

VOL. XXXVII NO. 6 | JUNE 2024

# BUSINESS

## MAGAZINE



**FAMILY OWNED BUSINESS  
CELEBRATES 65 YEARS OF QUALITY,  
CRAFTSMANSHIP AND SERVICE**

**SPOTLIGHT Q&A:**  
ROBINSON FANS PRESIDENT  
SHARES LEGACY, LEADERSHIP  
OF ZELIENOPLE-BASED COMPANY

**SPECIAL SECTION:**  
MBA UNVEILS NEW TRAINING  
CLASSES FOR SUMMER 2024



**W**alking through the 100,000-square-foot factory where Seaway Manufacturing Corp. makes its signature home improvement products, you'll find innovation and craftsmanship at work.

Here, in its home base of Erie, Pennsylvania, Seaway Manufacturing specializes in producing vinyl replacement windows, patio doors and sunrooms for builders, contractors and specialty home improvement remodelers in 25 states along the Eastern seaboard and west. In addition, its subsidiary, Seaway Window, sells and installs Seaway products and those not directly manufactured in its plants (entry doors, awnings — stationary and retractable — and other products) directly to homeowners and businesses in the Greater Erie region.

The Goodrich family, owners of Seaway, are proud of the investment they've made in their equipment and their employees to create the high-quality products for which they're known.

"Our differentiator has always been our quality and performance," explains President Patrick Goodrich. "We are not a low-cost supplier and prefer to provide high-quality, long-lasting products for a fair price."

This unwavering commitment to excellence — by the Goodriches, their team members and independent dealers — is one of the reasons for Seaway's continued success as it marks 65 years of operation in 2024.

"A milestone like this is really a proud moment for all of us," explains Chief Executive Officer Jana Goodrich. "We have pride in our products and our people, and to have that kind of longevity as a family focused business is very special. It's a real achievement to have been able to provide solid, sustainable living wages to our employees who, along with our loyal and diverse dealer network, we consider 'Seaway family.'"

#### A PROUD HISTORY

Seaway started as a partnership in 1959 when Robert J. Goodrich joined his former supplier and friend Gene

Friedman to form Seaway Aluminum in Erie's EBCO Park. Over the next 10 years, Seaway and its product offering continued to grow and relocated to its present home — which includes two facilities occupying 130,000 square feet — at 2250 East 33rd Street in 1965. When Friedman passed away, the Goodrich family became sole owners of Seaway in 1969, with Michael, Robert's son and U.S. Navy veteran, taking over leadership of the company in 1993. The Michael and Jana Goodrich family, including children Christine Goodrich Blashock and Patrick Goodrich, assumed full ownership in 2005.

Now retired after a more than 40-year career at Seaway, Michael serves as chairman of the board Jana and Patrick lead Seaway's day-to-day. Jana joined Seaway in 2010 as vice president, taking on greater roles and responsibilities leading to her current position as CEO.



## Family Owned Business Celebrates 65 Years of Quality, Craftsmanship and Service

▲ Seaway Manufacturing Corp. employs a team of 80 professionals, many of whom are shown here with (front row) President Patrick Goodrich, CEO Jana Goodrich and Chairman Michael Goodrich.

Featured as a CEO to Watch in 2022's *Family Business Magazine* and in *Door & Window Market Magazine* in 2014, Jana Goodrich has been recognized for numerous awards in her professional ventures. Prior to Seaway, she served as a territory marketing representative for Xerox and as a systems engineer for IBM. She also founded and ran a management consulting firm, earned her MBA and taught management and marketing at Penn State Behrend.

Patrick, who earned his mechanical engineering degree from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts, "started" at Seaway three times — first as a student sweeping floors, then as an installer and again in 2012 when he became operations engineer, paving the way to operations manager, vice president of operations, chief operating officer, and his current role as president. He previously worked as an applications engineer for a Fortune 500 company and spent two years supporting the window, door and glass industries as an application engineer for Fenetech.



▲ (Above) Partners Eugene Friedman and Robert J. Goodrich founded Seaway in 1959. The Robert J. Goodrich family took over sole ownership of the company in 1969, with the Michael and Jana Goodrich family assuming full ownership in 2005. (Left) Shown here are some of the station wagons and trucks used by Seaway in its early days. (Right) Today, Seaway Manufacturing is owned and operated by the Goodrich family. From left are: CEO Jana Goodrich, President Patrick Goodrich (seated) and Chairman Michael Goodrich.



▲ *Seaway Manufacturing is an industry leader in producing high-quality home improvement products, including vinyl replacement windows, sunrooms and patio doors. Its subsidiary, Seaway Window, sells and installs Seaway products and those not directly manufactured in its plants to homeowners and businesses in the Greater Erie region.*

Together, the Goodriches bring extensive knowledge and experience to their business and their industry. They also wear many hats and share responsibility for all major decisions at the company — both strategic and operational — as they transition from one generation to the next. “Being able to work with family every day is great and strengthens the family. It can have its challenges, but you know you have someone to count on in family,” explains Patrick. “Our success has been based on our tradition of working hard on what we have and always looking to the future.”

Determination, perseverance, long hours, trust and a deep faith guide the Goodriches, along with a practical approach to leadership. “Hire good people who are experts at what they do and let them shine,” Michael adds.

Indeed, the Goodriches credit their 80 dedicated and often long-tenured employees as a big factor in Seaway’s success. “They care greatly about quality and about making sure everything is right when a product goes out the door,” states Jana. “They are knowledgeable and eagerly train newer employees to carry on the traditions of excellence we’ve always maintained.”

Investing in its team and cutting-edge technology, Seaway has continued to push the boundaries of craftsmanship and product innovation in the product design, materials and glass coatings, solidifying its position as an industry leader for the next generation of homeowners. Most recently, Seaway invested roughly \$1 million in high-tech equipment to support a new Epiphany window line for the growing new construction, multi-family market — largely three-to-five story rental housing — and residential remodeling.

The Goodriches say their products are “high touch, high tech,” meaning that they work hard to incorporate the latest technology, but never at

the expense of quality, aesthetics, performance or durability. Although they utilize high-tech automation in production, Seaway’s automation is designed to ensure consistent quality. Human operators can be found throughout each line to handle and inspect for quality at each stage of production.

## LOYAL CUSTOMERS AND DEALERS

Perhaps the true measure of Seaway’s success lies not only in its products and robust warranty, but from its loyal customers and selective network of independent specialty home improvement dealers in the Eastern and Midwest United States — which includes many family owned businesses as well.

A proud Seaway dealer, John Hogan, president of WSA (Weather Sealco of Ashtabula) Inc., a third-generation home improvement installer/retailer, can attest to the 65-year relationship with Seaway and what he describes as the best product in the marketplace for vinyl replacement windows. “There’s a lot of trust that’s been built up over the years, and that’s a great part of our relationship. But No. 1 is the quality of the product, which is why we continue to buy from them. Their customer service is also exceptional due to the family feel we get when we talk with their employees.”

It’s a sentiment shared by Sean Noonan, owner of Central Mass Sunrooms in Auburn, Massachusetts. Noonan, who started his business in 2008 when his former employer decided to close, immediately reached out to several sunroom companies to find a good supplier. He initially worked with Jana and Michael, and eventually Pat, who happened to go to the same college as Noonan’s nephew who is also in the business.

“It’s been a wonderful relationship, and I would assume they would say the same. We’re one of their only Northeast sunroom-only companies, and we’ve kind of stuck with that just because we’ve specialized in it,” Noonan says. “But it always comes down to the product. Most everyone, once they have our product, they love it, which is Seaway’s product.”

Ken Mariotti, owner and president of Woodland Windows & Doors, also a family owned business, located in the Chicago suburb of Roselle, Illinois, has been a Seaway dealer for close to 20 years. Mariotti can attest to the quality, design, features and warranty of Seaway products. He is equally impressed with the company’s leadership, now working with Patrick Goodrich. “He’s an engineer, so he understands the details of how product relates to wall construction, how it relates to how it integrates with the home. Any time I had questions, Patrick was quick to respond and added a lot of value to any scope of project that I worked on. He brings a lot of breadth for the next generation.”



## LASTING LEGACY

From its founding principles of integrity and quality to its embrace of innovation and technology, Seaway’s lasting legacy is that of the Goodrich family. As the owners look to the future, they do so with optimism, confidence and a deep sense of pride.

“Our focus on industry-leading products, consistent premium quality manufacturing and unsurpassed service remain at the top of our list, as well as providing a great place to work for our team,” notes Jana. “We will continue to pursue controlled growth with a focus on constantly building for the future, allowing us to maintain and extend our long tradition as both an employer and as a supporter of the greater Erie community.”

For more information, visit [seawaymfg.com](http://seawaymfg.com) or [seawaywindow.com](http://seawaywindow.com).



*Seaway’s commitment to the region begins with its history of employing local craftspeople and extends to its involvement both past and present in numerous civic and charitable organizations, including:*

- National Glass Association
- National Sunroom Association
- Manufacturer & Business Association
- United Way’s associated groups Erie Women’s Fund and Erie Women United
- City of Erie–Mayor’s Business Council
- Penn State Behrend–Black School of Business Advisory Council and Council of Fellows
- Penn State Behrend Center for Family Business
- Donations and support to numerous local organizations



▲ *Seaway is a high-tech, high-touch manufacturer that continues to invest in its employees and equipment, supplying products to 25 states.*