



Grand Jurors' Journal

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Newsletter of the California Grand Jurors' Association August, 2005

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President's Message

By Jerry Lewi

President, California Grand Jurors' Association

Our 2005 Training Seminars have been completed. This program, under the leadership of the Training Committee and Chair Sherry Chesny continues to grow in quality and quantity. I am personally pleased to be one of the trainers.

Plans are firming up for our annual conference to be held in Burbank on October 27-28th. Conference Chair Andy Bliss and his deputy, Audrey Lynberg have lined up outstanding speakers and we are allowing time for our traditional Open Forum and a session on improving Chapter relations. The conference is the best opportunity to meet with fellow members to exchange views.

A word or two about the Open Forum: We have moved it back to an earlier time during the conference as experience has shown this is more effect. The purpose of this session is for current and former Grand Jurors to share experiences or ask for advice on matters of concern. This is not the session to ask questions or offer comments on the workings of the Association. There will be an opportunity for that dialogue in a Question and Answer period after the annual report to the membership.

In the last issue, member Clarence Dilts expressed concerns about some Board actions. I did not have the opportunity to answer his concerns in that issue, so will use this message to respond. The fact that there are disagreements among Board members does not mean that the Board is totally dysfunctional. In fact, a little disagreement can be healthy. We are close to completing our new bylaws. We have had discussions how to improve our functioning, including an unprecedented mid-year face to face meeting of the Board. I continue to focus on the important work of the organization such as training and educating the public about the California Grand Jury system. To that end, nominations for our Excellence in Reporting awards have been accepted. This revitalized activity is a valuable tool in spreading the word and your help has been appreciated. Recipients of the 2005 Excellence in Reporting awards will be announced at the Annual Conference on October 28th.

I also will continue my pledge to meet with all chapters during my term. Thanks to those chapters I haven't visited yet for their patience.

Former Grand Juror celebrates his 95th birthday

Margaret Tucker, Vice President of the Los Angeles Chapter hosted a surprise 95th birthday luncheon for Walter Lowenstein.

Lowenstein was born on June 26, 1910. He served on the 1999-2000 Los Angeles Grand Jury. He may be the oldest living former Grand Juror but it is important to note that he served as a Grand Juror when he was 90 years old!

Twelve (12) former grand jurors and eight (8) guests enjoyed a nice lunch at the Jyokamachi Restaurant. Uncle Walter, as every one calls him, blew out candles and all sung "Happy Birthday Uncle Walter."

Lowenstein received birthday greetings from President Bush, Governor Schwarzenegger,

Congresswomen Maxine Walters and Diane Watson, Councilman Tom Le Bonge, and others.

On behalf of CGJA I would like to wish Happy belated Birthday "Uncle Walter."

Summary of Board Actions

The CGJA Board of Directors took the following actions at the May 16, 2005, face to face, regular Board meeting in Vacaville.

Recognized Nevada County Chapter.

Ratified the President's appointment of Director Mattea to serve as Vice President.

Reviewed draft bylaws starting at the beginning and go through section-by-section. Upon completion the motion to send the draft bylaws with changes, to legal counsel, Keith McBride, passed by voice vote.

A motion to authorize payment of registration and travel expenses for up to 4 Directors to attend the California Association for Nonprofits (CAN) seminar passed by voice vote.

Executive Session: A motion to send the letter with the change suggested by counsel via USPS, return receipt requested was passed by roll call vote.

Membership Chapter/ Relation

Michael Miller, Acting Chair

"Yes Virginia, there is a Santa" Actually, there are at least three of them. You all know of the outstanding job Clif and Joanne Poole currently do in keeping the Membership Committee on course, even though they were to retire much earlier in the year. But now Tom Hansen will take control of the computer side of Membership, saving your CGJA the cost of hiring an outside agency to keep its records. Having computer skills today is like years ago when there was one kid on the block who owned a bat and ball, he was indispensable.

President Lewi will be in the Bay Area in mid-September to oversee the Membership record change from the Pooles' to Tom Hansen, thus assuring the continuity and security of all CGJA records. Regretfully Richard Ruth, our Chapter Relations Chair has elected not to retain that position. We thank him for all the work he has done in establishing new Chapters for your CGJA. They say "you can never be too thin or too rich," well our Committee feels we can never have too many members, so please go out and recruit some new blood for your CGJA.

Operations

Les Daye, Chair

"First registration announcement" has been mailed to members and others for the 24th annual conference on October 27-28, 2005 at the Burbank Hilton. Andrew Bliss, CGJA Director, and Chair of the conference planning committee, along with the local volunteers, have met recently to finalize the conference program. Plan now to attend on October 27 from 9:00 AM - 9:00 PM and October 28 from 9:00 AM - Noon. Conference Registration form and an updated Conference Program is included in this Journal. Further information can also be obtained at the CGJA website www.cgja.org.

The CGJA Operations Committee extends its warmest thanks to Grand Jurors' Journal Editor,

Ourania Riddle, for her extraordinary effort to get this issue compiled and to the printer in a timely manner.

While most Final Reports from 2004-2005 grand juries have been published, the responses to findings and recommendations await action in the next forty-five days. Current grand juries are devoting a significant amount of time and effort to lead the continuity aspect of seeking ways to make a difference in the pursuit of good local governance.

The CGJA remains an active educational resource. Please make use of your association membership by seeking out available reference materials and conference opportunities.

One last note, our association lost a devoted member and friend recently. Russell Kiessig, a stalwart of dedication as a human being, family man and caring CGJA volunteer will always be remembered in our thoughts.

Training

Sherry Chesny Chair

No report was submitted by the Training Committee.

Nevada County Chapter

By Director Diane Masini

Director Diane Masini reported that Richard Hanson resigned as president of the Nevada County Chapter of CGJA. The Chapter elected a new president on July 7, 2005. The new president is Marcia Bennett <marcia.bennett@fs.fed.us>

The Grand Jury turned their Public Relations Committee responsibilities over to the chapter, as Marcia was the chairperson of the PR Committee the past 2 years. Nevada Chapter will be doing the jury's PR and the chapter is very excited about this.

San Francisco Chapter

By Serena Bardell, Outreach chair

Those of us who are active members of the SF Chapter were delighted to have several sitting jurors (counting the hours till their term ended at midnight) join us for our annual meeting. They all had that lovely afterglow from a successful term and some marvelous press coverage of their seven varied reports.

The outgoing chapter president gave an overview of the year's accomplishments; each committee chair reported; and the outgoing foreperson gave insight into the work her jury had performed. I spoke both about the hard-working Outreach Committee I chair, which sends speakers out into the community to spread the word about the value of the grand jury and to seek volunteers, and, changing hats, about CGJA's busy schedule of jury-strengthening activities.

The featured speaker was Aaron Peskin, who is both president of the SF Board of Supervisors and chair of a committee he set up on audits and oversight (dedicated to controller reports, GJ reports, and similar matters).

He spoke with what struck this listener as extraordinary frankness and lack of self-importance about the most effective ways for juries to succeed in their mission from his perspective as an elected city and country official.

I think we were all awed at his comments that the current jury's report on the Ethics Commission was sufficiently persuasive and well documented to cause him to alter his previously held view and contributed to plans to increase that commission's limited budget. He was also quite forthcoming on the kinds of investigations most and least likely to cause changes in local government.

We San Franciscans involved with the grand jury feel as if we are living in a golden moment, with both a mayor and a board president obviously interested enough to actually read reports and act on them. We are also making progress in establishing good communications with those SF Chronicle journalists who usually cover the jury. I've had the good fortune to have two lengthy conversations with the paper's "Reader Representative," who in his reporter days used to cover East Bay juries and remains interested in the role of the grand jury in promoting good government.

In other news, this year's officers are Jack McNulty, president; Carolyn Koster, VP; Bill Bowen, secretary; and Arlene Singer, treasurer.

Solano Chapter

Wanda Kiger-Tucker, President

I would like to thank the faithful volunteers (and you know who you are!) that made it possible for our chapter to host the Walnut Creek training seminar last month. Without you, we couldn't exist nor be effective for what we do. I will say it again, we are a small chapter but composed of dependable and faithful servers who see a vision for the work of the Grand Jury system. I would also like to publicly thank our exiting Grand Jury under the leadership of foreperson Cathy Houck for the fine work they did and for the very nicely done final report. I sincerely hope to see some of you carrying on the concept and vision of the Grand Jury and getting involved in our local chapter.

Thanks again.

Grand jury seeking tips from public

By Rachel Gordon (SF Chronicle)

The San Francisco civil grand jury, which investigates allegations of waste, inefficiencies, and wrongdoing in local government, is seeking ideas from the public on where to focus over the next year. The civil grand jury, a volunteer panel of 19 city residents overseen by the Superior Court, expects to complete six investigations during the 2005-06 term that started last month.

Suggestions can be faxed or mailed to San Francisco Civil Grand Jury. Proposals also can be also submitted online. The web address is www.sfgov.org/site/courts_page.asp?id=3680.

Excellence In Reporting

By Director Earl Heal

Recipients of the 2005 Excellence in Reporting Awards will be announced at the Annual Conference on October 28, 2005. The awards are presented for two categories of excellence toward improving local government—Grand Jury and News Media.

The Grand Jury Award is judged according to citizen impact, duration of the problem, difficulty of investigation, quality of the written report, public and media support gained, and actual change implemented. Because actual change created requires time for verification, this selection

tends toward investigations one or two years old that have been proved by subsequent reporting.

The News Media Award is judged on either of two elements -- increased public awareness of the grand jury institution or increased awareness in the community of a grand jury investigation so that the community benefited in the investigation. Criterion evaluated include apparent media research, quantity and quality of the reporting, and apparent citizen impact. Submissions may be independent of grand jury participation or in conjunction with specific grand jury investigative reports.

Many successful watchdog reports are unknown beyond the immediate community and encourages speculation that grand juries are ineffective. To emphasize the importance of grand juries to the State, investigative final reports that have led to particularly significant improvements may be presented as "Success Stories" to the conferees during the Excellence in Reporting Award program. Any chapter or juror believing that they have a report that would be of special interest to the Conference membership is encouraged to contact Earl Heal at 707-446-1353.

Revision Of Grand Jurors' Manual Committee (Ad Hoc) Report

The Manual Revision Committee is completing the work of creating a new generic manual for distribution each county grand jury. This Manual will replace the Syllabus, first distributed in 1997, to aid counties in preparing their own specific rules of procedure as required by Penal Code 916. Because all counties identified in the 2004 CGJA Survey indicated that they current have a rules of procedure handbook, this manual is written in a succinct format to serve as a checklist as the juries annually update their own handbook. Specific references are made to Penal Code requirements. Included as well as suggestions based on experiences of grand juries throughout the State. Not forgotten is the requirement that each jury is responsible for preparing their own rules as they determine the best way to meet their responsibilities.

The cost of printing and distributing the Manual to each county grand jury will be covered by the Price Family Charitable Fund. Mr. Sol Price's expressed purpose is to contribute to the education and training of grand jurors' state wide through a written handbook or manual.

The CGJA Manual Revision Committee includes Ray Hoffman and Diane Masini of Nevada County, Russell Fury of San Diego County, Dian Picone of San Benito County, and Earl Heal of Solano County. Serena Bardell of San Francisco County contributed significantly by professionally editing the text.

Thank you

Thank you Serena Bardell, Dwight Brown, Peter Cresci, Jean Hall, Donna Haar, and Achiel Wanket for your donations totaling \$380.00.

Grand jury is one of county's best-kept secrets

Fresno Bee

By Morton G. Rosenstein

Composed of 19 citizen volunteers, the grand jury performs a vital service each year that escapes the attention of most people in the county. Their impression of grand juries is

unfortunately based on what is seen in television police drama depiction of the criminal function of hearing cases and bringing indictments.

While this is true in a few instances, most of the grand juries in California's 58 counties, including Fresno County, act in a civil oversight capacity. They review and investigate the governmental functions of each jurisdiction in their counties, a time intensive and energy-consuming task.

The grand jury frequently considers issues that make headlines and the 6 o'clock news, however its views and conclusions are not included in these media reports. Many changes come about, in an unsung fashion, in response to its investigations and interviews. This process creates an awareness of problems and leads to agencies taking corrective action. It truly acts as the "watchdog" of local government and is essential to good government.

Subpoena power

The grand jury is appointed by the superior court judges of the county. The presiding judge swears in the panel, administers the oath and describes the duties and responsibilities to the jury. The jury's final report is presented to the presiding judge. The county counsel and the District Attorney's Office provide legal advice and assistance to the jury. The grand jury has subpoena power for individuals and records. Applications to serve can be made by any citizen of the county. The superior court judges and members of the current jury can also make nominations. The nominees are interviewed by the judges. The ultimate panel is chosen randomly. Terms are for one year, but a second term can be served. Only two consecutive years are allowed.

The grand jury operates under the Penal Code of California, which provides the breadth and limitations of its activities, which include oversight of county government, cities in the county, school boards, special districts, law enforcement, jails and juvenile detention facilities.

In the course of their investigations, jurors visit many facilities and interview witnesses to obtain direct, factual information. All discussions, interviews, and proceedings are strictly confidential, and all witnesses are provided with an admonishment that explains their responsibility in maintaining confidentiality.

The grand jury performs and speaks as a single entity. No juror can act independently. Six committees carry out day-to-day work. Their investigations, conclusions, and recommendations must be endorsed by a mandated supermajority of 12 of the 19 jurors.

Each year's jury is autonomous in deciding what to investigate. Subjects arise from press reports, citizen complaints or whistle blowers. Complaints must be written and signed on a form that's available or by letter.

The entire year's work culminates with the final report, the only public voice of the panel. Committee reports and recommendations that make up the report must be approved by the supermajority to be included. No minority reports are allowed.

In keeping with the requirements for strict confidentiality, nothing is directly attributed to any identifiable individual.

After receiving final approval from the presiding judge, the report is released as a public document available to anyone. The governmental bodies addressed in the report must respond within 90 days, and these responses are likewise compiled and published. The recommendations must be responded to by agreement and explanation of compliance, or disagreement and the reasons for such. Compliance with the recommendations is not required.

Information channels

A major frustration for the grand jury, however, is the very limited distribution of the final report because the public is rarely made aware of its release.

Only the governmental departments involved are provided with copies. The report is also placed on the county Web page; however, this is difficult to find and is only accessible to people with computers and the knowledge of using the Web. Wider distribution to the general public by multiple media sources is essential for the grand jury to be more effective in carrying out its mission.

While the grand jury's task may be arduous, sometimes thankless, and unrecognized, it is well worth the time and effort of the citizens involved. The opportunity to learn about the workings of our government is an invaluable experience, which all prior jurors will attest to.

A survey was sent to 74 candidates in contested races who had to pay a statement fee. About 40 of the candidates responded, and 38 percent of those 40 said the fee was an extreme hardship, while 81 percent said it either was extreme or above average.

Grand Jury Finds Registrar Of Voters Overcharged Candidates

Recommending organization review fee policy for future school board races

By Wes Bowers

The Santa Clara County Civil Grand Jury has released a report stating that the county's Registrar of Voters overcharged November 2004 school board candidates more than \$650 on average to place a 200-word statement on the ballot. The grand jury has recommended the organization look at a different system for setting fees.

The report said the grand jury found that a majority of school board candidates in the Nov. 2 election found the fee to place a written statement of qualifications on the sample ballot to be either a disincentive or a financial hardship.

The grand jury also found that candidates from school districts with some of the lowest incomes in the county usually had to pay the highest fees, and candidates who did not file written statements because of the high cost were perceived by voters in a less favorable light than candidates who did. East Side Union High School District candidates were hit with the largest filing fee: \$6,870, more than \$3,000 of which was later refunded.

According to the Registrar of Voters, the fee to file a written statement had increased due to federal requirements to print ballots in as many as five different languages. Currently, the Registrar of Voters prints ballots in English, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Spanish.

Milpitas Unified School District Board of Education member Barbara Santos said that when she

saw the fees the Registrar of Voters was asking, she was shocked.

For the Nov. 2 election, there were more than 850,000 eligible voters in the county, according to the grand jury report. Due to the configuration of precincts, ballot rotation requirements, the number of national, state, county, city, school board and special district contests and the minority populations in various areas, the Registrar of Voters prepared 207 ballot types resulting in 651 different sample ballot variations.

According to the report, every sample ballot in the county was printed in one other language besides English that was either requested by the voter or assumed to be the native language of that area of the population.

Due to the county's budget shortfall, the Board of Supervisors required the registrar to recoup all costs associated with printing the candidates' statements on the sample ballot, and that in turn resulted in the registrar implementing the statement fee.

The registrar determines the statement fee by analyzing typesetting, translating, handling and printing costs, along with the number of sample ballots needed in a candidate's school district. These are generally up-front charges that must be paid by the candidate at the time of filing.

In Milpitas Unified, candidates were initially charged \$1,790 for a 200-word statement. After the election, candidates may receive either a partial rebate or an additional charge when the registrar's expenses are finalized. However, the amount of any refund is not determined or rebated until six months after the statement fee deadline.

To determine their findings, the grand jury sent a survey to 74 candidates in contested races who had to pay a statement fee. About 40 of the candidates responded, and 38 percent of those 40 said the fee was an extreme hardship, while 81 percent said it either was extreme or above average. Some candidates in the survey said an alternative would be to have the school district either pay or share the cost. But the registrar argues that districts already pay an election fee that ranges from \$1 to \$10 per voter.

Another solution suggested was to impose a flat fee of \$500 and to recoup any revenue loss through other creative means, as is done in San Francisco County. But according to the grand jury report, the registrar is actively looking into possibly reducing the costs caused by multiple languages.

Beginning in the fall, the official title of the sample ballot will be changed to "Voter Language Preference Sample Ballot and Voter Information Pamphlet." At that point, all voting materials will be sent out in English only, to every voter. Then, this will be followed with a mailing in the voter's language of preference if it is requested.

CGJA 24th Annual Conference News

Andrew Bliss and his 2005 Annual Conference team are hard at work in this year's conference in Burbank on October 27-28, 2005. Conference registration forms have been mailed to CGJA members and supporters. However, included in this Journal you will find an updated Conference program and a Conference Registration form for those procrastinators who have not registered yet. We recommend early sign ups for special hotel room rates. You don't want to miss this

conference. Director Bliss is promising an exciting program with celebrity speakers.

Biography Of Thomas Mesereau Jr, Michael Jackson's Attorney

Thomas A. Mesereau, Jr. specializes in criminal defense (state and federal court) and civil trials. He is a partner with the firm of Collins, Mesereau, Reddock & Yu, LLP in Los Angeles.

Tom was educated at Harvard University, The London School of Economics and The University of California's Hastings College of Law. He appears often on national and local Los Angeles television and radio stations and lectures on various topics, including criminal law, civil rights and trial strategy.

Mr. Mesereau has served as counsel in many high-profile trials in Los Angeles County, as well as other parts of the United States. A noted defender of the underprivileged, Mr. Mesereau has received numerous awards from cities and churches for his contributions. He has been named the "Criminal Defense Lawyer of the Year" by the Century City Bar Association, Los Angeles, and has been listed as one of the "One Hundred Most Influential Attorneys in California" by the Los Angeles Daily Journal. Los Angeles Magazine has named Mr. Mesereau one of California's "Super Lawyers."

In a one-year period, Mr. Mesereau obtained seven (7) acquittals and two (2) hung juries in cases involving murder, drive-by shootings, robbery, assault and illegal weapon possession.

Mr. Mesereau has obtained numerous acquittals in criminal jury trials involving murder, the death penalty, securities fraud, health care fraud, business fraud, sex crimes (rape, child molestation, etc.), conspiracy, drugs, assaults, three strikes, gang violence, weapons violations and other alleged crimes. He has successfully defended and prosecuted civil cases through trial involving business fraud, legal malpractice, sexual harassment, real estate fraud and personal injury. Mr. Mesereau has successfully defended licensed professionals, including physicians and attorneys, in administrative licensure proceedings.

Thomas Mesereau currently defended music legend Michael Jackson, who was acquitted of conspiracy and child molestation charges.

Mr. Mesereau also defended actor Robert Blake against charges that Mr. Blake murdered his wife. However, "irreconcilable differences" with Mr. Blake led to Mr. Mesereau's withdrawal from this case.

Thomas Mesereau has received many awards for his contributions to the criminal justice system and to minority communities. Once a year, Mr. Mesereau travels to Alabama to defend a death penalty trial without charging any legal fees.

Mr. Mesereau is a co-sponsor and active participant in the free legal clinic at First African Methodist Episcopal Church, Los Angeles. Two Sunday mornings a month, Tom and other volunteer lawyers donate their time and expertise to poor people who cannot afford a lawyer. Tom also participates and donates his time to the "Save Our Sons" organization at Crenshaw United Methodist Church, Los Angeles. This organization is run by mothers whose sons are incarcerated and who need advice on various legal issues. Mr. Mesereau serves on the advisory board and donates his time to "n-Action," a non-profit organization devoted to assisting women and their children with making a positive re-entry into society following incarceration.

Thomas Mesereau has marched with and supports the “Mothers of Watts, Los Angeles” and their children in opposition to gang violence and crime. He also assists and supports various organizations who seek to reform our laws so that they will be more equitable.

Biography of Police Chief Frank J. Wills

Frank Wills was appointed Chief of Police for the City of West Covina on November 30, 1998. He is the tenth Chief in the Department’s history and the first Chief in over 40 years selected from outside the Department.

After graduating first in his class from the Rio Hondo Police Academy in 1978, Chief Wills spent fifteen years with the Pasadena Police Department before being appointed to the position of Chief of Police for the City of San Marino in 1993. He is a proponent of assertive, high intensity policing strategies. In San Marino, he implemented a broad array of proactive policing programs resulting in the lowest crime rate since 1964 and a reduction in gangs and gang related problems.

In 1997, the Peace Officers Shrine Club of Los Angeles named Chief Wills “Los Angeles County Law Enforcement Executive of the Year.” He was the first police executive from a city with a population of under 80,000 ever to receive this award.

He serves on the Board of Directors for several community organizations and actively participates in a host of civic activities. In 1995, he was named “San Marino Citizen of the Year” – the first time in San Marino history that the award was presented to a city employee or a person living outside of the city limits. That same year, he also received the PTA Council of San Marino’s “Golden Oaks Service Award” – the highest honor awarded for service to San Marion Schools.

While serving as West Covina’s Chief of Police, he has successfully combined effective community policing programs with a proactive policing philosophy that fosters a “no-nonsense” approach to fighting crime. Chief Wills has implemented the popular Community Service Area Policing Program in West Covina, brought the Gang Resistance Education Program (GREAT) to the public schools, and created a parolee-monitoring program for the community. Violent crime has decreased for three consecutive years in West Covina.

The West Covina Police Department’s outstanding Explorer Program has received an array of awards over the past three years.

West Covina’s new Chief holds a Masters Degree in Public Administration from Cal State Long Beach and a second Masters Degree in Management from Cal Poly, Pomona. He is a Magna Cum Laude graduate of Cal State University, Fresno where he majored in both Public Administration and Economics.

Thoughts of the Training Seminar in Visalia (Tulare County)

By Jeanne Forbes, President Tulare County Grand Jurors’ Association

California Grand Jurors' Training Seminar

Who...Training teams from the state organization

What...Training of Grand Jurors' from around the State. I believe there were sixteen or so Counties represented.

Where... The Convention Center in Visalia California

When...August 8 and 9, 2005

Why...This is a concerted effort to train as many incoming Grand Jurors' as possible in the Art, Intricacies and most importantly the Law as it regards Grand Juries.

Okay...that all said let me add my own thoughts on the training seminar this year.

We had 77 grand jurors signed up to attend the training...to my knowledge all but 3 came. This was obvious because we had their nametags left on the registration desk. We are sorry they didn't come. We realize it's a long drive...but we did have Jurors from both San Diego County and Imperial County...thank you for coming.

As I am sure you are all aware Tulare County no longer subscribes to the State association. We are not a chapter of CGJA. That's sad...because it was a feeling of being ignored that led us to this determination. It took a lot of discussion of all the pro's and con's, the outcome being whether we go...or whether we stay, and obviously we decided that what we wanted to accomplish in our County, for our people, was "cross ways" to the State Organization.

I personally understand that this is a Professional Organization, stiff upper lip, buttoned down collar and all that "rot." But you see... we live in a large (geographical) smaller population wise? County...maybe not quite "goat ropers" anymore, but then...not so far removed either. We like to shake hands and say "Howdy, how're the wife and kids" ya know?

In the mean time...back at the fort! This certainly did not mean that we would not help in any possible way to aid in the training and enlightenment of future juries. It is our fervent wish that all Californians (and any one else who might be interested) know about... and understand the Grand Jury system as practiced in our state. Sorry if I seem to be preaching to the choir...but we are serious here in "Podunc" California.

It was my pleasure to be the timer in four workshops...the first was a law workshop that was, in my humble opinion, exemplar. It was hosted by the foreman of last year's Orange County Grand Jury Mr. Lou Aver who obviously had no problem "preaching to the choir"...I found every thing he had to say very interesting. Especially in dealing with his Judge and showing you how it is done...diplomatically, if you will.

Next I sat in on a workshop on Special Districts. I will confess that I personally find the whole idea of Special Districts reprehensible. I certainly do not mean to demean the young man who spoke. I understand that public speaking can be daunting and he will learn. Was it the occasion (Grand Jury Training) or the place, (Visalia?) which prompted the powers that be to send him? I certainly hope it wasn't us but that leaves only his subject matter that could be the cause of his distress...that he will improve...I am certain...and we wish him Gods speed. Special Districts is a serious subject here in our County as we have the dubious distinction of having more special districts then any other County in the State of California.

I did sit in on two other workshops and they were both very good. I have spoken to my other

timers and their conclusions are much the same as mine. As far as we are concerned the mere fact that “they came, they taught” and they obviously love this thing called The Grand Jury as much as we do and continue to labor in the fields of educating and disseminating to incoming jurors where ever possible.

So to... Jack Zepp... we say “as usual a grand showing.”

To Jerry Lewi... all we can do is apologize for our short comings that you so generously pointed out during your classes.

To Mike Miller... thank you... thank you. Your smile and desire to help were as usual “at the right time and the right place”

Bob Geiss...I didn't get to sit in on one of your workshops...in fact I don't have any idea what it is you teach...but thank you for coming.

I know I've missed many of you...for this I am sorry...but, the problem is not entirely ours. Maybe next year we can have a few “howdy's and how are ya's.” Remember, we, who live in Tulare County, are for the most part pretty laid back and tend to lean towards the friendly side.

So, thank you all for coming...we really feel that we all serve a higher purpose through these efforts...so... some of us...will see some of you...in “Greater downtown Burbank.”

A personal lament from a frustrated friend.

As of the election in October Linda Baker will no longer serve with us in our fields of endeavor. To say that I really hate this is putting it mildly.

Linda has been a mainstay of the Association for low these many years (how many? ahh... ladies don't tell)

Bright and fiery and not afraid to speak the truth. I am left to wonder if all the horrible strife we are in has helped contribute to her decision. I will sorely miss her... As will all of you, even if you don't realize it yet. Enough said.