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## The Picture

By Staci Stallings

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We had a lot of pictures taken at our wedding—a lot of pictures. We had two photographers and two videographers, so there weren't many pictures that we missed. However, out of all those pictures, there is one perfectly perfect one.

It wasn't a staged one. It wasn't one I had on my infamous "list" to have taken. I didn't know it had been taken. I didn't even see this one until nearly a month after we'd been married. Yet is it my favorite of all of them. Why? Because in one single image our relationship was captured—frozen forever on Fuji Photo Film.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, but I'll try not to use quite that many to explain it. In the picture I'm doing what I'm always doing—directing traffic. Since it was taken during the photo session following our wedding and since we didn't see each other before the wedding and since my husband's immediate family had 26 people in it at the time, there was a lot of traffic to direct. There were certain pictures that I wanted, and we had a small window of opportunity to get them taken.

In short, I was occupied.

The picture shows me, looking off-camera, pointing to someone and explaining what I want done. My dress that day didn't make doing things myself an option, so I had to rely on everyone else. It's easy to see that I'm intent on getting whomever it is to do whatever it is I want done immediately.

As funny and point-blank as I am what makes the photo poignant is what my newlywed husband is doing. What's that? Exactly what he always does—he's taking care of me.

As my attention is elsewhere, he's standing there patiently picking tiny pieces of birdseed out of my hair. The thing is, he looks like he's got not another thing in the world to do, not one other thing to worry about. Amazing. Us in living color.

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Many, many times since that photo was taken we've relived that moment. Me taking care of others, me ordering the world around us, him patiently taking care of me. Now, twelve years later, during the present incarnation of our relationship, I'm the one out there trying to learn new things. I'm the one out there taking us out of our comfort zone, pulling us in directions we never could have seen or imagined at that moment.

But the thing is, I can take those chances, chase those dreams because I know with no doubt that he will always be right there, patiently keeping me together. It's how we've always been. I have the proof.

Life is meant to be lived—not just survived. Find out how. Visit [StaciStallings.com](http://StaciStallings.com). You'll feel better for the experience!

### **Brighten Up Your Shelves With Picture Frames**

**By Johann Erickson**

Would you like to add a personal touch to your home or office, but not sure how? Picture frames may be your answer. Picture frames are a fun and simple way to add color, character and style.

Decorating with picture frames is fun and simple. To add a splash of color to a shelf or mantle choose a series of similar frames in coordinating colors, such as three shades of green. To set a theme in the bedroom stick with one basic color and two or three styles of frames, such as silver or pewter antique-style frames. Or to make a dramatic statement on a wall choose one bold color, such as black or deep red, and identical picture frames, such as simple squares. No matter what look you're trying to achieve, group picture frames together for impact.

Once you've decided on a style, it's easy to find the perfect picture frames. Department stores and home decorating stores are a good place to start. But don't forget about antique stores, flea markets, yard sales and thrift stores. These are all great places to find unique picture frames. Look for unique picture frames with beveled glass, unusual shapes, or matching sets.

Picture frames also make wonderful gifts and keepsakes. Decorate picture frames with silver charms, crystal beads, or grandma's antique costume jewelry to make a special keepsake. Create a family display of picture frames by adding a detail to each picture frame that reflects each family member's personality or hobby. For example, add a golf detail to dad's picture frame, a fishing detail to grandpa's picture frame, and a gardening detail to mom's picture frame. Scrapbooking supply stores are perfect places to find unique items to add to picture frames. Just imagine the items on a frame, or inside on the matting, instead of on a scrapbook page. There's no limit to the details you can add to a picture frame.

Whether you're creating a keepsake or brightening up a shelf, picture frames are one of the most fun and versatile decorating accessories available.

Johann Erickson is the owner of Online Discount Mart (

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