

Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program

Class XVII

Scribe Notes

Seminar 8

July 16 - 17, 2015

“Family Relationships and Community Concerns”

Thursday July 16

Scribe: Jared Grissom

Botanic Garden and Turf Center Complex at OSU: Laura Payne and David Hillcock started the morning out with a tour of the grounds at the Botanic Garden. The grounds consist of many different garden exhibits. The different exhibits can show people what types of plants to put in different areas of their landscape. The gardens give people great advice on what can grow and where to plant it. We saw the butterfly gardens, shade, rock, and sensory gardens and many, many more. We also saw and learned how a pervious paving system works which was neat. After the tour of the gardens, Dr. Dennis Martin explained what his team was doing to explore and grow different types of turfgrass. Since the mid-1990s when turfgrass research began here, OSU has released seven different bermudagrasses to the turf industry. The most recent was Latitude 36. Bermudagrass and buffalograss are very popular because of their hardiness, high density, and quality. I was not aware that so much research went into the turfgrass industry.

Entrepreneurial Leadership Exchange Program: Coleen Thornton had the privilege of travelling to Molokai, HI to work with some farmers/ranchers and exchange ideas on how to grow their businesses. While she was there she learned that tradition was a very big deal. The native people want to bring back the old way of doing things and they have a hard time allowing people to come in and try to change things. They can farm year round, so it is an ideal place for Monsanto and similar companies to go there, but some people don't want them coming in. They are also trying to keep tourism away.

Communication and Stress Management: Dr. Jason White is a licensed psychologist at OSU and he talked about the indicators of stress and how we can deal with different types of stress in our lives. There are four indicators for stress; physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral. He said that it is good to have some stress and that level of stress is called Eustress. Some of the ways he mentioned to help manage stress were social support, physical health and exercise, organization, and relaxation. Negative communication with people leads to more stress, whereas positive communication can relieve it. Dr. White also talked about the five love languages which was interesting. It taught us what kind of communication we are looking for from a partner and what type our partner was looking for which can help people eliminate some stress in their personal lives.

Service Leadership: Dr. Avery Culbertson joined us to discuss service leadership. It is cooperative learning where we, as a team, can work together to do something really great for the community, but also learn about the community and ourselves as a team. Leadership is never over, so after this program we will continue to go out and learn from others and also share our knowledge with them. The components of service learning are preparation, investigation, action, reflection, and celebration/demonstration.

Community Service Project: We went to First United Methodist Church and painted the youth center. The youth were unable to help because they were away at camp. Everyone worked together, including spouses, and did a great job completing the task.

Picnic at the Arnall's house: Brian and Courtney were very kind to allow us to come to their home and, along with DuPont Crop Protection, provide a great meal! Brian talked about UAVs in agriculture and demonstrated his UAV. The information he provided was very interesting and we had a lot of fun even though the UAV quit working. It was a very relaxing evening.

Friday, July 17, 2015

Scribe: Janlyn Hannah

Class XVII reconvened for Day 2 of Session 8 at the USDA Hydraulic Engineering Research Unit northwest of Stillwater. Amanda Horn, chairperson, began the morning by introducing our speaker. Dr. Sherry Hunt walked us through a PowerPoint presentation of the history of the research unit as well as the USDA's mission for the Agriculture Research Service. As the Research Leader for the lab, it is Dr. Hunt's job to work with experts, such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), to design dams and other structures. Dr. Hunt discussed the intended effective life of dams being about fifty years. She said many of the dams in Oklahoma are nearing or even exceeding that time. Restructuring or rebuilding are options for preserving the integrity of the dams. We toured the grounds of the research station and viewed many of the experiments the researchers are working on. Months are spent setting up experiments to test water speed and dam strength. At the conclusion of the outdoor tour, the class departed for the Wyndham Garden Hotel.

Upon arrival at the hotel, the group met in the conference room with Brent Howard, Esq. Mr. Howard is an attorney specializing in farm/estate planning. Rather than proceed with a presentation, Mr. Howard allowed members of the OALP to ask as many questions as we liked. Many in the group had questions about setting up estates and trusts. Mr. Howard discussed the differences between irrevocable and revocable trusts. He also explained estates and wills and went through scenarios of when each would be best used. In closing, Mr. Howard encouraged each of us to look at our unique situations and discuss our options with a licensed attorney to find what would be most effective. After thanking Mr. Howard for his time, the class broke for lunch sponsored by William Nelson, President of the CHS Foundation.

Promptly after the meal, Amanda Horn introduced the afternoon's final presenter: Mr. David Lane. Mr. Lane is the Managing Director of Messaging at Iron Mountain. His presentation was on making relationships stronger. Mr. Lane was very interactive during his presentation. He spoke about the importance of understanding and its role in communication. We watched several short videos about watching for body language cues such as darting eyes when understanding what sort of learners with which we are dealing. Knowing what type of learner someone is helps us communicate most effectively with that person. Mr. Lane showed us how to fold a t-shirt in 5 seconds. This process was to demonstrate that the most effective methods are not always the one we already use, even if we'd all like to think so. Mr. Lane encouraged us to openly communicate with others and think of our audience to communicate effectively.

After Mr. Lane departed, the group gathered for synthesis, discussion and announcements. We each went around and spoke about a presenter or tour that most affected us. Many commented that the Botanic Gardens or Hydraulic labs were the most enjoyable tours. Spouses were also very appreciated for attending the meeting. Edmond asked that we share concerns about the international trip. Many cited concerns such as vaccinations, healthcare options and communicating with family at home. Edmond will look more into these items and give us more information as we get closer to travel time. After discussion, the group dismissed until Session 9 in Northwest Oklahoma.