



**Scrapbook Blueprint**  
How 5 Multi-Published Scrapbookers Find Ideas and Inspiration

---

**Scrapbook Blueprint is Brought to you by...**

<http://www.ScrapbookClass.com> –

5 Multi-Published Scrapbookers Reveal their Favorite Scrapbooking Tips, Ideas, and Inspirations.

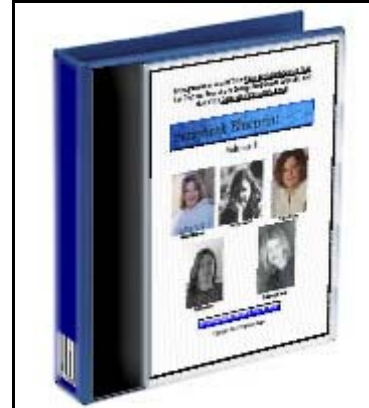
*Including Q & A Sessions with:*

**Karyn Gartel** – Altering expert from [www.altered-diva.com](http://www.altered-diva.com)

**Jill Beamer** – Photography expert, with layouts published in Scrapbooks, Etc. and other great scrapbooking magazines

**Bethany Fields** – Featured Designer from Craft TV Weekly's - Scrapbooking Show.

*Plus more...*



**Scrapbook Blueprint**

Get the rights to **sell Scrapbook Blueprint**, and **keep 100% of the sales** for your scrapbooking website...

<http://www.scrapbookclass.com/resale.html>

---

<http://www.ScrapbookRadio.com> –

Join the FREE Members area, and listen to the Heidi Swapp interview. You won't find this amazing information anywhere else on the web.

**In it, Heidi shares some of the inspirations she uses for...**

- **Her 20 Idea Strategy**
- How she gets so much done
- **Thinking outside the box**
- Her outlook on life and finding where you fit – Pretty Cool!



Heidi Swapp

**You'll also learn about our other past interviews** (with Making Memories designers, Renae Lindgren, Heidi Grace, Thena Smith and MORE), **when you sign up – for FREE Today!**

---

NOTICE: You Do NOT Have the Right  
to Reprint or Resell this Report,  
UNLESS you have a copy of the  
'Scrapbook Blueprint Reprint Rights  
License Agreement' On file!

You Also MAY NOT Give Away, Sell or Share  
the Content Herein Without the License.

If you would like to be able to **sell this report**, and **keep 100% of the sales**,  
please visit...

<http://www.scrapbookclass.com/resale.html>

If you obtained this ebook from anywhere other than  
<http://www.ScrapbookClass.com>, you have a pirated copy.

Please help stop Internet crime by reporting this to:  
<mailto:support@ScrapbookClass.com>

© Copyright Al Speer

**ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.** No part of this report may be reproduced or transmitted in any form whatsoever, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any informational storage or retrieval system without express written, dated and signed permission from the author.

**DISCLAIMER AND/OR LEGAL NOTICES:**

The information presented herein represents the view of the author as of the date of publication. Because of the rate with which conditions change, the author reserves the right to alter and update his opinion based on the new conditions. The report is for informational purposes only. While every attempt has been made to verify the information provided in this report, neither the author nor his affiliates/partners assume any responsibility for errors, inaccuracies or omissions. Any slights of people or organizations are unintentional. If advice concerning legal or related matters is needed, the services of a fully qualified professional should be sought. This report is not intended for use as a source of legal or accounting advice. You should be aware of any laws which govern business transactions or other business practices in your country and state. Any reference to any person or business whether living or dead is purely coincidental.

**Jill:**

**SR:** Today I have Jill Beamer with me. And Jill is a great scrapbook artist and I really like the way she takes pictures and the creativeness she brings to the process. Just looking at Jill's stuff I am just really pleased that she decided to help us with this project. And so I just want to say thanks, Jill, for joining us today. I just want to let everybody know that Jill has been published multiple times in Better Homes and Gardens, Scrapbooks etc., Paperkuts, Simple Scrapbooks, and Creating Keepsakes magazines. Jill really has a great eye for design and is really creative. I want to start by getting a little bit of your background and maybe see what you think has been your most important skills that you have been able to learn.



**Jill:** I have been scrapbooking for about 2 years. I was at my local grocery store looking through the magazine rack and came across a Creating Keepsakes and picked it up and I have been hooked ever since. Looking at the back of the magazine, I came across a little add for Two Peas in a Bucket, and that is when I found how big it really was. I had no idea. Here in Vancouver we don't have a lot of scrapbook stores so I do a lot of my shopping on-line. Prior to that I don't really have any artistic training. I was a labor and delivery nurse but have been a stay at home mom now for 4 years.

**SR:** Well let me ask , how have you picked up the skills that you have learned and developed?

**Jill:** Basically I am a scrapbooker through watching. I have never taken any courses directly related to scrapbooking. I have taken some photography classes. But usually, I just watch others, be it on line or in the publications that I get. And then I go from there. Sometimes I take things quite literally and use them in my scrapbooking, and sometimes I use them as a jumping off point and make them my own.

**SR:** So I guess that you are saying that you get inspired by other people partly.

**Jill:** Mostly yeah, a great deal. I look for inspiration in many places. I look at everything through a scrap bookers eye now. Whether that be in a songs lyrics, or the graphic design of an ad, even if it is not scrap related, books and color combinations. It is quite odd. I often look at things thinking how I might be able to incorporate that into a scrapbook page.

**SR:** Do you just have a photographic memory, or do you capture these things some way? How do you collect your ideas?

**Jill:** Well on line that is easy, I can save things as I see them. Or a lot of the web sites have a way of saving your favorites. Sometimes I will jot down little notes. I am not very religious about having a set book. Sometimes I will just grab a scrap piece of paper. I have a stack of scrap pieces of paper. Sometimes it will be a layout design or a color combination or just a title or an idea or theme for a page.

**SR:** So you have little pieces of paper lying all over? And as you find them you might remember to use them or how does that work?

**Jill:** Sometimes I will have a picture, and it will jog my memory that might go with a certain theme that I wanted to do a scrapbook page about. Occasionally, but not often, I will actually take pictures to go with a layout that I wanted to do. But usually it is the other way around.

**SR:** Can you share with us what your process is when you create and design things? Do you have certain things that you do?

**Jill:** It really varies from layout to layout. I don't have a set process that I go through. Each individual layout it will vary. Sometimes I will be inspired by a new product or a technique that I have seen, and I will find a way to try and incorporate that into a layout that I am working on currently. Other times I'll have a set idea in my mind as to the theme of the layout, and I will collect up my supplies that I have on hand. I go from there. It is trial and error; I just put things and see if I like it, and if not I will move them around. Occasionally I will work from a sketch, something I have gathered either from an add or an actual scrapbook page sketch that I have seen somewhere. I don't usually do that too often, usually it is just a trial and error process.

**SR:** So when you are creating something you don't actually glue it down or attach it until you have it kinda of where you want it and you like what you are seeing?

**Jill:** Half and Half. Initially I don't, and then once I am comfortable with at least some of the key elements I will attach it. And then, for example, I will often with a title or journaling, I will make it to fit into what ever space I have left. I don't often save everything to adhere until the end. I do adhere it through out the creating process. I don't often have a set picture in my mind of what the layout is going to look like when it is finished. Occasionally I do, but often not.

**SR:** Say you had a picture or an element that you liked what would be your process when you sat down to use that?

**Jill:** Initially my thought process would be based on what I have seen done with it already. I am not that cutting edge, so I don't often think of new things to do. Sometime I

will play on an idea that I have seen and change it a little bit. Something that I have seen somewhere else, either in the scrapbooking world or in every day life. But it really depends on the layouts, because of the 5 that you have selected, each one is very different. The process that I used to create those is very different for each of those. For example, for the “What I Love About You” layout, the orange and white one, that was based on an ad that I had seen. So I knew that I wanted the three strips like that, the title on the left and the journaling on the bottom right. That was based on an ad, a real-estate ad that I got that from. The Leader of the pack layout, I did not really have a idea with the design necessarily, but I knew where I wanted to go with the title and the journaling, and what that picture represented to me. And that one especially was just a trial and error of where I was putting the patterned papers.

**SR:** Very neat. I know you will probably get into a little more detail with that, but let me ask you one last thing here in the background. If you had to start over again and you didn’t know anything about this craft, what do you think you would do or where would you start to learn how to design and to get inspiration for your ideas?

**Jill:** First and foremost, if I were to start over, I would have started a lot younger. As it was I have only been scrapbooking for 2 years and I have already had all my children at that point. I view things so differently now that I am a scrapbooker, that I wished I had that eye when my children were younger. And I could have taken way more pictures and different pictures. But as far as skills acquired if I were to do it over again, I guess basically, I would really like to know more about graphic design elements in layout design. Even though I buy a lot of the new and current trendy things, I don’t use them a lot. So I am not really compelled to stay current with new techniques and taking courses and what not. So I am actually really happy with the direction my scrapbooking is going. I mostly wish I would have started it sooner.

**SR:** Your style seems very clean and simple, and yet every layout seems different. What do you think you can attribute that to? Do you have a different viewpoint on things or what?

**Jill:** I like to keep the book open and not close any doors in my style. I don’t really feel like I need to fit in one genre of scrapbooking. Regardless of what is current at the moment, I am always drawn and revert back to the more simple and graphic looking layouts. I love the new products that come out. I still buy the new products that come out. When I just purchase something new I will try it for a layout or two, and then revert back to my more simple style. In looking at other people’s layouts, those are the ones that catch my eye the most, are the ones with the larger pictures. The pictures just seem to really speak in the layout and have fewer things to distract from that.

**SR:** One of the things that looks to me is that you really use a lot of paper. Can you tell me how you organize your papers?

**Jill:** I love papers. It is a very popular system actually I got the idea from some one online. It is those metal wire cubes that I ordered from Seville classics. They have these

little gliding rails that I have inserted on the left and right sides of those, so the drawers actually slide out. I am happy with that.

**SR:** Did those come with that?

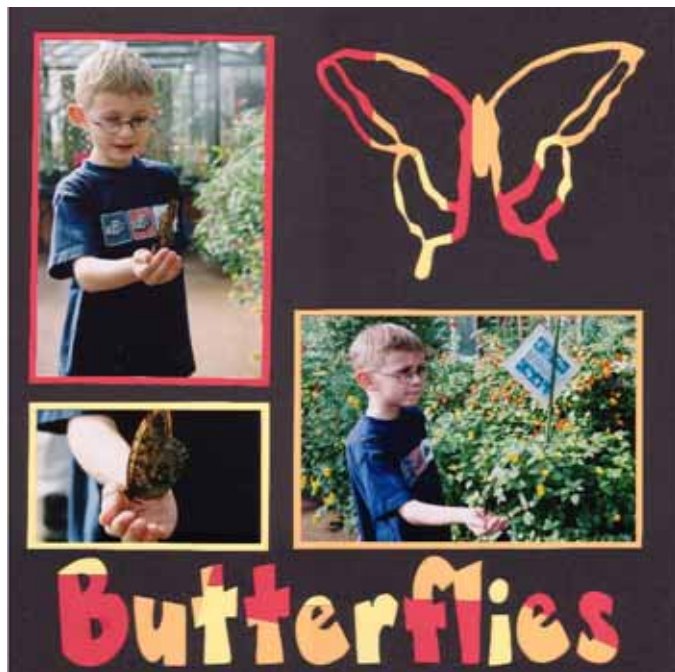
**Jill:** Well it comes with just the wire mesh sides and shelves. But most people use those cable ties to attach them on and then those shelves are permanently where they are, but with these little gliders you can pull the shelves out so you don't damage your papers as much.

**SR:** Where did you get the gliders?

**Jill:** From Seville Classics.

**SR:** We are going to go ahead and cover this layout. It is called Butterflies. I wanted to take a look at this one. It really inspired us because I really liked the way that you used the background paper on the title and the butterfly. Can you talk about different ways to use paper in your designs as an element or an embellishment?

**Jill:** Paper, as you just mentioned, is my most common supply on any layout. More so than anything else for me. I tend to use it in very simple ways though. I am not that creative in the newer techniques, like paper crumpling and walnut inking and all that stuff.



**SR:** You don't use those things very often then?

**Jill:** No, just rarely. Like I said... when I see something new I will buy it and I will use it once or twice, then I go back to my simple style. On this layout, I just wanted to use a lot of color in the title that symbolized to me what I think about when I think of butterflies. You know bright and colorful. And I chose a black background to really make those colors stand out. I thought putting the different colors for the letters behind the layout would be simpler than making the letters out of the different colors. If you were to actually look at the back of that layout it is a mess. But I think it looks ok from the front. The butterfly itself, all I did was take a clip art image of a butterfly online. I enlarged it and printed it off then I exacto-ed the shape into the background then I did the same thing as I did for those title letters.

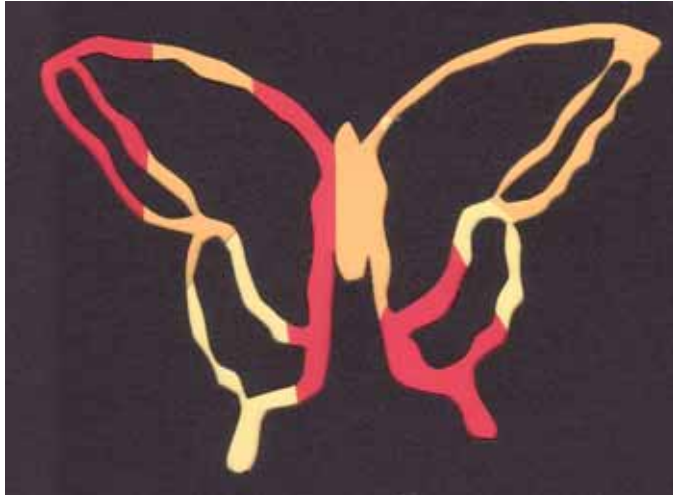
**SR:** So you stuck these wing areas back on?

**Jill:** Yes.

**SR:** So the other way that you could have done this would be to mix all these papers together and then like hand cut out the letters.

**Jill:** Yes.

**SR:** So you talked about how you exacto knifed the butterfly and maybe you did this title that way also.



**Jill:** Yeah, the title is stencils. I stenciled it on the back and then I exacto knifed the letters out.

**SR:** Can you share any tips or anything that you might have about using exacto knives? Or doing it so it is faster maybe?



**Jill:** Sure, When I use the exacto knife or hand cut letters or design elements, I use a cutting mat. I know some people swear by using the glass, I have never used that so I can't vouch for that. But I just use my cutting mat and I make sure that I change my blade relatively often, because the sharper it is the easier it is and the neater cuts that you get. I cut out the insides of the letters first, then I will do the little sharp tight corners second, then I will go around the full letter. My technique is as I am cutting, I will kind of keep my cutting hand still and move my paper around rather than moving my cutting knife around. I find that that works easiest for me and reduces hand cramping.

**SR:** So do you do hand cut titles a lot?

**Jill:** I did during a period of time and that layout was created at a time when I did do it quite a bit. And that is like anything, I kind of move on to something else. So I actually

have not done a hand cut title for quite a while. At the time, when I was doing that and some others that I have, it was sort of the in thing to do at the time.

**SR:** Say you did a title hand cut, would you trace it or print it out backwards?

**Jill:** In all the cases that I have done it I have always done it on the back of the sheet of paper either by stenciling it, as the case with this layout or I printed it backwards through Microsoft Word. I flip it horizontally and then print it backward so nothing is left on the front of the page.

**SR:** So you print out the butterfly then you cut it out to get the stencil shape? Is that how you did that?

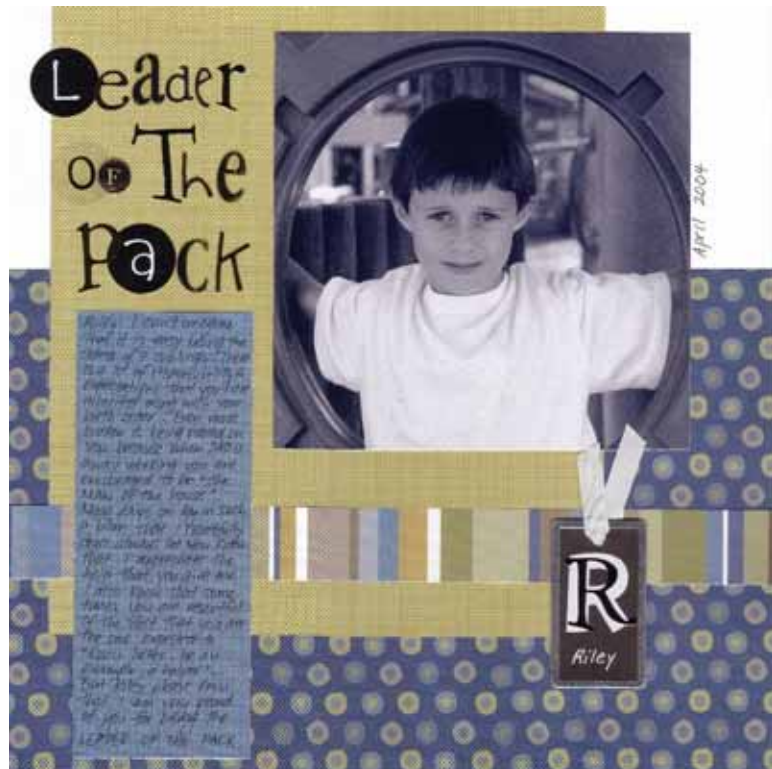
**Jill:** In this case I printed out the butterfly on a plain piece of white paper. I got it to the size I wanted it. If I remember correctly, all I did was enlarged it on my photocopier at home, I didn't even print it out. I just enlarged it, till I got it the right size. So that was on plain white paper. Then I temporarily adhered that to the back of the layout page and then I cut through the black paper and the white paper at the same time. So I did not have and I still do not have a large format printer, so I would not have been able to print it right out on to the layout. Plus with the black paper it would not have shown very well any way.

**SR:** Now with this second one, can you talk about designing with patterned paper, and also how you match patterned papers? I know one of the problems that I have when looking at patterned paper is matching it up to another one.

**Jill:** Sure. Patterned paper is my weakness. I love patterned paper. Although I don't use it a lot, when a line comes out that I like I will buy the whole line.

**SR:** What are your favorites?

**Jill:** My two favorite lines are Chatterbox and Ki Memories. And with those lines matching patterned paper is virtually fool proof. They coordinate so well. Part of this process is getting over the fear, from growing up when dressing yourself, of never mixing polka dots with stripes or plaids with polka dots. And you have to throw that aside if you want to mix different



patterns when you are scrapbooking. Those rules no longer apply. But like I said my two favorite lines coordinate so well I don't even have to think about it. They have the same color schemes. I don't even think about the actual patterns per se when I am mixing them. It is more that I see the color pallet, and as long as the color pallet on the page goes well it is fine by me.

**SR:** You talked earlier about getting inspiration and you talked about color. Do you use the inspirations that you see?

**Jill:** My inspiration for color comes from so many different things. I don't actually own a color wheel, so I don't use or know of the theories behind it. The choices of color in the paper that are available for scrapbooking are so beautiful. My favorite being Bazzil. So when ever they come out with a new set of colors they almost always go together anyway. Sometime I will be driving by and I will see a display in a window, in fact this just happened in a layout I did about a month ago. I saw this color scheme on a window display and I just wrote down the colors, and then I used it on a layout. Some times, when I am looking through a scrapbooking magazine or scrapbooking galleries online, I will see a color scheme and I will incorporate in on to a layout or at least make note of it. Sometimes I will use colors of real life things, be it flowers or fruit or things like that. A piece of art work, if it appeals to me, I will try to make a note of it.

**SR:** So you just try to go from memory.

**Jill:** I do. The other thing that I will do is, I will have that picture that I want to scrapbook at that moment, and I will go thought my patterned papers or cardstock, and pull out papers that I think go with it or go with the premise of the layout that I am doing. Or if not, add to the premise of the layout, then at least not detract from the theme I am trying to create with the layout. So if it is a happy layout I may not choose colors that are dull and dreary. But basically I will wing it.

**SR:** Can you share how you envision using color for emotions? A lot of your layouts are powerful on an emotional level or they seem to be. How do you get the colors to match that emotion that you are looking for.

**Jill:** In the layout that I am thinking of, I did not set out to choose a particular color. It is nothing that I set out to do intentionally. When I choose my colors, I choose the kind of colors that match to me. It was not an intentional planned decision.



**SR:** Say you had a black and white picture; you would just look through your colors and just see?

**Jill:** Yeah I do tend to use black and white photos most often, because it is the easiest thing to color coordinate with. Almost anything goes well with a black and white photo.

**SR:** I am not sure if you completely covered this, but do you have any little tips for using patterned papers together so they don't clash?

**Jill:** If I have to sum it up, when I use patterned papers, I generally use them in small pieces. I don't wallpaper a layout with a bold paper in the background. I use little squares, little strips. And even if there are several different patterns on the paper, well maybe others will think that they clash, but I don't think that they do. I think that it is more distracting to me, if I see a whole background in the same pattern. Personally, I use little pieces and I find that a little more calming.

**SR:** So is that a good way to use up scraps of paper also?

**Jill:** I was just thinking that. It is a great way to use up scraps.

**SR:** So you pretty much save up all your scraps of paper?

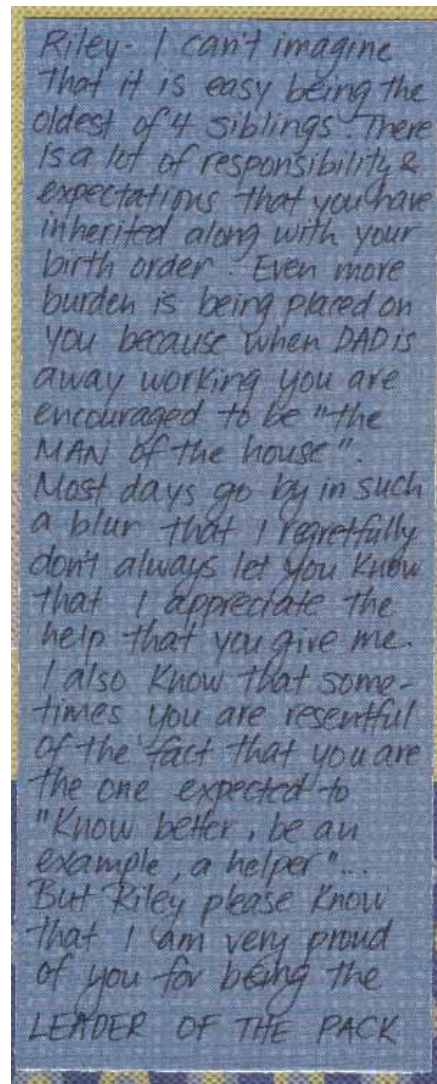
**Jill:** I do. If I don't use them on layouts, I can use them on cards. They all get used.

**SR:** How do you organize those?

**Jill:** Nothing that creative. I have two boxes that sit on the same shelf. And I have one for patterned paper and one for cardstock. I don't even separate them by different colors or anything. When I go to do a card or layout, if I have a color in mind, then I just quickly look through there and see if I see something appropriate in color and pattern and size. If not then I go for my full pieces.

**SR:** I know you have already talked about design. Are there any other design principles that you do use?

**Jill:** If I have to sum up all or most of my layouts I guess that it is not so much a design principle, as basically I tend not to center my photos. I keep them off center. I find that more visually appealing. I have



recently made the switch to 8 1/2 x 11, up until about 2 months ago, all my pages were 12 x 12. And if I centered a photo on a 12x12, I find that your eye just gets stuck there and does not really explore the page. Another principle that I will use, and I used it in the, “what I love about you” layout,. I will often use this in my photography as well, is the rule of thirds. Where you put your subject or what you want to put the focus on, if you were to divide your picture or page up in to three quadrants, both horizontally and vertically, where those lines cross are the thirds. So if you are taking a photo, it is more appealing to have the person’s eyes on one of those third lines, or where they intersect. And I will do that with my scrapbook layouts as well.

**SR:** So those are the principles that you use most often then?

**Jill:** Yeah. If I am using any more principles I am not really aware of it because I don’t know what they are.

**SR:** Well I did have one other question for you in that, as I said before your stuff is very simple in design or it looks very simple. I am wondering why don’t you use lumpy type of elements or embellishments on your designs?

**Jill:** This is a good question, because I can’t really put my finger on the exact answer. As I touched on earlier, it’s not that I don’t like lumpy embellishments; I love them. When something new comes out, I will often buy it and I will use it for at least a page or two. But when it comes down to it, I think that if I had to put my finger on the reason, it is because I have 4 children to scrap and I am not interested in doing pages that take me 4 days. When I have a moment to sit down and scrap, I like to finish a page. I don’t like to leave it sitting. So, often that just lends its self to simpler quicker pages, both in design and supplies.

**SR:** When do you scrapbook?.

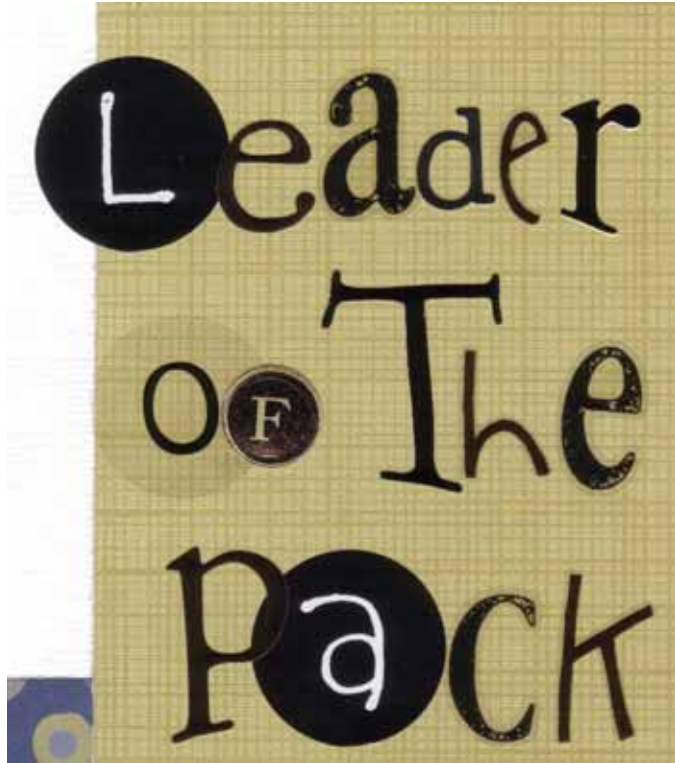
**Jill:** Mostly in the evenings. Generally, I am an after they are in bed scrapbooker.

**SR:** Let me ask you this then. You say you get all the embellishments, so what are your favorite brands or what do you usually get? Or do you have any?

**Jill:** I have lots. Right now I am loving the foam stamps by Making Memories. I love, In fact if I have to choose an all time favorite, letter stickers would have to be it. By several different manufactures, I love letter stickers. Again that simplifies thing for me when I am doing titles, because I don’t have to worry about printing and lining things up. I just throw on a few stickers. You know I go through cycles. I use eyelets for a little while, brads for a while. I also really like the embellishments that come with the Ki memories papers. The blocks and the little circle and squares with little words on them.

**SR:** This is a question that Christy asks me a lot or that comes up a lot. When you have extra letter stickers on your packs do you have any thing you do to use those up?

**Jill:** A couple different things. Sometimes, I will use letter stickers for part of a title or one word in a title. I think I did this in the “leader of the pack” layout, I will mix letter stickers from totally different lines to use up left over stickers. Sometimes it works well, sometimes it doesn’t. I will use them up that way. Or sometimes I will use them on a card. Often I will switch, I’ll do one word in one type of letter sticker the other word in the title in a different type. So there’s lots of different ways to use up letters stickers. And if all else fails give them to my kids.



**SR:** There you go. Very good! So do they join you, or enjoy the craft that you do?

**Jill:** It varies. My oldest is a boy and he is eleven, he couldn’t care less. He doesn’t even like seeing himself if he is in a magazine. My seven-year-old boy loves my supplies, and I actually have to keep a real eye on him, because he will get into all my things. He does not understand that the colored paper that he is wanting to play with, costs \$1.00 a sheet. The girls, they are happy with giving them some of my scrap papers and some of my punches and they are content with that. But the girls love looking at their own albums or the pages of themselves that get published. They quite like that.

**SR:** Another thing that you do a lot in your designs, is you use one photo. Can you talk about why you do that. Does it help you with your creativity?

**Jill:** There’s no denying, if you look through my albums, a good amount – probably 85% or more of my layouts are single photo, one page spreads. probably a couple reasons for that. One might be, when I see a photo for whatever reason that speaks to me, and I’ll often want it to speak on the scrapbook pages. So often I’ll enlarge a single photo and that’ll be the focus of the layout. Another reason stems back to my impatience quality, and that I want to get pages done as quickly as possible. There is no denying that designing and implementing a scrapbook page with one photo, is quicker than trying to design a page with multiple photos

**SR:** Now you’re sharing about your photos and I think this is really something that is a real skill that you have, is taking great photos, so maybe we can move into this “what I love about you” layout?

**Jill:** Sure,

**SR:** There is so much I want to ask you about your Photography. I guess maybe we will just run with this, and see how much you can throw out there and how much we can get from all the things you know. I wanna start with, it looks to me like a lot of your designs, maybe look like a home studio, can you share about that?

**Jill:** When I discovered scrapbooking 2 years ago it totally spawned off an interest in photography for me. I found it was much easier to a scrap pictures that I thought were better, than the ones that I wasn't that thrilled with. In the two years I've been scrapbooking, I upgraded my camera three times. First of all, I bought some books. Then I've taken a couple courses at a local photography school. In some of the courses I took we were required to take some photos, and being a busy mom it was much easier for me to take photos at home, than it was for me to drag my kids elsewhere and just to take photos of an event. Initially my photos if you could call it that, was to set up a gray fleece blanket duck taped to my kitchen wall. My kitchen is actually the only room in my house that has adequate lighting for taking indoor shots of that nature. It has a huge sliding glass door and a huge skylight. The downside of that is, during the peak or middle of the day, it gets so much light that the direct light makes for crappy pictures. So I take them more so in the midmorning to late-afternoon, and I find lighting is really pretty... then. Some local friends that I have, when they knew I was taking some photography courses and knew I wanted to practice. They came and asked me to take pictures of their kids for them. So I've done a few informal photo shoots for a few friends. And then I got to thinking, maybe I'll even turn this into something semiprofessional. So I bought a backdrop and a backdrop stand and more lenses, and a few little props here and there. Then I just realize people were asking so much of me, that it was just cutting into my time so drastically, that I've actually put that on the back burner for now, any thoughts of doing this professionally or semi professionally.

**SR:** There's no question that you are good and that people seek you out to take pictures for them.

**Jill:** Well Thank you. My expertise, if I can call it that, is more so with natural light photography and close up. That mainly stems from the fact that my kitchen is so small and I can only be so far away from my subjects, especially if there is more than one person in the frame. I can't get that far back to get their whole body in. So I have really focused on the close ups. Which is really my favorite kind of photo anyway.

**SR:** As far as the background goes that you picked up for your studio, is that something that a normal scrapper could pick up? And where would they get something like that?

**Jill:** The 2 that I purchased, I purchased them off of e-bay. They are 10ft by 15ft. one is a white muslin and the other is a black muslin. And muslin is just basically a cotton it is nothing fancy at all. You can actually go to a fabric store and buy muslin, but it is not quite as big as that. So what a lot of people will do from what I understand is go to the fabric store and buy muslin or another type of fabric that lends itself to a background, and

will just sew it together themselves. The problem with that is that sometimes you can see the seam. But with so many people being digital, it is really easy to Photoshop that out, if you can see it. Fleece works really well, that is what I started with as well as velvet. The one thing that I don't like about the two backdrops that I have is that they wrinkle really easily. But If I can manage to blur the background enough it is not that noticeable. If I crop in enough on the face you don't see much of the background anyway.

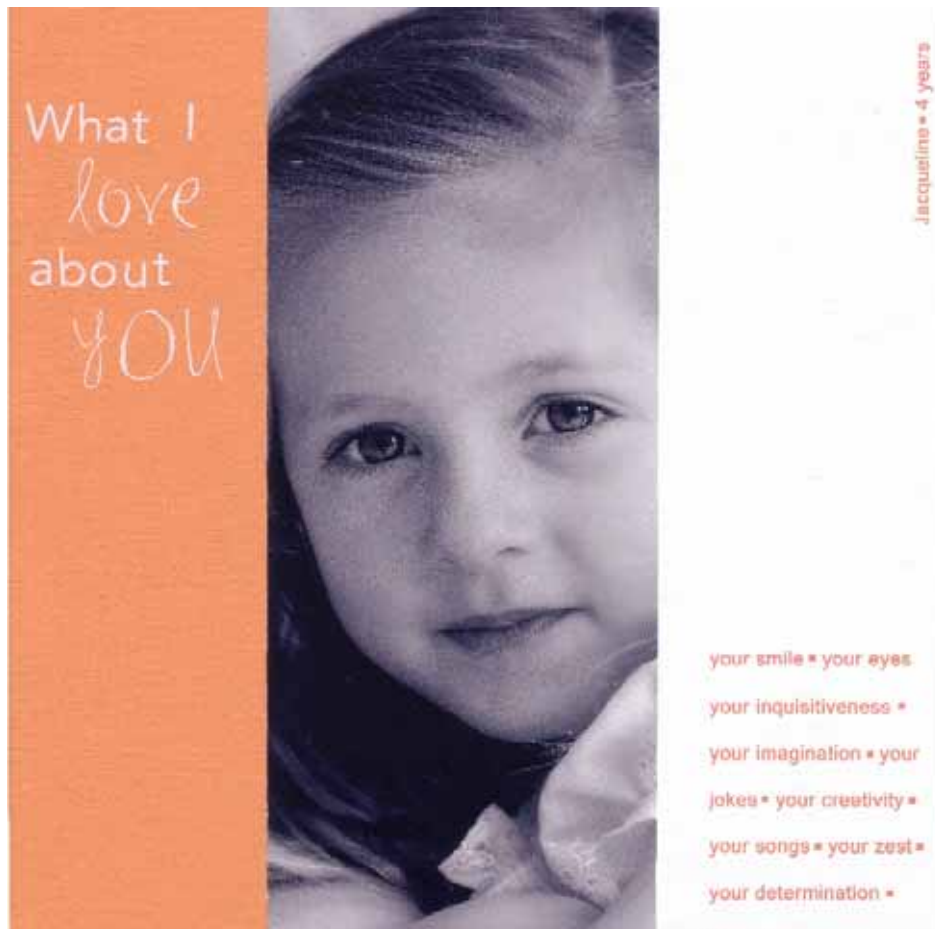
**SR:** One of the things that I notice about the photos you take is some how you capture your kids really well. How do you get them to pose and stay where you want them, and capture that shot?

**Jill:** One word... bribery! It works for some of my kids better than others. That is actually one of the things that I struggle with the most, both with my kids and photographing other peoples kids. It makes me actually doubt whether or not I want to do that. More then what I have anyway, because I really stress out about getting kids to relax. And I'm so new at it, that I still get nervous myself. And I think the kids especially will pick up on that. For my kids and a few of my friends kids that I have photographed as well, what really helped was when I went digital. Because if I can get them to make a funny face, then I can show them immediately their funny face on my camera, and that will get them to loosen up. With my 7 year old and my two girls, if I do that every once in a while and they kinda look forward to the next time, when they get to be as silly as possible and get to see the immediate image of them being silly. It kind of keeps them within my grasp a little longer, perhaps than if it was a film camera and they did not get to see any of the results. Another thing I will do, it doesn't work so much for my son, because he has heard it all before and there is nothing I can do to surprise him, but what works well for pre-teen boys or boys that are about 6 to pre-teen, is to ask them out of the blue if they are married. And that usually gets a good little giggle. For babies try bubbles or having the parents standing behind me singing nursery rhymes to them. Things like that.

**SR:** I was reminded of a question, on the background, say you went and bought material from a fabric store, do you have to get a certain size that matches the whole background frame?

**Jill:** I would not recommend anything less then 8 or 9 feet wide that is close to 100 inches. Most standard fabric comes in 60-inch width. All that is going to let you get, is a really tight close up of one individual to get the whole background, to keep it from getting anything else than the fabric that you have chosen for your background. So what a lot of people will do is get enough of a 60-inch width fabric in length and then sew it together. And then like I said, depending on the fabric and the lighting conditions, and how you manage to blur the background depends on how much that will show. But depending on where it is and how much you crop in on your subject, it may not even be an issue. But again for people that are shooting digital, it is super easy to get rid of that.

**SR:** You are talking about taking close up pictures and stuff; can you talk about how you get such great pictures, or your process. Where do you stand and what angle of shots that you take?



**Jill:** For the ones that I have done in my kitchen, I am probably no more than 6 or 8 feet away from the subject. And what I often do, to sort of make it easier on me, because I like to take my pictures at eye level, not looking down not looking up at the subject. I will have my background set up and I will have my kitchen table, and I will drape my background over my table. And I will have my kids, or whoever's kids sitting on my kitchen table. And that kind of keeps them from moving around too much as well. I will focus on their eyes, if I am using a shallow depth of field, where there may be some image blurring, depending on the lighting conditions, sometimes you have to use a shallow depth of field to get decent shutter speeds. I will focus on their eyes first and then I hold my shutter button down half way on the eyes and then I recompose, so that I get the eye. Because your focus button is often in the middle of your image and you focus on the eyes, and if you keep it there then the subject's eyes are always in the middle of the photo, and that tends to be kind of boring. So I'll focus on the eyes, and then I'll recompose, while I'm still holding the shutter button half way down, to where I want it. Then I'll fully press it in and take the picture. I've got somewhat lazy with that, going

digital because it's somewhat easy to crop the picture to the size and shape and orientation that you want them. And then I actually print them out in Photoshop

**SR:** When you are taking pictures, this may have to do with processing, what are your ideas for cropping and resizing your pictures so you get the look you want in your layouts.

**Jill:** A lot of variables go into this, if I have a sketch or an actual design of a layout in mind, I will crop my picture and massage it to the exact size I want to fit on the layout. And the way I wanted to a lot of times though, I will print them out in a five by seven, or six by eight size; if I was doing a single photo layout, that was a good size for me. One of the reasons I love being digital, is because I can resize my photos exactly to the size I want. When I was a film photographer, for example, I recently did a layout the other day where I did; I put an eight and a half by 11 on a 2-page layout. I put 24 pictures on there in a grid like way. I was able, once I knew what size, to figure out what size the grid was supposed to be. I was able to cut out and put on the photo exactly the way I wanted. If I was film, that would have been almost impossible, because I would either had to enlarge the photos to get as much of the subject in that set amount of space as I needed. And then it's really just a guessing game. But with digital, it's so precise

**SR:** What camera do you use to take your pictures?

**Jill:** I use a Canon digital 10D digital SLR

**SR:** I know, when I use a digital camera, there's a slight delay when I take or snap a picture to when it actually takes it. Could you share about that?

**Jill:** Mine's a digital SLR, so that it doesn't have a delay. That's one of the reasons I went that way. My first digital camera did have a delay, but I took it back, that one, the first day because it annoyed me.

**SR:** OK, I was wondering how you got such great pictures with that delay.

**Jill:** Just knowing what was recommended to me, and hearing other people talking about the delays they have. If they put it on a burst mode, where it takes several pictures, shots, you're more likely to catch the one you were meaning to catch. And then you can delete the others. When I say burst mode, it's a generalized term, some of them will be a sport mode, something like that, depending on the actual part and what they call it. But it's a continuous shooting that kind of thing

**SR:** What software do you use to manipulate your pictures?

**Jill:** I have Photoshop creative suite, which is the most current.

**SR:** How did you learn to use that?

**Jill:** I used to have Photoshop 7. And I took one course on Photoshop 7, and then it died on me. It wouldn't work properly, so my husband upgraded me to the newer one. So I only took the one course on Photoshop.

**SR:** So when you get your pictures they're actually color when you pull them off your camera. Then you just convert them to black and white if you want to

**Jill:** I often do.

**SR:** When you take a picture, say of your kids or whatever, do you generally fill up the frame picture, or is that a good way to do it?

**Jill:** I typically do, unless I'm not certain about what size, or aspect ratio that I'm going to print the picture out, in the end. In my camera and film cameras, I take the picture in 2x3 ratio or a 4 x 6. My digital camera is the same, but in a lot of digital cameras the aspect ratio is actually a little bit different. So in a film camera or a digital camera, if I fill the frame up with my subject, but say I want a five by seven which has a different ratio than a two to three, then to get a five by seven you're going to lose some of your image. So if I'm pretty certain that I know the resulting print I'm going to want to get from that picture is going to be a 2:3 ratio, like a 4 x 6 or an 8 x 12 – now that I'm a smaller scrapper, I don't do 12 by 12 scrap pages, I used to use 8 x 12 pictures on my pages. Anyhow I will leave a little bit of space around anyhow, just to give me some wiggle room if I'm printing a picture that doesn't have that ratio. Clear as mud?



**SR:** That's interesting. Do you ever have processing done on your photos? I guess if you had a 12 x 12 you might need...

**Jill:** I learned a trick when I was doing 12 by 12, and like I said I have a small format printer - I really, really wanted a large format printer both for printing directly on a large format, but a trick I learned is for people who have a regular sized printer, I buy regular photo printer paper that's in a 13 by 19 in. size. It's designed for a larger format printer. Then I cut it into two pieces that are 8 1/2 by 13 so it's cut in half on the 19 inch side. Then cut off the extra 1 inch strip, making it 8 1/2 by 12. Then I feed it through my printer as if it was an 8 1/2 by 14 in. piece of paper, because your printer will still accept legal size papers. Then I'm able to print a 8 x 12 photo that way. I can't do anything that's wider than 8 1/2 in. but I can do it as long as 12 or 13 in.

**SR:** Wow that is pretty cool. Is that pretty tricky to do?

**Jill:** No, as long as you resize your photo in your photo editing software to the size you want a 8 x 12, then when you go to print, for your printer options or paper set up, instead of having 8 1/2 x 11 selected. You just choose an 8 1/2 x 14. And so it's going to print it through, and it will stop at 12 in. When your picture's done. But there's 13 inches of paper, but the printer doesn't care about the last inch of paper, it will only print up to 12 inches.

**SR:** That's a pretty cool tip

**Jill:** Yeah I did this often when I was at 12 by 12 scrapper, as well. And when I did actually want to print on the background or the cardstock itself, and I did have a large format printer, I would often cut the 12 x 12 piece of paper into a piece that is 8 1/2 x 12. I would actually cut it, I would print on the piece of a 8 1/2 x 12, whether it was the journaling or the title or whatever and then I would find some way of covering up the seam, like to put a strip of cardstock over it or, in some of the layouts I used it for. You can't even tell that I've actually done that. Or that I've actually cut the paper.

**SR:** So you might have to plan that a little bit

**Jill:** Yeah, I would have to have a pretty good idea where I wanted the journaling or the title or what ever it is I'm printing

**SR:** So one more question on the Photography, you usually just use natural lighting? You don't use other lighting

**Jill:** Over the winter in Vancouver the lighting isn't always that great, and so sometimes I have to use a flash. But if I don't use a flash, the shutter speeds I get with my camera are too slow to hand hold, and so I get more blurry pictures. I did buy a faster lens recently though, so I'm curious to see how that handles this winter.

**SR:** How many lenses do you have for your camera?

**Jill:** I have four.

**SR:** Can you tell us what they are?

**Jill:** I have, the first purchase I made was actually, the first 2 lenses I have, I purchased when I had a film SLR camera. They're all Canon, and one's a 28-135 image stabilizer lens. And what the image stabilizer means, and Nikon has a similar technology, and theirs is called vibration reduction, I think. It's this little thing you switch on your lens, so that once you focus on the image, it actually stabilizes the image, so that you can actually hand hold your camera for shutter speeds up to 2 stops (is what they call them) faster than what you normally would be. For SLR cameras they recommend to get clear, sharp hand held images that you use shutter speeds, 1 over the length of the lens. So if I

am shooting my picture at 100mm, then I need to use a shutter speed faster than 1 / 100 of a second. So the image stabilizer allows you to hand hold that shot at slower shutter speeds. So it reduces the need for tripods, which I hate. Then the other, the next lens I have is a 75 to 300 mm lens also image stabilizer. Both of those are relatively slow in their f stop range. So that the F stop for both of those are F three - F three and half, or F four. And depending on the lighting situation you need a lower number F stop, which means it's a faster lens for the hand-held. So the next one I bought is a 100 mm, 2.8 lens. So the 2.8 lens is a faster lens than my other lenses, so I can get faster shutter speeds. That lens is also a macro lens, which I like as well. It allows you to focus really close to the subject. I find that the 100 mm lens, on a dreary day in my kitchen, was too long of a lens for me. It didn't let me get much of the person I was photographing. So then I bought a 50 mm lens, which has an F 1.4. Which is almost as fast as you can go. And I use that lens a lot. It really allows me to get a lot of shots in situations where I would really have to use a flash.

**SR:** So that one might be your favorite?

**Jill:** Yeah, when I'm indoors I have that one of my camera the most. When I'm outdoors and at the beach or at the park and I want more flexibility in zooming in, then I'll use my other lenses. But also the lighting is better; so you don't need such a fast lens any way.

**SR:** One question I have, how many pictures do you actually take? Either when you're outside or when you take a home studio session?

**Jill:** I've had my most recent digital camera for about 13 months, and I've taken about 7000 shots. The photo shoots where I took the picture on the layout "what I love about you", I probably took about, well that day, actually I took some of both my daughters (some of one by herself and some of the other by herself), but combined I took about 50 or 60 pictures. And out of those there's probably only five or six that I like enough that I would either use them in a layout or I could enlarge them to actually frame or what ever. I take way, way, way more than I actually use or am happy with.

**SR:** One thing I'm wondering here, do you think it's better to practice taking pictures or get books and take classes?

**Jill:** I think you need both. I think you need to have the knowledge first off, but if you don't use the knowledge- and I found this even in my own case - even if you don't use the knowledge very often you forget it. And so it's always good, whether you're reading the information in a book or online, to go out and try it out. Because it makes more sense when you can see the examples in the resulting photographs that you took, than looking at somebody else's photo or even reading a description in words. Digital is wonderful for that because you can see, you can change... for example, if you're playing with the depth of field, or shutter speed, you can see immediately what the resulting changes are to your images. And you're not really wasting film. You can take as much as you want and it doesn't cost any money to actually have them printed out to see them.

**SR:** What kind of printer do you use? Is it a real nice photo quality printer?

**Jill:** Not all, my printer is actually really basic, all it is the Hewlett-Packard 6110, it's an all-in-one, not even a dedicated photo printer. But I'm really happy with the prints I get off of it. I'm sure the longevity of the prints isn't gonna be that great, but I'll cross that bridge when I get to it, and I could always reprint them.

**SR:** This brings up an interesting idea, how do you store or do you have a system for storing the pictures that you take, on your computer, with your digital camera?

**Jill:** My system for when I was film, consisted of, when I would take in a roll of film... I would get either doubles or triples. And one set would go into a regular photo album, and one set that was for me to scrapbook with, and one that was for me to give to relatives. And the 1 set designated for me to scrapbook with that I have not yet scrapbooked with, or that weren't good enough any way, I have them stored in photo boxes that are shoebox size. I have six of those right now. Then when I went digital, when I download them on my computer, the system that I find works easiest for me... I have a folder for the year. Then there I have sub-folders for the month. So I have a folder named 2004, then I have 12 folders in there, one folder per month. Then inside side each of those monthly folders, if I'm downloading, for example, Christmas last year, I put it in the folder 2004, in 2004.12. Then in that folder I put 2004.12.25 – Christmas. Then it makes it real easy to find the photos that I'm looking for. What I'll also do... is when I get a disk full, I'll go into Photoshop, and there's a feature in Photoshop 7 in the newer one, I'm not sure about the older ones, there's a feature called "automate", and you can make contact sheets. So you go in there, and you pull up all the files on your disk and it automatically creates a contact sheet for you. And then I print that off. Usually on a disk I'll end up with five pages of photos. And I'll have thumbnails in rows of seven by nine, and that makes about five pages per disk.

**SR:** Is this something you have to keep up on everyday?

**Jill:** Not every day, I will usually do it, either when my card gets full, I will download them on my computer and put them in their appropriate folders on the hard drive. I don't really have a set time frame for when I do it, but when I feel I've got a desk full worth of photos that have not been saved on to disk yet, that's when I'll burn them to disk. As far as printing off the contact sheets, I will do that whenever. That's not in the least crucial. That's the last step of the whole thing for me. Like right now I'm on disc #15 for saving, but I am only up to disc #10 on the contact sheets.

**SR:** So did you have any other tips in your photography or ideas that you would want to mention, or share, or that you find helpful for anyone?

**Jill:** The only other thing, to take into all your other photography or picture-taking experiences, film or not, take more pictures than you think you'll need. Especially when you're film. You have no guarantees when you get those pictures back of whether your subject had their eyes closed or what ever. So definitely take more than you need. Film,

there is a cost involved, but it's really not that expensive. Especially if you're taking photos of important events or something that can't be relived or recreated or experienced again.

Another thing I would have to say would be, if you're going to take five pictures of the same thing, Don't take five pictures with the same setting from exactly the same spot. Take a few steps to either side, sit down, or stand up. Get them from different perspectives. It really helps with scrapbooking.

**SR:** I know your Photography is fantastic so I wanted to get as much from you as I could.

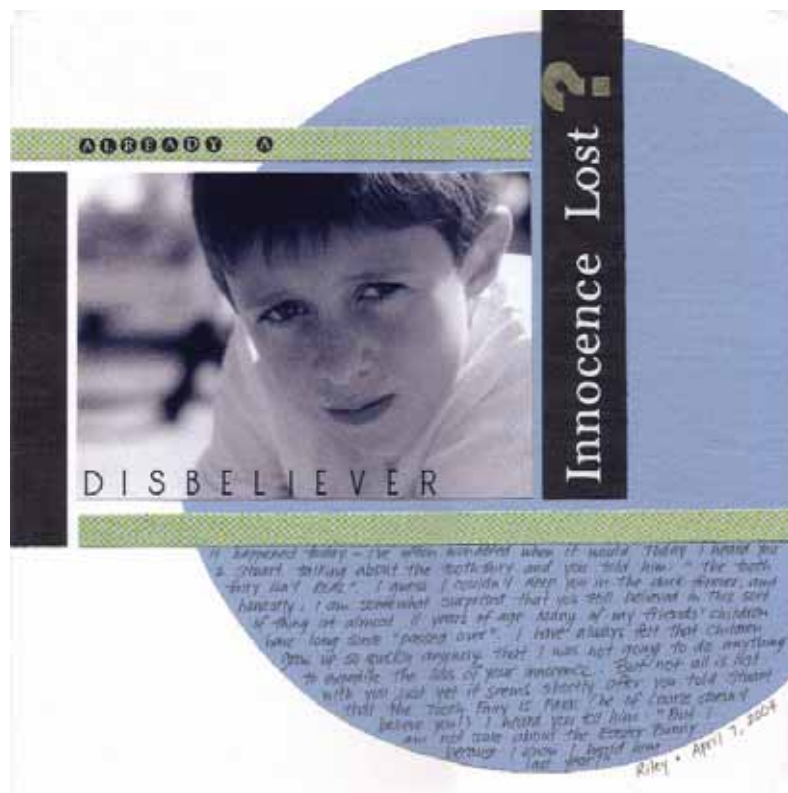
**Jill:** Thank you

**SR:** Another thing that I really like about your designs, and this kinda goes with the next layout the “already a disbeliever” layout, you really write some great journaling that has some emotional impact. So could you share with us how you write journaling or any ideas you have.

**Jill:** For layouts like that, I write them as if I am writing a letter to the person that the layout is about. I don't want my scrapbooks, when my kids or grandkids look at them later on, I don't want them to think my whole life was

peaches and cream. I want them to know the real story sometimes. I'll just mention briefly that, one of my motivations for scrapbooking, especially getting little stories for my kids, is I was adopted when I was 10. And I have five pictures of me before the age of 10. No one in my life remembers my birth weight, or how long I was, or when I first walked, or when I talked, or anything like that. So it's really important for me to record these things for my kids. As far as the journaling, like I said, I write them often as a letter to the child. So that, “already a disbeliever”, is to my oldest son, as if I'm writing it to him.

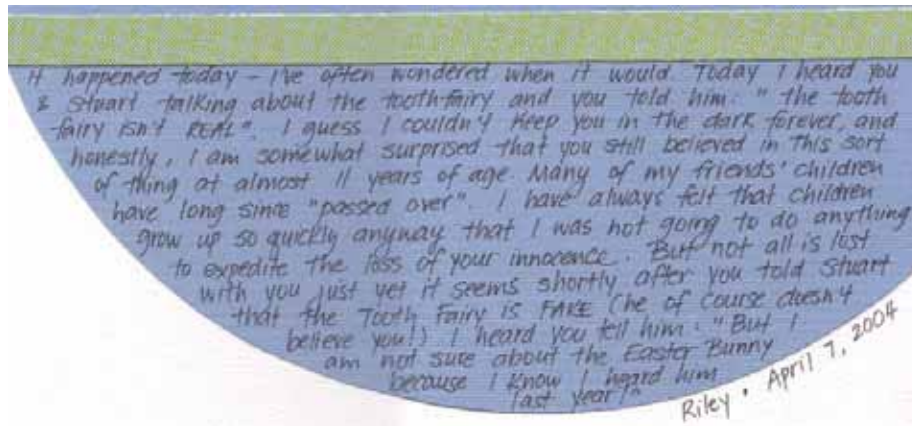
**SR:** In a future context or?...



**Jill:** Often it's in the present I would have to say, present tense. Oh, I see what you're saying... No, I'm not writing it as if he's going to read it today, because he's not even interested in reading it today. But I just want him to know, when he or his future wife, or whatever, is interested in looking at his album, about what it was at that moment, what I was thinking, what kind of trials and tribulations he was causing me. Four kids is not easy and we certainly have a fair number of crises in our house.

**SR:** When you sit down to write do you just think about what's you're wanting to say and just put it down?

**Jill:** It depends, some of the less deep layouts, often times are just spur of the moment, and I think of it as I'm doing it. And if it's typed journaling, sometimes I just think as I type. But oftentimes, layouts like this one, I'll do a rough draft first. And sometimes when an idea for a layout hits me and I'm not even at home, I'll quickly jot down questions or a sentence or two that I want to make sure I include in the journaling, or even sometimes the whole journaling.



**Jill:** If something hits me, whether it's a layout design, a color combination, or an idea for journaling, or title... I usually have a pen and some piece of paper, even if it's just a bank statement in my purse. Then I'll go home and they get shoved into my to be considered pile.

**SR:** Another question I have, it seems, the journaling on this layout; the journaling fits right in with your whole design?

**Jill:** That was totally, I couldn't have been more pleased myself. I had no idea when I started the journaling, I thought if I got down to the bottom and I was running out room, I would have to sum up my journaling a little quicker. But that's what I meant to write. I couldn't believe how perfectly that fit. I don't do that very often, trying to fit into such a tight spot. Usually what I'll do, for example, on the "leader of the pack" layout, I'll right it on another piece of paper and then I'll trim it to however much space the journaling took and then I'll try and incorporate that into the layout. But on this one I decided to try it. And I thought, if I really, really mess it up, I could always re-cut the circle and try

again. But I was totally surprised with how perfectly I was able to get that to fit. Usually I do the journaling then trim to size, and put that in the layout, but this time I already put the circle on the layout and the photo and little strips, and then did the journaling.

**SR:** This design is really neat, so you cut out this circular design here? What inspired that layout for you?

**Jill:** The design of the layout? I really had wanted to try a layout with a huge circle. But I didn't know whether I was going to try and incorporate it into a one page layout, or 2 page. But that sort of what I was thinking when I wanted to do this layout. I had this goal in mind of having a large circle. As far as where everything else went, it was just sort of moving things around, and I found where I liked the placement of the picture the best. Then I just put things around it. As simple as this and those little green strips of cardstock are, it took me forever to decide on where to put those.

**SR:** That's the thing that's amazing. It looks so simple, but ...

**Jill:** Simple doesn't always mean easy though

**SR:** I know one of the things I use when I write, sometimes I have some tools that I use to help spark an idea. Do you have any thing you use for that?

**Jill:** When I'm listening to the radio, or just conversation sometimes, somebody will say just two or three words that will spark an interest for a layout idea or journaling idea. My third child, who is turning five this coming week, somebody asked her the other day at a summer camp, how old she was going to be? She held her hand to show off five fingers, and someone said "Oh, a real handful" and so that made me think and gave me a great idea for this layout about her being a real handful. So I just get ideas like that. Of course sometimes I get ideas from other scrappers, and other layouts I've seen. I certainly don't claim all my designs to be original. That's not the truth. Occasionally though I get stuck, and I do have a few layouts in my albums that are direct copies of things I've seen. When I'm not feeling terribly creative, sometimes they spark some interest of different ways of thinking for me.

**SR:** This last one we chose here this "secrets" layout, it really seems like it's a different style for you.

**Jill:** It is totally different for me

**SR:** Would you talk about what inspired you to do this one?

**Jill:** Every once in while I just get it compelled to step out of my box, my creative box, and try something new. At the time there was a kaffuffle over foam stamps and painting on layouts. So I just got some paint and I was really drawn to do a layout with some paint on it, and that's what I came up with. In fact, that picture on that layout, I had already used on another layout, and I just really wanted to do a layout with paint and I

couldn't think of a picture to use, so I just used that picture that I had used before. Also those transparencies, those are transparencies behind it, they were just coming out.

**SR:** So when you used the paint on this layout, did you just use it minimally to get the look you wanted?

**Jill:** Yeah, I wanted to do the title in paint, but I wasn't sure how. And initially, I thought I would paint on... and then I would adhere black circles. Yeah, I was going to paint, and while the paint was still wet, and I'd attach my title to the black circles.

**SR:** Do you have any considerations for archival safety or is that not really an issue for you?



**Jill:** My take on it is, it's an issue but I don't stress about it. As much as I want my layouts to be seen and remembered by my kids, and if they last for future generations that's a bonus, but I'm not a future teller, and I don't really know what kind of environmental situations my scrapbooks will have to endure. You know, are they going to be in a house that floods, or in an earthquake, or a fire? I figure those threats are probably more real, than having them, all the sudden, disintegrate because I use something that wasn't acid free down the line. Also, because the printer I use for a lot of my recent pictures, is just an average printer, that's more of an issue for me. I don't generally put a lot of things that aren't acid free on my pages. I don't know why, I just don't. I don't negate the concern over archive-ability. I don't expect my scrapbooks to last a hundred years and have them look exactly as they do today. Things age, even photographs from a hundred years ago don't all look the same as they did the day they were taken. And I think that's to be expected. Who knows what kind of technology is going to be around the corner.

**SR:** How many layouts would you say you're actually able to do in a week?

**Jill:** It varies. I'm coming off a three week stretch where I hadn't done a single layout, which was really annoying me. I wasn't really very creative at all. But typically, the most I've done in a week would be 7 to 10. Usually I'm happy if I can get 1 or 2 done a week. A monthly average would be five to 15. I spend way too much time on the computer compared to scrapbooking.

**SR:** As you were talking about that, it reminded me that we go through Scrapper's or creative block sometimes. How were you able to come out of that?

**Jill:** I've done 2 layouts about two days ago, and I feel like I'm just turning the corner. Usually I've been quite successful at forcing myself out of these, but it was difficult this time. We went on a short holiday, which cut up that time. And I just felt like I couldn't really get into it before the holiday, and of course not while I was away on holiday. I've kind of forced myself to try and get out of it. What I'll often do is, I'll take times like that to either try and plan a few layouts I have in mind ahead of time. Or I look through magazines that I've looked at once, and then put on the shelf. So I take those times to really look at those in more detail. I look at online galleries for inspiration. Sometimes I use that time to make cards. It's not quite as involved as planning layouts. It's quite a bit more simple. If all else fails, this is what I actually had to do this recent time, I'll look at my favorite layouts, whether in a magazine or online and I'll actually scrapbook the layout. I did this a couple days ago. Sometimes it's enough to jump-start my thinking process, to think about layouts again. I'm personally not that terribly concerned about SCRAPLIFTING, because I don't submit those layouts that I scaplift. And when my kids, or their future kids are looking at my albums, they're not gonna know that that layout was scaplifted. It really doesn't bother me

**SR:** What you're talking about is something that Christy has found somewhat effective. And that is when she's found a design that she wants to copy, she starts to copy it, and then somewhere in the process, she gets a creative bug

**Jill:** And turns it into her own. Yeah, that's often the case that will happen, although this layout I did a couple days ago was almost exactly a copy.

**SR:** Jill that's about all the questions I have for you. I do want to thank you so much for your time and thank you so much for sharing with us a lot of the thoughts and ideas that you have about your creative process.

**Jill:** You're welcome, and good luck with your project.

**SR:** Well thank you.