

'Paper Alice' Recycles, Innovates

By Mike Woody
Gazette Writer

The inventive hobby of creating handmade paper has developed into a worldwide business for Alison Rusk, a.k.a. "Paper Alice."

Based out of her Tipp City home, Rusk's endeavor is recognized around the globe for her innovative approach to handmade paper, gifts, invitations, and more.

Through her paper-making techniques, Rusk recycles junk mail into treasures of the heart that will generate everlasting memories.

"It's amazing what you can do with paper. I never throw anything away; its gold to me," she said.

Armed with her paper-making kit, it takes a mere three minutes to transform a piece of junk mail into a decorative sheet of paper useful for cards, journals, scrap booking, or photo mattes. The process is relatively simple, requiring only a blender and water, in addition to the kit. It is something all ages can take delight in, and families can do together.

To her line of products, Rusk recently added a 12x12 paper-making kit, designed and sold exclusively through Paper Alice. It creates the perfect-sized paper for scrap booking pages, and for a variety of other purposes. Rusk also developed a line

of templates: a fashion purse, small and large library pockets, a money gift card, a recipe card set, and, coming soon, one for business cards.

And the local company is releasing a paper press that keeps the paper flat while it's being created. All the items are only available through Paper Alice.

"Everyone can use paper for something, and, with this one-time investment, you will always have a use for junk mail. The kits will last forever," said Rusk.

Her customer base has grown tremendously via her website, www.paperalice.com and a demonstrational video on YouTube. She has mailed kits to as far away as Bangkok and the Philippines.

Beyond the junk mail angle, Rusk's creativity has led her to use many other household items in making paper; items such as grass, flower petals, wood chips, glitter, and onion skins. The deli department at Foodtown saves its left-over onion skins for her. The additional materials add more dimension to the paper.

A long-term believer in recycling, Rusk is glad to see the "Go Green," philosophy catching on. The process of making paper is a true example of going green.

For Rusk, the biggest joy comes from teaching others and seeing their expressions of amazement as they view the beautiful results of the simple process.



Alison Rusk, aka 'Paper Alice' shows off some samples of her work.

She demonstrates at schools and holds classes in her home. The two-and-a-half hour workshops are for all ages, ranging from the young to the young-at-heart.

For those with more paper-making experience, an advanced class is available

"It's great to see people's faces light up when their paper is finished. And everyone can do it, it's so easy. Plus, the classes are a lot of fun. They are great for a group of friends to do together," said Rusk. Class schedules are available on the website, and, for birthday parties or other

special events, Rusk asks for extra notice.

She also displays at 35 different shows each year, always eager to show off her products. She is a fixture at community shows, such as Art for the Heart and the Antique & Artisan Show. For more information or to schedule a workshop visit www.paperalice.com, or email: awonderland221@woh.rr.com, or call: 667-0787. Rusk is thrilled to share her passion with others. "I'm really lucky to love what I do. I never get tired of making paper," she said.