

Greater New Orlea

## West Bank Desk and Derrick Club bonds women from oil industry



The Association of Desk and Derrick Clubs Region III Director Claudia Prather, left, traveled from El Dorado, Arkansas recently to present "Years of Service Pins" and Certificates to members of the Desk and Derrick Club of the Westbank including, left to right, Pam Lauckner, Kori Allemand, Judy Guillot and Sylvia Hohmann. (Photo by Helen Williams) --



By **Helen Williams, Gretna Columnist**

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The West Bank was once a place booming with the sights, sounds and smells of the oil industry. In the 1970s, oil field related companies thrived on both sides of the Harvey Canal, along Destrehan Avenue on the west side of the canal, Peters Road on the right side and down Engineers Road.

Judi Adams, a 26-year member of the Desk and Derrick Club of the West Bank said she hopes the area can return to that vitality.

The Association of Desk and Derrick Clubs' West Bank club was started to provide employees of the many oilfield related companies located on the West Bank with a group based near their employment and homes.

The West Bank group once had 300 members in its heyday, but is still active with its current members numbering 30. The club meets at Boomtown Casino in Harvey on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Meetings start at 6 p.m. and include a business meeting, dinner and a guest speaker. Topics of interest in the oil and energy industry are presented by local representatives of the industry and related services.

Jo Ann Brown is the most senior in membership. She became a member of Desk and Derrick in New Orleans in 1971 and is founder of the West Bank club that was chartered in 1976 with 81 members.

The West Bank edition has come a long way.

Region III Director Claudia Prather traveled from El Dorado, Arkansas recently to present "Years of Service Pins" and Certificates to members. Recipients with over 40 years of service included Pam Lauckner, Kori Allemand, Judy Guillot and Sylvia Hohmann.

Prather also installed 2017 officers of the club that are Susan Miller, president, Angie Duplessis, vice president, Jo Ann Brown, treasurer, Gabriella Hunter, secretary, Gaylen Guillory, immediate past president and Theresa Adams and Bonnie Wall, directors.

The Westbank Club is part of the Association of Desk and Derrick Clubs (ADDC) and proudly upholds its mission, purpose and motto. The West Bank club was named Desk and Derrick Club of the Year in 1996, 2003 and 2004.

Three members have risen through the ranks of the West Bank club to become ADDC president--Theresa Adams in 2000, Angie Duplessis in 2011 and Judi Adams in 2012.

New president Susan Miller's Theme is "Re-igniting the Flame of Desk and Derrick" as she endeavors to keep the energy and enthusiasm of the past 41 years ablaze. A member since 1977 when she became employed with Tuboscope, Inc., this is the fourth time that Miller will serve as president.

"Our calendar will be busy the rest of the year with field trips, seminars and our fundraiser, a Bonco in August. We are proud to give college scholarships each year and hold an Industry Appreciation Night to recognize our sponsors and guest speakers," she said.

With its motto: "Greater Knowledge - Greater Service, the club's mission is to enhance and foster a positive image to the global community.

"Most of our members are not working in the oil and gas energy industries today," Theresa Miller said. "Many have retired and some had to find employment in other industries due to the oil crash here. However, we do have a few still working in the industry. ... The knowledgeable speakers at meetings along with seminars, workshops and amazing presentations at the annual conference increased my knowledge."

Desk and Derrick concentrates not only on industry education, but also provides self-improvement courses.

"I was extremely shy and terrified of public speaking. Desk and Derrick had a speaker's bureau committee that I joined to overcome those fears," she said. "After several years of committee meetings where we shared our fears and began giving short presentations, I did overcome my fear and presented numerous seminars and workshops throughout the years at the club, regional and association level."

"I contribute my success in the advancement of my career to Desk and Derrick. When I changed positions, the knowledge I had gained through club programs impressed my employers," she added.

For information about the club, go to [westbankdandd.org](http://westbankdandd.org) or contact Susan Miller at 504.908.6131.

Helen Williams is a Gretna resident who writes about people and events of community interest. She can be reached at 504.450.8481 or email her at [gretnaglance@cox.net](mailto:gretnaglance@cox.net). Her posts and videos can be seen at: <http://connect.nola.com/user/mhwilliams/index.html>.

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