

SENIOR LAWYERS CONFERENCE

William B. Smith, chair

The Senior Lawyers Conference got a dramatic jump start in June when Chief Justice Leroy R. Hassell Sr. of the Supreme Court of Virginia asked to meet with the leadership of the conference at the Virginia State Bar Annual Meeting at Virginia Beach to discuss his ideas of how the Supreme Court might work with the conference.

At the request of the Chief Justice, I named Earle Garrett III of Danville, Harriette H. Shivers of Roanoke, Robert L. Calhoun of Alexandria, Thomas F. McPhaul of Norfolk, and John G. Mizell Jr. of Richmond as the SLC Involuntary Commitment Procedures Committee—with Garrett chair. In November, the committee, William T. Wilson of Covington, other SLC board members and the SLC chair attended a luncheon at the Supreme Court arranged by Chief Justice Hassell to discuss involuntary commitment issues and concerns and to outline the plan for a statewide conference and workshop in the fall of 2005.

As chair of the conference, I have attended meetings of the Virginia State Bar Executive Committee and Council. I also was invited to and attended the Judicial Conference of Circuit Court Judges.

Former SLC Chair Colin J.S. “Cal” Thomas Jr. of Staunton, Edward R. Slaughter Jr. of Charlottesville and Homer C. Eliades of Hopewell are developing seminar programs on civility and professionalism. F. Mather Archer of Portsmouth served as liaison to the Lawyers Helping Lawyers Committee, and Wilson was liaison to the VSB Litigation Section. Clarence M. Dunnville Jr. of Richmond and Henry L. Woodward of Roanoke are working to involve senior lawyers in pro bono legal work with legal aid societies. Patricia A. Barton of Springfield was instrumental in increasing the distribution of the *Senior Citizens Handbook*, and retired Judge J. Davis Reed of Virginia Beach contributed considerable time and effort to editing portions of the newly revised handbook, which was printed in time for distribution at the 2005 annual meeting of the VSB. Jack W. Burtch Jr. of Richmond kept accurate minutes of our meetings, and Treasurer Robert A. Cox Jr. of Richmond made sure we stayed within our budget. George W. Shanks of Luray and Wilson served on the panels of two bar leadership programs presented by the Conference of Local Bar Associations and gave an overview of the activities of our conference.

Wilson planned and presented a program on the *Senior Citizens Handbook* to the public at the courthouse in Covington. His work on this project is a model for future presentations to the elderly by local bar associations.

Frank O. Brown Jr. of Richmond, former chair and our newsletter editor and Webmaster, keeps the board fully informed about all deadlines and procedures. He also chairs our nominating committee and presents seminars to local bar associations on protecting lawyers’ and clients’ interests in event of the lawyer’s disability, death or other disaster.

Other members of our board not mentioned above—R. Hunter Manson III of Reedville, Carolyn O. Marsh of Richmond, John H. Tate Jr. of Marion, Ebb H. Williams III of Martinsville and retired Judge James E. Kulp of Richmond, and Joseph E. Spruill of Tappahannock and Frank M. Slayton of South Boston all made valuable contributions to the work of the conference.

Patricia A. Sliger is the VSB staff liaison in Richmond and the right hand of the Senior Lawyers Conference leadership. She is always available, supportive and informative. She is especially adept at reasoning out how to get SLC projects and activities done.

The Senior Lawyers Conference is alive and well and looking forward to the future in planning and making contributions to its mission.

