



Back to the Garden

**Gardening For Good
2015**

Gardening For Good

Gardening for Good was introduced at Troy Gardens in the summer of 2012, with funding from Dane County, support from Community GroundWorks, and help from Hy-Vee.

Inclusive gardening unites people with and without disabilities in a shared community garden plot, where we meet weekly to plant, tend and harvest our food and flowers. When the chores are done, we enjoy yummy snacks, fun activities, and just hanging out. Our Gardening for Good motto is “Everyone belongs; everyone contributes.”

The very best gift we share with each other is the gift of our story. Everybody has one—or a thousand! We tell them, sing them, or dance them. We make art that speaks the feelings in our hearts. We chat while sharing the food that connects us. We talk about ourselves and listen to each other at Gardening for Good, and we collect our memories on our blog and in this book. By giving and receiving the gift of our unique selves in a shared garden that feeds us, we become whole, one and all.

This book is made up of stories and pictures from the fourth year of Gardening for Good. We hope you enjoy looking at it and reading it over and over. May the memories and the magic we share in the summer stay with us every day of the year.



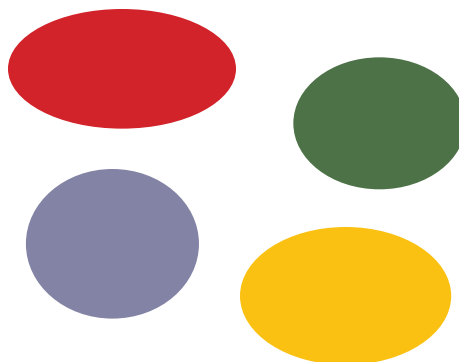
Growing Food. Growing Minds. Together.



G4G: NEW FACES, OLD FACES



We welcomed several new faces this year. Tami and Caleb are our new group leaders. Rebecca (also known as Robbie), Sally, Rodrigo, Daniel, Therese, Nura, Megan, Evan and Jon joined us, and they must have had fun because they kept coming back! And of course, that new guy with the hanging tongue and helicopter tail is Bird, the new canine best friend of G4G.



THE BLOG: GARDENINGFORGOODMADISON.COM

My name is Caleb, and I am excited to be getting involved with G4G this year, and to help in carrying out the wonderful traditions of this exciting project! As most of you probably know, Rebecca, who started this all up, moved with her husband to Colorado last fall. She is clearly and dearly missed by everybody. Recently joining this G4G team, I am encouraged to see the joyous spirit that all of the returning gardeners carry with them, that Rebecca helped to instill.



G4G: NEW FACES



Evan



Tami



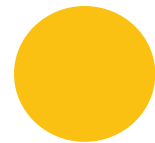
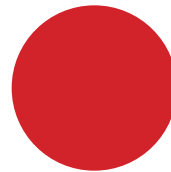
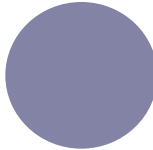
Rebecca, also known as Robbie



Bird



Rodrigo



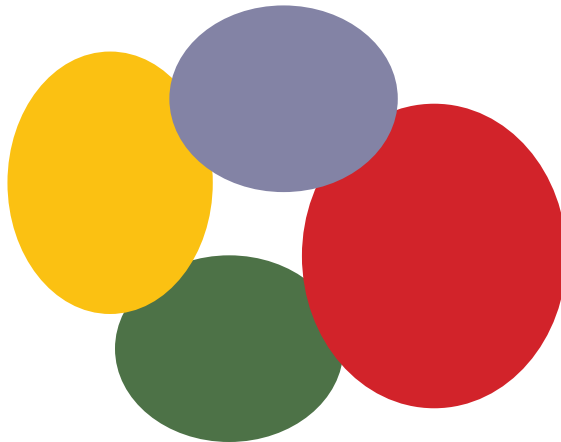
SEEDS

by Laura Well. Laura, also known as Alex, has published a book called Tell Me More: Stories and poems by a young woman with Asperger's. Laura's book is available on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

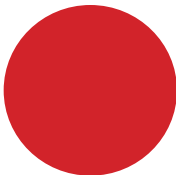
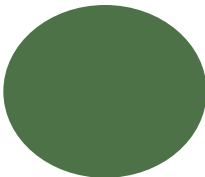
I've always wondered how a tiny seed can grow into the earth
in many forms.

It's just like a tiny seed turns into flowing rivers of water, boulders
of rock mountains, fields of green land, rolling hills of open land,
forests of trees, waves of splashing lakes, miles of desert land, and
islands of ocean water.

This seed is what brings the five elements together
fire, air, water, earth, and space.



G4G: PLANTING SEEDS



THE BLOG: GARDENINGFORGOODMADISON.COM

In our third week, we welcomed two special, very distinguished, guests: Carrie Simon, local pudgie pie expert, and Tyrion, a playful, one-year-old miniature goat, brought from Heartland Farm Sanctuary by Quincy and Kay. We all had a blast together!

Carrie Simon, co-author of *Pudgie Revolution!*, joined us to share her fondness and wisdom of pudgie pies. We had so much fun talking about the endless fillings that could go into a pudgie pie. Our plan was to harvest some mulberries from the trees around the chicken coop to use in our pies. Everyone joined in the harvest, nibbling the dark juicy berries along the way.

We got a wood fire going, crafted our pies using various breads, cream cheese, pecans, chocolate, and granola, and then cooked them up in cast iron pans. We burned some, we overfilled some, we didn't sweeten some enough, and many turned out perfect! It was so much fun brainstorming new pudgie combinations, learning from others' mistakes, and sharing the tasty pies with everybody! And it is neat to think that our main ingredient—the mulberry—was in season and as local as can be (about 20 ft. from our wood-fueled grill).

All the while, everyone enjoyed meeting Tyrion, Quincy, and Kay, and introducing them to Troy Gardens and our G4G plot. Tyrion loved climbing up on the massive stumps beneath the fruit trees. He wasn't a fan of the mulberry fruit, but nibbled at the mulberry leaves. While we all were saying goodbye at the evening's end, Carrie knelt down to the goat, and held out the last of our pudgie pie scraps. He happily chewed them down in many quick bites, providing everyone with an entertaining and fitting closing scene to the night.



G4G: PUDGIE PIES AND A GOAT!



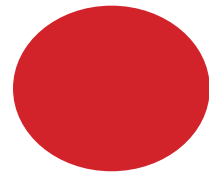
Carrie, the Pudge Pie guru



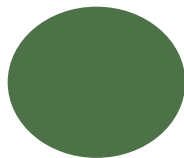
Quincy and Tyrion



Andy knew just where Tyrion liked to be scratched



Tyrion "pigged out" on Pudge Pie scraps!



THE BLOG: GARDENINGFORGOODMADISON.COM

In our fourth week, Laura, also known as Alex, wrote our blog post. Here it is, followed by two more poems from her book Tell Me More: Stories and poems by a young woman with Asperger's.

Gardening is soo fun because it's fun to get out in the garden to plant things, pick fruits and vegetables, put hay around on the ground, pull weeds, water plants.

Wonderful

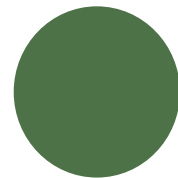
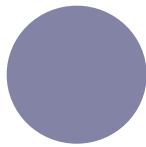
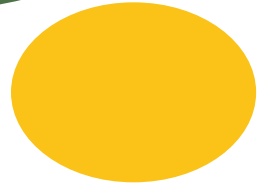
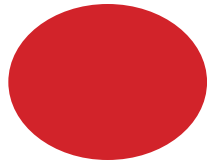
I like taking baths. Hot
water, relaxing. The quiet.
Thinking about . . . all that
happened during my day
and feeling wonderful.

Now We Are Grown

We all grew up together at my dad's
house. Ate dinner together: spaghetti,
stew, talk about football. The Packers.
Wisconsin is cold winters, but inside,
fire-in-the-fireplace warm. This year
many things have changed, but we
are still together.



G4G: HANGING OUT



THE BLOG: GARDENINGFORGOODMADISON.COM

It was a very hot night, with no breeze. Yet, everyone started to do the work of weeding, watering, harvesting. We pulled and picked garlic, onions, pac choy, summer squash, cabbage, cucumbers, zucchini. The zinnias are bright and colorful at the front of the garden. Calendula and bachelor buttons bring cheerful color to the back of the garden.

It was a special night at the gardens. Toby and Denero got on a trailer twice, once coming to visit us at the gardens and once going back to their home in the country. Jeff drove them to the gardens in their trailer that they are used to traveling in.

Marge takes care of them at their home in the country. Tonight, she picked a really appreciative group of people who would lavish them with touch and scent and sound. What an experience to have so many people admiring their power and beauty. And they seemed to love the abundant grass and sweet clover.

We learned that Toby was a wild mustang who had lived in the West. He has lived with Marge for many years now, and knows her well. He knows Denero, and the other horses that they both live with.

Last year Denero was very excitable. There was too much new for him to be able to relax. But this year, he is older and he remembers where he was last summer. He remembers all of the touch and admiration that he felt from so many kind people. Marge showed how to breathe into his nostrils so that he could feel the emotions of the person, and know what is going on in order to feel safe.

Look at all of the happy faces!



G4G: HORSES!



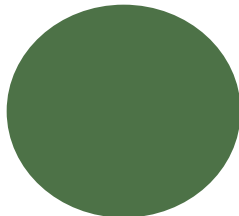
Jeff owns the stable where Toby and Denero live.



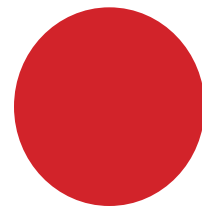
Steve is a cowboy from way back. He has a special friendship with Denero.



Marge shows Kate and Dennis how to invite a horse to read your breath.



Randy's ease with horses made Denero feel like eating!



THE BLOG: GARDENINGFORGOODMADISON.COM

We were fortunate to welcome back Phyllis Noble and Peter Leidy, who led us in a “Gardensong Singalong.” Andy accompanied on his ukulele. Laura twirled around freely to the rhythms and harmonies. And everyone enjoyed sitting back under the hot sun, singing along with our lovely and talented guests.

Beer Barrel Polka, ala G4G *rewritten by Phyllis and Peter*

Roll out the barrel, we'll have a barrel of fun
Roll out the barrel, we've got the blues on the run
Zing boom tararell, ring out a song of good cheer
Now's the time to roll the barrel, for the gang's all here!

JULIE loves her potatoes, DOUG'S jalapenos are hot!
REBECCA planted swiss chard, we're gonna have us a lot!
KEN does his weeding, and JOJO mulches away
SARAH'S out there picking her veggies, in the sun all day!

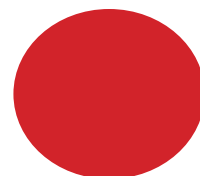
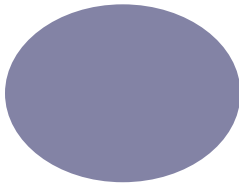
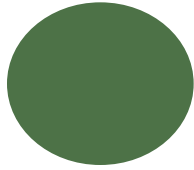
MARGE loves the birdies that fly over Troy in the sky,
To make EDWARD happy, give him just one Pudgie Pie
ANDY'S fond of zinnias, RICK tends his bountiful beans
Carrots are preferred by LAURA, who knows all about proteins!

STEVE plants his basil, under the hot sunny sky
KATE wants to water, whenever the dirt is too dry
RANDY practices yoga, caring for himself like we should
SALLY is collecting calendula, 'cause we're Gardening 4 Good!

Three cheers for CALEB, he makes a barrel of fun
Roll out the barrel, we've got the blues on the run
Remember REBECCA, her smile and her love make us cheer!
Now's the time to roll the barrel, for the gang's all here!



G4G: MUSIC IN OUR GARDEN, SONGS IN OUR HEARTS



THE BLOG: GARDENINGFORGOODMADISON.COM

Our gathering began a bit early, around 5:30pm, as it usually does. Lucky for us, Lisa brought reading material. She had picked up several copies of the Northside News, which had the article in it that Marge wrote about G4G, as well as a photo of us!

Just before six o'clock, the sun tucked itself behind a large front of clouds. It was a welcomed change in the sky, after a sunny and dry week. We even brought our yoga and mindfulness routine out from under the tent!

We then dispersed in the garden to see what needed to be done. Randy and Laura gave all the soil much needed water, but not before Anne and the troops harvested kale, collards, summer squash, some little cucumbers, and delicious red rose tomatos! Carol and Steve worked on digging up the bitter, flowering mesclun from the raised bed. We decided that we will plant some variety of kale this coming week in that bed. Rick watered and deflowered basil in the raised beds, while Andy and Daniel mulched around the plants. Meanwhile, Todd and Jo Jo made sure to cover all the bare soil in our garden with straw.

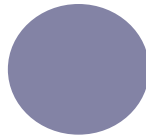
Later in the evening, John presented two of his freshly-made salsas: red tomato and green tomatillo. To each of his salsas, along with their respective tomato, John added onion, garlic, cilantro, lime juice, and salt. While the red was subtly sweet, and the green was tangy, they each were delicious in their own right. They both were bursting with fresh, savory bites charged by onion, garlic and cilantro. We all enjoyed these salsas together, excited that such wonderful flavor combinations can be created in a garden like ours, and comforted in knowing John made these salsas with love, for us to all enjoy together.



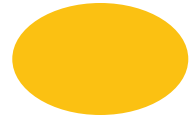
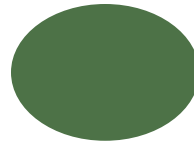
G4G: CHORES FIRST, THEN SALSA!



Kate and Carol keep the zinnia patch nice and tidy.



Eyes on the prize—vegetables to share from the garden.



Laura holds a big harvest of carrots.



Finally, John presents his famous fresh salsa!

THE BLOG: GARDENINGFORGOODMADISON.COM

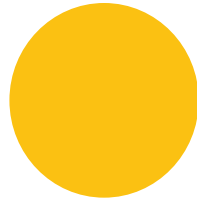
Last week presented us with another lovely G4G. It was overcast once again. We subtly rejoiced that we didn't even need to erect the clumsy blue tent for shade's sake, and then we got right to work...

Marge and Julie harvested our first crop of potatoes. There was some weeding and some watering and lots of tomatoes! Rodrigo and Randy planted kohlrabi in the vacant bed where Jon and Randy had planted radishes in the spring, and where Laura and John later harvested said radishes. Therese and Sally planted kale and parsley in the raised bed that Steve and Carol dug up the week prior. We really share this garden.

Following our period of garden work, all 25 of us circled up for a storytelling session, orchestrated by Marge. It was special to all come together in an activity that included every single person. Each person drew a word from Marge's basket of words, and shared a story about their word. With Todd's help, Jo Jo explained to us that he loves to dance, and how he speaks with his body. Pat described the means by which horses sense human emotion through breath. Edward expressed how he enjoys hearing the Beatles sing. Each one of us drew a different word from the basket, and we all shared a story.



G4G: PICK-A-WORD GARDEN STORIES



Here are the words each of us picked, and what those words inspired us to say on a sweet summer evening at G4G.

Marge: **Spirit**: We have many different bodies, everyone has a different brain and guts and minds and experiences, but when we make eye contact and smile with someone else, we feel that we are part of one spirit. And we find that spirit when we're together in the garden.

Therese: **Yummy**: She likes to make a yummy vegetable soup with kale, potatoes, onion and chicken broth.

Randy: **Difficult**: Chores are difficult. Eating is difficult. Some chores are easy, like watering.

Laura, also known as Alex: **Understanding**: She tries to understand how fruits and vegetables turn into food from a tiny seed. How does all this come together from five elements—fire, earth, water, air and space?

Joe: **Your Body**: Joe uses body language to communicate. He needs nutrition—good food from the garden—to make his body strong, for dancing and for showing us how he feels.

Edward: **Sing**: Edward likes the music of the Beatles, it makes his heart sing!

Nura: **Mindful**: Often we're not mindful of our environment, but in the garden we become mindful because here we are touching the earth.

Rebecca, also known as Robbie: **Hard Work**: pulling weeds in the flowers and vegetables is hard work that is good for the muscles of the body. After hard work, the mind, heart and soul are calm and content.

Doug: **Bird**: Doug pulled the word "Bird" from the basket while Birdie the dog was sitting right next to him! Doug thinks Bird is a good dog. Doug's favorite bird is the eagle.

Pat: **Horse Breath**: When the horses visited us in the garden, Pat learned that horses can read each other's breath and the breath of people too. They learn about you that way.

Julie: **Hello**: "Hello!" is how you feel when you come to the garden and see your friends.

Rodrigo: **Summer**: His favorite time of year because you can be outside so much. Nothing says summer better than the garden!

Kay: **Favorite Tool:** Kay's favorite is the clipper, to cut flowers and trim vegetables. A good clipper makes a nice sharp cut, and that makes for a better bouquet.

Ken: **Seed:** Ken knows that when you plant seeds they grow, and then it's your job to take care of the plants.

Ann: **Our Group:** Ann says we have a wonderful group. She looks forward to everything we do. It's good to have this group.

Megan: **Helping:** This day was Megan's first visit with us. She appreciated how helpful everyone was to her, by being nice and welcoming to her she felt included into the group, and that was very helpful on her first day!

Daniel: **Feel Better:** Daniel's advice is to eat a lot of vegetables from the garden and you will feel better!

Andy: **Denero:** Denero is one of the horses who visit us each year. Andy asked Denero to give him a kiss—and Denero kissed him!

Tami: **Goat:** Tami wasn't with us the day the goat visited, but she loves "fainting goats," a type of small goat that falls over when it's alarmed. Very funny to see on YouTube. Tami likes goats, maybe some day she'll have one of her own.

Caleb: **Toby:** Toby is the other horse who visits us in the garden. Caleb enjoyed hearing Toby's life story—Toby is a mustang, born wild 27 years ago in the Sierra Nevada. Now he is a tame and gentle old fellow.

Mimi: **Yoga:** Mimi likes how we do yoga every time before gardening. Yoga helps heal the body and mind.

Todd: **Dance:** Todd helps Joe, and Joe loves to dance. Todd loves to bring Joe to the garden, where he has the space and the opportunity to dance as much as he wants. Sometimes Todd dances with Joe!

Birdie: **Drumming:** Birdie is a dog and can't talk, but he drums on the ground with his tail when he's lying down and you look at him.



G4G: ONE BY ONE



Rick



Kate



Mary



Andy



Ken



Bird

G4G: WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE



Carol, Ken and Joe



Doug



Laura/Alex



Randy



THE BLOG: GARDENINGFORGOODMADISON.COM

Peppers and tomatoes were ripe and abundant this week. These plants—which began by seed in Marge’s house—continue to have a wonderfully productive life. Daniel harvested the remaining carrot crop, while Carol, Pat, and Ken crafted brilliant bouquets of zinnias and dill flowers with friends. Steve and Rick watered the raised beds, and we bagged up as much kale and collards as people could stand to take home with them.

Christine, an art teacher and friend of Gardening for Good, joined us this week. We harvested flowers from our garden, and together made beautiful magnets, using the flowers’ petals and inspiring quotes from various authors. The results looked great, and everybody was proud to share their artwork!

As most of our gatherings are, it was a busy day. We weeded, conversed, laughed, composted, marveled, harvested and created garden art. All the while, we finished up the calendula project that we started way back in early June, when our first calendula flowers were in bloom.

Since then, we have harvested gallons of these sweet, sticky blossoms. Then, we set them out to completely dry, which took a few weeks. Next, we poured grapeseed oil into large jars with the dried flowers, and allowed them to steep for about a month, so to infuse the calendula’s healing properties into the oil.

Following this, we strained the solid particles from the oil using cheesecloth. And then we completed the final step: Using a propane grill and a makeshift double boiler, we combined beeswax with the calendula-infused oil, and heated it just enough to melt the wax. Once melted, we poured the mixture into individual-sized jars for each gardener to take home for personal use.

This calendula balm is great for rough or chapped skin, cuts and abrasions, bruises and inflammations, rashes and fungal infections. It is a very gentle natural healer that has amazing antimicrobial, antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, anti-itch, and anti-fungal properties. It is a product of many weeks of many hands, gardening together beneath the blue-bottle tree!



G4G: ART IS THE BALM OF THE SOUL



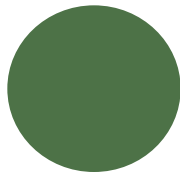
Edward carefully handles flower petals for his magnet.



Beeswax melts into the calendula oil.



Carol helps Steve envision how to design his magnet.



Mimi helps Andy, while Mary admires Rick's decisive artistry.



OUR EYES HOLD EACH OTHER

By Marge

The reason I put on the floppy hat, and the slip the leash over Birdie's head, and grab the bag that contains a dog toy and poop bags and whatever, and walk half a block to Troy Gardens on Thursdays in the summer, is mostly to look into the eyes of my friends.

Usually I hand Birdie off to Andy or Rebecca/Robbie; both of them are dog people, and he goes helicopter-tail when he sees them. That frees me to find the faces and smiles that I'm looking for.

I find Sally, who grins from ear to ear as she hands me one of her toys—she always brings two. I admire it, give it back, and take the other one, over and over. I squeal with delight, and Sally squeals back. Our eyes hold each other and we're grateful.

I find Ann, always doing something useful. I see the light in her soul but I don't need to tell her that. Our eyes hold each other and we're peaceful.

I pop over to Laura/Alex. We both love rhetorical questions and the Green Bay Packers. We make each other laugh. Our eyes hold each other and we're bright.

I find Steve in his chair, his smiling face as luminous as the full moon. We talk horses and pratfalls and silliness. Our eyes hold each other and we are very, very, *very* glad.

I find Pat, leading from the background. She and I believe in saving the world bit by bit. Our eyes hold each other and we're as strong, and soft, as water.

I look for Randy, bold and cheerful and genuine. We drape our arms across each other's shoulders and belly-laugh. Our eyes hold each other with affection.

I check on Andy and Birdie. They're up to some kind of nonsense—Tug of War or Sit! or Give me a kiss! Birdie's totally into it. I see their eyes holding each other, man and dog: best friends forever.

Perhaps Bird is with Rebecca/Robbie. She's a skilled dog handler; Bird obeys her commands immediately, like the best boy in class. Their eyes hold each other; woman and dog confident and sharp.

I see John. We've shared a vision for Troy Gardens for almost 20 years. We're still here, and that vision is coming true through the work of our hands and minds. Our eyes hold each other in salute, as comrades.

I slip in next to Julie; what's up, lady? We chat about this and that. Her arched eyebrows and bright brown eyes let me know she's good for a wisecrack or an impromptu karaoke chorus of "Tiny Bubbles." Our eyes hold each other and we're gal pals.

I see that the city bus has delivered Edward. He doesn't seek attention but I always shout hello as soon as he arrives. Self-reliant and quiet, Edward is a loyal Gardener for Good. One of us, for sure. Our eyes welcome each other with respect.

There's Tami, one of our new G4G leaders. She brought us the gift of yoga. Light and friendly, she's known and helped many of our gardeners for years. When her eyes hold mine or anyone else's, the feeling is trust.

Gotta say hi to Caleb, our other new G4G leader. Already smart, definitely on his way to wisdom, young and capable and unafraid to build a future on this green earth. Our eyes hold each other, and whether he knows it or not, I feel pretty sure there's still hope.

With luck Rick has arrived, and his awesome sister Mary. If you need to have a little positive attitude rub off on you, here you go. After catching up on the fun stuff Rick's done lately, our eyes hold the three of us together, and we're positively invincible.

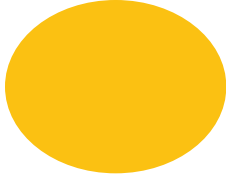
I check in with Sarah and Kate, who are devoted to each other. Kate asks questions; Sarah knows answers. They're completely different and they live together in harmony and grace. Our eyes hold each other, and like all women everywhere, we're sisters.

I plop down next to Doug. He has an elegant posture and pleasant manner, which make it nice to be around him. He may love jalapenos, but he's no hothead. Our eyes hold each other, and the world feels safe for gentle people.

Naturally, Kay and Ken are here. They've known each other for years. Ken is a mysterious, quiet planet; Kay is the moon that keeps his orbit steady. Our eyes hold each other, and it's clear that Creation is perfect beyond our understanding.

Carol is here today, yay! She's been a G4G driving force behind the scenes since day one; and when she's at the garden, the driving force becomes an attracting one. People are drawn to her as to a brilliant bouquet or a sumptuous apple pie. Her charm is the shiny outside of real goodness within; everybody knows it. Our eyes hold each other, and we're rewarded with success; and because of the beauty of the people of Gardening for Good, my heart pops open like a milkweed pod, and my love carries across this place in tufted, floating fragments.

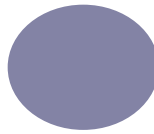
G4G: TWO BY TWO



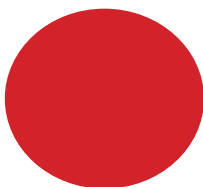
Steve and Nara



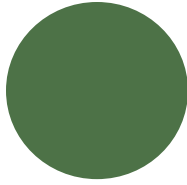
Laura and Evan



Julie and Marge



G4G: TWO BY TWO



Steve and Evan



Ann and Ken



Doug and Tami



THE BLOG: GARDENINGFORGOODMADISON.COM

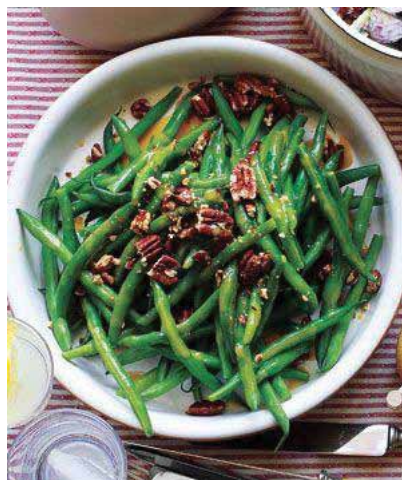
At the end of the summer season we threw a grand finale potluck. It was a wonderful gathering of tasty food and warm company—a great celebration of all that we have done this season. Here is the recipe for the delicious maple pecan green bean salad that John's sister Jo made.

Ingredients

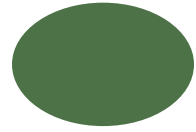
1. 3/4 cup pecans
2. kosher salt and black pepper
3. 2 pounds green beans, trimmed
4. 1/4 cup olive oil
5. 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
6. 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
7. 1 tablespoon pure maple syrup

Directions

1. Heat oven to 400° F. Spread the pecans on a rimmed baking sheet and bake, tossing once, until toasted, 6 to 8 minutes. Let cool, then roughly chop.
2. Meanwhile, bring a large pot of water to a boil and add 1 tablespoon salt. Add the green beans and cook until just tender, 4 to 5 minutes. Drain and run under cold water to cool.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together the oil, vinegar, mustard, maple syrup, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Add the green beans and pecans and toss to combine.



G4G: GOT FEAST?



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