

# ACLM Notes from the President

January/February 2012



## ACLM January/February LMP

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## Comments from ACLM Members:

If you have thoughts or opinions on articles in the ACLM LMP that you would like to share with the membership, please email them to Amy Meyer at [amy@wjweiser.com](mailto:amy@wjweiser.com).

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## Notes from the President: Gary I. Birnbaum, MD, JD, FCLM

Dear ACLM Colleague,

This will be my final ACLM Notes from the President newsletter and it's difficult to believe, but here we are in 2012! 2011 went by very quickly. By checking [www.aclm.org](http://www.aclm.org) right now, the upper right-hand corner of your screen will show all the details pertaining to our 2012 Annual Meeting in New Orleans at the newly restored Hyatt Regency. The 52nd Annual Conference of the ACLM offers CME and CLE educational credits and will take place from February 23 to February 26. You can review the program and register online now if you have not already done so. Many thanks to Program Chair **Francois M. Blaudeau, MD, JD, FCLM, FACHE** for putting together such a great group of speakers and topics and to **Bruce H. Seidberg, DDS, MScD, JD, FCLM, DABMM, DABE** for another great program of DDS - JDs.

Over the past year, I have recognized and thanked many of the people who make extraordinary efforts on behalf of the College. Your Board of Governors and Executive Committee, the great people at WJ Weiser & Associates (our management company), and all of the committee chairs and members all team up to contribute to the College and its membership. If you have not been an "active" member of the College, I urge you to join a committee or speak with any member of our leadership if you have constructive ideas on how to better the College and the field of legal medicine. Attending the February Annual Meeting will give you the opportunity to meet and interface with your legal medicine colleagues and leadership. Shortly after the meeting, newly installed President **Kent E. Harshbarger, MD, JD, FCLM** will designate the new committee chairs and members.

Many have asked me over the years what it takes to achieve a leadership position in the College. The answer is simple. ACLM, for the most part, follows a meritocracy model. If you attend the meetings and meaningfully contribute to the betterment of the College, you will most likely be asked to serve on a committee, get involved in an ACLM special project, or even serve as a chairperson or run for the Board. The best practice for advancing within the ACLM is putting aside personal agendas, focusing on the common interests of our colleagues to promote education in legal medicine, and enhancing the stature of legal medicine as a uniquely special area of study and scholarship.

Civility and good will are very important to all organizations and the ACLM is no exception. In an organization such as ours, there will never be universal agreement on social issues, political issues, or legal jurisprudence. However, all legitimate views should be respected and can be debated within the context of polite discourse.

At the New Orleans meeting, President-Elect **Kent E. Harshbarger, MD, JD, FCLM** will become president of the ACLM. Kent is a graduate of the Southern Illinois University MD JD Program and currently serves as chief coroner for Montgomery County in Ohio, which encompasses Dayton. Kent chaired the 2011 Annual Meeting and was the principal author for the book outlining and celebrating the 50-year history of the ACLM (with the initial assistance of Past-President **Melvin A. Shiffman, MD, JD, FCLM**). Kent will make a great president and we

should all commit to assist him as he leads the College in 2012 and early 2013.

**Victoria L. Green, MD, JD, MBA, FCLM** (Vicky) has done an extraordinary job as our Treasurer. At the annual meeting she will lead a special session which is designed to position the College to meet future challenges as the leading organization in the field of legal medicine. Vicky practices OB - GYN at Emory University in Atlanta and chaired the 2010 annual meeting in Orlando.

**Martin J. Stillman, MD, JD, FCLM** from Minneapolis will move from secretary to treasurer in New Orleans. Marty practices and teaches Internal Medicine at the University of Minnesota. He has done a tremendous job as the chair of our Credential and Membership Committee for many years and co-chaired the mid-year Chicago ACLM meeting in 2008 with BOG member **Christopher White, MD, JD, FCLM**.

**Dale H. Cowan, MD, JD, FCLM**, currently immediate past - president has had a long and distinguished career as a practicing physician, attorney and arbitrator. A graduate of Harvard University and Harvard Medical School, Dale currently serves as VP of Medical Operations at a hospital in the Cleveland area. Using his expertise as an oncologist, Dale chaired a mid-year meeting focusing on "Cancer and the Law." Thank you, Dale, for all of your efforts over many years on behalf of the Board and the Executive Committee.

**Sue O'Sullivan** has been a friend ever since we first met at the 2001 Annual Meeting in Atlanta. As our Executive Director from WJ Weiser & Associates, Sue is always looking out for the best interests of the College and our membership. Thanks, Sue, for all of your great advice and counsel to all of our Board and Executive Committee members over the years and for always being ready to help any member of the ACLM!

Special thanks to board members Bill Hinnant Jr., MD, JD, FCLM and Vicky A. Trompler, MD, JD, FCLM. These individuals devoted their time to assist the College in recent months. We are very appreciative of their contributions.

Finally, many thanks to my wife of 33 years, **Andrea Birnbaum**. Andrea, the mother of our four grown children, David, Adam, Daniel, and Jessica and grandmother of Henry, has put up with my second love, the ACLM, for all the years since I became a member around 1998. I thank her for all of her support over the years while I worked, sometimes long hours, with other members of the College. She has earned the right to be considered an honorary member of the ACLM!

*Other Announcements:*

All of us who were privileged to know and work with **Judy Gic Shelton, RN, CRNA, JD, FCLM, Editor Emeritus Legal Medicine Q&A**, were saddened to hear of her recent passing. Perhaps no one put it better than one of our past presidents.

This message comes from Past President **Bruce H. Seidberg, DDS, MScD, JD, FCLM, DABMM, DABE**: "With sadness, we've acknowledged the untimely passing of a dear colleague. Judy Gic Shelton passed away December 31, 2011, following a rapid health decline. My acquaintance with her began when I became a member of ACLM. I soon learned about her ability and knowledge as we worked together on several committees. She focused on having ACLM accept membership categories of health care providers who had the JD degree but not the MD degree, and helped develop their pathway to Fellowship. Judy was a RN/CRNA/JD. She practiced her professions admirably and served the College with distinction rising to the level of Fellow. She was a member of the Board of Governors for two terms, served on numerous committees, lectured at many of the annual meetings and was one of the first Diplomats of the ABMM. She was Editor of the ACLM publication Q&A for many years.

Although Judy was a feisty individual, I admired her ability to speak what was on her mind while dodging bullets from those who did not agree with her. If she had an opinion, she would let you know it. There may have been perceived confrontations with her at one time or another, but never was there a malicious intent on her part, and when it was over, friendship and respect for one another reigned. She loved ACLM and lived for the success of the College, where she met her love and married Past President Philip Shelton and enjoyed several years of happiness together before her untimely death. Our sincere sympathy is extended to Dr. Phil and their family. Judy had a lot of wisdom to offer. I will miss her and so will many others in the College."

**WILM COURSES** - Members of ACLM receive a **50% discount** for all WILM courses. **Marvin Firestone, MD, JD, FCLM (ACLM Past President)** and **Dan Tennenhouse, MD, JD, FCLM (ACLM Past Governor)** are offering legal medicine courses via the Western Institute of Legal Medicine (WILM), a non-profit corporation. The next WILM conference will be held March 2 - 6 near the San Francisco airport. The courses are approved for CME by ACLM, co-sponsored by ACLM and endorsed by ABLM/ABMM as board review courses. They are: Prescribing Practices and Management of Substance Abusing Patients (2 1/2 days) and Medical Record Keeping (2 days). Visit the WILM web site at [www.wilm-ed.org](http://www.wilm-ed.org).

Charles E. Rawlings, MD, JD, FCLM has recently been certified as a specialist in medical negligence by the American Board of Professional Liability Attorneys.

**Peter H. Rheinstein, MD, JD, MS, FCLM, FAFAP** is serving as chair of the American Board of Legal Medicine.

**Bruce H. Seidberg, DDS, MScD, JD, FCLM, DABMM, DABE** continues as chair of the American Board of Medical Malpractice.

**Robert W. Buckman, PhD, FCLM** ("Dr. Bob") serves as president of the ACLM Foundation. Contributions are always welcome!

Well, that's it. I hope to see all of you at the meeting coming up in New Orleans and I hope that all of you help to recruit new members to the College so that we continue our over fifty-year track record as the leading professional organization for MD - JDs, DDS - JDs, and all who are involved, interested and passionate about legal medicine.

Thanks for allowing me the privilege to serve and lead the American College of Legal Medicine this past year.  
Cordially,

Gary Birnbaum, MD, JD, FCLM  
President  
American College of Legal Medicine

## Register Today!

### ACLM 52nd Annual Meeting

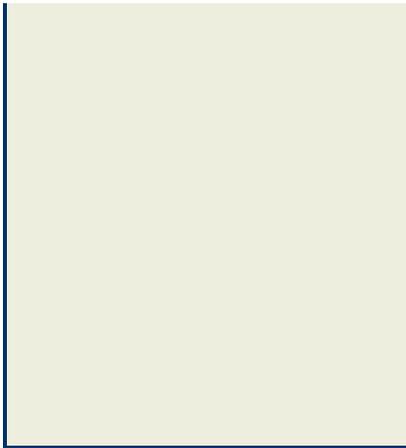
*"Law and Medicine Update"*

February 23 - 26, 2012

Hyatt Regency New Orleans

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