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TURNING VISIONS INTO REALITY FOR 90 YEARS

LEVAN MACHINE AND TRUCK EQUIPMENT



Brian Levan, CEO



By Kathy Hunt

Imagine that you need to replace a faulty part in your production line but, when you try to order it, you find that the part no longer exists. Or, maybe your fast-growing landscaping or construction company requires a customized truck, but you aren't sure what type will best serve your present and future needs. Rather than waste time scrolling through websites, trying to track down someone who *might* be able to answer your questions and address your specific must-haves, contact Levan Machine and Truck Equipment in Fleetwood (610.944.7455).

Whether you need to repair, replace, or reverse-engineer a part or upfit a vehicle with a service or dump body, crane, lighting, or other equipment, this full-service machine shop and custom commercial truck upfitter can complete the job expertly and efficiently for you.

In business for 90 years, the third generation-owned company has the knowledge and skill to assist a wide range of clients, including those in construction, landscaping, public works, food service, and motorsports. Although based in Berks County, its reputation for quality products and service has brought it customers from across the United States and around the globe.

1930s

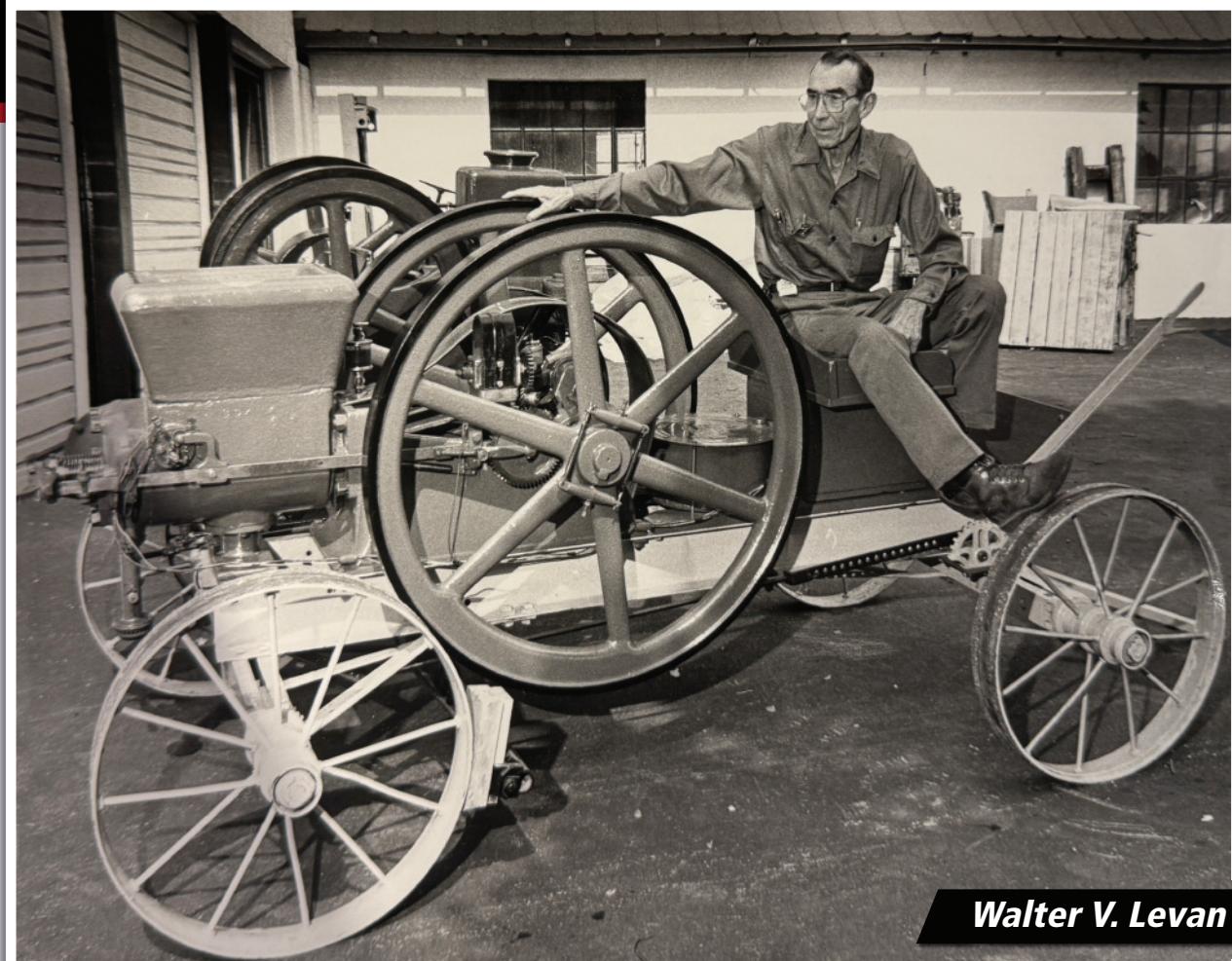


90 years of expert machining and custom solutions

In 1936, Walter V. Levan opened a machine shop on Fleetwood's Pricetown Road. His aim was to provide custom welding, machining, and general repair service to farmers and townships in the Reading area. During World War II, Walter took a hiatus from his day-to-day business to serve as a machinist in the U.S. Navy. In his absence, his wife Sarah operated the machine shop, learning how to run a lathe and fabricate parts. Sarah would become instrumental in growing Levan Machine Co.'s post-war business.

By 1969, the couple's son Carl and his wife Janet had stepped into Walter's and Sarah's shoes, running the company until 1993. That year, the founder's grandson and current CEO Brian Levan took over the business. Today, the company has 77 employees, over 40 of whom are skilled technicians. It operates three Fleetwood-area facilities, including the original building from the 1930s.

As times changed, so did Levan Machine Co. In addition to expanding its footprint, and changing its name to Levan Machine and Truck Equipment, it now offers a wide range of services. Among those are CNC (computer numeric control) machining, line boring, welding and fabrication, plus



Walter V. Levan

they are known for their hydraulic cylinder and driveshaft expertise too.

Deb Heffner, marketing assistant and operations team member at Levan Machine and Truck Equipment, said that the machine shop is known locally as a custom machine or job shop. "If someone has a broken part, they can literally walk in and say, 'Can you fix it?' Usually, we can," she said. "We have a mechanical engineer on staff that can literally reverse-engineer a part if

necessary. We can also design and build manufacturing equipment for exactly what a customer needs."

Custom machining work and their on-the-road service truck which offers on-site line boring and welding services sets the company apart from its competition, but they also do mass production machining up to 10,000 parts. The staff at Levan Machine and Truck Equipment look at each client's distinct wants and needs and turn those visions into reality.

Today



One-stop shop for vehicle upfitting, service, and more

Along with machining, Levan Machine and Truck Equipment has become a leader in truck and van upfitting or modifying a work vehicle so that it fits a client's specific job needs. At Levan, the upfitting process begins with a meeting between the client and a sales specialist to help determine what vehicle body best fits the client's requirements. Included in this initial discussion are the tasks the vehicle will perform and how often and in what environmental conditions it will be used.

Once these and other questions are answered, the team at Levan creates a plan that meets both functional and regulatory requirements. Once a vehicle body has been ordered and delivered, a team of ASE-certified, Levan technicians builds the work truck, securely installing job-specific components and equipment. Examples of upfitting done by Levan are vehicles upfitted into service, crane, emergency, and dump trucks, which are then customized with additional products like snow plows and salt spreaders, toolboxes, and a variety of other equipment.

(Continued on page 8)

COVER STORY

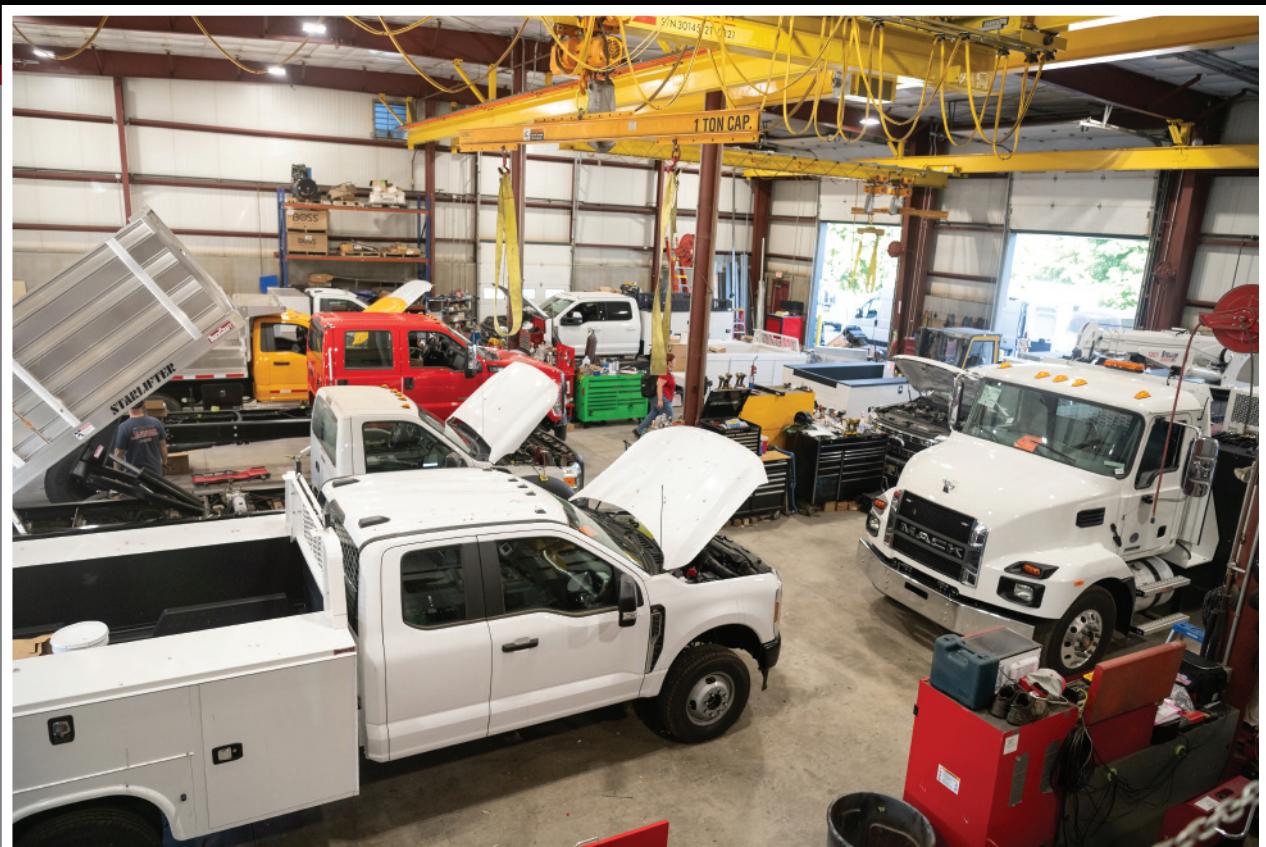
(Continued from page 7)

Their truck body vendor partners include Knapheide, Stellar, AirFlo, TruckCraft, EZ Dumper and Wabash. A growing technology is all-in-one power units offered by their vendor partners like Miller Enpac, VanAir and VMAC, and includes technology such as a generator power, welder, and compressor that power all of the equipment on a work truck without the truck engine actually running.

"Our business is very diverse," said Lisa Schaeffer, vice president of marketing and business development at Levan Machine and Truck Equipment. "Even so, the divisions of our company work closely together and support each other. If we can't buy a specific piece of equipment for a truck build, our CNC division can design and make it for us. That's what allows us to customize truck builds."

She added that Levan Machine and Truck Equipment not only creates custom solutions, but also services everything it sells. "We're not just about the sale. We work with our customers to ensure that all of our vendor partners also support our customers," Schaeffer said. "Our name is behind our work. We want our customers to have a positive experience and we offer a full customer service experience, from start to finish," she said.

Whether a vehicle is due for a safety inspection or is in need of driveline or hydraulic system troubleshooting, maintenance, or repair, Levan has its clients covered. Additionally, it provides 24-hour, emergency repair service for snowplows and tailgate spreaders. Its mobile service truck supports fleet customers on job sites as well as manufacturing companies in need of equipment maintenance and repair in Berks, Lehigh, and Montgomery counties.



Representing a one-stop-shop in the fullest sense, the company carries a wealth of after-market truck parts and accessories from such vendors as AirLift, Weather Guard, B&W Hitches, WeatherTech, and Real Truck. Its parts department stocks everything from toolboxes, truck caps, steps, airbags, and lighting to electric jacks, and tonneau covers. It also has trailer parts, including hitches, axles, brake controls, hanger kits, and wheel bearing kits. Customers can pick up their parts and either do the installation themselves or schedule an appointment with a Levan truck technician who will do the work for them.

Enhancing emergency services

Over the past few years, Levan Machine and Truck Equipment has increased its relationships with emergency service crews, such as fire, police, and emergency medical services (EMS). Schaeffer pointed out that many volunteer fire companies cannot afford to purchase million-dollar fire trucks and certainly can't acquire them on a timely basis. Instead, they are increasingly turning to Levan Machine and Truck Equipment to assist with buying and upfitting less costly trucks. As a result of this heightened interest, last year, the business expanded its upfit division to install and service emergency lighting, and other features for police, EMS, and fire vehicles.

Upfitting for emergency services comes with its own set of considerations. Among them are vehicle height, width, and weight restrictions, vehicle safety features such as emergency lights and sirens, and smart storage solutions that ensure emergency workers can access all their equipment quickly, efficiently, and safely. Another consideration when upfitting a truck is how rapidly technology is advancing.

In 2025, a custom EMS command truck from the Allentown Paramedics and a firefighter rescue truck from the Milford Township Volunteer Fire Company, both upfitted by Levan, were profiled in a national Knapheide video campaign. Knapheide is a major North American manufacturer of work truck bodies, truck beds, and van equipment. Levan is one of its top 10 dealers in the U.S.

"Emergency services technology changes very quickly, particularly on the lighting side," Schaeffer said. "The technology is complicated. The wiring is complicated. Different police and fire departments have different lighting and safety requirements. All this makes us stay on top of our game. Our technicians are constantly training and learning about new products, software upgrades, and safety requirements. We're very proud that we offer custom solutions, and we can do that because we have a diverse group of employees with a diverse range of skills."





Rescue truck — Milford Township Volunteer Fire Company



Custom EMS command truck — City of Allentown EMS



Heffner noted that what seems like a simple wiring task in a vehicle actually involves a tremendous amount of behind-the-scenes effort by Levan's technicians. "From a layman's perspective, you would think you just flip a button to turn on the lights or siren or change a traffic signal," she said. "The number of wires and electronic units that drive all of this is surprising." Heffner and Schaeffer likened the extensive tangle of wires to a ball of spaghetti.

Satisfying the needs of a range of customers

Along with its emergency services customers, Levan Machine and Truck Equipment receives a steady flow of clients from the public works sectors, including utilities, sewer and water, and transportation. For the transportation sector, the company does a great deal of driveline, welding, and line boring work. Levan Machine likewise has a number of manufacturing customers for which it performs tooling for manufacturing lines. Among these customers is the food service industry.

When working with Levan Machine and Truck Equipment, concerns about a repaired or replaced part negatively impacting a facility's adherence to FDA, USDA, and other food industry standards

disappear. The company complies with all food safety regulations so that, as its website states, "contact with food is always safe, clean, and reliable in your facility."

To ensure that every part and every outfit remain as safe and reliable as possible, the staff stays on top of all safety updates, standards, and OEMs (original equipment manufacturers). "Things vary from year to year and make to make. We ensure that all our customers are safe and also aware of any changes taking place," Schaeffer said.

Many of Levan Machine and Truck Equipment customers come from referrals and word-of-mouth. It also has longstanding relationships with auto dealers throughout the tri-state area as well as considerable repeat business. All of its clients will be invited to celebrate the company's 90th anniversary at small events to be held throughout the year.

For additional information about Levan Machine and Truck Equipment and its products and learn how it can turn your business visions into reality, visit its website at www.levanmachine.com. You can also phone the business at 610.944.7455 or complete an online contact form on its website homepage or "Contact Us" page. Levan Machine and Truck Equipment is located at 3417 Pricetown Road in Fleetwood, PA, just outside of Reading.



Service truck — Foley CAT



Levan is one of Knapheide Manufacturing's top 10 dealers in the U.S.