

## REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

### **SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION**

*Thomas E. Spahn, Chair*

This year, our committee continued to assist with videotape projects by various bar sections, expanded the statewide speakers bureau, conducted another successful Law in Society Award contest and arranged for our award-winning public service announcement campaign to be published in other states.

As the bar entity responsible for overseeing all bar groups' videotapes, our committee has helped with numerous projects. This year, we assisted in preparation of the "So You're 18" video, the new introductory video for the Standing Committee on Professionalism and a video providing a brief description of the jury system in Virginia. We also dealt with copyright issues that have arisen during the preparation of these videos.

Jennifer Sparger, of the bar, continues to expand our statewide speakers bureau. There are now 400 lawyers signed up to volunteer for presentations.

With the generosity of the Litigation Section, our Law in Society Award ("LISA") contest was successful again this year. Our timely topic dealt with balancing security and freedom. High school students from throughout Virginia wrote balanced essays on hypothetical legislation dealing with the terrorism threat. As in previous years, our committee was assisted by former McGuireWoods secretary Sharon Parker, who prepared a package presentation that Virginia teachers used to teach high school students about America's repeated efforts to balance security and freedom (during the Civil War, World War II, etc.). Sharon ensured that the program met SOL standards. Sharon may also have won the award for the longest-distance help—for the past two years she has assisted the committee from her new job as a teacher in Kuwait.

Our award-winning public service announcement campaign continued to draw nationwide interest. The Washington State Bar and two local bars purchased the campaign. We also explored the possibility of producing short television spots and will continue to look for ways to use this highly successful campaign.

This is my last report as chair of this committee, and I would like to thank all of my colleagues who provided assistance over my years at its helm. We have much to take pride in—including Virginia's first statewide speakers bureau and a public service announcement campaign that has been shown in seven states and across Canada. In the best Virginia tradition, this pay-as-you-go campaign (which was funded without any state money) can now fairly be characterized as the most widely used public service campaign in the history of the American legal profession. Let me close with a special thanks to the real heroes—the bar staff who devote themselves every day to helping our profession. Victoria Lewkow and Rod Coggin deserve all of the credit for our successes, and all Virginia lawyers are in their debt.

