

## Conference of Local Bars Brings Bar Association and State Bar Together



I AM PLEASED AND HONORED to be writing my first column as chair of the Conference of Local Bar Associations (CLBA). I am a member of the Page County Bar Association in the Shenandoah Valley, and I practice in a firm of two attorneys. Our bar currently has thirteen members, so every member eventually has the opportunity to serve as a local bar leader.

The CLBA is a conference of the Virginia State Bar that serves the needs of approximately 132 local and specialty bar associations in Virginia. The mission of the CLBA is to establish and maintain a mutually beneficial working relationship by building communication between the VSB and the bar associations. The CLBA receives input from the associations on issues that affect the legal profession and informs the associations about the VSB's activities and policies. The CLBA also facilitates cooperation between local and specialty bars and the VSB to improve the public's understanding and appreciation of the law and the legal profession. Finally, the CLBA presents high-quality education programs for bar association leaders. The CLBA Executive Committee, elected by the members of the conference at the Virginia State Bar Annual Meeting, works diligently to carry out its responsibilities.

Most of these local and specialty bars serve a specific geographic area, but some are statewide. This year, the conference's executive committee hopes to improve with our member

bar associations and increase their participation in VSB activities and programs, including those sponsored by the CLBA. The CLBA Executive Committee wants Virginia's local and specialty bars to know that the CLBA will provide them with information about the VSB's services, and the committee will communicate the associations' input to the Virginia State Bar. The CLBA also wants to do everything possible to help bar associations improve the public's understanding of the legal profession. Our goal is to be the point of contact for our member bar associations when they need information and resources from the Virginia State Bar.

As part of this effort, the CLBA will present a Bar Leaders Institute on October 22, 2010, at the Roanoke Higher Education Center and on March 7, 2011, at the University of Richmond School of Law. In Roanoke, the keynote speaker will be Judge G. Steven Agee of the Fourth U.S. District Court of Appeals. Panels will discuss resources and programs for bar associations and issues related to leading during a bad economy. A representative of the American College of Trial Lawyers will talk about the college's Code of Pretrial and Trial Conduct. VSB Assistant Ethics Counsel Leslie A.T. Haley will discuss the ethics of social networking in a session that carries one hour of ethics credit. Members of the VSB Committee on Bench-Bar Relations will talk about maintaining communications between bench and

bar; the panel will include Roanoke City Circuit Judge Clifford R. Weckstein; Jacqueline F. Ward-Talevi, chief judge of the Roanoke County General District Court; and Timothy J. Heaphy, U.S. attorney for the Western District of Virginia. Registration details are available at <http://www.vsb.org/site/conferences/clba-calendar/vsb-bar-leaders-institute/>.

On November 1, 2010, the CLBA will present a Solo & Small-Firm Practitioner Forum at the Workforce Development Center at Eastern Shore Community College in Melfa. Sharon D. Nelson and John W. Simek of Sensei Enterprises will present engaging programs on legal technology for solos and small firms and on disaster recovery in the electronics age. They also will offer "Sixty Law Office Management Tips in Sixty Minutes." VSB Ethics Counsel James M. McCauley will teach a two-hour ethics session, "Talk Is Cheap Until You Hire a Lawyer — Financial and Business Arrangements with Your Clients." Frank O. Brown Jr., a past chair of the VSB Senior Lawyers Conference, will present "Protecting Your Clients in the Event of Death or Disability," a one-hour ethics program. The forum is free, lunch is included, and attendees will receive six hours of continuing legal education, including three hours of ethics.

We hope to see VSB members at all of these outstanding programs. Let us know what we can do for you and your bar association.