

**SDARL Class VI**  
**Sioux Falls Seminar #9**  
**December 13-15, 2011**

Class VI began the seminar with Program Director, Michelle Robbins, giving a quick analysis of the schedule and speakers. SDARL Executive Director, Dan Gee, followed with a wrap-up on the day we spent in Milbank at Seminar #8 and the lessons learned.

Twelve class members presented their China reports. Dan handed out a guide sheet on the SDARL Class VI journey to China. He shared many insights on international travel. The class also had the opportunity to ask many questions about the upcoming trip. Three of the ag Businesses we will visit will be Pioneer China, US Feed and Grain Association, and the Ag Trade Association. We should be prepared to ask questions with take home messages at each of these businesses.

Our main, and only outside speaker for the day was Dana Dykhouse, CEO and President, First Premier Bank. His focus was on fundraising. His "Culture of Giving" includes five main focal points when involved with fund raising. The five points are:

Vision: have a true, positive vision you believe in and can share with the potential donors.

Concept of Lifetime Giving: Instill a sense of ownership. Give back to what made you what you are.

Passion for the Cause: Realize why you are involved. Have a passion for what you are fundraising for and be able to explain it.

Professionalism of Approach: Build a team that makes it more fun and successful. Be able to show the leadership is giving and follow up on all contacts in person.

Celebrate your Successes: give public recognition. Thank you's are very important!

Final message from Mr. Dykhouse was "Never Be Afraid To Try!"

The day was closed with a reception at Lura and Shon Roti's beautiful historic home in downtown Sioux Falls with a few appetizers.

### **Wednesday, December 14, 2011**

SDARL Class VI started the second day of the December 2011 seminar meeting at the Poet Technology Center, Sioux Falls. The first order of business was to elect Class VI's class president. Jon Nelson of Lake Preston was elected to this position.

Jeremy Freking, Executive Director of the SD Soybean Association and SD Soybean Research and Promotion Council, gave a presentation on the soybean check-off program, along with steps that are being taken with biodiesel. He discussed the US's only major export port being the Pacific Northwest, which is Grays Harbor. Jeremy also told the group that China is the US's largest importer of soybeans. He said that 825 million bushels, or one out of every four rows, of soybeans go to China. He noted that sixty percent of South Dakota's soybeans go to China.

Later that morning Adam Wirt, Regional Biomass Coordinator, gave an in-depth view of Poet Energy - where they started to where they are today, and where they are looking to go in the future. The company is working hard on developing cellulosic ethanol from different forms of biomass, particularly corn stover.

After a lunch break class members joined a number of SDARL alumni at the Hefty Seed Company outside of Baltic. Brian and Darren Hefty gave a very informative presentation on new technologies, drain tiling and their 2012 outlook for crops. They explained some of the production, as well as economic benefits, of tiling to remove excess water from fields, roadways and other problem areas.

The final event for the day was at C .J. Callaway's Event Center in Sioux Falls where we had the opportunity to socialize with many alumni and thank many of our great SDARL sponsors.

The keynote speaker for the evening was VJ Smith. He delivered a very interesting speech about setting goals and his own personal journey in doing so. This was an excellent ending to a very informative and enjoyable day.

Marlin Nilsson, Reporter

### **Thursday December 15, 2011**

Day three of the Sioux Falls seminar began with an exciting tour of John Morrell & Company. John Morrell was established in England in 1827. It is the oldest continuously operating meat company in the U.S. with its headquarters in Cincinnati, Ohio. The company is currently a subsidiary of Smithfield Foods, Inc. The Sioux Falls plant was built in 1909 and has been a centerpiece of the Sioux Falls economy for over 100 years. The company currently employs 3,200 energetic employees and adds an additional 200 employees during seasonal periods when demand for hams is high. The company is well known for taking care of its employees with multiple generations working at the plant. The plant now has employees from over 43

countries. It is one of the top companies in the nation with only a 17% employee turnover rate, which is exceptional given that the jobs can be very strenuous.

The company is currently processing 18,000 hogs per day with a line speed of 1,106 pigs per hour. This means that the company annually processes between 4.6 and 4.7 million head of hogs per year. The company has a huge impact on pork production in the region with 33% of the hogs coming from South Dakota farms, 35% from MN farms and 32% from Iowa farms. The company only harvests hogs from the U.S.

The staff and management at John Morrell were commended for giving the group a great tour, as the class was able to see all facets of production. Bacon, and ham curing were a highlight to see, as the facility has 22 smokehouses with each smokehouse as large as a two-car garage. One hundred thousand pounds of meat is made into eight different brands of hotdogs every day. An interesting note is that this plant makes the hotdogs for Nathan's in Manhattan, which hosts the World Hotdog Eating Championship each year.

The group then had the opportunity to make the short trip downtown to Raven Industries. Matt Burkhart, Vice President and General Manager of the Applied Technology Division, hosted Class VI, who was also joined by several alumni for the afternoon. Matt gave a company overview describing the four divisions of the company. Applied Technology is the division that makes agricultural products that we are familiar with such as auto steer; Electronic Systems makes circuit boards for a variety of applications, one being fuel gauges on planes; Engineered Films makes large sheets of plastic that are used to cover grain, as well as liners in retention ponds; and Aerostar manufactures balloons for not only parades but also for military surveillance. Mr. Paul Welbig, Director of Marketing, gave an interesting presentation on new technology called Slingshot, which allows tractor operators to link up their computer in their tractor to their home computer utilizing cell towers. This technology has many opportunities for farmers.

Raven hosted the group with a delicious lunch catered by Famous Dave's before traveling to the company's brand new production facility, which is just south of the Sioux Falls Regional Airport. There the group saw employees making circuit boards and assembling materials for auto steer. The plant had literally only been open for a few days. The bus then traveled north out of Sioux Falls on Cliff Avenue to the Raven Industries research campus where the company tests their products.

Raven Industries has 1,300 employees with 400 in the agriculture division, (200 of those are in production with 200 in sales, service and marketing). Raven appreciates what those in agriculture do every day.

Reporter, Kelly Bruns