



Stocking stuffers

Whimsical gifts add to family fun

DECADES AGO, a heavy-laden Christmas stocking was the dream of every pioneer child. Christmas Eve was a sleepless night, and he or she counted the hours until it was finally time to get up and see what Santa had brought.

And it was a good Christmas if there were a few oranges, maple candy, a handmade wool scarf for cold prairie mornings and maybe a tiny store-bought doll piled into the sock.

In the 1980s, Santa has proved to be more generous. With dozens of wrapped gifts under the tree, plus the Christmas Eve loot, it's easy for the Christmas stocking to be overlooked.

Yet the hanging of stockings is a tradition worth continuing. Dangling stockings add a festive touch to the home during the days before Christmas and remind everyone of the approaching holiday.

If you're helping Santa with stocking stuffing this year, you can put the stocking back in the limelight by packing it with gifts for the owner's favorite hobbies, sports and pastimes.

FOR THE GOLFER: Even if the courses are covered with snow, small gifts for the green will suit any golfer to a tee. Fill his or her stocking with personalized golf balls, a golf glove sporting his or her initials and maybe a personalized brass golfer's set including a ball marker, cleat tightener and divot repair tool, each engraved with initials.

If your golfer is a real diehard, toss in some glow-in-the-dark golf balls for those last few holes at dusk. The balls are illuminated by chemical lightsticks that contain reactive chemicals in a polyethylene tube. All are available in the Spiegel Christmas 1986 catalog.

FOR THE WOMAN: If diamonds are too pricey for the Christmas stock-

ing this year, add glittering makeup instead. Some manufacturers, like Maybelline, offer a line of cosmetics especially for Christmas with colored mascaras, glittering shadows and matching pencils.

For fashionable nail-tapping, add some of the new opalescent holiday colors that give nails a jewel-like sheen.

FOR THE COLLECTOR: 1986 was a big year for America with the 100th birthday of the Statue of Liberty. Help your loved one remember the occasion with commemorative dollars and half-dollars produced by the U.S. Mint.

They'll be available through the end of 1986 at 20,000 locations across the country, with proceeds going toward the restoration of the statue and Ellis Island. The dollar contains .77 ounces of pure silver and the half-dollar is a copper-nickel alloy.

FOR CLOTHES BUFFS: If you have a little one who loves to color on clothes, stuff his or her Christmas stocking with a ReMarkAbles shirt. Each kit includes a 50/50 polyester/cotton blend shirt and a set of four non-toxic, wide felt-tipped markers.

The markers are water-soluble, so the shirts can be colored, worn, washed and colored again with no fear of damage to the shirt or to other clothes when washed together.

Do you have a fashion-conscious clothes horse on your gift list who spends months "wearing out" his or her jeans to get that stonewashed look? The Authentic Jeanswashed Stone might make his or her life easier.

The kit includes instructions and a lava stone, which is rubbed on jeans to achieve that worn effect. And the whole kit is small enough to fit in an ample stocking.

STEVE FECHT/staff photographer