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Michigan Oil and Gas Industry Legislative Education Day Held February 15, 2017

by Betty Wajda

The Bay Area Desk and Derrick Club members were proud to represent the oil and gas industry by meeting with legislators in Michigan's capitol, Lansing, on Legislative Education Day. Michigan Oil and Gas Association (MOGA) invited us to join them as co-hosts along with Michigan Association of Professional Landmen (MAPL) and the Northern Chapter of API in speaking to the newly elected 43 members of the House plus incumbent representatives and senators. Meetings and schedules were arranged by MOGA's staff. Five BADD Club members joined members of the other groups in teams of three to present statistics from an Economic Contribution Study that verifies the impact our industry makes to all of Michigan. We were armed with reports showing individual data per county for each legislator concerning the amount of income, jobs and taxes as it relates. Plus, we were able to boast about the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) and the over one billion dollars that have been appropriated for every county in the state funding projects like land acquisitions, parks, ball fields, trailheads and other amenities.

Personally, I received quite the education as well. My schedule was full. I met with three members of the House on several different floors of the House Office Building. My highlight was running across the street in 24 degree weather with blowing winds to the Capitol Building to meet with the Minority Floor Leader and a Senator from the south western part of the state. My team members were so helpful and knowledgeable, I would have been far less confident without them. One representative from the thumb area really gave us a challenge. He doesn't agree with fracking and does not like wind turbines. My team member gave him an informed debate while I did my best to schmooze him regarding the \$10 million in funds from the MNRTF his two counties have received. Seeing the inside of these offices was remarkable to me. The Senator was in a corner office on the first floor of the Capitol Building and had windows on two sides. He had a large staff as well and was very personable.

Thank you to the other members who joined me: Jan Bell, Kathy Bickel, Karen Thomas and Joyce Williams. I know you ladies were impressed with the organization of this event and agree with me when I encourage other members to join us next year. It was an experience I am truly grateful to be a part of. This is what our Club was designed to do: to enhance and foster a positive image to the global community by promoting the contribution of the petroleum, energy and allied industries through education by using all resources available!! That's our mission.

I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination. —Jimmy Dean

