

Family-operated All Seasons Sportswear continues growth

In 1998, coach and teacher Steve Wilbert was looking for a business to run in retirement when he and former business partner Ted Easter bought All Seasons Sportswear from Joe and Irene Howell.

Now, nearly two decades later, All Seasons Sportswear has grown from the small operation originally purchased to a family business providing an ever-increasing number of products and services.

“We’ve expanded quite dramatically in 18 years. It’s been a steady expansion,” Wilbert said. “When we first bought it, it was a small operation.”

At that time, the business occupied a location in Goddard, and as it expanded it moved to a location on Maize Road and then to its current, larger location at 7420 Northwind Cir. in Wichita.

The company still serves its traditional market of coaches and sports teams, but has added many other customers along the way, along with a growing menu of products and services.

“We don’t want to be seen as just a sportswear company,” Wilbert said,

Currently the business, which primarily serves custom-order customers rather than generalized retail, has more than 500 small business customers on the books, along with a number of teams, schools and organizations, providing all types of personalized printed

materials.

“We are custom decorators,” Wilbert said.

The company sells traditional letter jackets (to the tune of 600 a year) and sportswear but also can do screen printing, custom embroidery, vinyl printing, engraving, trophies, medallions and banners, among other products.

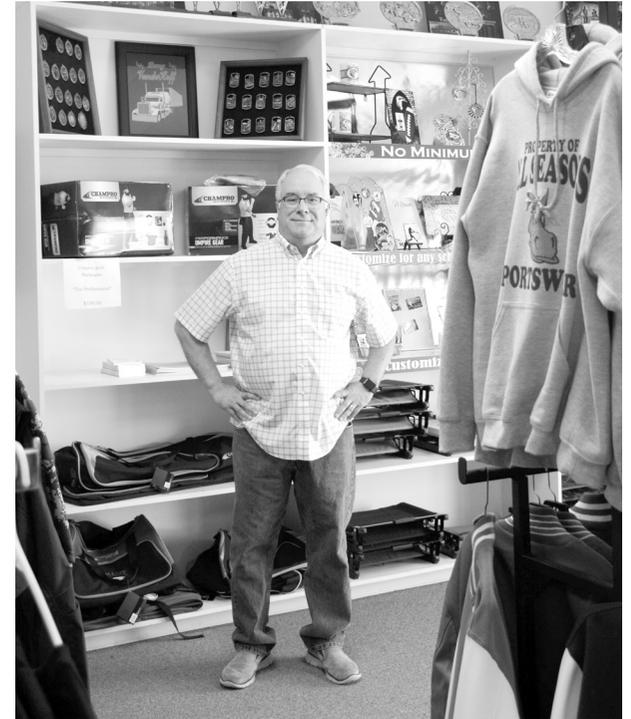
Wilbert said business continues to increase, prompting All Seasons Sportswear to upgrade its technology in order to keep up with demand, including the recent addition of an automatic screen-printing machine to handle larger jobs.

Along the way, many of Wilbert’s family members have become part of the operation, including his wife, who left her role as a daycare provider to run the business until Wilbert reached full retirement, as well as three sons, a daughter-in-law and a niece.

“This is a family business,” he said. “We have a direct interest in what we do here.”

Wilbert said keeping a small business moving forward takes a passion similar to the demands of coaching a team, and has been a fulfilling opportunity.

“I was a head football coach for years and I love coaching,” he said. “You have to have a game plan. You have to have organizational skill. You have to have strategy. This is a lot like coaching.”



All Seasons Sportswear owner Steve Wilbert shows off some of the merchandise in his store, located in northwest Wichita.