

## BUSINESS

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ANNE SCHROEDER



■ Anne Schroeder is the creator of the "Andi's People" line of greeting cards. She works from her Duxbury home studio.

# New career: 'Doodles' become greeting cards

Duxbury artist finds new life as creator of line sold in gift shops on the South Shore and across the country

By **ANDREW LaVALLEE**  
The Patriot Ledger

**A**ne Schroeder has quite a menagerie in her Duxbury home studio: a saxophonist, a ballerina, a few sailors and a pianist. There are also a skateboarder, a flutist, a few tennis players and two girls eating ice cream.

Lanky, big-footed and hand-drawn, they are part of her 24-piece line of greeting cards, Andi's People.

"I was just always doodling," said Schroeder, 49. The cards' name is taken from her childhood nickname, she said, because "they've always been a part of me."

A Duxbury resident for 13 years, she designed her first cards while living in Honolulu. Several still wear the aloha shirts and hula skirts she saw in Hawaii.

"That was my test market," Schroeder said. "I didn't find that special card, so I made it myself."

Although she copyrighted her creations in 1978, a series of moves, three children and a career in hotel public relations kept her from her artwork.

It wasn't until a "creative night" for mothers at her daughter Emma's preschool that Schroeder started drawing again.

"I felt it simmering," she said. In 2003, after a 25-year hiatus, she launched Andi's People as a business.

"To me they're just simple

DUXBURY



One of Schroeder's creations.

little characters that make you smile," Schroeder said. But it's more than a hobby. Thirty-six stores are ordering her cards wholesale. Several South Shore stationers and gift shops sell the line,

including Roseann's Floral & Gift Shop in Quincy, Gift Garden in Milton, Treasures in the Square in Hingham, Bedazzled in Hull, The Studio in Duxbury, Country Scents in Kingston, and Fine Line and Priscilla's of Plymouth Gift Shop in Plymouth.

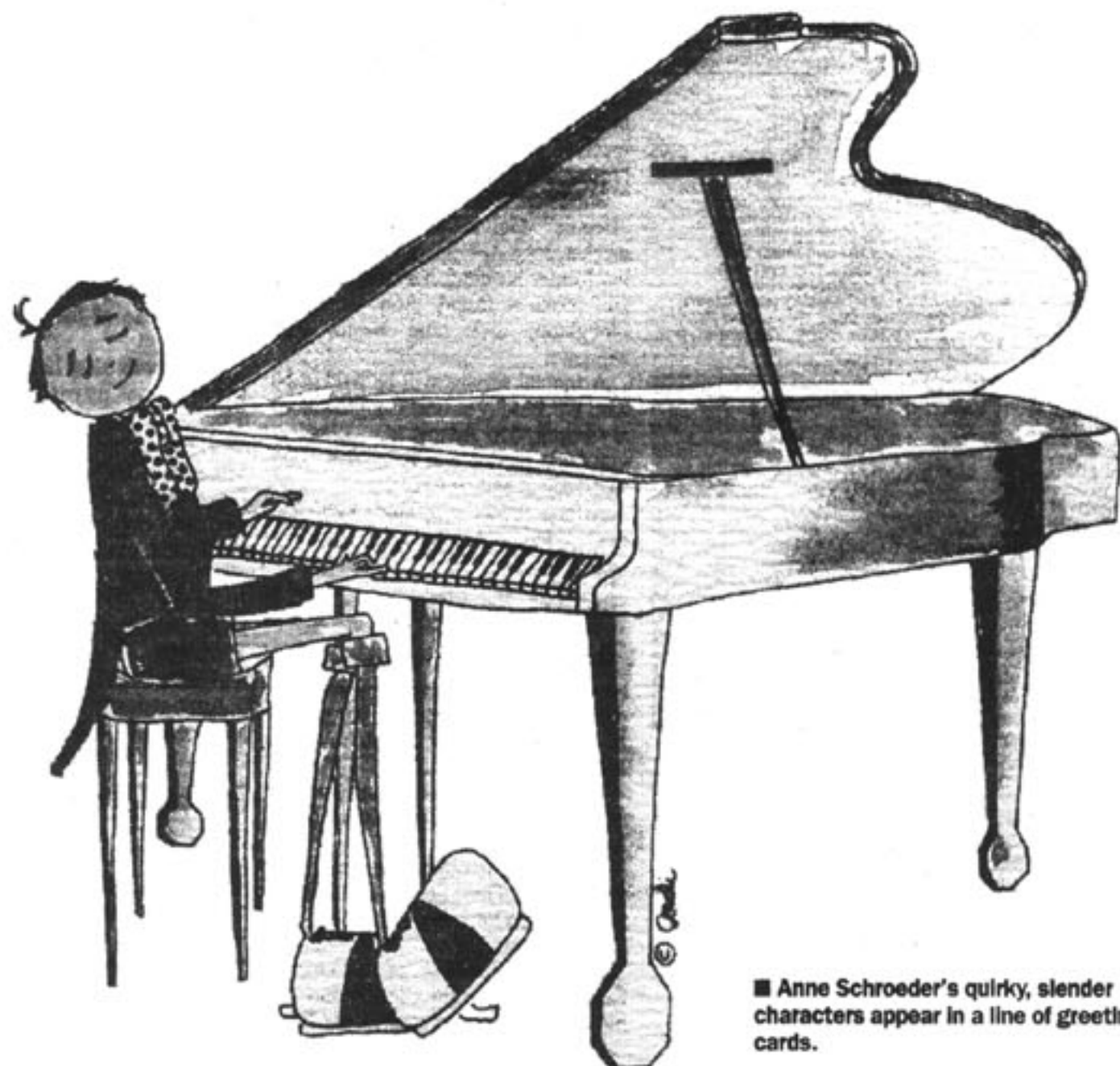
Stores in Hawaii, Illinois, Kansas, Maine, New Jersey, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Texas and

Vermont also carry the cards. They sell for \$2.75 apiece, and a calendar Schroeder recently designed, featuring 12 of her characters, sells for \$20.

Her marketing is based on referrals and word-of-mouth, she said. When out-of-towners visit, Schroeder asks them to name their favorite hometown gift shop and then sends the shop one of her catalogs, she said.

"We have family in Texas, that's why

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■ Anne Schroeder's quirky, slender characters appear in a line of greeting cards.

# Duxbury artist finds new life drawing greeting cards

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they're there," she said. "We travel in New Mexico, that's why they're there."

Several of the characters allude to parts of Schroeder's life, she said. The "Pedal to the metal!" birthday card shows a figure on a bicycle, which she drew after completing a bike ride across the country.

Next year, she plans to add 12 more characters, including a lacrosse player, a rower, a second yoga practitioner (her first, depicting a girl in tree pose, has sold out, Schroeder said) and a mother and child reading. She will launch a Web site in January, and she will exhibit at the National

Stationery Show, a trade show in May that often draws buyers for large gift and stationery chains.

Schroeder hopes to eventually double the number of independent gift stores that sell her cards and to extend the characters to magnets and notepads.

Her three children, Ryan, Ben and Emma, help her package the cards for delivery and have served as models for sketches.

They provide career advice, too. On the occasions when she's considered retiring, Schroeder said, Emma says, "No, Mommy, you have to do this, you love it."

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