



I'm going to keep this short this month since we need the room for our TWO December guest designers to introduce themselves! ☺ I hope you're having a great December and enjoying all this month has to offer.

Until next year,
Paula



Welcome Ruth {December Guest Designer}

I'm Ruth Tacoma & the opportunity to Guest Design for Back Porch Memories is a thrill! I live in SNOWY Northern Michigan with my sweet husband of 29 years. Our children are all grown & living within an hour or so, so all of them are still subjects (mostly willing) of my photography. I began scrapbooking in 1991 and this hobby just never gets old! I love the creativity of scrapbooking and am blessed by the beautiful friendships it has helped me cultivate in my life.



Welcome Kristie {December Guest Designer}



Shortly after the first of my six beautiful children was born, I began my foray in the wide world of scrapbooking. That was back 17 years ago when it was all decorative scissors and stickers. I still love my early scrapbooks but I do fight off the desire to tear them apart and "update" them. I just keep reminding myself that their style is a reflection of the time, and that that too, deserves preservation. In the last few years, scrapbooking has moved from a hobby to a consuming passion for me. I happily design pages & projects in my very own scraproom overlooking my somewhat neglected back garden while my children frolic in our forest.

I enjoy designing clean and graphic layouts as well as shabby layouts filled with flowers, inking and distressing. So, I guess my style is eclectic. I find inspiration everywhere: photos, family, magazines, menus, photography websites and of course in beautiful products. I love inspiring others to come along on this creative journey by sharing tutorials and inspiration on my blog, which I affectionately named Scrappy Days. I've enjoyed designing for a variety of magazines and design teams ranging from manufacturers to challenge blogs. I've been crafty for as long as I can remember but scrapbooking gives me that soul sustaining creative outlet while enabling me to create something of real value for my beloved family.

Layout in 10 or 30 Minutes

by Alissa Trowbridge

We're changing up this article by request! Each month, our designer will show you how to whip together a fabulous looking layout in just about 10 minutes. Have a bit more time? Try our 30-minute look.

10-Minute Layout



Supplies from the December Solo Kit:

Cardstock, Kraft
4 x 6" Labels, red side
4 x 6" Word Art, green dot side
12 x 3/4" Word Art (I picked the part that said "The First Noel")
8 1/2 x 1/4" O Christmas Tree, stripe side
(1) Tag from kit
Green stripe chipboard sticker
"Joy" chipboard sticker
Red chipboard accent
Glitter letters for title
Photos: (1) 4 x 6, (2) 3 x 4 and (1) 1 1/2 x 2 1/2

Instructions:

Adhere 12 x 3/4" Word Art 1 1/4" from bottom of Kraft cardstock. Adhere green stripe chipboard sticker, centering (it's not exactly long enough to go from edge-to-edge) on the page. Adhere 4 x 6" photo flush to right side. Adhere 4 x 6" green dot side Word Art next to photo. Adhere 4 x 6" red side Labels next, flush with left. Adhere tag. Adhere remaining photos as shown. Apply glitter letter stickers and chipboard "joy" sticker. Cut notch/flag on one end of 8 1/2 x 1/4" silver stripe and adhere to top of layout, flush with left side. Adhere red chipboard accent about 1" from left, as shown.

30-Minute Layout



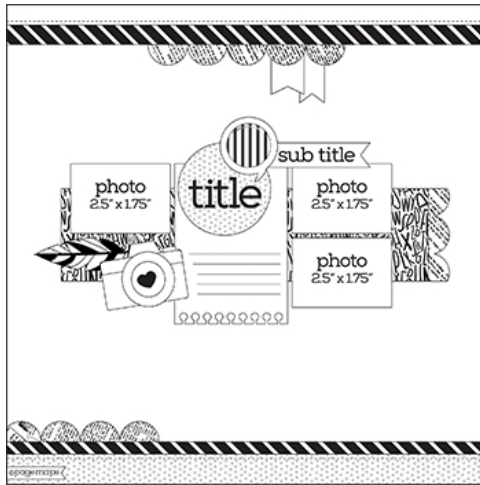
Additional Supplies:

Gray cardstock for title, cut using Arial Narrow Font
Black cardstock for title, cut using Lucida Handwriting (CS from stash)
7 3/4 x 1/4" Snowflakes, red side
12 x 1/4" gray cardstock
Buttons from embellishment card
6" piece black embroidery floss (from stash)
Additional chipboard accents
White cardstock for matting photos

Note: A Silhouette Cameo was used to cut title.

Mat three smaller photos on white cardstock. Complete as instructed above, adding floss bow to tag and replacing part of the title with gray & black die cut cardstock letters. Notch/flag end of red piece Snowflakes and adhere above silver stripe piece. Use zigzag scissors or a border punch along edge of 12 x 1/4" gray cardstock and adhere below "The First Noel" words piece. Adhere green stripe chipboard piece flush with right side and cover empty space on left with green and red button. Embellish with chipboard accents, glitter letter year, and buttons as shown.

{December Sketch}
selected from www.pagemaps.com



December Sketch



Danielle Calhoun



Ruth {Guest Designer}



Kristie {Guest Designer}



No January Guest Designer Contest

With our upcoming travels for the holidays and tight shipping deadlines, there will not be a guest designer contest for January. Please look for our February guest designer contest to be posted soon. Thanks for playing along with our contests this year!

Christmas Card “Cover”

by Ruth {December Guest Designer}



Don't you just LOVE getting Christmas cards in the mail? Call me old fashioned, but I really love walking to the mailbox in December when Christmas cards are arriving from friends and family. I know people don't send as many these days, but that might make the ones we do receive even more special. Most are photo cards, but there are still a few handwritten notes in cards or even a family update newsletter.

In the past I have left them in my card basket that I get out every year, packed away each January with the ornaments and decorations. Then when I get the basket back out I read them one time and toss them. I have seen people make scrapbook pages out of them, and while that is super cute, I just don't have a place for them in my ongoing family albums. Then I thought I could easily bind them together with rings.

In less than 5 minutes I created a cover that could go on the top, and put two rings through. Then I punch each of our cards/photos as well. It's also a great way to use up our scraps! Give this a try and be sure to post yours in the gallery here. This will be my third year doing this and we love it! Now I have a little collection of mini books made up of special cards and photo cards from years past.



Designer Details {Handcrafted Christmas Tags}

by Kristie {December Guest Designer}

I love sparkle on winter layouts. I don't know if it is the colder weather, the grey skies or what that makes me crave sparkle at this time of year but I just DO.

This year, I am enamored with silver and gold. Perhaps it began when my kids started watching *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer* on a continuous loop in October.

As I sat down to work on my *Santa* layout I decided I wanted to create some gold snowflakes for the layout. Just because. I cut the snowflakes from some of the kraft cardstock that came in the Medley kit with my Silhouette Cameo and then grabbed for my mist. I held onto my mist for a moment while I had a thought. Would plain old acrylic paint work? So I tried it and I love the results so much better!



As you can see in the first photo, I used an old envelope that I pulled right out of the recycle bin in my scraproom and got to painting. {Guess who has a son applying to college ;) }

As I said, this was really just a whim but I am thrilled with the final product. The cuts dry nice and flat and a bonus is that the little itty bitty tiny pieces that are *sometimes* difficult to pop out of a cut come out ever so much easier once the paint is dry.

Designer Details {Handcrafted Christmas Tags}

by Danielle Calhoun

I love making tags and cards with my extra kit supplies. A little goes a long way! I make tags/cards every month with my kit scraps and put them away for the perfect occasion. It's so nice to have a stash of them for gifts when I need them! With the December kit I made Christmas tags, but you could make tags for any occasion with your monthly kits!

The December kit came with a few die cut tags, and I used these as a stencil for my own tags. Begin with your cardstock and either trace or cut around the stencil tag to create your own. I used the white cardstock in the December kit for mine. After your tags are cut out, use a hole punch to punch a hole in the top of the tag. From there, it's all about your own creativity. I used scraps of patterned paper, extra stickers, etc. to decorate my tags.



In my first example I cut a little tree out of the same patterned paper to give a 3-D look, and punched the "25" out of the patterned paper with a circle punch.

In this example I used a few patterned paper scraps and used my circle punch again to layer the sticker. I added a chipboard star to complete the tag!



For this tag, I wanted to use the sequins so I decided to create a "shaker" tag. I simply used a sandwich baggie and placed my tag inside the baggie up against a corner to measure how much I needed. I trimmed the baggie and stretched it tight holding it with tape in the back. I filled the baggie with some sequins and stapled it closed at the top with 2 staples. I used the strip of patterned paper at the top to cover up my staples. Super easy to create, and so cute! I always get compliments with these tags!

