

PRESS RELEASE

April 17, 2017

Contact: Judge Barbara Crowder
(618) 296-4576

Office of the Chief Judge
Madison County Courthouse
Edwardsville, IL 62025

For Immediate Release:

Madison County Lawyers Provide Help

The Third Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee continues to offer help to low income members of this community. The committee sponsors a Legal Advice Clinic where volunteer attorneys provide free legal appointments; it also offers assistance in real estate matters, and services exist for veterans. There is a separate program where lawyers provide services for the court in family division. Some paralegals from area law firms are also helping with paperwork in domestic violence court. The areas in which the lawyers help have been increased due to the overwhelming response from local attorneys.

"Many attorneys volunteer their time in these programs as a public service and are finding more ways they can be helpful," noted Judge Barb Crowder, Chair of the Pro Bono Committee. "Their enthusiasm and commitment towards meeting the needs of people with low incomes make us proud to know them and to publicize their efforts."

Forty-seven free appointments were scheduled from January through March. The attorneys who volunteered for the free appointments during the first three months are:

Will Asa, Rob Bas, Jared Giuffre, Thomas Hildebrand, Christine Kovach, Elizabeth Levy, Amy Meyer, Scott Meyer, Zachary Pashea, Barbara Sherer, Scott Snider, Gale Stipes, Andrew Velloff, and Audra Zobrist.

In addition to the appointments, attorneys assist the Family division judges by serving as mediators to try to help parties settle their cases or as guardians ad litem. During the first quarter of 2017, eleven attorneys participated as mediators for parenting disputes and seven attorneys served as guardians at litem in court. Several paralegals from area law firms are also assisting with paperwork during the dockets dealing with domestic violence orders of protections in a new program sponsored by area law firms.

The Pro Bono committee wants to remind the public that there are programs available overseen by the Pro Bono Coordinator, Angela Warta. The public should contact the self-help center in the Madison County Law Library for help. Low-income individuals who do not have attorneys may make a 30 minute appointment on any civil matter (such as landlord-tenant,

collections cases, small claims, guardianship, divorce and child support) for the second or fourth Tuesday of each month. Low-income individuals who have real-estate deed or other problems may make an appointment to speak with Recorder of Deeds Amy Meyer in the Madison County Law Library on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. And veterans who do not have attorneys but have legal issues may be able to be matched with an attorney volunteer who will help the veteran with the legal problem.

Qualifying information may need to be provided. Anyone who needs legal assistance or who wants to volunteer to help should contact Lauren Jansen at 618-296-4472 or email her with their needs at ljansen@co.madison.il.us. Veterans are asked to specifically identify themselves.