How to take good pictures!

The following are guidelines (not rules) on how to use different composition elements to make photographs look better.   
  
Fill the camera view finder with the subject. Make the subject as sharp as possible. Get as close to the subject as possible. Take the photograph at the subject’s eye level. Use a zoom lens to get as close to the subject as possible. Sometimes, the subject will be in focus, and other elements may be slightly blurred, when taking close-ups. (Depth of field is what’s in focus). Leave an adequate amount of space around the outside edge of the photograph to frame the subject.

Portraits of people call for a vertical format. Landscape pictures call for a horizontal format. Take the same scene in horizontal format and then take it in vertical format. Different formats give you different pictures.

When taking pictures be aware of diagonal lines, which indicate a sense of movement. Leading lines can direct your eye to your subject.

Make a picture look better by increasing the contrast or hue/saturation (Use Picasa, an editing program, to change contrast, etc.)

Rule of thirds—Divide the camera view finder into a tic-tac toe gird, vertical and horizontal lines. Place the subject where the two lines intersect.

Watch what is in the background for unwanted elements. Crop the photograph to improve it or eliminate an unwanted background element.

Look for interesting lines, patterns or textures to include in a photograph.  
  
Use foreground elements to give the photograph depth. Dark tones will give a picture a somber mood.

Look for elements that will give the photograph the illusion of movement, such as water.

Light in the late afternoon has a pink glow. There is beautiful color just after the sun has set.

Take lots of photographs to increase a chance to capture just the right shot. Edit your photographs and delete unwanted photographs.

Picasa is a free photo editing program. This is the website where you can download Picasa:

<http://picasa.google.com/thanks.html>