

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/ CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

The rate of growth of Virginia State Bar membership has slowed in recent years. Total “in good standing” membership increased to 32,193, an increase of 796, or 2.5% over the previous fiscal year.

	1998–99	1997–98
Active	22,135	21,725
Associate	7,906	7,601
Judicial	887	860
Retired	<u>1,265</u>	<u>1,211</u>
	32,193	31,397

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

W. Scott Street, III, of Richmond became president of the Virginia State Bar at its annual meeting on June 21, 1999. He was sworn in by Justice A. Christian Compton of the Virginia Supreme Court. Joseph A. Condo of Vienna became president-elect for the 1999–2000 bar year in an uncontested election.

John A. C. Keith of Fairfax completed his year as president, having carried out his goal of fostering heightened awareness of the need for pro bono legal services in Virginia and increased participation in pro bono activities by VSB members. He saw the passage of a resolution by Council urging creation of local pro bono committees throughout the Commonwealth to identify local needs for pro bono services and devise ways to meet those needs. Local bar leadership conferences were very well received in both Lexington and Richmond. A productive relationship continued with the General Assembly and the Supreme Court in 1999. The new Virginia Rules of Professional Conduct were approved by the Court, effective January 1, 2000. Challenges persist in the areas of adequate resources for effective professional regulation and developing integrated software to meet the bar’s computer needs.

Four members of Council were elected to the Executive Committee: Dennis W. Dohnal and Virginia W. Powell of Richmond, Susan M. Pesner of Fairfax, and Theophlise L. Twitty of Portsmouth, replacing James A. Roy of Chesapeake, Larry B. Slipow of Virginia Beach, and William D. Cremins of Fairfax, whose terms on Council ended, and Joseph A. Condo, who became president-elect. Jane S. Glenn of Roanoke and Michael A. Glasser of Norfolk were reelected to one-year terms.

The following new members were elected to three-year terms on Council beginning July 1, 1999:

Stephen J. Telfeyan	1st Judicial Circuit
John W. Richardson	2nd Judicial Circuit
William C. Cowardin, Jr.	7th Judicial Circuit
S. Anderson Nelson	10th Judicial Circuit
Dale W. Pittman	11th Judicial Circuit
Bernard J. DiMuro	18th Judicial Circuit
Glenn C. Lewis	19th Judicial Circuit
J. Patrick McConnell	19th Judicial Circuit
David P. Bobzien	19th Judicial Circuit
Robert J. Stoney	19th Judicial Circuit
J. Steven Grist	25th Judicial Circuit

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The following incumbents were reelected to Council for three year terms.

Michael A. Glasser	4th Judicial Circuit
Harry A. Morris, Jr.	9th Judicial Circuit
Michael C. Allen	12th Judicial Circuit
Virginia W. Powell	13th Judicial Circuit
Jean P. Dahnk	15th Judicial Circuit
Thomas P. Dugan	19th Judicial Circuit
Susan M. Hicks	19th Judicial Circuit
James H. Ford	21st Judicial Circuit
Glenn M. Hodge	26th Judicial Circuit

Incumbents Helen F. Fahey and Inga A. Watkins of Alexandria were reappointed Council members at large by the Supreme Court of Virginia. Three additional member at large positions were created at the request of Bar Council this year, and the Court appointed to these positions Charlie Chong Ho Lee of Vienna, Alda L. White of Stafford and H. Ronnie Montgomery of Jonesville.

Elizabeth K. Dillon of Roanoke became president of the Conference of Local Bar Associations and J. Tracy Walker, IV of Richmond became president of the Young Lawyers Conference. They will both serve as ex officio members of Council, and Mr. Walker will also serve as an ex officio member of the Executive Committee.

BAR OPERATIONS AND STAFF

There were no personnel changes during the year among the bar's senior staff. Randy K. Dorman joined the bar in March 1999 as Director of the Information Services Department. Mr. Dorman has significant computer and management experience in both the public and private sectors, and he is expected to provide strong leadership as we move forward with the bar's rewriting and integration of its computer software programs.

After completing the upgrading of the bar's computer hardware last year, a great deal of time was invested by bar staff from all departments this year in developing a set of system requirements for new, integrated computer software programs that will allow us to serve our members and the public in a much more effective and efficient way. Work will continue during the coming year on the detailed requirements for the software, and we hope to accomplish the programming and implementation during the following bar year.

Another major project this year has been our work with the Standing Committee on Budget and Finance in evaluating the bar's present programs and activities, assessing the critical need for additional resources in our professional regulation area, determining the likely cost of completing our computer software rewrite project, and recommending an appropriate dues level for bar members, effective July 1, 2000. The bar reduced its dues from \$185 to \$169 in 1996, following a review by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission that concluded the bar had accumulated an excessively large reserve. For the past four years, the bar's operating expenses have continued to increase, resulting in an accelerating draw on the reserve each year. At this point, the bar is spending approximately \$200 per active member, while collecting only \$169.

In light of these developments, along with the generally recognized need for new resources in both professional regulation and for completion of the computer software rewrite project, a dues increase appears quite likely on July 1, 2000. In the June/July issue of the *Virginia Lawyer*, members will be provided with information about each of the bar's present and planned programs and activities, along with the cost of each program or activity and the number of bar staff and volunteers needed to carry it out. Members will have the opportunity of advising the officers and the Standing Committee on Budget & Finance on the value of each program or activity using a questionnaire contained in the magazine. The committee will take this member input into account as it formulates its recommendations to the executive

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committee and council about the bar's future spending plans and priorities, as well as an appropriate dues level beginning July 1, 2000.

In the meantime, the staff has assisted the committee in identifying ways in which to contain costs and trim spending from the bar's operating budget, so that the reserve will prove adequate to enable us to retain the current dues level through next year.

One significant development that will have a major impact on the staff is approval by the Virginia Supreme Court this year of the new Virginia Rules of Professional Conduct, which are to become effective January 1, 2000. Members of the professional regulation department staff are working closely with a transition committee of volunteers to be certain that the changeover from the present Code of Professional Responsibility is a smooth one. Numerous educational opportunities are already being provided so that Virginia lawyers can familiarize themselves with the new rules well in advance of their effective date, and such things as our existing legal ethics opinions and the materials for the mandatory professionalism course are being updated and revised to take into account changes that the new rules will bring. ❀