photography
Monte Nagler

Improving your winter portfolio

While until last week, the snow has been light, you and I both know more will soon be on the way. And when it arrives, don't let it keep you and your camera indoors.

Winter scenes are beautiful and have a mood all their own. The minor discomfort you might encounter in the cold air is well worth the exciting pictures that can be yours.

Here are some tips to help you capture those dramatic winter scenes on film:

- Keep your camera and film as warm as possible by keeping them under your jacket until it's time to shoot.
- Use a slow, steady motion to advance the film from one exposure to the next. This will reduce the strain on cold film and eliminate the possibility of static electric marks on the film.
- Wear thin gloves under your regular, heavier ones. When you're about to take a shot, remove the outer gloves leaving the inner pair for temporary protection while you focus and snap.
- Pay attention to lighting. Back or side lighting will enable you to capture the sparkle and textures of snow not obtainable with overhead lighting.
- Sun and bright snow will increase the chance of lens flare, so be sure to use your lens shade. However, intentional lens flare can add drama and mood to your winter scenes, so experiment with a few shots.
- With color film, use your polarizer filter on a blue sky day. The resulting deep blue sky in your finished shot will look extra-dramatic against the sparkling snow.
- Many winter scenes are monochromatic, so now is a good time to experiment with some black and white film. Those of you who have never shot in black and white, will be pleasantly surprised at your results.

Be aware that snow can fool your camera's meter. Winter scenes often don't contain the average proportions of lightness and darkness that all meters are calibrated to read.

Try taking a meter reading from your hand or a "gray" card or use an incident light meter if you have one. A general rule to follow in winter scenes with lots of snow is to "open-up" one to two f-stops from what the meter indicates.

Be on the lookout for closeup and unusual picture possibilities. Frost patterns on a window, sunlight shimmering through an icicle and snow delicately etching a tree branch will all add exciting pictures to your winter portfolio.

© 1987, Monte Nagler

The unusual composition gives this winter scene high impact. Monte Nagler opened up two f-stops from the meter reading to keep the snow nice and white.

Art classes offered

Registration is now underway for winter classes at Pontiac Art Center. Classes for adults include watercolor, ceramics, jazzercise, photography, creative writing, acrylics, calligraphy and Chinese brush painting.

Saturday classes for children include multi-media, clay, photography, painting, drawing, drama, dance, creative writing, sculpture, cartooning and T-shirt design. Group piano is on Tuesday.

Classes run from Jan. 20 to March 21. For registration information, call Pontiac Art Center, 47 Williams, Pontiac, 333-7849.

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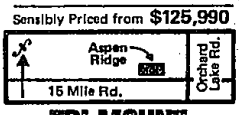

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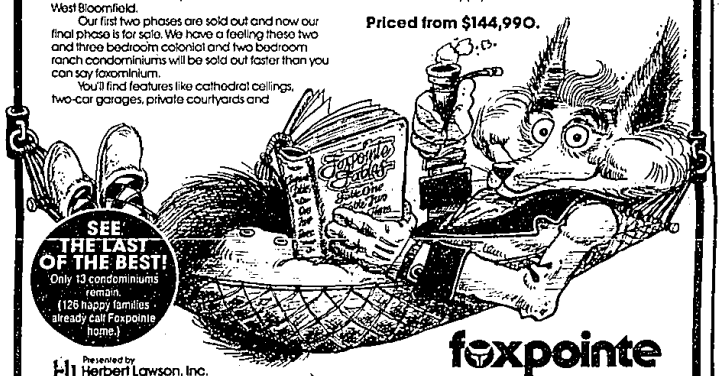

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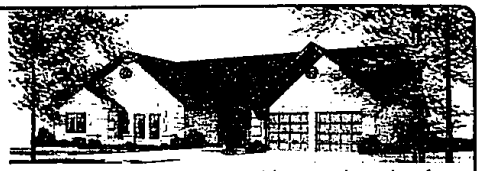

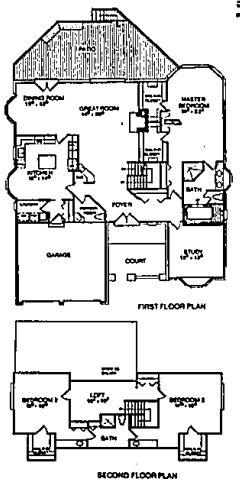

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