

Hello!

I was hoping to start this newsletter with some positive news regarding our message board and gallery. It is still down and not accessible. Every time my web guy gets it going again, the code the hackers used causes it to go back down.

I'm currently in the process of having our entire message board and gallery switched to a new server, which is supposed to fix the issue. However, this isn't something that can be done quickly and easily from my end.

Because of the message board issues, we've had to postpone our open-call Design Team contests until further notice. Without having access to our resources, it's been too difficult for our guests to submit and confusing for everyone. We think this is the fairest thing we can do for everyone until things are back to normal.

I love technology, but it sure is frustrating when it doesn't work properly. Again, I very much appreciate your patience!

Paula



Welcome Back, Tami! {February Guest Designer}

With our message board and gallery going down, our February Guest Designer contest had to be put on hold as no one could access the sketch or our requirements.

We asked Tami Floyd to fill in for us, and fill in she did! Just wait until you see Tami's work with the Medley Kit this month ☺

Tami is no stranger to Back Porch Memories. She was on our Design Team for years! About a year ago, she "retired" from the team to go back to school. Way to go, Tami! We sure do miss her fabulous work with our kits, though, and are happy to have her back as our guest designer this month.

Thanks for filling in, Tami!

Layouts in 15 Minutes {or Less}

by Margy Eastman

The Jillibean Soup “Sweet and Sour” line is the perfect mix of text, bright colors and a touch of floral. They’re perfect for boy or girl layouts (or in this example, both!). I cheated a little on the 10-minute page. The die cut letters were too tiny to adhere temporarily, so use your imagination for the title.



10 Minutes

Ingredients:

Bazzill brown and ivory cardstock

Jillibean Soup “Crushed Tomatoes” paper, front and back

Jillibean Soup “Raisins” paper, front and back

Glimmer Mist – Jingle Bells and Aquamarine

Maya Mist – Red

Cricut Expression alpha – “Capitol” from the Lyrical Letters cartridge

Font – “Traveling Typewriter” from dafont.com

I’m still not brave enough to send misted cardstock through my newish printer, so I made a mask to cover my journaling. I used a 2” square punch for the patterned paper – super quick.

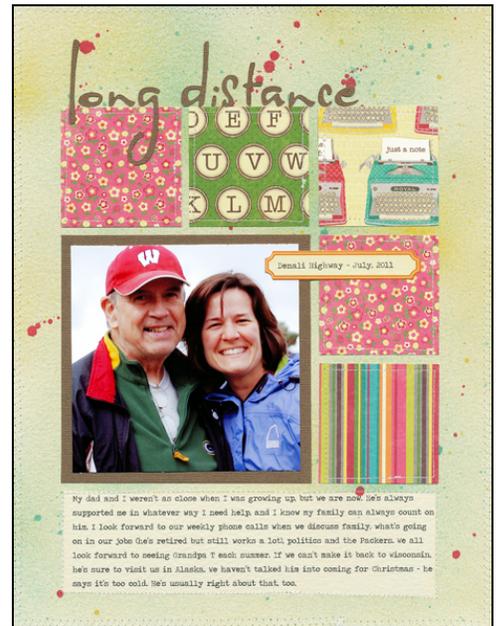
15 Minutes

Additional Ingredients:

Jillibean Soup Sweet and Sour Labels

Thread

The machine stitching adds texture to the squares. I typed the text for the label on regular copy paper, and then adhered the label gently over the print. It came up pretty easily after a quick trip through the printer. Probably the fussiest part of this layout was adhering those tiny letters. I love the font, but the gluing is not for the faint of heart. I put them in a box and sprayed them three at a time with spray adhesive.



This layout is actually a scraplift of another I did last year. On that page I used only a couple squares of patterned paper and added small photos. You just can’t beat a good grid!

{February Sketch}

selected from www.pagemaps.com



February Sketch



Margy Eastman



Alissa Trowbridge



Karry Weaver



February Design Team Projects

With our gallery going down, our Design Team couldn't upload their projects to our gallery as usual. We have added their layouts, cards and other projects to our home page on the website.

Once our gallery is up and running again, our Design Team will add their layouts to our gallery as usual.

Stamping Tips & Tricks

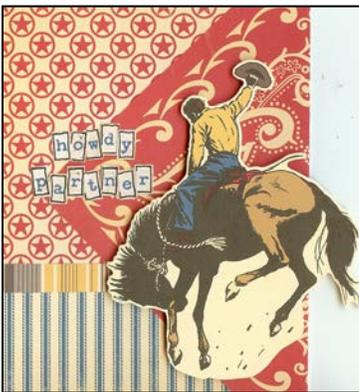
by Karry Weaver

I have tons of these little journaling stamps that I've collected from both Walmart and Michael's dollar bins. I have the hardest time using them though. Either they aren't spaced just right, or the line weight doesn't match well. (I either press too hard on one stamp and then not hard enough on the next stamp.) Using a large binder clip makes it so much easier to get a nice uniform look. It turns all those small stamps into one stamp. It's a super easy trick. Give it a try!



Scrapbook Shortcuts {Quick Card Sentiments}

by Alissa Trowbridge



Sometimes when I make a card, I just want a quick way to add a cute sentiment. I have tons and tons of stamps, but it's often a bit of a hassle to flip through them looking for the right one.

In this case, I loved the cowboy theme of the October Afternoon paper in the Medley Kit. I also got the add-ons this month, which included this fun cowboy die cut. I really didn't want to go generic with my sentiment on this card as I thought it needed something themed.

Luckily, the Medley Kit came with these darling mini market letter stickers! I sat and thought for a bit until I came up with a good "cowboy" sentiment. "Howdy

Partner" seemed just perfect.

I think I spent a lot less time thinking up a creative sentiment than I would have spent riffling through all of my stamps just to use a generic one!

If you need inspiration for creative card sentiments, go online to some of the available e-card websites. They often have clever and inspirational cards that might spark an idea.

How-To {Topiary}

by Danielle Price

My craft for the month is a Valentine topiary. I have made many different versions of this project for many different holidays, but I have to say this one was a lot of fun. I used a small sized ball so it went pretty quickly. Here is how I did it!!

Gather all your supplies. You will need a foam ball (any size will do), patterned paper that has a pattern on both sides, a flower shaped punch and a lot of straight pins. I used pins from Maya Road that had hearts on the top. Punch out a lot of flowers. It doesn't look it, but I used at least 50!



Prepare the flowers by bending the petals upward. I like to get them all bent before adding them to the ball.



Start pinning the flowers to the ball by placing the pin in the center of the flower and pushing the pin all the way through the ball.



Pin the flowers close together. Close enough that you won't see the foam ball but not close enough to crowd it. If you crowd it, you will not be able to see the center. Keep pinning until the whole ball is covered.

Since this was a smaller foam ball, I used a skewer for the sticker. You have many different options here, depending on your taste. If you use a larger foam ball, I would recommend using a dowel. I have also seen others used a stick from there backyard.



Using the heart patterned paper, cut out as many as you would like to decorate with. I didn't have any tape in the house, my little boy is too crafty sometimes, and so I used photo squares to attach one of the hearts to a skewer.

continues next page...



Add pop-dots to the heart and attach another one on top of it so that the skewer is sandwiched in between.

Add the hearts and topiary to a jar filled with holiday candy and anything else you would like. Remember to add a ribbon to the base of the topiary. It always makes it look better!

