

February is Grand Jury Awareness Month

By Jerry Lewi, Editor

Traditionally, February is a kick-off month in most counties for recruiting volunteers for the next grand jury. You will find in this issue several articles about how this is being supported by several of our chapters and other CGJA activities.

By the time you receive this issue, we anticipate Governor Schwarzenegger will have issued a proclamation declaring February as Grand Jury Awareness month throughout the state. This proclamation and our collective efforts are designed to make all Californians aware of the value of grand juries and, in turn, encourage many qualified persons to apply for the valuable and rewarding service.

It is CGJA's position and a key in our mission statement that we first make citizens aware of the importance of grand juries so they may rely on that work and then to encourage more volunteers.

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Grand Jurors' Journal

President's Message

By Tony Noce

Greetings,

This issue of the Journal is focused on both the month of February being Grand Jury Awareness Month and CGJA Goals for the year 2010. You will learn more about the goals as you read through the Journal. The message I want to send is that the Board recently created a History Ad Hoc Committee. Cicero said a long time ago, "Not to know what has been transacted in former times is to be always a child. If no use is made of the labors of past ages, the world must remain always in the infancy of knowledge."



Let's look at our past and see if it really is a light into the future by reviewing what the goals of past CGJA Presidents have been.

1997 Message from CGJA 8th President Dan Taranto, "I wish every grand juror would join our unique group to help advance the interests of the civil watchdog jury, particularly those of you out there that fall into the "doer" category."

Do we have "doers" in the CGJA organization? Yes. Could we use more "doers"? Yes. Please consider becoming more active in the CGJA as a personal goal this year.

1999 Message from CGJA 9th President Les Daye, "Let me thank all members who have submitted materials of interest for the quarterly Grand Jurors Journal. Your continued communication and assistance in the goals and objectives of the association is appreciated."

Have we continued to fill this need? Yes, as is evident in this issue. Do we need continuing support in the future? Most definitely. Please consider contributing to a future issue as a member, a chapter, an association, or simply a former grand juror.

2002 Message from CGJA 10th President Jack Zepp, "I encourage you to make a generous tax deductible donation to your organization."

Do we still need generous contributions to move forward? Yes we do. Please seriously consider a donation to the CGJA this year.

2004 Message from CGJA 11th President Elwood Moger, "No longer is CGJA a small group of activists but an expanding organization with an increasing number of members actively serving in a diversity of efforts in support of California's 58 Grand Juries."

Are we still working to increase our membership? Yes we are. We have a great new program that will be unveiled in the near future related to new grand jurors attending our many training sessions this year. Have you renewed your membership and/or considered a multi-year or lifetime membership?

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If, as a grand jury or a CGJA member or chapter you would like to increase your efforts, here is a summary of activities you can engage in.

- Persuade the County Board of Supervisors and any cities in your county to proclaim Grand Jury Awareness Month in the county.
- Speak to the Board of Supervisors and City Council during public comments at their regular meeting to publicize this activity.
- Issue press releases on the value of grand jury efforts in your county to (a) make the public more aware of grand juries and (b) help interest citizens to volunteer for this service. Incorporate successful reports – perhaps we can help you find examples in your county.
- Visit any local civic organization to make short presentations. We have available several versions in Power Point that can be helpful. Create a speakers' bureau to carry this out.
- Encourage people to visit their own county grand jury website as well as the CGJA website, www.cgja.org, to learn more about grand juries.

We look forward to hearing from anyone other efforts and ideas.



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2006 Message from CGJA 12th President Jerry Lewi, "In my view, one of the most important goals we have adopted is to find a way to document the good work of California Grand Juries."

Have we made progress towards this goal? Yes we have. We continue to publish exceptional grand jury final reports under our ongoing Grand Jury Achievement program. Have you contributed a local grand jury final report to this program?

2007 Message from CGJA 13th President Judi Lazenby, "Our greatest wish is for future administrations to be able to stand firmly on our work and continue to build an organization that is a beacon of help to grand juries, local chapters, and independent associations."

Has former President Lazenby's goal been reached? Yes it has. The CGJA presently does stand on a firm foundation in every area with

the State acknowledging our grand juries, an increase in Chapters, an expanded Training program, a sound financial accounting, recording and filing system, a very active membership program and a better communications network utilizing the internet. These are a few of our beacons that are shining bright.

2009 Message from CGJA 14th President Tony Noce, "All of us working together can make our dreams become reality."

Are we working together? Yes we are. We have twenty committees with over one hundred committee members of which over fifty percent of the members are at-large members. Have you volunteered your services to a committee?

In Conclusion:

Can we learn from the Past? Most definitely as has been identified above. Are we excited about our new History Ad Hoc Committee? Yes we are.

ATTENTION CALIFORNIA'S 58 COUNTIES
HAS YOUR GRAND JURY
WRITTEN A REPORT IN THE PAST 3 YEARS
THAT SHOULD BE SUBMITTED FOR A
EIR AWARD?



CGJA is looking for Grand Jury reports and news articles to be considered for an EIR 2010 award. Nominations can be submitted by any current or past grand juror to:
Excellence in Reporting Working Group
Submit before August 15, 2010

Annual Excellence in Reporting Awards Nomination Form is posted on the website at: www.cgja.org

Excellence in Reporting *By Sarah Simpson, EIR Committee Chair (Napa)*

The *Excellence in Reporting Award* (EIR) is presented annually by the CGJA. Its purpose is to recognize quality in Grand Jury reports as well as in those released by news media. This award is presented at the annual CGJA conference to recognize and increase public awareness of exceptional reporting in both categories.

Current or past Grand Juries are eligible to receive the Grand Jury Award. Criteria considered are citizen impact, duration of the problem addressed, formidability of investigation, quality of writing and editing, degree of public support achieved, and extent to which recommendations were implemented.

The News Media Award, pre-

sented to print or electronic media, is judged on whether there is an increased public awareness of the Grand Jury system or an increased consciousness of the investigation covered by the report within the community. Entries may be submitted in conjunction with a specific Grand Jury report or independently.

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Grand Juries and present or past Grand Jury members are encouraged to submit the best of their investigation reports and news articles for consideration by the Excellence in Reporting Working Group. **The application form, California Grand Jurors' Association Annual Excellence in Reporting Awards Nomination Form, is posted on the CGJA website.** Submissions of current and past reports (going back three years) for the EIR Awards must be made by August 15, 2010. Further information about these awards can be obtained from Sarah Simpson at sarah.simpson@comcast.net.

Important
DATE!

Mark your Calendar!

The dates for the Annual Conference in San Diego are now confirmed as October 21-22, 2010

Please watch our website and future issues for more information

CGJA INVITED TO SPEAK TO YOLO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT

By Ron Miguel (San Francisco)

Ed Note: Grand Jurors are invited to call this article to their court personnel's attention to see if there is any interest in having a similar presentation within their county.

Last September the CGJA Training Committee was contacted by Beverly Snow, the Human Resources Manager for the Yolo County Superior Court, after one of her staff members who had attended our training seminar in Sacramento told her about the informative presentations she had observed there. Ms. Snow asked if any of our training staff might be willing to participate in their annual staff training sessions during the last two weeks of December. This was the first such request CGJA has received from a Superior Court jurisdiction. The court is 'dark' those weeks and they use the time to schedule two training days for their staff of about 106 employees – half one week and the remainder the following week.

Because of my experience with CGJA training materials and my proximity to Yolo County I was asked to prepare the presentation. Their request was for a history and overview of the Grand Jury System in California and allotted me three hours including Q&A. Although members of our association have been making presentations to various groups for many years, these usually fall into the 'juror recruitment' category and they rarely exceed an hour.

The Yolo County Grand Juries regularly attend our Sacramento Seminar and the court is familiar with our usual course material – but this was to be a much more in depth and concentrated presentation. They have a very good website which gave me some background and a review of the Final Reports

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Public Relations Committee Report By Jerry Lewi, Chair

The Public Relations Committee has adopted several new goals for 2010. They are in priority order: Completing a new recruiting video in conjunction with our Humboldt Chapter, updating our website, creating posters to promote grand jury service and publishing a book about the California Grand Jury system. Some of these need a little explanation: Updating our website is aimed at improving the navigation through the site to make it easier for all visitors to find the information they are seeking. The new book is intended as a short book that will fundamentally answer the question posed to me recently by a reporter, "Why should the average Californian care about the grand jury?" We think all new grand jurors will want a copy of this book that will be attractively priced to explain to their friends and relatives why they have signed up for this duty.



These new goals are in addition to our ongoing activities including the *Grand Jurors' Journal*, promoting *Osher Lifelong Learning Institute* courses and the *Grand Jury Achievement Report*. With respect to the latter, we have been disappointed by the lack of new candidate grand jury reports and have decided on another approach to assist in this project. It is as follows: Any member or grand jury who thinks they have a candidate, should contact me with some idea about why they believe a certain report would qualify. I will either take the call myself or refer it to one of my committee members and we will "interview" you to see if there is enough information to justify adding the report to our data base. If you believe you have a candidate, please follow these guidelines:

Call or email Jerry Lewi, 805-532-1321, cgjaprguy@roadrunner.com with the following information at hand: Date/County/Title of Report and what benefit to your county resulted. It would also be convenient to have the report in front of you when you make the call

We hope this new approach will generate many more candidate reports. Please visit our website, www.cgja.org, and click on the "Grand Jury Achievement" icon for more information.

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which they've issued in recent years. This Grand Jury is one which participates in both the Criminal and Civil aspects of Grand Jury work.

There is an excellent Grand Jury history on our own website and I was able to reference material that I've accumulated over the years - a great deal came directly from our Training Manual and generic Grand Jury Handbook. There was additional material supplied by Lew Avra, Jerry Lewi, Marsha Caranci, Diane Hoffman and others in my research. They also reviewed my drafts – both presentation slides and script, making valuable suggestions.

I outlined the presentation with History, Law, Process, and Product as the four 'chapters'. History started in England in 1066, moved to the Colonies, then to California, where I dealt with the basic changes since 1850. Law followed – again referencing the earlier English statutes, through the Accusation process, the Penal Code sections, and the requirements for working with their District Attorney on indictments. I led them through the formation of a Grand Jury, Internal Procedures Manual, committees, investigations, interviews, and then the writing and editorial process. There are about 40 slides in the presentation, and my 'script' is around 6,500 words. The script has many Yolo County specific references, but the slides are generic and could be used again for other presentations. I was able to reference some of their own Final Reports as examples of excellent work and very effective changes, and used examples from other Northern California counties.

The first session had about 45 in attendance and lasted around 2 3/4 hours. The staff filled out evaluation forms supplied by the Court and reported back to me a few days later.

Based on that feedback, I made some changes in emphasis for the second week's session which I shortened to just over 2 hours – a much more manageable timeframe. This second week had about 35 staff in attendance with one great addition. Judge David W. Reed, who will be the Yolo County Grand Jury Supervising Judge for 2010-2011, heard about the presentation and decided to attend. He was a great addition to the group. Evaluations from the second week were also very positive.



Membership Relations Committee

By Daniel Mufson, Ph.D., Chair

Introductory Membership Program: We recently reported on the chapter and association presidents meeting held in Sacramento where it was suggested that the CGJA consider offering introductory membership to sitting grand jurors in order to further introduce them to our activities. The MRC then drafted a policy proposal for the Board which was approved at their December meeting:

It is moved that the CGJA Board of Directors, in accordance with Article 4. [MEMBERS]; Section 1. of the By-laws, create an additional Class of Member titled "introductory" member. An introductory member is an individual who has been offered and accepted a complimentary membership valid during their term of Regular Grand Jury service, who has complied with the requirements for such complimentary membership as set forth by the Board of Directors and who is currently serving on an impaneled Regular Grand Jury for the first time in any of the 58 Counties. Such a member has no vote in CGJA matters but does have voice

at CGJA functions when recognized by the President or Chairperson."

The MRC has been working with PR and Training to draft procedures to implement this program. The Training Committee will provide application forms to all trainees attending our sessions and we will have a note on the web to alert others who might not have taken the training to apply. The MRC will send these introductory members the Journal in electronic form for the period of their GJ service and then invite their full membership.

And now a tale of two members, one a member for 8 years and the other who joined last January. The energizer bunny has re-joined the MRC: Owen Haxton was recently selected to fill a vacant position on the Board of directors and he volunteered to serve, yet again, on the MRC--he had chaired it several years ago. He then volunteered to draft the policy for the Board's approval. Because of his quality work and attitude, we asked him to be the Vice-Chair of the MRC. He accepted. Our only concern is why would anyone volunteer to serve on this committee twice?

And that other dynamo, Bonnie Kenk! Did you ever see anyone so organized or responsive? She maintains the membership list and can answer questions such as how many members pre-paid their dues and for what years; how many are left-handed and those who eat broccoli... She handles many details including the CGJA book keeping with professionalism. She has designed the application form for the introductory membership. Another innovation she is rolling out is to save the organization postage and printing costs by emailing out renewal notices to our members who have given us their email address. Hopefully we'll be able to collect more

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email addresses when the renewals come back and thereby save the organization even more funds. You can help to expedite the process by sending your email address now to parroted@cox.net. So, if you're due to renew this year, and we have your email address, keep an eye out for our renewal reminder in your inbox.

The members in Sonoma are off to a most impressive start as our newest Chapter--they're developing a great web page. Two additional groups are moving toward chapter status...

Chapter and Association News from around the state:

Humboldt County Chapter has selected officers for 2010. Suzi Fregeau, President; Barbara Carolan, Vice President; Darlene Marlow, Sergeant-at-Arms; Diane Lehman, Secretary. Matt Morehouse, Irene Stidston and Keath North were elected to serve on the Board of Directors. North is also a statewide Director and Vice President.

Kings County Chapter just elected new officers to begin in January: Ken Beinhorn, President; Betty Hampton, Vice President; Eldora Triguero, Secretary; Georgia Matos, Treasurer; and Georgia Tierney, Member at Large.

Marin County Chapter reports that in conjunction with the Community Media Center of Marin, we are currently creating a recruitment video to augment our public outreach program. One of our goals this year was to get the Public Issues Committee started: They have been meeting regularly and been inviting speakers to discuss topics of interest to our members.

San Luis Obispo Elections: Jim Ragan, President; Mimi Kalland, Vice President; Hedy Damery, Secretary;

Dorothy Schlitz, Treasurer. Catherine McKown will present the Marin Chapter's experiences educating and interviewing GJ applicants at a February luncheon meeting. The Chapter is participating in GJ Awareness Month activities with the Board of Supervisors and in seven cities.

Shasta is embarking on their annual recruitment drive, a secret project and paperwork to become a CGJA chapter.

Grand Jurors Association of Orange County: New officers: Joe A. Moreland, president; Bob Fauteux, First Vice President; Charlotte Fox, Second Vice President; Rose Moreno, Secretary; Joe Quiros, treasurer; Carol Duensing, parliamentarian; and Jerry Kraus, sergeant-at-arms.

San Diego Grand Jurors' Association....we are in full swing preparation for the 2010 CGJA Annual Conference to be held here October 21/22....committees are forming and details are being worked on....

Chapter News

Kern County Chapter

By Larry Walker, President

Greetings from Kern County to all. It is indeed a pleasure to report to the CGJA membership what has been and will be going on in Kern County since our last report. It is with great sadness to report that our recent Chapter President, Trudy Slater, will not be able to complete her term due to temporary health reasons. Trudy has done a great job and we all appreciate her efforts and look forward to her participation in the future.

I have accepted the position of Chapter President and I am looking forward to leading our fine organization. I am currently serving on the Kern County Grand Jury as I

have done for two previous terms, as well as being active in various positions within the Chapter since 2007

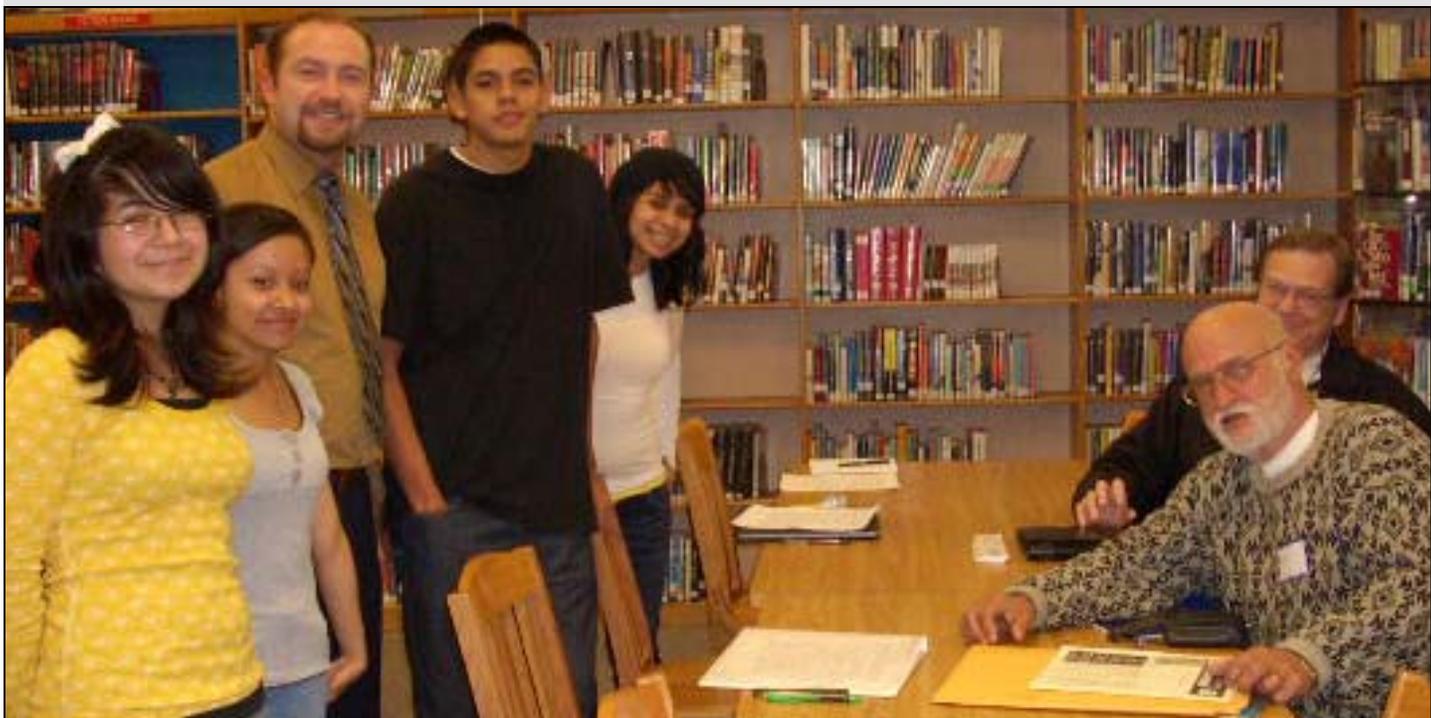
The Chapter is once again supporting the Kern County Grand Jury in their efforts to promote Grand Jury Awareness throughout the County. On Feb. 18th, the Grand Jury will be hosting a Public Ceremony at the Courthouse, as they have each year for the past decade, in an effort to expose the Grand Jury system to the public and to promote recruiting efforts for the 2010-2011 Kern County Grand Jury.

The event will be highlighted by the Kern County Board of Supervisors presenting the Grand Jury with a Proclamation declaring the month of February as Grand Jury Awareness Month. This local recognition hopefully will be supported by a Proclamation from the Governor's Office which has been requested once again by the CGJA.

An additional highlight will be the presentation of awards to the winners of the Grand Jury's Art Contest which was open to Kern County students in grades 5-6th, 7-8th and 11-12th. This year's theme was "We The People" and its purpose was to familiarize students with the Grand Jury and to promote the objective: "To Serve and Assist the People of Kern County by Insuring Transparency in Government." The jury received over 550 entries from 26 schools which is a strong show of support from school districts in the County. Judging was extremely difficult as Tony Noce can attest to, since he was invited to assist in the judging process.

In summary, I would like to note that the Chapter had a great Christmas luncheon this past December with over thirty attendees and looks forward to a schedule for the year 2010 that promises to be very rewarding and fulfilling.

CGJA Chapters in the News



Kern County Chapter Members Assist High School Competition

The Kern County Grand Jury Foreperson John Mainland was invited to be interviewed by the Arvin High School *We the People* competition team to review the US Constitution and specifically the jury system. John invited the local Kern County Chapter Director and CGJA President Tony Noce to accompany him. They met with the five different groups over a period of a week. Both were very impressed with the background knowledge that all the team members displayed. The team won at the county level and will move onto the State competition. This is a sample of how the Kern County Grand Jury, and the Kern County CGJA Chapter is working with the schools in promoting the importance of educating the citizens of the State of California about the Grand Jury system and its need to be preserved.



Humboldt Chapter Luncheon Attendees

L to R: Irene Stidston, Diane Lehman, Darlene Marlow, Suzi Fregeau, Keath North, Deborah Cordone, Barbara Carolan, Skip Jorgensen, Dolores Theuerkauf, Harry Pond, Phil Minor, Darrel Petersen, Dan Taranto, Ed Albert

Kern County Chapter Presidents

Outgoing President Trudy Slater and newly elected President Larry Walker at a recent Chapter Meeting



Humboldt Chapter

By Suzi Fregeau, President

We are excited to report that the completion of our DVD is close at hand. On January 30th, Keath North and other volunteers will meet at the Humboldt County courthouse to film the documentary they have been planning and working on for well over a year. The expectation is we can then use this DVD as a “selling point” to petit jurors (as they wait to see if they are called for jury duty) with the hopes of getting more community members involved in our civic grand jury. We will also make this available to other grand jury chapters if they are interested in showing it in their community.

Additionally there is a sub-committee of current association members putting together a list of local organizations and civic groups where we feel we could also recruit quality members for our grand jury; we will also use the DVD for presentations to these organizations. It has been suggested we talk to the local high school administration to see if doing this presentation to the civics classes would be of value to the students in preparation for life after high school!

Our monthly meetings are still held on the second Wednesday of each month and the trend seems to be 12-15 members attend on a regular basis. This year we will look at avenues to expand

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Jerry Lewi, Director and Public Relations Chair, was honored by the Ventura County Board of Supervisors in a presentation on January 12. The presentation was made by Supervisor Linda Parks. Lewi was honored for receiving CGJA’s Angelo Rolando Award this past October. In his remarks, Lewi stated that by honoring him, they were also honoring CGJA for the work it does and also honoring the Grand Jury system for its significant contributions. CJGA has been training the Ventura Grand Jury on site for the past three years.

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the local chapter; perhaps a questionnaire to former grand jury members asking why they served, and what would interest them in continuing to be active in a statewide organization after they have actually served on the jury.

These are pretty aggressive goals for members who have committed time to other local activities.....if we can increase our monthly meetings to 25-30 we can also draw on those new members to identify areas where we can be of value.

San Francisco Chapter
By Beate Boultinghouse, President



The outreach efforts for the 2010-2011 Civil Grand Juries will be coming to a close and applications will be

in by April 16. A county's Superior Court may have received anywhere from 30 to 100 applications for prospective jurors. How do we cull the number to the 30 which will be chosen to sit for the next year? I understand that the usual process involves the judges glancing through the applications and choosing the 30.

Here in San Francisco, a process has evolved in which Association members interview applicants and make recommendations to the judges. This allows for a personal meeting with each applicant that reveals far more about them than a completed application. Carolyn Koster heads our Interviewing Committee and explains the process the San Francisco chapter uses to assist the Judges' Civil Grand Jury Committee in making informed decisions.

Interview and Selection Process of the San Francisco Chapter

by Carolyn Koster

The San Francisco Chapter began interviewing grand jury applicants shortly after its inception in 2004. Then presiding Judge Hitchens encouraged the chapter membership to be aggressive in developing plans for supporting the grand jury. Over the years the process has evolved but the goals have remained the same; to identify applicants who:

- Are willing to commit the necessary time to serve on the jury,
- Can work in a cooperative manner with a group
- And potentially serve as foreperson.

Additional goals are to give applicants an idea of what is involved in jury service and to determine how they learned about the Grand Jury. This latter information is important to our outreach efforts.

Interviewers are solicited from the chapter membership. They are asked to commit as much time as they can spare during the three-week interview period that usually takes place at the end of April and beginning of May. A meeting of the group is held prior to the start of interviews to orient new interviewers to the process, to review the interview question/evaluation form and to firm up time commitments.

A schedule of available time slots is prepared. Pairs of interviewers, preferably a man and a woman conduct all interviews using standardized questions developed by the Interview and Selection committee. Once the schedule is finalized, Gary Giubbini of the Superior Court contacts the candidates and schedules the interviews. Gary also makes sure that the interviewers have the applications of the candidates they will interview on a given day prior to the interview.

We allow an hour for the interview; half an hour or so for the actual inter-

view and the remainder for the two interviewers to agree on a recommendation and make notes on the evaluation form. Interviewers review the applications and make note of any responses that need follow up. One area we try to pinpoint is how specifically an applicant learned about the Grand Jury. This information helps the Outreach Committee know what efforts are working.

Over the years, the Grand Jury has gone through all alternates and has had to function with fewer than 19 jurors. Consequently, we focus on the time commitment involved and the financial disclosure form in the interview. We've had some success in recent years in that more people are dropping out before they become part of the pool of 30. Still there are always people who do not hear what we're saying about the amount of time involved.

The rest of the interview is spent on drawing people out regarding their experience and ability to work in a group. If an applicant indicated willingness to serve as foreperson on the application, we follow up with additional questions.

After all applicants have been interviewed, the interviewers meet as a group to discuss foreperson candidates, any questionable recommendation and to suggest improvements in the process, question/evaluation form and/or application.

The Chair of the Committee prepares a list of "highly recommended," "recommended," and "not recommended" candidates. This list, the applications and our evaluations plus a letter summarizing the Committee's work and listing potential foreperson candidates are forwarded to the Judges' Civil Grand Jury Committee and the Presiding Judge. The judges then meet and review the material and determine the final pool of 30 candidates.



Sonoma County Chapter

By Melissa J. Jones, President

The Sonoma County Chapter (SCCGJA) held its first Annual Meeting on January 11. Seven board members were elected, and the board elected officers:

Secretary, Ellen Stillman; **Treasurer**, Don Johnson; **Vice President**, Rich Klein; and **President**, Melissa Jones. The three at-large members are Ellen Harrington, Jerry Bagger and Dennis O'Reilly.

The initial committee structure for the chapter is designed to ensure support for each major element of the Grand Juror annual cycle:

- Community Outreach (Speakers' Bureau, Marketing Communications)
- Applicant Assessment and Selection
- Onboarding/In-Service Training
- General Administration/Response to Sitting Jury Requests
- Published Report Oversight

The Chapter has held planning meetings with the Sonoma County Superior Court Executive Officer Jose Guillen and will work closely with Mr. Guillen's staff on community outreach. The emphasis will be on attracting a prospective Grand Juror pool that reflects the diversity of the entire community.

The Chapter is in discussion with the State Association about hosting a regional training session for new Grand Jurors in Santa Rosa, and is working to set up a collaborative meeting with the San Francisco Chapter to talk about best practices for Juror selection and training. The timing should work well with the seating of the 2010-2011 Grand Jury. The Chapter also hopes to soon host visitors from Mendocino County who are interested in forming a Chapter.

Self-Evaluation

By Barbara Sommer, Foreperson, Yolo County Grand Jury, 2009-2010
basommer@ucdavis.edu

The thought of Grand Jury evaluation can be a little terrifying. Do we really want to know ... that our leadership skills leave something to be desired, that everyone is angry with Juror X, that the meetings seem interminable? Don't we know that already? Why ask? We ask because a systematic assessment gives a more reliable picture than various bits of observation and comments. A few individuals can set a tone that is not reflective of the group as a whole. In contrast, a systematic survey provides a more clear sense of what we are doing right and what needs to be changed or improved, and in so doing, can increase the effectiveness of our jury efforts. Systematic evaluation also is beneficial in letting individual members learn how their peers feel about the jury. It can be a wake-up call to learn that one's point of view may not be shared.

There are two general types of evaluation: summative and formative. Summative evaluation is like it sounds – summing up. It is generally done at the end of a term, session, or course, and is an after-the-fact study. Formative evaluation refers to making an assessment while the operation is ongoing in order to improve things. At the end of last year's term, the Yolo County Grand Jury evaluated its activities using the following questionnaire:

This anonymous survey is geared toward improving next year's Grand Jury operation. Please be candid in your reply, and do NOT put your name on it.

1. List the 2 or 3 most rewarding things about being on the Grand Jury this year.
2. List the 2 or 3 most challenging or difficult things about being on the Grand Jury this year.
3. What would have made the year's Grand Jury experience better for you?
4. Do you have any suggestions for improving next year's Grand Jury operations?

As this year's Foreperson, I found the responses to be immensely helpful to my present leadership role. I learned the importance of clarifying role, structure, and goals early on in the year. I was warned about the pitfalls (some inevitable) of member turnover, the tedium of producing the final report, variations in motivation, and the constraints on juror time.

As a result, I was able to "hit the road running" by building on the rewards and dealing with the challenges directly early in the year. Then, to determine whether in fact we were on the right track, we did a formative "Early Evaluation" three months into the new term, using this questionnaire:

This anonymous survey is geared toward improving our Grand Jury operation. Please be candid in your reply, and do NOT put your name on it.

1. What do you feel is going well with the Grand Jury?
2. What do you think we need to improve?
3. Do you have a sense of our role/function as a Grand Jury? (circle one)

| | | |
|------------|-----------------|-----------|
| <i>Yes</i> | <i>Not sure</i> | <i>No</i> |
|------------|-----------------|-----------|
4. Do you feel we should have a group discussion of our role/function? (circle one)

| | | |
|------------|-----------------|-----------|
| <i>Yes</i> | <i>Not sure</i> | <i>No</i> |
|------------|-----------------|-----------|
5. Overall, how satisfied are you with your current Grand Jury experience? (circle one)

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Very dissatisfied</i> | <i>Not sure</i> | <i>Very satisfied</i> |
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | 4 |
| | | 5 |

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6. How satisfied are you with the Foreperson's performance? (circle one)

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Very dissatisfied</i> | <i>Not sure</i> | <i>Very satisfied</i> |
| 1 2 | 3 | 4 5 |

7. What is she doing right?

8. What could she do better?

9. Other comments

We learned that the Jury had a good sense of camaraderie and working well together, despite there being a few problem jurors who dominated the discussion. The result was that the latter tended to self-monitor and pull back a bit. The one or two less-than satisfied jurors found that they were in the minority.

I learned that my running of the meetings was satisfactory, and that I now can proceed with more confidence. The overall response to the evaluation was very positive with a sense of shared knowledge and involvement. There seemed no negative consequences of doing the evaluation.

Use a formative evaluation for what it is – an assessment of the Grand Jury process, not a personal popularity rating. It can help you to be a more effective leader. You want more than simple ratings of satisfactory and unsatisfactory – you want to find out what can make it better. The questions can be modified to suit the needs of your particular Jury.



In My Opinion

Note: The following was submitted to a local group by Carol Rosenberg, a member of the Mendocino County Grand Jury. It provides another view about the use of the term "Civil" to describe the regular grand jury

I'm currently serving my fourth term on the Mendocino County (CIVIL) Grand Jury. The reason I include "civil" is that we do not review evidence and vote to prosecute wrongdoers as the Grand Juries do in other states. We investigate county, city and other agencies that spend local money, such as special districts and non-profit agencies that contract to provide county services.

We at best cast light on how and why public funds are being spent. We interview lawmakers, department heads, members of the Board of Supervisors and other decision makers or folks that provide services. We search for "Findings," that is, facts that may point to possible truths. We write them up and make practical suggestions as to how the situation can be improved. We make our reports available online or in print. We are a panel of 19 individuals from all over the county and have every possible opinion on politics, social services, what makes good government, etc. That is also why I wrote civil! We try very hard to be at least tolerant if not accepting of each others' differences. We try hard to listen to opinions that differ from our own. We try hard to look for information that we can all agree is valid, that has been triangulated, that comes from more than one source. Information that is not contaminated by falsehood propaganda or our own perverted lens. We do not necessarily like each other, but we can work together to find the truth or make a suggestions to how a problem can be solved. We ask for feedback from those we investigate. Did we understand what you said correctly? Can you do what we asked? Are our suggestions valid and possible?

I would like all intelligent, reasonable county residents with 20 -30 hours a week to volunteer for the rand Jury. I think the process and the reports are important and yes, I think the process is also fun! I personally love the exchange of ideas and seeing how government actually works.

Summary of Board Action

By Joann Landi

**December 15,
2009**



Approved letter to Governor requesting proclamation declaring the month of February as Grand Jury Awareness Month.

Approved Annual Conference dates of October 21-22, 2010

Reaffirmed compliance with approved guidelines for meeting conduct.

January 26, 2010

Approved a protected reserve fund for the Training Committee.

Approved use of surplus 2009 Conference funds as budgeted income for the 2010 Annual Conference.

Approved accounting entries to close the Sol Price and Val Cavey funds.

Approved the 2010 Budget.

Approved letter to Sacramento Chapter.

Approved changes to CGJA Chapter formation document.

Note: Board Agendas are posted on our website seven days prior to a Board meeting, which is usually the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM. Board minutes are posted after approval the month following each meeting.

Help Wanted

**Don't just be a member of CGJA,
become a participating member
All committees will welcome
your involvement as new people
and their ideas is what will keep
our organization moving ahead
in both educating the public and
training grand jurors**

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Our website is a great informational resource for grand juries to use. Our "links" and "local Grand Jury information" pages will take you to websites that can assist in research and information
Visit us at www.cgja.org



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**2010
Annual
CONFERENCE**

San Diego, CA
October
21-22, 2010

The Mission of the California Grand Jurors' Association is To promote government accountability by improving the training and resources available to California's 58 regular grand juries and educating the public about the substantial local government oversight and reporting powers these grand juries have

Format for submitting letters and articles to the Grand Jurors' Journal
Articles should be e-mailed to Jerry Lewi, Editor
cgjaprguy@roadrunner.com
Articles submitted by e-mail should be saved in Rich Text Format and transmitted as an attachment to the e-mail message.
If e-mail is not available, articles should be faxed to Jerry at 805-531-1121
Letters to the editor are limited to 200 words. (One hundred words for "Kudos" thank-you letters).
The Journal will highlight opinion articles written by readers, experts, and issues advocates. They may be 500 to 600 words in length.
We are especially interested in articles on Grand Jury issues or solutions to improving public education of the grand jury system in California.

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