

W



Linda and Glenn Smith

Although balancing our professional and personal life can be a challenge, the shared experiences we have are a wonderful benefit." For Al, being together all the time is the greatest challenge and the greatest benefit: "It creates zest in our lives."

#### Linda and Glenn Smith Glenn Smith Presents

**"Treat it like a good marriage — be in it for the long run."**

After graduating from Alamo Heights High School in 1970, Glenn threw himself into music. That's how he met his wife, Linda. He was playing guitar in a rock band; she was 17 and the rest is a

country music song. When they married 28 years ago, they were on separate career paths, Glenn pursuing music and Linda in real estate. His band mates, dedicated to the rock star ideal, slept until three in the afternoon — it was up to Glenn to book gigs so he and Linda could eat.

For many years, the couple straddled both sides of the coin. Linda kept her day job but also worked some of the shows, using the audio engineering skills she developed in college. She ran the light and sound operations for shows and naturally gravitated toward learning all aspects of putting on an event. Soon she was running and settling shows on her own. Sometimes Glenn would book a show and play in

another one the same night. That was in the '80s, when they started to realize they could make entertainment bookings a full-time business.

Linda spotted Glenn's true calling and urged him to devote 100 percent of his time to bookings and the business side of the industry. "Although I loved playing music, I would always get bored," says Glenn. Linda agrees. "His true expertise lies in business," she says.

It was in the '80s that Glenn Smith Presents was formally created. It was incorporated in 1990 and is now a highly respected concert promotion/production company. Jobs include everything from marketing to ticketing, security and all aspects of production. The Smiths work with a variety of events and artists, such as Garth Brooks, the Goo Goo Dolls, State Fair of Texas concert main stage, military installations worldwide (including aircraft carriers) and even the production of the presidential inaugural celebration.

"Early on, we stepped on each other's toes," says Glenn. "We'd be working on the same things and not know it. It was sort of like two people trying to walk through a narrow doorway at the same time — you collide and get stuck."

"I had a big chip on my shoulder too — mostly in my 30s," recalls Linda. "I received no credibility and resented the fact that Glenn was the only one who was recognized as capable of, or responsible for, any of our work accomplishments. It also took me awhile to come to terms with the fact that Glenn and I have different strengths and talents. Now I know that's a good thing."

She realized that neither one of them was more, or less, important to the business. All of their skill sets and expertise were required to make things run. "I finally had an epiphany that we're both on the same team," says Linda.

The business reached critical mass in 1990 when they booked Garth Brooks — just before his popularity exploded. "We found synergy when we started working larger shows. It became obvious what each of us enjoyed doing," says Linda. Glenn agrees. "We got so busy our egos had to get out of the way." Both say it took time to develop well-defined roles.

Since then Glenn has taken the lead on the sales side, and Linda concentrates on servicing and keeping new and regular business. Although they travel a lot, the inherent flexibility of their life has enabled Glenn to spend a lot of time

## up front

with their 16-year-old daughter, Shannon. "He is such a soccer mom," says Linda. "He has always shuttled her around to her softball games and golf tournaments. He used to travel 150 days out of the year, so having that time with her is really important to him."

The couple has a solid history of supporting one another. One of Linda's lifelong dreams was to learn to fly, so Glenn arranged for lessons. Both are now accomplished pilots and own a twin-engine Cessna. Linda is also active in volunteering her time and expertise to various nonprofit organizations. "He's always been supportive of whatever I do," she says.

As for disagreements, both say when and if they fight, it is more about work-related things than anything else. "Sometimes we have strong but separate opinions. But when you have a good business partnership, there is no insurmountable problem," says Linda. "Sometimes we just agree to disagree and move on."

Linda, 46, and Glenn, 50, think the greatest reward is knowing their success is greater combined than either could achieve individually. "We try very hard not to take each other or what we have for granted," says Linda.

It's clear they respect one another and see themselves as equals. So the burning question remains: If this is such a partnership, why is the business called "Glenn Smith Presents"? Glenn chortles, "I know, I know. But you have to remember that two decades ago this was almost entirely a male-dominated business. Starting out, it was important to set an impression. Using my name for the company gave it a more human side. It was before acronyms were cool." Linda says it doesn't bother her. "We've worked hard to create a solid reputation. The name has morphed into being more about what we do and what the business stands for than being about Glenn."

The Smiths' advice to couples considering working together is to treat the business as they would their marriage. "You have to be in it for the long run," says Linda. "It's definitely not for everyone."

From the standpoint of financial risk, Glenn advises starting slowly and not putting your money into one venture all at once. "It definitely helped us to have Linda working in a different industry for the first few years while we grew the business and got established," says Glenn. "That way if you hit a rough

*I.a.*

Frame: Gemco by L.A. Eyeworks Photo: Greg Gorman

**DIETZ-MCLEAN OPTICAL**

*Celebrating 65 Years in South*

- Lincoln Heights, Broadway at
- 8476 Wurzbach at Fredericks

[www.dmoptical.com](http://www.dmoptical.com)  
Hours: M-F 9-5:30 Sat. 10-5

**THE NEW 2003 JAGUAR S-TYPE** If it weren't for the sn acceleration provided by a first-in-class 6-speed auto transmission, the intelligence of a re-engineered suspension, more refined ride and the confidence of Dynamic Stability Control working to keep a firm grip on the road in any condition. If it were for these refinements, you could love it on looks alone. The new rounded Jaguar S-TYPE. Beyond beautiful. **Exceptional at \$44,5**

**IT'S NOT JUST BEAUTIFUL. BUT IT COULD**

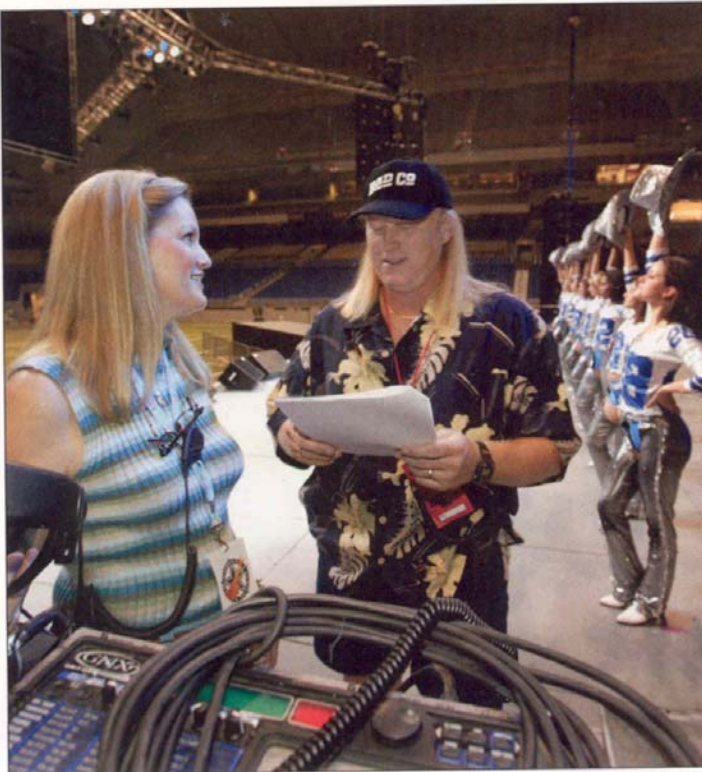


THE NEW 2003 S-TYPE

**BARRETT** 154  
 **JAGUAR**

\*MSRP 2003 Jaguar S-TYPE 3.0 with 6-speed automatic and moonroof. Taxes, title, license, dealer fees, and options extra.

W



Above, Linda and Glenn Smith prepare for the Dallas Cowboys' kickoff celebration at the Alamodome. Below, Nora Sierra and Charlie Acuña whip up a birthday dinner at home with their children, Christa and Carlo.



patch or it doesn't work out, you still have a source of income."

#### Nora Sierra and Charlie Acuña SoFlo District

**"Be best friends and live your lives together."**

Nora Sierra and Charlie Acuña first met when she was 23 and went to work for him in El Paso as his office manager. At the time, he owned an apparel-manufacturing company.

The couple has been married for 15 years. They sold the manufacturing plant shortly after their marriage and moved to San Antonio, where Nora finished her nursing degree. She also helped Charlie open and run a specialized laundry that finished Levi Strauss products. They have two children, Christa, 13, and Carlo, 11. Charlie also has two older sons, Greg, 37, and Craig, 30, by his first marriage.

Throughout the years, they've tried various business ventures, leveraging each other's skills and strengths. Off and on Nora also worked as a registered nurse in cardiology at Baptist Medical Center. For the last few years, they've concentrated their energy on the SoFlo District, a progressive mixed-use development on the south side of San Antonio. They are devoted to transforming buildings, such as the old laundry, into retail and office space the likes of which are rarely seen or even imagined. You know immediately you've stepped inside a Charlie Acuña creation. His artistic sensibilities and penchant for construction have made unique spaces a reality. He finds the buildings and creates a vision, while Nora assembles the artisans and manages the projects.

Nora has helped Charlie understand and value time with their children. "Before we met, he was always working," says Nora. Now at age 58, Charlie sees time with his kids and the companionship of his spouse as one of the most important benefits of working together. Nora is 16 years younger and proud of the way they've been able to make it work. "At one time we even had a nursery here at the office," she comments.

Having been married previously, Charlie has insight and knows the value of a good relationship. "I'm so blessed with Nora. She's my best friend," he says. Although they've tried to strike a balance of responsibilities, Charlie thinks Nora has it tougher than he does. "I've always had the easy job of just running a