

WALKER TALK

‘I
DON’T
FISH
OR
HUNT,
BUT...’

JEREMY NICHOLS OF 4N LAWN CARE
COLLECTS WALKER MOWERS



VOL. 54

PERCEPTION ISN'T ALWAYS REALITY



WALKER FACTORY DAY





3 'I don't hunt or fish, but...'

From trains to yellow compact mowers, Jeremy Nichols likes all types of equipment.

6 Perception isn't always reality

Walker dealers and users find transporting mowers as easy as 1-2-3.

9 From zero to 65 in just four years

A dream comes true for Brenda Bailey.

12 'Excellence is our standard'

Greenwood Village, Colorado parks staff conquers the turf.

14 A model of efficiency

Walker Mowers are just the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

18 News & Products



WALKER TALK is published by AC Business Media, 201 N. Main Street, Fort Atkinson, WI 53538. Phone (920) 542-1131. Printed in the U.S., copyright 2018 Canada Post PM40612608. Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: (WALKER TALK), Station A, PO Box 25542, London ON N6C 6B2.

WALKER TALK

OUR STORY CONTINUES

Forty years ago we made our first public introduction of the Walker Mower at a farm equipment show in Kansas. We were showing our 3rd prototype as a market test, and with the encouragement we received from farmers at the show, we started working on building our first batch of 25 machines in 1980. As I think back over the years, a lot has happened in our industry. There have been many manufacturers of lawn mowers and other power equipment that have come and gone; quite a few well-known brand names have disappeared.

How is it that Walker Mowers have now been on the market this many years while many of our earlier contemporaries are gone? Although there are some interesting stories to tell, I would not pretend to know the cause of all the manufacturers and brand names leaving the market, nor would I want to highlight the negative. What I think is interesting to share are the operating principles and philosophies that we believe have kept Walker in the market and thriving across the years:


- We have stayed focused on the Walker Mower. While it might be tempting to add other product lines and “diversify”, we have concentrated our resources and investment in the mower product line to achieve the best possible outcome.
- We keep moving ahead, working continuously to take new opportunities, improve our products and programs, and utilize new technology when available and appropriate.
- Not obsessing about growth is a great help. We see growth as an outcome of doing everything else right in the business and doing our best with the opportunity we have. It is an advantage for a family-owned business to not compromise long-term results in order to reach short-term growth goals.
- It is a priority to keep being an independent company and to maintain financial control. Being independent means we can make our own decisions, keep our promises, keep our commitments and honor investments made by others.
- Designing and building a unique “original design” machine with superior performance and quality makes us stand apart in the market—supplying a product not available from other manufacturers.
- We are a relationship-based company. We seek and treasure long-term relationships with our suppliers, factory employees, distributors, dealers and end-customers. Operating family-style emphasizes the value of individual people and relationships in the whole enterprise known as Walker Mower.
- We have carefully planned and worked for the transfer of the business ownership and management to the next generation of Walker family members.

Finally, we recognize God's hand and His help have made it possible for us to be in the lawn mower business for these 40 years, and we are grateful.

Bob Walker

Bob Walker, President





4N maintains more than a dozen
high-end residential properties
like this one in Enid, Okla.

“I DON’T HUNT OR FISH, BUT...”

I collect Walker Mowers,” said Jeremy Nichols, who, with wife Sara, owns and operates 4N LawnCare in Medford, OK. In business only three years, the couple already have four Walker Mowers, six decks, and a couple of attachments, including a dethatcher and blade. One mower is also equipped with a Power Dump and another with a Hi-Dump.

The small fleet maintains a range of accounts, all the way from large, four-acre properties, including more than a dozen high-end residential homes, to small properties in Medford and nearby Enid.

It all began when Jeremy and Sara wanted to instill an early work ethic in their oldest son, Jake.

“That first summer, we mowed a neigh-

bor’s yard and picked up a few more, smaller yards around town,” said Sara, recalling that one of their first mowers was one given to them by a neighbor. “It wasn’t long, however, before my husband expanded the idea into a business plan for a new company.

“I’ve always liked to mow, and the thought of having our own business was attractive to me,” Jeremy explained. “I’m a locomo-

“My goal was to grow, and I wanted to have machines that would allow me to expand quickly.”

– Jeremy Nichols, 4N LawnCare

tive engineer and spend a lot of time away from home. If we could grow the business, just maybe I could one day get off the train and get on board mowing lawns full-time in Medford and surrounding communities.”

GOOD ADVICE

Jeremy’s grandfather gave him some sound advice several years ago. He told his grandson, “You can make a living doing almost anything if you do enough of it.” The message: Find something you like to do and do it well.

Early in the second year, 4N signed a contract to mow 28 retail stores. It was time to find a better and more efficient way to get the job done. Jeremy said he had never heard of a Walker Mower but in doing some research, he found the Walker website, read the company mission statement, and viewed several videos of the mower in action.

“I was sold. I found a dealer and ordered a Model T with a GHS deck, and then purchased a Model B with a mulching deck,” he said. “My goal was to grow, and I wanted to have machines that would allow me to expand quickly. With the railroad job, I didn’t have a lot of spare time. I needed to be efficient two years ago, and I still need to be efficient today.”

He recently purchased two more Walker Mowers, another Model T and a Model H. This spring, an area welding shop also fabricated a hydraulic bucket for his dump truck.

“The bucket lift negates my reason for originally purchasing the Hi-Dump attachment, to stack grass high on my first trailer, but it is part of an ongoing effort to find the most efficient way to handle clippings,” Jeremy said.

For 4N, every machine and every attachment has a purpose.

“I purchased the 42-inch deck to go through gates,” he said. “For maintaining a



cemetery, we often use three decks: a side-discharge and mulching deck for wide areas and a GHS deck for mowing around the headstones. The Model H with a 52-inch rear-discharge deck will make quick work of our larger properties. The dethatcher assists

with spring cleanup. We scalp the Bermuda grass with a collection deck, and the dozer blade fills in irrigation trenches.”

When not driving the train or mowing lawns, 4N’s owner earned the requisite licenses to offer a full-service to customers



The 4N family (l to r). Sara, Jake, Atley, and Jeremy.



Jeremy originally purchased his Hi-Dump for loading grass clippings on a trailer. A dump truck with hydraulic bucket lift may prove to be even more efficient as his company grows.

COMMON BONDS

One would think driving a locomotive and operating a Walker Mower have little in common.

“Not so,” said Jeremy. “First, I enjoy operating equipment, all equipment from large locomotives to compact yellow mowers. Then, every train and the load it hauls is different, just as every yard is different. One day, I may be hauling new automobiles. On another, it might be grain or container cars. Back home, I may be mowing an HOA or a larger residential property, followed by a smaller back yard. In both cases, either driving a train or operating a mower, you just can’t sit back and forget about what you’re doing or stop thinking about ways to do it better.

“Having the right equipment for the task at hand makes such a difference, he continued.

“I’ve purchased different Walker Mowers and different decks to match the application, and you can’t imagine how much time and

labor a power dump, Hi-Dump, or even a bucket lift saves compared to handling grass clippings manually,” he said. “Yes, being able to offer a service such as fertilization brings in additional revenue, but equally important, it gives us more control over a property to mow and otherwise maintain it on our schedule.”

When he says “us,” Jeremy is talking about Sara and Jake. Both mow lawns and keep the business going when he is out of town on the train. On some of the larger properties all three might be on the Walker Mowers, with younger son, Atley, beginning to learn the ropes, as well.

“We are expanding very quickly,” Jeremy emphasized. He glanced over at his wife for a moment and added,

“Maybe too quickly at times from Sara’s perspective. But we both have the same goal in mind. It’s just a matter of how soon we want to get there.” ☺



Jeremy and Sara started mowing to help instill a work ethic in their oldest son Jake, pictured here. Little did they know their plan would blossom into a business.

who wanted irrigation, fertilization, and pesticide application.

This year, the company added another service by purchasing an Eco top dresser, and it launched a forum on Facebook to share ideas with other new Walker Mower users.

WHEN IT COMES TO SPACE, PERCEPTION ISN'T

Walker dealers, users have found that transporting their mowers is as easy as 1-2-3

One concern potential users of out-front mowers have is space. Say skeptical operators, “I would consider an out-front mower if I could get two, maybe three, on my trailer. There’s no way I can afford to buy a new trailer, maybe even a new truck, just to accommodate them.”

There’s a mower for every application, and professional mowing contractors do their best work when they find a machine that fits theirs. To forsake that machine because of space concerns, in this case because an out-front deck seemingly takes up too much space, would be both unfortunate and unnecessary.

Veteran Walker Mower dealers and users have found that transporting their machines is as easy as 1-2-3: loading them on their trailers, tilting up their front decks, and positioning them to accommodate another zero-turn mower, push mower, or whatever needs to be hauled to the next property.

AS EASY AS 1-2-3:

→ **LOAD**
mowers on
trailer

→ **TILT** up
front decks

→ **POSITION** to
accommodate
another mower

“We move Walker Mowers all the time and don’t want to make extra trips when delivering them,” said Ed Struk, technician with ACE Power Equipment in Cream Ridge, NJ. “Hauling them with a 16-foot trailer, I drive them up the ramp, tip up the deck, put my knee on the seat, and gently turn each one 90 degrees so they line up nice and straight. This way we can get four mowers with 48-inch decks on the trailer, and maybe more if they have smaller decks.”

He continued, “Not only does tipping the deck make it easy for delivering to customers, it is a great selling point. We have made many sales at our dealership just by advertising the



benefits of fitting more mowers on the trailer.”

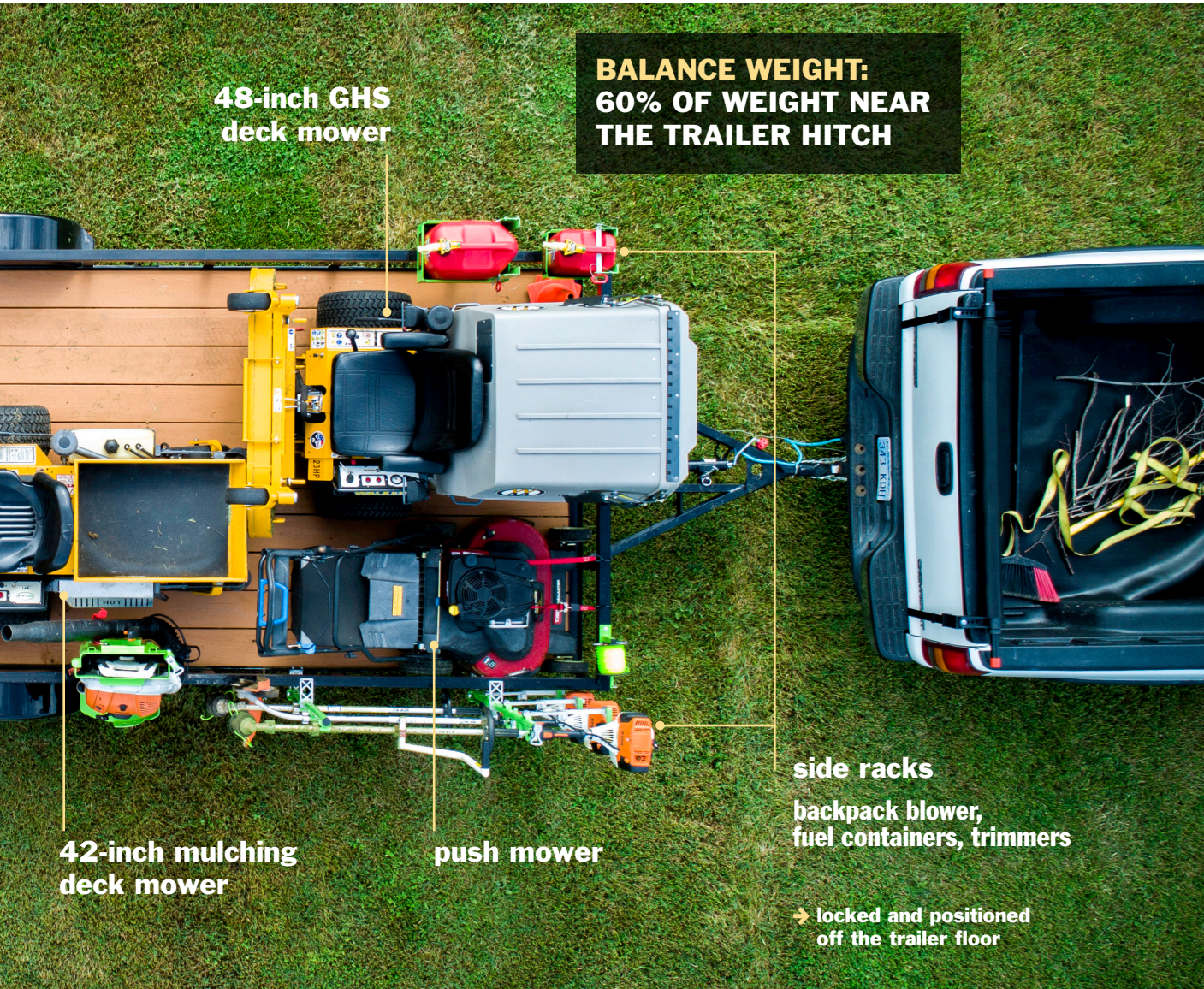
Unless you’re an operator maintaining large commercial properties, hauling around four Walker Mowers at a time would be unusual. Trailering one or two is a more likely scenario, something that Marcus Buchanan,

owner of Allegiant Lawn Care in Rose Hill, KS, has been doing for three years.

He relates two loading configurations for his 18-foot tandem axle trailer.

“I usually haul two Walker Mowers and a push mower to my properties,” Buchanan

ALWAYS REALITY



📍 Aerial view shows mower configuration, along with Marcus Buchanan's organizational side.

📍 When hauling two Walker Mowers and a push mower, Marcus Buchanan doesn't tip the decks, but loads the one with the mulching deck last.

Thomas Buchanan Photography



🔗 **Steve Lezzer gets three mowers on his demo trailer, including a Model H with a 52 or 64-inch deck, using a slightly different approach.**

said. “One mower has a 48-inch GHS deck and the other a 42-inch mulching deck. Since I mulch about 70 percent of the time, that mower is loaded last. I can easily fit both mowers on the trailer with plenty of room for a push mower nestled next to the GHS mower even without tilting the decks.”

With the second configuration, Buchanan adds a 27 hp Model H to the mix. Once again, he backs them all on, his GHS mower first, followed by the mulching mower and the Model H. He sets the parking brake and tilts all the decks, leaving enough space between the mowers and decks so they don’t rub against one another.

“When loading, I position the push mower to the back, next to the GHS mower, and strap it down. Walker Manufacturing recommends strapping the decks down, as well, so they don’t bounce around and damage the rear caster wheels or another machine. I don’t show that here, but the decks would be strapped in transport,” said Buchanan.

Steve Lezzer, a lawn maintenance contractor for 20 years and a demo rep

for Walker Distributor Lawn Equipment Enterprises in Waycross, GA, follows a slightly different approach to loading his Walker Mowers.

“I can get three on my 16-foot demo trailer by backing the first one up and tilting the deck,” he said. “Then, I drive the second one up, tilt its deck, and turn it 90 degrees. Finally, I back the third one up and tilt the deck.”

Loading this way, he can haul around an H-Series with either a 52-inch or 64-inch rear-discharge deck, a B-Series with a 56-inch side-discharge deck, and a Model S

or T with a 42 or 48-inch deck. All three are strapped down before he hits the road.

TRAILER TIPS

Both Buchanan and Lezzer have a few additional tips for loading equipment. Buchanan admits to being an organizational buff. Notice in the aerial view how fuel containers, the backpack blower, and trimmers all have their place in special side racks. The racks keep them off the trailer floor and from bouncing around, and all three can be locked.

He also strives to keep his loads balanced, with approximately 60 percent of the weight near the trailer hitch and 40 percent to the rear.

Lezzer advises operators to ensure the trailer is level before loading.

“If the ramp is too steep, there’s a chance the deck will catch on the ramp’s hinge point,” he emphasized. “Making sure the mower deck is at a high position will help guard against this, as well.”

Trailers come in all sorts of sizes and configurations, and they haul a wide variety of equipment. When it comes to hauling Walker Mowers, however, perception isn’t always reality when it comes to saving space. 🍌



🔗 **“Tipping the deck is a great selling point,” said Ed Struk, technician with ACE Power Equipment in Cream Ridge, NJ. “We have made many sales at our dealership just by advertising the benefits of fitting more mowers on the trailer.”**



Brenda Bailey (on the left) initially worked alone. Two years ago, her sister Cindy joined in to lend a helping hand and has since stayed on full time.

A dream to one day put the leisurely pursuits to work in her own company came true

FROM ZERO TO 65 IN FOUR YEARS

Brenda Bailey always enjoyed mowing and gardening. Her dream was to one day put the leisurely pursuits to work in her own company. The dream came true four years ago when she quit her job of 13 years and started mowing lawns in her neighborhood.

“One of my first mowers was a Ferris. I liked it well enough, but it was just too big for the residential properties I was maintaining,” she recalled. “When a friend asked me to help mow a 55-and-over community, it became obvious I needed something more

compact and maneuverable. He suggested a Walker Mower and that’s what I purchased, a model T-25 with a 52-inch GHS deck.”

That was two years ago in August. Now, Creative Hands Landscape Design, located in Shippensburg, PA, has another Walker Mower, a B-23i with a 48-inch mulching deck. The young company also has a mulching deck for its first Walker Mower, along with a dethatcher and snowblower attachment.

TIME IS MONEY

Brenda initially worked alone. Two years

ago, her sister Cindy joined in to lend a helping hand and has since stayed on full-time. Together they “touch” 65 accounts.

Brenda said “touch” because her company doesn’t provide full-service on every property every week. Some customers want their lawns mowed bi-weekly and others may choose from a menu of services that includes seasonal color, mulching, dethatching, shrub and tree trimming, and even power washing. Last year, the snowblower attachment was also put to work on 22 driveways.

Still, mowing, which the sisters do five



Creative Hands Landscape Design purchased its first Walker Mower, a T-25, two years ago. The young company now has a second one, a B23i with a 48-inch mulching deck.

“Customers tell us we don’t just mow a lawn, we manicure it”

Brenda Bailey,
Creative Hands Landscape Design

days a week, accounts for most of their work, and handling grass clippings was becoming counterproductive for them.

“We were spending too much time picking up clippings, putting them in the trailer, and dumping them. Time is money, which is the main reason we went with the two mulching decks this year,” Brenda explained. “They do an awesome job, although it’s been so wet, we can barely get on the properties to mow, let alone take advantage of the mulching feature. Since the first day of spring, we’ve

had more than 17 inches of rain and there’s no end in sight. Actually, our rainy season started last August, and the additional moisture caused the mowing season to begin early this year, in April.”

The inclement weather has also delayed landscape renovation projects, forcing Brenda and Cindy to work extra-long days. The work doesn’t faze them, even though Brenda admits to first having doubts about her ability to handle the physical aspect of her new career.

“You don’t see many women working in



Growing up and working side-by-side for two years, Brenda and Cindy seem to communicate intuitively. The sisters enjoy seeing the results of a hard day's work and getting a property to look nice.



the industry," she said. "Even customers were skeptical at first, thinking I would do the estimates and then hand off the work to a crew."

That didn't happen and the sisters have since proven they're not going to be out-worked by any crew, male or female alike. In addition, their attention to detail has become an effective marketing tool.

BEING PARTICULAR

Brenda and Cindy have found that women are generally more detail oriented

than men. Growing up together and working side-by-side for the last two years also makes them an efficient team.

"We communicate intuitively," Cindy added. "I know what Brenda wants done and vice versa."

Each property is treated as if it were their own. "Customers appreciate that," Brenda said.

Cindy's passion is cooking, not mowing lawns and landscaping. She came on board because, in her words, "The business was growing so fast that Brenda needed help."

It has since grown on her, as well.

"I enjoy being outside versus being behind a desk, and the fresh air sure beats standing behind a hot grill," she added.

More than anything, though, both enjoy seeing the results of a hard day's work and getting a property looking nice.

That's where the Walker Mowers come in, noted Brenda. "Customers tell us we don't just mow a lawn, we manicure it," she said.

"I think the floating, outfront deck makes a big difference in cut and appearance, and being able to get under fence lines saves so much trimming time. We also have automatic deck-height adjusters, which are time-savers, as well."

The sisters transport their Walker Mowers on a 16-foot trailer pulled by a Nissan Titan pickup. They also have a second trailer for yard debris, and there's enough work now to entertain the thought of bringing in someone to manage the landscaping side of their business, freeing up more of their time to mow.

When she started the business, Brenda planned to grow it gradually and one day get to the point where she is less hands on.

With Cindy's help, and the Walker Mowers, she's already gone from zero to 65 in four years. Add in their shared experience, more help, and a little cooperation from Mother Nature, and reaching that goal will likely be closer than she thinks. ☺

Greenwood Village

'EXCELL

Located only 10 miles from downtown Denver and split right down the center by heavily trafficked I-25 is Greenwood Village, a community of 15,000 plus residents. Unlike most metropolitan municipalities, however, this city is dominated less by noise and congestion and more by green space. In fact, Greenwood Village features 17 parks, including smaller neighborhood "pocket parks," two destination and two equestrian parks, several recreation fields, not to mention lengthy connecting trails.

Maintaining this extensive park system falls under the auspices of the city's Parks, Trails, and Recreation Department and Parks Manager, Dustin Huff.

"I think one of the biggest challenges for most everyone here, including the 34 full-time employees who work in the parks department, is maintaining the high standards set by the Village and our residents," Huff said. "It requires balancing priorities and dealing with unpredictable weather so characteristic of this part of the country. In fact, just a few weeks ago a major May winter storm dropped eight inches of heavy snow. The event wreaked havoc on our trees, which dropped branches everywhere, causing us to reconfigure our work schedule to come together as a team to clean up the village in a very short period of time."

Storms or not, there's never a day when employees are at a loss for work. In addition to maintaining approximately 200 acres of turf weekly, the department is responsible for the city's urban trees; horticulture beds; infrastructure that includes playgrounds, bike racks, benches, railing, fences, trash receptacles, and more; along with an extensive irrigation system for the recreation fields and developed turf.

All 34 full-time employees in the Parks & Trails Maintenance Services program, including parks supervisor, Tara Jordan, and maintenance mechanics Wayne Vehrs and Ryan Jarrett, also share snow removal duties during the winter.

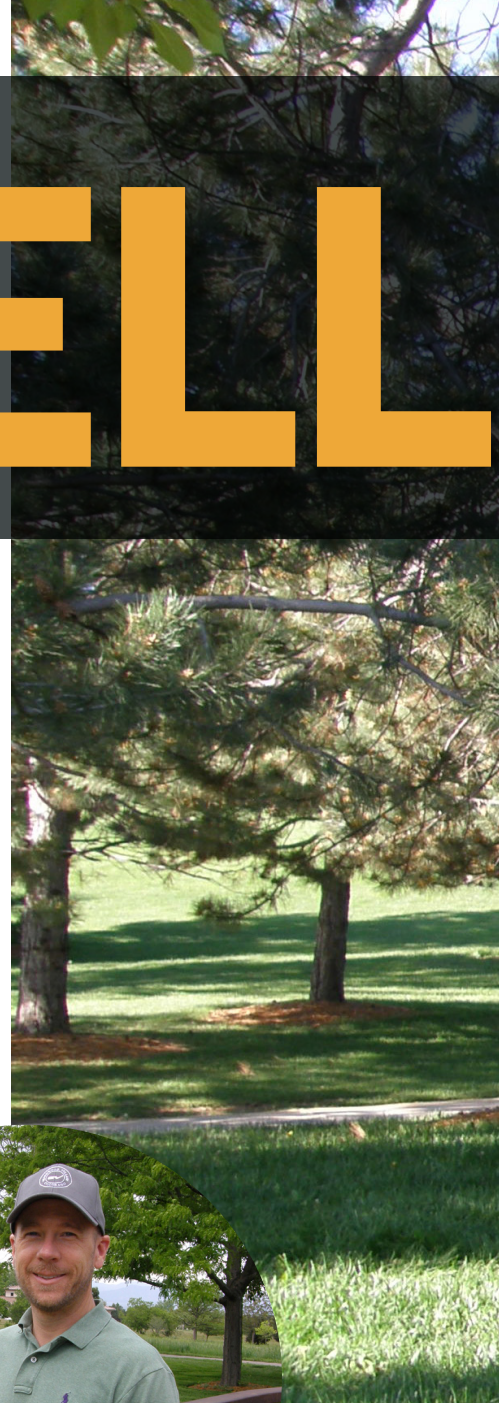
TURF CHALLENGE

Speaking of challenges, Jordan said one of hers is getting everything done.

"Four days a week, we're mowing the parks, with crews splitting duties between the east and west sides of I-25," she said. "Nearly a dozen Walker Mowers use their front decks and maneuverability to mow under the many trees and around other obstacles, leaving the grass looking neat and trim. We use two Toro wide-area mowers for open areas in the parks and the recreation fields, some of which are mowed twice a week. In addition, two John Deere out-front machines mow the trails."

She mentioned the Walker Mowers have been a staple, working in the parks for several years.

"The Village was even using Walker Mowers when I came on board 23 years ago," Vehrs added. "Today, the fleet consists primarily of all MT 25i units, each with 42-inch GHS decks. Four 48-inch mulching decks can also be employed to break down clippings that add nutrients to the soil. As important as the mowers are for the mowing season, they truly demonstrate their worth during fall leaf cleanup."



👉 "Excellence is the standard," said Parks Manager, Dustin Huff, pictured here at Greenwood Village's recently renovated Running Fox Park.

👉 A maze of trees provide an interesting challenge for Walker Mower operator Kevin Bertrand.

👉 Walker Mowers are among 240 pieces of equipment used to maintain the 17 parks in the

ENCE IS OUR STANDARD'





👉 At Silo Park, bluegrass and native flora make a pleasant contrast for trail walkers. Training on the Walker Mowers is required before employees are allowed to take on the bluegrass.

He noted they can also be equipped with dethatchers and an edger attachment, which takes the footwork out of trimming away grass from the many walks.

“Ryan and I have approximately 240 pieces of equipment to maintain and repair, and all are on a maintenance schedule like the Walker Mowers,” Vehrs said. “In addition to following the recommended service intervals, we give the mowers an overall inspection every 100 hours, and an even more thorough inspection over the winter.”

MAGNETIC ATTRACTION

Long before Greenwood Village became a municipality, its first settlers were attracted to the area searching for gold. Later, in the early 1900s, the land proved to be fertile for both farmers and ranchers. More than 100 years since then, the area continues to serve as an attraction, with the city’s parks inviting families, residents and nonresidents alike, to enjoy the outdoors, playground facilities, walking trails, open spaces and water features. One of the two destination parks, Westlands, even has an art exhibit, tree house observatory, and an area where children can test their musical skills by playing outdoor instruments.

Throughout the park system, approximately 90 percent of the developed turf is bluegrass, yet in locations like Silo Park, the hardy grass shares space with more native

varieties to help retain an ecological balance.

“We just re-opened our newest renovated park, Running Fox Park, a few months ago,” said Huff.

In another small neighborhood setting, the park features a waterfall and seasonal color to provide an interesting and relaxing environment for visitors, with truly spectacular views of the front range.

“It’s something of which we are especially proud since it was designed and mostly built in-house by the Parks, Trails, and Recreation Department,” Huff said.

The city’s commitment to sustaining green space, and a culture that encourages employees and residents alike to take ownership in the park system is what brought Huff back home.

Growing up just outside of Greenwood Village, he previously worked with South Suburban Parks and Recreation before moving to the mountains for nine years. There he worked with the Town of Breckenridge prior to accepting the position as parks manager almost two years ago.

“I’m fortunate to have such a great staff, people who’ve been here for many years and who deserve the credit for sustaining and enhancing the parks,” said Huff. “The Village cares for its employees and ensures they have the right equipment and proper training for not only getting the job done, but doing it in a safe manner. Each morning



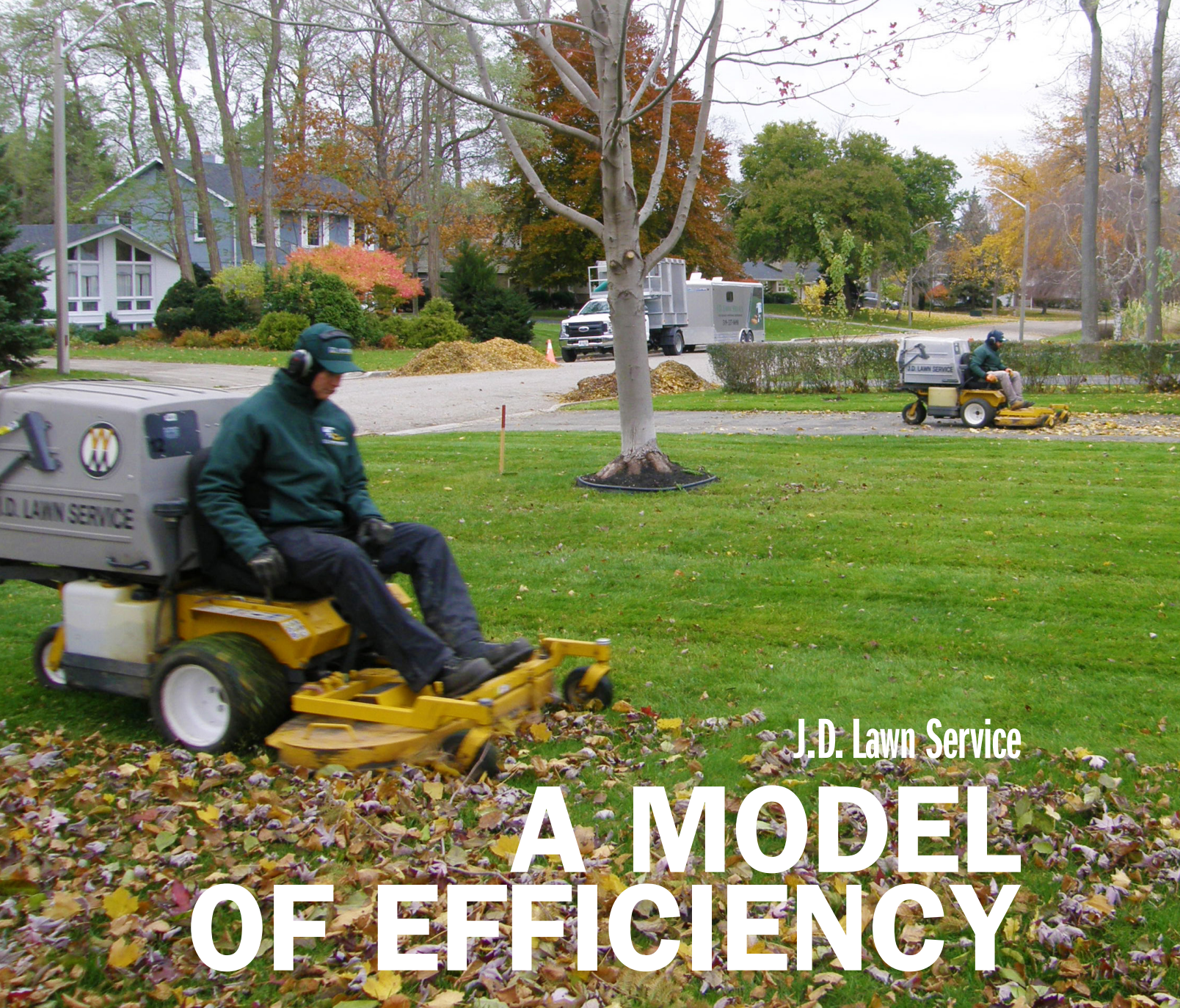
👉 Playgrounds, water features, and outdoor instruments attract residents and nonresidents alike to the variety of parks in Greenwood Village.

our department starts off with a stretching regimen, and we have refresher safety sessions, weekly safety talks, and safety videos that are accessed on-line.”

He noted his department also employs 10 summer seasonal workers, some of whom learn to operate Walker Mowers.

Viewing a Walker Mower training video, practicing operating a mower in a parking lot, and even going through a small obstacle course is a requisite before taking on the bluegrass.

“Excellence is our standard,” Huff reemphasized, whether it involves training employees, maintaining the parks, or renovating parks and open space like Running Fox Park. “Setting the bar high for what we do and how we do it is contagious and becomes a catalyst for ensuring the bar continues to move in the right direction.” ➡



J.D. Lawn Service

A MODEL OF EFFICIENCY

When Joe Dawson purchased his first Walker Mower in the early 1990's, he had been in business only a couple of years. Yet already he knew how important it was to always find a better way to get things done.

"I recall sitting on that mower and thinking how I could make life easier for myself, get more accomplished in a day, and feel better at night," said the owner of J.D. Lawn Service in Sarnia, Ontario., Canada.

A few months later, his thinking brought two more Walker Mowers on board, each of which he claimed replaced at least two people.

"It was the beginning of fall cleanup when we would put a herd of people on a site to get the job done," Joe said. "We reduced the group considerably by putting two of the new mowers on a crew."

Today, J.D. Lawn Service has 20 Walker Mowers with GHS decks, and that's only the tip of the proverbial iceberg for equipment and efficiency.

Waiting for the snow season sit a dozen 4-wheel drive John Deere tractors equipped with snow plows, eight Kubota utility vehicles with snow plows, and several pickups with plows and salt spreaders.

🔊 **Alex, in foreground, makes quick work of leaf removal and then cleans up with the help of a vacuum system and dump box.**

After their winter work is done, tractors and utility vehicles go into hibernation to be replaced by five two-person mowing crews, a couple of gardening and fertilizer crews, along with a parking lot sweeper and line striper to service larger commercial and retail accounts.

"For eight months out of the year, our work is divided evenly between residential and commercial accounts," said Joe.

👉 Joe, Bonnie, and son Alex. “We’re hands-on owners,” said Bonnie. “There’s really no layer of management between family members and crew



👉 In addition to minding the front desk, daughter Heather is responsible for HR/administration.

“Because of our snow commitment, however, commercial clients account for 80 percent of our work during the other four months. For most, if not all of them, we provide year-round full-service property maintenance, as owners and property managers prefer dealing with one rather than several companies.”

KEEPING IT LEAN

J. D. Lawn Service has approximately 200 customers, 80 percent of whom reside

within Sarnia, a city with a population of 71,594 located right across the border from Port Huron, MI.

Included among them are large shopping plazas, a hospital, casino, and several other commercial and retail establishments, along with some beautiful residential properties. The work is accomplished with only 15 employees, along with Joe, wife Bonnie, who manages the office, daughter Heather, responsible for HR/administration, and senior crew leader, son Alex.

“As you can see, we’re hands-on owners,”

added Bonnie. “There’s really no layer of management between family members and crew leaders. Every business is unique and being involved in virtually everything works for Joe and me.”

She continued, “Joe acts as the operations manager. He doesn’t spend time on mowers anymore, but instead does all the scheduling, meets with crew leaders every morning before they go out the door, and visits properties and customers.”

He also does all the purchasing and hence is responsible for the company’s extensive equipment lineup, including vacuums and dump bodies for every crew’s pickup.

“You have to spend money to make

money,” said Joe. “That’s why within two months of purchasing our first Walker Mower we had another two machines. They not only leave a beautiful cut, they save us so much time, and time is money in this business.”

The same logic applies to their snow removal business where, depending on the client, timeliness is even more important.

“We can put three or four tractors on a site,” Joe noted. “Each has a two-way radio to help coordinate the work and they can be finished in no time.”

In a typical winter, Sarnia may have 20 snow events that require snow to be removed from parking lots, 30 to clean walks, and 45 to 55 for salting. To help remove ice at lower temperatures, the company mixes Ice B Gone ice melter with salt, a combination that Joe noted is also more environmentally friendly than using regular salt.

FROM FACILITY TO TRAILERS

The company’s five enclosed trailers and the 8,000 square foot facility that houses them share a common theme: efficiency. The shop’s floor is spotless, and a degree of slant that directs water to a drain system works to keep it that way. The floor is also heated, making it a comfortable working environment for the company’s two technicians who also have the luxury of a floor lift to help maintain their Walker Mower fleet. A large upstairs houses seasonal tools and a full parts department, while a shower and laundry also add to the amenities.

The trailers have a rather unusual feature, as well. They’re each equipped with washrooms.

“Even though most of our work is in and around Sarnia, some of our properties are in the outskirts several miles from a gas station or quick mart,” Bonnie explained. “This is an added comfort for employees.”

A crew set-up also includes a vacuum system and dump box on an F-550 pickup. The system features a 26-hp engine and

8-inch hose. Said Alex, “When we leave a site, there’s no mess left behind.”

BUILDING BLOCKS

Bonnie and Joe were married the same year they launched their business. The office was in their home and the company’s main tool was a Lawn-Boy push mower.

At the time, Joe had been mowing lawns part time, but the purchase of a small mowing company gave the couple the start they needed.

“Residential was our focus at the time,” said Bonnie, “and we just grew over time with the help of the Walker Mowers and Joe’s commitment to providing good, quality service.”

Finding the best, most efficient way to get the job done has certainly prompted the company’s growth, but there are other

factors, as well, that have led to their success.

Joe and Bonnie spend time educating their employees and they look for and appreciate their input. They also know their own strengths.

“I’m not a computer person, nor do I have the other office skills Bonnie and Heather have,” Joe added. “You will always find me with my coveralls on either, in the shop or in the field.”

Being involved is something the owners do with their community just as they do with their business: they support several local charitable causes and events with a similar commitment and enthusiasm.

It’s a passion for what they do that ultimately fuels their success and keeps them looking for ways, as Joe said, “to make life easier, get more accomplished, and feel better at night.” ☺

👉 A dozen 4-wheel drive tractors and eight Kubota utility vehicles await the season’s first snowfall.



👉 An 8,000 square foot facility provides a clean and comfortable working environment for employees.





MODEL H 61-INCH DECK

With a newly designed carrier frame and deck housing, Walker introduces the DS61 deck to replace the DS60, offering improved performance, both in cutting quality and side discharge of clippings. The housing is shorter front-to-back which increases machine agility and contour following, plus reduces weight and gives a more compact dimension in overall machine length. Also, the deck is offset to the left-hand side to improve trimming capability. Finally, a larger gas spring is used with the deck lift to make it easier for the operator to lift the deck and adjust the cutting height. Fits on all Model H units.



REPLACEABLE WEAR EDGES FOR DC48 DECK

Walker's DC48 deck has added replaceable wear edges and stronger deck edge stiffeners for extra durability and wear capacity. After wearing down, the replaceable edges can be "flipped over" to extend use and then be replaced with a new wear edge after both top and bottom edges are worn away. The wear edge kit for the DC48 is P/N 7703-10. The replaceable wear edge design is also used on the DM52 deck and will be incorporated on other Walker decks in the future.

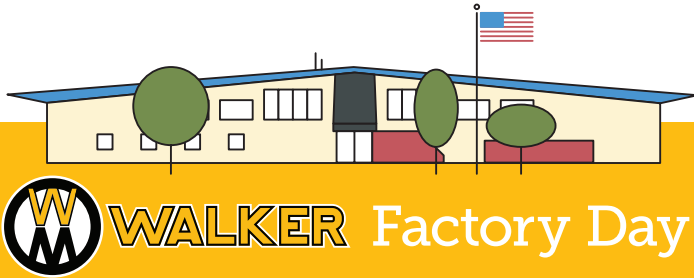
DEALERS RECOGNIZE WALKER AS GOLD LEVEL MANUFACTURER

For the fourth time, in the past four years, Walker Manufacturing, was recognized as a top performing manufacturer with Gold Level status by the Equipment Dealers Association. The recognition is given to companies that receive exceptionally high ratings from dealers for their commitment to providing top-quality products, parts, service and support to dealers in the United States and Canada. Over 2500 North American dealers participated in the EDA's 2019 Dealer-Manufacturer Relations Survey and rated the manufacturers of the brands they sell on how they are working with the dealer.

In its survey, the EDA asked agricultural and outdoor power equipment dealers to rate the companies whose products they represent on 12 key categories including product quality, parts availability, warranty procedures, and marketing and advertising support. Gold status is awarded to those companies who receive exemplary ratings from dealers in their manufacturing classifications.

On a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 being extremely dissatisfied and 7 being extremely satisfied, Walker averaged 6.1 in the eleven primary categories, and in the separate "Overall Satisfaction" category, Walker topped all outdoor power equipment manufacturers at 6.4.

"Walker Manufacturing very much appreciates this great vote of confidence by our dealers," says Walker president, Bob Walker. "We are both humbled by the recognition and challenged to keep working to improve our relationship with our dealers. Since dealers and their services are the only way we choose to go to market with the Walker Mower, they are our life-line as a manufacturer, and we will need to continue our work to build and maintain strong relationships with our dealers."



**SEPTEMBER 27
FORT COLLINS,
COLORADO**

WALKER FACTORY DAY ANNOUNCED

Walker Factory Day is an opportunity for owners and enthusiasts of the Walker Mower to gather at the Walker Manufacturing factory for a day of activities, fellowship, and fun. Guests will enjoy a free event offering opportunities to see the newest Walker Mower models, tour the factory and grounds, interact with those who create and build the Walker Mower, enjoy a free lunch and more.

→ OBSTACLE COURSE

A single-day "World Championship" will be held during the event. Open qualifying will take place in the morning with the finals taking place in the afternoon. Prizes will be awarded.



↑ DODGE CITY PARK INTERACTIVE

Operate the newest Walker equipment in and around the official Walker testing and training facility called Dodge City Park.

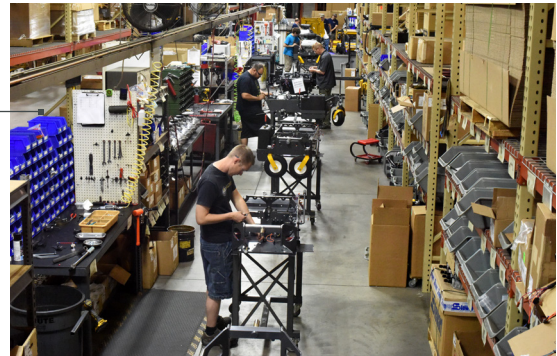


↑ PANEL DISCUSSIONS

The Engineering and Tech Services Teams will organize a series of topic-focused discussions. Additionally, this will be an area for guests to interact with one another and the Walker team regarding the Walker product.

↓ FACTORY TOURS

Learn how the mowers are made from start to finish with this self-guided factory tour while interacting with the Walker factory team.



← WALKER WARE

Find Walker-branded gear and apparel at our factory store. Great for gifts for the Walker fan in your life.



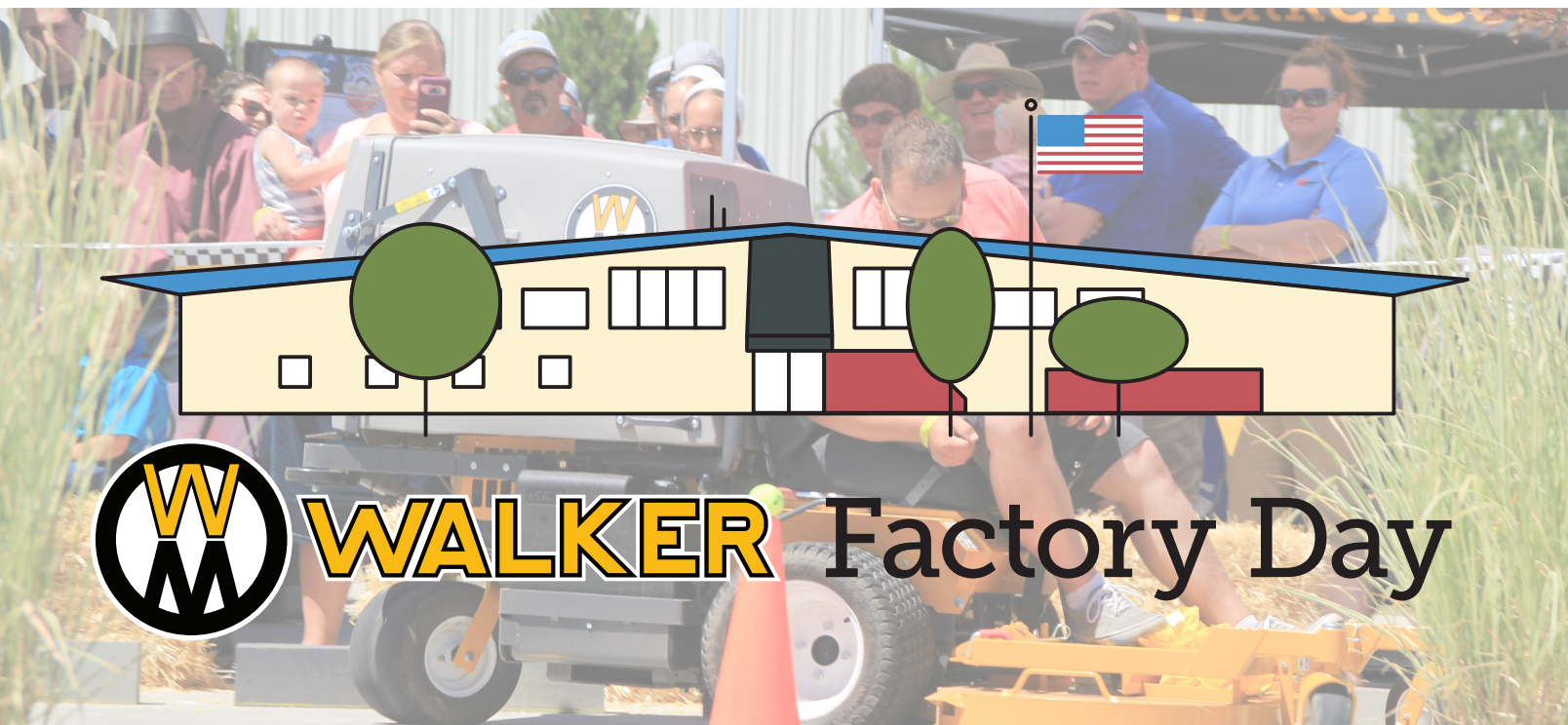
← FREE RSVP LUNCH

A catered meal at noon will be provided. Go to walker.com/factory-day to RSVP for lunch.

Please send to:
P.O. BOX 3605
NORTHBROOK, IL 60065-3605

Electronic Service Requested

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lebanon Junction, KY
Permit # 1013



Join us for Walker Factory Day

*Friday, September 27, 2019 | 9:00am - 3:00pm
Fort Collins, Colorado*

Walker Factory Day is an opportunity for owners and enthusiasts of the Walker Mower to gather at the Walker Manufacturing Factory for a day of activities, fellowship, and fun. Guests will enjoy a free event offering opportunities to see the current Walker Mower models, tour the factory and grounds, interact with those who create and build the Walker Mower, and more.

Activities

- Dodge City Park Interactive
- Obstacle Course
- Technical Workshops
- Factory Tour
- Walker Ware
- Free RSVP Lunch

See more information and RSVP for free lunch at walker.com/factory-day