Notes from the President:
Kent E. Harshbarger, MD, JD, MBA, FCLM

Dear ACLM Colleague,

It is a privilege to author my first ACLM "Notes from the President" and to serve as your president for the next year. I would be remiss if I did not first thank Immediate Past President Gary Birnbaum, MD, JD, FCLM, for the outstanding leadership he provided to the College during the past year. I also need to thank Dale Cowan, MD, JD, FCLM, for his outstanding vision and dedication as he leaves the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors after many years of exemplary service to our organization. These individuals, with the rest of the leadership, have positioned the American College of Legal Medicine as the leading organization for those of us with MD or DDS and JD degrees, as well as respected other associates and members of the College who share an interest in and who are involved with legal medicine.

I also need to thank Francois Blaudeau, MD, JD, FCLM, for planning and coordinating such an outstanding Annual Meeting of the College at what I found to be a great venue in New Orleans. I also congratulate the members of the Executive Committee (EC) who were elected at the meeting to continue service and to Tom McLean, MD, JD, FCLM, who has joined the EC and who will serve as secretary this year.

Dr. McLean is also the program chairperson for the 2013 Annual Meeting that will be held in Las Vegas at the Planet Hollywood Hotel on February 21 - 24. Dr. McLean has already begun the planning process and has neared completion of the agenda. Jim Hubler, MD, JD, FCLM, has begun active planning for the 2014 meeting and I encourage all College members who have an interest in presenting at that meeting to contact him at hublereps@aol.com or send a statement to Sue O'Sullivan in the ACLM office at sueo@wjweiser.com including the topic one wishes to present, a short summary of the content of the presentation and a brief summary of one's background and qualifications in the area of the presentation. It is understood that not every proposal can be accepted, but there is a genuine desire to expand the roster of presenters and the scope of the educational program.

My initiatives for this year are simple as I outlined during my brief remarks at the Fellows meeting. Membership numbers have been our biggest concern for several years but, while that is certainly a concern, membership will come as a by product of success. Success happens only when we can add value to being a member or add value to the greater medical legal community by leveraging the only valuable asset we have: the members themselves.

To that end, I will be pushing the Website Committee to explore updating the platform and thereby adding more functionality. The goal is to be able to market better our intellectual property such as the recorded presentations from our annual meeting or other forms of member published CME/CLE; provide better social connectivity through Facebook and Twitter links; and provide a forum for member interaction and College-controlled database marketing for such purposes as inquiries from job search organizations, news media, education of legislative members or the community.

In reference to H.R. 1409 of 112th Congress: The Quality Health Care Coalition Act, on March 26th, 2012, in a special meeting which included a
quorum of the ACLM Fellows, the Fellows voted in favor of supporting the below RESOLUTION:

NOW THEREFORE RESOLVED, as exemplified by multiple other organizations; the ACLM likewise embraces antitrust reform, including HR 1409, as a top educational priority so as to devote reasonable financial and manpower resources to inform (using the means within its lawful scope to reach members, physicians, lawyers, and lawmakers) why HR 1409 would be in the public good, sound public policy, and that all these should understand and act accordingly that said HR 1409 would have the maximum likelihood to become a law that would improve patient care, strengthen the opportunity for fair negotiations, build professionally responsible behavior, and improve the opportunity for therapeutic physician patient relationships with fewer conflicts of interests.

Visit the ACLM website at www.aclm.org for complete materials regarding HR 1409.

The College has also begun to leverage our ability to act as an accrediting body for other organizations who are seeking CME accreditation through “joint sponsorship”. Our relationship with WJ Weiser & Associates has streamlined this process and we have begun to see and certify applications. In order to assure appropriate compliance with all requirements and guidelines, I have added a CME Committee for which I am acting as the chair reviewing the applications and the process. I have changed the Education Committee such that all known upcoming annual meeting chairpersons sit on the committee so they can gain an understanding of the new ACCME guidelines for which they will be responsible.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve as it is an honor. Should you have any questions, comments or suggestions, do not hesitate to contact me at aclmpresident@gmail.com or harshbargerke@mcohio.org.

Cordially,

Kent E. Harshbarger, MD, JD, MBA, FCLM
President
American College of Legal Medicine