

KARL Class XI Genesis Seminar

Friday August 19, 2011, Tyler VanWinkle - Scribe

The initial KARL experience began for the 30 members of Class XI on Friday evening as the group assembled from their respective regions. As conversation began to build amongst the crowd, one of the most popular topics was reminiscing about the last time we were “campers” at Rock Springs, of course this is after we reintroduced ourselves to one another. After a few signing off on some waivers, it was time for dinner at the famed Williams Dining Hall.

After dinner we had the good fortune of meeting Gordon Hibbard, the president of the Kansas 4-H Foundation, which is an honor and challenge as it is the largest 4-H foundation in the United States. Mr. Hibbard spoke to the group in regards to ethics in leadership, and sometimes the lack thereof. The first exercise was to name 3 people that depend on the individual class member, and 3 people that we depend on in our daily lives. While this seems like a small, insignificant task to put names on paper, that sparked subsequent and appreciative thoughts about those special people in our circles. This is something we could all stand to practice more regularly. Moving on, Mr. Hibbard outlined that with the resources abundant in our society, there is a vast array of information regarding Leadership and Ethics; however it is the practice of ethics that is most important. An important take home message was that “living an ethical life isn’t always easy, but it shouldn’t be difficult”. Mundane and very simple statement it may be, but there are many instances that suggest that is not as easy to carry out. Mr. Hibbard pointed out that usually it is the 3 P’s that cause our ethics to be compromised; Pressure, Pleasure, and Power. Lastly, he asked the group to take an ethics test, again rather simple in nature, but for some was enlightening. The test question is below:

Which one applies to you?

- 1- I am always ethical
- 2- I am mostly ethical
- 3- I am somewhat ethical
- 4- I am seldom ethical
- 5- I am never ethical

I don’t think an answer is needed here, but it is important to recognize that the challenges we are faced with and the choices there in, carry significant implications. As a society, we are fortunate to have leaders such as Mr. Hibbard for his ability to carry himself with a high ethical standard. Blake Angell, the chair of the session presented Mr. Hibbard a bottle of wine in appreciation for his contribution to the growth and development of class XI.



The second speaker of the night was Rob Cook, from Supplejack Station, Northern Territory, Australia. Mr. Cook is a recipient of the 2011 Nuffield Scholarship, which has provided him with resources to travel the Midwestern section of the United States. In his endeavors, Mr. Cook is seeking to obtain education on American agriculture, specifically the beef industry. As a rancher in a very sparsely populated area, he and his family have survived several generations by becoming adaptable and self-sustaining. Mr. Cook did not explicitly state that he had a passion for extreme activities, but his history strongly suggests that “living on the edge” was a large part of his life. He was a bull rider, dynamite explosive technician, and a helicopter pilot. Sadly, the last interest led to an unfortunate accident leaving him paralyzed and wheelchair bound. The challenges that he and his family faced were complex as their ranch is devoid of a consistent supply of electricity, they rely on generators to fill this need. Mr. Cook intends to gain a better understanding of available technology to provide assistance to the operation as it is near impossible for him to accomplish the necessary work from a physical standpoint. Mr. Cook’s story was certainly humbling, and inspiring. However, his personality and demeanor made it more self-reflective and motivating as it was clear that he was determined to push past the challenges. Mr. Cook has the drive and vision to incorporate technology into the operation to become not only feasible, but durable to stand up over time. Mr. Cook’s venture is quite remarkable, but the most impressive story is that he is doing this despite his only true wish of being able to physically walk again. The presentation was concluded by Blake Angell providing a fine bottle of wine to Mr. Cook and his wife.



The last event of the evening was executive session, and per binding oath, details are not to be discussed.

Summary-

The commencement of class XI was quite impressive, and created a strong sense of excitement among the group. As we began the process of developing our leadership skills, and enhancing our social capacity we received guidance and perspective from 2 inspiring people. Gordon Hibbard, an established and respected community leader, highlighted the importance of carrying ethics while in leadership positions. Rob Cook, a young aspiring leader from Australia demonstrated the importance of vision and determination in leadership. These individuals were on different ends of the age spectrum; however the message from both was abundantly clear and significant. Class XI is going to be a tremendous journey for tomorrow's leaders.

Saturday, August 20, 2011, Luke Thornton - Scribe

We began the day with breakfast and then headed down to the Leadership Adventure Course. Luckily we had a nice cloudy and cool morning for this intense encounter with the outdoors. Dane Mauslein led us through the different challenges we had to conquer as a group. During these challenges he discussed various ideas related to leadership, including the little known fact that sometimes you must use only spoons, not forks or napkins. He stated that to accomplish these tasks we were about to face, we would need communication, cooperation, and trust. Trust = Predictability + Reliability over time. Working together, we learned that all of these tasks were possible with everyone working as a team. We not only need to spot each other through these exercises, but into the future as well. Dane gave us his idea that leadership is the ability to lead people in a way they feel like they succeeded on their own.



A couple of worthwhile quotes he stated were:

“The difficult we can do now, the impossible will just take awhile”

“Attitude is the one thing we can control”

“Worrying is like a rocking chair, it is something to do, but it doesn't get you anywhere”

It was clear that everyone's comfort levels with each other significantly increased through the activities. It seems easy to remember everyone's name when we spend time working together like this. (And when they are wearing a large name tag the whole time) The conversation level on the way back from the Leadership course was much more than previously on the way there. Despite the grueling physical exertion during the course, it appears no one reported any injuries. Hopefully the jungle of poison ivy didn't catch anyone either.



After the course, we ate lunch then headed into the classroom for Team Building with Marisa. It was interesting that while going over the "True Colors" personality test results, 57% of the group scored in the Gold personality with 17 of the 30 in our group. We worked on the ways different personalities communicate and how they want others to communicate with them.



Next we had Ron Wilson from the Huck Boyd Institute for Rural Development discuss "Getting Your Message Across". A great quote originally from Huck Boyd was "Community service is the rent you pay for the privilege of living on this earth."



Mr. Wilson stated that in two way communication you need to:

- 1) Listen - seek first to understand, then to be understood
- 2) Give feedback
- 3) Engage in dialogue
- 4) Use multiple channels

He also shared the Four D's of Getting Your Message Across:

- 1) Define your message
- 2) Distill your message – making it concise and effective
- 3) Deliver your message
- 4) Dedicate your message – practice, repeat, commit
 - a. It's not as much the creativeness, but the repetitiveness



We finished the day with a dinner at the Kniebel Ranch. It was a beautiful place to wind down for the evening. Everyone enjoyed the great hospitality and the opportunity to spend time in fellowship.



Sunday August 21, 2011, Chris Tanner – Scribe

The morning began with Tyler Ediger giving a Sunday morning devotional at Vesper Hill, at sunrise. Following that we walked to the chapel where the KARL Choir sang Amazing Grace. We then went to breakfast.

Our next order of business was planning the carpools for the Garden City meeting. I enjoyed having everyone stand in the area of the state we were from so we could visualize our distance from one another.

Dan Kahl began his session by having us select a photo of leaders. Then we discussed what made them good leaders and how they led. Some of them mentioned were:

- Trendsetter
- Open to other cultures
- Risk taker
- Create avenue for others to express themselves
- Gave back
- Visionary
- Fearless
- Ability to inspire
- Advanced / evolved in industry
- Forgiveness
- Communication



We then discussed some movies that showed good leadership they were,

Hoosiers
Remember the Titans
Miracle
To kill a mockingbird
Apollo 13
High Noon
Band of Brothers
One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest
1776

One quote mentioned was by General Patton: "If everyone is thinking alike, then someone isn't thinking"

We then took another personality profile on our learning and working styles. We then split up into our four possible groups, and planned a party. It was interesting to see the like-minded people working together, and try to communicate with our opposites.



We learned how to strategize and use each other's thinking. A book that was mentioned to read was The Leader of The Future.

We then went to lunch for the last time together, and then made the drive home.

