

# REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

## SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON BENCH-BAR RELATIONS

*Robert D. Perrow, Chair*

The mission of the committee is to improve the administration of justice, enhance service to the community and increase professionalism within the legal community by promoting the exchange of information and ideas between the judiciary and practicing attorneys of the commonwealth. The committee's activities range from the monitoring of changes in the judicial system to involvement in legal education programs for both judges and lawyers.

- **Responding to the Unjust Criticism of Judges and the Judicial System:** This year, the committee was not asked to respond to the unjust criticism of a judge in Virginia. The committee needs to make local bars aware of the guidelines and encourage their use.
- **Regional Judicial Conferences:** The committee planned a program on the juror orientation video for regional judicial conferences that are held twice a year in six judicial regions across the commonwealth. Due to delays in the video production, the presentations were deferred until the next bar year.
- **Annual Seminar at the VSB Annual Meeting:** The committee and the Litigation Section of the Virginia State Bar, jointly sponsored a program, "Winning the Battle of Experts Without Losing the 'Civil' in Civil Discovery."
- **Orientation Video for Jurors.** The jury orientation video to be used by circuit courts statewide was filmed. The Virginia State Bar and Supreme Court of Virginia approved the video. The final version of the video should be available in the fall.
- **Judicial Merit Selection and Retention:** The committee continues to monitor legislation that affects the process of evaluating, nominating, electing or retaining statewide judges and their effect on judicial independence.
- **Annual Judicial Conference:** The committee continues to monitor and encourage attendance by lawyer invitees. The conference is worthwhile, and more lawyers should attend.
- **Other Projects:** The committee maintains a notebook containing project and seminar materials that were completed over several years by the committee. It is hoped this notebook will be used by judges, members of the Virginia State Bar and the local bar associations. This year, we responded to a request for materials to assist in presentation of a local bench-bar program in Southwest Virginia.

