

Harvest Magazine

a quarterly journal on true wealth building and sharing

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The Wealth of Work

Meet the Bob and Marie Dawes Family
and their business, the **BOB-BOYD**
AUTO FAMILY



Sitting L-R: Michael Cummins, Maureen Cummins, Alex Dawes. Standing L-R: Nick Dawes, Cody Culbertson, Katie Dawes, Anne Marie Cummins, Carly Culbertson, Abby Dawes, Sarah Dawes, Kelly Culbertson.

Bob and Marie Dawes' grandchildren ~
who in this third generation will join the family business?

The Wealth of Work

*Editor's Note: When we reflect on the Bob and Marie Dawes family and their business, the Bob-Boyd Auto Family, several descriptors come to mind: **a strong faith...a very close knit family...a thriving family business.** In this issue of Harvest Magazine, we are pleased to introduce our readers to this remarkable family, their highly respected business, and the values they hold dear, as we continue this year's theme of The Wealth of Work, especially work done through family-owned businesses.*

Faith, Family and Business



Bob and Marie Dawes

parts and service packages to Ford dealerships in the greater Pittsburgh area.

Bob knew the territory well. He and his older brother had been raised in nearby Mt. Lebanon, attending St. Bernard's Catholic grade school. Their father died when Bob was nine and their mother returned to work to support them. Bob stayed busy with school and parish activities, attending Mass regularly and serving as an altar boy.

After graduation from Mt. Lebanon High School, Bob went to college at Mount St. Mary's in Emmetsburg, Maryland, a Catholic all men's school located next to the all women's college, St. Joseph's, founded by Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton and her Sisters of Charity. It was there that Bob met Marie Gavin, of Allentown, PA. They dated the last three years of college and married July 1, 1961. Later this year Bob and Marie will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary!

Ford moved Bob and Marie's young family to Detroit in 1967 where Bob was made a manager in the business management department, evaluating new dealer applications. It was here that he reconnected with Boyd Fackler, also a former field manager; Boyd had been sent to Detroit by Ford to perform market studies

for new dealer locations.

As was typical at the time, Ford kept its young talent moving. Within a short time, Boyd was offered an opportunity in Brussels with Ford Europe and Bob was offered a promotion to the New York market. But Bob and Boyd were eyeing an opportunity to enter the company's dealer development program and decided to focus their careers in that direction. In 1970, with Ford putting up 80% of the necessary capital, and Bob and Boyd each contributing 10%, the two partners were able to take over a small Lincoln Mercury dealership on the west side of Columbus, a growing Midwest market for Ford. By 1975, they had outgrown that location and moved to nearby Mound and Central, renaming their dealership Bob-Boyd Lincoln Mercury.

In 1982, Bob and Boyd moved the dealership to South Hamilton Road near I-70, to be near the rapidly expanding areas of Reynoldsburg and Pickerington. Later the company relocated farther east to Scarborough Blvd., near Brice Road and I-70.



Siblings MaryBeth Culbertson, Bill Dawes and Bobby Dawes in front of the new Fiat Dealership on Scarborough Blvd.

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The dealership's move meant a move for Bob and Marie's family as well. Now with four children (Bobby, MaryBeth, Bill and Becky), the family had deep roots on the west side of Columbus. Active at St. Cecilia's Parish, Marie was an 8th grade teacher there where all four children attended grade school. With youngest daughter Becky soon to graduate from high school, Bob and Marie felt that relocating their family nearer the dealership made sense, so they purchased a home with acreage in Pataskala. And they joined nearby Church of the Resurrection in New Albany. Remarkably, all four children chose to attend John Carroll University in Cleveland. The second generation of Dawes were now ready to join the business; each began in sales.

In 1985, Bobby took over the company's new Isuzu dealership, then became general sales manager for the Lincoln product line. The company's entry into the Ford market was achieved with the purchase of Jack Helm Ford in Lancaster in 1991. Bobby became general manager there and Bill succeeded him as general sales manager at Lincoln. By then MaryBeth had gravitated away from sales and into the administrative side of the business, beginning her long and effective tenure as company controller and senior manager for overall administration.

By now, Bob-Boyd had become one of Ford's top dealerships in Columbus so the company turned its attention to growing their franchise in the attractive Lancaster market. The company purchased land and built a brand new store for their Ford operations in 1994. In 1999, they acquired a Dodge Mazda dealership from Frank Newlon, and in 2002 they were able to relocate that dealership next to their new Ford operations.

In 2007, Boyd Fackler announced his retirement and transitioned his ownership to Bobby, MaryBeth and Bill. He continued as a valuable consultant to the company and his thoughtful, ethical decision making and overall business savvy continue to be a lasting legacy to the business.

When Chrysler went through its restructuring in 2008-2009, it reached out to successful dealerships in key markets, resulting in Bob-Boyd adding Chrysler/Jeep to the Ford/Dodge/Mazda location. By then, Bill was general manager of the flagship Lincoln-Mercury store on Scarborough Blvd.; Bobby was general manager of the Lancaster dealerships; and MaryBeth was the

company's top financial and administrative officer. Bob Sr. was now in more of a chairman's role, providing advice and encouragement while transferring key customer relationships to Bobby, MaryBeth and Bill.

2010 was another year of change and opportunity for the company. Along with Ford's decision to close its Mercury line, Chrysler decided to bring Fiat back to the U.S. by bidding out 165 Fiat dealership licenses across the country. A carefully and professionally prepared proposal orchestrated by Bill and MaryBeth resulted in Bob-Boyd receiving one of two Fiat dealerships awarded in central Ohio, to be located on Scarborough Blvd.



Bill Dawes displays a new Fiat.

More change and opportunity soon followed. In a move to more effectively compete with other luxury brands, like Lexus and Cadillac, Ford announced it would be consolidating significantly its Lincoln dealerships throughout the country, focusing on those that would commit heavily to the brand and achieve certain sales goals. As the largest Lincoln dealer in the region, Bob-Boyd was a natural to be named the central Ohio Lincoln dealer, but Ford requested their location be moved from Scarborough to the more attractive Dublin marketplace. In a win-win move, Bob-Boyd agreed to take over Krieger's Lincoln location in Dublin, and Germain Toyota agreed to take over Bob-Boyd's location on Scarborough!

In asking members of the Dawes family what they see as keys to the company's success over the years, they shared several:

First, they cited their father's and Boyd's decisions to be hands-on managers. While many dealers hire a

general manager and sales manager, Bob and Boyd filled those roles for many years, giving them ample opportunity to build positive and lasting relationships with customers and employees. The result has been numerous two and three generation families that have been purchasing cars from Bob-Boyd since the early 1970's. And one need not go far to find employees, as well, that have been with the company for decades, including Glenn Hoffman (parts manager), Renny Smith (technician), Bob Zellner (salesperson), Jack Songailo (salesperson), Steve Skeldon (sales manager), and Tim Clark (sales manager). Glenn and Renny have been part of the team since its inception in November, 1970 – nearly 42 years!

Second, Bob shared that he and Boyd, and now Bobby, MaryBeth and Bill, all have a great respect for the business balance sheet, particularly working capital. This attention to the financials has allowed the company to grow in a manner that has not jeopardized its financial health and long term viability.

Third, Bob and Boyd started the company's tradition of building loyal and profitable customer relationships over the long term rather than focusing on each sale. Key to this has been great integrity in dealing with the customer – something insisted on by Boyd and Bob.

Fourth, Boyd was quick to see that the company's growth would require strong, young leadership; he took the lead in encouraging Bob's children to enter the business. With three of the four doing so, it provided a natural succession plan for management and ownership. Bob and Boyd started the three in sales and sent them to NADA Dealer Academy, a highly regarded institute that trains young future dealer/owners.

And with Bobby, MaryBeth and Bill assuming greater duties came a corresponding stepping back by Bob and Boyd, not something all business owners can do. Bill was quick to praise his father and Boyd for allowing him and his siblings to get involved in decision making. Boyd and Bob focused on mentoring and it proved to be a masterful transition.

Fifth, the relationships of the leadership team were built on complete trust and complementary skill sets. Bob shared how much he and Boyd trusted one another and allowed each other to handle areas of the business for which each was well suited. And Bobby, MaryBeth and Bill were quick to acknowledge the great trust they have in one another, their respective strengths in different areas and the need for daily communication.

Finally, the entire Dawes family has worked hard over the decades to balance faith, family and business, prioritizing them in that order. Bob shared that Marie gets much of the credit for that as she took the early lead in building strong family bonds tied closely to the Church.

Service to others is a huge focus for the Dawes family with Bob and Marie setting the example. At St. Cecilia's Church, Bob served as Athletic Director and a Parish Council member. He also served as president of Bishop Ready's school board, vice president of the Diocesan school board, and for ten years was a trustee of The Catholic Foundation, including stints as vice chair and chair.

In addition to her earlier teaching duties at St. Cecilia's, Marie is a past volunteer at Pregnancy Decision Health Center, and a past board member and current life member of Christ Child Society of Columbus. For the last three years, Bob and Marie have co-chaired the Columbus Diocese's Celebration of Catholic School Virtues, a major fundraising event on behalf of Catholic families needing assistance with rising Catholic school tuition expense. Besides this strong commitment to their Christian faith, family remains the center of Bob and Marie's lives.

Son Bobby is married to Kelly and they have three daughters: Katie (20), Sarah (18), and Abby (14). Bobby is active in the Lancaster Charity Newsies and YMCA, and he and Kelly co-chair Bishop Hartley's largest annual fundraiser, Evening of Excellence. Kelly also pursues her own entrepreneurial skills as owner of College Traditions, a specialty retailer of OSU clothing and merchandise.

Daughter MaryBeth is married to Tim Culbertson, owner of a carryout business. They have three children: Cody (19), Carly (16) and Kelly (15).

Son Bill is married to Lisa and they have twelve year old twin sons, Nicholas and Alex. Lisa helps sister-in-law Kelly at College Traditions and is a very busy volunteer at St. Matthew's, serving in the Home and School Association, working in the cafeteria and chairing various school fundraisers. Bill is active in Columbus Charity Newsies and helps coach his sons' sports teams.

Daughter Becky, not active in the family business, is married to Mike Cummins. She is a teacher at St. Matthew's Parish School and he is the EVP of sales for

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the medical division of Shamrock Printing. Their children are Anne Marie (14), Maureen (12) and Michael (10).

While Bob continues to help Bobby, MaryBeth and Bill at the company, he was quick to add that his main focus now is church and family. He and Marie look forward to hosting the extended family for a week each

summer on Kiawah Island, a family tradition now in its 16th straight year.

A strong faith...a very close knit family...a thriving family business, now in its fifth decade...These describe Bob and Marie Dawes and their family. Knowing them and their family well, we have the strong sense that these words will continue to describe this family for decades to come!



The Dawes Family

“Life affords no greater responsibility, no greater privilege, than the raising of the next generation.”

— C.Everet Koop, MD, former US Surgeon General