

**2007 Annual Report
Elder Law Committee
Lycoming County Bar Association
January 6, 2008**

In the Spring of 2007, the Elder Law Committee conducted a re-organizational committee meeting. The meeting was advertised to all members of the Lycoming Law Association to assure that all interested members were included, not just those who had previously joined the committee. At this first meeting ideas for the purpose and goals of the committee for the year were discussed. The following is a list of goals set and events held during 2007:

1) Disseminate Information from the PBA Elder Law Section Meetings

The Committee decided that one of the ongoing functions of the Committee would be to disseminate information received during the PBA Elder Law Section Meetings to members of the Lycoming County Bar Elder Law Committee. The PBA Elder Law Section Meetings are invaluable to those practicing elder law, particularly during times of law changes. If a member was not able to attend the Section Meeting, he/she would be able to get a report at the County Bar Elder Law Committee Meeting. The Section Meetings were held in June and November and those attending reported at the next County Bar Elder Law Committee for the benefit of those who could not attend. Since the Medicaid laws were in transition during 2007, this exchange of information proved very helpful to all.

2) MH/MR and Office of Aging

The Committee decided that one of the problems confronting many clients is the gap between the laws governing mental health issues and aging issues. The statutes for involuntary commitment, guardianship, and protective services are separate and distinct. In addition, the agencies which provide services to those confronting these issues are viewed as separate. The Committee decided to address this problem by having a forum over lunch to start a dialogue about these concerns. This meeting was held in the courthouse basement conference room and was well attended. Both Jim Wilkerson, Executive Director for MH/MR, and Fred Shrimp, Executive Director for the Bi-County Office of Aging participated.

3) Orphan's Court Rules

The Committee decided that the local rules governing guardianship proceedings should be reviewed. This was in response, in part, to changes in the law. The Committee discussed this concern at two different meetings.

Julianne Steinbacher relayed the concerns of the Elder Law Committee to the Orphan's Court Subcommittee of the Bench and Bar Committee. Julianne Steinbacher joined the subcommittee and met numerous times to help formulate proposed revisions to the rules.

4) Service Project

The Committee decided to hold a service project event. This event is planned for March of 2008. Information about powers of attorney will be given to low income elderly. All participants will be given the chance for a pro-bono power of attorney at a local law firm. A final planning meeting is being held in January.

5) Lunch and Learn

The Committee also decided to plan a lunch and learn focusing on ethics in elder law. This event was held in December. Dale Tice, William Knecht, and Julianne Steinbacher presented a panel discussion on behalf of the Elder Law Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julianne E. Steinbacher, Esq.

Chairperson, Elder Law Committee

Lycoming County Bar Association