

OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

CLASS XVI

Scribe Notes
Seminar 8
July 11-12, 2013

Theme: *“Family Relationships and Community Concerns”*

July 11, 2013

Scribe: Cheri Long

Our day began at the Botanic Garden at OSU. Kim Toscano, who is the host of Oklahoma Gardening, was our host and speaker. She is the writer, host and producer of the show. She is a very busy lady! She shared with us that this is the 40th season for the show. We also had one of the Ambassadors for OK Gardening, Lynn Hughes, along with us. Kim shared with us about the Cow Creek Stream Corridor Restoration Project. Cow Creek is a typical Oklahoma stream whose natural course has been manipulated and the stream is currently deepening and widening. The Oklahoma Gardening Studio garden and OSU service roads are being threatened due to this. The ARRA, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, has given \$2 million dollars to restore this site.

She continued to explain about various areas in the garden. There are a variety of types of gardening within the garden itself. Kim stated that there are 20 theme gardens within OK Gardening. They use integrated pest management, IPM. She calls this common sense gardening. They use things like bird netting, solarization, copper and barrier trails with slugs, companion planting, crop rotation, and floating row covers just to determine what works best with certain plants and vegetation.

Kim showed us the Green Cottage which the garden is using to test solar power etc. Just that little Green Cottage was \$8000 for electricity so they use the solar resources. She went on to explain the Sensory Garden and how much it is used and appreciated. The different textures and sounds that the garden provides help people that have multisensory disorders and issues. The plants have different textures; the sound room plants make noise. It attracts bees which make the buzzing noises and the path has different structures than the actual garden so the blind can use it to help determine where they are.

Kim then took us to one of the main areas that Hwy 51 accesses. They are testing storm water management in this area. Pervious paving is used in the driveway. On one side non-permeable bricks are used so the water runs off and into the rain garden. The other side of the drive is pervious and it can hold 2 inches of rain. The rain goes down beneath the bricks. In this area the plants can tolerate lots of water. This area can hold up to 24 hours of rainfall. This garden experience was fabulous!

After the tour of the Botanic Garden we met with Dennis Martin who heads up the Turf Grass Research. They test all sorts of turf grasses. They were testing 15 different types of grasses; 1200-1500 different varieties. OSU is one of seven cooperator sites. Turf grass research began somewhere in the 1900s at OSU. Dr. Charles Taliaferro began breeding and developing turf bermudagrasses in the mid-1980s. Since then, OSU has independently or collaboratively released seven bermudagrass cultivars to the turf industry, namely ‘Midlawn’ and ‘Midfield’ in 1993, ‘Yukon’ and ‘Riviera’ in 2005, ‘Patriot’ in 2006, and “Northbridge” and “Latitude 36” in 2011. These latter two cultivars are popular in the U.S. primarily due to their improved turf quality, cold hardiness, and spring dead spot tolerance. It was interesting to see the physical testing that was taking place. I think Dennis called it Game Day play or something like that. He told us there could be 500 different types of

bermudagrasses in one plot. I didn't realize there were so many different types. On the consumer end of it, he made a statement about choosing the right grass stating, "Before you knock a plant out, have a better plan in mind."

Our next stop was the Insect Adventure. We met with Dr. Andrine Shrufran and we were told to call her Andrine. Insect Adventure is a live, hands-on petting zoo with lots of species of insects. She gave a little background on "bugs". About 2/3 of the world's plants require pollination and that can't happen without bugs. She talked about "Bug Fest" and she used our own Tracey Payton Miller to help her with the presentation. We saw and touched several different arthropods which included a millipede, African Forest Millipede, centipede, Oklahoma Tarantula, Mexican Red Tarantula, beetles and a daddy long legs which is not a spider but a harvestman. It is considered an arachnid. Insects are insects because of their wings. She also pulled out some walking sticks that were absolutely beautiful. At the Insect Adventure they have eight species of walking sticks. At the end of our time at the Insect Adventure she showed us a dead leaf mimic walking stick and a live leaf mimic walking stick. This facility is a very valuable resource. Andrine is definitely passionate about her work!

We headed over to the Noble Research Center and had a great lunch and then at 1:00 p.m. gathered in the auditorium for our next speakers. We heard from Matt Cordray who is the Chief Operating Officer for Heartline 2.1.1. He brought along his coworkers Brian and Kelly. Heartline is a 501-C3 Non-profit organization that helps in all areas of life. It helps connect Oklahomans to help, hope, and information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. There are 13,000 services available. In their Fiscal year 2013 they had 199,857 contacts with people. They work with the Health and Human Services and the National Suicide Prevention in all 77 counties except Tulsa County. It is a community crisis connection. Most of us had never heard of 2.1.1. until this seminar. I hadn't heard about it until our May 20th tornado. The program started in Tulsa in 2004 and now we have one in Oklahoma City. Every state has a 2.1.1. This is a fabulous resource that everyone needs to know about!

We took a break and then heard from Cindy Washington who is a clinical counselor with OSU University Counseling Services. She shared her PowerPoint presentation with us. We discussed stress. Stress is anything that stimulates us or the lack of stimulation can also stress us out. We need stress but at the optimal levels. The impact of stress does weird stuff to our minds and bodies. Illnesses are connected to stress. We should all take 10-20 minutes to alleviate our stress and our bodies require 7-9 hours of sleep. Most people do not get this at all. Stress can have and does have a negative impact on communication. Tracey mentioned things she was dealing with in her work environment that was very stressful. Negative communication is stressful and we need the positive to counteract it. There are four negatives of communication: criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling. Cindy stated that observation is a safe way to protect you from stress. She recommended a book by John Gottman called "Why Marriages Succeed or Fail & How You can Make Yours Last." She seemed to really enjoy interacting and talking with our class.

We took a break and headed to the hotel to check in and change our clothes for the community service project and our evening picnic. Our community service project was at the Payne County Youth Services in Stillwater. The class did some tree trimming and weeding eating. They worked on cleaning up around the facility and made it a little nicer around the building. It was hot! We were there for an hour or so. Cheri Long with Ag in the Classroom along with two other class members, Ginger Reimer and Debbie Wedel, worked with three of the children being housed at the center. The children participated in three hands-on activities with Ag in the Classroom. The students made Beanie Babies and learned what plants require to grow and survive. They made Prairie Dolls and learned that back in the prairie days, children didn't have all the technology and things to play with and everything they had to play with was made or created. The last activity was making an agriculture bracelet which helped the students realize that everything moves in a cycle and that we are all connected to agriculture all the time. It was a great experience by everyone involved.

After our community service, we went to the home of Brian and Courtney Arnall. We had a picnic and enjoyed our time together before calling it a night. Beautiful night and great food! We also enjoyed sampling various

types of apple cider that was sent to Tracey by one of the class members from the state of Washington who we met while on our tour in Washington, D.C. Our meal was sponsored by DuPont Crop Protection and Greg Justice from Class IX.

July 12, 2013

Scribe: Sandra Stevenson

TOUR OF USDA HYDRAULIC ENGINEERING RESEARCH UNIT - Dr. Sherry Hunt, Acting Research Leader

Their primary client is the NRCS. This unit has 150 acres of which 50 acres are developed for outdoor activities. Hydraulic structures: gravel rock structures assist with erosion control like one in place at Sugar Creek and they also measure flow. In the USDA Small Watershed Program, the Washita River has 43 flood control dams. Pictures of floods along Sugar Creek started to get the attention of Congress in 1949. They put in dams on upper tributaries to control flow downstream. Baffles underneath with covered tops called "trash racks" assisted in reducing debris. The most famous head cut is Niagara Falls. Software technology used by the NRCS to predict erosion is also used by the Army Corp of Engineers. In 1962, the Sugar Creek Watershed #8 was built that allowed Dr. Hunt's grandfather's land to be used for agriculture instead of wasted land under water. Watersheds also provide pond water for livestock.

Janet Stewart informed us that there are not any zoning restrictions or state laws to prevent construction, buildings, and development near or on spillways. Zones are not in flood plains and people are not aware.

Roller compacted concrete is so dry highway machinery and equipment has to lay it out. Research in Georgia determined that the 22:1 scale was too small. Types of erosion include overtopping and internal erosion. Win Dam 2005 is a software program that assists the NRCS to determine which structures are in need of repair and prioritizes those with the greatest need and safety hazard. Discussions about structures no longer being needed are taking place. However, they provide \$2.5 billion annual benefits. Innovative uses include using the sediments stored in these structures for dams and spillways and to develop ways to harness energy. We enjoyed her personal stories and photos.

We then toured the outdoor facilities and learned about current research. A tool used to take samples of how much erosion has occurred was demonstrated. They discussed erosion resistant vs. sand/soil on a testing plate. This division of the research does not build structures for long-term use. They are built to be destroyed and tested. The electrical chemistry of the soil plays a large role in its erodible factor. The Army Corp of Engineers contacted them to learn more about the levy after hurricane Katrina. The staff demonstrated five siphons coming from the dam that move 125-130 gallons of water per minute when opened at full-discharge capacity. We saw the channel where civil engineers test their concrete canoes. They discussed high risk research in that results are not available within 6 months; may even take 5 years or 5 additional years. It could take 3 months to construct a structure and 5 minutes for it to erode or 10 years to erode; depends on the soil parameters.

BASICS OF ESTATE PLANNING - Hal Ellis, Attorney at Law

Do not let the tax tail wag the dog around! Get your stuff in order; it feels good; like an adult. There are many federal tax systems including income tax, excise tax, sales tax, and estate tax systems. We had a discussion about how to use the dead spouse's exemption for the surviving spouse; portability. A will has to go through probate court to put it into effect; doesn't necessarily have to be a bad thing. Go to a lawyer familiar with Oklahoma law. DO NOT download a form from the internet. A trust consists of a revocable trust (very valuable because of durable power of attorney) and irrevocable trusts (requires more advanced planning such as business assets.) In a trust, the assets are private and do not go through probate. They also do not impact your personal taxes. Make sure your attorney is an expert in irrevocable trusts. Durable Power of Attorney is a trust still valid even if you are deemed incompetent. Be conscious of why you want or need one. A living will in Oklahoma is also known as an Advanced Directive that addresses end of life issues and/or persistently unconscious. Pay particular attention when planning for your children; consider their ages, terms, special needs, disabilities,

whether a guardian for minor children is needed, when they get to receive their inheritance, etc. Consider also appointing a trustee to oversee the trust. General probate procedures cost approximately \$2500-3500. The cost to set up a trust varies on your assets and ease/difficulty of assets. The attorney should send an engagement letter, you pay a retainer, and then the clock starts ticking. Know what you expect in a good trustee. Come prepared for the first meeting with a list of names (spelled correctly) of your spouse and children, their addresses, dates of birth, assets/liabilities list, tax returns, financial statements (better if prepared by CPA). The expectations from your lawyer include having an interest in estate planning, websites and word of mouth referrals, knowledge of wills, trusts, and taxes, and that they express an interest in you. Avoid attorneys that are too busy for you, too involved in other areas of practice, and really short meeting sessions with them.

THE POWER OF A POSITIVE ATTITUDE - State Representative Joe Dorman

He spoke briefly on the power of a positive attitude and shared a brief history of himself and how he became involved in politics. He considers serving as a representative his full-time job but will "retire" after this term as he is not eligible for re-election. He plans to pursue a master's degree after he retires. Joe offered a quote he found on the internet about positive thinking and then took questions which were related to bills and issues not necessarily about the topic of the power of positive thinking.