



# Grand Jurors' Journal

cgja.org

Volume 21, No. 5

October 2020

Inside: [Directors-elect](#) | [Award nominees](#) | [Ask the Trainer](#) | [Audrey Lynberg](#) | [Committee reports](#) | [Volunteer roster](#) | [New members](#)

## 2020 Annual CGJA Membership Meeting on Zoom

by Jim Ragan, Chair, Membership and Chapter Relations Committee

On **Monday, October 26, 1:00 PM**, we will hold our first-ever virtual CGJA Annual Membership Meeting—via Zoom.

Until this year, we have held our annual membership meetings in person as part of our annual conferences. The 2019 session, for example, was in Sacramento. We had planned the 2020 conference and membership meeting to be in San Rafael on October 25-26. However, COVID-19 social distancing requirements and concerns many of us have about voluntarily getting together for meetings right now caused us to postpone the annual conference until October 2021—still planned for San Rafael.

But we saw an opportunity to conduct the 2020 CGJA Annual Meeting, which our bylaws require, via Zoom. We hope more members will participate because they do not have to spend time traveling and incur travel and hotel expenses. Why not spend two hours or so on Zoom?

Let's take a look at the agenda.

**Dick Spotswood**, politics and government columnist for the *Marin Independent Journal*, will be our keynote speaker. His topic will be ***Credibility: Every grand jury's most valuable asset***. We will have the opportunity to ask Dick questions at the conclusion of his remarks. He arguably comments more about grand jury reports than any other media person in California. He says that, for 18 years, he has probably written three to five times a year on a Marin grand jury topic. In addition, for many years he has oriented incoming grand juries on Marin County governmental organization.

Earlier this year, Dick retired after 45 years as a trial attorney. He is a former council member and three-term mayor of the City of Mill Valley. He served for ten years as a director of the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway & Transportation District, representing Marin's eleven cities and towns. He currently chairs ***The Sacramento Seminar***, a San Francisco political salon that is one of America's few truly bipartisan political and civic discussion groups.

### CGJA Business

**Larry Herbst**, outgoing president, will report on 2020 at CGJA—unlike any in recent memory. Annual reports of each standing committee are published elsewhere in this Journal. Please read them. Larry and the chairs of each committee will answer questions.

The new CGJA officers will be announced and the Board of Directors will be sworn in.

**CGJA Annual Awards.** CGJA makes three awards every year, first announced at the annual membership meeting:

**Best Grand Jury Report** and **Best Media Coverage.** The nominees are introduced in another article in this *Journal*. See ***Past EIR Awards*** on our website to see previous recipients.

The **Angelo Rolando Service Award** goes to a CGJA member for outstanding participation at both the state and county level in support of CGJA goals and objectives. See ***Past Rolando Awards*** on our website for a list of previous recipients.

Click here to see the full meeting agenda: **[2020 Annual Membership Meeting](#)**.

### Zoom link to the meeting

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83300501919?pwd=TIBic3gvR2x4VlppqNjdZL3V6MENCZz09>**

Or go to **<https://zoom.us/join>**, enter the meeting ID: **874 5089 8937**, and click **Join**.

If you are asked for the password, it is: **500499**.

Audio Conference Only: call **1-669-900-6833**. See above for the meeting ID and password.

### CGJA 2020 Director Election Results

The Nominations-Elections Committee established the 2020 Tellers Committee to verify and count all ballots cast in CGJA’s 2020 election for directors. Verification is based on the member being in good standing and voting in the proper region.

The 2020 Tellers Committee members were Judi Lazenby, Nell Griscom and Kris Desmond of the Santa Cruz CGJA Chapter. The Tellers Committee received a total of 96 valid, digital ballots and 2 mail-in ballots. The results for each region are shown below.



Ron Zurek, South



Jim Ragan, South



Bob Finlayson, Central

#### Votes Cast

##### South

- 24 Ron Zurek
- 23 Jim Ragan
- 1 Birgit Sale (write-in)

##### North

- 21 Bernadette Cheyne
- 20 Shirley Boracci
- 7 Lynn Plew

##### Central

- 38 Robert Finlayson
- 33 Barbara Sommer



Barbara Sommer, Central



Shirley Boracci, North



Bernadette Cheyne, North

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

## Nominations for CGJA's Excellence in Reporting Awards by Barbara Sommer, EIR subcommittee chair

Four nominations were submitted for CGJA's **Best Grand Jury Report** award. Two were submitted for the **Best News Media Reporting** award. The five-member EIR subcommittee of the CGJA Awards Committee has rated them. The evaluation criteria can be viewed on our [website](#). The winners will be announced at the [annual membership meeting](#) on October 26. We introduce the nominees here so that you can see how meritorious all are.

### BEST GRAND JURY REPORT

#### **ALAMEDA** (2019-20) [Oakland 9-1-1 Communications Center – A Center in Crisis](#)

Despite agency reports of problems in 2017 and 2018, the grand jury found continuing and lengthy delays in the City of Oakland's emergency response system. These were largely related to understaffing and funding.

#### **MARIN** (2018-19) [Wildfire Preparedness: A New Approach](#)

The report focused on four aspects related to wildfire danger – vegetation management, educating the public, alerts and evacuation. As a result of their findings and recommendations, a joint powers authority funded by a ¼ cent sales tax was established to address these issues.

#### **SANTA CLARA** (2016-17) [Justice Delayed: Why Does It Take So Long to Resolve Felonies in Santa Clara County?](#)

Santa Clara County ranks last in resolving felony cases among the 49 California's counties reporting data. Addressing this issue, the report documents a "culture of complacency" and inadequate data management systems across multiple agencies including the district attorney's office, public defender's office, San Jose police, the crime laboratory and the medical examiner-coroner.

#### **SONOMA** (2018-19) [Will There Be Water After an Earthquake?](#)

The grand jury investigated plans and resources that are in place in the event of a major earthquake, to provide drinking water to residents of the county who receive water from Sonoma Water (over 600,000 customers). They recommended several steps to the agency related to earthquake preparedness.

### BEST NEWS MEDIA REPORTING

#### **MARIN** *Point Reyes Light* for its coverage of [Wildfire Preparedness: A New Approach](#)

The *Point Reyes Light* in West Marin gave the 2018-19 Marin County Grand Jury report excellent coverage. Although there was little coverage of the actual responses to recommendations, the process of establishing the Joint Powers Agency and approving the parcel tax had outstanding coverage.

#### **TUOLUMNE** Alex MacLean, reporter for [The Union Democrat](#), for his coverage of the 2017-18 Tuolumne County Grand Jury Report: [Tuolumne County Economic Development Authority \(TCEDA\)](#) (page 151).

Alex MacLean covered this report with at least 26 articles through May 2019 in *The Union Democrat* – from the report's release through many meetings that eventually led to Tuolumne County and the City of Sonora dissolving TCEDA. MacLean's articles were objective and thorough. He captured and reported on the substantial debate on the issues by the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors, the Sonora City Council, the TCEDA Board and the highly interested public.

---

*The nomination materials are retained by the [subcommittee chair](#). A nomination may be resubmitted in 2021 for reports and/or coverage dated 2016 or later (5-year window).*

## 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](mailto:cgjatraining@cgja.org). Our response to your edited or redacted question might appear in a future edition of the *Journal*.

**Q. Our grand jury is conducting most of our business remotely. We have found that many officials and government employees are willing to be interviewed using teleconferencing, but we are concerned about ensuring the confidentiality of those interviews. How can we be sure that the interviewee is in a private room and will maintain confidentiality?**

**A.** After scheduling the remote interview, the grand jury will need to send a meeting invitation to the interviewee in advance, with log-in instructions if needed. The invitation should advise the interviewee that in order to protect confidentiality during the interview, the interviewee must be in a secure location where they will be alone and cannot be overheard.

As the interview begins, the grand jury's interview team should confirm that the interviewee is alone in a room where the interview will not be interrupted or overheard. The interviewee should be directed not to record the interview. The team may record it, as long as all participants agree, as required by state law.

Two or more jurors must participate at all times during the interview. They, too, must be in private rooms where they will be alone and not be interrupted or overheard.

The lead interviewer should read an admonition to the interviewee, directing them to keep confidential everything they learn during the interview. As the interview closes, the lead interviewer should remind the interviewee of the admonition and email a copy of it to them at the conclusion of the interview.

As the interview team prepares for a video interview, the jurors should decide on how the jurors other than the lead interviewer will ask questions during the interview – by raising their hands, or just interrupting?

**Q. Has the Brown Act been modified at all to allow local government bodies to conduct their meetings remotely during the pandemic?**

**A.** Yes. In March, Governor Newsom issued executive orders related to the Brown Act. Order N-29-20 allows governing boards to hold meetings remotely from locations both within and outside the entity's service area. The board does not need to provide a physical location from which the public can observe the meeting and provide public comment as long as the public can do so by phone or computer. Board members do not need to reveal their remote locations.

The agenda notice must describe the means by which the public may observe the meeting and address the board. The board must advertise its procedure for swiftly resolving requests for reasonable ADA accommodations.

Order N-35-20 allows board members to receive simultaneous or serial updates from federal, state, or local officials related to a declared emergency, including a COVID emergency, but they may not discuss the information amongst themselves except at a Brown Act compliant meeting.

These orders will be in effect as long as social distancing recommendations are in place.

## Audrey Lynberg

by Jerry Lewi

We friends and colleagues were saddened to learn of the death of one of CGJA's founders, Audrey Lynberg, on August 24, at age 91.

Audrey served on the 1993-1994 Los Angeles County Grand Jury. According to Jaclyn Tilly Hill, foreperson of that jury and a CGJA Lifetime Member, Audrey was a very effective juror, served on several committees, and had a very high degree of loyalty to her purpose and to her colleagues. That jury, for that time, had the highest number of high-profile cases, was an extremely diverse jury, had no dropouts during the year, and survived the Northridge earthquake. Despite their record number of criminal cases, the jury conducted many civil investigations.



The best way to describe her contributions to CGJA is to quote from her own article printed in the October 2017 *Journal: The Life and Death of a CGJA Chapter*.

During 1994-1995 The California Grand Jurors Association had been divided into two regions and there was discussion in changing the organization to a 501(c)3 status. A committee was formed to study of the pros and cons of changing the organization from a 501(c) 4 to a 501(c)3 status, as the organization activities were mostly educational and it would allow a tax-exemption, and tax-deductible contribution.

In 1996, the CGJA constitution and bylaws were revised for the new 501(c)3 and approved by the organization at the Asilomar Conference, August 1997. In these bylaws, the California Grand Jurors' Association stated that Chapters could be formed in the counties with bylaws that were consistent with the CGJA Articles of Incorporation. In addition, the purpose statement of the organization was to establish a training program for grand jurors.

The first meeting of the Los Angeles Chapter was in the fall of 1998 and adopted the constitution and bylaws of CGJA which new focus was a training program for new grand jurors. There were 36 persons in attendance and among those in attendance were former CGJA President Pat Yeomans and CGJA Director Les Daye. State President Dan Taranto also attended. He helped the Chapter set up the first training program in 1999, at the University of La Verne Law School. There were 48 persons in attendance from surrounding counties as a new state law passed requiring training of grand jurors.

*continued on next page*

*continued from preceding page – Audrey Lynberg*

Over the years, the Los Angeles Chapter, has met three to four times a year with a luncheon and outstanding speakers. During the last few years, our membership declined. However, we continued to send information yearly, to 160 former grand jurors and keep them informed of the activities of the organization.

Our board members have been honorable, serving in the different roles to fulfill our connection with the State Association. During the past 2-3 months, our board has suffered the loss of two long time members who passed away. So, we are closing our Chapter, and will continue our support of the California Grand Jurors' Association as individuals.

Audrey continued to serve as a member of the CGJA Awards Committee, emphasizing the Local Achievement Award. She received the **Angelo Rolando Service Award** (shown in photo) in 1998. Some of her early support including serving on the CGJA board in 2000 and again in 2014, supporting and attending our annual conferences. She chaired the 2014 conference in Burbank. But her main interest was the Los Angeles Chapter. She was president in 2000 and was the driving force behind the chapter until it closed.

Audrey was born and raised in Iowa and thrived in a professional career as a nurse. She led a full life of professional and community service by serving on several boards of directors and coordinating several political campaigns – as she was interested in the political issues. She was recognized by the 32nd Congressional District with the *Women of Distinction Award*. Audrey helped to develop the Children and Family Center Program at Azusa Pacific University, which continues to provide training for graduate students to serve families in the community. Audrey was president of the YWCA, where she helped develop the Wings Shelter Program and raise funds for the San Gabriel Valley Domestic Violence Program. She was on the Board of Directors of the Coalition for Victims Rights.

We celebrate Audrey's life in what she gave to us and to everyone else.

## Letters

Send your thoughts or opinions on CGJA or grand jury matters to [editor@cgja.org](mailto:editor@cgja.org).

## Annual Standing Committee Reports

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE (ACC)** - strives to present a challenging, inspiring, and informative program each year in a convenient yet popular location that will entice attendees to come early or stay after our meetings to enjoy the locale. **Chair, Lloyd Bell**



Planning for this year’s conference began shortly after the conclusion of the 2019 event which was held in Sacramento. Though the program was almost complete in the early spring, the CGJA Board of Directors voted to postpone the event until next year due to Covid-19 pandemic uncertainties.

Next year’s Annual Conference (2021) will be held at the Embassy Suites, San Rafael, on October 24-25, 2021, with a full complement of award presentations, informative speakers, an update from the CGJA President, and a gala dinner on the evening of October 24. The committee will continue to monitor the pandemic situation to ensure a safe environment for our meeting.

As required by our bylaws, the Annual Membership Meeting, which is normally held concurrently with the annual conference, will be conducted electronically using Zoom technology, which will enable participants to “attend” this meeting from the comfort of their homes using their computers to participate.

Along with other business that we will conduct, our keynote speaker, Dick Spotswood from the Marin Independent Journal, has entitled his presentation “Credibility: Every grand jury’s most valuable asset.” We invite you to join us for this very thought-provoking presentation and to participate in this venture, which is a “first” for the CGJA.

Our committee is always seeking new volunteers who wish to volunteer their time and talents in planning and executing our annual conference. If you know of someone who would enjoy working on such an event, or if you would find it fulfilling, please let us know by sending a note to [annualconference@cgja.org](mailto:annualconference@cgja.org).



**AWARDS (AC)** - establishes and administers all CGJA awards and recognition, with the exception of the Lifetime Achievement Award that falls within the purview of the Board of Directors. **Chair, Joann Landi**

This year the CGJA will present **Excellence in Reporting Awards (EIR)** for a grand jury report and media coverage and the **Angelo Rolando Service Award**.

We urge our colleagues to consider presenting awards locally. While certain awards must be presented at the annual meeting, i.e., the EIR and Rolando awards, **Local Achievement** and **Certificates of Special Recognition** awards can be presented at a chapter or regional meeting. This may permit more local people to be present to enjoy the proceedings and congratulate the honoree(s). Details are on the website at [cgja.org/awards](http://cgja.org/awards).

**BYLAWS AND POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE (BPRC)** - works with other standing committees and the board of directors to ensure that the association’s governing documents are updated as needed, compliant with state law and internally consistent. **Chair, Karen Jahr**



This committee reviews any proposed amendment to the CGJA Bylaws or Policy Manual and makes recommendations regarding the amendment’s content, format, and placement within the bylaws or manual. We also review newly adopted or revised committee procedures for consistency with state law, CGJA’s Bylaws, and the Policy Manual and report our conclusion to the referring committee. We conduct other reviews as requested.

This past year, BPRC reviewed proposed amendments to the CGJA Bylaws related to directors’ terms. We reviewed several proposed amendments to the policy manual, including those related to scheduling and conducting the annual conference and membership meeting, allowing a multi-

**BPRC** –continued on next page

*continued from preceding page – BPRC*

county chapter to nominate Excellence in Reporting awards for each member county, allowing for director elections to be held electronically, and requiring an electronic run-off election in the event of a tie vote.

The committee reviewed and provided comments on the revised procedures for the Training Committee, the Nominations-Elections Committee, and the CGJA president. We also reviewed and updated the Chapter Formation Guide.



**FINANCE (FC)** - works with the president, treasurer, and committee chairs to develop the annual budget and provide oversight of other finance-related information and activities of the association. The committee actively recruits for new members familiar with financial management principles, the nonprofit legal environment, accounting software, and administration. **Chair, Ron Zurek**

This year the Finance Committee:

- Conducted a successful 2019 year-end donation solicitation campaign.
- Conducted a monthly review of CGJA financial records and transactions, including adherence to budget.
- Compiled and facilitated approval of the 2020 CGJA budget.
- Provided timely reminders to chapters concerning their tax-filing obligations.
- Filed IRS CP 119 Form to update subsidiary CGJA chapter nonprofit status.
- Filed updated Entity Numbers for Subordinates to CGJA with the California Franchise Tax Board.
- Successfully managed finance-related issues with the assistance of the CGJA treasurer.
- Updated the Chapter Formation Guide with the latest forms and instructions.
- Forwarded financial information for 2019 to the CPA for preparation of the federal and state tax returns.
- Prepared and submitted an Annual Financial Report for the CGJA Board and membership.

**LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE RESOURCES (LLRC)** - answers questions submitted by grand juries, grand jurors, CGJA chapter members, legal advisors to grand juries and court personnel. **Chair, Karen Jahr**



Since LLRC members are not in an attorney/client relationship with any grand jury or juror, the committee does not provide legal advice in response to the questions we receive. Instead, we make "best practices" suggestions based on the information submitted to us and on the collective experience of LLRC members. We always advise grand juries and jurors to consult with their legal advisors when they need legal advice about the grand jury or local government entities.

This past year, LLRC or its members provided responses to questions on a number of topics, including whether the court is required to fill vacancies, the propriety of a report urging citizens to contact state officials, making recommendations to a tribe, what constitutes a quorum for conducting grand jury business, how to dispose of confidential materials at the end of the term, the timing of exit interviews, whether responses should be requested for commendatory findings, and the timing for the release of individual reports.

Some of the questions were answered informally by individual LLRC members when the answer could be limited to a referral to the text of the Training Manual or the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page of the association's website.

**LLRC** –continued on next page



continued from preceding page – **LLRC**

LLRC's largest project this year was to rewrite the FAQ page. We modified nearly all 60 Q&A entries for clarity and to ensure conformance with the best practice positions reflected in CGJA's training materials. We deleted several entries and substituted new ones that we concluded were of more use to the grand juries.

We updated CGJA's *Compendium of California Grand Jury Law*. We also reviewed and provided comment on the bylaws for the proposed Mendocino Chapter of CGJA.

Another function of the committee is to monitor legislation that could affect the grand jury system and provide an analysis of the bills to the board of directors. No bills related to grand jury operations were introduced this year.



**MEMBERSHIP AND CHAPTER RELATIONS (MCRC)** - manages the CGJA membership database, recruits and tries to retain CGJA members, shepherds grand jurors in each county who want to form a chapter, supports ongoing chapters, and maintains a membership-resource information database.

In January 2020, the Board of Directors added "chapter" to the name of the committee. This better represents the committee's functions and gives greater recognition to CGJA chapters. **Chair, Jim Ragan**

Voting membership has decreased over the first eight months of 2020: from 279 at the beginning of the year to 270 at the end of August. Membership non-renewals (including deaths) are slightly up over 2019. New members are down, but Introductory Members converting to full members are up. There are four months left in the year. Our target for the end of the year is 285 members.

We welcomed one new chapter, Glenn, in October 2019 (after publication of the 2019 annual report). We currently have 25 chapters representing 27 counties (the Mother Lode represents Amador, Calaveras, and Tuolumne). We continue to help former jurors in other counties form chapters.

A regional meeting of some chapters in the Bay Area was held in June.

In supporting chapters, we have recently assigned each MCRC member to be a liaison to several chapters. to help ensure that:

- we know what chapters are doing so that we can share that information with other chapters and our membership,
- we can broadcast chapter achievements throughout CGJA,
- we can respond promptly to a chapter's request for support from CGJA,
- we can ask for chapter support to CGJA and the statewide issues we deal with – when they come up,
- we can remind chapters when their reports and filings to IRS and state agencies are due, and

We have modified our Chapter Resource Documents page on our website to make it easier to find documents.

We are working on an article for the February 2021 edition of the *Grand Jurors' Journal* that will recognize our lifetime members and those who have been CGJA members for at least five years. This will then become an annual article.

**Committees** –continued on next page

continued from preceding page – **Committee Reports**

**PUBLIC RELATIONS (PRC)** - continues to present timely information about CGJA and the California civil grand jury system to our members, our chapters, sitting grand jurors, and interested others. **Chair, Jim Ragan**  
**Website**



In January 2020, the Board of Directors moved the responsibility for the website from PRC to the relatively new Technology Committee (Tech). This reflects today's reality that virtually all standing committees use and post information on the website. The move was, therefore, to place the responsibility where it best fits within CGJA. When the website was launched, the board would probably have assigned it to Tech if it had existed. To help ensure coordination between PRC and Tech, the webmaster continues as a PRC member and makes monthly reports.

### Grand Jury News

PRC continues to manage our news blog, *Grand Jury News*, on the website. It now houses over 4,600 news and opinion articles on California civil grand juries since late 2008 – mostly on their reports and published comments about them. We organize the posted articles chronologically grouped by year (starting with the most recent article). A search capability on the blog page enables the user to search for articles based on key words such as a county, a report topic, a media source, and an author.

### The Grand Jurors' Journal

The bimonthly *Grand Jurors' Journal* continues as a vibrant information vehicle to reach our members, current grand jurors, and court and county staffs. Barbara Sommer, our editor, continues to produce first-class editions. In each journal, one can find CGJA announcements, chapter news, training information, and other interest topics to readers. Our website contains Journal Archives that go back to 2001 (and even a few issues before that).

While we continue to mail a hard copy of the journal to those requesting it, the vast majority receive and read it electronically. One of the great advantages of this is that it enables us to provide electronic links where readers can find more information.

### CGJA News and Juror Messages

This is a support-function for PRC. We continue to support the president and committee chairs in electronically sending messages to members and others under two conditions. The first is when the messages cannot wait for the next edition of the journal. The second is when the messages are so important that they require emphasis outside the journal. 2020 is the year that CGJA used (and continues to use) this PRC function to keep everyone informed about how grand juries, courts, chapters, and CGJA (especially in training) are addressing the COVID-19 crisis.

### Social Media

Our connections are Facebook and Twitter. If you follow us on either, you will receive a notice and link whenever we post an article on our news blog. We know that we are not using social media to full benefit. We seek a member(s) to join PRC who are experienced with using social media and have the desire and time to take on this function.



**TECHNOLOGY (Tech)** – oversees and supports the technical, data, and communications resources and deploys a cohesive technology strategy across the association ensuring the security and privacy of its financial, legal, and membership information. **Chair, Lou Panetta**

The Technology Committee took on two major development projects this year.

A new custom search engine was developed to support the more focused searching of grand jury reports throughout all 58 California counties. The new search capabilities will find reports and agency responses, by topic, for

as many years as the various counties archive on their websites. This is an important tool for sitting grand juries.

**Tech** –continued on next page

*continued from preceding page – Tech*

Two Zoom accounts were established. One is dedicated to the monthly board meeting and all of the various recurring committee meetings. This replaces the WebEx account previously used. The second account is dedicated to CGJA Training, as most of our training during the pandemic is done remotely. Significant work was required for curriculum conversion and developing trainer skills for remote training.

In addition, the Technology Committee performed regular support for the association's website and the archival storage and access of the association's records in Dropbox.



**TRAINING (TC)** – develops and conducts annual training programs presented at statewide locations for new grand jurors. **Chair, Marsha Caranci**

CGJA's training year started off as it normally does – we reviewed the comments from last year's trainees and our own evaluations and updated our curriculum; we interviewed and selected a group of new trainers and planned our annual "Train-the-Trainer" face-to-face meeting in Sacramento for early April; we contacted all of the 58 counties to offer and schedule our annual two-day summer training seminars; and we scheduled four Foreperson and Pro Tem Workshops, two Legal Advisor Workshops, and seven fall Report Writing Workshops – all in regional locations.

By March, we were well positioned for another great year. Then the whole world turned upside down, requiring us to regroup. We immediately cancelled our train-the-trainer workshop and rescheduled it as a series of sessions on Zoom.

CGJA formed a Pandemic Response Workgroup who, together with our Training Committee and the Legal and Legislative Resources Committee, explored the possible alternatives for how courts might deal with extending the 2019-2020 grand jury term if needed, or delaying impaneling the new grand jury if a normal schedule wasn't possible due to the pandemic. (See more on the work of this group in their separate report which follows.)

We contacted the courts and grand juries throughout the state and learned that counties were taking different approaches. Some juries were able to finish their term on the normal schedule and the courts could impanel a new jury on time; other courts extended the term of the sitting jury by up to six months; others determined they would ask their board of supervisors to approve changing to a calendar-year term; and many delayed making any decision until they knew better how the situation would evolve.

We quickly realized that new juries would be seated anywhere from the normal July 1 date all the way to January 2021. We cancelled most of our previously planned seminars and workshops and adopted an ad-hoc approach to our training schedule. We also found that as situations changed, which has been almost daily, there was little certainty about whether in person or remote training would be the best alternative. We were asked to provide our first in-person training in late June, another in early July, and yet another in early August. But most counties realized that training remotely would be the only practical and safe solution for juries who were being impaneled this summer and fall.

We set up our licensed Zoom account and learned how to use it; we studied YouTube videos and had a number of Zoom training sessions for some of the veteran trainers who had the technological capabilities to train remotely, and then started bringing on additional members of the training team. We had our first fully-remote training session on Zoom the second week in August and have been conducting these sessions weekly since.

Like the rest of the world, we quickly adapted to the Zoom approach to training and have learned how to share our interview videos, conduct interactive sessions using breakout rooms, and make the best of the experience – all while teaching new jurors from the safety and comfort of our own homes. But it has been a lot of work, and we appreciate the efforts and time that all members of our training team have put into this.

**TC** –continued on next page

*continued from preceding page – TC*

As of press time for this report, we will have trained three grand juries in person and sixteen via Zoom, and will have conducted two Foreperson and Pro Tem Workshops on Zoom. We have several additional remote training seminars scheduled for this fall, one in-person training, one more Foreperson and Pro Tem Workshop, two Legal Advisor Workshops, and a number of Report Writing Workshops. And then we will start again in January, providing training either in-person or remotely to all of those grand juries that will be impaneled in December or January, another Foreperson and Pro Tem Workshop, and many more Report Writing Workshops – all to accommodate the various impanelment dates. What a strange year!

In the meantime, grand juries are developing their own approaches to meeting remotely if needed, conducting investigations and interviews that way, and getting their work done (even if their term is shortened). We are here to help – we have added helpful hints to our training programs on how to deal with these challenges, and have provided additional information on the CGJA website.

We are impressed with how everyone involved with the grand jury system has dealt with the challenges they face, and how the courts have come up with some creative ways to meet their constitutional mandate to impanel a grand jury every year – even during a pandemic. We hope for and look forward to returning to some semblance of “normal” in 2021.

I want to thank all of our trainers and support volunteers for their dedication to our effort to provide training to California’s civil grand juries. And I would like to express our sorrow in having lost two colleagues this past year who played an important part in the development of the CGJA training program: Sherry Chesny, the founder of the program, who passed away last November after a long and difficult time with Alzheimer’s; and Ron Miguel, who was with Sherry at the outset and who contributed to our program right up to within weeks of his passing in June after a short illness. They will be missed.

### **PANDEMIC RESPONSE COORDINATION WORKGROUP, Co-chairs, Karen Jahr and Marsha Caranci**

In early March, several of us active in CGJA began discussing the possible effects of COVID-19 social-distancing guidelines on grand jury operations and the courts’ ability to recruit applicants for the 2020/2021 term.

Soon, superior courts and grand juries were turning to CGJA for best-practice advice about these issues. We began collecting as much information as possible about what the courts were doing about the duration of the 2019/2020 grand jury’s term and their recruitment efforts for the next term so that we could act as a clearinghouse for this information.

On March 29, CGJA President Larry Herbst appointed the Pandemic Response Coordination Workgroup to coordinate the association’s responses to the challenges posed by the pandemic.

The workgroup contacted the Judicial Council’s Legal Services Office and the head of the Jury Improvement Project to discuss with them how grand juries can conduct business remotely, whether and how the current juries’ terms could be extended, and how and when to recruit and impanel the 2020/2021 grand jury. Our communications with the courts were posted on the presiding judges’ own network and distributed to the members of the California Judges’ Association. We also contacted court executive officers, grand jury legal advisors, grand jury liaisons, sitting forepersons and jurors, and CGJA chapters to let them know what steps we were taking and to invite their input.

Our discussions and analysis of state law resulted in a series of communications with the grand juries’ stakeholders and culminated with the CGJA website posting and email distribution of our most recent document, “[Coping With COVID.](#)”

This document provides our best practice advice regarding extended-term and shortened-term grand juries, how juries can effectively hold plenary and committee meetings and conduct interviews, how they can inquire into detention facilities as required by PC §919 if facility tours are unavailable, how to remotely write and edit reports, and how jurors can communicate with each other and establish a collegial team. The webpage also contains most of the earlier communications prepared by the workgroup.

# 2020 Volunteer Roster

Fulfilling CGJA’s many purposes and functions requires the commitment of many people.

### Executive Committee

- Larry Herbst, chair (President)
- Lou Panetta, vice-chair (Vice President)
- Lloyd Bell, member (Member-at-large)
- Travis Gibbons, member (Treasurer)
- Barbara Sommer, member (Secretary)

### Standing Committee and Working Group Members

<p><b>Annual Conference</b></p> <p>Lloyd Bell, chair</p> <p>Chuck MacLean, vice-chair</p> <p>Tom Borden</p> <p>Janet Clark</p> <p>Travis Gibbons</p> <p>Colleen Leahy</p> <p>Jerry Lewi</p> <p>Jim Ragan</p>	<p><b>Excellence in Reporting Award</b></p> <p>Barbara Sommer, chair</p> <p>Richard Faenzi</p> <p>Ray Frisbie</p> <p>Lanny Larson</p> <p>Mary Lou Oliver</p> <p><b>Local Achievement Award</b></p> <p>Audrey Lynberg, chair</p>	<p><b>Legal and Legislative Resources</b></p> <p>Karen Jahr, chair</p> <p>Teri Goldner, vice-chair</p> <p>Bill Harvey</p> <p>Karin Hern</p> <p>Dianne Hoffman</p> <p>David Mulford</p> <p>Kathy Wylie</p>
<p><b>Awards</b></p> <p>Joann Landi, chair</p> <p>Audrey Lynberg</p> <p>Barbara Sommer</p> <p>Terrie Stevens</p> <p><b>Angelo Rolando Service Award</b></p> <p>Joann Landi, chair</p> <p>Lloyd Bell</p> <p>Medsie Bolin</p> <p>Keath North</p> <p>Terrie Stevens</p> <p><b>Certificate of Special Recognition</b></p> <p>Terrie Stevens</p>	<p><b>Bylaws and Policies Review</b></p> <p>Karen Jahr, chair</p> <p>Marsha Caranci, vice-chair</p> <p>Karin Hern</p> <p>Joann Landi</p> <p>Jim Ragan</p> <p style="background-color: #e1f5fe;"><b>Finance</b></p> <p>Ron Zurek, chair</p> <p>Lloyd Bell, vice-chair</p> <p>Travis Gibbons, treasurer</p> <p>Medsie Bolin, asst. treas.</p> <p>Marsha Caranci</p> <p>Karin Hern</p> <p>Dianne Hoffman</p>	<p><b>Membership and Chapter Relations</b></p> <p>Jim Ragan, chair</p> <p>Dianne Hoffman, db manager</p> <p>Dave Chapel</p> <p>Janet Clark</p> <p>Rich Knowles</p> <p>Jerry Kunkle</p> <p>Diane Lloyd</p> <p>Kathy Mastako</p> <p><b>Nominations-Elections</b></p> <p>Tim Hafner, co-chair</p> <p>Lou Panetta, co-chair</p> <p>Ray Frisbie</p> <p>Joann Landi</p> <p>Birgit Sale</p> <p>Carolyn Stinemates</p>

**Volunteers** –continued on next page

*continued from preceding page – Volunteers*

**Tellers**

Judy Lazenby, chair  
Kris Desmond  
Nel Griscomb

**Public Relations**

Jim Ragan, chair  
Jerry Lewi, vice-chair  
Joann Landi, secretary  
Barbara Arietta  
Larry Herbst  
Barbara Sommer

**Technology**

Lou Panetta, chair  
Ron Zurek, vice-chair  
Larry Herbst

**Training**

Marsha Caranci, Chair  
Medsie Bolin, vice-chair  
Travis Gibbons, secretary  
Ken Adair  
Bernadette Cheyne  
Bob Finlayson  
Teri Goldner  
Laura Griffin  
John Heckel  
Karen Jahr  
Jerry Lewi  
Lou Panetta  
Jim Ragan

**Curriculum**

Karen Jahr, chair  
Marsha Caranci  
Bob Finlayson

Teri Goldner

Bill Harvey

Carol Perry

Jim Ragan

Birgit Sale

Medsie Bolin, chair

Marsha Caranci

Joann Landi

**Program Administration**

Marsha Caranci, chair

Shirley Boracci

Medsie Bolin

Laura Griffen

Karen Jahr

Joann Landi

Judi Lazenby

Leslie Lea

Diane Lloyd

Cheryl Nelson

Pat Pavone

**Public Relations**

Jerry Lewi, chair

Travis Gibbons

Jim Ragan

**Technology**

Lou Panetta, chair

**Trainer**

Medsie Bolin, chair

Marsha Caranci

John Heckel

Karen Jahr

Jim Ragan

**2020 Trainers**

Ken Adair

Medsie Bolin

Marsha Caranci

Bernadette Cheyne

Karen Deeming

Lucy Dilworth

Bob Finlayson

Travis Gibbons

Teri Goldner

Laura Griffin

Bill Harvey

John Heckel

Karin Hern

Karen Jahr

Jerry Lewi

Diane Lloyd

Steven Loreus

Bob Morse

David Mulford

Lou Panetta

Carol Perry

Lynn Pidal

Jim Ragan

Pat Randolph

Bruce Rawding

Birgit Sale

Dee Schweitzer

Jon Tonsing

**Pandemic Response  
Coordination Workgroup**

Marsha Caranci, co-chair

Karen Jahr, co-chair

Teri Goldner

Bill Harvey

Larry Herbst

## New Regular Members

by Jim Ragan, Chair, MCRC

From August 1 through September 27 of this year, 32 former and current grand jurors became new regular (voting) members of CGJA. We heartily welcome:

<b>New member</b>	<b>County</b>
Adam Andersen	Mariposa
Walter 'Steve' Ansel	Glenn
Lynn Bonas	Orange
Ron Boring	San Francisco
Geoffery F Brown	San Francisco
Todd Chambers	Sutter
Karen Deeming	Merced
Charles Edwards	Lassen
Mike Fitzgerald	San Francisco
Louis Friedman	Stanislaus
James Gilmore	Sonoma
Don Hamaguchi	Stanislaus
Craig Hollyfield	Placer
Tom Horsley	San Joaquin
Donna Hurowitz	San Francisco
Leif Isaksen	San Mateo
Stephanie Jacques	San Francisco
Kristopher Johnson	San Mateo
Irene Kennedy	San Mateo
George N Kokkinakis	Glenn
Cindra Lacey-Wilfong	Glenn
Phil Marson	San Mateo
Cheryl Mason	Stanislaus
Elton Michael	Placer
Gary Montrezza	Santa Clara
Horace Nash	San Mateo
Karen Ormsby	Kings
Jason Rowell	Placer
Ellie Schafer	San Francisco
Charles Vega	Placer
Margaret Walker	Sutter
Susan Warren	San Mateo

## 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](mailto:editor@cgja.org). For more details see [How to submit an article](#).

**DEADLINE** for submitting articles for publication in the next issue

**Nov. 23, 2020**

**Change of address** - Please notify the [editor@cgja.org](mailto: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](#).

**CONNECT!**



*Visit our website*

The views expressed in the *Grand Jurors' Journal* are those of the writers unless otherwise stated. The CGJA Board of Directors disclaims any liability arising from errors or omissions. The Editor has the right to accept, edit or reject submitted articles.

©2020 All rights reserved.