The Exploring the relationship between Agriculture, Communities, and Natural Resources Seminar started with Kathy Tweeten sharing information on the seven Community Capitals. Our next speaker, Scott Bachmeier, visited with us about what he can do from his remote ranch, deep in the heart of the badlands, with his fiber optics connection that supports cameras for calving and his radio talk show, Dakota Prairie Outdoors.

Larry White and Les Paulson; partners in Pulse Oils, LLC; shared what they do with Safflower Oil. They produce a cold pressed oil marketed as 17 Thistles, a Pride of Dakota product.

We then went to the indoor arena in Bowman to watch a horse riding lesson. Robyn Mrnak, founder of Hope and Healing Therapeutic Riding, does eight week sessions with special needs individuals and troubled youth. Robyn, along with many volunteers, are doing great work in their community.

Our RLND Leadership Dinner was held Wednesday evening at the Cow Chip Ranch, owned by Chad and Amanda Njos. Chad and Amanda took a 100 year old barn and totally remodeled it to do many different things. Amanda talked to us and showed us her

Chad Njos speaking at RLND Leadership Dinner.

by Paula Anderson and Mandy Kvale

RLND Class VIII participants at Bowman Fairgrounds.

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furniture boutique that is operated out of the main floor of the barn. In their hayloft event center, Chad talked to us about how his family has adopted a holistic approach on their ranch. He explained that a holistic approach is basically taking a step back and looking at why you do the things you do.

Day two began with a bus tour of Bowman with Teran Doerr, the Bowman County EDC director. She gave us an update on many local projects and unique opportunities that Bowman has to offer.

Our next stop was with Pam Burch in Hettinger, owner of Peacock Mercantile. Pam shared with us why she created the coffee shop and that she has a passion to serve her customers and give them a relaxing place away from the stresses of life.

Jasmin Fosheim, Adams County EDC director, joined us to share information about the community of Hettinger. They have included two students on their economic board and recently held a Helping Hettinger Day.

Our final stop before lunch was at Killdeer Mountain Manufacturing to tour and hear about airplane wire harness manufacturing.

Lunch was at the Hettinger Research Center where Chris Schauer, REC Director, shared information about the Research Center. Lunch was provided by Anthony (RLND Class V) and Jodi (RLND Class VII) Larson, owners of Scruffy’s Restaurant in Hettinger.

Our next visit was at West River Regional Medical Center. CEO Matt Shahan told us about the challenges that health care facilities are facing in rural ND. Despite the daily challenges they face, WRRMC has been recognized for their achievements as a top critical access hospital.

Our next stop was the West River Vet Clinic. They have six veterinarians on staff to provide services for small and large animals, along with kennels for local residents to board their pets.

Next, Class VIII traveled to Lemmon, SD to visit with local sculptor, John Lopez. He shared a message that just because you have a niche talent doesn’t mean you can’t live in your small town and do it. John shared the history of the Kokomo, a vacated dilapidated bar, on main street that he transformed into his Gallery.

Thursday ended with supper at Hettinger’s Research Center and speaker, Ben Geaumont, wildlife and range scientist joining us. Ben spoke about the research he is doing with wildlife and agriculture.

As the seminar concluded Friday morning, participants shared thoughts of what they experienced and learned over the past two days. We had a brief update on our International trip to Chile and a few participants shared a topic of interest about Chile.