



# HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY

## The Scrapbook Sentinel

A Free Newsletter For The Friends of: Imagine That! Scrapbooks & Gifts

*Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass on a summer day listening to the murmur of water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is hardly a waste of time. ~John Lubbock*

### DE-Stress With Gorgeous DISTressed Vacation Layouts

Happy summer, everyone! Got any plans for a big vacation this year – or are you just getting back from one? Ronnie is the vacation planner in our house for the most part– which is just the way we both like it. If it were up to me, we’d see the same places over and over. I always love to revisit my favorite spots. Ronnie, on the other hand loves to see something new each trip. I’ve often thought that for him, just selecting the vacation is his favorite part of the whole process.

He’ll come home, and (this is the best part) ask me what **I** think about just spending time in our home state? What’s here, I’ll ask? And with great enthusiasm he’ll tell me about the beautiful scenery- Flat Lands to Mountains, Desert to rock formations and the rivers and the national parks, and I’ll say Really Here?! That just never seems what I want to do for my vacation after all- I want to “Go Somewhere”- And then, a week later, he’ll say at dinner – you know, I’ve been rethinking about our trip. What do you think about Maine? Lighthouses, rocky shores, whale watches, lobster dinners ... what do you think? Sounds good to me – let’s go! And on it continues. Now don’t get me wrong – I have chosen vacation destinations too, but for the most part I just let him do it. Because he has so much fun with it. Ronnie LOVES to travel- and see new places, and even see places again that he has been before that I have not been to. He enjoys seeing new things, and if he had his way- we would travel the country side all by train!

But once he decides where we are going, that’s where I come in.

I’m not so much a “big picture” person as I am a details person. Once we have finally settled on a destination, I’m the one who comes up with the agenda of what we’re going to actually do while we’re there. On Monday and Tuesday, we’ll stay in Portland, stop at the lighthouse and go on a whale watch – that kind of thing. It’s a great system for us that we’ve sort of perfected over the years.

So what are your plans for the summer? Have you picked up a new pair of flip-flops and some sunscreen? An extra memory card for your camera? Whatever your plans, you can count on us to help you get your happy summer memories preserved in an archival scrapbook album.

Last month we talked about strategies to apply the perfect rub-on embellishments to your pages. This month, I wanted to take a look at some simple techniques to use with your papers that will create distressed looks for your vacation pages that are simply fabulous...

#### Rip It Up!

The easiest way to create distress in your layout is simply to tear it up! Although it’s pretty scary thing to do at first, once you get the hang of it, ripping is a lot of fun.



Some terms you’ll become familiar with, as you try out this technique, is “white core” paper vs. “colored core” paper. Colored core paper has the

ink going all the way through the page, while white core does not. White core paper gives you an extra measure of the distressed look, because you can really see the rip. Bet you didn't even know paper HAD a core, did you? Anyway, back to our topic...

If you want a really rough edge, here's what you do. Take the piece that you want to use for your layout, and set it on the table in front of you. Rip the other half, up toward yourself. The piece you set aside will have a smoother-looking tear, while the piece you keep will have the exposed "core" of the paper, which will either be colored or white. You can leave this edge "as is", or continue to distress it by curling it up with your fingers or, chalking or inking along the edge.

For a more controlled tear, you can rip along the edge of a ruler or ripping tool, or even along a line you penciled out for yourself to follow.

The thing about ripping is the messier the better. And if it doesn't look quite the way you want it – no problem – let 'er rip again!

**Tearing mulberry paper** can be a little trickier. Make a fold where you want the mulberry paper to tear. Moisten the crease with water, and then gently pull the paper apart along the crease. What's cool about ripping mulberry paper is that all the fibers will feather at the site of the tear for a really nice distressed look. (FYI: Mulberry is also tricky to fasten down. I like to use Zots or Click-its to get it to stick well.)

Once you've got your paper nicely torn, now you can try distressing it further with ink or chalk.

### **Inking & Chalking The Edges**

You can ink just about anything you put into your album, including the album pages and the photos themselves! I like to add a little color to the edges of my mats, stickers, chipboards, whatever.

And you don't have to stop there. Use make-up wedges, an unused kitchen sponge cut into pieces, or for smaller areas you can just use a cotton swab or chalking tool to add interest to anything and everything on your page. Inking the

edges of almost anything will make it look more finished. You can even finish your stickers, die-cuts, and punch outs by using a Q-tip end and

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adding a dab of pink to cheeks or a scuff of brown to a knee or face to add a little dirt. You'll come up with lots of places to add a little extra color.

To create a color wash background paper use a cut up sponge, a white piece of card stock, and your chalks. Apply chalk in a swirling motion over the card stock until you reach the desired background.

### **Add some Texture**

Another way to create a fabulous, distressed look is by adding texture to your paper. Get a nice piece of printed paper wet (you can put it in a bowl of water), then wad it up into a loose ball that you can undo it without tearing it, then lay it on a towel or ironing board and iron it (without steam). You can intentionally add creases with the iron and small tears will only add to the effect. (We sell some really cool scrapbook irons!)

Another way to add texture is to crumple up an image that you have torn out, then just flatten it out with your hands. Go ahead and ink or chalk the edges if you want.

### **Sand It Down**

You can also distress your paper with a sanding block or file (rough or fine). Here's another chance for you to impress people with your knowledge of the "colored vs. white" core lingo; as you scuff down the surface of your paper, you'll discover just what kind of stock your cardstock is made of.

So that was just a few ideas for you to try out to keep your pages fresh and fun. Let me know how it goes, and show me any ideas YOU come up with – I'd love to see them!



### **Welcome New Scrappers!**

*Here are the new people that became members of our scrapping family this last month! We'd like to welcome you publicly, and wish you all the best!*

**Barbara K, Casie S, Carmen O, Lacy H, Robin P, Molly D, Janet F, Susie D, & Pamela R**

We love giving recognition to our new friends and our wonderful existing customers who are kind enough to



refer their friends and relatives to us! We're all helping each other, which is the whole point of all this! Right?



Inspirational Story Of The Month

## I Met Her At A Garage Sale

By Anne Cummings

One of my favorite hobbies is visiting garage sales. I don't get to go as often as I used to, but with all the signs around everywhere, I'm reminded of a garage sale I visited several years ago and the woman who was having it. It was a yard sale, the likes of which I had never seen. Everywhere I turned, from the very end of the driveway, to the far reaches of the garage, even spread clear across the yard was ... scrapbooking stuff. Yes, I had found Mecca.

When I first arrived, I really didn't know what I had found. My forward progress stopped at the end of the driveway, where I was going through a massive stack of old scrapbooking magazines, and excitedly making a pile. Suddenly, a thought occurred to me, and I looked up. Wait a minute – what IS all this stuff? The magazines temporarily forgotten, I worked my way up the driveway through tables covered with stacks of papers, albums of every size, design and color, loose pages, and page protectors. Over here was an entire box filled with ribbons, many in unopened packages. Next to them were thousands of packages of brads, eyelets and snaps in every size and color. Cardstock and printed papers were stacked everywhere. I found maybe 100 or more paper packs, again all unopened, and in every shade of every color in every pattern imaginable, in bins and bags and boxes... and stickers - stickers bursting at the seams of every stack on every table – again, a few used here and there, but mostly brand new. Mixed with the papers were chipboards in the shapes of letters, animals, holiday themes, designs of all kinds. And stacks of brand-new album kits – for Christmas, Vacation, Swimming Pools, Celebrations, Wedding, Anniversary, Birthday Parties – you name it. Back in the garage, on the floor under a table were her bins of ink pads and stamps. The ink pads were still wrapped in their cellophane – the stamps as clean as the day she brought them home. Everywhere I turned was a bounty of unused scrapbooking supplies.

I found an empty box and set to work filling it as quickly as I could. I actually had an appointment I had to get to, so I hurriedly paid for what few items I'd been able to gather, and made plans to come back. Later that day, when I pulled back up, I noticed for the first time, the Sold sign in the yard, and, with my curiosity brimming, I approached the woman who was having the sale. What could possibly make someone want to sell all this great stuff?

So I started chatting with the woman to whom it all belonged. She was lovely, in her early 60s, friendly and warm. "So, did you own a store? Is that why you have all this?" I was serious, but she laughed in response.

"No, I just gathered it all over the years. I still have my boxes of pictures all over the house. Somehow, I guess I never seemed to find the time to work on my albums; I always told myself I'd do my pictures after we retired." "Oh," I said, not wanting to pry, but just making conversation, "Is that why you're selling your house?" "Yes," she told me, "my husband and I are retiring to Florida." Now I was really confused. "But if you're retiring, why are you selling all your stuff? Won't your new house be big enough for everything? Or did you just stop scrapbooking?"

And then this kind, sweet woman looked at me and said something I will never forget. "No, I love to scrapbook," she said quietly. "But I am losing my sight."

I stood silent and stunned, as she continued to explain. She'd had surgeries to slow the process, but the macular degeneration in both her eyes was incurable. Already, her vision was growing more shadowy, and reading had become all but impossible.

I looked all around me, at the heaping mounds of this woman's ambitions and plans, and all the projects she had hoped to accomplish, but never would, and my heart trembled. Now I saw the piles with new understanding. These wedding doo-dads and kits must have been intended to embellish her own wedding photos. The brightly colored party favor chipboards and stickers were going to commemorate the birthdays of her children. And the holidays, vacations and first days of school photos, still jumbled away in boxes under her bed and in the backs of closets... all of her plans and intentions would never come to pass. Just this. Just heaping mounds of supplies on card tables on her driveway.

I was speechless. I wanted to embrace her and to take it all away from this woman – this stranger whose circumstances had turned her life upside down and dumped them into these boxes for strangers to rifle through and haggle over.

I finished shopping, gave her a warm smile and wished her well. But I couldn't stop thinking about her, and her loss. I wanted to do something for her, but what? And then it came to me. The next day, I stopped by again, not to browse, but with a specific plan in mind. I went directly to a table in the middle of the driveway, and after digging a moment, found the kit I had been looking for. Out in the yard on another table was the album. I paid her and returned home. I went straight to my kitchen table, and got to work. I pulled out the formal floral papers and silvery ribbons, the delicate floral stickers and die cuts, and got to work, putting them into the album.

Hopefully I thought, she and her husband wouldn't be moving at least for another week, and I would have enough time. I worked like a woman possessed, creating simple but elegant pages, versatile enough for a variety of photos. Five days later, I was finished. Nervously, I looked back over my pages one last time. I scooped up the album, grabbed my purse, and got into my car, all the while wondering if I was really doing the right thing, or if she would just think I was some kind of a nut. Didn't matter, I supposed – there was no turning back now. And so for the last time, I drove to her house. The driveway was cleared of course, but the Sold sign was still in the yard, and the front door was open. I climbed the stoop and knocked.

When she came to the door, I suddenly realized I had no idea what to say. “Um – I don't know if you remember me, but I came to your garage sale last week, and I just felt so bad about your, um ... sight, that I wanted to do something for you. And so Here,” I said, thrusting the album at her. “I know you're not able to see well enough to make the pages yourself, so I made them for you. I thought that you and your husband might like to at least be able to get your wedding photos into an album; that it might make you feel a little better at least to know that one project was finished...” My words which had been streaming out of my mouth at break-neck speed, just trailed off, because suddenly it sounded so foolish – what was a blind woman going to do with a photo album? I stood there, almost apologetically, and tried to explain some more, but I just couldn't think of anything to say. What was I thinking?

She stood silently before me for a moment, holding the album. “You made this for me? You don't even know me,” she said wonderingly. And then, “Please come in – I want to take a look at it.” I followed her into the brightly lit kitchen, and as she set the album on the table, she began to turn the pages, exclaiming over each one. She called her husband over, and they went through the pages again, together. We chatted a few minutes longer, and they asked me for my address so they could send a thank you card. I gave it to them, and said goodbye. They thanked me again and I left.

Two months later, I received an envelope in the mail with a Ft. Meyers postmark. The letter inside had been typed on a computer and was printed in a large font.

*Dear Anne,*

*I am sorry this letter is so long in coming to you – I lost your address in the bustle of the move, and only just today found it again. I wanted to thank you so much for your thoughtful and beautiful gift. I still am astonished every time I think of it. Your kindness to a total stranger – the time you spent putting it together – touches me more than I can say. I wanted to let you know that Jerry and I did get our wedding pictures out, and while I could still see well enough to help put them in order, we got them into your beautiful album. Jerry even wrote some of the stories we remembered as we put it all together.*

*My retirement is not unfolding exactly as I had planned, and I don't suppose I'll ever be able to make heads or tails of the rest of my boxes of photos, but it is nice to know that our wedding, the day that began our life together, is in an album. So while I still can, I go through the album and enjoy the photos and remember. And that is all because of you. Thank you – Ellen.*

I have the note pinned to my bulletin board. And whenever I find myself putting my pictures to the side for more “important” things, I remember Ellen and her time that ran out before she knew it, and I make another page – journal another story – and complete another memory. Today. Because I can.



### **Featured Product Of The Month: Our Entire Selection of Chalks and Inks!**

Even if you're not a stamper, you can still have fun with ink! That little something you just couldn't put your finger on, that you needed to finish off your layout is right at your fingertips. Start with a brown... and a pink... and maybe a nice mossy green... Start scuffing those edges, and discover the colorful world that awaits you!

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