

2002-2003 Annual Report of the
Elder Law and Advocacy Section
James Schuster, Chair

This past year has been an exciting one for the Elder Law and Advocacy Section. We built on our successes, broke new ground and watched our membership grow.

We repeated the success of our three day fall conference that was held at the Tree Tops Resort in Gaylord October 2002. The program boasted the best attorneys in Michigan and national experts on subjects of legal capacity, housing and care options, advance directives, guardianship, rights of nursing home residents, medical issues, consumer credit and estate planning. We will be repeating the program at the Mission Pointe Hotel on Mackinac Island September 17 - 19, 2003 with even more national experts coming. It is becoming The regional conference on Elder and Disability Law.

We continued and built on our Brown Bag Lunch series. On March 28th we had a full house one day program at the MSU Center in Troy. The program was informal as the Brown Bag Lunches, with a lead topic each hour, but with wide discussion of issues. The subjects covered ranged from estate planning, Medicare and Medicaid to nursing home rights. The program by all reports was a great success.

The listserv continues to grow in importance as a member benefit. Currently we have about 300 members participating, but will push to include the entire membership as the way of section communication.

We continued to publish solid articles in the Newsletter with Susan Wideman as the editor.

Our new ground reflected the changes in Lansing. The section has kept current with legislation introduced, but felt with the change in administration in Lansing that policy changes would be made at the administrative, not just legislative level. The Council needed to know what changes were being considered, when, where and by whom. The Section hired Capitol Services Inc. as the Section's information pipeline from Lansing. We feel confident that as changes are being considered the voice of us and our clients will be heard.

Times are changing and we are on the crest of the wave.