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Getting stuck on stickers

DOGS AND PONIES, baseball bats and race cars, ornaments and Easter bunnies, fancy drinks and leafy vegetables — Andrea Grossman wasn't thinking of any of them when she got a request from a her client more than 30 years ago.



PJBREMIER

The graphic designer from Woodacre was envisioning hearts: Kitty Okamura, owner of Pine Street Pastry in Sausalito, needed some to send out for Valentine's Day.

See **FINE LIVING**, page D2

FINE LIVING



Provided by Mrs. Grossman's

D2 • SATURDAY, JANUARY 9, 2010

HOME & GARDEN

FINE LIVING: Graphic designer finds success with stickers

From page D1

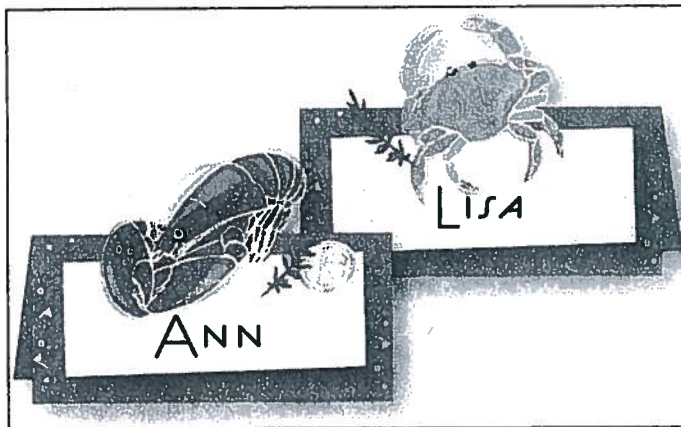
But when the label manufacturer sent back the roll of hearts, the two women decided to sell them instead, and with a yardstick and pair of scissors attached nearby, the stickers were an instant success and launched a new industry, says Barbara Marino who's worked for Mrs. Grossman's, the company, for more than a decade.

"The only stickers at the time were on Chiquita bananas," she says.

The signature heart motif is still found in the array of stickers produced at Mrs. Grossman's headquarters, a certified-green printing plant in Petaluma where high-speed printing presses can produce 500,000 stickers an hour and more than 15,000 miles of nontoxic, acid-free stickers annually.

Employees bring their pets; developmentally disabled adults find jobs, more than 20 million stickers have been donated to children's hospitals across the country, and there are bargains for everyone.

Fans line up before sunrise for the one-day warehouse sales in November/December and June; take advantage of monthly online specials where value packs of stickers worth \$180 are reduced to \$15 (www.mrsgrossmans.com)



Photos provided by Mrs. Grossman's

Mrs. Grossman's pioneered the sticker industry 30 years ago.

or the bargain bins at the factory store upstairs.

Stickers, from fun to formal, can enhance and personalize invitations, flyers, place cards, calendars, nametags, recipe cards and note cards and stationery.

Elegant laser-cut silhouettes, the newest design, are perfect for mounting on fine paper for expressive notecards, Marino says.

Nancy Elgort, production development manager for Mrs. Grossman's and for-

mer owner of Scrap Attack at Northgate mall, uses stickers as embellishments in her scrapbooks to highlight mementos — special photographs, letters, ticket stubs, awards, press clippings — in scrapbooks.

"They help tell the story," the Novato resident says. "If you're doing a cooking page, pots and pans, silverware and fruits and vegetables stickers make it more fun and dynamic."

While the artistic aspect



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appeals to scrapbook crafters, it's the dimensionality of a scrapbook that engages a reader, inviting him to linger and look. And, scrapbooks make emotional gifts, she adds. "People know you're giving them a keepsake, a treasure, and, as they look back at the pictures of their friendship, it brings back good memories."

Digital scrapbooks may be the way of the future but "holding original mementos is like holding a piece of someone's life." And even digital albums benefit from the dimensionality of stickers, she says. "If you're doing a birthday page, grab a digital cupcake into a corner and add sparkly