## Word Up!

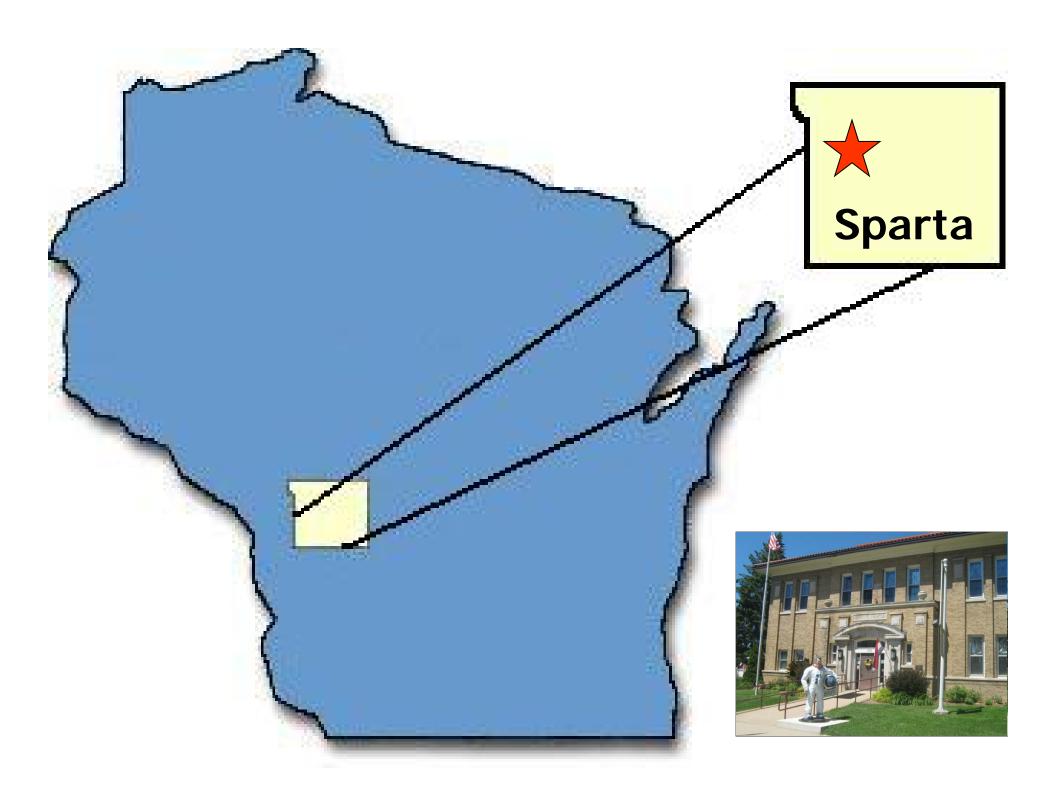
How to Make
Professional Exhibit Labels
(On A Budget)

Jarrod Roll
Monroe County Local History Room
& Museum, Sparta, Wisconsin

#### **Monroe County Local History Room & Museum**

200 West Main St., Sparta







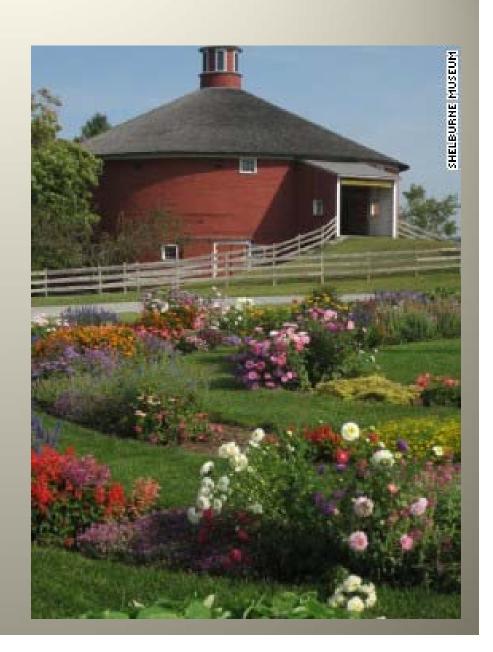
Research Library

### Monroe County Museum



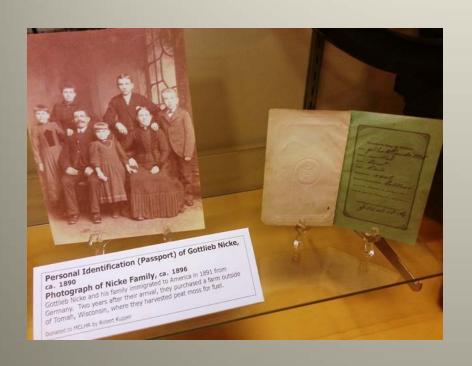
# Cooperstown GRADUATE PROGRAM





- What is a Label?
- Using LabelsEffectively
- Design Tips
- Making a Label
- Resources

### What is a Label?



Written words used in museum exhibitions and displays to provide info for visitors



#### Types of Labels





Title Label

#### Section Label





### Object Label

# Writing a Better Label

#### What Visitors Want...

 Just enough information delivered quickly and clearly

 Personable, memorable experience

#### Three Simple Rules

- Keep it as brief as possible
- Make a point
- Make it accessible

#### Keep it Brief

- 10 to 25 word long sentences
- Break up the text
- No more than 150-200 words per sign/label
- Most read only 50%

#### "THE FINEST SPECIMENS OF ART"

low shop, James Mc State Western (1834—1861) continued for a found since he had not recurred to Lorodon from a desprease price or Americalism, nearly "naming" houself in "old clima". He desployed these arrappe Clarene, power losses in his studie in the Chelma weather has dot Loradon. There personation recited the interest of his friends, among them the Pre-Hophaelite artist Datate Gobriel Remetti and toest Charles Algertian Swinburne. According to the artist's monther, Aman McNeill Whiteler, this "visionary and strend" group gathered in the evenings at Whistler's "artistic abode" and, as she observed, became "enhantantic" as they handled the antique wants and examined "the carriors figures" depicted on their unfoces. My win, "Mrs. Whistler concluded in a letter of 1864, "considers the paterings upon them the firmus speciments of Art."



The porcelains that Whinfer collected over the next fifteen years were chiefly export waters intended for the European market and were manufactured in the Jingdeshen region of southern China during the Kangsi reign (1662–1722). They were not the greatest

management of Chance creams arts. For Whatele, however, the decreative sensels represented a tope of ideal beauty for amount from the hand testing of Vectorian London. Ho material in them crows ideal with his desire to remove homely better to remove the homely beauty to remove the professionally by terroscioling the influence.



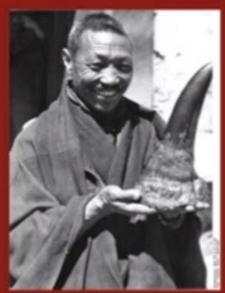
of French realism and developing a distractive style-some impacted by art, nor life. He manager ated pieces from his own collection into his compositions a trouget way. Let instruce, appears near the "princes" in the painting over stairs). The model benefit, the renowned beauty Christing Sportali, is reminiscent of the elougited tigures known in Large Lie, Dutch slang for the "lanky people" that decurate many Chinese vision. The composition of Purple and Rose. The Lange Lerent of the See Marke features. Whistley model-matres Journa Hiffernin in a Chinese nobe applying color to a glaced por. She is surrounded by blue and white ceramics from Whistler's own collection. When he pesed for a posttrait by his friend Henry Faraus-Latina (on view outside gallery 11), Whiteler, like his models, donned a Chinese cost and care himself in a pointer "from the land of pocelum."

### 370 Words!

#### The Rhinoceros

In the wild, adult rhinoceros have few natural predators other than humans. Although rhinos are of large size and have a reputation of being tough, they are actually very easily poached. Because it visits water holes daily, the rhinoceros is easily killed while taking a drink. As of December 2009 poaching has been on a global increase, while efforts to protect the rhinoceros are being considered increasingly ineffective. Rhino horn is wrongly considered to be particularly effective on fevers and even "life saving" by traditional Chinese medicine practitioners, which in turn provides a sales market. South African officials are calling for urgent action against rhinoceros poaching after poachers killed the last female rhinoceros in Kruger National Park near Johannesburg.



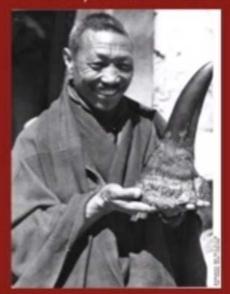


#### No Text Blocks

#### The Rhinoceros

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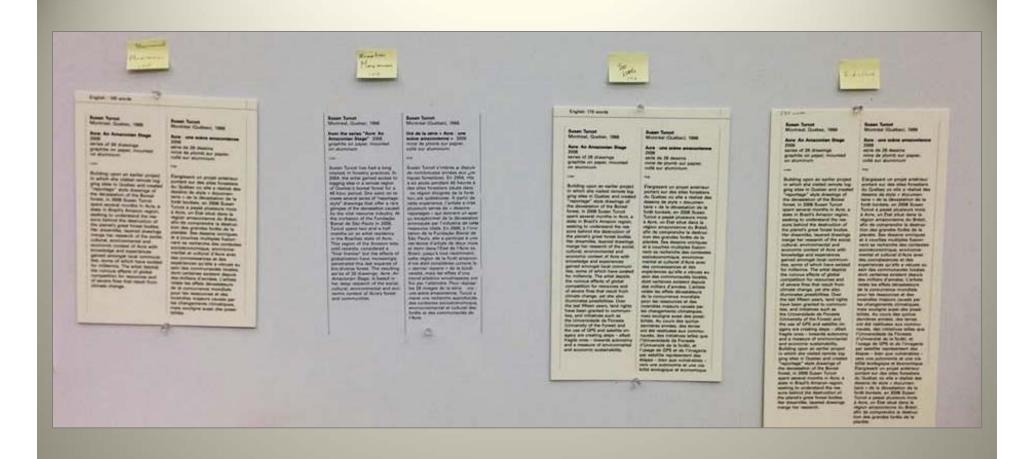




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South African officials are calling for urgent action against rhinoceros poaching after poachers killed the last female rhinoceros in Kruger National Park near Johannesburg.

#### Try "Chunking" the Text



Maximum (100 words); Exceptional Maximum (140 words); Too Long (170 words); Ridiculous (200+).

## Make a Point (have a "big idea")

 What is the <u>one main thing</u> that the exhibit is about?

 "By experiencing this exhibit, visitors will learn that

#### Examples of Big Ideas

Farming has changed over the years.

Artifacts can tell stories about a Vet's experience

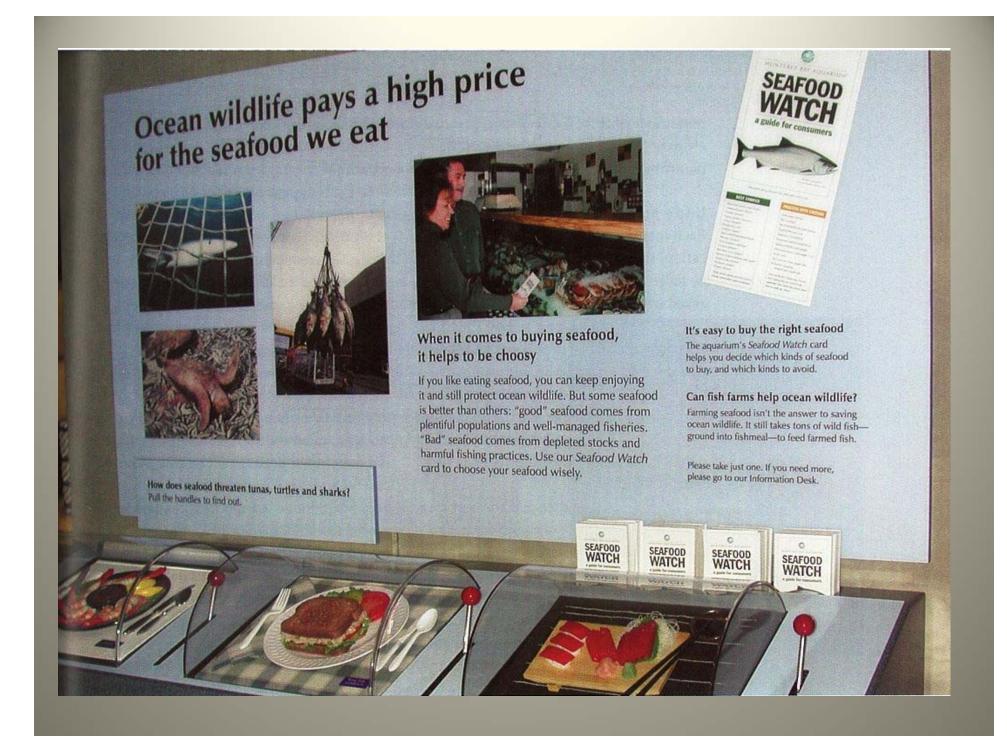
Our county was settled by people from all over.

#### Examples of Not "Big Ideas"

The history of our community (too broad)

Hats (too vague)

The history of the wealthy family who settled the town



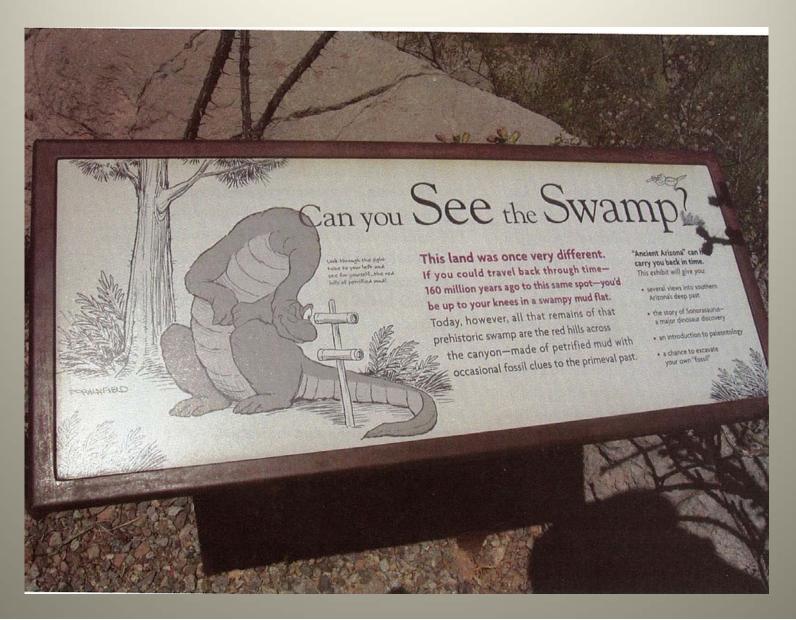
#### Make it accessible

- Avoid technical or complicated language
- Reading level between 6th-12th grade
- Use colorful, descriptive language
- Ask questions that provoke or that visitors would be asking
- Make the labels interactive

#### **Grab Attention**



#### Ask Questions to Engage



# Ask Questions to Engage



#### Make the Labels Interactive



#### Three Simple Rules

- Keep it as brief as possible
- Make a point
- Make it accessible

# Writing a Better Label

Design Tips

#### Use 20 to 24 Point Font



#### Never Handwrite Labels



## Avoid ALL CAPS; use *Decorative Fonts* sparingly

If you use too many fonts, they will all fight for altention!

**FUSION ADS** 

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Sad Emoticon Face

ALL GOOD THINGS MUST COME TO AN END

## THE APPLE CUBE

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WE'LL BE ANNOUNCING THE GIVEAWAY WINNERS

## AND OUR PARTICIPA

**Get Your Goods** 

#### Roman typefaces are effective.

Decorative typefaces are not as effective.

Sans-serif typefaces are effective.

Condensed typefaces are not as effective.

## Proofread

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# Use Contrast Effectively

Contrast Contrast

**Better** 

## Good High Contrasting Colors















## Poor Low Contrasting Colors

















# Label Evaluation Activity

## Clothes Dasher

Ca. 1895

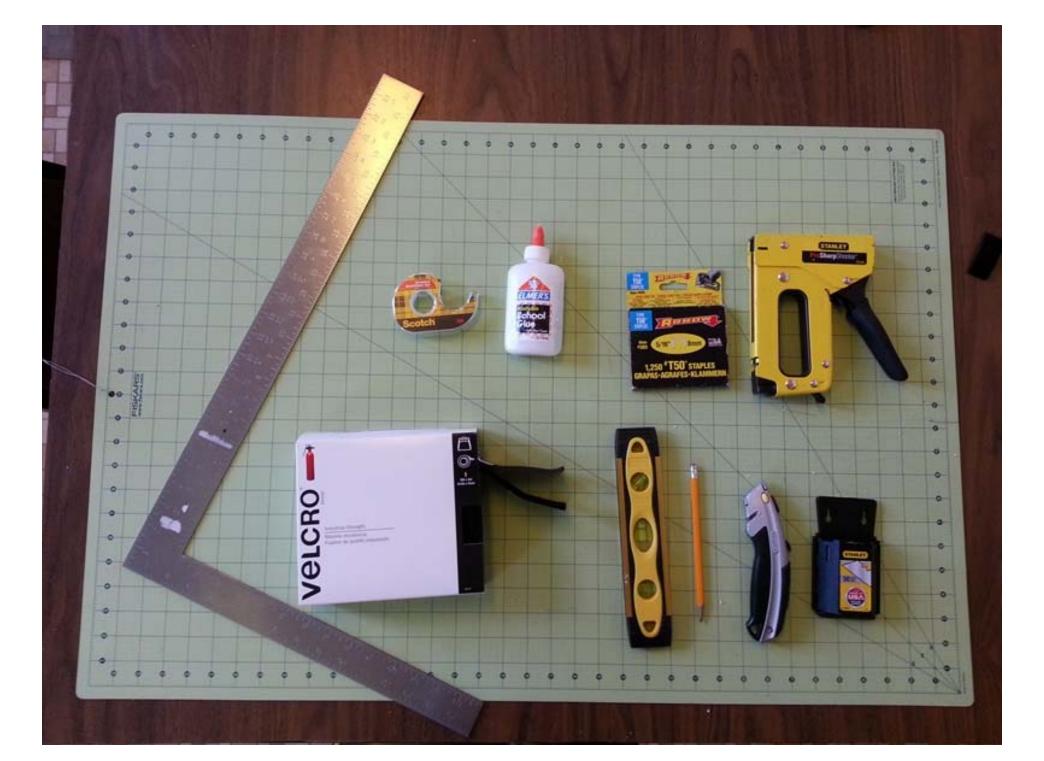
### Donated by the Michael Swanson Family

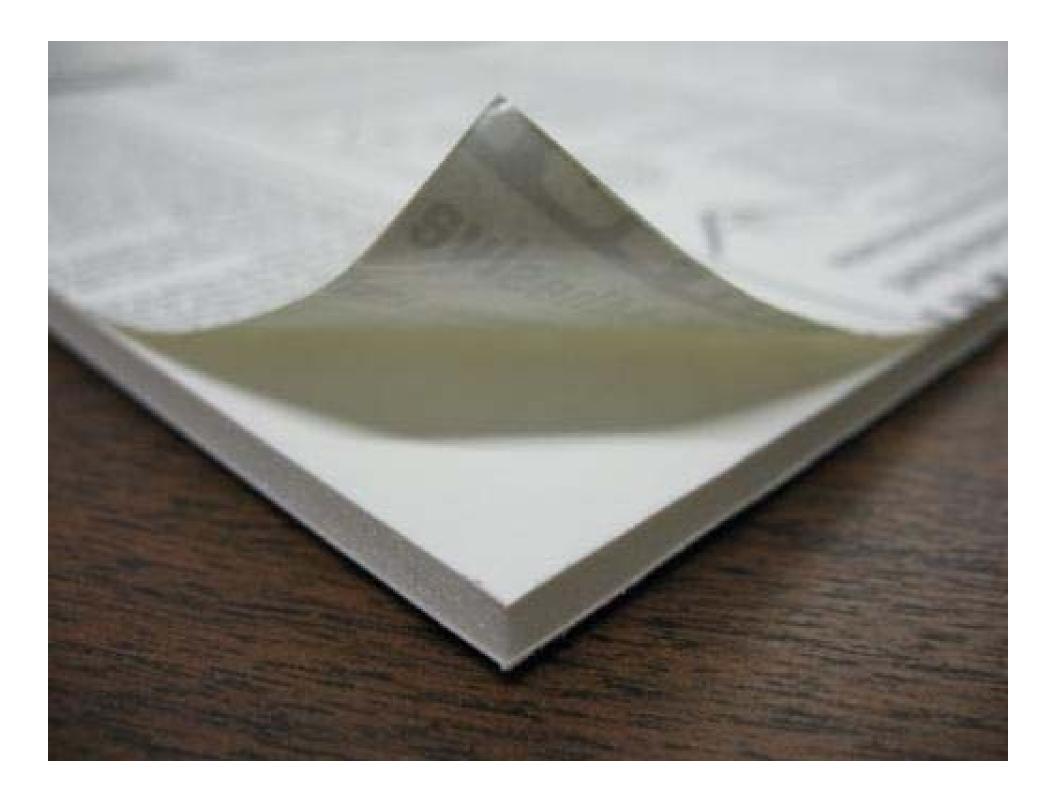
How much time do you spend washing clothes each week? Before the days of electricity and the evolution of washing machines, laundry was a back-breaking, difficult task. The clothes dasher, with wood handle and metal business end, assisted with the washing process. This was important because it took multiple days of hot, laborious work to clean clothes and linens. Whether the work was handled by the woman of the house or her servants, laundry was one of the hardest jobs in the household. Each piece of laundry was scrubbed until it was deemed as clean as possible. The clothes were turned inside out and lye soap was applied to the clothes. Next was the hardest step, scrubbing the clothes on a washboard. The washboard began as just a smooth board or surface that women would beat or rub the clothes on to help loosen soil. After each piece of laundry was scrubbed, water was heated to boiling and the clothes were boiled to kill "critters" (lice). The clothes dasher was then utilized to move the clothes around the hot water so that the woman would not have to touch it. The clothes had to be extracted with a laundry stick. They were then rinsed in cool water to remove any traces of the lye soap.

[215 Words]

# Let's Make A Label!

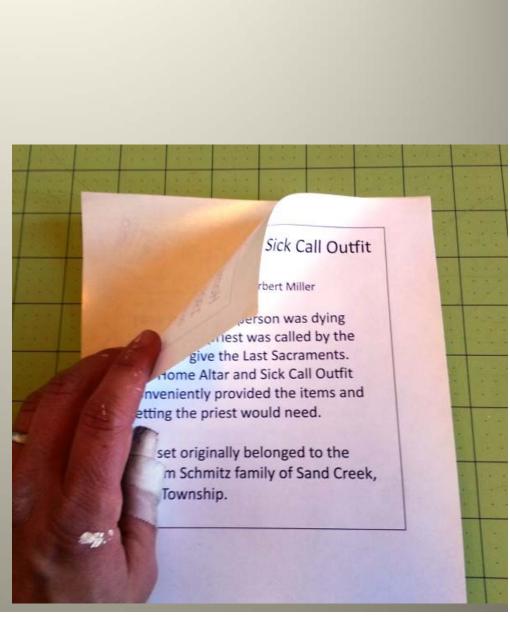


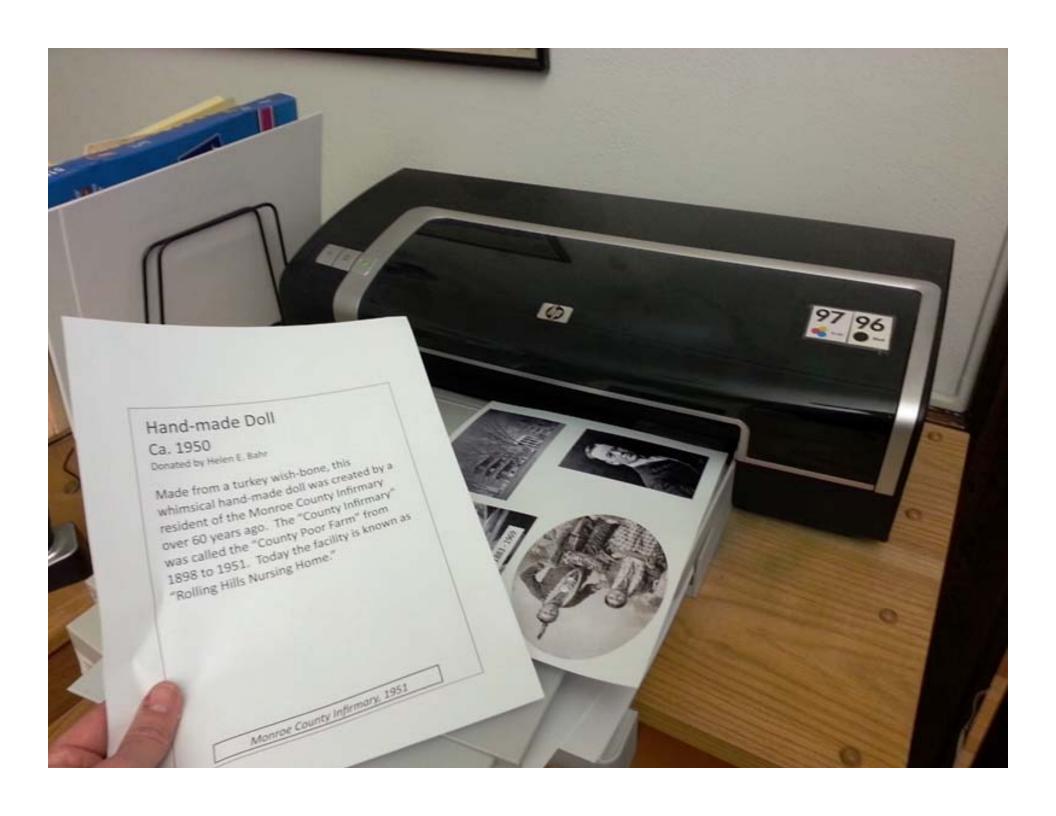


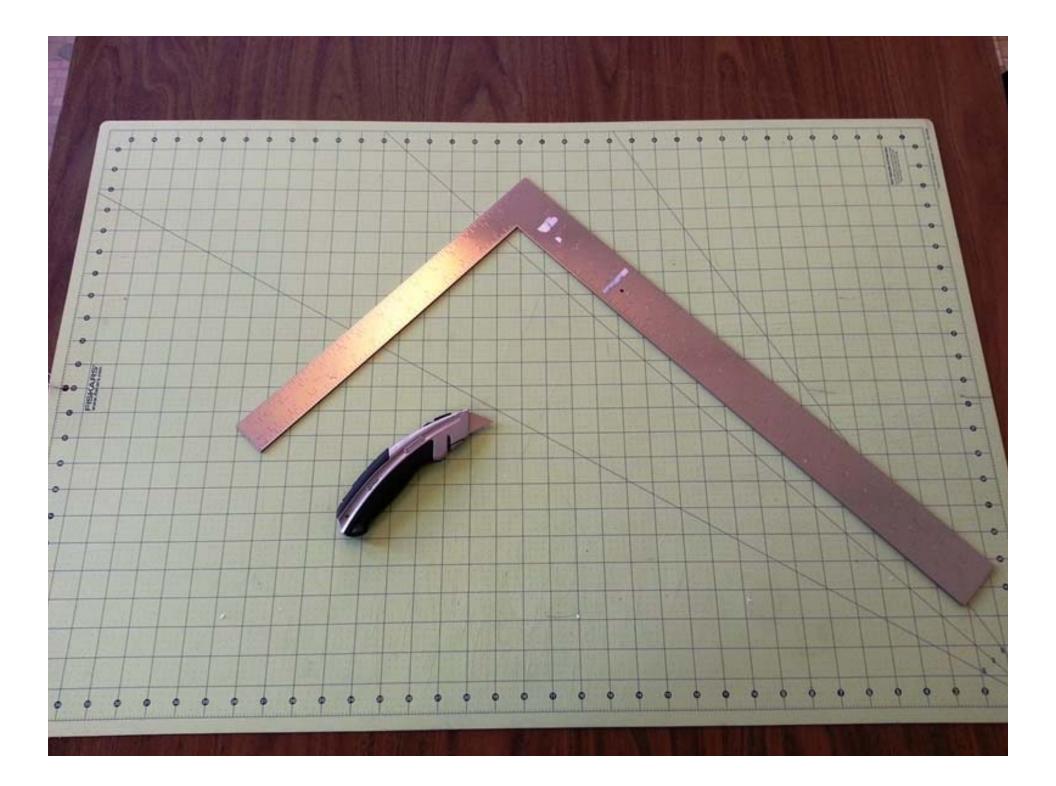


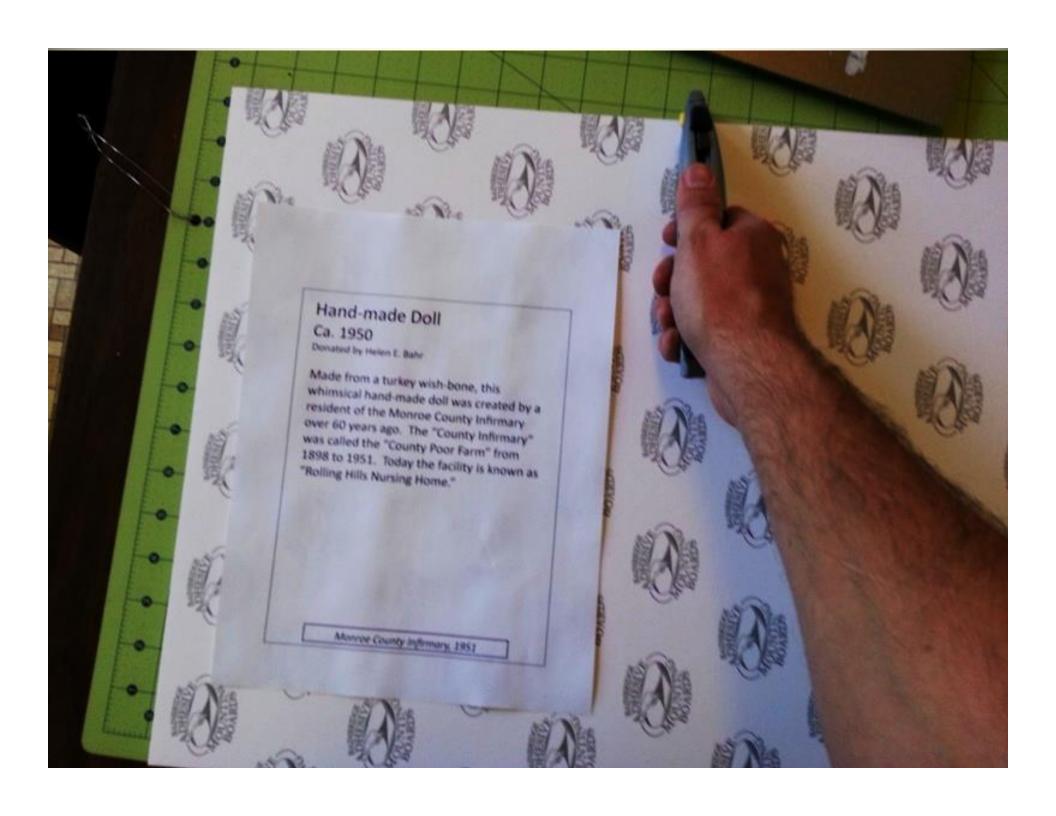


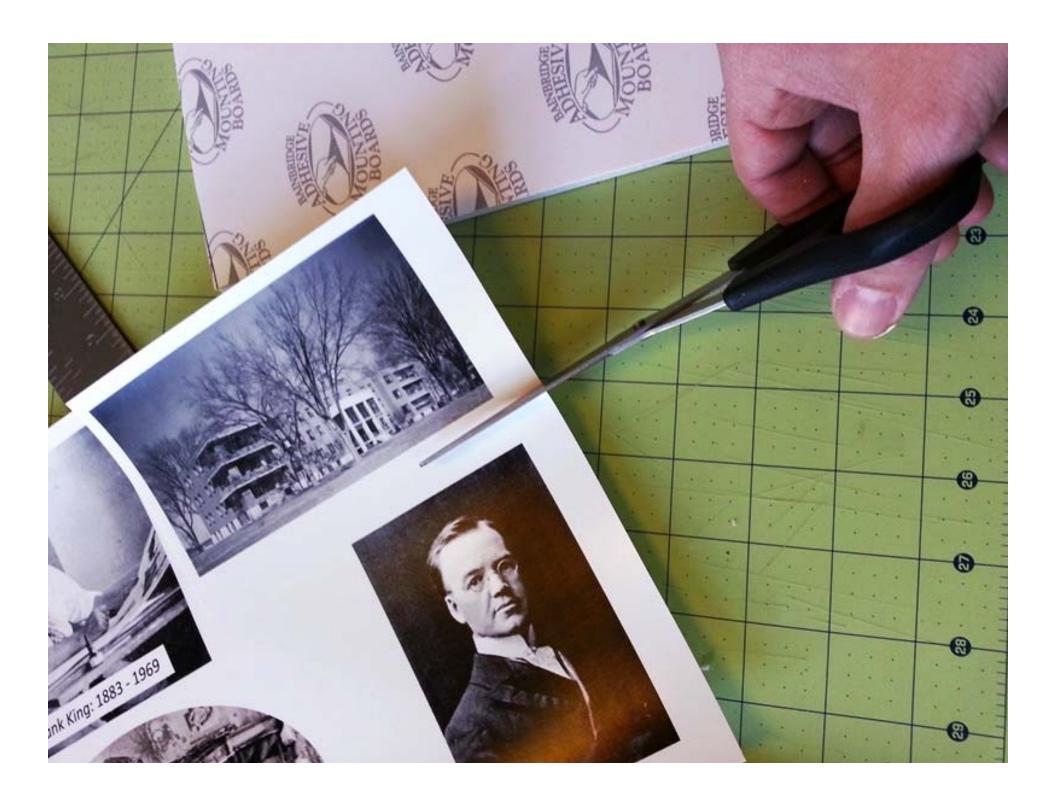






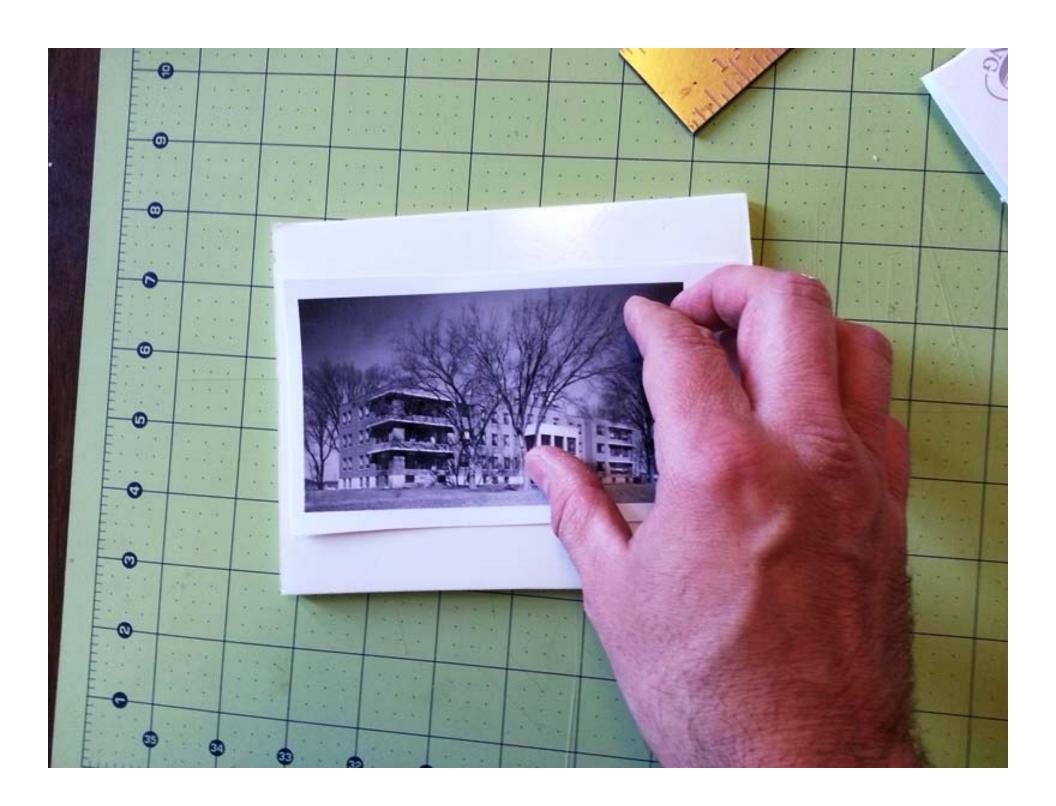


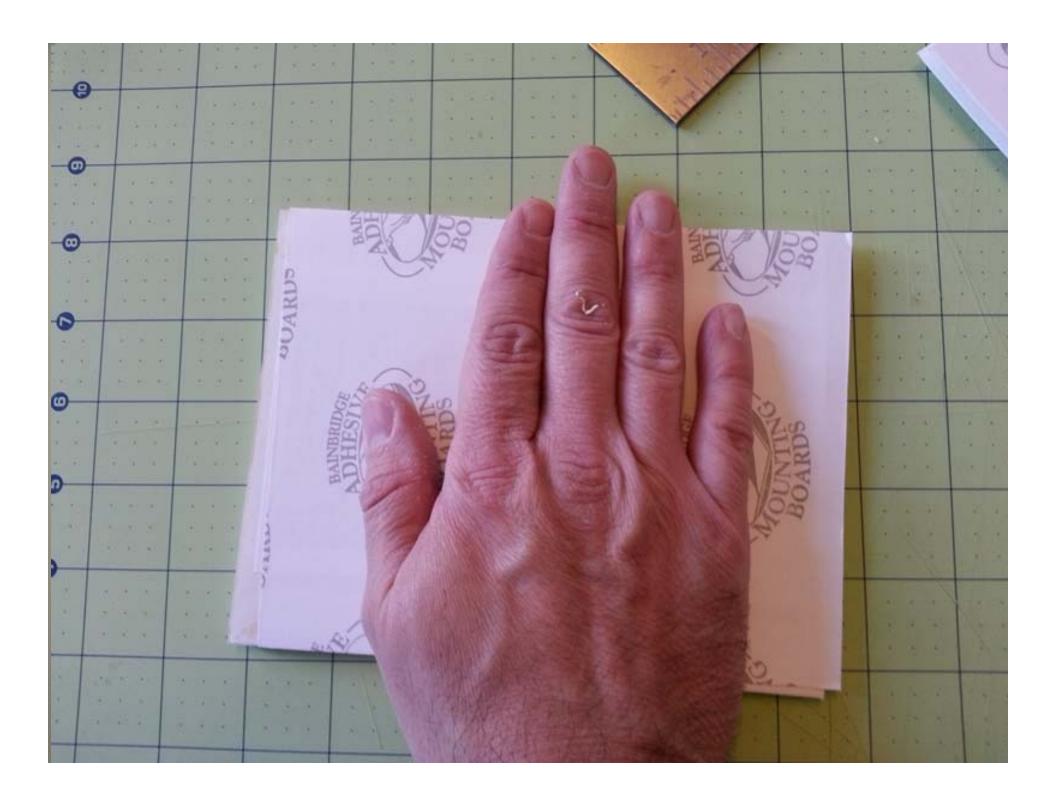


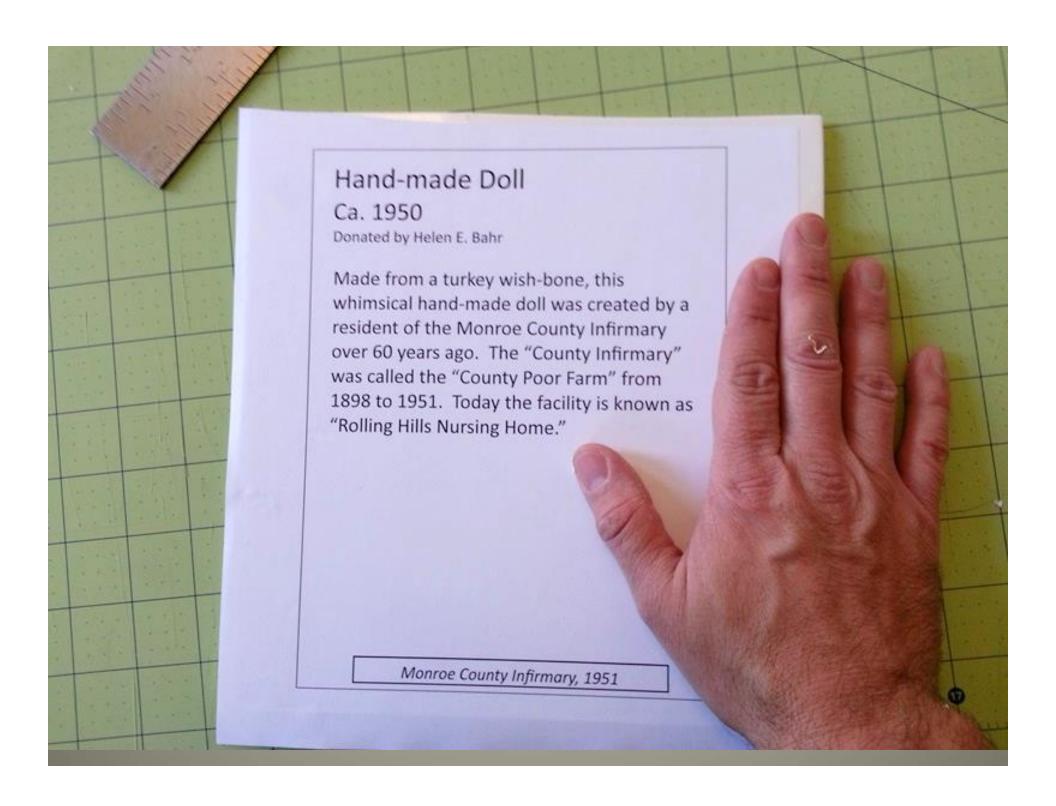


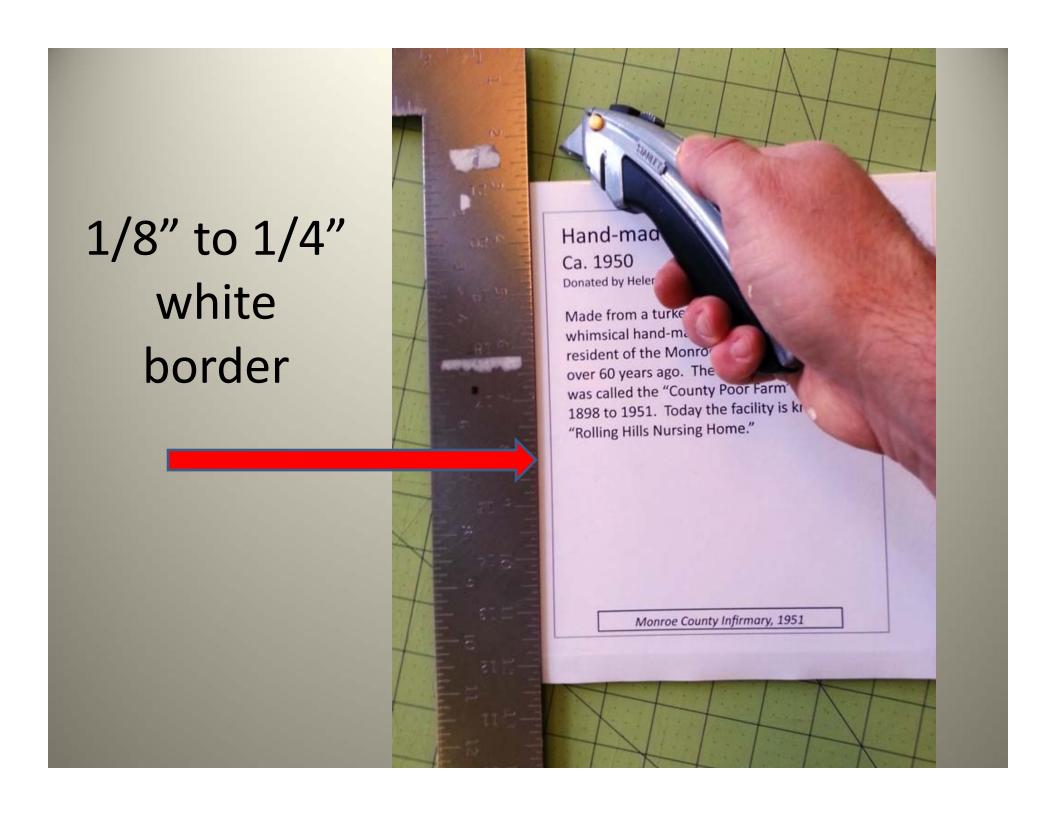


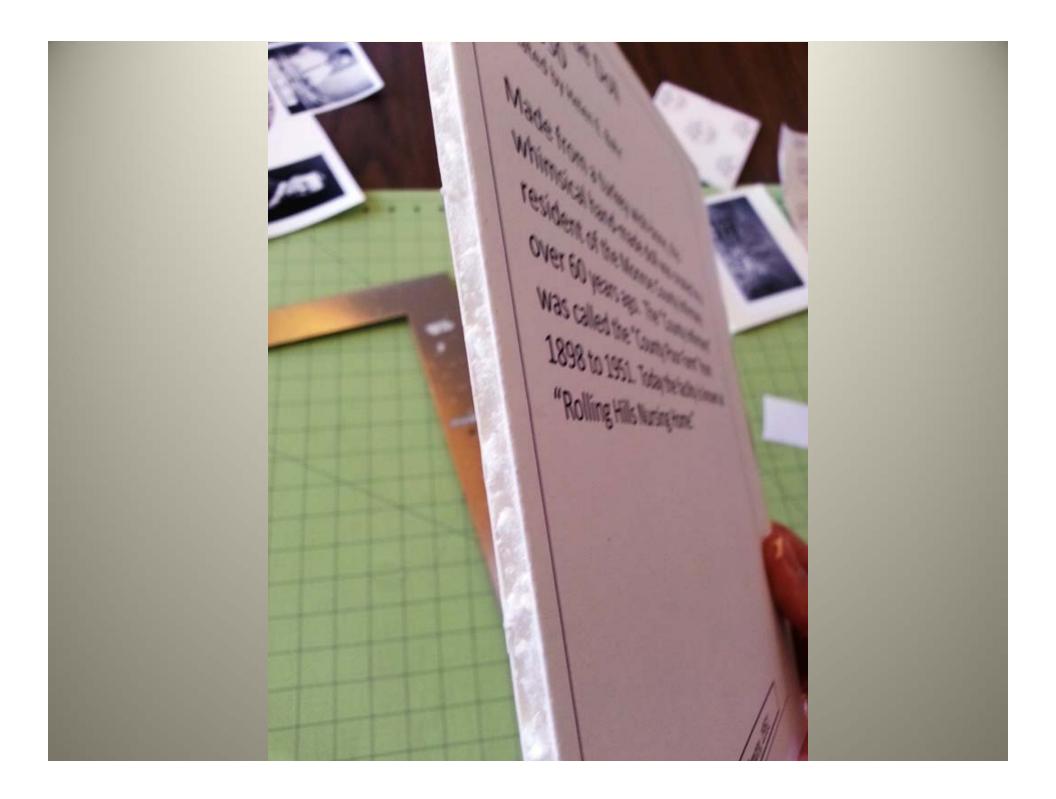


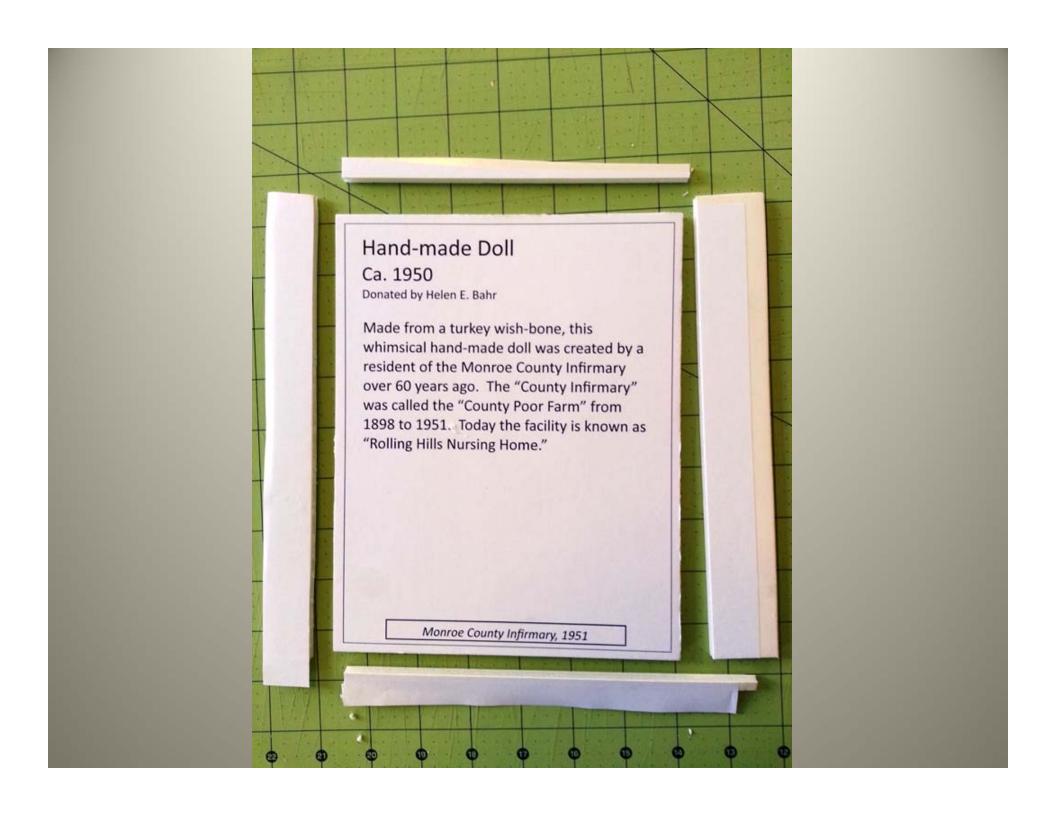








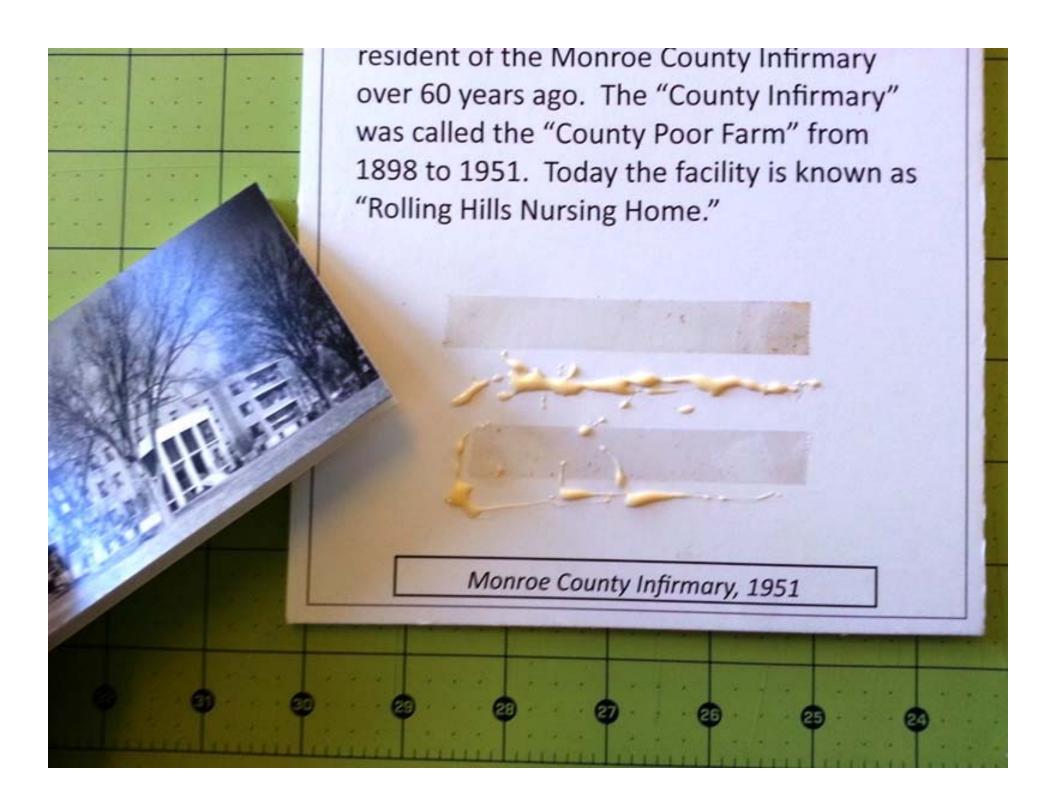






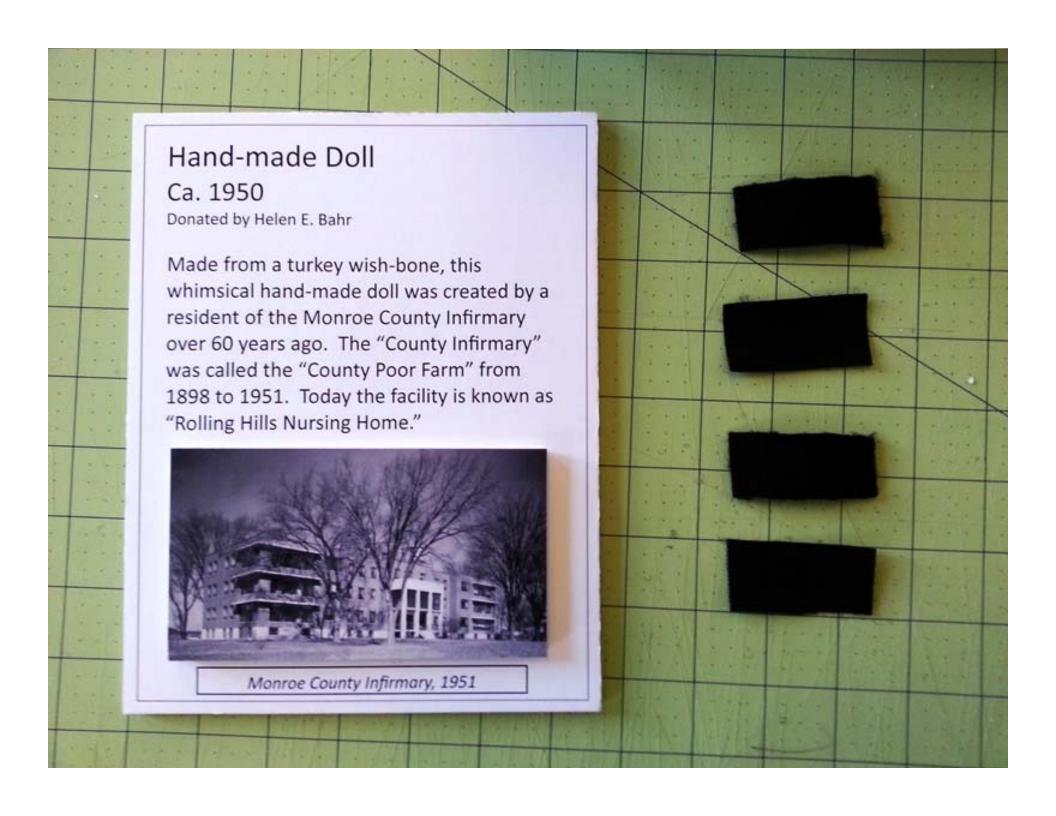




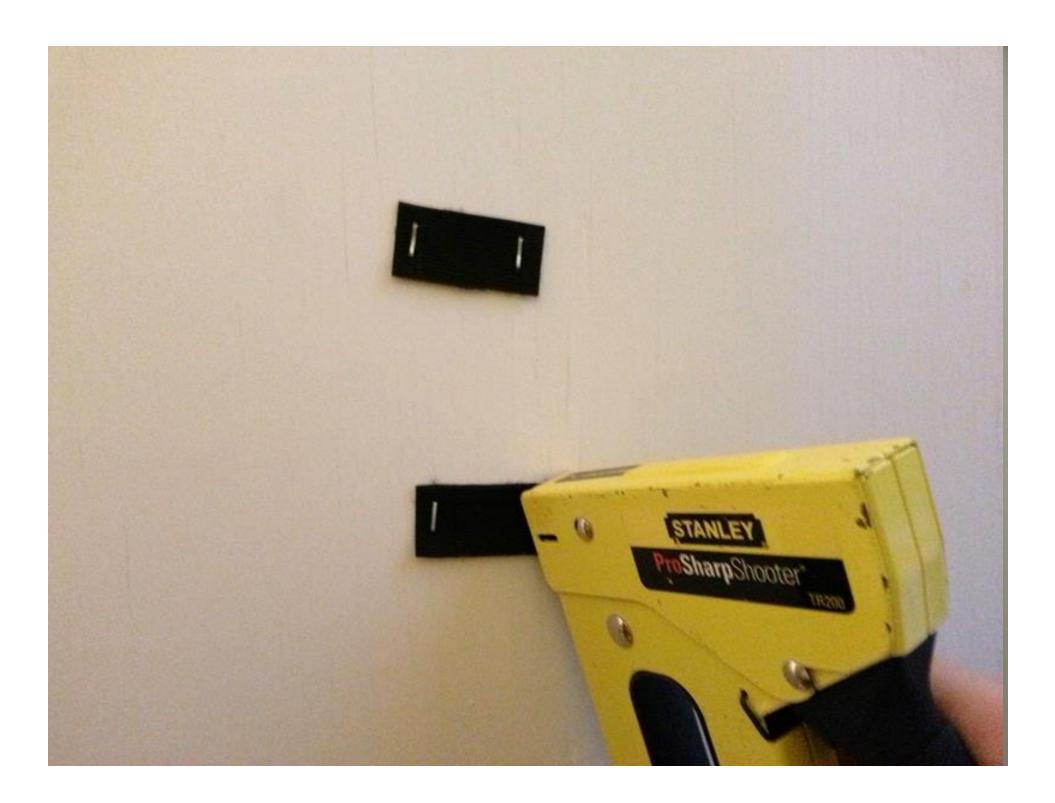


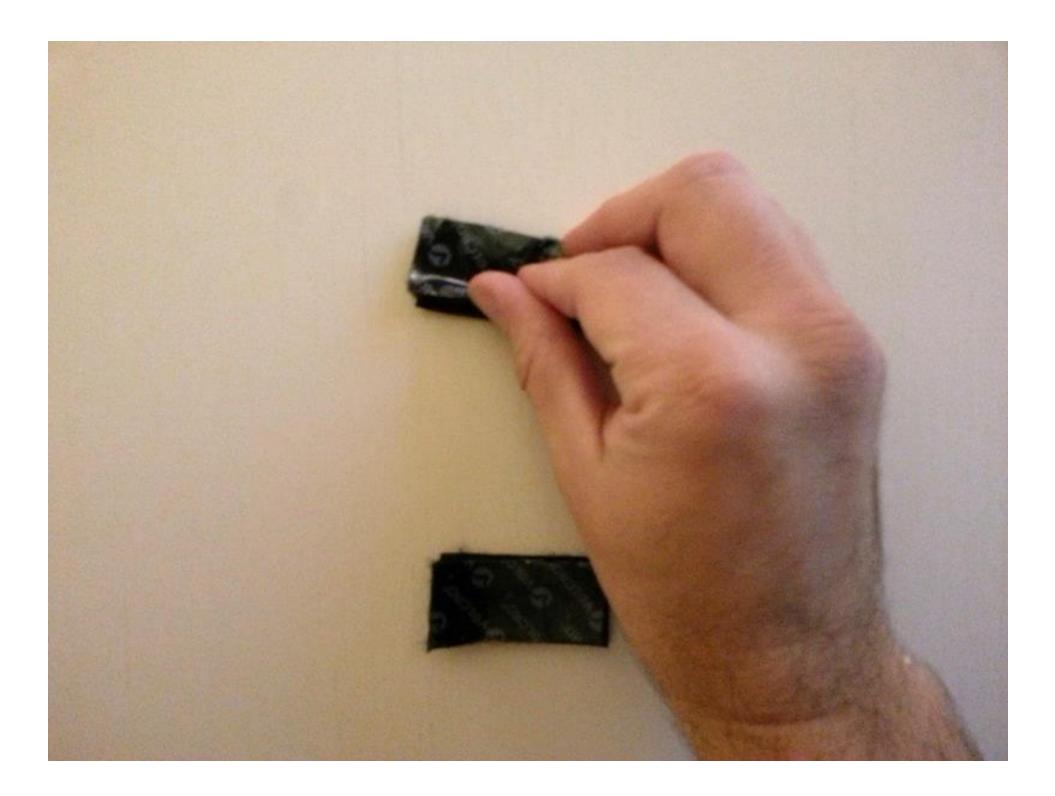














#### Hand-made Doll Ca. 1950

Donated by Helen E. Bahr

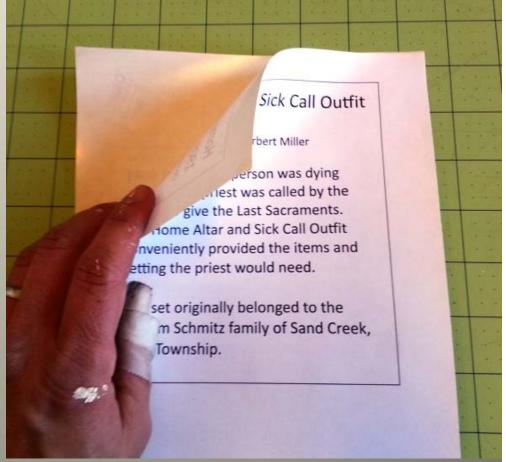
Made from a turkey wish-bone, this whimsical hand-made doll was created by a resident of the Monroe County Infirmary over 60 years ago. The "County Infirmary" was called the "County Poor Farm" from 1898 to 1951. Today the facility is known as "Rolling Hills Nursing Home."

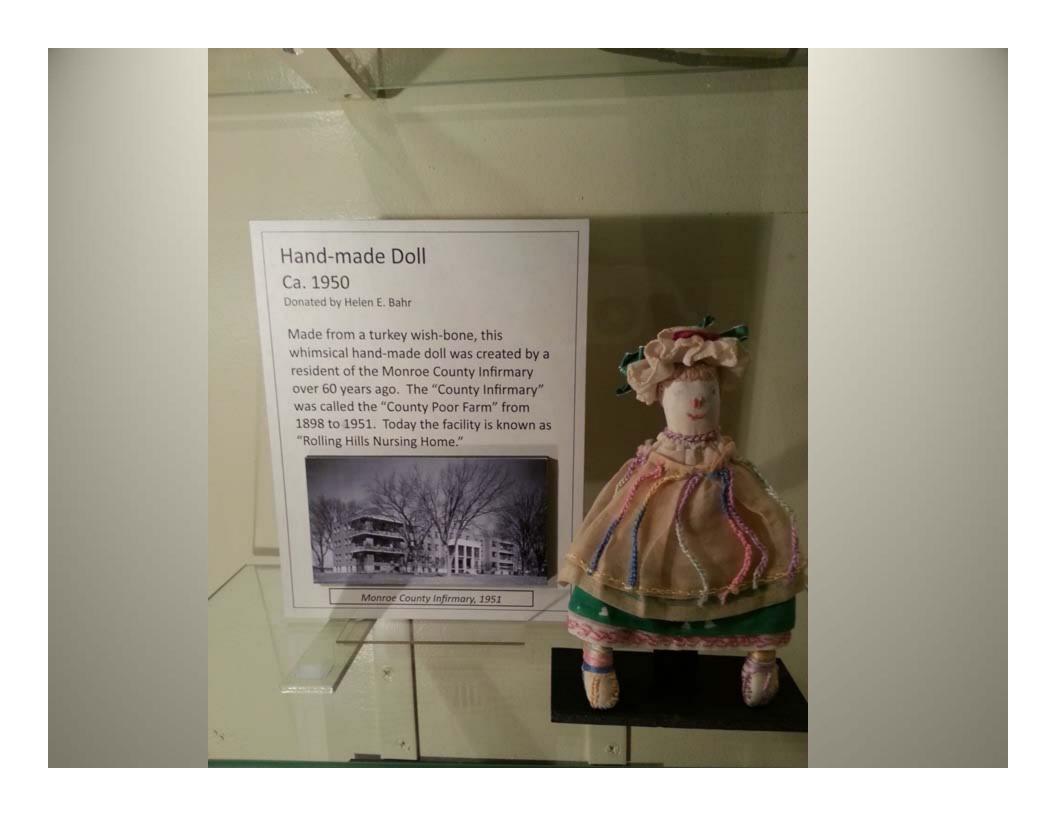


Monroe County Infirmary, 1951

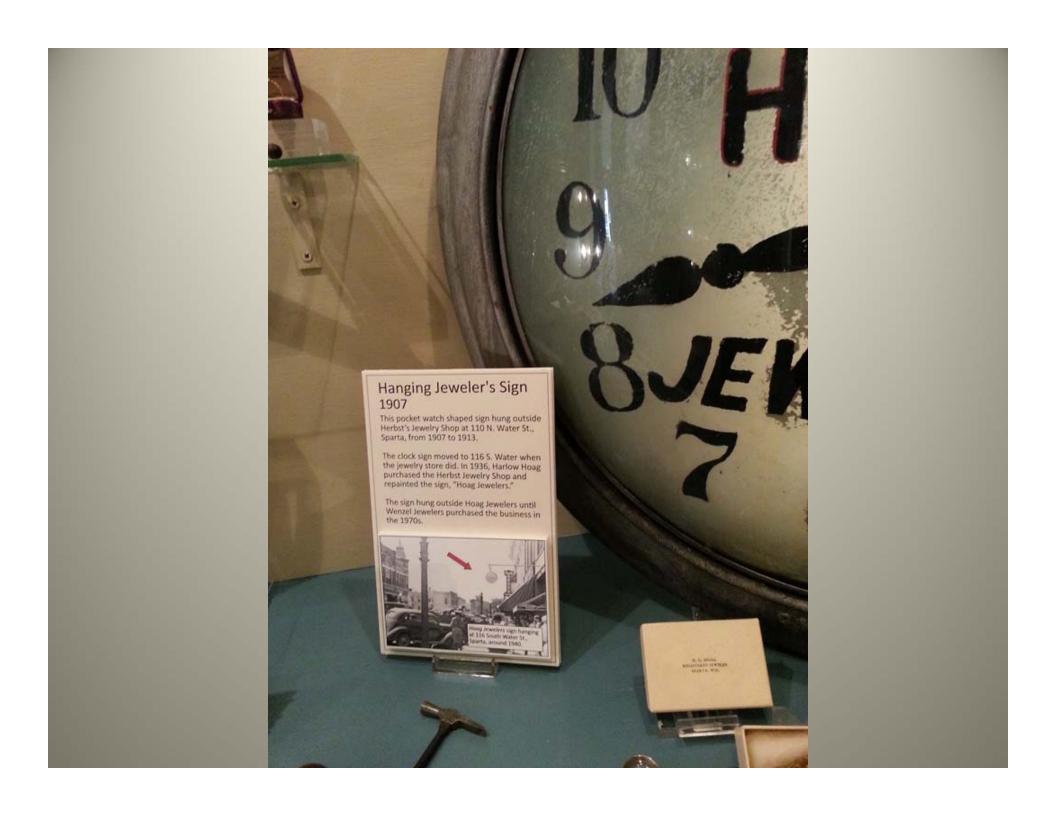


### Label Sheet Demo













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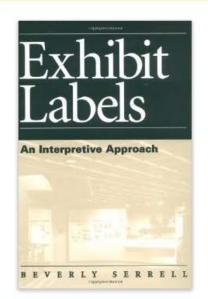
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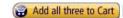
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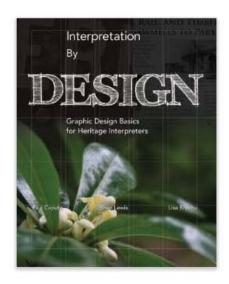
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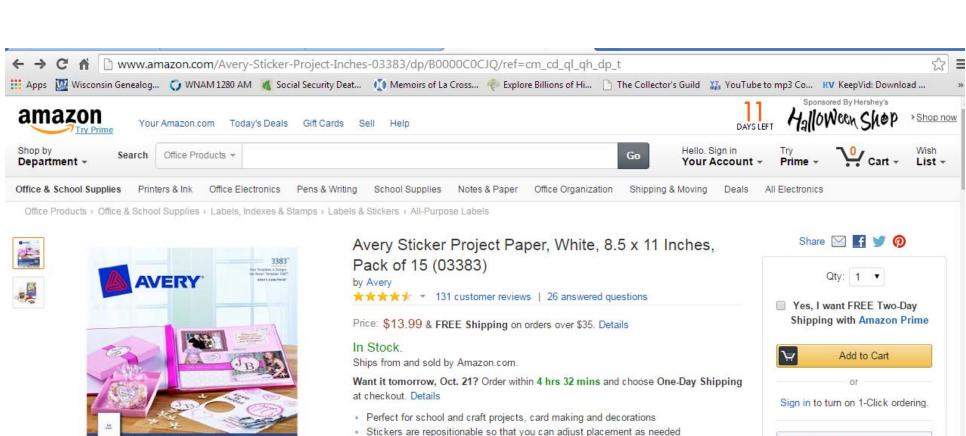
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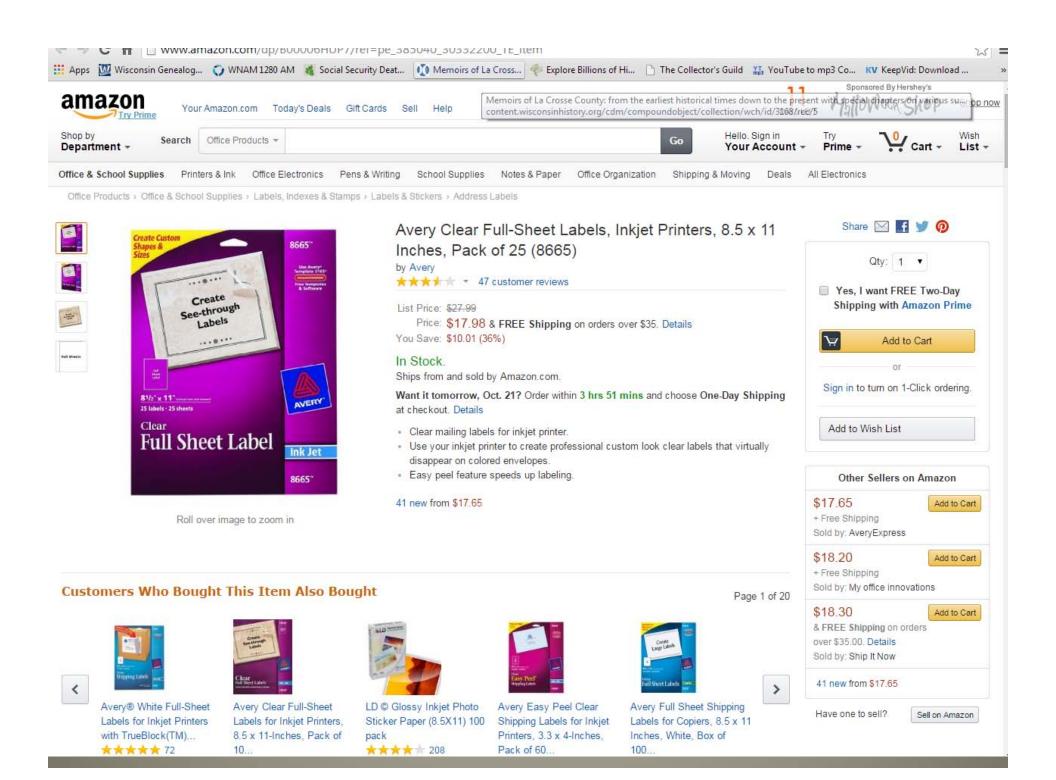


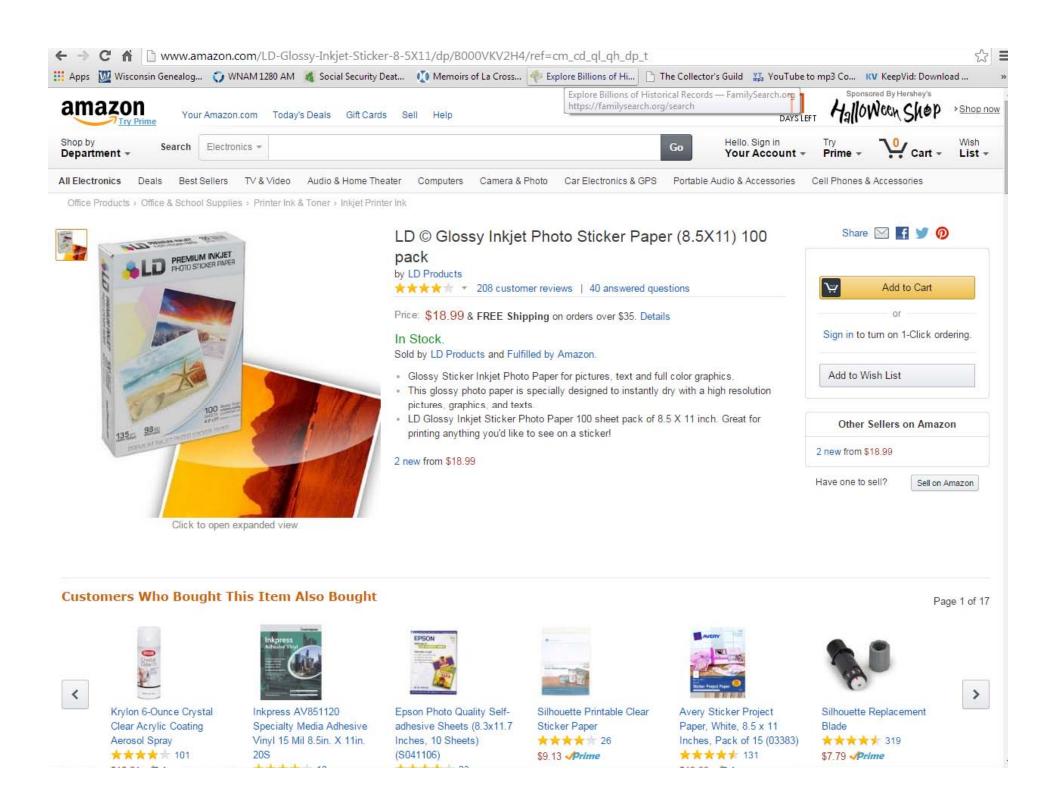


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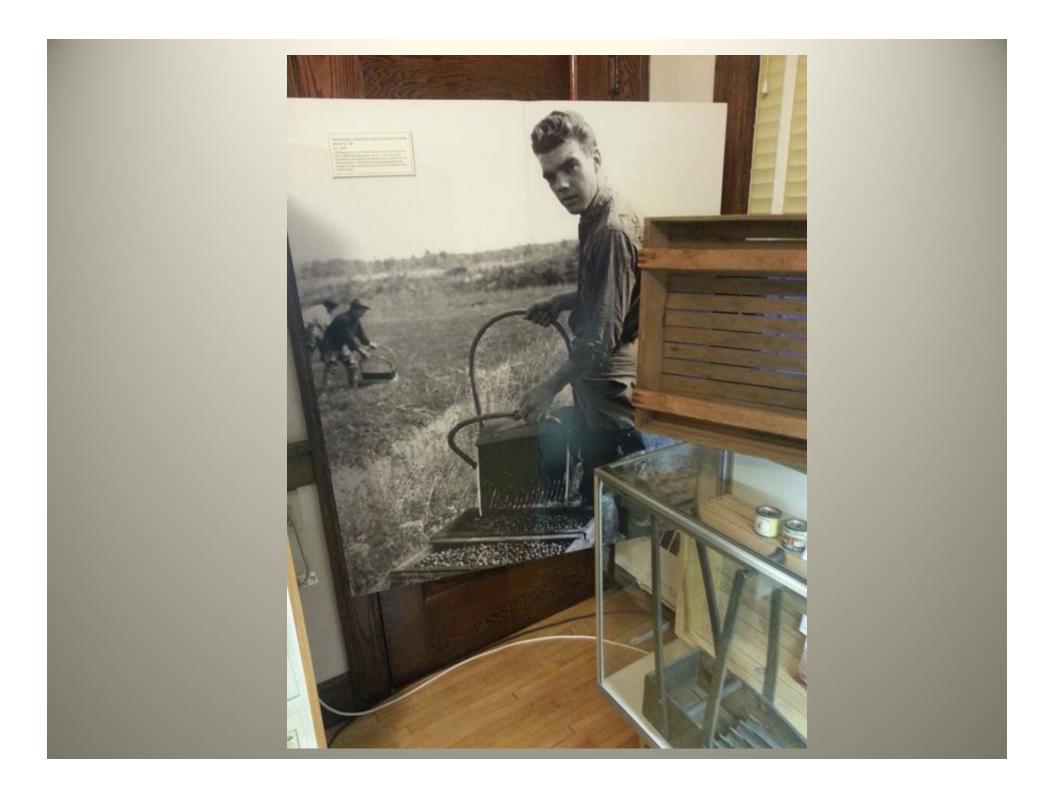
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# Questions & Hands-On Time

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How to Make
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(On A Budget)

Jarrod Roll

Monroe County Local History Room

& Museum, Sparta, Wisconsin