Charm

When a friend sent Marlene Gilbert two uncolored stamped images—the sandcastle and the “Enjoy Life’s Moments” phrase—the idea for this card came together. “When I was on vacation once,” recalls the Irvine, California stamper, “I happened to see a sandcastle competition, and it stayed in my memory.”

Gilbert attached a delicate gold charm to the upper left corner of the card, evoking a feeling of mellow calm. “This sand dollar charm was the first charm I bought years ago,” says Gilbert. “I wish I’d bought more of them.”

Like many stampers who make purchases based on emotional attachments to things, Gilbert wasn’t sure how to use her charm. “I didn’t use charms for years because I couldn’t think of ways to attach them that I liked,” she says. After deciding to use beads with charms on bent wire for this card, she was still stumped. “I didn’t know what to do with it, as I didn’t want to glue or tie it to the card.”

Back at the drawing board, Gilbert eventually thought about wrapping a strip of cut paper around the wire and then gluing the paper to the cardstock, allowing the charm to dangle.

“I’ve never found a whole sand dollar,” Gilbert says. “I have a small broken piece of one. That seems to be how life’s most enjoy-
able moments appear—in tiny bits and pieces.”

(Stamp credits: Sandcastle—Ann-ticipations; phrase—Hero Arts; seagull—Stampourri!; shell—Clearsnap Inkums. Charm source unknown.)

For You

Another beach, a continent away, inspired Evelyn Duncan to send in an adorable pastel card that also acts as a presentation gift. And her inspiration was a simple flip-flop.

“I thought these flip-flop charms were the cutest embellishments,” says the resident of Clayton, North Carolina. “As far as I’m concerned, charms are just great hardware to add dimension, texture and interest to your paper arts.”

Duncan, who’s been stamping for three years and making jewelry for six months, crafted the bracelet first. The base is a gold-tone chain which holds both the charms and four mother-of-pearl buttons the artist decorated with ink and stamped images. When the bracelet was complete, Duncan worked on the background presentation card.

“|combined my enjoyment of jewelry making with stamping to produce this gift with card. I like the idea that the charm bracelet is an embellishment on the card, yet the card will still be attractive after it’s removed.

“I enjoy working with charms since they do not require a lot of tools,” Duncan says. “Another great thing is you do not have to be into creating jewelry to use them. They can be glued independently to a project or you can slip them onto some funky fiber—no tools needed for that at all.”

(Stamp credits: Palm tree—Tin Can Mail [Inkadinkado]; sunglasses—Rubber Stampede; shells—Rubber Stamp Tapestry; phrase—Stampin’ Up!; Charms credits: Horizon Group USA Inc.)

Little Card, Big Hearts

Good things come in small packages—or envelopes—as Linda Berge’s card demonstrates. “This little card started out to be 5 by 3.5 inches and then I decided to make a fancy edge,” recalls Berge. “The edge didn’t turn out straight, so I cut it again!”

The finished card measures 2 by 2.5 inches. Berge’s use of the simple bow charm is a good example of how important it is to keep size and shape proportions in mind, as a larger charm would have dominated the potted
heart flowers. “I have a little box of charms,” she says, “much like my Grandma’s button box. Most of my charms are from thrift stores or are given to me by friends.”

Berge has experimented with different glues on charms, and has found that Crafters Pick’s The Ultimate glue works best for her. Holding the charm in one hand with tweezers, she applies a dab of glue to the back with an old stylus then smears the glue out in a thin even layer with her finger. “I attach the charm and apply a little pressure for a few seconds,” she says. “And it should stay put!”

With this piece finished, the Issaquah, Washington stamper then crafted an envelope for her dainty bouquet.

(Stamp credit: Rosie’s Roadshow. Charm credit: Embellish It.)

**Tea Time**

“I love working with charms,” says Nanci Ring of Cincinnati, Ohio. “The flat ones, meant for scrapbooking, make great card embellishments, and the 3-D charms add a professional touch to stamped jewelry.”

Ring’s submission is charm-like, for it is actually a mini-hanger meant to decorate a cabinet door or a drawer knob. The base is a wooden tag purchased from a craft store. Ring sanded it, painted it with Judikins’ Diamond Glaze to make it look like a piece of china, and then stamped the phrase and the cup of hot tea. Using a pin vise to drill the holes for the charms to hang from, she hung them with jump rings and bits of chain left over from another project.

“The finishing touch,” she says delightfully, “was the doll house spoon which is just the right scale!”

(Stamp credits: Teacup—Just for Fun; alphabet—My Sentiments Exactly. Charm credits: unknown.)

**Charming Christmas**

A festive holiday charm bracelet was Debbie Gimbel’s submission for this month’s theme. “I’m pleased as punch,” said Gimbel when she was notified her work was chosen for publication. “All the charms, including the gingerbread boy created with the paper punch, are shrink plastic.”

Gimbel literally wrote the book on the use of shrink plastic for rubber stamping (*RSM* #117, May /June 2001), and enjoys working with the versatile material. Her favorite plastic comes from Lucky Squirrel [see Resources next page], and she stamps her images with a permanent solvent-based ink. She colors before shrinking, which intensifies the colors, and blends colors with cotton tip swabs.

Before heating the plastic, she uses a 1/8 inch circular punch to make a hole that will later hold the charm in place with a jump ring.

“Then I blast away with a heat gun,” says Gimbel. “I use a toaster oven on pieces I want to remain rectangular, such as the snowman and ‘Merry Christmas’ charms.” On the latter piece, she used decorative scissors to cut the edges before shrinking.

Once shrunk, the Miramar, Florida stamper seals the charms using GlassKote. She builds up layers of the sealant to give added dimension to the pieces.

(Charming Christmas / Debbie Gimbel)
Working with a simple link bracelet, Gimbel attached the charms, alternating them with decorative bead drops she also made.

(Stamp credits: Elf, snowman, “For Christmas”—All Night Media; “I Love Santa,” tree, snowman, “Merry Christmas,” Santa blocks, snowlady—Peddler’s Pack.)

**Little Princess**

Nancy Armstrong lives in the upper western part of Louisiana, and while her town of Shreveport was spared from the effects of Hurricane Katrina, she witnessed first hand the difficulties that others were going through. “This was the main evacuation area,” explains Armstrong. Everyone started pouring in and then there wasn’t a place for everyone and then there wasn’t a place to go home to.”

Armstrong had just purchased the stamp of the young girl and felt connected to it. “The image seems to have a look of strength and sweetness,” she says, “which reminded me of the children of New Orleans.”

Armstrong used Shrinky Dinks shrink plastic to make the heart-shaped charms. She used gold crowns on paper from Rubber Baby Buggy Bumpers to decorate hang tags, then attached the tags with purple eyelets to the card. “I used purple as it is a royal color,” she says of her color palette of purple, light blue and yellow.

The large “p” is from a chipboard alphabet purchased at a scrapbooking store. The remaining lettering was done with a computer.

(Stamp credits: Girl—B Line Designs; patterned stamp—Stampland. Charms credits: Rubber Baby Buggy Bumpers.)

**Ephemera**

Jacquelyn Shenise found the inspiration for her card as soon as she stamped the background image. “I was drawn to it because I love the collage look as well as anything vintage,” says Shenise, who lives in Kinnelon, New Jersey. “As soon as I stamped it, a collage instantly began to emerge. “My mind was spinning with ideas,” she continues en-

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**Resources: Charms and more**

- **SkyBluePink**: A variety of charms, including wee coins, watch parts, muffins, seasonal selections and more. Visit www.SkyBluePink.com or write 707 MLK Drive W.#204E, Cincinnati, OH 45220.
- **Fancifuls**: Specializes in brass charms in a variety of sizes and themes. Visit www.fancifulsinc.com or write 1070 Leonard Rd., Marathon, NY 13803.
- **SilverCrow Creations**: Unusual charms from various countries like Italy, Peru, Thailand, as well as the U.S.A. Visit www.silvercrowcreations.com or write 6331 Darlington Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.
- **Blockheads**: Embellishments range from bottle caps, to charms to paper flowers to sequins to keys—you name it. Visit www.blockheadstamps.com.
- **Articus**: Provisions for Creative People. Altered Art Classes online, Supplies offered include beads, art metals, items from 7Gypsies and Tim Holtz. Visit www.articusstudiodesign.com. (740) 477-1238.
thusiastically. “Once I selected the other two stamps, the
embellishments and charms just seemed to fall into place.”

To hold them there, Shenise used The Ultimate glue
from Crafters Pick. “Nothing is worse than discovering
your card was received minus the charms and embellish-
ments,” she cautions. “Use a glue that won’t let you down.”

Before she gets to the gluing stage, though, Shenise has
to find those wonderful attachments. She regularly searches
for interesting charms, often finding them in out-of-the-way
places. “Less is usually more,” she cautions. “Don’t clutter
your piece unless that is the look you are after.”

(Stamp credits: “I’m serious”—Catslife Press; lady with
words—Limited Edition Rubber Stamps; ephemera—Stampin’ Up!
Charms credits: unknown.)

The Collection

A birthday celebration trip to Mrs. O’Leary’s, a paper
rafters in Wichita, Kansas, led Joyce Owen to the chess
piece that adorns this simple, yet elegant, card. “The shop
was brimming with all kinds of special embellishments and
unusual charms,” Owen recalls. “What a wonderful place!”

As the highlight of the line of chess pieces, Owen need-
ed to be sure the charm would
stay in place. Echoing what
many of the other artists have
said concerning the adhesion of
charm to paper, Owen says
she’s “found a wonderful glue
for attaching embellishments—
even metal charms!” Her choice
is the same as several of her fel-
low stampers—Crafters Pick
Ultimate White Glue.

“Chars are fun to use in
card design,” says Owen. “I try
to keep the stamped artwork the
focal point of the card, using the
charm just as what it is often
called—an embellishment.”

(Stamp credits: Large shad-
ow—Hero Arts; shadow shapes—
Postmodern Design Cube;
background squares—Art Impress-
sions; collection—B Line Designs;
chess pieces—Stampers Anony-
rous. Charm credit: Mrs. O’Leary
store, company unknown.)

Vintage Friends

We return to the beach with
Joyce Greenfield’s submission.
A resident of Bennet, Nebraska,
Greenfield was headed to the
west coast of Florida for a vaca-
tion when she learned that a
stamp convention would be held
on the east coast. “What’s a few
extra hours of driving to get to a
convention,” she says with a
laugh.

Needing something to trade
at the convention, she stopped
into The Owl and the Pussycat
in Fort Myers, and was soon
making pins to trade.

Those pins became the basis for the card pictured here, which features photos from a sticker sheet by Penny Black. “Since I’m all about instant gratification,” says the artist, “the slide mounts were self-sealing, the pin backs were self-adhesive, and the charms were adhered with Mini Glue Dots.”

Greenfield worked with Adirondack dye inks and, when she returned home, mounted two of the pins to cardstock. “I thought the gold charms added just the right amount of interest and brightened things up,” she says.

(Stamp credit: Sea shells—Tin Can Mail [Inkadinkado]. Charm credit unknown.)

Objet d’Art: Medusa!

“Dazzled by charms and enthralled with mythology since childhood, my creative ideas went into a spin,” Sandy Nelson says about learning of this issue’s theme. “Medusa sprang forth! My favorite myth, her charmed story is one of resilience found from reflection.”

Working with a variety of copper and black wire in varying gauges, Nelson twisted a body into shape for her four-by-four-inch wire sculpture. The Minneapolis, Minnesota artist used old jewelry parts, beads and charms to give her figure life, limiting herself to just three

*The Collection / Joyce Owen*

*Vintage Friends / Joyce Greenfield*
“Friends know me as the gatherer of junk,” she says. “I recycle or make from scratch whatever I need for my art.

“Browse through thrift and electrical part stores, flea markets, and garage sales for great junk,” she says. “Wire is forgiving so don’t worry if you make a mistake. Just keep wrapping until you have an impression in hand. Most of all, have fun!”

**Tall Ship**

From New South Wales, Australia a ship comes sailing into our pages. Brigitte Grant’s card is elegant in its simplicity, and faux in its execution. “Although they look like they are metal,” says the resident of Medlow Bath of her charm embellishments, “they are actually plastic.”

Grant’s inspiration for the card came from a sense of adventure developed over the years when she lived in Tahiti. “I tend to buy or collect everything that reminds me of home: ships, the sea, hibiscus flowers, etc. These charms I got some years ago in a junk/bargain shop. I didn’t need them at that time, but ‘had to have them’ just in case!”

After finishing the coloring and mounting of her stamped images, Grant attached the charms. “My tip for working with charms is to try to hide the glue the best possible way.” Because these were plastic charms, she used a good craft glue. “If they were metal,” she adds, “I would use something stronger. For bigger charms, I would use a silicone glue so that it doesn’t crack and unglue.”
Stuck on Glues

Some tips about glues and how to use them from expert crafters:

• “I use Diamond Glaze from JudiKins to adhere charms, crystals and shrink plastic,” says Marian Anderson from The Peddler's Pack Stampworks in Beaverton, Oregon. “If the charm is too heavy or concave then I’ll use a Glue Dot or hot glue from a glue gun.”

When working with Glue Dots, Anderson says it’s best to keep your fingers from touching the dots. She recommends cutting the paper each dot is attached to and using the paper as an applicator. To attach ribbons or bows, Anderson recommends hot glue from a glue gun. A strong double-stick tape like Mira-clé Tape from Viva Las Vegastamps or Red Line Doublestick Tape available from Hot Potatoes can also be useful when adhering charms.

• E6000 is the glue of choice for Donna Pedini of Fancifuls, a company that specializes in brass charms. Be sure to apply this glue with care, Pedini says, it’s considered a hazardous material. When working with E6000, she uses either an exhaust fan or a table fan to keep the fumes away from her face.

Pedini squeezes a small amount of E6000 from the tube and uses a toothpick to apply a bit of glue to the back of the charm. “I put a square about the size of a penny on a scrap of paper,” she says. “Because the glue dries quickly, you don’t want to have too much out at once.”

Pedini says this glue will adhere charms to metal, plastic, wood and paper. Don’t use E6000 with styrofoam—the styrofoam melts.

• Andrea Burke of Sun Spirit Studio started in the jewelry business and uses a lot of jewelry supplies in her craft work. For gluing jewels and stones she prefers Alleene’s Jewel It. Burke, too, puts the glue on a piece of paper and applies it with a toothpick —“or something small and thin like that,” she says. If attaching a crystal, she suggests holding it with tweezers.

• Shannon Rettig of Paperworks.biz uses E6000. When finished working with this glue, she recommends carefully cleaning the top of the tube. Otherwise it can seal itself shut. Another precaution she takes is to keep her E600 in a zip-lock bag.

Resources: Glues

Look for many of these products at your local stamp or craft stores.


• Glue Dots. Visit www.gluedots.com or write 5515 So. Westridge Dr., New Berlin, WI 53151.

• The Ultimate Glue. Visit www.crafterspick.com or write 520 Cleveland Ave., Albany, CA 94710.


• Gem-Tac, Glass Metal and More, Dazzle Tac by Beacon Adhesives. This company has an excellent chart on their website, showing which of their glues work best on a variety of surfaces. Visit www.beaconcreates.com or write 125 MacQuesten Parkway South, Mt. Vernon, NY 10550.