

FAMILY LAW

Brian M. Hirsch, chair

During fiscal 2007, the Family Law Section Board of Governors added a Family Law Service Award, which it presented this year for the first time. Philip Schwartz of Vienna received the Lifetime Achievement Award and Mary G. Commander of Norfolk received the Family Law Service Award. The awards were presented at the Annual Advanced Family Law Seminar luncheon in Richmond, which is attended by more section members than the Annual Meeting in Virginia Beach, where the award was previously handed out.

The section sponsored the February 2007 issue of *Virginia Lawyer* magazine. The section contributed five articles.

Membership in the section increased approximately 20 percent over last year's. This was due in part to the section's concerted efforts at seminars and similar events to encourage new members of the bar to join the section.

The section conducted a survey of its members to ensure that we are meeting their needs. It appears that the *Family Law News*, edited by Richard Crouch, and seminars are the cornerstones of the section. The survey also provided valuable feedback on how to improve these programs, and brought to light other needs of the section members.

While the section has a Web site, it had not been as interactive or user friendly as it could have been. This year, the Web site was updated and the members have been encouraged to use it regularly. The site (www.vsb.org/sections/fa/index.html) featured an article in which Juvenile and Domestic Relations Judge Angela G. Roberts, a Family Law Section board member, promoted National Adoption Day with Virginia First Lady Anne B. Holton. Also, the section has now begun e-mailing members to inform them of important news, such as upcoming seminars.

The section sent James W. Korman and Joseph A. Condo to Portugal to present on family law at the Virginia State Bar's Midyear Legal Seminar.

The Advanced Family Law Seminar in April, "Using Experts Effectively in Your Family Law Case," paired experts and lawyers by topic. It received excellent ratings and reviews, according to Virginia CLE. Likewise, the section's seminar on attorneys fees, presented at the VSB Annual Meeting, was a success.

Section officers for 2007-2008 are Craig Elliott White, chair; Andrea Rowse Stiles, vice chair; and Peter Williams Buchbauer, secretary.

