



Pottawattamie County Recorder

Mark Brandenburg, the Pottawattamie County Recorder, spoke at the Treynor Optimist Club on April 18. He enjoyed working in the Iowa Legislature in the past, but is really enjoying his new job.

Mark spent time with John Sortino, the retiring county recorder before deciding to run for recorder. That helped convince him that he could contribute meaningfully. He also realizes now that he would have liked to know some of the things he knows now when he was in the legislature, because he could have helped make some needed changes.

The recorder's office has three main areas: vital records, vehicle registration, and real estate. Last year they issued 7000 certified copies of vital records. They charge \$20 for

each one. The county does all the work, but the state gets \$16 of the \$20. Two people work in this area.

Vehicle registration includes cars, trucks, motorcycles, and boats. Registering boats requires answering a series of questions.

The real estate area requires two staff of the total seven staff in the recorder's office. 40% of real estate transactions are done electronically. Others have to be scanned. They do 60-120 transactions per day.

The county recorders in the state meet twice a year. They also have a network where they can post questions and get answers from other county recorders.

The recorder's office generated \$445,000 of income for the county last year. They have some very old microfiche readers which cost \$400/month to maintain. Mark would like to digitize and index all records so they are easily accessible. Records since 2002 have been digitized, but the county has other records since 1856 that are not.

Mark encourages everyone to sign up for Property Fraud Alerts. Protect your most valuable investment. Sign up to be notified if a real estate document with your name on it is recorded in the Pott. County Recorder's office. Sign up for free at <http://pfa.fidlar.com/IApottawattamie> or call the Property Fraud Alert Hotline at 1-800-728-3858. This will generate an email when someone makes changes to your property deed.

The state of Iowa handles records for deaths now. They will be handling births in the near future and marriages after that. The information will still be available at the county level.

Pottco.org is the county website. Some counties in Iowa have their own websites and others use iowalandrecords.org. All information is available through iowalandrecords.org.

Mark is working on a 5 year plan for the recorder's office.