

My Stressful Job

Hmm. In the last month I had exactly two posts about my life. I tend to write longer posts, so I just felt I never had the time for such a post. I'd like to say I will start writing more often with shorter posts, but knowing me if I make that commitment I will break it, so...we'll see. Last week was a terrible week, especially Friday. One of the workers moved to Arizona, so we (myself and the two trainees) had to cover all his stores plus two more. The first two days were really bad- Tuesday I had to work until 8:00 to appease an angry manager, causing me to miss rehearsal. Friday was supposed to be a short day, then rest. Except there was a crisis at another store. Another photographer and I were supposed to cover for someone who had to take off for court, only he only was able to shoot two out of the dozen cars they had while the first store I was at had twenty cars (some disappeared so I didn't actually have to shoot twenty, but what I had still took time) so I wasn't able to make it there at all until after sunset. The manager was furious and ready to fire us, but two of us (yep, me included) spent a few hours Saturday stickering cars. Thankfully he didn't want us taking photos, my guess because there were so many customers around, so it wasn't an all-day affair.

This week, I am letting one of my trainees work two stores by herself, so that will remove most of the pressure this week.

The updated life of Mr. D

I have now closed comments on the one post that was getting a bunch of spam. I'm not sure what I would do if one of those

spambots latched onto a more recent post. I'll cross that bridge when I get to it I suppose. Moving on now...

Musical: Going well. I went from using two canes as per script to just one. A couple weeks ago I brought up the point of cane usage to the choreographer and almost got taken out of Facade for it as it would change how I move. The only dance number I'm in. As for the other big one at the start of act II, let's just say there is a good reason I am not in it except for a short scene. Tonight is a full run-through of act I, and given the rehearsal is four hours we will probably run through it more than once. We're supposed to be off book, but I think it will be reasonable to use my music for any off-stage singing, such as the background vocals in Alive. I'll soon find out if they feel the same.

Work: The one I have been training is now out of training, so time to move on to other things. What? Another trainee? Two trainees?? Sigh. Just throw my quality control manager title out the window as it has been weeks since I have done any of that and seemingly weeks more before I can. Well, as long as the company doesn't mind then neither do I. At least some pressure has been removed with the one former trainee taking over three stores I was training him at- no more trips to Naperville or St. Charles! Well, after tomorrow at any rate when I just have to watch over him at one of the stores in case of problems. I still have the huge Elgin store for the time being and I can finally give it better attention, but then there are the new trainees. Well, I'll see how it goes.

Church: Still working away serving two services for 4th and 5th grades. A couple that started this year have sort of unofficially taken over one of the services with their ideas they are implementing. While they don't see themselves as the volunteer heads of the 4th/5th grade ministry, I am trying to take it in stride by thinking of them as such as the one we last had went and got himself married and so he has, shall we say, a new focus. Interestingly enough, the one before him

went and did the same thing, but it wasn't his reason for moving on- he was graduating from Moody and got a (paid) position elsewhere if I recall correctly.

Books: After reading a the [Wheel of Time](#) series for about five months straight, I am now on break from it for a short time. I was all set to check out the next book which showed as one copy available last night only to be on the hold shelf this afternoon. It's just as well since rehearsal really picks up for the next few weeks so I won't have enough time to read it anyway- I can hardly finish one of these 700-page tomes in a month as it is. I am not even a third of the way through the series, and not yet where I left off way back when. Mr. Jordan, you certainly wrote a good series. I certainly hope you accepted Christ in your life so I can meet you one day on the other side. Hopefully Brandon Sanderson completes the epic in a way that would please Robert Jordan.

Gaming: Nothing really to say at this time. For a future post.

Getting behind

Ugh. I ended up working late the last two days, no interest in blogging. I guess I do need to write something though considering my last post was from before camp. That turned out to be an enjoyable experience which I'll write about shortly. We left the morning of Sunday the 20th and returned last Friday. I could have stayed another week had it been a two-week experience, but then again the possibility exists for a trip with my OH friends next winter so I wouldn't have wanted to get in the way of it. So this week we started work on two new stores. There are actually four, but someone else

is doing the other two. In fact, I won't be doing these stores for more than a couple months because I'm training someone to hopefully take them over if the two who have been training don't snatch them up first. In addition, I am now in charge of the equipment and so had to order some yesterday. They attempted delivery today- that's quite the service but too bad nobody was home. I'll have to call them tomorrow to find out how to proceed, whether they will try again or I'll have to pick the packages up- I know nothing about this delivery company. Today's training went s-l-o-w by the way. I started the morning with a technical glitch that cost me almost three hours to fix, and then was only able to do one store afterward. Hopefully the other store won't be too upset. I wanted to call them but it seems that I have misplaced the business cards they gave me. Sigh.

Sorry- more positive ramblings next post I hope!

Busy Weekend

I will blog about that soon, but I will just say for now I was in Southern Illinois the entire weekend, or driving there or back. Monday I had my usual busy day. I tried to blog yesterday but the allergy pills I took for my headache just zonked me out. I must say, for a new position with higher pay I certainly don't feel those newfound funds. I guess another \$500 car bill last month and \$300 for an eye doctor visit and contacts will do that. That in addition to the medical insurance I finally purchased and the property tax bill I am trying to save for. None of this will keep me away this weekend, or keep me from spending money, mind you! I have

plenty for that.

So what has been going on? Well, my boss has been taking some time off because her brother was critically injured in a motorcycle accident (or some sort of motorized scooter I'm told, as if that makes a difference. Last I heard he was in a coma and they were going to take him off the pain medication to see if that would shock his system enough to wake him up. Yikes. In addition, her father was admitted to another hospital shortly after, though I forget why. So I am covering for her as best I can as far as technical things go. I was on the phone for awhile this morning trying to get a couple of our people in Florida up and running- this while training someone on the handheld computer who is back with us after leaving some months ago before his training was complete. Oh, and I just learned today another employee of our company was involved in a motorcycle accident, and her father had a medical problem (a heart attack in his case) happen at the same time as well. □

Now I have learned my brother is extremely upset about some damage to the classic Mustang sitting in our garage. Apparently someone, probably me I suppose, put a ladder in the wrong place and some boxes just happened to fall on the ladder, causing it to fall on the car. My brother was ranting on the phone yesterday and today with my mother. One of the unfair things he brought into play were our Christian values, as if we were purposely trying to cover it up. Really? Christian values? How about not making an idol of worldly possessions to a point where you yell at your mother for over a half-hour in three calls (which she had the grace to not just hang up on) and threaten to "disown us" if we don't fix it? My nephew, who is the actual owner of the car mind you, has made an assessment of his own that it can't be fixed for

less than many thousands of dollars due to the tiny dent (I couldn't even find it) being in a bad spot. He said he won't make us pay for it, but I asked him to find out some time how much it really would be. Lovely, we need our roof reshingled and new windows, but now we might have to pay to have a tiny dent fixed.

So... In more positive news, I have made an appointment to audition at our local professional theatre. My day to go is June 12. I need to get a new headshot done somewhere (hopefully they don't cost too much) and I need to write a new résumé. More importantly, I need to come up with a monologue. I expect I will sing a selection from my usual song from the Secret Garden, [Race you to the Top of the Morning](#), but I'm not sure about the monologue. Someone has recommended I do something from Oliver! since I played Fagin a few years ago. A site, [musicaltheatreaudition.com](#), says I should **not** use an accent unless specifically asked to and I couldn't imagine playing Fagin without one, so I don't know. I do know that since the song is dramatic the monologue should be comedic. Many other tips involve knowing what one is actually trying out for, but I am trying out for an entire season, and one show is even listed as "unknown musical." The song and the monologue have to total no more than three minutes, so I have my work cut out for me- but at least I have a couple of weeks. Any recommendations anyone?

Looked Big to Me

Oh come on, don't you like quizzes? I know all of you loved quizzes in school [dodges tomato]. Seriously though, only one

taker? Come on lurkers, you don't have to comment, just check out the videos two posts below and take the easy quiz. No grades here, nothing to go on permanent records if you answer wrong. Just step right up and give it a try! Answers in one of the next couple posts. ☐

This week someone from Florida flew down to train with me on the use of the handheld computer, something that the office there was apparently never trained on for some reason. He was placed in a hotel near me, right across from my church in fact, and is riding with me all week wherever I go. I have to tell you, this guy is on fire for Jesus. Like me, he serves in children's ministry at his church which is apparently set up slightly different from mine (and many others) so he has kids from ages 6-11. Perhaps he was sent not just to learn from me, but the other way around too. I invited him to my small group last night and when there, he didn't just sit back and listen, but was actively engaged in the discussion. It was interesting to learn that like another in my group, he is an Annihilationist, one who believes that there is no active eternal torment for those who don't accept God's offer of salvation through Jesus, but instead they are simply destroyed. His children, of course, still have eternal life in Heaven. Myself, I would love for this to be true but I know I must be careful to not try to read this into the scripture if and when I study this topic in detail. One of the things I have thought is that **if** God has chosen ahead of time those He is going to save (part of the Calvinist doctrine, I'm not sure about this interpretation of Scripture), that is we can only come to Christ if God calls us, and if He calls us we cannot fail to come, if this is true then it would seem to be wholly unfair, and seemingly against the nature of God to not just deny us eternal life in heaven (more than fair for our rejection of Him) but to purposefully send us to be actively tortured by the one who was given the

boot from Heaven for his rejection of God's authority. Of course, if we do have any say in the matter as Scripture *also* seems to say, then this argument falls flat- we deserve what we chose.

Anyway, I have gotten far beyond the point of this post. So today, we joined my coworker Rene again, and we practiced with the cars Rene and our other trainee were working on. He is slowly learning, but is enthusiastic about it. In fact, he is enthusiastic about everything- a very positive outlook. Well, on our way home, when about to turn on route 14, we noticed a thick plume of black smoke rising. I didn't think too much about it, but as we drove, an ambulance and a fire truck headed in that direction. About 15 minutes later we passed it just outside (I think) Barrington- I didn't think it would be that far away and the area the smoke, now worse, was coming from looked really big. However, we still couldn't see what was actually happening. We drove through the thin layer of smoke that reached the road, but that was it. I figured it would be in the news, but so far I couldn't find anything. Well, it looked big enough for news to me. I just pray for all involved.

I also pray that my car does not need an expensive repair. The "service engine soon" light just went on today and it is in the shop now to be looked at tomorrow.

Life Update

Whew. Okay, I have now gone through my junior high yearbooks and will soon have a post or two on that topic. Several memories, some forgotten mysteries, and general strangeness. More on that to come. I still have four high school band yearbooks (yes, the band had its own yearbook) and my one surviving yearbook from my freshman year, but I won't wait on those books- they will be a post or two all by themselves.

So what have I been up to? More of the same, really. A couple days a week are dedicated to just looking at and fixing photos online, usually adjusting the color when they are too blue or brightening dim or dark photos. I also report photo problems I cannot fix like photos taken at bad angles or ones so dark (or bright) that they can't be properly fixed. The other days I am still out in the field taking pictures at my own stores (soon to be given away so I can be free to fly out at any time) or helping another photographer who has been inundated as of late. Just Tuesday, she did over 50 cars with the assistance of the co-owner. She wants to give up some of the stores, but the owners like her too much apparently- for good reason as she is a very good photographer.

Besides that I have been rehearsing for Easter choir. I finally got the music I need to practice at home. For some reason they thought it would be a great idea to distribute the private link to the music over facebook instead of just emailing it to everyone, so when I realized an email was not forthcoming, I had to finally ask someone in the choir for the music. No, not everyone uses facebook and I have no intentions of ever signing up, especially after hearing about

[what's happening with Myspace and a company called Infochimps right now.](#)

As for now, it's a weekend of rest. Two days off from work, no choir until next week, and no 4th/5th grade ministry. I do enjoy what I do most of the time (even if fixing photos is a bit tedious), but it's nice to have a rest now and then.

Drivin' a Porsche

I think I spelled that right. This job of mine allows me to drive all sorts of interesting vehicles. Before this, I had never driven a Mercedes, BMW, 'Vette, Mustang, or Lamborghini. Wait, I **still** haven't driven a Lamborghini. Oh, well. I haven't driven a Jaguar either, but our company serves two Jaguar dealers, so you never know... Today it was a Porsche. It must have been a low-end Porsche because the dealer was trying to sell it, a [2002 Boxter](#), for just 16 grand, though they might change the price because they removed it from the windshield while I was there. In any event, it really doesn't matter what cars I drive since I don't really get to drive them as they are meant to be driven. If I were to drive them that way through their parking lot, or take them out onto the street, I would shortly be out of a job... ☐

But how about that training I mentioned? Well, the Florida team hired someone from around here, and so he started training here. Normal training takes several weeks, but he's to go to Florida next week, so we're trying to cram as much info and practice into him as we can in the few short weeks he

has. He has actually been doing a pretty good job learning. Though it doesn't help him to have to miss days like today due to another job, like today. Too bad- he missed out on the Porsche... ☐

I started him off on the handheld a week ago, though another trainer gave him the rundown on it first. I was actually the first one who he followed around, and on his first day of training I did teach him the basics of the job, but then I worked from home for the next two days so he went with someone else- the one who trained me in fact. So back to the handheld- he did make mistakes, but surprisingly not a lot. When he last went with me Monday, I only had to correct a couple of things. He has really picked up on the photography too. At this point he essentially does one of the jobs (handheld or camera), I then look over his work and let him know what he missed. Then I do the other part. All he is going to miss is the practice, practice, practice I went through before getting my first store. But still, he should do well in Florida, though it is yet an emerging market so I hope he can find other work too to sustain him in the meantime. If not, well the warm season is starting and the town is on the coast, so...

End of an Era

A while ago I mentioned becoming the national trainer for the photo job I do. Well, today I talked with the co-owner and the job is finally becoming a reality. As of this week I am the manager of training, or quality, or something like that. My new job will involve keeping a single store for photos, but

in addition involve filling in for others' vacations, do quality control on their work, and of course train. In fact, I will be training someone really soon now to take over two of my stores. My compensation has also become consistent, no longer dependent on the number of cars I do. As for traveling, that will come sometime as well- they already have stores in another state, though mostly for those stores they will bring the people here for me to train.

So what do I mean by the end of an era? Well, this job has now become full time so that means no more subbing. Maybe once in awhile (with the co-owner's blessing I should add) if I want to as long as I get the work done, but for the most part I'm done. I will drop down to one district I think, probably hometown district and sub maybe once every other week just for the extra cash until the end of the school year. Or mornings once a week if I can. I don't know. In any event, that means a rebranding for this blog as certainly I won't be signing up again for next year unless something goes very wrong with this job and so the name no longer works. I will have to think about a new name though I suspect the URL will remain the same.

I know I haven't said this yet, so I will say it now. In big bold letters:

**PRAISE GOD FOR HIS PROVISIONS
AND HIS BLESSINGS!!!**

What a week

The Thursday before last, I shot all of one car at two dealers- highly unusual, so on Monday that was more than made up for by having 18 cars to do between the same two dealers. Normally this would make me quite happy, but not so much on a Monday following a snowfall. For starters, I knew I couldn't leave as early as normal because the dealers needed time to clean up their lots. The first one was still doing it when I arrived. Monday nights I have small group at my church, so it is the only night I need to finish on time so starting late and then finding I had so many cars to do, some of which would have to be brushed off, was less than thrilling. I finished the second dealer a little before 7PM, then headed back. It was dark and I was traveling 50MPH, so I can probably be excused for not seeing the massive pothole in the right lane. I kept moving, but I feared it would cause my tire to go flat on the way home. It didn't and I was able to drive the car for the rest of the week, but when I brought the car into the shop Saturday because I needed a brake job, surprise! A \$500 repair bill. Actually, it was higher but he gave me a break (on top of the four brakes ☐) because my mother and I were good customers. \$210 was for the brakes, \$30 was for the oil change- that meant the rest was for the new axle and bearings on the potholed wheel. Incidentally, I was an hour late for small group, partly because I stopped to eat on the way.

Tuesday I found myself in supersized district to sub- a rare occurrence these days as I can find few jobs available there even the mornings of. And sub I dd- in bilingual kindergarten. Fortunately there was an assistant with me for both classes- a different one for each class. The morning had

Spanish-speakers who knew very little English. The assistant ended up running most of the morning. It was a struggle. Oddly enough there was a boy who I'm told actually knows English and very little Spanish, yet he was required to do everything in Spanish like the rest of the class! The afternoon was supposedly Polish-speakers (hence the different assistant) but all of them knew English so I was actually able to take charge of this group. I felt I accomplished much more with this group.

Wednesday I had only a half-day in, what do I call it again-next-door district? It was for middle-school math. The website said 7th grade, but when I got there I found out it was 8th grade. Oh well, the system has been wrong before. It was actually quite easy- most of the classes had tests, though I also went over homework answers. This teacher actually teaches five different classes out of her six teaching periods- unusual for middle school. Usually there are no more than three different classes, repeating the same lesson for more than one. Her one repeated class was in the morning so I only had two different lessons, though I did start the 5th-period class which would have been my third different plan. She arrived less than ten minutes in and took over.

Totally forgetting Wednesday when I had that entire afternoon free that there was a dealer in Barrington with two cars, I could kick myself when I realized I had forgotten and would have to fit them in Thursday instead. This is a small dealer that only has a couple of cars every few weeks. At least I did remember. Eventually. So I started off the morning by going there. Of course, there had been some more snow Wednesday night so I didn't get there *too* early. I did the cars and was on my way to the next dealer when- 25-min in I realized I still had a set of keys from the first place.

Oops. I turned around, angry with myself once all over again. The better part of an hour wasted. So I finally arrived at the next place, their lot cleared of snow, and found I had another bunch of cars like Monday. Two of them were too loaded with salt to do (hey, I just used three forms of a homophone/nym!), so I breathed a sigh of relief and headed to the final dealer with a good three hours of light to go, though it would be less by the time I got there. I finished with some light to spare. You are probably wondering about Monday right now. Yes, I did run out of light Monday, but when there is pressure to get things done at the end of the day like that I get all the photos out of the way first before I do the options and print the stickers, which tends to be the bulk of my time spent.

Friday I had only one dealer in the afternoon so I took a morning job in next-door district (still not sure if that's the name I gave it). It was for 3rd/4th grade. When I arrived, I said who I was there for and was handed a folder for a classroom that turned out to be 1st and 2nd grade. I looked at the name and it sounded right when I said it to myself, but while I didn't quite remember the spelling of the name I knew it didn't look right. I asked another teacher if this teacher taught 3rd/4th grade last year as sometimes that info doesn't get updated on the sub system (remember Wednesday). She thought for a few seconds and then informed me there was **another** teacher upstairs with almost the same name! I went back to the office to verify I was in the right class and found out that I was indeed given the wrong folder. Both teachers were out this morning, probably both for the same meeting I knew at least the one was at. I went upstairs to let the other sub know we had been duped. She had almost the same story as me, knowing something wasn't quite right with the room she was in. We traded folders and I finally got a chance to look at the right plans. The morning actually

went quite well. For the afternoon, instead of the usual two or three cars I had nine because for some reason the other photographer either didn't go there the day before like he usually does, or they didn't have any ready when he did which would have been strange considering nine were ready this time. Well, more commission for me I guess- something I will need because of the car repair bill. Sigh.

Saturday I was supposed to go cross-country skiing with a few guys from church, but when I called around Friday I couldn't find anyone who rented skis close by, and the one store that was recommended to me closed at 6PM Friday night, too early for me to go there. Well, I hope the others had a good time. Instead, I stayed home to receive that repair-bill shock...

Well, that was my week. How was yours?

A day in the life of a car photographer

I had to write this up for work, and I figured it would make a pretty good blog post as well. Some may be edited from the original:

I wake up and first thing charge my devices if I haven't the day before- the handheld every time, the camera battery maybe every other time. After eating and getting ready for the day I will turn on the computer, plug the handheld into the USB

port on the computer, and while waiting for the Windows mobile software I will load the web browser and go to the web site. By now the mobile software has loaded (seems to take forever, and often doesn't load so I will have to either turn the handheld off and back on or unplug and replug it into the computer), so I will click to connect without setting up the device. On the handheld, which is still on the sync screen from the last upload, I will select the right dealers and download. Back to the computer and web, I log in and one at a time go to the dealers for the day and the missing photo report page for each one. For most I have to do nothing but select print (I used to sort the list first, but have since learned that the printout is sorted by stock number even if the list on the screen is not). For my Oak Park store, I have to select all cars first. I used to only select new, but whenever Doug (used car manager) is working he stresses the priority of the used cars. I think this is unfair to Tim since he's the used car guy over there, but I can't really argue with the customer. Fortunately Doug seems to be off most Fridays.

So after syncing the handheld and printing the missing photo reports, I am ready to head out. I put the battery back in the camera if I charged it, check to make sure I reinserted the memory card the night before, then put everything in the camera bag (handheld included). I put the missing photo reports on my clipboard, then take the clipboard, bag, and printer bin (in cold weather I bring it in each night) and head out to the car. The bin goes in the trunk while the clipboard and bag go with me in the car. On to the first job. What time I leave depends on the day. Oak Park means I leave earlier because that dealer takes longer. I may only have my Elmhurst dealer on Friday so I will leave for that one after lunch to make sure more cars are ready, back from detail.

Arrival- time to walk the lot. When walking the lot I will mark off each car by the row or section it is in so I can find it again later. I generally look for stickers in the window, and at one dealer I can also check that I marked off a car on the windshield with my marker (I only got into that habit at one dealer for some reason). Of course, with this so far wet winter, checking for our mark on the windshield is difficult since snow usually covers it. After walking the lot, I will plug in at some of the dealers (in Naperville I wait until the end since the outlet is out of the way, and a couple others don't require stickers so no point plugging in until the end at these places). I will usually talk to my contact at this point to go over the list, though a couple don't really want to be bothered unless there's a question about whether or not to do a car (clean but not detailed, in a place that may indicate it is sold, damaged, etc.). After verifying the list, I will get the keys. Usually I get them all, but if there is another vendor around I may have to coordinate and share with them. Sometimes keys are out- as mentioned another vendor may have them, or a sales person, or repair. Really, they can be with just about anyone. At sites with computerized key boxes the system may tell me who has the key, but for manual systems such as keys on hooks I am on my own. Usually I will just take what keys are there and come back for the rest when I'm done- I don't like bothering the people there unless I have to. So, with the keys on my key ring (so I don't lose any) I will fetch the first car and bring it around. Unless I am losing the light of the day and have to scramble to get the pictures done immediately, I will start with the handheld. Before starting, I need to make sure the wireless has connected to my router by clicking on the wireless icon at the top of the home screen (only screen that shows it in the handheld software) and making sure it shows my router in the wifi box. If it doesn't, I turn off the wifi by clicking in the wifi area, then turn it back on. Rarely, if

it still doesn't connect (and the router is verified to be on) I will have to go to settings on the handheld, connections, and then wifi, and play around with the settings until it shows I am connected to my router. At my Naperville store I will skip this entire connection step (I may even turn wifi off and leave it that way so I am not bugged by the constant "connect to..." popups) until I am ready to print all the stickers and the invoice. So anyway, most cars are in the handheld so I can just select the right stock number (after selecting the correct dealer first on the home screen of course, then selecting the "no photos" option). For those that aren't I will check to see if the car is already there and has photos by refiltering to show all used cars, and if not I will manually add the car with the add vehicle menu item. I suppose it would be faster to just skip looking and just go right to the add item- if a VIN already exists it will find it that way and the stock number box will be filled. In this case I will jump immediately to the photos screen to see if it has photos already, marking it for restickering later if it does.

At this point I will go through the screens and adjust the mileage, make sure the correct style is selected, add the appropriate colors (choosing generic colors when I can't figure out what color the manufacturer meant- some have really odd names and sometimes there is more than one version of the color. Color codes can help, but not all manufacturers put them on the door and some of the color names are so long the color code doesn't show on the handheld), add "Cloth" or "Leather" (occasionally "Leatherette" or "Vinyl"), etc. By the way, when checking for the transmission type sometimes the field is blank. In this case, if the car is an automatic this will be a big clue that I will have to deselect "manual transmission" under the mechanical options tab and find the automatic transmission in the installed options. Once I view

it and discover what "speed" the transmission is, I will quickly go back to the screen where the transmission type is and change it as oftentimes the automatic has one less than the manual. Once this is done, I will head to the options and go over what the car has, starting with exterior. A couple special notes here- often it shows that the mirrors are heated, but most of the time there is no evidence of this so I will have to deselect it and select our "power outside mirrors" option in its place. Also, if the vehicle has a power sun/moonroof, this is very often not shown on this page and will have to be added under installed options. There are others, but sun/moonroof is by far the most prevalent. Next I will look at mechanical for a couple of the options- most on this page I just have to trust the car has. Wheels (sometimes under exterior) and transmission are the biggest things here. Next up is the safety tab where I check primarily for the airbags (sometimes unchecked, probably by the dealer so in this case I leave it unchecked even if it has the airbags) and also look for "OnStar" here (usually in the interior options but sometimes shows up here). Last tab I go to is the interior options. There is so much to check here that it takes the longest. While going through the installed options, I make a mental note what doesn't show up and look for them in the installed options. Now that the installed options show the details, I have to read them to make sure I can select them. For example, I have found that that the rear DVD system option might show that headphones and remote are included, but since these are used cars these are often *not* included as they tend to get lost so unless I see them I cannot select this installed option but instead have to settle for our own "rear entertainment" or "DVD system" option. Any options I still can't find listed I will have to go back to the appropriate tab and add our generic option. Note: some older cars have no VIN explosion so I have to painstakingly find each generic option that is listed, and even add some on the installed option screen if important enough. Fortunately most cars are new enough that they are in the handheld.

Once I finish the options, I head to the sticker screen (some dealers require pricing to be entered, but I don't serve anyone who does) and select the appropriate sticker and buyer's guide then print (unless I am at my Naperville store where I save printing until the end. If this is the first sticker at the dealer for the day I will verify the printer options and margins. Next, the billing screen where I check off the correct option before clicking done. Finished with the handheld, I turn it off, retrieve the stickers from the printer, move the car to the photo-taking spot if not already there (often I park the car by my car so I can retrieve the stickers quickly), take out the camera, and shoot the round of pictures. When it's getting dark or I am shooting indoors, especially for the interior shots I will often take more than one shot. If I can, I will lean the camera against something to keep it steady when shooting the interior. Sometimes I have to use the flash but I try not to if possible. I switch between four camera settings: P and closeup if the flash is needed, no flash and mountain if not. Each setting is useful in different situations. When shooting, I will skip any shots that will show damage such as dents or heavy scratches. Once I finish the shots, verifying each on the camera screen and reshooting when necessary, I turn the camera off, roll up the windows, put on the stickers (taking down any if necessary- usually buyer's guides), and repark the car. I will also make note on the missing photo report of the order of the photo set- 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc and write our mark on the bottom corner of the windshield, at least at the one store I do this at. Then it's on to the next car.

Once all the cars are finished, I return the keys I have and check for any keys I didn't get the first time. I may have to ask around at this point. Then I repeat the above process for these cars. One note, at any time I may have to towel down,

squeegee, brush off, or wipe off some smudges on the cars. This is all part of the service provided to the customer. Don't want any of the cheap companies to steal our customers, right? □ It takes longer, but is necessary. A dry summer is so much better than a wet winter...

Once finished with all cars, I will reprint any stickers for cars that have photos but are missing the stickers, put them up, and mark "reprint stickers" in the billing tab on the handheld for that car. Then I will print out two copies of the invoice- one for me and one for the customer, and see my contact to sign them. I may have to take the dealer copy to their accounting office, get a PO, or both. Once done, I exchange goodbyes, unplug, and head to the next store, or home if this was the last. At home, I will take everything in- the camera bag, my clipboard, and the printer during the winter. I may rest at this point, but before I go to bed sometime I will connect the handheld to the computer, wait for the mobile software to load again, click the button to connect without setting up on the mobile software dialog, go to the sync screen on the handheld, and choose to upload. Once it begins I will remove the memory card from the camera and insert it into my computer. Once the explorer window pops up, I will go to the picture folder and then copy all the pictures to the folder I have set up on my hard drive by doing a ctrl-a and dragging all of them to my hard drive folder. Then I will go to that folder and start going through the pictures, saving the best of each shot and deleting the rest. Sometimes the best shot will be too dim (common for flash shots) or too bright. For these pictures I will load them into Paint Shop Pro and adjust the brightness. Rarely, I will have to adjust color- for some reason I sometimes get shots that are way too blue. I may have to crop off part of the photo if the car isn't centered properly or something undesirable shows up in the photo (like a light wire at the new Glenview store used

for the indoor shots). These are the only things I will do to the photos- nothing else. Anything else can be considered unethical, like "fixing" damage. Most of the time damage will be fixed anyway by the dealer, but that is up to them. Better to just delete such photos. Anyway, getting off my soapbox, once I have gone through the photos, I will rename them according to the stock number of the car from the order I wrote down while shooting, then load up the photo uploading program. In this program I will import the pictures, then match them up for each dealer I was at during the day. Before uploading, I will verify the cars match the descriptions and that the order looks right. Then I will upload. As soon as the upload is complete I will close the program, go to the web site, close out the invoice, delete the pictures from the memory card (which I had saved up to this point in case something went wrong), safely eject the card and put it back in the camera, unplug and turn off the handheld, and if early enough charge up the camera battery (every other time unless I had a very busy day) and handheld. If there isn't enough time before I go to sleep, I will save charging for the morning.