

15 Years of (201)

2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 **2008** 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018



An example of JVS' work

In 2005, Westwood-based JVS Landscaping (now JVS Christmas Lighting) started to move away from traditional landscaping and began to focus on installing lights for Christmas and other holidays. Nearly 15 years later, they have completely abandoned lawncare and now put all of their efforts towards lighting and decorating homes and businesses throughout Bergen and Rockland County. We caught up with “Chief Executive Elf” Joe Soccodato to discuss what has changed since we last spoke with him in 2008.

“The biggest change in the past 10 years is the technology,” Soccodato says. “It’s apples and bowling balls from the days of incandescent lighting. Now you have RGB lighting, and the ability to transform colors and work a whole lighting display off of your smartphone.”

While it’s not too late to have your home or business decorated for the holidays, Soccodato recommends getting an early start, since weather can often cause delays.

“We start decorating for the holidays in early October,” Soccodato says. “Everybody wants their decorations up the week of Thanksgiving, but that’s physically impossible. Scheduling early is better for everybody because this way, when you are feeling festive, you just plug in the cord and you’re ready to go.”

In addition to using more cost-effective LED lights, JVS also offers yearly or multi-year leases on their equipment where they setup, takedown and store everything in their own storage facility until the following year.

While Christmas is traditionally their most hectic time, there are more than enough projects to keep JVS busy the rest of the year.

“This has really become a year-round business,” Soccodato says. “We’ve expanded into patio and bistro lighting, wedding decorations, parties and events.

“Bistro and patio lighting have just been phenomenal for us,” he says. “Homeowners call us for more permanent installs since people are spending a lot more time on their decks, porches and gardens having special events and backyard barbecues.”

For more information, visit jvschristmaslighting.net

— JORAM MUSHINSKE

(201) NEIGHBORS

Bright Ideas

Joe Soccodato's Westwood company lights up his homeowner clients' holidays

PHOTO AND TEXT BY ANNE-MARIE CARUSO

When the holiday displays appear miraculously around Bergen and across the country each year, people like Joe Soccodato know full well the effort it took to mount them. Soccodato has been making customers' faces light up for about five years, when he expanded his Westwood business, JVS Landscaping, from the typical lawn maintenance and landscape design the company's name suggests.

The Washington Township resident and his wife, Kim, had always intended to support themselves in the off-season doing snow removal. But with some winters in northern

New Jersey light on the white stuff, the couple saw the – well, light. Now, they receive glowing recommendations from hundreds of home – and business owners who might not have the time – or the expertise – to install, maintain and take down the decorations themselves.

Whether for Christmas or Hanukkah, for a whole range of aesthetic tastes, for an elaborate display or something along simpler lines, Soccodato arrives for a consult, followed by his trusty team of “elves.” They take digital photos of the exterior, formulate a design with special software, obtain the customers' approval, and get quickly to work: “The window for our work is smaller than the eye of a needle,” he says proudly. For the increasingly “green” conscious, there are even energy-efficient LED lights. And when the season is over, Soccodato will store the equipment until next year, when his work will brighten things up all over again. ■

To contact JVS Landscaping Inc., call (201) 664-4022. Submit your ideas for “neighbors” to editor@201.net

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EXTERIOR: COURTESY OF JVS CHRISTMAS LIGHTING