.
- Healing herbal salves.
- Natural incense.
- Essential oils (some good basics are Eucalyptus, Lavender, Lemon, Peppermint, and Rosemary).
- Herbal wreaths.
- White Sage, Cedar, Mugwort, or Sweetgrass smudge sticks.
- Bath salts.
- Beeswax or soy candles.

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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.

“It Was Meant To Be”

How many times in your life have you paused for a moment and acknowledged that a feeling was more than that? I’m specifically referring to the kind of moment that stands out as if it were three dimensional ... one of those “It was meant to be” moments. Had I the foresight to keep track of and number them all these years, perhaps I’d have fewer doubts about things working out for the best. From time to time, doubts leak under the door of my being like a wintry draft.

It is easy to suggest that things will work out as they’re meant to when I’m encouraging someone else. But, when doubt comes home to roost, well, it is easier to talk the talk than to walk the talk.

Those “meant to be” episodes in life really ought to be things we commit to memory. We need hopeful confidence for as long as we live and we need regular re-fueling to remain steadfast. That is what made me think of my “meant to be” moments. At first, I was a little embarrassed in that I had to think about it. Then the flood came. My earliest memories and right up to the present day are riddled with such events. Looking back, I can see 54 years worth of being watched over by a power beyond human care. There are so many little things—little to anyone else, but not to me. And there have been big things, even life-saving “coincidences,” which to this day defy explanation.

My family, my work, my marriage, my friendships, my pets, my horses, my travels, all of what I’ve learned, the person I am now, and the person I’m still working on ... all of it is wrapped up in moments that were and will be meant to be. Now, personalize that and stand back and look at the big picture. The design for our lives requires “big picture” thinking, and once you catch the vision, it is a real confidence builder. Where there is a pattern, there is an explanation (at worst) and a purpose (at best). Even if we don’t yet see the fullness of purpose, there is probably enough evidence for us to see a blueprint.

How do you see what I’m referring to? Connect the dots. Trust me, there is more to *you* than you might think. The dots, once collected, are a picture of you, the you of the past and the you in progress. While it is true that we cannot know what the future holds, we can help sway the outcome a little if we follow a positive pattern. If you don’t like what you see, notice that in the story of the dots, you are in a position to author many of the details in what is meant to be. Claim your rights to be a partner in self-governance. I have an idea about how it all happens, but “things” do come together in ways beyond my own influence and I’m okay with knowing only part of how it all works.

continued ...

“No hour of life is wasted that is spent in the saddle.”

– Winston Churchill



outpost

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

OUTPOST with Shery Jespersen To earn a Sisterhood badge in our **OUTPOST** category, [CLICK HERE](#)

continued ...

There is enough leftover “child” in me to believe in miracles and heaven-sent magic. As small as we feel sometimes, there *is* a “plan” for our lives. From somewhere within, a whisper insists that I *am* important in the grand scheme of things. All the “meant to be” moments strung in spiral fashion around me like a cascading trail of stars confirm it. Connect the dots, the stars. Then, move on to connecting to others ... and *that* is where the plan takes on real meaning.

All that I’ve learned from being part of the MaryJanesFarm family and all that I’ve gleaned from MaryJane as a mentor are woven into the fabric of my being. She helped me to re-set goals, clarify ideals, and spark new dreams when I most needed to dream again. The purpose became clear. I’ve been blessed to play a small role in something much larger than little old me. It was meant to be.



cleaning up

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**

CLEANING UP with Toni Salerno To earn a Sisterhood badge in our **CLEANING UP** category, [CLICK HERE](#)



Born and raised in Florida, Toni Salerno (Sister #197) left her city life as a Theatre Director/Teacher to live a more holistic, serene life in Idaho. Five years ago, she found her dream home in Troy, Idaho, and embraced the Palouse way of life. Now, Toni and her husband, Adam, and their four daughters own Clean Green, an organic cleaning service. This company specializes in chemical-free cleaning using their own line of environmentally safe products. Visit their website at www.cleangreenocs.com.

Make Mine
GREEN

Sparklin' Holidays

The holidays are a perfect time to get out the crystal, china, and glassware while entertaining. Wearing a fancy piece of costume jewelry or diamonds can also add ambiance to the season. But every farmgirl knows that water spots on your dinnerware or a dingy piece of jewelry can look unappealing and drab. But thankfully, there are inexpensive, natural products that will help put the sparkle back into your holidays.

Cleaning Dinnerware: When cleaning china, crystal, or glass, most dishwashers have a fine china and crystal setting. And if you are using the dishwasher, carefully stack each piece without touching other pieces to prevent chipping. Also, most china settings require less detergent and should be washed alone on their special setting. To enhance the shine, add vinegar as a rinse aid to remove buildup and leave your dinnerware streak free. Remember, if you allow your dinnerware pieces to dry naturally, they will develop water spots. Water spots are mineral deposits, like calcium, that remain on a surface after the water dries. You can avoid water spots by washing in warm water and drying with a soft cloth. In order to hand-wash glassware or crystal, wash in a soapy solution of 2 tablespoons of natural soap to a full sink of warm water. Then rinse with warm water and 1/4 cup of vinegar. Dry and polish each piece with a clean, soft dishtowel to restore sparkle. To remove tea stains from china, use a damp sponge with baking soda and wipe down.

Cleaning Dinnerware: Everyone knows that most jewelry stores charge for cleaning your jewelry and the chemicals used can be toxic and be absorbed into your skin. However, baking soda is safe and effective when it comes to cleaning jewelry. And a paste of baking soda and peroxide is great to clean buildup and dirt off your jewelry. It also gets rid of dirt, grime, and body oils to leave your jewelry shining and looking new. My mother always advised me to use a toothbrush and toothpaste to clean my jewelry—it adds sparkle to your diamonds and shine to your precious metals. Some other natural recipes are:

Gold: Soak for 15 minutes in a solution of 2 cups warm water and a few drops of a natural dishwashing liquid. Gently scrub with a soft-bristle toothbrush. Rinse with warm water and dry with a soft cloth.

Diamonds: Soak for 20 minutes in a solution of 1 cup warm water and 1/4 cup vinegar. Then gently scrub with a soft-bristle toothbrush, getting into the small areas between the diamond and the setting. Rinse with warm water and lay on a tissue to dry. If your diamonds are set in platinum, this method will also clean the setting.

Here's to a sparkling holiday season!



The Scoop from MaryJanesFarm

Indexes Now Available!

We now have a *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 is going to start a calendar to 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!)



MARYJANES FARM. TV



the scoop continues ...

MaryJanesFarm.TV

Head on over to www.maryjanesfarm.tv and check out our new Farmgirl “U” (University) Sisterhood Merit Badge videos. (Search through the list for those that are underlined—those are links to completed videos.) Also, our new “DIY Magazine Projects” has a video of paper guru Jaime Whitney demonstrating how to make beautiful paper out of junk mail as a companion to her how-to pages in the April/May 2010 issue of our magazine. And for a bit of escape, enjoy our “Farm Romance” videos.

Farmgirl “U” is for YOU—the gal who still giggles with her girlfriends and craves vine-ripened tomatoes, homemade jams, and healthier living in general. (Let’s not forget simple pleasures in particular.) And you were born with enough curiosity that continuing to learn is a must. In can-do, will-do “I can do this!” fashion, we are slowly offering how-to videos that match our written Merit Badge requirements. So take heart, visual learners, we heard you loud and clear! But be patient, our list of videos-yet-to-be-completed tells us we have about a year’s worth to shoot. Stay tuned! We’re hard at it.

MaryJane ♥

P.S. Don’t be shy! If you have a video camera, don’t hesitate to put yourself, a Farmerette, or a Young Cultivator in front of it describing how a particular badge was earned. They can be sent to us on a DVD as a .mpeg file for inclusion on our www.maryjanesfarm.tv website (upon approval). Send them to: MaryJanesFarm/Merit Badge Videos, Box 8691, Moscow, ID 83843. Include your e-mail address and the badge earned so we can let you know when it will go live. (You still need to apply online for approval of badges, but don’t hesitate to shoot videos of ANY badges you’ve earned in the past. And sorry, we can’t return the DVDs you send.) Think Farmgirl “U” Tube and get those cameras rolling!



Farmgirl Chatter

What are farmgirls chatting about?

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

UPDATE: If you've ever tried searching for a post on our chatroom, you know that our search can only look through one category at a time and that it takes quite a while to find results. (After all, there are now over 600,000 posts on our chatroom, and that's a lot of words to search through!) But did you know that Google has a quick, powerful "site" search? Just go to **Google**, type in the words you're searching for, then follow that by typing in the site name like this: `site:http://www.maryjanesfarm.org/snitz` (note that there's no space after the word "site"). You'll be astonished at the quick results!

Across the Fence: Completed Goals for 2010? Submitted by lovingewe
Getting near the end of 2010. Just wondering if anyone had anything they had hoped to accomplish in 2010 and did? I taught myself how to tat. I have had shuttles around the house for years, but didn't have a clue how to do it. Through *MaryJane's Stitching Room* book, I saw the needle tatting, received a needle from a dear lady on this forum, and went right to it. I love it. I also learned how to make homemade pasta from an Italian friend. I use our own organic flour from our farm to make it. I will never buy store bought again.

What about you? **Click here** to post your completed goals.

Barnyard Buddies: Offering Horseback Riding Lessons ... Submitted by TJinMT

Hi gals! This thought process is not very well advanced—just thinkin'—but ... I've been thinking about offering riding lessons again. When we lived in Texas, we had our own ranchette, I trained and boarded and competed and rode every day and had plenty of horses to use as lesson horses ... that is no longer the case! We now live in Montana and board my one remaining horse. He's NOT a good lesson horse (advanced riders only), but I'm kicking around ideas of getting a good, small lesson horse and offering basic Western lessons. The place where I board has a nice round pen and outdoor arena.

Just wondering if anyone else did this, and if so, how it worked out for them? I'm a homeschooling, write-from-home mom. The boarding stable is an easy 20 minutes away, maybe 25. We live in Montana so the lack of an indoor arena is an issue somewhat (at least during winter, summer is great). Part of my desire to do this is a bone-deep need to be around horses again! We also need another income source. I dunno. Anyone have any thoughts?? **Click here** to share your thoughts.

Barnyard Buddies: Rabbits. Submitted by Mama Jewel

The newest edition of MJF was very timely ... I've been thinking about angora rabbits for the pet aspect, the poop for compost, and the fur for hand spinning on a drop spindle to knit with. Has anyone made yarn with rabbit fur using *only* a drop spindle? Also, our humane society has a rabbit that they're calling a "mixed breed." The rabbit has longish fur and looks very much like part angora. Do you





the chatter continues ...

think I would be able to brush and use its fur for making yarn, or am I in fantasy land? (LOL) Click [here](#) to give your advice.

Barnyard Buddies: Chicken Breed Butchering Question. Submitted by farmmilkmama
So yesterday, hubby and I butchered our first batch of Buff Orpingtons. Up until this point everything we've butchered have been reds. Generally, we have NO problems and it doesn't take us very long, but holy moly, it took forever to get those Buff feathers out! (And we were using my hubby's homemade chicken plucker.) We did everything the same way we always do ... but this seriously took three times the amount of time as it normally does for the same amount of birds. Does anyone happen to know if the stars were just misaligned for butchering, or if some breeds take longer/are more stubborn than others? Click [here](#) to comment.

Cleaning Up: Steam Mops. Submitted by shelbyc
I'm thinking of getting a steam mop for my laminate and linoleum floors. Is there one brand that you would recommend or not recommend? Click [here](#) with your recommendations.

Cleaning Up: Vinegar in Laundry Rinse ... Submitted by 5 acre Farmgirl
What a incredible idea ... I tried white vinegar in my final rinse of my laundry and I LOVE IT!!!! I am allergic to almost everything, as far as, laundry goes, and I am not to the vinegar, YIIIPPEEE!!! My clothes smell good and clean ... Whoever posted it earlier, a Great Big Thank-you to you!!! Click [here](#) to comment.

Farmgirl Fashion: Closet Inventory. Submitted by prariehawk
I was just looking through my closet and came up with these figures: I have at least 12 items that were bought at resale or tag sales; I have seven fair trade items; at least 50 percent of my clothes are five years old or more. I find as I get older, the pickier I am about clothes. I hate shopping at dept. stores, even the nice ones. How do you recycle/reuse/restyle your threads? Click [here](#) to respond to topic.

Garden Gate: Seeds?? Submitted by CountryLisa72
I would like to start looking for heirloom seeds for the future ... Where should I look? Click [here](#) to with your ideas.

Garden Gate: What are you planting spring 2011? Submitted by homsteddinmom
What does everyone have on their list to plant for spring 2011? Click [here](#) to respond to topic.

Garden Gate: Blowing out sprinklers? Submitted by Mama Jewel
We've always borrowed a friend's air compressor to blow out our sprinklers to winterize our yard. However, we are trying to do it ourselves this year. We bought an air compressor at Sears, and it didn't do squat. So I'm wondering if anyone knows what psi we need to do this task. We have an avg-size home with about 30 sprinklers. We don't know what size tank we need. Any advice would be greatly appreciated. Click [here](#) to give your advice.



the chatter continues ...

Garden Gate: Year-round gardening? Submitted by Mama Jewel

I'm seriously thinking of trying to do some indoor vegetable gardening or something. Seeing the garden with frost and knowing we won't be able to garden until after the snow's gone and the ground's not frozen any more, I am curious to know if anyone tries to garden indoors somehow. I've got a few indoor herbs. I have an unheated greenhouse that's more like a mouse haven than anything (LOL). I'm thinking of trying to grow some microgreens. Do any of you do year-round gardening and/or grow microgreens? Any recommendations or pictures of your set up? I'm thinking of getting some shelves and some florescent lights. Click [here](#) to share your ideas.

Herbal Wisdom: Rose Hips. Submitted by kristin sherrill

I have been noticing lots of rose hips along the road I have been walking. So this morning, I brought some clippers and got a bag full. I looked it up and see they are full of good stuff. Mainly Vit. C. And they protect against cancer and heart disease. Also they have anti-inflammatory properties. Plus antioxidants. The rose hips from Rugosa and Dog rose have more Vit. C than citrus. They are also a useful treatment for flu like infections, diarrhea and various urinary tract infections. And they are a good diuretic and laxative. And they are free! That's the best part. I read that it's best to harvest after the first frost so they have the best flavor and are sweeter, because they can be eaten and you can make jelly from them.

To make a tea, just boil dried or crushed rose hips 10 minutes. About 2 T per pint of water.

I am going to put mine in the dehydrator and dry them so I can save them easier. Does anyone else use them or know more about them? I also read they help people who have knee joint pain. Click [here](#) to respond to topic.

Holidays: Decorating your barn. Submitted by missusprim

I'm so excited! This will be our first Christmas at our farm and I'd like to decorate the barn. So I'm wondering how you ladies decorate these sometimes-forgotten buildings around the holidays? Click [here](#) to share your Christmas decorating ideas.

Holidays: Christmas music. Submitted by pnickols

Is anyone else a sucker for Christmas music ? I love it, especially the oldies like Andy Williams and Bing Crosby. My mother used to play these and it's not Christmas without them. So I've been listening already, we even have a radio station that plays nothing but Christmas music, so I can listen in the car too. Click [here](#) to comment.

Stitching & Crafting Room: Merit Badge Jewelry. Submitted by urban Chickie

I am sitting here reading the latest Cluck, and was surprised at the jewelry ideas MaryJane gave for the merit badges. She hinted online before about this, and I was sure I knew what she was up to, but I was wrong! So I thought I would share my idea in case anyone wanted to try this as well. I have been thinking about making a charm bracelet using my earned badges. Instead of printing



the chatter continues ...

them out on paper like MaryJane did, though, I am going to print them larger on shrink plastic, color them in, and heat them up so they shrink to size. Shrink plastic is readily available in many craft stores, and it's fun to watch it at work. LOL. Click [here](#) to comment.

Stitching & Crafting Room: Handwarmers. Submitted by J.F. Brown

Hi all, I need advice! I'm about to make a big batch of handwarmers. I was inspired by Restoration Hardware's gift idea—a pair of tiny cashmere warmers, each filled with one of those little plastic, chemical-gel-filled warmers. The kind that is squishy, then you snap the little disc, releasing who knows what. The thing hardens over the cooling period, then you boil and re-use. The advantage is they get really warm and stay so for an hour or more. The disadvantage is, in addition to being costly, they are little plastic pouches, which contain who knows what.

So I have the thrift-shop cashmere and wool sweaters, washed, dried, and ready to cut and sew—which filler should I use? I know rice and beans are popular, and buckwheat is used in a commercially sold line. Which holds up best and holds the heat longest? Thanks, all! Click [here](#) to give advice.

Stitching & Crafting Room: Knit-impaired Submitted by RueAnn

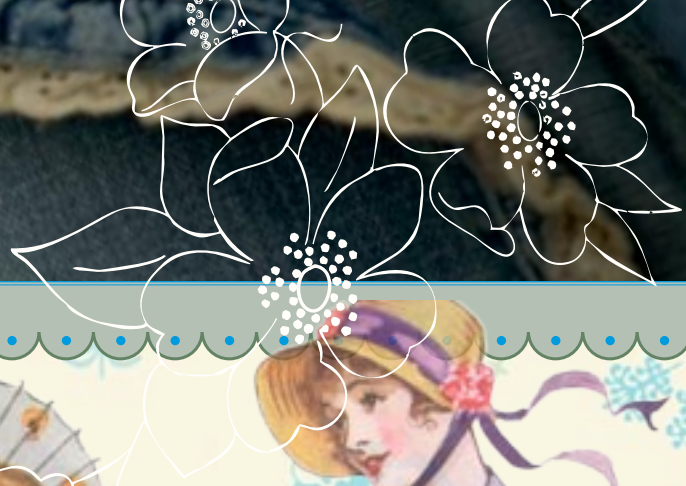
Help—I am knit impaired! I'd love to find a good video or website to show me how to knit. I've tried and tried to learn from reading knitting books, but so far can only figure out scarves. Any suggestions? Click [here](#) with suggestions.

Try This: Cloves. Submitted by Knead2garden

Teething issues? With all three of my children, I steep cloves in a tea kettle and let the kettle cool completely. Then dip the washcloth in the clove water and freeze it. Whenever it is teething time, I give my fussy little baby the washcloth to chew on. It always works well and chemical free! Not to mention that I love the smell:)

My 5-month-old was giving me a fit tonight. I was not prepared for teething. BUT you can bet that I have some washcloths in the freezer now! Click [here](#) to comment.





Join in the fun— join the Farmgirl Sisterhood!

When you add your name to the Farmgirl Sisterhood, you will receive a consecutive number according to when you signed up (for example, Farmgirl Sisterhood Member #750). Once you're officially signed up, we'll mail your official Farmgirl Sisterhood badge depicting an adorable aproned hen, our official logo, ready to wear or embroider, and an official Farmgirl Sisterhood certificate signed by the Queen Bee herself. We also offer for purchase a Sisterhood necklace customized with your unique number (see p. 30). Over on the Farmgirl Connection chatroom, you'll get a special hexagonal Farmgirl Sisterhood designation by your name. In addition, you'll start receiving The Cluck newsletter—packed with project ideas, news, and tips—each month; you'll be eligible for "Members Only" special product offers from MaryJanesFarm; and you can start earning Farmgirl Sisterhood Merit Badges right away (think Girl Scouts for grown-ups) and post photos and narratives of your projects on our website (braggin' rights). In other words, you'll be strutting your farmgirl skills for all the world to see! Members are also the only ones permitted to mentor Farmerettes (farmgirls-in-training between the ages 14–18) and Young Cultivators (girls and boys between the ages 6–13) and work with them to earn badges. But if you're not inclined to earn merit badges, there are plenty of other benefits to joining up. Whether it's cooking, stitching, gardening, make-it-yourself projects, going green, cleaning up, or just getting together, you'll gather with other farmgirls for lots of fun! **Click here** to purchase your Sisterhood membership.

and ...

Start or Join a Farmgirl Chapter

If you're yearnin' to meet up face-to-face with other farmgirls in your area, start or join a Farmgirl Chapter. MaryJane is proud to say that there are now over 1,133 Farmgirl Chapters located in all 50 states and 8 countries with 2,403 Sisterhood members—growing stronger every day!! These groups consist of diversified, talented, caring, creative, like-minded women just like YOU! This is truly the best sisterhood to be found anywhere!

Click here to join in.

Farmgirl Sisterhood News

Merit Badge Updates:

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.

We've also added four new badges for you to earn (we do this on Jan. 1 and July 1 each year). You can now earn badges for "Green Energy" in the Cleaning Up category, for "Knotty Farmgirls" in the Outpost category, and for "Farmgirl Shutterbugs" and "I Should Have Been in the Movies" in the Each Other category. And for those of you who like to print out the badge requirements, we'll have updated pdfs available soon. Find complete instructions for becoming a Farmgirl Legend and for earning the new badges [here](#).





... more Farmgirl Sisterhood News

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.**

FYI: We're working on earrings and a charm necklace with small, round "charms" that represent the Merit Badges you've earned. Stay tuned ...



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

JOIN UP TO JOIN IN

EARN MERIT BADGES

(think Girl Scouts for grownups) for stitching, cooking, gardening, carpentry, community service, and more!

What do 2,000+ women have in common?

MARYJANE'S FARMGIRL SISTERHOOD

We are Sisters—a sisterhood of farmgirls. We're country, we're city, and every texture and stripe in between. It's not at all about where we live, but how we live. We stay in touch in an active online chatroom, where 500 new posts are added daily, and form in-the-flesh Farmgirl Chapters and even virtual chapters called Henhouses. We love to share stories, to craft, to garden, and to nurture the next generation of Farmerettes and Young Cultivators. And when our work is done, we get together to go camping, fishing, and "glamping" as Farmgirls on the Loose. Learn all about us!

www.farmgirl-sisterhood.org

BONUS

Farmgirl Sisterhood members can watch exclusive how-to videos about earning merit badges at www.maryjanesfarm.tv

ANNA earned a beginner Each Other merit badge in Entrepreneurial Spirit. "I finally opened my real-estate firm, after years of planning and wishing. Thanks for the motivation I needed—I have already recruited two new agents!"

CINDY earned a beginner Each Other merit badge in Farmgirl Spirit. "I welcomed a new neighbor, a single woman who moved here from out-of-state. My kids and I made her a cake and cookies and gave her info on local farmers' markets and stands. We are now great friends."

"Henrietta" is the Farmgirl Sisterhood's official logo. She symbolizes the "can-do" attitude of being a farmgirl.



I'm not nuts;
I'm a farmgirl!

— Julie, Louisiana

Woo-
Hoo!

Merit Badge Awardees

Woo-Hoo! This month's Sisterhood Badges go to (drum roll please):

Allison Ray, allisonray #1880

Beginner badge: Shopping Green / Cleaning Up

Beginner badge: Entrepreneurial Spirit / Each Other

Intermediate badge: Shopping Green / Cleaning Up

Intermediate badge: Entrepreneurial Spirit / Each Other

Expert badge: Entrepreneurial Spirit / Each Other

Amelia Woodcock, ruralsweetheart #1960

Beginner badge: Farmgirl Gratitude / Each Other

Angela Neikirk, #2043

Beginner badge: Going Green / Cleaning Up

Beginner badge: Horse Dreams / Garden Gate

Intermediate badge: Going Green / Cleaning Up

Expert badge: Going Green / Cleaning Up

Annie Wong, njaw09 #1736

Beginner badge: Outpost / Disconnect to Reconnect

April Hager, #1044

Beginner badge: Disconnect to Reconnect / Outpost

Intermediate badge: Disconnect to Reconnect / Outpost

Carrie Meerwarth, Carrie M #147

Beginner badge: Knotty Farmgirls / Outpost

Beginner badge: Grow Where You're Planted / Garden Gate

Beginner badge: Pay It Forward / Farm Kitchen

Intermediate badge: Knotty Farmgirls / Outpost

Intermediate badge: Make It! / Make It Easy

Intermediate badge: Backyard Farmer / Garden Gate

Intermediate badge: Disconnect to Reconnect / Outpost

Intermediate badge: Outstepping / Outpost

Intermediate badge: Grow Where You're Planted / Garden Gate

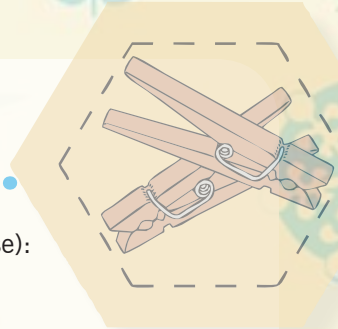
Intermediate badge: Farmgirl Gratitude / Each Other

Intermediate badge: Pay It Forward / Farm Kitchen

Expert badge: Build It Green / Make It Easy

Expert badge: Make It! / Make It Easy

Expert badge: Know Your Food / Farm Kitchen



continued ...

Merit Badge Awardees

Expert badge: The Secret Life of Bees / Garden Gate
Expert badge: Backyard Farmer / Garden Gate
Expert badge: Horse Dreams / Garden Gate
Expert badge: Disconnect to Reconnect / Outpost
Expert badge: Gaining Ground / Garden Gate
Expert badge: Knotty Farmgirls / Outpost
Expert badge: Outstepping / Outpost
Expert badge: Farmgirl Gratitude / Each Other
Expert badge: Pay It Forward / Farm Kitchen
Schoolmarm badge: Make It Easy / Farmgirl Legends
Schoolmarm badge: Outpost / Farmgirl Legends

Cheryle Duffy-Lehrer, shabbymys #604

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

Cindy Wolfshohl, Livin the Dream #2089

Beginner badge: Know Your Food / Farm Kitchen
Beginner badge: Bustin' Out / Farm Kitchen
Beginner badge: The Secret Life of Bees / Garden Gate
Intermediate badge: The Secret Life of Bees / Garden Gate

CJ Armstrong, ceejay48 #665

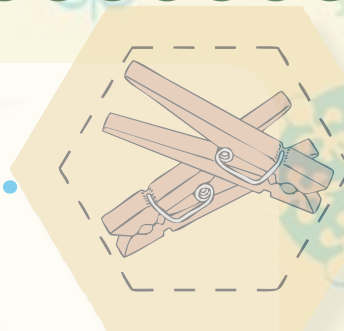
Beginner badge: I Should Have Been in the Movies / Each Other
Intermediate badge: Farmgirl Shutterbugs / Each Other
Intermediate badge: Knotty Farmgirls / Outpost
Expert badge: Farmgirl Shutterbugs / Each Other

Debbie Bosworth, dandelionhouse #1199

Beginner badge: Bustin' Out / Farm Kitchen
Beginner badge: What's Your Beef? / Garden Gate
Intermediate badge: Disconnect to Reconnect / Outpost

Deborah Rutledge, #1846

Beginner badge: Aprons / Stitching & Crafting
Beginner badge: Know Your Food / Farm Kitchen
Beginner badge: Knitting / Stitching & Crafting
Beginner badge: Quilting / Stitching & Crafting
Beginner badge: Gaining Ground / Garden Gate
Beginner badge: Get It Together / Farm Kitchen



continued ...

Merit Badge Awardees

Beginner badge: In the Garden / Make It Easy
Beginner badge: Bee Good to Your Mother Earth / Garden Gate
Intermediate badge: Aprons / Stitching & Crafting
Intermediate badge: Quilting / Stitching & Crafting

Debra Amon, farmliving #2182

Beginner badge: Aprons / Stitching & Crafting

Gail Springman, gspringman #486

Beginner badge: Nellie Will-do / Stitching & Crafting
Intermediate badge: Nellie Will-do / Stitching & Crafting
Intermediate badge: Buttoned Up / Stitching & Crafting

Heather Wright, hwright95 #2187

Beginner badge: Buttoned Up / Stitching & Crafting

Heidi Fry, Hidjmt #2111

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

Joanna Fedewa, tansyshy #907

Beginner badge: Crochet / Stitching & Crafting

Josie Ward, aquagirl #670

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

Kathleen Lorentz, KathleenL #1620

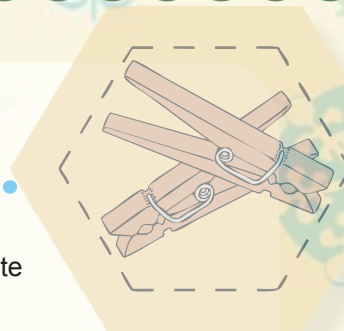
Beginner badge: Disconnect to Reconnect / Outpost
Expert badge: Aprons / Stitching & Crafting

Kristen Silvers, crazy*dazey #1645

Beginner badge: Backyard Farmer / Garden Gate

Laura Hughes, Morning #1915

Beginner badge: Families Forever / Each Other
Beginner badge: Crochet / Stitching & Crafting



continued ...



Merit Badge Awardees

Laurie Lemieux, Montrose Girl #1587

Beginner badge: Homespun Christmas / Stitching & Crafting

Intermediate badge: Crochet / Stitching & Crafting

Expert badge: Know Your Food / Farm Kitchen

Expert badge: Green Energy / Cleaning Up

Schoolmarm badge: Cleaning Up / Farmgirl Legends

Linda Mericle, bakermom #2064

Beginner badge: Aprons / Stitching & Crafting

Beginner badge: Shopping Green / Cleaning Up

Beginner badge: Farmgirl Gratitude / Each Other

Intermediate badge: Aprons / Stitching & Crafting

Megan Salter, HondaRebelGirl #1383

Beginner badge: 'Out There' Women / Outpost

Melissa Bailey, MissLiss #724

Beginner badge: Families Forever / Each Other

Intermediate badge: Pay It Forward / Farm Kitchen

Expert badge: Buttoned Up / Stitching & Crafting

Nancy Smith, minismith #1991

Beginner badge: Knitting / Stitching & Crafting

Beginner badge: Shopping Green / Cleaning Up

Beginner badge: Community Action / Each Other

Beginner badge: Plant It Forward / Each Other

Beginner badge: Get It Together / Farm Kitchen

Beginner badge: Backyard Farmer / Garden Gate

Nicole Christensen, texdane #1155

Beginner badge: Know Your Food / Farm Kitchen

Beginner badge: Bee Good to Your Mother Earth / Garden Gate

Beginner badge: Gaining Ground / Garden Gate

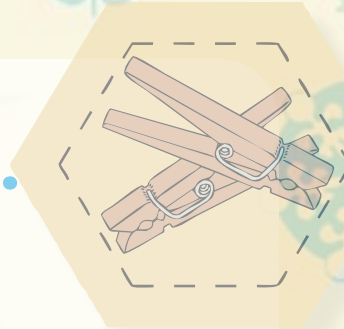
Beginner badge: Backyard Farmer / Garden Gate

Beginner badge: 3 R's Rule (Reuse, Recycle, Revive!) / Garden Gate

Intermediate badge: Know Your Food / Farm Kitchen

Intermediate badge: Bee Good to Your Mother Earth / Garden Gate

Intermediate badge: Backyard Farmer / Garden Gate



continued ...



Merit Badge Awardees

N. Susan Harmon, susanharmon #1958
Beginner badge: Safe Toys / Stitching & Crafting

Patricia Stimmel, littleredd #2106
Beginner badge: Crochet / Stitching & Crafting
Beginner badge: Knitting / Stitching & Crafting
Beginner badge: Nellie Will-do / Stitching & Crafting
Intermediate badge: Knitting / Stitching & Crafting
Expert badge: Knitting / Stitching & Crafting

Rejena Girton, Rejena #2059
Beginner badge: Farmgirl Gratitude / Each Other
Intermediate badge: Farmgirl Gratitude / Each Other

Ruby Slider, narjay #1663
Expert badge: Crochet / Stitching & Crafting

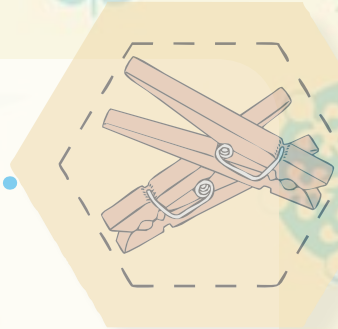
Sadie Rizzuto, #1909
Beginner badge: Shopping Green / Cleaning Up
Beginner badge: Backyard Farmer / Garden Gate

Sherri Reece, slreece #2090
Beginner badge: Farmgirl Gratitude / Each Other
Beginner badge: Quilting / Stitching & Crafting

Tammy Caltagirone, TammyCaltagirone #2167
Beginner badge: Farmgirl Gratitude / Each Other
Beginner badge: Backyard Farmer / Garden Gate
Beginner badge: Make It! / Make It Easy
Beginner badge: Get It Together / Farm Kitchen
Beginner badge: Little Squirts / Each Other
Intermediate badge: Farmgirl Gratitude / Each Other
Intermediate badge: Get It Together / Farm Kitchen

Tiffany Caruso, Avonfemme #2203
Beginner badge: Farmgirl Gratitude / Each Other

Vickie Garver, 13Grandma #2316
Beginner badge: Going Green / Cleaning Up



Woo-Hoo!

Farmerettes & Young Cultivators

Merit Badge Awardees

Woo-Hoo! This month's **Young Cultivator Badges** go to (drum roll please):

Isabella Taylor, Young Cultivator of Rebekka Boysen Taylor #40

Beginner badge: Horsing Around / Garden Gate
Intermediate badge: Horsing Around / Garden Gate
Intermediate badge: Families Forever / Each Other
Intermediate badge: All Buttoned Up / Stitching & Crafting
Expert badge: Families Forever / Each Other
Expert badge: Horsing Around / Garden Gate
Expert badge: Weaving In and Out / Stitching & Crafting

Julia Branen, Young Cultivator of Rebekka Boysen Taylor #40

Beginner badge: Horsing Around / Garden Gate
Intermediate badge: Horsing Around / Garden Gate
Intermediate badge: Families Forever / Each Other
Intermediate badge: All Buttoned Up / Stitching & Crafting
Expert badge: Families Forever / Each Other
Expert badge: Horsing Around / Garden Gate
Expert badge: Weaving In and Out / Stitching & Crafting
Expert badge: All Buttoned Up / Stitching & Crafting

Madeline Schab, Young Cultivator of Rebekka Boysen Taylor #40

Beginner badge: Horsing Around / Garden Gate
Intermediate badge: Horsing Around / Garden Gate
Intermediate badge: Families Forever / Each Other
Intermediate badge: All Buttoned Up / Stitching & Crafting
Expert badge: Families Forever / Each Other
Expert badge: Horsing Around / Garden Gate
Expert badge: Weaving In and Out / Stitching & Crafting

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.**





ArtTero has 12 different craft kits! Purchase them here.

Young Cultivators Group

Rebekka Boysen has started a Young Cultivators group. She'll be reporting on their activities in future issues.

One of Life's Greatest Pleasures

As the year comes to a close, I am amazed at what my Young Cultivators have accomplished. I say "my," but the group is actually child led. The girls decide what badges they want to work on; I simply help them out with logistics. They are so excited about each new skill that they acquire. The girls show up for our meetings ready to report on their progress, and have been braiding, sewing, caring for horses, planning family game nights and setting the table. So far, they have earned over 35 badges as a group, and they did it without anyone pestering them to complete tasks. Did I mention that these Young Cultivators are only 7 years old? This is a mighty achievement for a child of any age. Great job, girls!

At our last meeting, we had oodles of completed badges to apply for, so I gave the girls time to drink apple cider together and make hand-sewn books. ArtTero makes crafting kits for kids that are exquisite. I recently received one from a friend who thought the girls might enjoy it, and did they ever. The kits include natural, high-quality supplies like wool beads and handcrafted papers. There are ideas for ways to use the supplies inside, but the finished project is unique to its maker.

The kids each made a book, and with early beginner sewing skills, it took them about a half an hour from start to finish. They are proud of their books and plan to use them for an upcoming badge.

Work is beginning on "Gone to the Birds," which involves keeping a diary of the birds they see outside along with sketches and notes on the birds' habits. Over the next few weeks, bird feeders and baths will pop up in their yards, and I imagine the ranks of birdwatchers will grow by three. Each time a child comes to me with a discovery or accomplishment, all I can do is smile. It is one of life's greatest pleasures to learn something new!



Photographs courtesy of ArtTero. Buy ArtTero kits [here!](#)



December

Farmgirl Sisterhood Special

Save a Bundle

Free Shipping!

on orders of \$75 or more

(Free shipping offer applies to UPS Ground and Parcel Post only.)

Make a list, check it twice *(Gift ideas)*

1. Book Bundle=\$75 + Free Shipping
2. Three Magazine Bundles=\$75 + Free Shipping

Your free shipping is **ONLY** available by clicking on the link we've provided below.

CLICK HERE for free shipping

(Offer good through the month of December.)

Happy Shopping!



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; Libbie Zenger blogs from the rural perspective; Paula Spencer gives you the suburban viewpoint; Cathi Belcher shouts-out from her mountain top, and Shery Jespersen shares the ranch view from Wyoming. 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 who lives in a large metropolitan area and brings you 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



Libbie Zenger is a small-town farmgirl who writes our **Rural Farmgirl Blog** and lives in the high-desert Sevier Valley of Central Utah with her husband and two little farmboys—as well as 30 ewes, 60 lambs, a handful of rams, a milk cow, an old horse, two dogs, a bunch o' chickens and two cats. She lives on a 140-year-old farm, in a farmhouse built by her great-great-grandfather, and tries to channel her grandmothers.

Libbie says, "When I found MaryJanesFarm, I found a new sort of sisterhood—one in which hard work, 'heart' work and handwork are truly valued, appreciated, and shared."

suburban FARMGIRL



Nicole Christensen writes our **Suburban Farmgirl Blog**. Nicole 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."

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 Damn Horse in the Universe."

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

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

www.maryjanesfarm.org



Magazines, Books, and More

Our Dec/Jan issue, "Emotional Currency," hit newsstands on Nov. 9. In it, you'll find upcycled projects for the holidays, learn to make button jewelry, find recipes for shortcut soups and breads, bring back the holiday punch bowl, and more.

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

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

MaryJanesFarm 2011 Calendar

Our 2011 Calendar is now available! Click [here](#) to order your very own copy. 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 8½" x 11" card stock and are bound with black spiral wire, unfolding to 11" x 17".

Current Holidays:

- December 01 ~ Hanukkah Begins
- December 09 ~ Hanukkah Ends
- December 10 ~ Human Rights Day
- December 15 ~ Cat Herders' Day
- December 16 ~ National Chocolate-Covered Anything Day
- December 21 ~ Winter Solstice: First Day of Winter
- December 25 ~ Christmas Day
- December 26 ~ Kwanzaa Begins
- December 31 ~ New Year's Eve/Make Up Your Mind Day

Magazine "Goodies" on the MJF Website

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

To find the goodies, [click here!](#)



Merry Christmas



MARYJANES FARM

Magazines, Books, and More continues ...

SPECIAL: 3-Book Bundle

MaryJane's books are all bundled up for Christmas. Buy them together and save \$15! *MaryJane's Ideabook*, *Cookbook*, *Lifebook*; *MaryJane's Stitching Room*; and *MaryJane's Outpost*. **Click here.**



Gift Items ...

Inspire yourself or inspire a friend with books, journals, note cards, 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.

And don't forget to visit our "Product Shop" ...

Click Here

There, you'll find everything from organic bed sheets to beautiful bed sets to aprons to dolls to candles to chocolate to over 60 organic instant or quick-prep meals and desserts to much, much more!



If you know of someone who may be interested in receiving this newsletter, send their e-mail(s) 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 1,133 Farmgirl Chapters in all 50 states and 8 countries with
and 46 Herd 2,403 Sisterhood members —
growing stronger every day!