

Winter is not quite behind us here in Alaska, but I know many of you are starting to see the light at the end of the winter tunnel ☺ But there are still quite a few cool, cold or even rainy days ahead, and that means staying indoors and doing indoor activities. Can you guess what my favorite indoor activity is?! Well, scrapping, of course!

Luckily, this month's kits are full of great things to scrap your winter memories. Or un-winter activities. The Solo Kit this month is technically a winter line called Blissful Blizzard by Fancy Pants. But you'll see how versatile this kit really is. The "B" sides of the paper are chockfull of dots, plaids and stripes. It makes a fantastic non-winter masculine line! Or the perfect gender-neutral papers for warm layouts about your family. Or really, anything! It's a great line.

Our Medley Kit is versatile as well. Although Basic Grey's "True Love" line is technically for Valentine's or other love-y pages, the prints I picked are a little less specific. That means you can go all out and use them for Valentine's Day, but you don't have to. Don't you love that?! Studio Calico Darling Dear and Pink Paislee's Portfolio round out the rest of the Medley. Both of these lines are great for everyday photos. Plus, as I try to do with the Medley Kit every month, so many of the prints, cardstock and embellishments mix and match between all three paper lines.

Here's to just a bit more wintertime. A bit more indoor coziness. And a lot more scrapping with the help of your February kit!

Paula



Meet Andrea {February Guest Designer}

Andrea Wiebe lives with her family in the interior of British Columbia in Canada. She homeschools her three teenage children and has been married to her high school sweetheart for 19 years. She has been scrapbooking since 2002 when a friend dragged her to a home party and she was instantly hooked on memory-keeping.

Andrea loves both the creative process of scrapbooking and sharing her memories. Her style is detailed and homespun with a bit of whimsy. You'll find her mixing patterns, combining colors, and adding little details (like buttons!) to her projects. Andrea loves to scrapbooks special events and the everyday.

Along with scrapbooking, her other hobbies and interests include running, quilting, and cooking! You can find her blogging at <http://www.ajourneysofar.blogspot.com>.

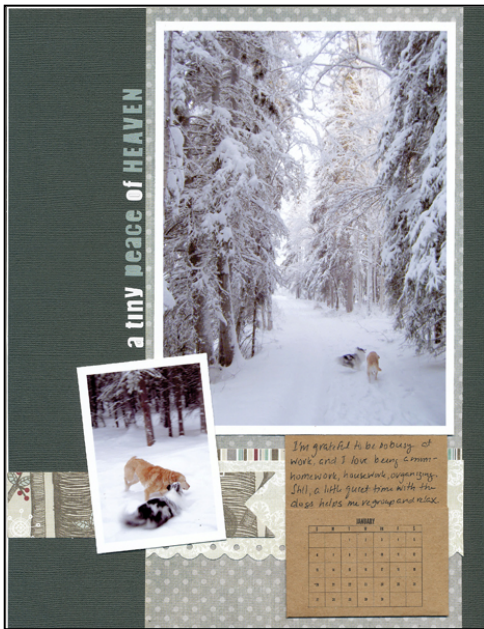


Layouts in 15 Minutes {or Less}

by Margy Eastman

The neutrals paired with subdued red and blue in the February Solo kit provide the perfect backdrop for photos rich with texture but not color. I used some heavy-duty editing in Photoshop Elements to lighten and sharpen these photos. The Blizzard papers with their subtle patterns really let the photos I worked to create take center stage. These papers would work beautifully with black and white photos as well.

A recent trend I really love is the “tiny title.” The title on this layout is fairly long, but it doesn’t overpower the picture and even leaves room for a little white space...my *favorite* design element.



15 Minute Layout Ingredients

(And this was a quickie!)

Cardstock – Bazzill Basics

Patterned Paper – Fancy Pants “Blissful Blizzard” Snow Pack, Icicles, and Tartan

Die cut – “Blissful Blizzard” Banner Die Cuts

Border Punch – Fiskars (Threading Water)

Stickers - “Blissful Blizzard” Sticker Fundamentals

Calendar Pocket – Studio Calico

Additional Supplies for 30 Minute Layout

More “Blissful Blizzard” Sticker Fundamentals

Glitter Tape – American Crafts

Sticker – Pink Paislee “Portfolio” label stickers

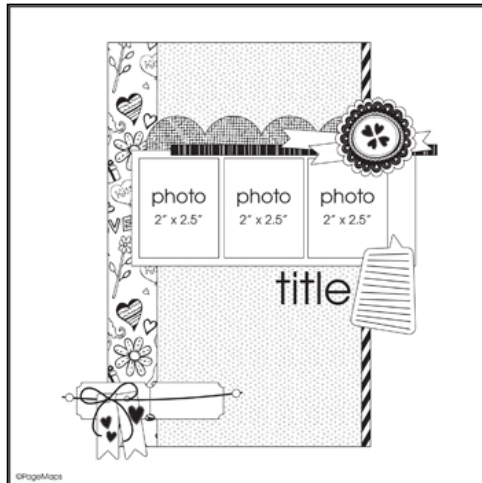
Bling – Basic Grey

Thread

Aspen Frost Flair Badge Stickers (from December Medley kit)



{February Sketch}
selected from www.pagemaps.com



February Sketch



Misty Willis



Alissa Trowbridge



Andrea {Guest Designer}



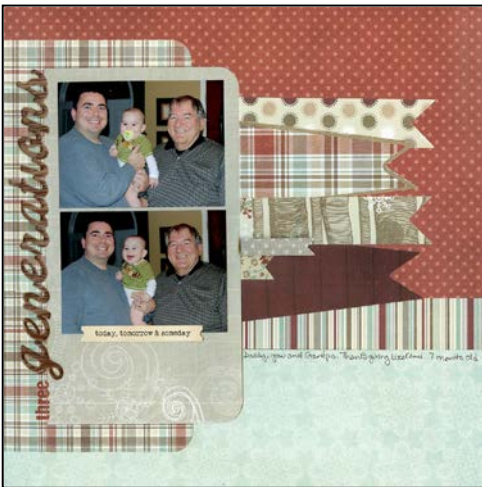
April Guest Designer Contest

Have you ever wanted to be a guest designer for us? We hold a sketch contest every month and the prize is a one-month spot on our team! Your kit is complimentary for the month and you get to design some great projects and layouts for us ☺

Check out all the details on our message board!

Scrapbook Shortcuts {Punch-Out Embellishments}

by Alissa Trowbridge



I love, love, LOVE the punch out sheet of banners in the February Solo Kit! These are a cinch to pop out and add to your projects. They totally take all the guess work out of trimming banners and flags down to a workable size. Plus, you get a bunch more patterns on the sheet to mix into the patterned papers in your kit. I love that!

The one thing I don't love, though, is the little hanging "Chads" that are left from punching out this sort of embellishment. An easy fix? Cut them apart from the background sheet using a craft knife. It takes just a few slices and BAM! Perfect pennants. Alternatively, you could cut them apart using your scissors. The craft knife method is the quickest, though!



Photo Mojo {New Photo Challenges}

By Misty Willis

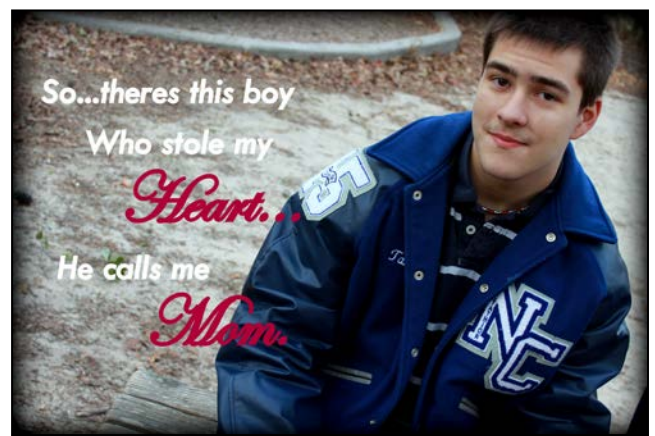
Hi everyone! I am Misty Willis aka mommyof5kidz on the forum. I have guest designed in the past a few times, and I am SUPER THRILLED to now be an official part of this amazing design team! I love the Back Porch and everyone there!

Aside from designing with Paula's beautiful kits each month, the design team members also have the pleasure of inspiring all of YOU to get scrappy and to preserve your memories. How do we do that? With all of the super fun challenges that you will find on the forum. Challenges to use your stash, challenges to create a page based on a sketch, color challenges and more.

However...how will you all participate in these challenges if you aren't taking PHOTOS!? We have to take photos in order to preserve our memories, and we have to have photos to be able to feed our scrappy addictions! LOL. Well, I will be hosting a new challenge on the forum centered solely around TAKING PICTURES! I will be issuing challenges, giving assignments, finding examples from the pros, and much more. You will find these challenges under the heading PHOTO MOJO on the forum. I will be issuing the challenges every other Friday, and you will have 2 weeks to load your "homework assignment" to the site. No, I am not issuing grades, and yes, late work is always accepted! This is just a fun way to inspire you all to break out those cameras and start using them!

The latest assignment is to add text directly to a photo using your preferred editing program. Here is an example of one that I did.

I hope to see you all on the forum!



Supply Savvy {Brown Paper Bags}

by Danielle Calhoun

Many of your Back Porch Memories kits will come with one of these adorable brown paper bags. I love using these, and there are so many fun ways to use them.

The most common thing I do with my paper bags is using them for cards. You can fold the bag in half, leaving the pocket facing forward. You can vary the size of the pocket depending on where you fold your bag. The pocket can be used for a little gift, I've found cash & gift cards to work best! You can decorate the front of your bag for the special occasion.



Another fun way to use the paper bags is to use them directly on a layout. I've used them as a photo mat directly behind photos. You can also create a pocket for hidden journaling to add to a scrapbook layout.

There are so many fun, creative paper bag ideas on Pinterest as well. One of my favorite examples is the paper bag flower. You can create these flowers in varying sizes, but these small paper bags create a great size flower for a layout or a card!

Please share any fun ideas that you may have for these paper bags!

