



DTR Industries 25th anniversary celebration

Photo scrapbook, Oct. 12, 1013

Bluffton  **ICON**



Nobuyuki Sato, first DTR employee to relocate his family to Bluffton, with Fred Rodabaugh, Roger Edwards and Larry Core, all instrumental in bringing DTR to Bluffton.

The DTR-Bluffton story

DTR Industries, 320 Snider Road, Bluffton's largest employer, celebrates its 25th anniversary with a community open house on Saturday, Oct. 12.

The community program is from 10 a.m. to noon. A program recognizing several groups, takes place at 10:30 a.m. The morning also includes plant tours, light refreshments and a performance by the Bluffton High School band.

Following the morning event DTR associates and their families will have an afternoon of activities.

DTR Industries, Inc. was established on Jan. 8, 1988, as a joint venture between Duramax Corporation of Middlefield, Ohio, and Tokai Rubber Industries of Komaki City, Aichi Prefecture, Japan.

The plant, started production in August of 1988, on the Snider road site of 53 acres. The production of the plant increased rapidly to provide Honda, Ford, Mazda, Toyota, Mitsubishi, Subaru, Nissan, and others with a wide variety of anti-vibration rubber products such as conventional and hydraulic engine mounts, body mounts, strut mounts, bushings and dampers.

Up until 2010 DTR also manufactured automotive hose products, including high pressure rubber and plastic fuel hose and fuel hose assemblies along with vapor hoses. In 2009-10, the hose manufacturing operations were transferred to sister plants in North America to dedicate the Bluffton manufacturing floor space to the growing demand for technologically advanced, hydraulic engine mounts.

Since its inception, the plant has been expanded 13 times in its 25-year history; growing from 88,000 square feet to over 340,000

square feet. Each of these expansions brought a corresponding growth in its labor force. The number of associates grew from an initial 17 associates in 1988 to the current enrollment of 666 associates.

DTR has been a friend of the Bluffton community since its inception. DTR's Community Involvement Committee consists of civic-minded associates that work to raise funds and commit time to various charities and organizations throughout Allen and neighboring counties.

Annually, since its inception, DTR has awarded scholastic scholarship to deserving Bluffton High School graduates and provides donations to other local institutions and organizations such as Bluffton University, Bluffton Family Recreation, the Bluffton Public Library, food banks, and the police and fire departments, to name just a few.

The morning celebration will conclude with a tree planting ceremony to commemorate this special anniversary.

DTR Industries was Tokai Rubber Industries first manufacturing plant outside of Japan. This venture required a marriage of cultures between Japan and America. It entailed the introduction of Japanese manufacturing philosophies and techniques that were dissimilar in many respects to those of many traditional American companies.

This success resulted in further Tokai Rubber Industries expansion outside Japan. Today, DTR finds itself the eldest sister to plants in Thailand, China, India, Mexico, Poland, Indonesia, Italy, Russia and Brazil.



Several of the 25-year DTR associates.



Akira Kikuta, DTR president and CEO, at the podium.



Kaze No Daichi Taiko (Land of Wind) performers from Bowling Green State University.



Dennis Gallant, Bluffton mayor, at the podium.



Akira Kikuta and Tetsuo Naruse ready to plant the 25-year anniversary tree.



Bill Yokas and Tetsuo Naruse prepare to cut a DTR cake.



Tracy Kehres presenting a \$2,500 check to Cindi Chasse, representing the Bluffton Public Library



Kathy Ervin presents a \$2,500 check to Richard Ramseyer, representing the Bluffton Pathway and Bikeway project



Akira Kikuta
presenting a \$10,000
check to Greg
Denecker,
representing the
Bluffton schools.



Steve Unterbrink (right) presenting a \$10,000 check to Jon Kinn, representing the Bluffton fire department.



Bluffton High School show choir.



Bluffton High School marching band.

