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BUSINESS

‘THAT’S WHAT WE BUILD’



VALERIE WELLS PHOTOS, HERALD & REVIEW

Magnus, a model 994 large wheel loader that served the Duff family’s coal mining company in Chavies, Kentucky, for over 20 years, returned home to CAT on Saturday, Sept. 13, 2025, during Family Day, where it will spend retirement on display.

CAT Family Day brings two big machines home for retirement

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DECATUR — The Caterpillar large wheel loader now on permanent display outside the CAT facility in Decatur used to belong to David Duff and logged 82,000 hours in the family’s coal mining operation in Chavies, Kentucky.

The machine, nicknamed “Magnus” and now in its retirement, is built in the Decatur plant, which is celebrating its 70th anniversary as the greater company celebrates its 100th year in business.

At Caterpillar’s annual Family Day on Saturday, both Magnus and the wheeled tractor scraper “Kelly,” also built in Decatur and retired to display after a full career, were unveiled in their new permanent parking spots. They join the big mining dump truck that has been on display for several years now.

The nicknames were chosen by CAT employees in a just-for-fun contest.

“We loaded this truck right here, two shifts a day, so it would run from 7 to 5; we’d shut it down for an hour and it would run from 6 to 6,” said Ryan Duff, who attended the unveiling of the new displays on the grounds of Caterpillar Inc. on Saturday. Magnus kept up that pace from 1990 to 2012, every day around the clock, he said.

His late father’s nickname was “44,” and both of the younger Duff’s sons use No. 44 in their respective sports. The reason for the nickname was that David



Brooks Bishop plays on an inflatable mining truck during Family Day at Caterpillar Inc. on Saturday, Sept. 13, 2025. Dad Eric worked at CAT for 11 years and brought the family to the event.

Duff and his employees all had two-way radios to keep in contact during the work day, and the radios were numbered. The elder Duff’s radio was actually number 444, Ryan Duff said, but immediately got shortened to “44,” and that number is even on his tombstone.

David Duff had several big CAT machines, but Magnus was his favorite, his son said.

Miles Bryant has worked for CAT since high school, when he was on a work/study program,

and is a fabrication specialist — a welder — who helped build the frame of the giant mining dump truck that is displayed near the building. He’s also a built-in quality coordinator.

“That’s what I weld on every day,” Bryant said, indicating the big dump truck. “When I bring people by (the plant) and say, ‘That’s what we build here in Decatur,’ they’re blown away. So that’s cool.”

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POLITICS

Kirk shaped generation of young people

Turning Point USA founder was big draw for college conservatives

ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON AND BILL BARROW
Associated Press

After a rejection from West Point, Charlie Kirk was 18 when he launched a grassroots organization from an Illinois garage that would grow alongside the rise of President Donald Trump and fuel the “Make America Great Again” movement.

Kirk said he had “no money, no connections and no idea what I was doing” when he started Turning Point USA in 2012. Yet, his rhetorical gifts for countering progressive ideas, inflaming cultural tensions and making provocative declarations instantly resonated with college audiences.



Kirk

Clips of his early campus appearances spread online, helping him secure a steady stream of donations that transformed Turning Point into one of the country’s largest political organizations, attracting young people to star-studded gatherings and making it a presence at high schools and colleges around the country.

“No one understood or had the heart of the youth in the United States of America better than Charlie,” Trump said Wednesday after Kirk was assassinated while speaking at a college in Utah.

Early on, Kirk described his group as a student organization that advocated for free markets and limited government. He needled peers who bashed capitalism and backed presidential candidate and democratic socialist Bernie Sanders yet “shamelessly enjoy the fruits of the free market,” like Starbucks, Amazon and Netflix.

Over time, Turning Point held mass rallies that drew tens of thousands of young voters each year to hear top conservative leaders speaking on glitzy

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MILITARY DEPLOYMENT

Trump’s authority has its limits, scholar says

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SPRINGFIELD — While heightened Immigration and Customs Enforcement operations have kicked off in the Chicago, President Donald Trump appears to have changed course on earlier plans to deploy National Guard troops on a crime-fighting mission to the nation’s third-largest city.

Trump said Friday that he would instead send troops to Memphis, Tennessee, where Republican Gov. Bill Lee welcomed the support. The president said he “would have preferred going to Chicago” but suggested that the city was too hostile.

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker, Chicago Mayor Brandon Johnson and a coalition of other Democratic state and city leaders had fiercely opposed the president’s plans for military intervention.

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