



LITIGATION SECTION

Samuel W. Meekins Jr., chair

The Litigation Section of the Virginia State Bar had a fruitful and rewarding year fulfilling its goal of promoting efforts to improve the efficient, ethical and just resolution of societal disputes. Vice Chair Vickie H. Devine and Secretary/Treasurer R. Lee Livingston, kept the section Board of Governors on track and under budget. A special thanks is due to Patricia A. Sliger, our VSB section liaison, whose devotion to the section and effervescent manner made the year's work pleasurable.

The *Litigation News*, edited by Kevin W. Mottley, provided interesting and educational articles on legal topics to section members. These issues are currently made available as hard copy but on the Litigation Section Web site at www.vsb.org/sections/lg/index.htm.

Litigation Section seminars included an insightful dissertation on depositions offered at the VSB 2005 Midyear Legal Seminar in Barcelona, Spain, presented by the Honorable William H. Ledbetter Jr. and Past Chair Robert E. Scully. At the VSB Annual Meeting, the section also presented a program, "Extreme Makeover: Preparing Your Client for Trial," on the dos and don'ts of witness preparation. R. Lee Livingston worked with the Family Law Section and Bench-Bar Relations Committee to coordinate the panel, which included Judge Michael F. Urbanski, Judge Jane M. Roush, Thomas E. Spahn, Thomas E. Albro and Glenn C. Lewis.

Sandra Chinn-Gilstrap, liaison to the Litigation Section's Young Lawyers Committee, and Philip G. Gardner created a workshop in which fundamentals of deposition-taking were taught and demonstrated by skilled practitioners and jurists. The seminar was videotaped for possible circulation to local bar associations.

Thanks to L. Steven Emmert, chair of the section's Appellate Subcommittee, the section developed an enhanced program for those practicing before appellate courts. Two symposia were offered where appellate practice issues were discussed and debated. The appellate subcommittee is developing a list of attorneys who will assist *pro se* litigants in civil appeal preparation. The appellate subcommittee also added representatives of the Supreme Court of Virginia, Court of Appeals of Virginia and Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to its membership.

The Litigation Section wrote feature articles for the February 2005 *Virginia Lawyer*. The articles, written or solicited by members of the section Board of Governors, received high praise from readers. An article by Mr. Emmert, "Getting a Writ in Virginia's Appellate Courts," has received wide circulation from lawyers seeking guidance on the appellate process.

As has been the practice for the past several years, the section was once again a primary sponsor of the Law in Society Award competition, in which high school students earn educational assistance for submitting essays on timely legal topics of public interest.

The section was pleased to add as new members this year Gary C. Hancock of Pulaski, Sharon S. Goodwin of Norfolk, and Gary A. Bryant of Norfolk. Ms. Goodwin and Mr. Bryant will fill unexpired terms. Next year's section can look forward to the outstanding leadership of Ms. Devine of Furniss, Davis, Rashkind & Saunders PC, chair; R. Lee Livingston of Trembley & Smith LLP, vice chair; and Jennifer Lee Parrish of Parrish, Houck & Snead PLC, secretary/treasurer.

It was my honor and pleasure to serve the section and its 2,765 members for the 2005–2006 year. I thank each member for his or her kindness and assistance.

