

"The older way of doing business was by operating off certain margins. We went through a gradual evolution from margin to volume."

Over the years some of the large chains have moved on up the Big Sandy Valley into VanHoose's backdoor. Some stayed around a little while, others longer. "We have taken some hard shots over the years, but we have managed. We have two large sales each year—spring and fall. We promote these sales in 25 newspapers with full-page ads. We use 10 to 12 radio stations and two TV stations, also. We have no outside sales, and this gets our name out there. It brings people in from other markets. We've been doing these sales since the early '70s."

Joe said new facilities are planned for the Prestonsburg store. "Adjacent to where we are now, we are renovating a large former Betsy Ross warehouse and plan a move into it soon. Also in Prestonsburg, we have a new manager since Mike retired. Calhoun Salyer from Paintsville had worked several years for us while going to college . . . probably 25 years ago. After he graduated from UK, he became secretary/treasurer for us and stayed around about five years before going elsewhere. He is back. He had been in management and sales and has brought that expertise with him. He is a good addition.

"We are financially stable now. Sales are 30 times what they were in the mid-1960s. We bring a lot of out-of-county and out-of-state money into this area."

Joe said that higher volume has required expansion of equipment and personnel to handle it. "Today, we have a fleet of a dozen trucks and a maintenance department to keep them running well, a boom truck to handle drywall, 10 forklifts, and half a dozen piggyback trucks with forklifts hanging off the back for special deliveries . . . all to serve our customers. Our total personnel varies between 37 and 50, depending on the economy."

Another added value that has most certainly contributed to the company's success is also a source of pride. "The amount of expertise that we have to offer to the customer that is free is phenomenal," Joe said. "If a professional contractor wants to know something, he or she comes to us."

"In the 1980s and early '90s, national trade magazines had our little company listed in the top 400 several years in a row. No little feat considering the large amount of lumber companies in this country and their sizes."

Joe grinned, "Can you imagine continuing 101 years in the retail business and having only two presidents of the company during that time?"

When asked how much longer he plans to work, he laughs and answers, "There was a man in Lewisburg, West Virginia, who ran his lumber company and showed up every day until he passed away at 103. I'd like to break his record."

REMEMBERING WHITNEY ELIZABETH HOUSTON

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of Whitney Elizabeth Houston who passed away on Saturday, February 11, 2012. Whitney Houston was a shining star born in the great city of Newark, NJ, whose life will be celebrated locally and globally by her family and friends.

Whitney followed in the footsteps of her mother and began performing as a soloist in the junior gospel choir at the New Hope Baptist Church in Newark, where her first solo performance was

"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah." Later she became the first woman of color to grace the cover of Seventeen Magazine and was also featured in layouts in the pages of Glamour, Cosmopolitan, and Young Miss.

In 1983, Clive Davis, head of Arista Records, helped start Whitney's recording career, and she went on to begin her meteoric rise to fame, with Rolling Stone praising her as "one of the most exciting new voices in years," while the New York Times called her debut, self-titled album "an impressive, musically conservative showcase for an exceptional vocal talent."

In 1986, a year after the initial release of her debut album, Whitney topped the Billboard 200 albums chart and stayed there for 14 weeks with the final single, "Greatest Love of All," which became one of her biggest hits. The album became the first album by a female to yield three No. 1 hits.

Whitney Houston is recognized as the most awarded female musical artist of all time, having received 2 Emmy Awards, 6 Grammy Awards, 22 American Music Awards, and 30 Billboard Music Awards. She also holds numerous other distinctions, including the best selling single by a female artist in music history, first solo act to sell more than 1,000,000 copies of an album within a 1-week period, the only artist to chart 7 consecutive No. 1 Billboard Hot 100 hits. She also had the best selling movie soundtrack of all time, "The Bodyguard."

Beyond her professional career, Whitney Houston demonstrated her commitment to humanitarianism as a supporter of Nelson Mandela and the anti-apartheid movement, refusing to do business with agencies that did business with the then-apartheid South Africa. She also founded the Whitney Houston Foundation for Children, an organization that cared for the homeless and children with cancer and AIDS. And during the 2009-2010 academic school year, the Whitney E. Houston Academy of Creative and Performing Arts became a thriving, arts-focused institution that provides expanded educational opportunities for the student body and surrounding community.

There are many reasons why America will never forget Whitney Houston, but one of the most memorable was her performance of "The Star Spangled Banner" at Super Bowl XXV on January 27, 1991. That performance was so powerful that it was later released as a commercial single and the video of her performance reached the top 20 on the Billboard Hot 100, making her the only person to turn the national anthem into a pop hit of that magnitude.

Mr. President, it is with immense sadness but great honor that I recognize, commend, and celebrate the life and legacy of Whitney E. Houston, a star of New Jersey who went on to shine bright across the globe. I extend my deepest condolences to Whitney's mother Cissy Houston, daughter Bobbi

Kristina, her other family members and friends, and to her millions of fans.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

ECONOMIC REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT DATED FEBRUARY 2012 WITH THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS FOR 2012—PM 41

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Joint Economic Committee:

To the Congress of the United States:

One of the fundamental tenets of the American economy has been that if you work hard, you can do well enough to raise a family, own a home, send your kids to college, and put a little money away for retirement. That's the promise of America.

The defining issue of our time is how to keep that promise alive. We can either settle for a country where a shrinking number of people do very well while a growing number of Americans barely get by, or we can restore an economy where everyone gets a fair shot, everyone does their fair share, and everyone plays by the same set of rules.

Long before the recession that began in December 2007, job growth was insufficient for our growing population. Manufacturing jobs were leaving our shores. Technology made businesses more efficient, but also made some jobs obsolete. The few at the top saw their incomes rise like never before, but most hardworking Americans struggled with costs that were growing, paychecks that were not, and personal debt that kept piling up.

In 2008, the house of cards collapsed. We learned that mortgages had been sold to people who could not afford them or did not understand them. Banks had made huge bets and doled out big bonuses with other people's money. Regulators had looked the other way, or did not have the authority to stop the bad behavior. It was wrong. It was irresponsible. And it plunged our economy into a crisis that put millions out of work, saddled us with more debt, and left innocent,