



SENIOR LAWYERS CONFERENCE

William T. Wilson, chair

The Senior Lawyers Conference (SLC) consists of more than eleven thousand members. From July 1, 2005, to June 30, 2006, the SLC has been involved in the following programs:

Senior Law Day: The SLC encouraged local bar associations to conduct Senior Law Day programs in their jurisdictions. This is a program first successfully executed in Covington by the Allegheny/Bath/Highland Bar Association. A panel of seven lawyers and a general district court judge discussed topics in the *Senior Citizens Handbook* with about one hundred senior citizens who met at the courthouse. The SLC has agreed to furnish *Senior Citizens Handbooks* to bar associations willing to put on similar programs, with the help of a \$9,000 grant from the

Virginia Law Foundation. Virginia Chief Justice Leroy R. Hassell Sr. and Virginia State Bar President Phillip V. Anderson endorsed the program in letters to local bars. Patricia A. Sliger of the VSB staff is the contact for distribution of the books. The Conference of Local Bar Associations recognized the program with an Award of Merit to the Alleghany/Bath/Highland Bar.

Senior Citizens Handbook: The SLC and Young Lawyers Conference continued to jointly produce and distribute the handbook.

Frank O. Brown Jr., a former SLC Chair and now editor of the SLC newsletter and Web site, traveled the commonwealth urging lawyers to prepare for orderly resolution of their practices should they die or become disabled. He gave unselfishly of his time without seeking fees or costs reimbursement. The General Practice Section presented Mr. Brown with its Tradition of Excellence Award.

Emeritus Rule: The SLC continued to encourage retiring lawyers to help the poor under the Emeritus Rule, which waives some formalities of active membership for retired lawyers doing pro bono work.

“So You’re Going to a Nursing Home/Assisted Living Facility.” This program, held at the VSB Annual Meeting, was designed to educate lawyers about the technicalities, complications and pitfalls involved when one is considering becoming a resident of a nursing home or assisted living facility. The panel included state Senator R. Creigh Deeds; Virginia Social Services Commissioner Anthony Conyers Jr.; Linda Wilhelm from the Department of Health; attorney T. Daniel Frith III of Roanoke; and attorney Andrew H. Hook of Portsmouth. William T. Wilson of Covington moderated the panel. The program was videotaped for future distribution.

SLC Web Site: Largely through the efforts of Mr. Brown, the SLC Web site, www.vsb.org/slc, was used heavily. It provides information helpful to the profession and the public.

Supreme Court Initiatives. Members of the SLC participated in a number of committees and commissions that execute the initiatives of Chief Justice Hassell. Topics include involuntary commitment, court-appointed defense counsel pay, and future planning for the courts.

Fifty-Year Awards. During the annual meeting, the SLC hosted a luncheon for members of the bar who have practiced fifty years or more. Awards were presented to the fifty-year lawyers by President Anderson.

The SLC is active and dedicated to improving the legal profession. Without the assistance of the SLC Board of Governors, I would have been like the proverbial gooney bird on the beach trying to get off of the ground. My thanks go to Jack W. “JB” Burtch Jr., incoming chair; George W. Shanks, chair-elect; Homer C. Eliades, first vice chair; Harriette H. Shivers, second vice chair; John G. Mizell Jr., secretary; Robert E. Eicher, treasurer; William Brice Smith; Mr. Brown; J. Dale Bimson; retired Judge William C. Boice; Robert L. Calhoun; Judge Bonnie C. Davis; Earle Garrett III; F. Warren Haynie Jr.; William H. Oast III; retired Judge J. Davis Reed III; Janine M. Saxe; Edward R. Slaughter Jr.; and retired Judge Frank M. Slayton.

Thanks also to Patricia A. Sliger, conference liaison; Thomas A. Edmonds, VSB executive director; and all of the VSB staff with whom we worked, for their very able assistance. It has been a rewarding year and I am thankful for the opportunity to serve.

