

Industry Innovator Dane Scag Dies



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ELM GROVE, Wis. – Dane Scag, 94, one of the most innovative commercial equipment designers in the green industry, passed away Aug. 9th. He held more than two dozen patents related to mower and landscape equipment design.

Under his ownership of Wisconsin Marine, Inc., Scag founded the Bob Cat brand that still exists today. In 1982 Scag founded and served as president of Scag Power Equipment, Inc., and introduced the three-wheel mowing tractor. At Scag Power Equipment, Dane developed a complete line of equipment including the revolutionary dual-drive hydro walk mower and mid-mount transmission steer riding mower.

Dane sold Scag Power Equipment to Metalcraft in 1991. Several years later he founded Great Dane Power Equipment Inc. and designed and introduced the Surfer stand-on mower and other commercial mowers. He sold Great Dane to John Deere in 2001.

Scag was awarded 2 prestigious OEMie Awards, the highest acknowledgement an inventor can receive for the introduction of the Scag dual-drive hydro walk mower and the Great Dane Surfer.

Scag was also an avid pilot and airplane owner, and often flew to call on customers and demonstrate mowers.

Dane received his bachelor's degree in physics and mathematics from North Central College, Naperville, Ill., and completed a master's degree from the University of Illinois in 1942. He later joined the teaching and research staff at Princeton University. Princeton offered Scag tenure and he was also offered the opportunity to be director of the newly opened Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, Batavia, Ill. Instead, he accepted a position at Allis-Chalmers, a diversified manufacturing company based in Milwaukee. While there he designed high-energy X-ray machines with military applications. He was later named vice president of research at McGraw-Edison Co., where he first tinkered with commercial lawn mowers.

(Source: North Central College, Naperville, Ill., where Dane Scag, an alumni '41, established a scholarship for students in the sciences. He also donated his home and 75 acres in Colorado to the college.)