

# It Has Been a Fun Run



Colin "Cal" J. S. Thomas, Jr., 2002–2003 Senior Lawyers Conference Chair

June is upon us—with June comes the Virginia State Bar annual meeting at Virginia Beach and the changeover of committee and conference chairs. For me it has been a fun run. While the senior lawyers did not accomplish all that we hoped, we came close. I credit our many victories to a board that has been wonderfully supportive, and, in no small way, to wonderful Pat Sliger of the Virginia State Bar.

Some years ago, I agreed to come onto the senior lawyers' board. We were then a small committee and we were still a small committee when I agreed to become chair-elect. When I agreed, I had no idea that I would be writing articles for this magazine or attending council meetings. When we became a conference, I wasn't sure where the senior lawyers might fit into the overall scheme. I wasn't sure that we could make a difference. I am now sure. We can lead, and together we are making a difference.

My former professor, Mortimer Caplin, spoke on May 18, 2003, at the University of Virginia commencement. (His address will soon be on the senior lawyers' Web site.) Caplin quoted John F. Kennedy: "Be a participant," he said. "Enter the lists." We, the senior lawyers, have entered the lists. We have taken some hits, but we are far from fallen. No one can accuse us of being mere spectators. Senior lawyers, individually and collectively, were participants in 2003.

In previous articles, I have recounted some of our accomplishments. Recently we sponsored a successful seminar on retirement planning. Despite our best efforts, we were unable to nominate a panel of fully-retired lawyers. I learned that for lawyers, full retirement is evasive. I do not believe that partially-retired senior lawyers are only partially-retired because their 401(k) became a 201(k). When we came to the bar, the senior lawyers who men-

tored us did not stop. They had clients to serve. They were part of a wonderful profession, and there were things to be accomplished. In great measure, that ethic has been passed on. Look at what has been done and is being done by so many—who, by firm rule, are required to cease at age 65. Their contributions to our profession have made a huge difference.

I am happy that I was granted an opportunity to be an early participant in what I believe will be an increasingly important part of the Virginia legal profession. I become past-chair with no regret. I have found good friends that I never knew before. Our next chair, Pat Barton, will lead us well. It is enough to say that she truly cares for our profession.

When I began service on our board some years ago, I joined a group of men and women who obviously enjoyed each other. I quickly learned that they cared for their profession and were willing to lend their time and effort to help make our profession better. By watching their example, I learned. I think that many of us may have learned together. I leave to Pat a full plate. We have been encouraged to create the first ever MCLE course entirely dedicated to professionalism, other than the specific course for new lawyers. Who better than us to do that!

We close our second year as a conference on a high note and with great future hopes. Recently a writer for the American Bar Association sought information for a possible article on our group. Despite the obvious presence of Robert Grey, I hope it is because we are doing something right. Either way, it is nice to be recognized.

The first board I joined cared. I can assure you that the tradition continues. God bless the senior lawyers. It has been a fun run.

## Senior Lawyers Conference Presents Retirement Planning Seminar for Lawyers

Members of the VSB Senior Lawyers Conference presented a seminar on retirement planning for lawyers on May 8, 2003, in Richmond. Robert A. Cox, Jr., moderated the program that was videotaped for later replay in Abingdon, Charlottesville, Richmond, Roanoke, Tysons Corner and Virginia Beach. It was presented in cooperation with Virginia CLE and provided 5.5 MCLE credit hours, including 1 hour ethics credit. Peter J. Kenny, of Virginia CLE, was the seminar director.

Frank O. Brown, Jr., discussed estate planning for lawyers and estate taxes; Leslie A.T. Haley, of the VSB ethics counsel's office, provided guidance on protecting the lawyer's and the client's interests in the event of the lawyer's disability or death; Mark G.

Smith, of Capital Advisory Group, Inc., emphasized important considerations about insurance planning for retirement, including life settlements; and Walter P. Smith, of BB&T Insurance Services, discussed professional liability insurance, and particularly tail coverage issues. A panel discussion on planning to exit the practice and related ethical considerations was presented by F. Warren Haynie, Jr., James W. Morris III and Colin J.S. Thomas, Jr., then SLC chair.

Timothy H. Guare outlined practical planning under the minimum distribution rules for IRAs and qualified plans. W. Richard Smith III, of Capital Advisory Group, Inc., concluded the program, emphasizing investment planning options for retirement.



The Senior Lawyers Conference hosted a luncheon in honor of lawyers who have been members of the Virginia State Bar for 50 years. The luncheon was held on Saturday, June 21, 2003, following the General Session of the VSB Annual Meeting.