

July 2017 - From the Chairman:

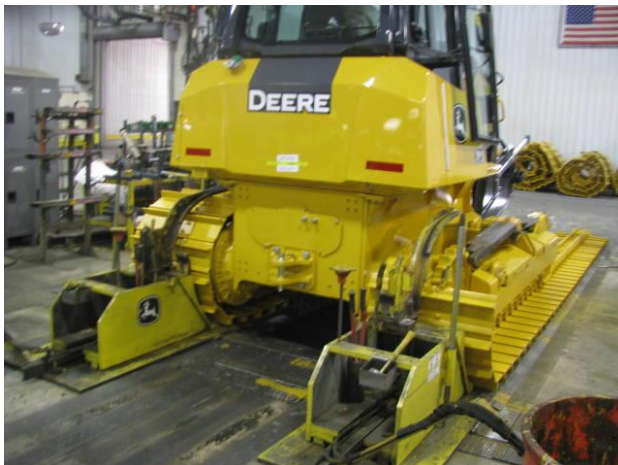
The Secondary Roads recently purchased a 2017 John Deere 700K crawler (dozer). With the purchase of the crawler, came an opportunity to have a Gold Key Tour at the Dubuque John Deere Construction facility, to watch the new crawler roll off the assembly line. Gold Key Tours are giving to individuals/businesses that purchase new John Deere equipment.

This was the most interesting tour I have ever had the opportunity to be part of. The technology that go into making these machines is absolutely amazing to me, starting with a slab of steel being laser cut, welded together, paint applied (yes, the paint is applied before all the parts are assembled on the equipment) and then having everything fall into place as the frame proceeds thru the stations where the rest of the parts are added to produce the crawler.

I envisioned parts to assemble the crawler hanging from hooks as they proceeded along the assembly line however that was not the case. The main frame of the crawler was on a dolly/cart that was advanced by computerized singles through the facility, knowing when to stop and advance to the next station. At each station, different parts were assembled on the crawler. When the right parts were applied and all bolts tightened to the specified torque, the computer recognized that and advance the dolly/cart forward to the next station.

By the time the crawlers arrived at the 7 or 8 station the engine was running and checked for any issues making sure all fluids are flowing and wiring working as needed.

There are approximately 8 to 9 stations where the assemblers stood as the crawler would advance forward. Perhaps the most interesting part of the crawler assembly was the final station. At this station, the tracks were installed. This two-person team had everything down to a science, the tracks were laid out on the floor, the dolly/cart was removed from the underside of the crawler allowing it to be lowered on the tracks then one person put the crawler in gear and applied one of the brakes, which made the sprockets engage on the other side of the crawler while the other person helped the track up on the sprockets and walla the track was on.



I wonder what Henry Ford would say if he saw this “assembly line”!

For those of you who are wondering about the cost – starting price was \$239,148.00 after trade in of the 1999 CAT dozer and government discounts the final price was \$128,375.00.

I have included a picture of the presentation of the Gold Key and plaque. With (left to right) Joel Fantz, County Engineer, Darrel Dolf, Supervisor, (John Deere Factory Rep.), Jeanine Tellin, Supervisor, Jim, Martin Equipment Rep., Jeff Koehn, County Road Foreman, Shane, Martin Equipment Rep., (back) Dan Winters and Dan Wood standing on the crawler track.



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On a personal note: My husband, Dennis and I have farmed for 42 years and never had a new tractor, so when I asked him if he wanted to go along on the Gold Key Tour he jumped at the chance to see this crawler being made and tour the factory. Since Dennis and I drove our own vehicle to Dubuque to tour the Dubuque John Deere factory we continued down the Mississippi to Moline and toured the John Deere Pavilion. This is an interesting facility as it tells of the history of John Deere and also has many displays of older machinery, newer machinery and even a robotic lawn mower. If you are ever in Moline take some extra time for a visit of this facility as the displays are always changing.

See you at the Fayette County Fair.