

CRIMINAL LAW SECTION

Michael N. Herring, chair

The Criminal Law Section continues to enjoy the enthusiastic support of a broad cross section of the state bar's membership. With approximately two thousand members, the section is one of the bar's largest.

The section continued its support for the reform of indigent defense services and funding in the commonwealth. After careful consideration of the work and reports of the various committees on indigent defense, the section's board of governors unanimously authorized a subcommittee to lobby members of the General Assembly for increased indigent defense funding.

The section sponsored its annual Criminal Law Seminar in Charlottesville and Williamsburg. Professor Roger D. Groot of Washington and Lee University Law School encouraged the attendees at the Charlottesville program to take all reasonable measures to improve the quality of indigent defense in Virginia. Professor Groot has steadfastly supported the activities of the Criminal Law Section, and we remain indebted to him for his invaluable leadership in the area of capital murder litigation.

Deputy U.S. Attorney General James B. Comey addressed the section at its Criminal Law Seminar luncheon in Williamsburg. Comey is widely regarded as one of the more competent and ethical attorneys in the Department of Justice, and his comments on the Patriot Act were informative and provocative.

Also at the Williamsburg luncheon, the section posthumously recognized Justin W. Williams for his many years of service to the bar and to our nation during his tenure with the Department of Justice.

Senior Justice Harry L. Carrico presented the section's Carrico Professionalism Award to Overton P. "Opie" Pollard for his tireless efforts as director of the Virginia Public Defender Commission.

In June, the section cosponsored a continuing legal education program with the Family Law Section entitled "Dangerous Intersection Ahead: When Criminal and Family Law Collide." Michael HuYoung did a masterful job as moderator of the program, which focused on the delicate balance between family law and criminal law in domestic relations matters.

At our business meeting Harvey L. Bryant III of Virginia Beach was elected chair of the section for 2005–2006. John E. Lichtenstein of Roanoke was elected vice-chair and Robert B. Beasley of Powhatan was elected secretary. The following members were elected to the board for four-year terms: Carolyn V. Grady of Richmond, David P. Baugh of Richmond and John L. Brownlee of Roanoke.

The section appreciates the generous commitments of Professor Robert E. Shepherd Jr. and Reno S. Harp for their thoughtful guidance and assistance to the board as it manages the affairs of the section. We are also indebted to Elizabeth L. Keller, Dolly Shaffner and Theresa B. Patrick at the state bar.

I have truly enjoyed my tenure on the board and as chair of the section. I hope all of the members of our section have found programming to be engaging and enjoyable.

