



President

Michael M. Raskin, MD, JD, MS, MPH, MA, FCLM

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SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS THAT “BOTHER ME SO”

I hope Brother Jimmy doesn't mind me borrowing a line from his song, but it's appropriate in this case. The ACLM staff receive questions that may “bother you so” but the answers are right on the ACLM website at www.aclm.org. You can find out if you paid your dues, locations and dates for the 2009 and 2010 meetings, full directory listing of members, bylaws, committee listings, publications online, and so much more! The ACLM **Home Page** has future meetings, publication links, hot links, ABLM certification website, the ACLM Foundation donor form, and the ACLM products catalog for ACLM logo merchandise available to purchase on line. The **About Us** section contains our bylaws, an organizational chart, BOG and committee listings, listing of all past presidents and all Gold Medal recipients, Notes from the President, and BOG/AMA delegate reports for the last five years. The **Members Only** section (you must log-in to access this section) contains your profile, dues history and payments, and CME history. You can also do a directory search to find members in a particular specialty or area of expertise. Finally, there is a member's only bulletin board. The **Members** section lists the newest members as well as Honorary Fellows, while the **Membership** section describes benefits and categories of being a member, as well as an application form for prospective members. The **Meetings** section lists future meetings as well as past meetings with program agendas and abstracts. There is also a **Photo Gallery** with pictures taken during the annual meetings and banquets for the last five years. Did you check to see if your mug shot is there? The **Resources** section has ACLM member articles, amicus briefs, related web site links, ACLM endorsed resources, and a posting of other health law conferences. The **Publications** section allows you to search back issues of *Legal Medicine Perspectives*, the *Journal of Legal Medicine*, and *Legal Medicine Q&A*. You can also order the Legal Medicine textbook online. Information on submissions for publication is also only a click away. You can sign up for **Legalmednet**, the premier e-mail discussion list for discussing legal medicine issues, with just one click. You **NEED** to be on this! Finally, don't forget that the **Home Page** contains **Hot Links** on the right side of the web page to other links. Spend 10 minutes exploring the ACLM web site and I am sure you will find a great deal of information you never knew existed – check it out! You never know what you'll find, but staff will be happy if you do, as it will probably answer any questions that “bother you so.”

GOING “GREEN”

Being ecologically concerned is a good thing. We each have to do our part to help preserve the environment. Every little bit helps! The ACLM has been recycling badge holders for several years and, starting in January, *Legal Medicine Q&A* will be sent to you electronically. Although it is only 4 pages, when you consider that it's published six times a year and more than 1,300 copies are printed for each issue, that's a lot of paper. We can start to do our part in saving trees and, as a byproduct, the ACLM will save a bit on printing costs. As you know, many organizations have gone to electronic format for their publications, programs, and syllabus. We have no intention of having the *Journal of Legal Medicine* **only** in electronic format. Please let me know your thoughts, pro or con, in January when you receive your first e-format *Legal Medicine Q&A*. In order for this to work, ACLM **MUST** have your correct email address – make sure we do! We can't keep you informed unless you first inform us. ACLM wants to be responsive to your needs while, at the same time, being a responsible citizen in regards to our planet. Do your part and we all gain!

MID-YEAR MEETING

Marty Stillman and Chris White put on a stellar mid-year meeting on “Primary Care and the Law.” Some outstanding speakers stimulated informative discussions. The participants were quite pleased with the quality of the meeting. If you were there, you know what a great meeting it was. If not, sorry you missed it. However, you can still purchase a syllabus for \$100, but you need to act quickly – only five remain! If interested, contact Sue O'Sullivan at the ACLM executive office at sueo@wjweiser.com.

ACLM POLICY ON AID IN DYING

Dated October 6, 2008

Effective October 6, 2008, the official policy of the American College of Legal Medicine relating to end-of-life decisions made by mentally competent, terminally ill persons is encapsulated by the three “resolve” sections, below.

WHEREAS, the American College of Legal Medicine (“ACLM”) is an organization of professionals engaged in issues where the disciplines of medicine and law converge, including the debate and discussion surrounding end-of-life treatment options and decisions, and has been so engaged in this debate for over a decade; and

WHEREAS the ACLM acknowledges that a continuum of views exists within its membership concerning end-of-life treatment options, and that it respects these views in accordance with the personal feelings and conscience of each of its members; and

WHEREAS, the ACLM has recognized there has been considerable literature and data surrounding whether or not there is a need to implement such options, including the 10 years of experience now from the State of Oregon with its Death With Dignity Act; and

WHEREAS, the ACLM filed an *Amicus* brief before the United States Supreme Court in 1996 in which it stated, “The term ‘physician-assisted suicide’ is arguably a misnomer that unfairly colors the issue, and for some, evokes feelings of repugnance and immorality... (I)t seems inappropriate to characterize requests for treatment that end life, made by suffering, terminally-ill patients, as any form of destruction or ruination of their interests. Assuming a patient’s mental competence, and recognizing (the Supreme) Court’s long-held commitment to the principles of personal autonomy and free will, prescribing medication intended to end life in the subject context serves — not destroys or ruins — a patient’s interests... ACLM rejects the term ‘physician-assisted suicide,’ and instead refers herein to the practice in question as ‘treatment intended to end life’ “; and finally,

WHEREAS, the ACLM is the first such organization to publicly advocate elimination of the word “suicide” from the lexicon created by a mentally competent, though terminally ill, person who wishes to be aided in dying; NOW THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the ACLM recognizes patient autonomy and the right of a mentally competent, though terminally ill, person to hasten what might otherwise be objectively considered a protracted, undignified, or painful death, *provided*, however, that such person strictly complies with law specifically enacted to regulate and control such a right; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That the process initiated by a mentally competent, though terminally ill, person who wishes to end his or her suffering and hasten death according to law *specifically* enacted to regulate and control such a process shall not be described using the word “suicide”, but, rather, as a process intended to hasten the end of life.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

The ACLM continues to strongly support the use of palliative and hospice care for mentally competent though terminally ill persons.

References available on the ACLM website.

Mark Your Calendar!**LEGAL-MEDICAL CRUISE**

American Board of Legal Medicine
January 17 - 24, 2009
Liberty of the Seas

2009 ACLM ANNUAL MEETING

Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino
February 27 - March 1, 2009
Las Vegas, Nevada

***Call for Submission of Abstracts
for Poster Session Presentations!***

49th Annual Conference on Legal Medicine
February 27 – March 1, 2009
Las Vegas, Nevada

Deadline for Abstract submission:

January 9, 2009

Visit www.aclm.org for instructions
about abstract submission.