



# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## Kaitlin Bricco

Class of 2017

written by Jill Van Den Eng

Kaitlin loves the feel of dirt on her hands and the sun on her face. "It's an integral part of who I am," she said.

Kaitlin grew up on a small dairy farm, as did her husband, Brent. Both farms are still operating and they often go home to help. Married for three years, this couple brought some of the farm to their home, with two cats and three chickens, and an antique road grader that incorporates a bit of family history in the garden.

"My mom always had a huge vegetable garden and an orchard (perks of growing up on a farm), so I've been in the garden my whole life. She gave me my roots in the plant world. From there, I attended UW-River Falls and graduated in 2015 with a degree in Professional Horticulture.

We have a large vegetable garden and a few fruit trees. I love the sentimentality and practicality of growing and preserving my own food. I also enjoy the tranquility and beauty that gardens add to a home."

Her favorite flowers are peonies, without question, because of their old-fashioned charm, stunning impact of color, and that they are designed for cold climates.

"They are also the reason we chose to get married in June. I just needed those beautiful blooms in my bridal bouquet."

When in the garden, Kaitlin is not quite as romantic. Her favorite garden attire is a pair of construction knee pads. What they lack in glamour, they make up for by being easy on the joints during weeding sessions. She also employs The Bucket Boss, an organizer that attaches to the outside of a bucket.

"I keep all of my hand tools, along with bug spray and sunscreen right in the bucket. That way I can just grab it and go!"

She gets ideas from the magazine, "Better Homes and Gardens," infusing different trends and creativity into her home and garden. However, she hasn't yet decided on a favorite style.

"Everyone's style is different and unique, that's what makes gardening so amazing!"

Kaitlin is not alone in her gardening ventures. Her husband Brent helps out with the hardscape elements, moving field stone and building fences to keep the deer out of their rural garden. Her role is to add plants and make it pretty.

The element of gardening that frustrates her is when the



winter claims her favorite landscape plants. "That's frustrating, but part of life. It gives me a good excuse to go buy new ones, though!"

When the long winters set in, Kaitlin can be found creating wreaths and other floral decorations, reading, and seeing Wisconsin's beautiful landscapes by snowmobile.

"I love the natural beauty and the rich history that Wisconsin holds, a lot of which was driven by the natural landscapes around us. I also love the small town feel of our community, it's a very neighborly mindset."

Kaitlin makes applesauce from her trees every year. She shares her favorite recipe for applesauce bread.

*"I grow plants for many reasons, to please my eye or to please my soul, to challenge the elements or challenge my patience, for the novelty or nostalgia, but mostly for the joy in seeing them grow." - David Hobson*

### Applesauce Bread

1/3 Cup Butter - softened  
1 Cup Sugar  
1 Egg  
1 1/4 Cup Applesauce

1 1/2 Cup All-Purpose Flour  
3/4 tsp Baking Soda  
3/4 tsp Ground Cinnamon  
1/2 tsp Baking Powder

1/2 tsp Salt  
1/2 tsp Ground Nutmeg  
1/8 tsp Ground Cloves  
1/2 Cup Chopped Walnuts

In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add the egg and applesauce; mix well. Combine the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, baking powder, salt, nutmeg and cloves. Stir into creamed mixture just until moistened. Fold in nuts.

Pour into a greased 8x4-in. loaf pan. Bake at 350° for 60-65 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack to cool completely.