

COMPUTER LAW

The section continued to focus on delivering value to the growing number of section members during 2002-2003. It undertook a number of activities intended to provide services to the members of the section and the Bar overall.

The council and officers met five times over the course of the year at various locations -- conference call connections were available at most of these meetings to promote maximum participation by section members. The meetings consisted of status reports of section activities, discussion of proposals to provide new section activities and services, and presentations by guest speakers on a variety of topics of interest to section members. In January, the council met with John Berry, Executive Director of the State Bar of Michigan, to discuss ways to promote better use of the Bar's services in support of section activities.

The section sponsored a theme issue of the Michigan Bar Journal in March 2003 entitled "Information Technology Law. Section members contributed five articles to the publication. The section published six issues of its newsletter, the Michigan Computer Lawyer, with updates on recent developments in computer law, summaries of section activities, and profiles of council members, among other features.

On May 21, 2003, the section held its spring luncheon at the Livonia Marriott. The topic of the lunch presentation was "Resolving E-Commerce Disputes with Alternative Dispute Resolution" and featured Tim Cole, Director of Internet Dispute Solutions and Assistant Director of Arbitration at the National Arbitration Forum, and Debi Miller-Moore, National Vice President of the American Arbitration Association.

A bylaws committee was created to evaluate the sections bylaws and recommend necessary changes, with particular emphasis on two areas: (1) providing procedures for section advocacy to enable the section to take positions on pending legislation relevant to section members; and (2) electronic notice, voting, and other procedures that facilitate electronic communications and interaction among section members. The section is expected to adopt the committee's recommendations later in the year.

The membership committee conducted an outreach program and made available an introductory offer of free section membership to recent admittees to the State Bar of Michigan.

The section helped to promote a seminar by the University of Dayton Law School on the topic of "Advanced Computer and Cyberspace Law," which was attended by several section members.

The section is planning its annual meeting on September 4, 2003 to include a golf outing and an evening program. A panel discussion on the topic of "identity theft" is planned.

The section is sponsoring the Edward F. Langs Writing Award, which is given to up to three student articles that make the most original and significant contributions to the knowledge and understanding of current computer law issues. At the time of this writing, the winners of this year's writing award had yet to be selected.

The section's web page on the State Bar website continues to be a source of information for current and prospective members of the section. It features notices of council and committee meetings, a directory of section leadership, as well as reprints of articles from the section newsletter. The depth and breadth of content available on the web page will be expanded as section members and committees develop new material.

Anthony Targan, Chairperson