

Sweetwater: Great Design Runs in the Family

For the trio behind Sweetwater – mom Karla Eisenach and daughters Lisa Burnett and Susan Kendrick – building their company and brand to the well-loved design group that it is today “has been a life-long process,” according to Lisa.

The seeds of Sweetwater were planted in the 1980s, when Karla started her quilt pattern business, Farmyard Creations. Lisa remembers summers spent folding “thousands and thousands” of patterns. “The quilting industry in the 80s was very different than present day,” says Lisa. “Patterns were gold. There wasn’t an internet or downloads, [and] you couldn’t get free patterns on Pinterest.” Farmyard Creations was a successful business for Karla, but Lisa and Susan didn’t immediately gravitate to quilting.

“After college, we discovered our creativity in a different way,” according to Lisa. In the early 2000s, as the scrapbook industry was booming, Lisa and Susan turned their passion for the craft into a business and



Karla with one of her first fabric collections at quilt market during her "Farmyard Creations" days.

launched their design company, Sweetwater. For nearly a decade, Lisa and Susan designed scrapbook products that were sold in retail stores across the US and around the world, attending trade shows and teaching classes all over the country. “It was very fast-paced and labor intensive,” Lisa admits.

Adapting to New Opportunities

When digital photography started to change the market and traditional scrapbooking began to wane, they realized that they needed to adapt. Karla had been helping her daughters with Sweetwater but was “itching to get back into quilting full-time,” Lisa says. Their timing couldn’t have been better: “When the door to the scrapbooking industry was closing, we were offered the perfect opportunity from Moda to design a fabric line. What a complete blessing that was,” says Lisa. Their debut fabric collection, Authentic, was released at Spring Quilt Market in 2009.



Susan making her first quilt in the early 80s.

Since then, the trio has designed more than 50 fabric collections for Moda! So how have these three creatives found a way to continue to develop the familiar-but-fresh collections that quilters love? According to Lisa, "We have similarities in style, but our differences in how we work is really how we achieve success!" From task-oriented "workhorse" Susan, to detail-oriented "over-analyzer" Lisa, to "little-bit-of-both" Karla, the three put their individual strengths together to successfully manage all aspects of their thriving business.

It All Starts at the Kitchen Table

Designing a collection begins by discussing ideas at Karla's kitchen table. They settle on a collection name, which "can be the hardest part of the entire process," Lisa says, but it helps them set the tone and theme of the designs. Then they'll decide on colors – "Sweetwater does have a recognizable style, and we don't go crazy with new colors," Lisa admits, but "we do like to switch it up and make each collection unique." Lisa and Susan create the artwork for all of Sweetwater's collections digitally, incorporating Karla's hand-drawn elements into the designs.



Susan Kendrick and her family.



Lisa Burnett and her family.

A Fun, Vibrant Christmas Collection

Lisa credits Susan for the ideas behind Emmitt and Ivy, Sweetwater's latest Christmas collection. "She came to the design meeting with rough sketches of snowmen and the idea they had names," Lisa says. "Her vision was a very fun, vibrant Christmas collection." Lisa says that the newsprint design in this collection "is one of my most favorite Christmas designs we have done!" The trio has designed some special patterns for Emmitt and Ivy as well: Twinkle, which will be a kit offered by Moda, features appliqued stars, each with two different prints – Karla's idea, according to Lisa. And Merry Merry is a sampler quilt that includes piecing, applique, and embroidery.

What's next for Sweetwater? "My mom proclaimed she would never, ever put a certain thing on a piece of fabric," Lisa teases. "Well, that certain thing is on a piece of fabric...woof, woof!"

Connect with Sweetwater on Instagram (@sweetwaterfabric) and visit their website at www.thesweetwaterco.com to learn more!



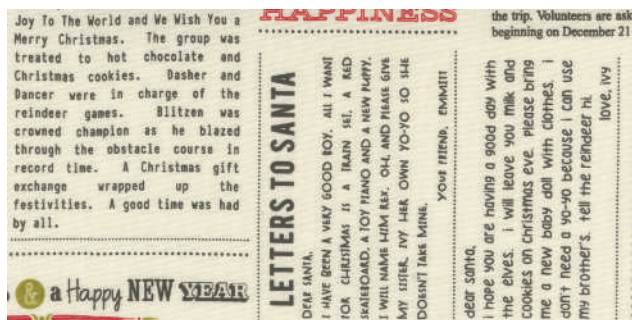
EMMITT AND IVY *Sweetwater*

CHRISTMAS COLLECTIONS ARE VERY NEAR AND DEAR TO OUR HEARTS and Emmitt and Ivy is no exception. The most fun part of designing this one was naming the cute snowmen. We had lots of choices, narrowed it down a bit and settled on two names that just “fit.” We just love the happy, festive vibes of this collection. Along with the quilts, make sure to check out the adorable ornaments we made in honor of Emmitt and Ivy!





EMMITT AND IVY Sweetwater



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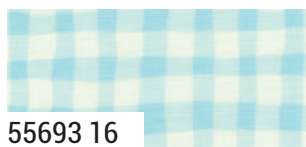
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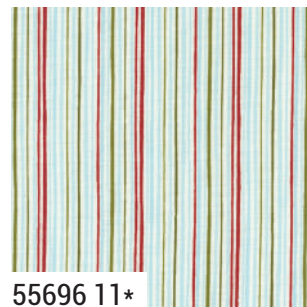
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moda JUNE DELIVERY

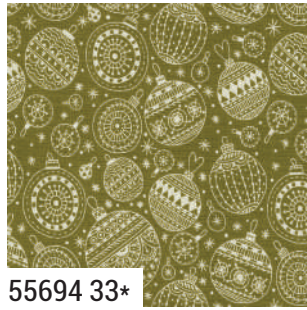
EMMITT AND IVY Sweetwater



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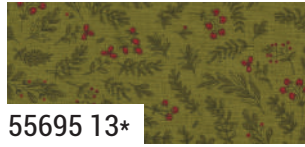
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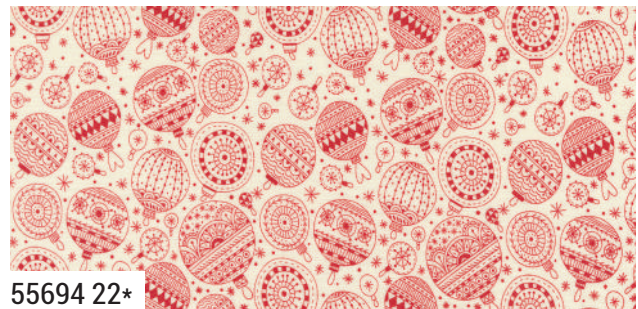
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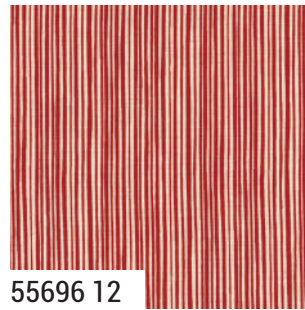
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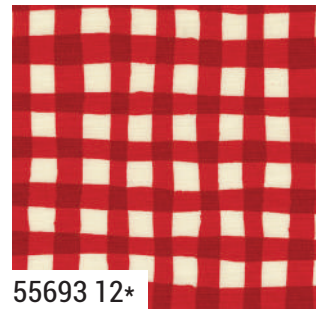
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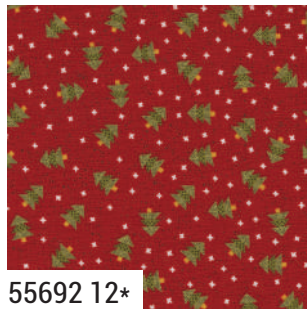
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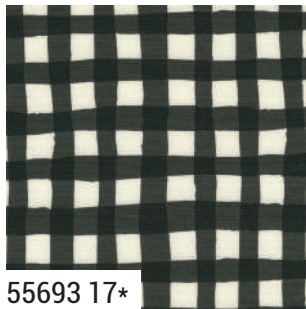
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Asst.
15

Asst.
10

Low Cal
10

AB

F8

JR

LC

MC

PP

KIT

JUNE DELIVERY

*31 Prints *100% Premium Cotton

AB & F8 includes all 31 skus. JRs, LCs, MCs & PPs include 31 skus with two each of 55690, 55691, 55692-11 & 17.

Assortments and precuts do not include Bella Solid Coordinates.

projects



SW P318 Twinkle 56" x 56" F8 Friendly

**KIT
55690**



SW P319 Merry Merry 61" x 79" AB Friendly



SW P321 The Tree Farm 68" x 72" JR and LC Friendly



SW P320 Emmitt & Ivy Ornaments PP Friendly

product



"Just a Little Box" project

LGEMIVY Just a Little Box
Pack 1 Mul 4

Includes 44 4" squares of fabric
from the Emmitt and Ivy fabric
line and a pattern to make the
10" quilt - all packaged in a 3.5"
little wood box.

RLR 10" Wood Frame Ruler
Pack 1 Mul 4

JUNE DELIVERY

Ask your sales professional to see more Just a Little Box fabric collections.