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OWNER BLENDS EXPERIENCE,
AND EDUCATION TO STAY ON TOP

SHAFFER BUILDING SERVICES

TAKES PRIDE IN SAFETY, QUALITY, SURVIVAL INSTINCT

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SHAFFER BUILDING SERVICES TAKES PRIDE IN SAFETY, QUALITY, SURVIVAL INSTINCT

MARTHA E. CONWAY

For more than 40 years, Shaffer Building Services, specialists in commercial roofing, have been going above and beyond to meet customer needs around the northeast. Originally founded as E.A. Shaffer & Sons, Inc., Shaffer Building Services acquired Giarrosso Sheet Metal Corporation in 2006. Purchase of Giarrosso, with a history dating back to 1888, allowed Shaffer Building Services to expand services to include custom sheet metal projects.

Brothers Andrew and Patrick Shaffer have operated the business since their father Eugene's retirement in 1996.

Shaffer Building Services specialize in the installation of new roofing systems, re-roofing, standing seam roofing systems, sheet metal installation and fabrication, historical recreations and roofing-related fabrications. Additional services include emergency leak and roof repairs, ice and snow removal, heat trace installation, and roof drain repairs.

The latest trend is the installation of green – literally – roofs. In 2011, Shaffer Building Services installed a green roofing system on the Monroe Building in downtown Syracuse. The project converted approximately 5,200 square feet of rooftop surface to a vegetative roof expected to reduce run-off by 91,581 gallons annually. Shaffer Building Services also installed the green roofing system on the Gear Building in downtown Syracuse.

"The biggest and toughest challenge to arise during the past 30 years has been the increasing cost of Liability and Workers' Compensation Insurance in New York State," Patrick Shaffer said.

New York State has Labor Laws 240 and 241 on the books, these laws, which were written before Workers' Compensation insurance was mandated in 1914, hold contractors strictly liable for employees in falls from height. New York State is the only state in the union, which still has these laws on the books, which in turn create a litigious atmosphere in New York State.



Patrick and Andrew Shaffer pose with their Giarrosso tin man.

These laws prevent contractors from defending themselves in liability suits, even though the employees have been trained in safe working practices.

"We hold a weekly safety meeting every Monday to review safe working practices, we provide all required safety gear for our employees, and we send our employees to

the 10-Hour OSHA training course, all of this to provide a safe working environment for our employees," said Patrick Shaffer. "We believe we should have the right to defend ourselves from frivolous and unfounded suits that claim we did not provide a safe work place."

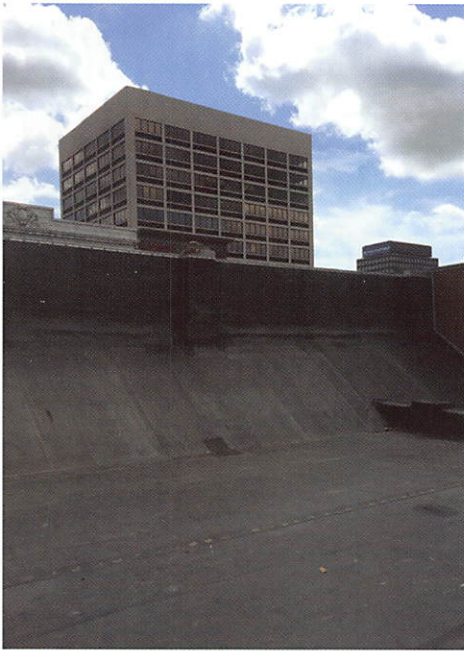
"These laws drive up the cost of projects to building owners and taxpayers" said Andrew Shaffer. "For example, if I see an employee doing an unsafe act, and I admonish that employee and tell them to not act in that manner, and then the employee

does exactly what I told him or her not to do, and the employee falls from height. We are strictly liable, and have no ability to defend ourselves, if that employee brings a lawsuit against us. This even though that employee has been told, and trained not to act in that manner."

"I have been to Albany many times over the past 15 years as part of the 'Small Business Lobby' day with the Syracuse Builders Exchange,

to try and get these 100-year old laws rewritten, so we may at least show that employees have some responsibility to act in a safe and compliant manner," Andrew Shaffer said.

In addition to liability and Workers' Compensation insurances, payroll taxes and operating expenses are constantly on the rise.



New Sky Armory Building (Downtown, Syracuse) - EPDM (Rubber) Roof



RAV Properties (Thompson Road, Syracuse) - Insulated TPO (Thermal Plastic) Roof, 140,000 Sq,Ft

Shaffer Building Services and Giarrosso Sheet Metal employ 27 full-time and one part-time employee.

According to Andrew Shaffer, the business has to work with municipal leaders often, sometimes having to shut down roads to do work. He said Syracuse has been wonderful in its cooperation to get these projects completed.

Andrew Shaffer said selling projects and installing complete roofing systems are his favorite part of the job, both in the private sector and public works.

“Our success, allows us to be selective about the jobs we bid,” Andrew Shaffer said.

The company also does warranty work for numerous large-volume manufacturers.

“We pretty much cover the northeast and have been as far south as North Carolina,” Andrew Shaffer said. “It just depends on the job and our relationship with the client.”

During the next five years, Andrew Shaffer said he would like to expand the estimating staff and add crews.

“I’m getting to where I would like to plan for retirement, and I want to make sure everything will go smoothly when I do,” Andrew Shaffer said.

“The thing that we are most proud of is being able to survive in New York’s business climate and provide good-paying jobs and benefits for our employees for more than 35 years,” said Patrick Shaffer.

“It is good to know you treat your clients and employees fairly, and go above and beyond in the job,” Andrew Shaffer said. “We provide a very safe workplace – we are committed to safety. When new employees are hired, I tell them the first three things they are going to learn are safety, safety, and safety.

“Then we talk about job quality,” Andrew Shaffer said. “We’ve never emphasized speed in an installation or repair because we expect quality.”

Shaffer Building Services would like to stress the importance of regular preventive maintenance and inspections of roofs, drains and gutters. In order to prolong the life expectancy of any roofing membrane, they recommend all roofs be inspected for possible leaks, penetrations, seam separations and drain functionality by a qualified roofing technician on a regular basis.

Most service calls occur after a roof has failed and can result in more costly repairs; at times, damages may include merchandise, computers, furniture, ceiling repairs and carpeting. The inspection service they provide will include a detailed report on the condition of the roof, along with recommendations in prolonging the life for all roofing applications.

Shaffer Building Services, Inc., is located at 120 Ball Circle, Syracuse, New York. 315.471.4500 FAX: 315.471.4535 Email: Office@ShafferBuildingServices.com www.ShafferBuildingServices.com Hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays for emergencies only