

KARL Class XI
Personal Development Seminar
Location: Colby
Wednesday Dec. 7, 2011
Joe Muller, scribe

As we arrived in Colby, we were greeted at the Visitors Center with genuine Western Kansas hospitality. While at the grain bin “styled” visitor center; we were able to reunite with fellow classmates, enjoyed lunch with several classmates, then we all met at Colby Community College Student Union for the first session.

Key Issues on Board and Committee Participation started the Personal Development Seminar with Bill Riley sharing his wealth of knowledge relating to board participation and expectations. Mr. Riley has developed and served on or for boards in the non-profit sector for nearly forty years. He explained many key points; one being, the three major components of the responsibility that the governing board in a non-profit are: 1) Financial security of the organization. 2) Ethical operation of the organization. 3) Advancement of the mission. He asked how we measure the success of a non-profit, “Are we measuring the activities or the real results?” When we answer this question do we say; “my life changed because... or I had a really good time on the field trip.” The number one rule of fundraising is “don’t confuse capability with willingness.”



After a short break we had the opportunity to listen and interact with world-known agriculture activist Trent Loos. Mr. Loos, a 6th generation farmer and recognized radio voice, explained that his job in addressing the session topic, **Building the Image of Agricultural Industry**, was to help us tell our own story with passion and conviction. The first skill we have to have in speaking about agriculture is to be a good listener. By being a good listener, we are able to hear what we need to talk about and how we need to address the other party’s needs. Some of you may have heard fellow classmates; Brandon, Blake, Debra, Natalie, Kelsey, Tyler E., Liesel, Mike, and Tanner, on the Rural Route a couple of Thursdays ago. They all did an exceptional job on the air, especially being in the spotlight with no preparation. A few main points from this session: 1) if you stay on task, people will get your point even if you stutter or don’t feel like you are very polished. 2) People don’t remember what you say, but they remember how you say

it. 3) Animal agriculture improves human lives and improves the world through food, fuel, pharmacy, and fiber. Mr. Loos' radio broadcasts can be heard via this website.
www.FacesofAg.com



Thank you to all the area donors that sponsored the dinner Wednesday night.

Thursday Dec. 8, 2011
Josh Morrill, scribe

Jennifer Latzke associate editor for the High Plains Journal led the morning session educating class XI of the importance of social media. Ms. Latzke explained the inner workings of Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and other web based media outlets. The class was instructed on how to establish a personal Twitter account and the class was given an overview of how the Twitter process worked. With Ms. Latzke's career being front and center in the print media, she gave a firsthand account of how the media has incorporated Twitter as a vital tool for up to the minute information from day to day; following specific sources (tweets). Marisa Larson then led class XI in writing responses to the media, and how critical it is for leaders in agriculture and rural economics, to voice our opinions. The class was then broken into groups, and asked to craft responses to current events. Each group presented their letter to the editor to the whole class for evaluation and feedback.



For the afternoon session, class XI was divided into two groups. The first group exercise exposed class members to engaging the media. Mr. Ken Rahjes, Network Coordinator for KRVN/Rural Radio Network and member of KARL class III, gave a personal history of his career in media. Mr. Rahjes individually interviewed each class member. Each interview was videotaped and unrehearsed to simulate a real life media experience. Mr. Rahjes had a list of several current event topics to question each class member from. Class members were put on the spot to articulate appropriate impromptu responses. After the conclusion of each interview Mr. Rahjes evaluated and gave helpful feedback to each interviewee. Each class member was made acutely aware of the importance of knowing your position and being prepared to factually defend yourself at all times, even to those with opposing views.



The second group exercise was conducted by Mr. Mark Coberly of KARL Class VI. Mr. Mark Coberly educated the group on board room etiquette and protocol, drawing from his career in county government. Mr. Coberly also led the class through an extemporaneous speaking exercise in which each class member had two minutes to develop a position to a current events topic, largely unfamiliar to them, and present and defend their position to the entire group.

The evening session was held at the Prairie Museum in Colby. KARL XI was provided an excellent roast beef dinner by Mark Winger (Class III) and Lon Frahm (Class II) and was joined for dinner by a distinguished WWII veteran and local hero. After dinner and touring the museum, Class XI heard presentations regarding the Home Town Competitiveness rural development program, and the city of Atwood's success with the program, from Leon Atwell of Bennington and Chris Sramek of Atwood.



Dale Deaver, WWII veteran

Friday, Dec. 9, 2011

Location: Atwood

Facilitator: Matt Wolters

Paula Landoll-Smith, scribe

Matt Wolters

KARL XI was brought to Atwood because of the success with Hometown Competitiveness Model. An attitude shift has been established over the last 10 years: those in their 20s/30s are welcomed home, a cultural change for the area.

Joe Cabrinha, Mayor of Atwood

Suggested Reading “**Survival of Rural America**” by Richard E Wood. There are two ways to go- either grow or decline. “From the City’s Point of View in Atwood, we have concerned ourselves with infrastructure.” 85% of the city water lines have been replaced and there is funding for the other 15%.

Atwood is progressive. There are committees/boards for the library, airport, trees, etc. These committees/board members are VOLUNTEERS. The town has been persistent in endeavors and they have paid off.

Note: Joe is not a native of Atwood. He married a girl from Atwood and they chose to come back in their retirement years.



Julie Britton, Economic Development Director of Rawlins Co.

Her History: Returned to Atwood in 2005. Previous: Governor Hayden appointed Julie to the KS Arts Commission. This is where she learned how to write grants and to “express her needs to go after the mighty dollar”.

Upon her return, she worked at the health center writing grants. She expresses gratitude to former KS Governor Mike Hayden who encouraged her and others to “put talent back into rural America”.

Community Leader Panel

Chris Sramek – Coordinator of HTC/KHPI, Owner Decision Weather

“To retain people, you must invest” in your area. “Some entity in the community must keep leadership in the big picture.”

Mary Holle - Rawlins Co Newspaper/Farmer

One of the original 10 at the HTC (Hometown Competitiveness) meeting. “Leadership is not done by government officials, money is not from the government, it is a TRUE GRASS ROOTS Effort. Hard work and road blocks are ahead of you. Either go forward, go around, or step back and regroup.”

4 Pillars that the group concentrates on: Youth, Buildings, Entrepreneurs, Keeping Wealth. –

Community organizer group sent people to the HTC academy. The group met again within a week. Asked “Now, what do we do with this information?”.

Began Birth Notices (in Blue and Pink) vs. just Death Notices

Newspaper printed positive reinforcements. Focus on POSITIVE.

Focus: Quality of Life Matters more than Money

POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Invest in YOUR COMMUNITY

Mark Wolters – Superintendent of Rawlins Co. Schools

Grew up in Atwood, wanted to be a part of its future. “The future of our community was in our hands. We needed to step up.” Worried about decline in enrollment. Without enrollment, funds decrease. Without funds, opportunities lessen for students. School system was sending the message to students “you can go anywhere and do anything. We were doing a great job of exporting our most valuable resource.” Over time it wasn’t that alums did not want to return, it was the lack of employment. The Ag teacher began instructing “you don’t have to work for someone else” and the area began encouraging entrepreneurship.

PROGRESSIVE THINKING vs. Negative

PERSISTENCE and DETERMINATION: “Swim against the Current, Not Just Taking a Raft Downstream”

Dawn Hampton- Drug Store/Accountant

Note: From Wyoming – Came because opportunity for her husband to take over pharmacy.

“We must find the gifts in our community, Ag Genius, Budget Genius, etc”.

Two ways to greet people who move back to Atwood: Why'd you come back? Vs. Welcome Home! We are glad you are here

“You can either break spirits or bring smiles to faces. We like to bring smiles.”
“I LOVE THIS COMMUNITY” attitude.

Chris Schmidt – High Plains Food Coop

“We bring the Farmers Market to You”

Group offers 450-600 products per month including all natural beef, chicken and eggs.
60/65 orders per month –

Hoping to grow

www.highplainsfood.org



Heidi Lowry – Director of Rawlins Co. Dental

Nebraskan – Lived in Portland and Denver, wanted a place to raise 6 children. Went to school in Colby to be a Dental Hygienist. Began project in Dec. 08 and were in business in less than a year. Started with one dentist, now have two. It is good for a dental clinic to have 40 new patients per month, they have approximately 150. Writing grants – They do approx \$1 Million in care per year with \$300,000 in write-offs. “We are helping people who wouldn’t get help otherwise.”

“Look internally and find if you are the obstacle. Sometimes we are the person to get in our own way”

Group Tours: Bison RX/Compounding, Mizer Milling, Margret Hagler spoke on Community Beautification

Bus Tour to Final Finish Auto Body, Vap Construction, Drive by of Rawlins Co Health Center

Tour of Sure Fire Ag and Lunch:

Matt Wolters: “No More Poor Us. I didn’t come home to be at home, but for an awesome opportunity. We can service anyone from here. People are our greatest asset.”

Josh Wolters: One way to do strategy “Define what you are not going to do and be experts at what you will do”