

# This is your Bar

by Michael A. Glasser 2001–2002 VSB President

Recently, an in-house lawyer for a major Virginia corporation called me. He was unaware that meetings of the Virginia State Bar Council were open and that any lawyer could attend and witness the proceedings. I was happy to advise him, and am equally happy to advise the remaining 30,000 members of our bar, that Council has an open door policy.

We are your representatives, and we solicit both your input and your involvement. For those of you—and I suspect there are legions—who are unaware of how your VSB Council operates, you can consult Part 6, Section IV, Paragraphs 5–9 of the Rules of the Virginia Supreme Court, and the Bylaws of Council. It will be a cure to a sleepless night but will also be an excellent primer on the governing body of the Virginia State Bar. You can also see when the meetings of Council are scheduled by clicking on [www.vsb.org](http://www.vsb.org) and perusing the calendar. There are no closed meetings or secret handshakes to gain admission. I am quite proud that the Virginia State Bar is continuing its progress as one of Virginia's most accessible state agencies.

Once you become more familiar with how the state bar operates, you will be very favorably impressed with the quality and depth of the professional staff who really move the laboring oars. Serving as president is a wonderful honor and privilege—and a fair amount of work—but I believe most of our past presidents would agree with me that the bulk of the organizational work of the bar is accomplished by our exemplary staff. The professional staff is very self-effacing and will always give credit to the hundreds of lawyer volunteers, but we are all very dependent on their consistently exemplary service.

Let me introduce you to our incredible staff:



**Tom Edmonds**  
*Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer*

Tom manages and supervises the bar staff and its facilities; advises the leadership on policy matters, meeting agendas and issues facing the organized bar; carries on necessary communications with the Supreme Court, the General Assembly and the other

statewide bars; and manages the other tasks required for day-to-day operation of the bar. Like many other staff members, in addition to his other duties, Tom also acts as liaison to several



© Steve Budman

bar committees and represents the bar at state, regional and national association meetings. He also serves in the ABA House of Delegates as the representative of the National Association of Bar Executives and has served as a member of the NABE board.

Prior to assuming his present position with the VSB, Tom practiced with a small firm in Orlando, Florida; taught in the law schools at the University of Mississippi and Florida State; and served as the law school dean at the University of Richmond and the University of Mississippi. He has been the bar's executive director since 1989.



© Dementi Studio

**Mary Yancey Spencer**  
*Deputy Executive Director*

Mary Yancey manages the bar in Tom's absence; works with the General Assembly; serves as a resource on governmental issues; and manages the public information and public service programs, which include Access to Legal Services, Publications and Public Information, Local and Specialty Bar

Relations, Fee Dispute Resolution, and Lawyer Referral. She also supervises the Office of the Clerk of the Disciplinary System, which provides administrative support to the bar's adjudicative bodies and is custodian of the records of the disciplinary system.

Mary Yancey is a former deputy attorney general of Virginia. She came to the VSB in 1994 with 20 years experience representing the commonwealth and its agencies.



© Dementi-Foster Studio

**Barbara Williams**  
*Bar Counsel*

Barbara heads the professional regulation department. Her office processes approximately 3,000 complaints a year. Many of these have no merit or fall outside the bar's jurisdiction, but each year there are hundreds that require investigation. Many are serious enough to warrant hearings

before either a district committee or the VSB Disciplinary Board. In addition to supervising the lawyers and investigators who

*continued on page 8*

*continued from page 4*

process complaints, Barbara carries her own caseload. She is also liaison to the Standing Committee on Lawyer Discipline, which oversees the disciplinary system. She also works with receivers appointed at the bar's request to protect the clients of lawyers who die, are disbarred, or abandon their practices without having made arrangements for winding up the practice.

Before joining the VSB as Bar Counsel in January 1998, Barbara was in private practice for 16 years. She litigated commercial disputes and professional malpractice, products liability, insurance defense and coverage matters.



**Susan Busch**  
*Assistant Executive Director for Administration*

Susan prepares and manages the budget to insure compliance with polices set by the leadership and a myriad of state regulations. Her fiscal staff is responsible for all financial transactions. She also supervises the Clients' Protection Fund and the Human

Resources, Facilities Management, and Information Technology departments, and serves as liaison to the Budget and Finance Committee. She is currently overseeing the development of the bar's new computer system.

Susan is a CPA and a Certified Government Financial Manager. She will have worked at the bar 23 years this July.



© Dementi-Foster Studio

**Elizabeth ("Bet") Keller**  
*Assistant Executive Director for Bar Services*

Bet oversees MCLE, Membership, the Professionalism Course, sections, and conferences. She has primary responsibility for meeting planning and coordinates the YLC Admission and Orientation Ceremony, First Day in Practice Seminar, Criminal

Law Seminar, Annual Meeting, Lawyers Expo, Midyear Legal Seminar, and Executive Committee and Council meetings. She assists the bar's 20 sections and two conferences with programs, budgets and VSB policies. She prepares the Section Chairs Handbook, assigns staff liaisons, and plans the fall meeting of section chairs.

Bet has been with the bar 25 years.

---

**H**aving now served at the side of these splendid individuals over the past 10 months, I am proud to say that the Virginia State Bar is blessed with an energetic and hard-working group of senior managers, as well as an outstanding support staff. When you speak with them you will learn, as I have, that your bar is ably staffed by a team that is dedicated to our profession.

Any of the members of the senior staff are most willing to hear of your suggestions and concerns. We are striving to serve you in the best possible manner. ☺

## ATTENTION District Committee Members

**Please mark your calendars . . .** and plan to attend the Disciplinary Conference that the Standing Committee on Lawyer Discipline will host on July 18, 2002, in Richmond.

VSB District Committee members for the 2002–2003 term, including new and returning committee members elected at the council meeting in June, should attend the conference. Attorney attendees will receive CLE credit hours.

More detailed program information and registration forms will be mailed well in advance of the Disciplinary Conference. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact:

**Gwen Evens at (804) 775-0556.**