



focus on photography

Yuletide scenes that you'll cherish



MONTE NAGLER

I like to write annually on probably the best time of the year for recording treasured family memories with your camera - the holidays. So here goes with this year's advice and recommendations.

Christmas and children go hand in hand, so let's begin with them. Remember to move in close to fill the frame and get down on their level. Concentrate on candid as the youngsters unwrap their presents under the tree and begin to play with their new toys. Your photos will appear natural because in all the excitement the children won't even know you're there.

But don't forget other family members. For group shots, have everyone sit or stand around informally rather than stiffly posed. Even try some candid as you did with the children. Try including yourself in the picture by using the self-timer and placing the camera on a tripod or steady table.

As always, check your backgrounds for unwanted or distracting objects. And watch out for undesirable reflections from windows, mirrors or picture glass that may ruin a treasured shot. Most often, a slight adjustment in camera angle eliminates this problem.

Keep alert for other Christmas sub-

jects that will add variety and interest to your holiday pictures. A colorfully filled stocking, a beautifully wrapped present, or a sparkling tree ornament will all reward you with a fine yuletide shot. Take advantage of today's fast films. Using 1000 or 1600 speed films, try lighting some scenes only with candlelight. Your dinner table or a family member lit only by candles will produce that unforgettable romantic shot. An exposure of f-2 at 1/30 second is all that's needed.

Need a last-minute stocking stuffer? How about one of the Fuji or Kodak disposable panorama cameras? They're inexpensive and produce surprisingly good results. A supply of film, a new camera bag or a beautiful photo-filled 1997 calendar will please any photographer.

Here's another unusual gift idea. "Borrow" Dad's old home movies - you know, the ones collecting dust on the top shelf - and have them video transferred. Imagine his and everyone's delight when you pop them into the VCR for a memorable holiday treat.

And at holiday time, we're usually ankle-deep in nature's blanket of winter snow. So bundle up both you and your camera to capture some exciting winter scenes on film.

Happy holidays to all my readers and friends.

Monte Nagler is a fine art photographer based in Farmington Hills.

Winter wonder:
The holidays offer the perfect time to head out-doors to capture dramatic winter scenes on film. This is Taquamenon Falls in the Upper Peninsula.



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