

## **CRIMINAL LAW SECTION 2002-2003 ANNUAL REPORT**

This has been a very exciting and busy year for the Criminal Law Section. We began with our Mid-winter Ski Conference in February of 2003. The educational program dealt with voir dire, preserving a record for appeal and creative sentencing.

Sometime after the February Mid-winter Conference, the first Criminal Law Section journal was published. The articles were enthusiastically received by all of the members. We received a great deal of response concerning some of the articles. One or two were controversial. They opened communication and the exchange of ideas.

We owe special thanks to Karen Woodside and Kimberly Reed-Thompson for making sure that this publication took place. The Criminal Law Section intends to continue publishing its journal on an annual basis.

In June we had our Policy Conference at the Grand Hotel on Mackinaw Island. The discussion drew a large number of participants. The topic was should Michigan adopt a statewide funded public defender system. We had speakers Robert L. Spangenberg, National Consultant on Criminal Defense Services; Mark E. Stevens, Public Defender, Knoxville, TN; Norman Lefstein, Prof. Of Law and Dean Emeritus, IN Univ. School of Law; Hon. George W. Crockett III, 3<sup>rd</sup> Circuit Judge, Detroit; Matthew M. Evans, Esq., President, Wayne Co. Criminal Bar Association. The result of the discussion was that the Criminal Law Section will do everything in its power to see that more funding is provided for criminal defense and that attorneys who represent indigents will meet the highest standards.

Thank you Norris Thomas and Graham Teall for putting together such an exciting Policy Conference. Our year would not have been as successful without the help of James Shonkwiler.

We finalized the year with our September annual meeting in Lansing. The topic, which is of interest to all of our members, concerns the de-institutionalization of mental illness and its impact on the criminal justice system.