



Grand Jurors' Journal

cgja.org

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August 2020

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ELECTION EDITION

from the Nominations-Elections Committee

This edition of the *Journal* serves as your Voter Information Pamphlet. Please keep it until you have voted.

CGJA Board of Directors Candidates

Southern Region

Jim Ragan (*San Luis Obispo*)

Ron Zurek (*San Bernardino*)

Central Region

Robert Finlayson (*Contra Costa*)

Barbara Sommer (*Yolo*)

Northern Region

Shirley Boracci (*Glenn*)

Bernadette Cheyne (*Humboldt*)

Lynn Plew (*Trinity*)



This year, we will again conduct voting for directors electronically using the CGJA website during August. Soon you will receive an email with a link to the voting site. The email will contain a control number that you must enter on the voting form as proof of your eligibility to vote. Simple, detailed instructions will be on the voting site for your review.

If you do not receive your emailed link by August 15, please contact us at nominations@CGJA.org or nec@cgja.org to receive another link. Members not having an email address in the CGJA database, or those preferring a paper ballot, will be sent a paper ballot via first class mail (sent by August 10). Voting ends on August 31.

Results will be announced at the Annual Membership Meeting on Monday, October 26, 2020 (a virtual meeting via Zoom because of the COVID 19 pandemic).

If you have any questions, please contact Lou Panetta or Tim Hafner, Co-Chairs, Nominations-Elections Committee, at nec@cgja.org, or phone Lou 415-793-4577 or Tim 707-441-8494.

Read the candidate statements on the following pages.

Rolando Award Nominations Due by August 28th

Last call to nominate a member for outstanding service to our organization.

See details at cgja.org/angelo-rolando-award

Questions? Contact [Joann Landi](#) Awards Committee chair

Director Candidate Statements

Southern Region

Jim Ragan (San Luis Obispo)

I began my second "career" (little was I to know) with CGJA as a grand juror trainer in 2011. I continue as a trainer. I am now one of our lead on-site trainers and head two training topics: Grand Jury Reports and Collegiality.

I was a member of the CGJA Board of Directors from 2011 to 2018, serving as board secretary. I have been a member of almost all CGJA standing committees. I continue to serve on many. I currently chair the Public Relations Committee and the Membership and Chapter Relations Committee.

I was president of the San Luis Obispo County chapter for six years. I know how important chapters are to CGJA.

Looking to our CGJA future, my priorities are to (1) fully support our training program and chapters, (2) continue to increase our membership, and (3) make the grand jury more visible among counties throughout California. I hope that my return to the board (undoubtedly for the last time) will help me better promote my priorities.



Ron Zurek (San Bernardino)

I have been a member of CGJA for over four years. I served on the 2016-2017 San Bernardino County Grand Jury and chaired the County and Editorial Committees. I am a retired banker with over 35 years of finance experience managing branch offices for several regional and community banks where I processed, underwrote and approved all types of personal and business loans.

I started getting more involved in CGJA by serving on the Website Revitalization Committee and participated in the planning and rollover of the newly formatted website over two years ago. I serve as the chair of the Finance Committee and I am your assistant webmaster. I served on the

Nominations-Elections Committee last year and was the primary website contact that introduced online voting for the annual election for the last year. I just completed my first two-year term as a director of the South Region.

I am a member and a director of the San Bernardino County Grand Jurors Association since 2016. I helped the organization get back on track with their financial and statement filings with official agencies.

I look forward to serving you for another two-year term and I would appreciate your vote of support and confidence.

Robert Finlayson (Contra Costa)

With the vast new concerns arising out of the Covid 19 situation, and a time of extreme partisanship, the grand jury system will become of increasing importance as the unbiased watchdog of local government. The goals of attracting the best possible candidates and training them on how to investigate and make practical, well researched and objectively reasoned recommendations will become even more critical.

Assisting in the orientation of prospective jurors for the last three years provided me with a current insight as to their concerns and perceptions about grand juries and ideas on how we could attract more diverse and qualified candidates. Having attended meetings with other chapters from neighboring counties, I have seen the benefits of combining experiences and talent from several counties to improve the effectiveness of the grand jury system.

Central Region



continued on the next page

continued from preceing page – **Finlayson**

Working with state CGJA, I would like to explore ways in which an external organization, such as the University of California, could assist in gathering, analyzing and reporting out on the trends and accepted recommendations from all the annual published grand jury reports, and determine if this concept is feasible, worthwhile and sustainable.

My four years’ experience as a trainer for the CGJA has shown me how varied are the approaches each county takes. I would strive, as director for the Central Region, to use the best practices approach to help all counties constantly improve their work product, as well as vigorously following up on prior reports to ensure the actions agreed upon have been implemented.

Barbara Sommer (Yolo)

I would very much like to continue my service as a director and as secretary to the board.

I am a native Californian, educated in the state, retired from UC Davis (Lecturer in Psychology); and have lived in southern California, the bay area, and currently reside in the central valley. These factors contribute to my knowledge and appreciation of the needs and challenges of our state and of our region.



With regard to CGJA, I became active following two terms on the Yolo County Grand Jury (2008-10, foreperson the second term). I have been the chair of the Awards Committee and continue to chair its Excellence in Reporting subcommittee. I am a member of the Public Relations Committee and edit this bimonthly Grand Jurors’ Journal.

I have been very impressed by the CGJA’s laying out a roadmap with the various routes open to the courts with regard to continuing grand jury function without a serious pause. In my role as director, I would continue to actively encourage this type of endeavor. Our role as a protector of impartial democratic institutions seems particularly important at this time.

Northern Region

Bernadette Cheyne (Humboldt)

I served on the Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury for two years, from 2016-2018, the second year as its foreperson. It was a very worthwhile experience where I learned a great deal about local governments and the positive impact the grand jury can have on their operations. These experiences led to my ongoing involvement with the CGJA, including my work as a CGJA trainer.



My interest in serving on the CGJA Board stems in part from the importance of the grand jury system in providing oversight for and recommending improvements to our local governments. Equally as compelling is the collaborative element. I have spent much of my life working in theatre and as a teacher in the California State University system, both of which involve engaging in effective teamwork to accomplish something of value. Serving as a member of the CGJA Board would provide a continuation of the collaborative experience through working with others to further its mission “To promote, preserve, and support the grand jury system through training, education, and outreach.”

Areas of importance where I believe I can make useful contributions include my continuing participation in the training aspects of the organization, working on strategies to increase public awareness of and participation in the grand jury system, and promoting initiatives to increase the accountability of government agencies in responding to and implementing recommendations from grand jury reports. I look forward to my continued involvement with CGJA in whatever capacity best serves the organization.

Shirley Boracci (Glenn)

My goal would be to make the public aware of what the grand Jury does, time requirements, commitment to completing a full term and enjoying the attention put into each final report. I am currently president of the Glenn County Alumni Chapter of CGJA. We recently organized our chapter and received our Certificate of Affiliation at the annual conference in October 2019.

Our goal for the chapter is to educate our community on the workings of the grand jury. We put together a PowerPoint which we take to service groups, churches, schools, etc. relating to the workings of the jury, time commitment etc. We have also created a PowerPoint for new jury members. It is a follow-up to the CGJA training that includes local/county department heads names and contact information and it will be updated each year.

Previously I have been on five grand juries, most recent was in 2018-2019 of which I was foreperson. I am currently on CGJA Program Administration Subcommittee where I am learning more and more valued information. I enjoy community volunteering.

**Lynn Plew (Trinity)**

It is my great pleasure to share important goals for the CGJA. In all areas of the professional sector, training is considered of greatest importance. Training for members of the CGJA is no different. By providing training in local areas, it allows volunteer grand jury members to attend while keeping the cost of the training to a minimum. In addition, it provides for discussions and questions specific to the area, making the training more valuable and meaningful to the attendees and the trainers. At this point in my life I am able and more than willing to travel throughout the state to help in trainings as needed.

Reviewing the CGJA purpose and goals statements, I believe that I can support and help with statement number 6 in its relation to informing, recruiting, and retaining grand jury members. As a past school board member and longtime PTA member, I know the importance of providing information to our youth so that they can make meaningful connections to their community. After all, it is our public education's duty to grow and support productive members of our society. As a past and current active participant with my school community, I believe that I can help build a bridge between the school administration and the grand jury to integrate curriculum, workshops, guest speakers and potential fields trips to increase the awareness and importance of local grand juries.

Thank you for considering me for the position of directorship.

Recent Board Actions

Board Meeting, June 23, 2020

Directed that the 2020 CGJA Annual Membership Meeting for our members be conducted via Zoom on Monday, October 26, 2020.

Approved 2020 Director Election Ballots.

All approved board meeting minutes are available on the CGJA [website](#).

Barbara Sommer, Secretary

NOTE: We encourage members to attend meetings of the board of directors. They are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month via teleconferencing (no meetings in July and rarely in December). [Read more.](#)

Santa Cruz Judge's Grand Jury Rationale

We all know that the Covid 19 pandemic has affected 2019-20 grand juries and is affecting the recruitment for the 2020-21 grand juries. The Hon. John Gallagher, supervising judge of the Santa Cruz County Grand Jury, takes these issues head-on in a media article asking citizens to apply to join the 2020-21 grand jury. We reprint the judge's article here. – Ed.

Guest Commentary: The [Santa Cruz County] grand jury needs you now more than ever

We need the grand jury and the grand jury needs you. In this time of political polarization at all levels of government, the need for a neutral grand jury to investigate, report on government performance and offer solutions has never been greater. Despite the pandemic, the 2019-20 Civil Grand Jury recently completed its term successfully. The grand jury completed 10 separate investigations, published reports to explain their work, and made specific findings and recommendations to improve both the quality of our government and the health and safety of all who live here.

The topics the grand jury chose to investigate were compelling, including: homelessness; the horrific fire risk the community faces and the questionable capability the community has to respond to catastrophic fires; the lack of adequate risk management tools in local government; and the loss of trust and accountability in the City of Santa Cruz governance, to name just a few of the investigations. Rather than giving up when the pandemic made completion of the grand jury's mission monumentally harder, the members of the grand jury rallied and used the technology of the virtual meeting world to finish their work. What is frequently not mentioned in considering the value of the grand jury system, is that more often than not the recommendations of the grand jury are accepted, and very real and significant improvements are made for everyone's benefit.

By statute the Superior Court is charged with empaneling the new grand jury, which normally begins serving its term on July 1. The pandemic has caused a delay in recruiting, interviewing and selecting the new grand jurors. This year the selection process will begin in September with virtual interviews taking the place of actual physical meetings in order to ensure the health and safety of everyone. The new grand jury is expected to be sworn in during the week of Oct. 5 and will serve a nine-month term rather than a full year. Grand juror training and the actual work of the next grand jury are likely to be completed in the virtual world of electronic communications to keep everyone safe. Travel impediments that oftentimes deterred members of the community with difficult commutes from serving won't be a problem in the virtual meeting world.

But the challenges the new grand jury will face are even greater than the 2019-20 grand jury faced, as the jurors will not have the full year term to work with and will not have the normal face-to-face meetings at which to bond and develop team work. Nevertheless, the incoming foreperson has been selected and has a core of experienced and dedicated returning grand jurors ready to get to work and bring the new grand jurors up to speed. Prior experience with virtual meeting technology and secure data-sharing for the grand jury members will be more important than ever, but refresher training will be available.

There are so many new challenges facing us today, not to mention just staying alive. But we will not be stopped from protecting our democracy and improving the operations of our government agencies. The work is essential and rewarding. Good people rise to ensure good government. We are good people. We need good grand jurors.

Please apply to join the 2020-21 grand jury.

We need you now more than ever.

SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL

by Judge John Gallagher, Grand jury supervising judge

July 26, 2020

Update: Grand Jury and CGJA Training Status

by Marsha Caranci, Chair, Training Committee

In the June *Journal* we provided information about how grand juries throughout the state have been dealing with the COVID-19 situation. This article updates that information and describes how CGJA's 2020 grand jury training season is shaping up – with the understanding that the situation is very dynamic and changes often.

Some of the 2019-2020 grand juries have posted their final reports on their websites. Others are still finishing up as they have had their terms extended, which allows additional time for the report review and release process.

We know of about a dozen 2020-2021 grand juries that have been sworn in and are starting to meet (some remotely using Zoom or other teleconference meeting tools). In those counties where the juries have had their terms extended, many will be impaneling the new jury sometime between now and December, and at least fifteen of the courts that have extended their juries will impanel new juries in January and convert to a calendar-year term.

CGJA is providing training for each county as requested this year – either in-person or remotely. The training will be over a much longer than usual training season, extending into 2021. So far, we have completed two in-person training seminars, one in Orange County and one in Monterey County (which included some of the jurors attending remotely). An in-person seminar is scheduled in Lassen County on August 6 and 7, and remote training (using Zoom) is set for seven other grand juries starting on August 10. We will be scheduling additional seminars as more new juries are sworn in.

We have also now scheduled our first two Foreperson and Pro Tem Workshops, which will be conducted remotely on August 27 and 28, and again on September 24 and 25. Go to our [website](#) for registration information. We will add more workshops as needed.

Our first Report Writing Workshop will take place in September for a single county, and others will be scheduled throughout the rest of 2020 and into the spring of 2021, as needed.

Our training team has been meeting on Zoom and getting to know all the new trainers, who received their initial training to be CGJA trainers through a series of Zoom meetings. We believe that, with this experience, our training teams are ready to meet the individual training needs of each jury.

We appreciate all the county and court officials who have provided us updated status on a regular basis, and I especially want to thank all of our dedicated trainers who have shown their patience and willingness to be flexible in these unusual circumstances.

Letters

Send your thoughts or opinions on CGJA or grand jury matters to editor@cgja.org.

Ronald Julian Miguel

by Jerry Lewi

We have posted two articles on our news blog documenting the life of our beloved colleague, Ron Miguel, who passed away on June 28. He was 88.

Ron documented for us his beginning of training for grand jurors and for CGJA in the obituary we published in February 2019 about Sherry Chesny, the originator of our training program:



"Sherry started teaching with Bruce Olson, who was then contracting with a number of counties to do grand juror training. She worked with him from 1989 to 1993. About 1994, there was a two-day grand jury training session held in Yuba City that was organized by a former juror, Al Alamaro. In 1996, I went to Yuba. Well over 100 jurors in one big room listened to a series of lectures for two days – hardly any interaction.

"After it was over, Sherry asked me to help teach there, and I did so with her in '97 and '98 – she doing Interviewing, I doing Investigation and sometimes trading off. Several of us were CGJA members, and by '99 we felt this should be a CGJA-sponsored program. Sherry became the first chair of our committee."

As one of our original trainers, Ron managed the Investigations presentation and remained its lead trainer until recently.

He contributed much more. He mentored and supported all trainers with his presentation skills and extensive knowledge of the California grand jury system. One of his favorite sayings – and he had many – was that as a presenter you, "Owned the room," meaning you controlled how the material was presented and discussed. And he asked new trainers, "What is the subject of your grand juror training?" When they responded, "Investigations," "Grand Jury Law," or "Grand Jury Reports," he retorted NO: "Your subject is the grand jury. You have to know everything."

Ron served on the CGJA Board of Directors from 1998 to 2000 and received the Angelo Rolando Service Award in 2006.

But grand juror training was his passion. For more than 20 years, all grand juror trainers benefited from his passion, knowledge, and expertise – that will live on.

Ask the Trainer by Marsha Caranci, CGJA Training Chair



This regular column allows the CGJA training team to share with *Journal* readers our responses to questions we receive from grand jurors. Please remember: You may not take any response as legal advice; and you should contact your local legal advisor to answer any question that might divulge confidential information.

Please submit your questions to me at cgjatraining@cgja.org. Our response to your edited or redacted question might appear in a future edition of the *Journal*.

Q. Our final reports have been released, but our grand jury's term has been extended until a new jury can be sworn in. What activities should we be doing, if any?

A. Each grand jury is required to issue only one grand jury report each year, dealing with some aspect of county government. If your jury has done that, there is nothing more you are required to do. But a jury with an extended term might want to make use of the additional time by continuing to do a limited range of work.

If you wish, and if there's enough time left in your extended term, the jury could issue a "continuity report," which analyses the responses you have received to the reports you issued this term. (See Tab 1, section IV D, Continuity, in our CGJA Training Manual for more on this kind of report.) Or the jury could take up a special project, such as thoroughly reviewing and updating your procedures manual, developing or improving your local orientation program, or even cleaning the grand jury room.

Members of the public may be unaware that a jury's term has been extended. If your jury receives a complaint during the extension period, and you decide not to address it, we suggest you send an acknowledgement letter explaining that the complaint will be forwarded to the next jury and providing the impanelment date. If you wish, your jury could conduct some research about the complaint, or even interview the complainant, and pass your information on to the next grand jury.

Q. What are forepersons required (or able) to do during the 45-day period during which they must remain available to answer questions about our reports?

A. Penal Code section 933(a) states in part: "For 45 days after the end of the term, the foreperson and his or her designees shall, upon reasonable notice, be available to clarify the recommendations of the report." This obligation is the only provision of law that explicitly requires or allows a member of a grand jury to discuss a grand jury's recommendations. Any request for clarification will probably come from the investigated entity, but since the section doesn't limit who might ask for clarification, it appears that anyone can ask.

This section does not state exactly what information the foreperson or the designees may reveal when "clarifying" the recommendations. But the general rule is that a juror may not reveal any of the evidence gathered during an investigation (PC §921.4) except through the grand jury's report — and the willful disclosure of evidence is a misdemeanor. Section 933(a) does not exempt the foreperson or designees from this confidentiality provision.

In short, the foreperson or designee may clarify the recommendations (but not any other part of the report), but should not cite any evidence or other information that is not contained in the report.

New Members

From January 1 through July 31 this year, 32 former grand jurors, grand jurors and grand jury legal advisors have become new regular (voting) members of CGJA.

We heartily welcome them.

Jim Ragan, Chair,
Membership and Chapter Relations Committee



New member	County
Kara Abelson	Sonoma
Hailey Ayres	Contra Costa
Francis Bremson	Sacramento
Renee Brewer	Marin
Joel Campbell-Blair	Del Norte
Enid Carroll	San Bernardino
Richard Castro	San Diego
Bob Cathaway	Shasta
Heather Chambers	Sutter
Victor Clifford	Santa Clara
Gale Corson	Sonoma
Lucy Dilworth	Marin
Roger Draper	Contra Costa
Bob Freelen	Sonoma
Clare Greene	Humboldt
Mary Griffith	Placer
Luann Hopkins	Tuolumne
Howard Johnson	Plumas
Eloise Jorritsma	Merced

New member	County
Carolyn Kelly	Madera
Angeleke Levy	Monterey
Steven Loreus	Humboldt
Rose Marie Mankoff	Kern
Brenda McHenry	Calaveras
Bob Morse	Humboldt
Lester Perpall	Mono
Lynn Pidal	San Bernardino
Wanda Shaffer	Orange
Marty Spitz	Napa
Joanie Stevens	Mendocino
Darlyne Swenson	Fresno
Kathleen Wilburn	Ventura

Until a few years ago, publishing the names of new members was a regular feature of the *Journal*. It was a good feature, and we have restored it. From now on, each *Journal* edition will publish the names of people who have joined since the last edition.

Zoom into the Annual Membership Meeting

Monday, October 26

by Lloyd Bell, Chair, Annual Conference Committee

We announced in the June *Journal* that the 2020 Annual Conference has been postponed until 2021 because of statewide social distancing requirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will, however, conduct an annual membership meeting (required by our bylaws). It is a new opportunity to connect with all members. It will be a virtual meeting via Zoom on Monday, October 26, 1:00 pm until about 3:00 pm. All members will receive log-in information.

The agenda includes the president's annual report, committee reports, announcement of board-member election results, and maybe outside speakers.

This is a fantastic opportunity for maximum participation by all of our members. Some of you regularly attend our annual in-person conferences (which include the membership meeting). For those of you who do not, this is your opportunity for a couple of hours to connect and participate in how we carry out CGJA's mission. We will encourage and facilitate member comments. You'll get to see other members, officers and directors you may never have met and we will get to see you.

Over the next few weeks we'll send out emails with more information.

Many of us have used Zoom over the past few months to connect with family and friends, do business, and worship. If you have not experienced Zoom, we recommend that you download the Zoom app (www.zoom.com) on your device of choice – computer, tablet, or smart phone – and learn how to use it. For assistance, see [Abbreviated CGJA Zoom Users Guide](#).

Keep us Posted

Send us your chapter or association news and accomplishments. Format articles in Word and send as email attachments to Barbara Sommer editor@cgja.org. For more details see [How to submit an article](#).

DEADLINE for submitting articles for publication in the next issue

September 28, 2020

Change of address - Please notify the editor@cgja.org of any email address changes.

The mission of the CGJA is to promote, preserve, and support the grand jury system through training, education, and outreach.

Contacts: [Officers and directors](#), chapter and association [presidents](#).

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Visit our website

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