

**ANNUAL REPORT
SENIOR LAWYERS SECTION
STATE BAR OF MICHIGAN**

The 2002-2003 year for the Senior Lawyers Section was a challenge and an insight. Perhaps the most significant aspect of our year was the effort to continue the dues exemption for Senior Lawyers. Having several meetings with the State Bar of Michigan Leadership and speaking before the hearings committee for the Representative Assembly resulted in retaining that exemption for lawyers 70 years and older as of October 1, 2003. After that date, the dues exemption will not take effect until an attorney attains the age of 75. The initial recommendation from the State Bar of Michigan was to completely abandon any dues exemption. The Council, in its many meetings, pointed out that several attorneys still practice beyond the age of 70 and, are actively involved in pro bono work. Imposing the dues requirement on these individuals, no matter how slight, would result in a financial impact and potentially deprive those in need of legal services they cannot afford.

Helpful to the Senior Lawyers Council were the responses to a survey sent after the issue involving the dues increase had been resolved. The response to the survey approximated nearly 55% of the membership, a truly resounding response. Our members have challenged the Council to the initiation of future programs. The growth of this Section over the next several years could be profound. Our successful growth will be dependent upon the ability of the Council as to attract new members to its programs. The survey results are currently being evaluated. At the Annual Meeting in August 2003, the Council will determine the strategic plan for the future. In advance, I thank you all for responding to that survey.

This year also saw the Senior Lawyers Section liaison with the Young Lawyers Section (YLS) in the initiation of a mentor program. There is now a column in Inter-Alia, the YLS newsletter by a member of the Senior Lawyers Council. I was pleased to be invited to write the first column.

We intend to initiate more effective and timely communication with our members. With the advent of the Internet and new computer scanning capabilities, we should be able to effectively communicate with you. That is our challenge to you - more of your involvement and commitment. In return, we promise to make your membership in this Section worthwhile. Let us start the planning for 2003 and 2004.