

Sunday, November 19, 2017

Holiday season is here: some tips

The holiday shopping season is upon us, so here are some tips on making the most of it! This is the time of year that people are looking for deals, so make sure you are offering some. This can be a critical play to get new customers in the door, and keep existing customers coming back.



Jen Dangelo

Black Friday, Small Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday make up one of the largest shopping weekends of the year, and it all starts this week!

To help spread the word about the unique and great small businesses we have in the Upper Cumberland, we have partnered with American Express for a second year to host UC Shop Small — a free campaign to get business owners more exposure on Small Business Saturday. If you want to learn more or join the campaign, visit www.ucshopsmall.com and click sign up, or by calling 931-372-3648. Be sure to send shoppers to our UC Shop Small Welcome Station on Nov. 25 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. (or while swag lasts!) at 242 E 10th St. for some great Shop Small freebies!

While most people think of shopping for the holidays at traditional retail stores, this can be a great time of year all for small businesses. If your business is service-based, offer deals on pre-purchased services, booked appointments, or gift certificates. Offering even small add-ons with purchases make customers feel like they are getting the most bang for their buck. Repeat customers can be made in the holiday season by asking customers to sign up for an email newsletter list, or having them follow you on social media — these platforms can be crucial in keeping customers coming back to shop with you. Happy selling!

Jen Dangelo is the director of the Tennessee Small Business Development Center at Tennessee Tech. She can be reached at JDangelo@tsbdc.org.

J&S celebrating 60 years

BY LAURA MILITANA
laura.militana@herald-citizen.com

Their work is everywhere — from Cookeville to Nashville to Knoxville to Chattanooga — and beyond.

From retail to office space, no job is too small for J&S Construction, a family-owned construction company that is celebrating 60 years this year.

“We’re very blessed,” Jack Stites, CEO, said. “We started off with maybe two people and had a max of 240 people at one time.”

The company was started by John D. Stites in 1957 as a small construction company that built spec houses. Its original location was on CC Camp Road where the shop is now.

It grew over the years, moving to Willow Avenue before the current building on Foreman Drive was built.

“We are in the service business,” Jack said. “We do literally everything from hang a door to a \$20 million project.”

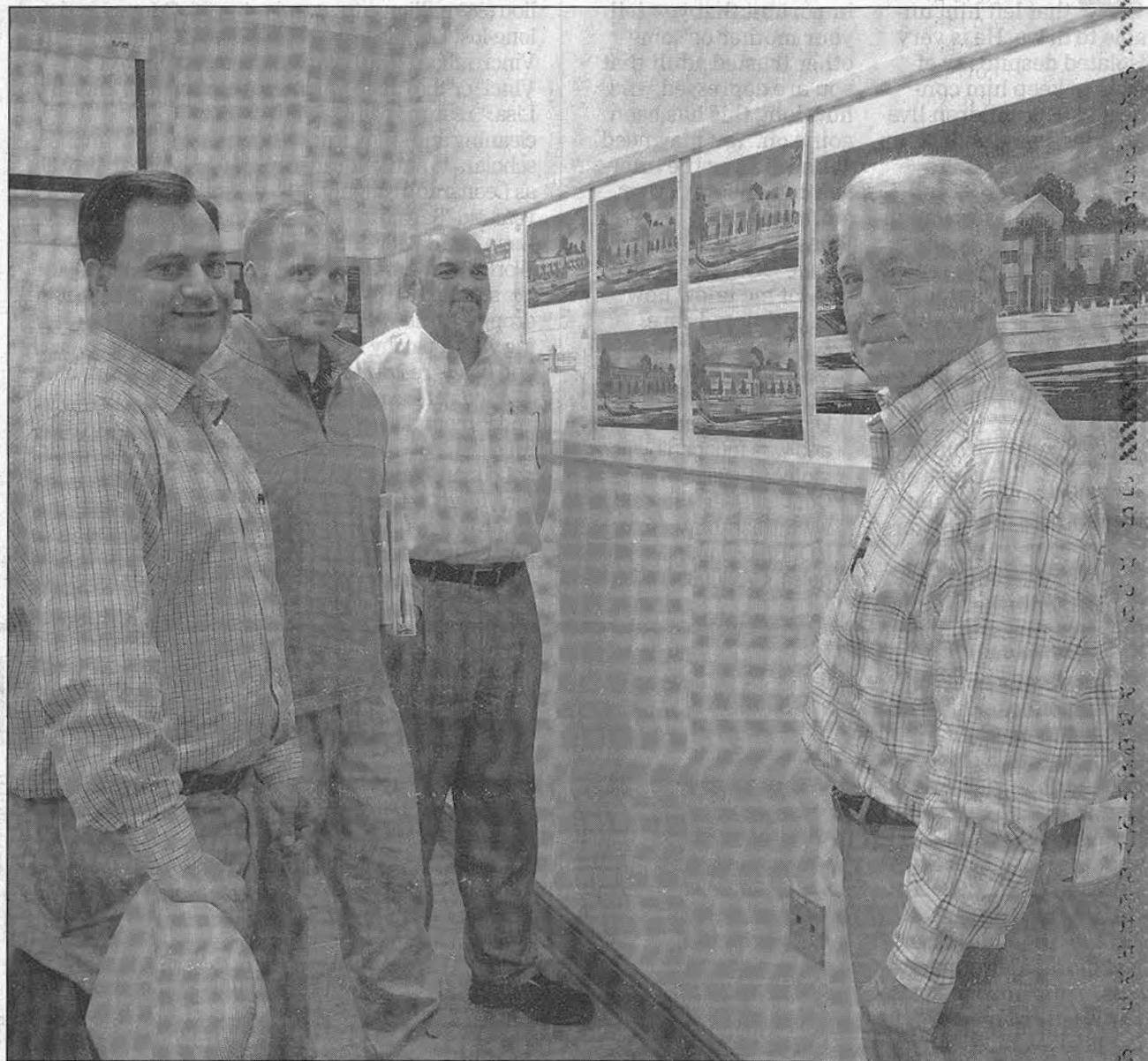
Jack has been with the company 46 years and has seen a lot of changes throughout those years.

“We pay attention to what we do,” he said. “We have continuous training for our employees.”

“If an employee knows of a training seminar they want to attend, we encourage them to go and the company pays for it.”

In 1980, there were two changes that came about.

“We wanted the company to be built on Biblical principals and to be a design-build concept,” Jack said. “Those were two completely



Laura Militana | Herald-Citizen

From left, Kevin McCaleb, COO; Andy Stites, vice president; Josh Stites, president; and Jack Stites, CEO, in the design room.

new concepts at that time.”

And that’s what spurred the growth.

“In the construction industry, you are better off going with someone you trust and tell them your needs and budget,” he said. “We encourage people to bring us on early in the project and see what the needs are so we can fit in a budget.”

There are architects, designers, draftsmen, craftsmen and a variety of project and field

managers among the J&S crew.

“When you treat people right, you get great results,” he said.

The Foreman Drive office building is more than an office building — it’s an example of how J&S works.

“We have a variety of designs in here,” Jack said. “We take clients around and show them the different options they have when it comes to building what they want.”

He says the most no-

table projects over the 60 years has been the ones where the company gives back to the community.

“To be able to help agencies such as the Cookeville Pregnancy Clinic, Mustard Seed Ranch and Habitat for Humanity is worthwhile,” he said. “We don’t know who will be touched by those groups, but that makes it all worth it.”

As for the future, he sees the business continue to grow.

“Cookeville is doing great,” he said.

“We’ll continue to grow the relationships we have and create new ones.”

He doesn’t see retirement on the horizon anytime soon either.

“When you stop loving what you’re doing that’s time to go,” he said. “But I don’t see that anytime soon for me.”

For more information about J&S Construction, visit www.jsconstruction.com.

American Bank & Trust hosts Home Builders Association meeting

American Bank & Trust recently hosted an educational meeting for members of the Home Builders Association of the Upper Cumberland.

It is important for builders and others involved in the construction industry to know about current housing trends and community economic issues.

“We were honored to host the Home Builders Association, and we appreciate Zach Buckner of the Highlands Economic Partnership sharing a summary of recent success stories,” Ryan Smith with American Bank & Trust said.

“We believe being a member of the Home Builders Association is an investment in the continued success of the communities we all serve together.”

The Home Builders



From left are Zach Buckner, Highlands Economic Partnership; American Bank & Trust representatives Sherri Lee, Becky Thomas, Rebecca King, and Ryan Smith and Robert McCormick, HBAUC president.

Association of the Upper Cumberland works to support and promote the residential construction industry.

Homeownership builds stronger communities, provides a solid foundation for family and personal

achievement, and improves the quality of life for millions of people.

For more information

about the Home Builders Association of the Upper Cumberland, call 528-7472 or visit www.uchba.com.

Small Business Saturday an alternative to big box stores on Black Friday

The Small Business Development Center at Tennessee Tech University and its regional partners are partnering with American Express to hold the second annual UC Shop Small campaign for Small Business Saturday on Nov. 25 and everyone is welcome to join in!

Small Business Saturday is the official day to Shop Small! Most people shop the big box stores on Black Friday, but you can find some amazing products and services at a great deal at small businesses the following day.

If you are a business, you can regis-

ter to be listed on the UC Shop Small website by visiting www.ucshopsmall.com and clicking “Sign Up.” This campaign is completely free to join, all your business has to do is be open on Small Business Saturday and offer a promotion to shoppers.

The promotion will be listed on the UC Shop Small website and available on a printed list which will be handed out at the UC Shop Small Welcome station in Cookeville.

On Nov. 25, shoppers can swing by TTU Foundation Hall at 242 E. 10th

Street in Cookeville from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. to visit the Cookeville UC Shop Small Welcome Station and pick up reusable shopping totes, Shop Small buttons, pet bandanas, and more! You will also be given a list of participating businesses from across the Upper Cumberland so you can make sure to get deals on some great stuff. You don’t even have to park — just swing into the front of the building and one of the TTU SBDC interns will give you your swag and send you on your way to shop!

Small businesses are a huge part of

the economy of the Upper Cumberland, and we want to make sure we celebrate them all on this special day — so please sign up if you are a business, or #shopsmall if you are a consumer!

Remember to share pictures of your purchases and shopping adventures on Facebook and use the hashtag #ucshopsmall so we can feature you on our Facebook page.

Make sure to “like” the UC Shop Small Facebook page as it will continue to feature great deals from small businesses across the Upper Cumberland year round!