

## **COUNTY ATTORNEY WORK LOAD GROWS**

Pottawattamie County Attorney Matt Wilber spoke to club members about the first year of his second term of office. He stated this year has been more challenging compared to previous years. His department of fourteen lawyers is dealing with five open murder cases. In addition Wilber explained he spends considerable time dealing with civil matters for the county such as drafting agreements, examining real estate issues, and planning for future operations. Also, he had to deal with the firing of a staff member. Wilber noted that as an elected official he has the responsibility to choose the criminal cases going to trial, the approach of argument for prosecution, and which lawyers to present the case in court. He said junior and senior staff lawyers are often paired to take a case to trial. He doesn't want any one to handle a case unless they feel ready to do so. In response to questions, Wilber noted that Iowa has the most restrictive rules against a lawyer advertising his services. Also, evaluations of the actions of judges are not easy to find. It is unethical for lawyers to comment about judges. However, there is an opinion survey by lawyers available from the state bar association.