

classX newsletter

Seminar V
In This Issue:

- Director's Dialogue- p.1-2
- Announcements-p.3
- Innovation in Southwest Florida-p.4-5
- Kissimmee, Cows, & Quail Creek-p.6-7
- "A Cup of Joe" with Dr. Joe- p.8-9
- More Photos from Seminar V-p.9
- Coordinator's Corner- p.10-11

Let's Reflect.

Director's Dialogue -Dr. Hannah Carter, Program Director

Anytime you begin a seminar with two members of the Florida Agricultural Hall of Fame, you know you're starting strong and that it's going to be an exceptional time together—and that was certainly the case with Seminar V! We began with Mr. Dallas Townsend and Mr. Hugh English overlooking the Caloosahatchee River—both the speakers and the location were intentional—they spoke about the history of agriculture in this area, its unique position and the importance of water—both from the river and from the Bay.

This is the second time that we have had this seminar as part of a WLI class experience and it has, personally, become one of my favorites. I love this area of the state and there are so many interesting things to learn about, I feel badly that for this seminar we go an inch deep and about 20 miles wide, as we cover a great deal of ground!

After leaving the western part of the state, we headed northeast to visit the Nicodemus water storage project of Lykes Brothers, Inc. When the

news this spring was dominated by talk of storing water below Lake Okeechobee, it is eye-opening to see a completed project of this size and scope. Special thanks to Noah Handley



"...for this seminar we go an inch deep and about 20 miles wide, as we cover a great deal of ground!"



(Class IX) for leading the class around the project, answering our questions and also for his help in sketching out this entire seminar!

While in this area, we visited Jim Snively (Class VI) and Southern Gardens Citrus. We learned about what Southern Gardens is doing to address citrus greening and I think we all left a bit more hopeful that the industry will continue to be resilient (as will the people who work within it) and find a way to keep growing the state's iconic crop. We were treated to a wonderful meal with WLI alumni in the area at the Dunwoody Lodge and are grateful to Jim and Southern Gardens for hosting!





We started our second day of programming in true WLI fashion, learning about a place and project that is much discussed, but after leaving there, you have more questions than answers. The Kissimmee River Project, north of Lake Okeechobee has been mentioned to the class throughout their time in the program. We not only learned more about the project, we got on a boat and were able to be on the river and see restoration efforts. And I do not think I'm alone in this, I left wondering about a lot more than I learned about. We were then treated to lunch, sponsored by Justin Hood (Class IX) and hosted by Ben Butler (Class IX) and his family. The Butler's have a long dairy legacy in this area and spoke about their experiences and opinions on the restoration project. It was a wonderful way to wrap up the morning and discuss what we just saw.

The day wrapped up with a tour of Chad Rucks' (Class V) dairy operation. I think the class could have asked Chad questions all day! It was wonderful to see his operation and watch him engage with members of this new class!

We wrapped up the seminar in one of my favorite places, Quail Creek Plantation! While Fred and Maria Fanizzi (Class VIII) were not able to be there, the class certainly enjoyed the wonderful hospitality and amenities of Quail Creek. We were supposed to have a team building whiffle ball game that unfortunately was postponed due to weather, instead, we had an amazing "Let's Reflect" in the main lodge.

The seminar ended with Senator Denise Grimsley joining us on Thursday morning to discuss issues in this area that she represents and her thoughts on running for the Commissioner of Ag. Then, with a great deal of anticipation, the class learned about their international trip (which is exactly a year away)! They'll be traveling to Scotland and Kenya in 2018!

I hope to see everyone at this year's annual alumni meeting! It's going to be an amazing time with lots of exciting things happening!

Go to: wedgworthalumni.org for more information!

"I hope to see everyone at this year's annual alumni meeting! It's going to be an amazing time with lots of exciting things happening!"

Go to:
wedgworthalumni.org for
more information!"



Class X welcomes Baby Jahna!

It's a Girl!

Class X would like to send a very special congratulations to fellow class member Adrian Jahna and his wife Brooke on their newest addition to their family.

Sutton Jahna was born on May 6th, 2017 and weighed 7lbs, 10 oz..

We are so excited for you, Adrian, and we look forward to meeting your precious baby girl very soon!



You're Invited to the 2017 AAWLI Annual Meeting!



Naples Grande Beach Resort,
Naples, FL
August 3rd-5th

Go to [wedgworthalumni.org] for more information about registration, hotel rooms, sponsorships, the annual Live and Silent auctions, the youth institute, and more!



Meet Class X Member Tim Brock



Tim lives in Lynn Haven, FL with his wife Natalie and 3 kids, Jackson (15), Averie-Grace (14) and Griffin (12). After graduating from Troy University with a B.S. in Business Administration Tim joined the family business, Brock Lawn and Pest Control Inc. where he currently serves as the President and CEO. He is a third-generation pest control operator. He enjoys camping and spending time with his family, hunting, fishing, playing sports and anything outdoors.

Innovation in Southwest Florida

-Tim Brock



Day One started at the Three Fishermen Seafood Restaurant,

located waterside in North Fort Myers directly along the Caloosahatchee River. Once everyone arrived, we were joined by Mr. Dallas Townsend & Mr. Hugh English of TOC Land Services. Mr. Townsend & Mr. English proceeded to provide a great overview & complete history of southwest Florida and the importance of agriculture. There are currently 1.3 million acres of southwest Florida that are being used strictly for agricultural purposes. The area also contains approximately 177,000

head of cattle and approximately 125,000 acres of citrus crops that account for a portion of the roughly 1.2 billion dollars of gross sales and a total economic impact to southwest Florida of approximately 2.2 billion dollars.

Following the presentations of Mr. Townsend & Mr. English, the group traveled to Palmdale and to the property that encompasses the Lykes Nicodemus Project. Once we arrived we were Joined by Mr. Noah Handley, Director of Engineering, for Lykes Brothers Inc. and WLIANR Class IX Alumni. The Lykes West Waterhole project was the first pilot program of the Florida Ranchlands Environmental Services Project, that stores & filters 2,500 acres of water

to help reduce the excess nutrients that are present in the water. The site has since reduced the phosphorus concentrations in the water by around 56%, therefore preventing the excess from ultimately reaching Lake Okeechobee. This is by far the largest public/private water storage in the country consisting of over 15,000 acres for the South West Florida Water Management District. After visiting several water management district projects in multiple seminars, it appears that a private/public approach is the most successful and the most economical.

We then were off to pay a visit to U.S. Sugar, where we were joined by the VP of Grove Operations for Southern Gardens Citrus and WLIANR Class VI Alumni, Mr. Jim Snively. In the 1980's, the company started to diversify into cattle, citrus and vegetables after purchasing South Bay Growers. What set the company apart from its competitors was an elaborate internal transportation network that include a private railroad consisting of over 1,100 railcars and 120 miles of private track that linked all of the sugarcane fields to the processing mills. We toured their citrus



"After visiting several water management district projects in multiple seminars, it appears that a private/public approach is the most successful and the most economical."

processing plant, where their focus is on sustainability. All the water that is used within the plant for processing is recycled and used back in the

citrus groves. Southern Gardens Citrus has had great success with utilizing high density planting and they currently have their very own nursery for all re-plants. They are currently working with The University of Florida on an experimental Viral Vector program in order to combat citrus greening within the industry.

Following the wonderful presentation and tour by Mr. Snively, the group proceeded to the Dunwoody Lodge where dinner was sponsored by U.S. Sugar and Southern Gardens. My newsletter partner, Mr. Michael Basore, will comment on the eventful Day Two later on.

Day Three wrapped up our seminar for the week with a presentation by Florida Senator Denise Grimsly from District 26. Senator Grimsly provided us with a broad update to the current 2017 Legislative Session as well as some thoughts moving forward. Senator Grimsly also discussed her plans for running for Florida Agriculture Commissioner in 2018. Current and future legislation is on hold pending the signing of the State's budget by Governor Scott.



Meet Class X Member Michael Basore



Michael Basore is an Owner and Vice President of TKM Bengard farms, LLC. located in BelleGlade, Fl. After attending the University of Florida and graduating with a degree in marketing, Michael joined the family business. TKM Bengard Farms is the largest grower and shipper of iceberg and romaine on the east coast of the U.S. He and his wife Tammy live in West Palm Beach, Fl along with their two children, Myles and Sara. He enjoys spending time with his family out on the lake and traveling to new places.

Kissimmee, Cows, & Quail Creek on Day 2 -Michael Basore

When we arrived at Riverwood Field Lab,

located in Fl, we were greeted by Ms. Loisa Kerwin FAU/CES Assistant Director. We were quickly split into two groups. The first group was taken on a boat tour of the Kissimmee river restoration project by Mr. Mike Cheek. Mike is an environmental scientist employed by the SFWMD.

I was a part of the first group and once we were all on the boat we began our journey down the Kissimmee. I felt as if I had gone back to a time before man had come and altered the flow of the Kissimmee. The long water slowly moving South to the great Okeechobbe and then onto Florida Bay.

Back on dry land, we then switched with the second group. Our group was educated by Ms. Kerwin on the objectives of the project itself. Restoration, education and research were the three main goals of the SFWMD and the Army Corps of Engineers. Forty square miles of the 103 mile river course will be restored upon completion. The Northern and the Southern parts will not be restored on account of flood control. The Kissimmee project is the largest restoration of its kind in the world.

Jointly working with the Florida Legislature, SWMD and ACE, they are beginning to undo what they did to this ever so important water way. Leonardo de Vinci once said "When you put your





hand in a flowing stream, you touch the last that has gone before and the first of what is still to come.” People sometimes feel like they are making things better for the environment, but in reality they are making things much worse.

After leaving the Riverwood Field Lab we drove to Butler Park where we were all greeted by the Butler Family. We were served a terrific lunch provided by Justin Hood WLIANR (Class IX). While we ate, Bob and his brother, Roger, talked to us about their heritage and how their family ended up settling in the Okeechobee area. You could see a larger-than-life type of person when Bob spoke to us all. His underlying passion for the land and the dairy business was without question. He said, “Don’t tell me what I can or should eat if you are a vegan.” His matter-of-act attitude reminded me a lot of my father. I believe we are missing more people like these trailblazers in today’s agribusiness arena.

Roger then told us that his honest opinion of the Kissimmee restoration project was that it was too expensive for what would be the end result. He felt that over time the restoration would be a good thing and one day, it would lower the phosphorus load into the lake. He said that it would have been better off left alone and that the money should have been spent to reduce the phosphorus load up closer to the metropolitan areas around Orlando.

We then went to C&M Rucks Diary. Mr. Chad Rucks (WLIANR Class V) gave the tour. We quickly learned that Chad was 100% focused on his dairy business. He didn’t see the profitability in expanding

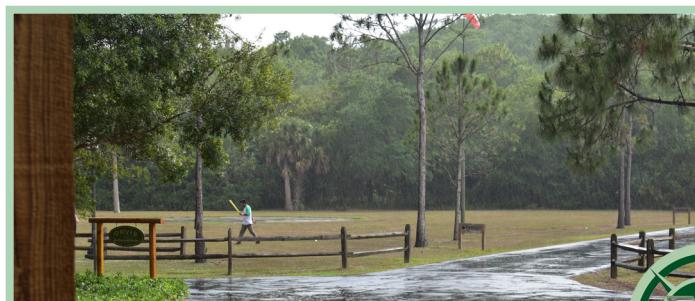
“Leonardo de Vinci once said ‘When you put your hand in a flowing stream, you touch the last that has gone before and the first of what is still to come.’”

his company, but rather he focused on improving the production of milk while lowering costs. Chad told the group that his focus was not to make a ton milk, but rather to make a ton of money making milk. He and his brother built their own feed mill and came up with a “Fitbit” which goes around each of their cows to monitor their health and sustainability. These are just a few of the things that keeps Chad ahead of the competition.

We then left for Quail Creek Plantation in Okeechobee. We checked into our rooms and sat down to an exceptional steak dinner. Later we all retired to the lounge. We played darts, billiards and an assortment of other games. The fellowship with the classmates was truly a highlight of the seminar. Unfortunately, our planned wiffle ball tournament was postponed due to inclement weather. However, we were all pleased to hear that Dr. Carter had invited the class to her home during our next scheduled seminar in Gainesville for a makeup game. Thank you, Dr. Carter!

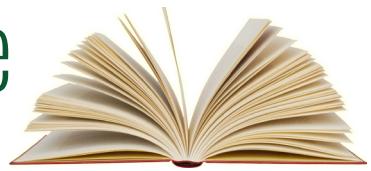
In closing, I would like to express how blessed I am to be a part of Wedgworth Class X. I am confident that when we all finish our time at Wedgworth we will be known as

THE BEST CLASS EVER!





“A Cup of Joe” with Dr. Joe



Inspirational
Reading Reviews from Dr. Joe Joyce,
Program Faculty Advisor

“A Passion for Leadership,” by Robert M. Gates.

At a recent Farm Credit National Director’s meeting I had the privilege of hearing Dr. Bob Gates discuss some of his thoughts on leadership and the current political environment. During his talk he mentioned (plugged) his newest book, *A Passion for Leadership*. So I decided to see what it was all about. After reading it, the subtitle of this book, *Lessons on Change and Reform from Fifty Years of Public Service*, really sums up the book’s core message – How to implement change in public and private organizations.

Robert Gates was appointed the 22nd Secretary of Defense (2006-11) by President George W. Bush and is the only Secretary of Defense to be asked to remain in office by a newly elected President, Barack Obama. In his various roles, Gates served eight different Presidents. Before becoming SecDef, he was President of Texas A&M for nearly 5 years. He joined the CIA in 1966 and served as Director from 1991 to 1993. During his career he has also served on the boards of some of America’s greatest companies. In May of 2014 he became the national President of the Boy Scouts of America.

It is about Gates as a change agent and his use of leadership principles to implement change at the CIA, Department of Defense and at Texas A&M. He discusses the character of each organization, the barriers to change, his success and failures, and his approach to identifying needed changes and most importantly the implementation of the change. Not surprisingly to us academics, his most difficult organization to change was the academic environment.

Although most of his career was in public service, he applies many of his

change principles to the private sector, noting that both public and private organizations have their own bureaucracies. He even starts the book with the statement, “Everybody hates bureaucracies, even those who work in them.” In business, he notes that success and self-preservation require that leaders and employees work hard every day to innovate and change, to overcome sluggishness, poor customer service and the stifling effect of too much management.

In most of the book he uniquely refers to the leader in the female gender, i.e. she should do this, she should be aware of this, she should hold people accountable, etc.

The best leaders have their ego under control. Gates points out that “intellectual and professional intimidation, characteristic of those who believe they are the smartest people in the room, is a poor way to solicit good ideas and avoid big mistakes.” He stressed that the environment created by an egotists is the antithesis of what is required to lead successful reform. Egotism is often in lock step with arrogance. Noting that “They often operate just barely inside the rules. They are supremely self-confident, amazingly lacking in self-awareness, incapable of introspection, and generally unpleasant to deal with.”

The previous point leads to a cornerstone of leadership: A leader must have integrity. Gates notes that integrity is “adherence to moral principle and character.” and “character is sometimes described as how people behave when no one is watching.” He further notes, “Every leader in public service and business will at some point need to stand apart and alone – to speak truth to power and to do the right thing. That can be very lonely place, but it is where

leaders who can effectively reform institutions are found.”

Don’t overstay your welcome. Gates stated, “When you have accomplished your mission of reform, or taken it as far as you can, go home.” Gates feels that the “sweet spot” is to leave a leadership position when people would say, “I wish he weren’t leaving so soon”, as opposed to “How the hell do we get rid of this guy?”

He closes the book with a chapter entitled “A Flaming Heart” and quotes Harry Truman as saying “Every great achievement is the story of

a flaming heart.” Gates believes that “leadership is more about the heart than the head” and the “core to leadership is the ability to relate to people – to empathize, understand, inspire, and motivate.” Then he adds. “Just because you are high in the organizational ladder and can tell people what to do, doesn’t make you a leader. Just a boss.”

I recommend the book. The only criticism I have is it is a little self-aggrandizing on Dr. Gates part, but the lessons are pertinent and meaningful. It is a quick read of 228 pages.

More Photos from Seminar V!





Coordinator's Corner

Camping on Key Issues

-Valerie McKee, Program Coordinator

To celebrate my 12th birthday, I asked for my family to go on a camping trip. My parents kindly obliged to my request, and so we borrowed my grandparents' RV and drove to a then county-operated campground to camp alongside the "Old Kissimmee." Thirteen years later, I found myself on the same exact piece of property, now a family-campground owned and enjoyed by Class IX-member Mr. Ben Butler and his family, alongside Class X during Seminar V.

Memories of that camping trip fled my mind during our visit to Butler Oaks, including the many adventures I took with my brother in our canoe down the river. We saw parts of the river that looked very much alive and wild. We also saw parts of the river that looked dead and vacant, as though life had been pushed out by work of maybe bulldozers and heavy equipment. I remember asking my father questions about the river. "Why is it called the "Old Kissimmee?" "Why are there random dirt mounds alongside parts of the river?" "Why did 'they' make a "New Kissimmee" if they were just going to fill it in again?" Daddy's answers to me were simple, vague, and somewhat skeptical, and I remember coming to an understanding that 'they' did not know what they were doing. It's funny what you pick up when you're a child, the over-generalized concepts that point your emotions in a certain direction before your mind can even process the complex facts of the matter.

Seminar V took Class X to my "backyard" so to speak. As an Okeechobee native with family roots all around Lake Okeechobee, I was able to relate all too well to the topical issues discussed in this seminar. On the first day of Seminar V, we traveled from Fort Myers to Palmdale after hearing about southwest Florida's agriculture history from two speakers: Mr. Hugh English, Partner of English Brother Partnership, Principal of TOC Land Services, and father of Class IV member Katherine English, and Mr. Dallas Townsend, fellow Principal of TOC Land Services and a retired extension agent. In Palmdale, we met Mr. Noah Handley, Class IX member and Director of Engineering for Lykes Bros. Inc.

What in the world could bring Class X to Palmdale, you may ask? The Nicodemus Slough, the world's largest public/private water storage area project managed by Lykes Bros. Inc., that's what! The Nicodemus Slough project, which encompasses over 15,000

acres, helps to answer the need for additional water storage when Lake Okeechobee water levels are high in the wet season. This project reduces discharges to coastal estuaries, improves water quality, and rehydrates wetlands to enhance wildlife habitat. The project also delivers additional stored water back to the lake or to the Caloosahatchee River as needed in the dry seasons. Class X was provided a driving tour of part of the project led by Mr. Handley. Mr. Handley mentioned we were close in proximity to Fisheating Creek, which meanders along the northern boundary of the slough. I grew up hearing stories from my mother's much older sisters about camping and gathering at Fisheating Creek. The same natural landscapes that hold so many memories for my mother's family now also hold the precious resource of lake waters, benefiting Lake Okeechobee and in some ways benefiting my Okeechobee family members today!

In Clewiston, we landed at Southern Gardens Citrus, a division of U.S. Sugar, where we were the audience of Mr. Jim Snively, Class VI member and Vice President of Grove Operations. My grandfather worked for many years as a shop foreman for Southern Gardens Citrus, and so I had his colorful stories to play in the background of Mr. Snively's discussion of citrus production and its future place in the corporate fabric of U.S. Sugar. What intrigued me the most from Mr. Snively's presentation was the mixed thoughts on the research underway by Southern Gardens Citrus aimed to combat the citrus greening epidemic.

Mr. Snively pointed out the unfortunate truth that while genetically modified citrus varieties are not grown commercially, marketing groups of citrus products have made use of terms like "No GMO" labeling on their products, thus implying genetically modified citrus is currently produced for consumption. This type of marketing is extremely damaging to the fight against greening, as Southern Gardens Citrus is testing field trials of disease-resistant genetically modified citrus trees to combat the plant disease. My boyfriend, who lives several states away and actively supports GMO research, recently informed me that he had decided to opt against buying his usual grocery purchase of "Florida's Natural" because of its "GMO free" labeling. He regretted telling me about this choice after I gave him an earful of the current facts and frustrations in our beloved citrus industry. Citrus farmers, be encouraged that the right pieces of information and a whole lot of "raising your

voice” can make a difference for a consumer!

On the second day of Seminar V, Class X caravanned to Lorida, FL, to the Riverwoods Field Lab, a site actively used by Florida Atlantic University’s Center for Environmental Studies (FAU/CES). Surprisingly, I recognized our meeting place as a building I had been in years before to facilitate a middle school FFA leadership training. On this day of the seminar, FAU/CES Director Ms. Loisa Kerwin welcomed Class X to Riverwoods and spoke to the history and status of the Kissimmee River Restoration Project. A result of the 1992 Kissimmee River Restoration Water Resources Development Act, the project is shared between the US Army Corps of Engineers and the South Florida Water Management District. The four-phase project seeks to backfill the C-38 canal, the 56-mile long, 300 feet wide, and 30 feet deep canal created from 1960-1971 to manage river flooding in the central Florida basin, in order to restore water flow to the historic river.

At this point in the seminar, my thoughts turned to what I remembered explained to me about the “Old” and “New” Kissimmee by my father so many years before. I found myself trying to make sense of the information being presented by Ms. Kerwin, which seemed to clash with the residual feelings I had developed around the project 13 years prior. My thoughts and emotions on the issue were further stirred after hearing from our next speakers, dairy farmers Mr. Bob Butler and Mr. Roger Butler, respective father and uncle to Mr. Ben Butler of Class IX. As we all sat under a tent at Butler Oaks campground and dined on ribeye steaks, sweet corn, and “rice-n-tomato gravy,” all graciously sponsored by Mr. Justin Hood of Class IX, the Butler brothers spoke to us about the challenges of dairy production in the area and the blame they receive for local water quality issues.

While I won’t use this article to voice my opinion on the river project, I will comment on the most valuable thoughts I walked away with after this seminar that occurred so close to my hometown. When you grow up surrounded by water and agriculture, you will have an intimate understanding of the issues for both, as well as the true interdependence that exists for solutions. While this program encourages its leaders (and myself) to be open to new perspectives and opinions on issues, I am reminded from this seminar that being open to new perspectives does not have to mean abandoning former perspectives. Rather, an openness to hearing new perspectives may help us polish, refine, or even strengthen our current perspectives on controversial issues. Sometimes, our “understanding” of issues is more emotional than factual; what we understand is more about how we think we ‘ought’ to feel versus what we can explain with facts and logic. This doesn’t mean our understanding is wrong or that it’s wrong to be emotional about key issues. Instead, it means we just ought to “camp” on these issues, to explore and seek new knowledge to complement (or possibly alter) our understanding of them.



WEDGWORTH

LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Developing Leaders for Florida Agriculture & Natural Resources

*For more information about the
Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and
Natural Resources
please see our website:
wedgworthleadership.com.*

Office location:

University of Florida
121 A Bryant Hall
Gainesville, FL 32611

Mailing information:

PO Box 112060
Gainesville, FL 32611

Program Director information:

Dr. Hannah Carter
Tel: 352-392-1038
hscarter@ufl.edu

Program Administrative Assistant information:

Janice Shephard
Tel: 352-392-1038
jeshephard@ufl.edu

Program Coordinator information:

Valerie McKee
Tel: 352-273-2584
vmckee@ufl.edu

WLI Alumni information:

wedgworthalumni.org
wli alumni association@gmail.com