

**MANDATORY CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION**

*Calvin S. Spencer Jr., chair*

The Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) board administers the program that was established by the Supreme Court of Virginia in 1985. The rules governing the MCLE program were amended in 1990, requiring all active members of the Virginia State Bar to complete a minimum of twelve hours of approved CLE courses each fiscal year, including two hours of ethics of professionalism. In 2001, the Supreme Court amended its rules to change the completion deadline for MCLE from June 30 to October 31. The date to certify the completion was changed by the Supreme Court from July 31 to December 15. These changes took effect in 2002, and the transition was accomplished without significant difficulties.

The MCLE board consists of twelve members appointed by the Supreme Court. The 2003–2004 MCLE Board comprised: Charles M. Allen (Glen Allen), George J. Dancigers (Norfolk), Paul W. Hammack (Fairfax), R. Lee Livingstone (Charlottesville), Sharon D. Nelson (Fairfax), Oliver Norrell (Arlington), Eric M. Page (Glen Allen), Nancy G. Parr (Chesapeake); Kurt J. Pomrenke (Bristol), Calvin S. Spencer Jr. (Kenbridge), Wilson F. Villines (Staunton) and Edward Walinsky (Fairfax), chair. Calvin Spencer served as vice-chair for 2003–2004, and will serve as chair for 2004–2005. Eric Page will serve as vice-chair.

Two valuable members rotated off of the board at the conclusion of the 2003–2004 board year: Edward Walinsky (1998–2004) and Paul Hammack (1997–2004) shared their wit, enthusiasm and integrity with the board, and they will be missed.

The Virginia State Bar's MCLE department administers the MCLE requirements for the board. The board meets six times a year at the VSB office and meets an average of ten times per year by consent agenda to consider applications. Over the last reporting cycle, the MCLE staff and board have worked on the following: 5,780 course applications, 14,800 accredited sponsor courses, 25 waiver requests; 29 extension requests, 15,000 telephone inquires, 25,000 letters sent out and 92,000 certificates of attendance.

During 2003–2004, the board continued to examine issues arising from the ever-increasing use of distance-learning programs to satisfy MCLE requirements. A subcommittee continued to research and study possible changes to the MCLE regulations and opinions in response to the board's experiences with the unique nature of Internet and other distance-learning courses. The members of this subcommittee were VSB Executive Director Thomas A. Edmonds, Charles Allen and Edward Walinsky, chair. Walinsky issued a preliminary report in which he recommended possible changes to Regulation 102(b) and Opinion 16. At the August 2004 meeting, we expect the full board to vote on a new opinion regarding distance-learning courses.

The Virginia State Bar continued to provide access to members' CLE records on the VSB Web site. Members can check their MCLE record online and download MCLE regulations, opinions, forms or course listings from the Internet.

The MCLE staff, directed by Gale Cartwright, works diligently to perform their many responsibilities. On behalf of the entire MCLE board, I wish to thank the staff for their hard work and dedication.

