



Contributed photos

Pictured from left are Brian Clouden, Jeff SgROI, Patrick SgROI and John Clouden of SgROI Financial. Right, SgROI Financials' office building in 1981 when the company first moved to 965 Union Road.

Second-generation family business hits 50-year milestone

By Lian Bunny
SUN STAFF REPORTER

When Patrick SgROI started work at his father Joe's company in 1991, his dad gave him a little note reminding him to always be professional and keep high standards.

Now decades later and after his father's death in 2017, Patrick, who now serves as president of the company, said he still keeps the sheet in his desk drawer as a reminder of what he was taught.

"Treat people the way you want to be treated," he said. "My dad was big on honesty and integrity."

The second-generation family business hit its 50-year anniversary earlier this month. SgROI Financial, founded by Joe in 1971 and currently located at 965 Union Road, has been based in the Town of West Seneca for most of its existence and currently employs 26 people, according to Patrick.

In the past, SgROI Financial's celebrations such as its 40th anniversary involved a venue that fits 500 to 600 people. However, with the ongoing pandemic, that isn't possible right now, but Patrick hopes to hold an event in the future when it's safe to do so, he said.

Joe, the company's founder, was



Joe SgROI started SgROI Financial and his son Patrick SgROI has taken the reins.

the youngest personnel manager at General Mills when his Air Force Reserve unit was activated in 1968. He returned to General Mills' C-CEL-O Sponge Division after serving for a year in the Vietnam War and looked for a new career after the company wanted to transfer him to another city, according to published reports.

He was also involved with the local community, including serving



as past president and board chair of the West Seneca Chamber of Commerce and he was an honorary life member of the West Seneca Rotary Club where he also served as president and board chairman, among the many his many group and organization involvements.

He and a friend Don Reeves started a personnel business in 1971 and then got licensed with Bankers Life Insurance, now Principal

Financial Group. That was the start of SgROI Financial, and the company later transitioned from predominantly insurance to financial planning around 1983, according to Patrick.

A true family business, Patrick said at one point he, his father, his mother Betsy and his late brother Jeffrey worked together at SgROI Financial.

Jeffrey, who was the business' chief financial officer, as well as a baseball coach at St. Francis High School, died in 2016 from cancer.

Patrick still works with his uncle John Clouden, business partner and senior vice president, and his cousin Brian Clouden, vice president. Plus, his son Timothy joined the company in September after graduating from college.

What also makes the SgROI family business unique, according to Patrick, is that a "large portion" of the company's business is second, third or fourth generation clients.

"They've really become like extended family and friends," he said. "The relationships we have with them go well beyond investments."

Joe Kirchmyer, West Seneca Chamber of Commerce executive director, said SgROI Financial and the SgROI family have been an important part of the West Seneca

business community and the town as a whole for many decades.

"They are a tremendous supporter of our town, our residents, our schools and our many service organizations," he said. "They are leaders in every sense of the word, and we applaud their ongoing efforts to make West Seneca a great place to live and work. Here's to the next 50 years."

SgROI Financial has been involved with the West Seneca community from high school scholarships for local seniors to an annual memorial golf tournament fundraiser in honor of Jeffrey SgROI to continue his good work in the community, according to Patrick.

Patrick is also one of the four West Seneca Central School District alumni who as a group purchased a vacant lot and building at 555 Orchard Park Road and are working toward opening a restaurant and brewery there later this year.

Based on SgROI Financial's 50-year milestone, it seems Joe SgROI's business philosophies held true, his son said.

"He always believed if you treated people well and took care of them, it would fall into place," Patrick said. "It's very important to me to continue his legacy and continue to take care of clients."