

Bobcat Celebrates Production of ONE MILLIONTH LOADER

Producing one million Bobcat loaders is not only an unparalleled industry achievement that has impacted the livelihood of compact equipment users worldwide; it has also touched the lives of thousands more who have designed, built and backed generations of Bobcat loaders for nearly 60 years.

Bobcat Company marked this tremendous milestone with a formal ceremony on July 12, sharing the occasion with its valued employees and the community of Gwinner, N.D., home to Bobcat's primary production facility. The company also celebrated with family members of those who invented



▲ Bobcat Company and Doosan North America President Rich Goldsbury addresses the crowd at the Bobcat Company Millionth Loader Celebration.



▲ Above Left: The millionth Bobcat skid-steer loader rolls off the line and out of the Gwinner factory. Above Right: Two loaders rolled off the line during the Millionth Loader ceremony: loader number one-million, a skid-steer loader; and loader number one-million-one, a compact track loader version.



▲ Above Left: North Dakota Lt. Gov. Drew Wrigley addresses the crowd. Above Right: North Dakota U.S. Senator John Hoeven.

ALL PHOTOS PROVIDED BY BOBCAT COMPANY

the original loader, perfected the design, brought it to market and created the brand five decades ago. Past organizational leaders and hundreds of others who have been part of the Bobcat success story were also present at the event.

The ceremony was held at the Gwinner factory, and featured remarks from Rich Goldsbury, president of Bobcat and Doosan (parent company of Bobcat) for North America; Gwinner Mayor Dan McKeever; North Dakota Lt. Gov. Drew Wrigley; North Dakota Sen. John Hoeven; and North Dakota Congressman Kevin Cramer. Sylvan Melroe, one of the organization's first marketing managers, talked about the perseverance of the Melroe family, who owned Melroe Manufacturing, and built the first Bobcat loaders. He reflected upon the early days of the loader — as it transitioned from the original three-wheeled version to the skid-steer loader we know today — and how Melroe Manufacturing improved the design that became increasingly tested by challenging jobs the more the machine grew in popularity.

Cyril Keller, one of the brothers who invented the original three-wheeled loader and soon after partnered with Melroe Manufacturing, was on-hand as well.

The ceremony culminated with a product line roll-off of a Special Edition One-Millionth Bobcat Loader, which Bobcat is selling in limited quantities through authorized dealers.

“This entire celebration is about much more than a single loader, the actual millionth machine,” said Goldsbury. “It represents everything Bobcat has accomplished as an organization over six decades, and it signifies our vision for the future. We embrace and honor our history, so it was particularly special to have some of the company's pioneers and early leaders here. But we wanted to bring them together with those who are moving us forward into the new era — those who will help us build the next million loaders.”

A DAY FILLED WITH EVENTS

The general public was invited to an assortment of Bobcat-sponsored events, including a 5K run/walk in Gwinner, Bobcat factory tours, carnival-type festivities in the Gwinner Park and a “Bobcat square dance” loader performance by four brothers who have 130 years of combined service at Bobcat Company. The Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM) also made the Gwinner event a stop on its “I Make America” nationwide tour, which advocates for pro-manufacturing policies to create more jobs in the United States and keep the economy competitive with other countries. Attendees over the age of 18 could enter to win a 2014 Harley-Davidson Road King featuring a custom “I Make America” paint job.

“It was particularly special to host the ‘I Make America’ tour,” said Goldsbury. “Bobcat is a great manufacturing success story for

Timeline

1960 — Invented the first true skid-steer loader.



1962 — The name “Bobcat” is used for the first time on the new and improved model M-440.

1970 — The exclusive Bob-Tach mounting system is introduced, allowing fast and easy attachment changes for Bobcat loaders.

1981 — The 743 loader is introduced.



1999 — Introduced the first compact track loader with a solid-mounted undercarriage manufactured in the United States.

2009 — Launched M-Series compact loader line.



2011 — The M-Series loader models S850 and T870 became the largest and most powerful in the Bobcat lineup.



2013 — The M-Series 500 frame-size loaders replaced the popular S185 and T190. This loader size is the most popular in the world and has been for two decades.



2014 — Produced the millionth Bobcat loader.



— Information and photos provided by Bobcat Company.

so many reasons — from the generations that have been employed to the products they've produced. Thousands of Bobcat employees have given many global customers the tools they use to make a living."

Bobcat Company also helped Gwinner city officials dedicate three welcome signs at different entrances to town signifying "Home of Bobcat, one million loaders and counting."

The company celebrated the production of 500,000 loaders in 2001 and 750,000 units in conjunction with its 50th anniversary in 2008. The million loaders built by Bobcat represent the largest production of this equipment by any manufacturer globally.

AN "UNSTOPPABLE" FORCE

To commemorate the year-long celebration, Bobcat developed the "Unstoppable" campaign, which recognizes the company's rich history and heritage, yet illustrates its plans to continue to set the pace in the compact equipment markets it serves.

The celebration started in January, as Bobcat Company launched a contest that ran through June, asking participants to answer the

question, "How does Bobcat make you unstoppable?" The grand prize winner will receive a Special Edition One-Millionth Bobcat Loader. Bobcat unveiled its Special Edition One-Millionth Bobcat Loaders at the CONEXPO-CON/AGG trade show in Las Vegas in March.

Bobcat Company social media channels — Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google Plus, Flickr and YouTube — feature various elements of the celebration and Unstoppable content and promotions. Fans and followers can participate in merchandise giveaways and trivia contests, show pride by selecting a "pride badge," share stories and read about how others are joining in the celebration. A special app enables customers to upload photos, and apply a custom "One Million Strong" treatment. Several celebration-focused videos are available as well.

"The ceremony in Gwinner is a great centerpiece to what we are doing to celebrate all year," Goldsbury said. "But it doesn't start or end with this. 'Unstoppable' is a theme that started in January, and we still have a lot of celebration time left in 2014 and beyond." ■

Information provided by Bobcat Company.



▲ **Left:** Pictured are descendants of the Melroe and Dahl families. The Melroe and Dahl families helped the original Melroe Manufacturing Company produce, market and brand the original Bobcat loader. Sylvan Melroe (pictured in the blue shirt, far right, first row) was one of the company's original advertising managers. **Middle:** Bobcat Company and Doosan North America President Rich Goldsbury and Cy Keller, one of the inventors of the original loader. **Right:** Bobcat Company and the City of Gwinner, North Dakota dedicated three signs at entrances to town; they signify that Gwinner is "Home of Bobcat, one million loaders and counting."

The loader that launched an industry

The Million Loader celebration honors the revolutionary three-wheeled loader engineered by brothers Cyril and Louis Keller of Rothsay, Minn., designed to clean turkey manure out of barns. Second-generation Melroe Manufacturing Company leaders — sons of founder Edward Gideon "E.G." Melroe — Clifford, Lester, Roger and Irving Melroe; and their brother-in-law Eugene Dahl saw strong potential for the machine to meet the needs of any livestock farmer.

In 1958, the Gwinner-based manufacturer bought the rights to this innovative three-

wheeled loader, and Louis and Cyril Keller became employees of the Melroe Manufacturing Company, assigned to put the loader into production.

The Keller Loader, as the original machine was called, was improved with a larger 9-horsepower engine, and a new product line for the Melroe Company was born — the M-60, a three-wheeled Melroe self-propelled loader. It was the forerunner of what became the Bobcat skid-steer loader, and ultimately launched the compact equipment industry.

Then, in 1960, the company built the first

true skid-steer loader with four-wheel drive. In 1962, the loaders were branded "Bobcat" after the "tough, quick and agile" prairie animal.

Today, the Bobcat name still matches the performance qualities of the enduring international brand. Bobcat Company has become North Dakota's largest manufacturer with more than 2,000 employees in the state. Bobcat products have representation through more than 900 dealers in more than 100 countries with production facilities in Gwinner, Bismarck and Wahpeton, N.D.; Litchfield, Minn.; France and the Czech Republic.