

# Robot visits children

NEW HOLLAND — Move over Marcus Welby, Ben Casey and the staff at General Hospital. Here comes Dr. INNO-Vator.

Well, maybe not a real doctor, but if making people in a hospital feel better is one of the prerequisites for hanging your medical diploma, then INNO qualifies.

INNO-Vator is a six-foot, 250-pound robot who has been demonstrating Sperry New Holland farm equipment at major farm shows. Since robots don't get tired, the farm equipment firm has given the gleaming silver showman additional duties. INNO has been visiting hospitals whenever his schedule will allow it.

During a recent visit to Children's Hospital while working at the National Farm Machinery Show in Louisville, Ky., the robot did something trained people and modern medicine hadn't been able to do, according to Bill Loader, a hospital spokesman.

"One little girl, with Reye's Syndrome, had not responded to routine efforts used to communicate with such children. But, the minute INNO walked into the

room there was a spark of excitement INNO talked with her and when he saw her nod her head he proceeded with conversation that required her to make responsive motions. When he left five minutes later he asked her for a favor. He wanted her to throw him a kiss," Loader says.

There was excitement in the room and crowded hallway as the little girl strained to raise both hands to her lips and throw a kiss to INNO. The crowd, which included visitors, nurses and the girl's family, broke into applause, Loader says.

In another instance, a little girl from Greece had been flown to Louisville for a very serious and complicated back operation. Nurses said she was very depressed. She hadn't smiled for several weeks. They wanted INNO to visit her. However, she spoke no English.

INNO, who is multi-lingual but doesn't speak Greek fluently, dipped into his memory bank and retrieved a few words of Greek...enough to ask "how are you?" and "promise me you'll get better soon."

When INNO left the room after just a few minutes, the young

patient was smiling and so were the nurses.

The robot, manufactured by International Robotics of New York City, will attend more than a dozen major farm machinery shows for Sperry New Holland. Other Sperry Corporation divisions will also use the robot in trade shows, including the Paris Air Show, where the robot will switch its memory banks from agricultural matters to aeronautics.

"Naturally, we're interested in the power of INNO to attract crowds to our farm machinery displays," says Dale Berkheimer, director of communications and promotions at Sperry New Holland.

"However, we book the robot for a full day's work, and those extra hours at the hospital are more fun than work for our people who accompany INNO. Perhaps we'll be helpful in leading the way to some new methods of treatment that doctors can follow up on in the future."

Berkheimer says International Robotics has already started working on possible uses for the robot in medical and psychological treatments and the Sperry New Holland hospital visits will add to their information.

How does a robot fit into the (Turn to Page C15)



INNO-Vator, a friendly robot, brings smiles to the faces of children as he visits Children's Hospital in Louisville, KY. The robot takes time out from demonstrating Sperry New Holland farm machinery to visit.



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