

At the end of September, Madison County Circuit Clerk's employee Crystal Hale retired after serving 37 years in the office. We sat down with Crystal for a behind the scenes peek at things happening in the Circuit Clerk's office and what she has planned for retirement.



**CIRCUIT CLERK'S OFFICE: For the many people who don't know, what role does the Circuit Clerk play?**

**CRYSTAL HALE:** Mostly the Circuit Clerk is the record keeper of all of the court files. That's pretty much how it's defined. Of course there are all kinds of things, setting of court dates for the defendants and plaintiffs, for the various offices. We handle large bank accounts for the fines that come in, and it's a large variety. But the main title is they are the record keeper of the court records.

**What would you say is the most underutilized function provided by the Circuit Clerk's Office that a citizen could use?**

Most recently we have added a client access room that I helped develop and get up and running, where the public can come in and use those terminals to look up any court cases, not confidential, and find a lot of things out about the cases that are in the Circuit Clerk's office.

They also just recently began E-filing on civil cases and they use (the client access) room to do that as well. So the public can do that, attorneys if they're here they can go to that room. That's kind of been a real benefit.

I think that's good for the public to know is available here. They can get to all of our records that are available. Whether it be a traffic ticket or a lawsuit. They can see images of the paperwork that's been filed, which is something that has not been allowed outside of the office until now.

**What has your normal day been like here at the circuit clerk?**

Most recently I have been doing a lot of troubleshooting, mostly for our Traffic and Misdemeanor division. I'm a project manager, so I've been working on projects that have been completed, but the most recent one is our E-citation program that's getting all the police departments up and running on the electronic citations instead of handwritten.

We have ten agencies that are fully live using the system, six more that are in configuration so they'll be the next group. And we have eight to ten left to complete that cycle. So there is someone else that will be taking that over.

In the coming days we'll have the rest of Crystal's thoughts on what it's been like working at the Circuit Clerk's Office and what she looks forward to in retirement.