

BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT

Pottawattamie County Attorney Matt Wilber spoke to Club members about operations in the county office. As a newly elected administrator of the County Attorney's office, he supervises twelve assistants. Matt said work moral and productivity has improved. The staff has doubled the number of cases taken to trial and is winning a higher percentage of trials. Matt explained he has nine prosecutors on his staff and over 7000 cases per year are processed. Council Bluffs has had the highest crime rate in Iowa the past four years, Matt noted. This has contributed to the high case number. Through increased training, critiquing, and mentoring of younger lawyers on the staff, the cases are getting processed more efficiently, Matt explained. Matt expressed that there is a greater trust between the law enforcement officers and the Co. Attorney's office. Matt indicated many cases are settled by 'out-of-court' agreements. For everyone who is sent to prison in Iowa, someone already in prison is released on early parole because of limited state prison space. Matt said he is working to have a greater presence of an U.S. Attorney in Pott. County. The prison time for committing a federal crime is usually longer before parole, so the penalty for conviction is a greater deterrent.