

Chapter Officers' Meeting, June 10, 2026

(For CGJA website - Chapter Officers Meeting / Past Meetings)

June 10, 2026: 29 attendees representing 16 active chapters in attendance.

The meeting followed a full agenda of interchange and reporting by individual chapters with full participation by attendees. Topics covered included:

- **Yolo Chapter** - Sharon DeBenedetti, Chair of the Chapter Relations Subcommittee, welcomed the newly approved chapter, Yolo County, to the Chapter Officers meeting. Bob Phibbs, Chapter Vice-President, reported that they are getting organized and have met with the outgoing and incoming jury Forepersons. The Chapter will play host to the 2026 annual conference. Mike Familia is the Chapter President (not in attendance).
- **Training updates** - Karen Jahr, trainer and advisor, provided a thorough presentation on updated training materials for 2026 and the upcoming term. The focus is on 'how to do things' and best practices. The emphasis on a practical approach to the training seminars include providing checklists, more exercises at the end of each section. An important emphasis included ADA standards for website posting (effective in April 2027) and AI recommendations to use AI as a research tool in investigations as one source of facts during investigations. They must be verified.
- **Chapter reports** - Each Chapter reported on their recruitment successes and challenges for the 2026-2027 term, along with the number of applicants that resulted from their efforts. There were varied challenges identified, but successful recruitment efforts made use of: flyers, brochures, yard signs and banners, podcasts, social media, website, PSAs on local TV and radio, attending Rotary, Kiwanis, etc. meetings, holding library hours, Farmer's Market (handing out dog treats), County Fairs, Senior Centers, letters to BOS and city council members, wearing a red t-shirt ("Ask me about CGJ") at events and walking around with cookies.

One of the recurring themes throughout Chapter presentations was the relationship with the court and how important that is. There were a variety of levels of engagement from interviewing applicants and providing jury orientations to minimal interactions mostly centered around recruiting.

- **Speakers** - Sharon asked the attendees about the value of speakers at the Chapter Officers such as Karen Jahr's update on training earlier in the meeting and the presentation made by David Heintz from the Santa Cruz Chapter on IT development. The response was positive and Sharon asked the attendees to suggest topics for future meetings and send them to her.

- **Combined Membership** - Mike Hofman reported that there are 13 chapters participating in the Combined Membership Program. The next drive will be in September.
- **Report Nominations** - Martha Saldana-Wolf informed the group that "Excellence in Reporting" nominations are due by June 30. Reports can be submitted through the cgja.org website under "Awards." Reports from the previous five years can be nominated for the two categories: "Best Civil Grand Jury Report" and "Best Media Coverage."
- **Chapter Liaison** - Sharon stated that the Chapter Liaison program is designed to support chapters by maintaining a regular interaction to determine how we can best help each other.
- **Annual Conference** - The CGJA Annual Conference on November 1-2 at the Embassy Suites/Riverfront Promenade in Sacramento. The theme this year is "Volunteerism": Key to Grand Jury Success." There are limited rooms, so attendees were encouraged to register early.

Next meeting - September 30, 2026, 3PM - 5PM, via Zoom