

Frontier

Hasslochers mixing old and the new in latest development venture. **PAGE 5**

Crossing borders

San Antonio eyes bioscience collaboration with Mexico. **PAGE 6**

Legacy project

Development venture picks Schertz for new senior-care complex. **PAGE 10**

More inside

Real Estate Roundup	8	SportsView	19	The Lists	29, 31
This Week Online	9	Small Business Weekly	20-22	Records & Leads	32-39
Marketing & Media	14	People on the Move	24	Money Rates	41
Then & Now	16	Special Report	25-31	Opinion	50-51

Small Business Weekly



Jenna-Beth Lyde is working to rebrand Parish Photography, founded by Charles Parish nearly 50 years ago. **PAGE 20**

THIS WEEK'S NEWSMAKERS



Index

This index lists businesses, organizations and people mentioned in news stories in the San Antonio Business Journal this week. It does not include People on the Move, Records & Leads, Week in Review, News Bytes or the Opinion pages.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Adams, Gus.....	14	Hardberger, Phil.....	14	Patel, Dharmesh.....	8
Anastasio, Curt.....	1	Hasslocher, G. "Jim".....	5	Patel, Nimesh.....	8
Becquet, Michael.....	14	Hasslocher, Jimmy.....	5	Ragsdale, Jeremy.....	10
Brewer, Ben.....	1	Jakeway, Donald.....	6	Reichman, Mark.....	1
Brown, Tad.....	19	Jones, Jerry.....	19	Rush, Trent.....	8
Castro, Julian.....	1	Kauss, George.....	6	Rusk, David.....	1
Coker, Larry.....	19	Kowalski, Rosemary.....	5	Sanchez, Bart.....	6
Collins, Dan.....	8	Kuchinsky, Aliyah.....	14	Sculley, Sheryl.....	1
Cornell, Dan.....	3	Lane, Amy.....	14	Stevens, Ann.....	6
Dickson, John.....	3	Lyde, Jenna-Beth.....	20	Sutton, Hall.....	14
DiGiovanni, Pat.....	1	Marquez, David.....	6	Trevett, Kenneth.....	1
Dominguez, Rene.....	6	McCullough, Dan.....	8	Turner, Charles.....	10
Frantz, Doug.....	1	McHardy, Stanton.....	1	Watson, Brian.....	1
Frost, Don.....	1	Miraglia, Jeff.....	14	Wheeler, Jennifer.....	12
Gatley, Kim.....	5	Nicholson, Bruce.....	1	Wolff, Nelson.....	1
Greehey, Bill.....	1	Parish, Charles.....	20		
Hansen, Robert.....	3	Parish, George.....	20		

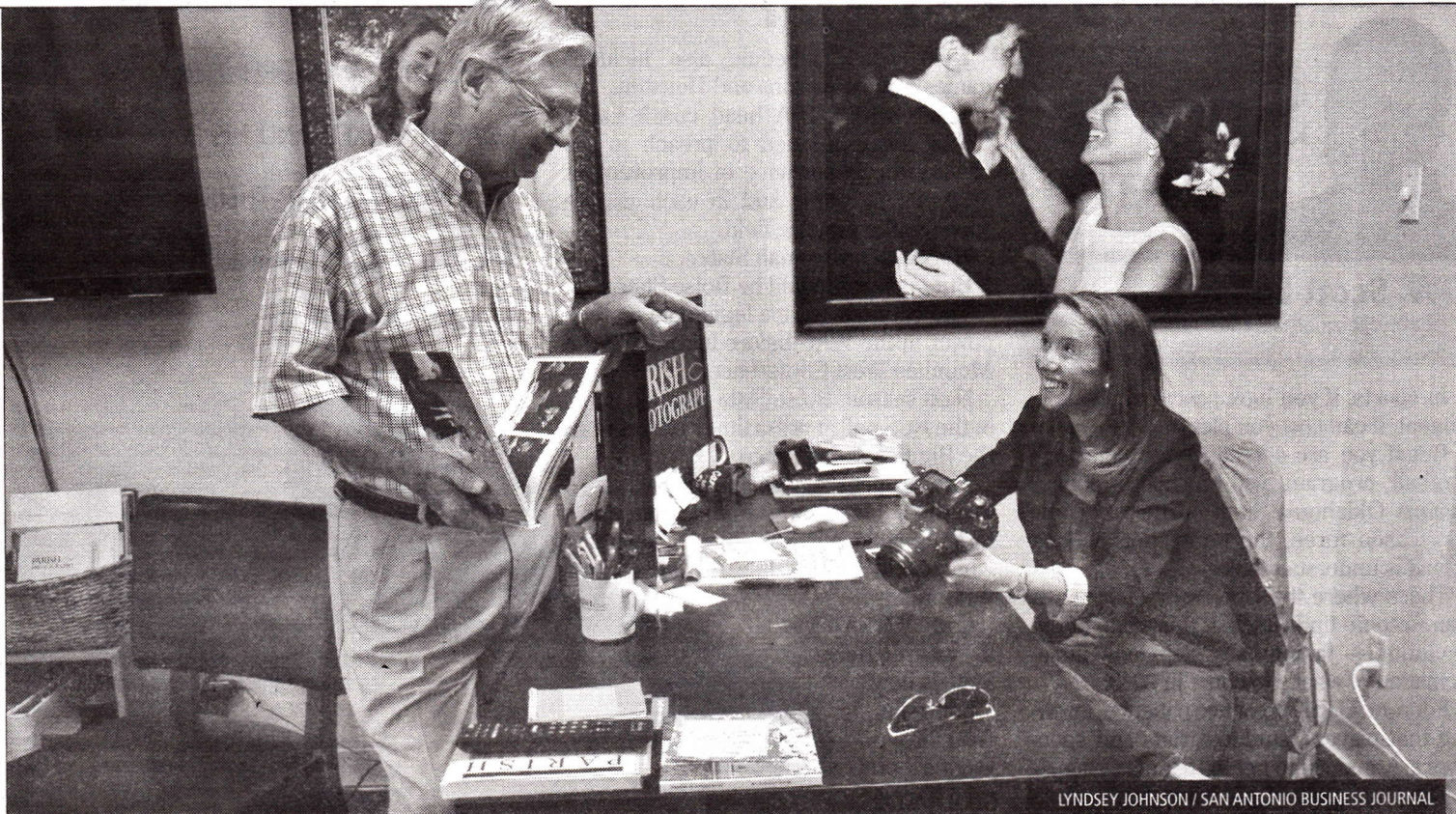
COMPANIES IN THE NEWS

13th Floor Haunted House.....	8	Hasslocher Enterprises.....	5	Screamworks LLC.....	8
Actium Biosystems.....	6	Hauntworld.com.....	8	Sentier Strategic Resources LLC.....	12
Alamo Photo Labs.....	20	Heard That! Consulting.....	14	Simmons & Co. International.....	1
Boot Ranch.....	14	Hemisfair Park Area Redevelopment Corp.....	8	Southeastern Conference.....	19
Brooks Development Authority.....	6	Houston Rockets.....	19	Southwest Research Institute.....	12
Center for Innovation in Drug Discovery.....	1	Laboratorios Rimsa.....	6	Standard & Poor's.....	1
Centro Partnership San Antonio.....	1	Lindsay Goldberg.....	1	SteelPath Fund Advisors.....	1
Confidence USA.....	10	Magic Time Machine.....	5	Taylor West Advertising.....	14

Small Business Weekly

SAN ANTONIO BUSINESS JOURNAL

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After founding Parish Photography nearly 50 years ago, Charles Parish has turned over daily operations to Jenna-Beth Lyde, who is bringing a modern touch to the studio.

Photo studio views future through new lens

BY ROSALIND SOLIZ

The one-time dean of San Antonio portrait and wedding photographers, Charles Parish, has the best of both worlds. This year, he retired as owner of Parish Photography, the company he co-founded nearly 50 years ago, but he is still on the payroll doing what he loves best: taking pictures.

The transition began a year and a half ago when Jenna-Beth "JB" Lyde met Parish at a business luncheon. "I told him I wanted to work with him," says Lyde.

"I told her I couldn't pay her and she said we could work it out," Parish recalled.

They have.

Six months ago, Parish transferred his successful small business to Lyde.

"It's a gift. Well maybe," says Parish. "I don't know if it's a gift if I put it in the contract that she can't fire me," Parish says with a chuckle.

"I bought the company through a promissory note," says Lyde. She agreed to make monthly payments toward the purchase of the company for three years and to honor a three-year salary contract for Parish.

"The funds are coming from current money generated by the business. The transaction was an asset transfer for all the equipment, goodwill, trademark," Lyde says.

Lyde and Parish declined to provide financial details of the sale, or to release revenue figures.

Exit strategy

An ownership transfer can allow business owners to hand pick a successor. It is an exit strategy for business owners who are ready to relinquish day-to-day business operations but want to remain professionally active with their company and generate income.

Parish says he learned the strategy from another veteran San Antonio photographer whose children had no interest in taking over the family business.

Parish's daughters had no interest in pho-

tography, choosing other careers.

Parish Photography was founded by Charles and his late uncle, George Parish, in 1964. "When I started, there were only seven photographers in the Yellow Pages," says Parish. "Now there are 300."

WHEN I STARTED, THERE WERE ONLY SEVEN PHOTOGRAPHERS IN THE YELLOW PAGES.'

Charles Parish
Parish Photography

The Parish family also founded Alamo Photo Labs in Alamo Heights, a few blocks from the studio on Broadway. Parish Photography worked in tandem with Wedding Planners, the company next door owned by Charles' wife.

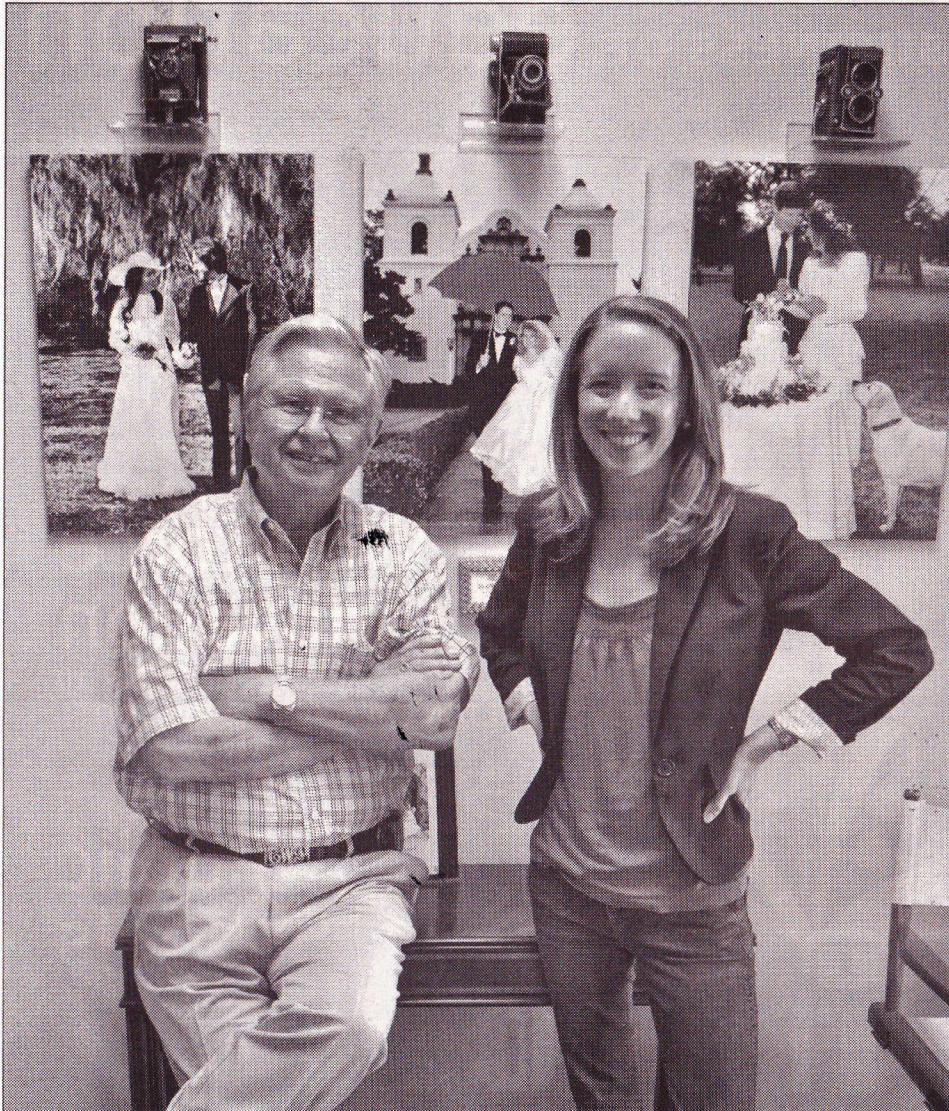
Parish's client list reads like a who's who of established San Antonio business leaders:

the McCombs and Cavendar auto dealership families; the Frosts of Frost Bank. Families have relied on him over generations.

"The other day I took wedding photos. I'd taken pictures of the grandparents' (wedding)," says Parish.

See **PARISH**, Page 22

PARISH: Studio is rebranding its image and turning to social media to promote its services



FROM PAGE 20

Explaining the company's longevity, Lyde says, "Charles knows everybody."

Parish agrees.

In the know

"I got where I am because of who I know, not because I'm a great photographer. You could take pictures with a Brownie," he says, referring to the simple, inexpensive camera popular more than half a century ago. "What matters is the relationships you build. Many young photographers don't know that.

"They think it's all about staying at your computer," he adds, referring to the contemporary technology-dependent form of photography.

Parish says he is surprised that he is the only photographer who is a member of the Alamo Heights Rotary Club. He belongs to multiple civic and business organizations.

"I'm a (Texas) Cavalier," he says. The Cavaliers are a high-profile charity group featured during San Antonio's Fiesta.

Although a generation apart in age, 24-year-old Lyde and 74-year-old Parish have similar backgrounds. Both graduated college with business degrees. Both have a passion for photography. When they met, Lyde says, "I was looking for a mentor and he was looking for a mentee."

Parish holds a business degree from Trinity University. He began taking photographs while looking for a banking job. He stuck with photography. Lyde, who is from McAllen in the Rio Grande Valley, also ma-

changed her career direction.

"My dad always told me when you're in college, take at least one course for fun each semester." She took enough art courses to minor in the discipline.

Once she joined Parish Photography, she turned to social media such as Facebook to promote the company's services, which include corporate event photos and business portraits — in addition to wedding photography, family photos and portraits.

New vision

"My vision is to rebrand and grow the company. We have a long history and good reputation with the Alamo Heights community and all of San Antonio, but we are an old business and I feel that makes us less hip and relevant in today's society," says Lyde.

"Our industry has changed dramatically over the past decade," Lyde adds. "Photography is seen more as an art form than a business. Where people used to look for professionalism and dependability, they are now looking for creativity and unique perspectives."

To Parish, that means Lyde can "do things that are more modern." He says "she gets the people dangling from the ceiling" while he focuses on a traditional style.

She says, "My goal is for people to realize that we have both. It is ironic to me that everyone knows our name, yet they are not walking through our door. It's time to give them a reason to and I think rebranding our image will do just that."