



CGJA Journal

Vol. 28, No. 1, February 2026

Greetings!

Let's Get On It! Grand Jury Awareness Month 2026



During his term, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger proclaimed each February as Grand Jury Awareness Month. Some California counties do that; others choose March. Whatever the date, we take pride in publicizing this well-deserved public recognition of both our juries and the outstanding work they are doing all across the State, and we'll be featuring these events here in the *Journal* over the coming months.

As many counties have not been regularly recognizing this honorable and voluntary service, this year our Public Relations Committee reached out to each county – both through the chapters and by directly contacting court executive offices, offering a template proclamation to share with their Board of Supervisors.



San Bernardino County's Board of Supervisors publicly recognize their sitting Civil Grand Jurors during a prior 'Grand Jury Awareness Month' event.

If your county makes a proclamation or hosts an event this year, please send us (**John Bradley**) photos and any other press coverage so that we can recognize you and your peers in the *Journal*!

Outreach Time

Counties soon will be recruiting members for their 2026-27 civil grand juries. Chapters can help in this effort. For speaking to local groups, download **[Civil Grand Jury Talking Points \(PDF\)](#)**.



Ask the Trainers by the Training Committee Co-chairs



Marsha Caranci

In this regular column, the CGJA training team shares with Journal readers our responses to questions we receive from grand jurors. Please remember: Do not take any responses as legal advice and contact your local legal advisors to answer any question that might divulge confidential information.

You may submit your questions to cgjatraining@cgja.org. If your question appears in a future edition of the Journal, it might be edited and will not be attributed to you.

Questions

We have a quick follow-up question for someone we already interviewed once. Can a single juror be assigned to get the answer on their own? Does the admonition the interviewee signed earlier still apply?

When members of our grand jury are recused from an investigation due to a perceived conflict of interest, we know they must leave our meeting when this topic is being discussed. Do we also need to limit their access to the records kept on our shared drive for this investigation, including minutes, draft reports, etc.?

What can the sitting grand jury do to assist the court and local CGJA chapter in recruiting viable candidates for the next grand jury?

Read the answers.



Richard Rogers

Foreperson Roundtable Discussions – February

CGJA is sponsoring two foreperson roundtable sessions this month, hosted on Zoom by our Foreperson and Pro Tem Workshop training team. We hope all current forepersons and/or their pro tems or designees will be able to attend on one of the following dates:

Thursday, February 12, 2:00 to 4:00 pm

or

Tuesday, February 17, 2:00 to 4:00 pm.

Pre-registration is required by Friday, February 6. [See details](#).

Combined Membership – UPDATE

Last fall, CGJA introduced the Combined Membership Renewal Program to make it easier and quicker to join CGJA and support one's local chapter. One can join or renew membership to both in one easy step. Also, it encourages outgoing grand jurors to join their local chapter at the same time they convert their free introductory membership to a full CGJA membership.

Eleven chapters are participating in the program and to date 27 members (and four members whose chapters are not yet participating) have signed up. Several other chapters are considering participation in this program and will be welcome to join as they decide.

You can [join or renew](#) your membership in CGJA today, along with your local chapter if they are participating. For more information, please reach out to the [Member and Chapter Relations Committee](#).

behind the scenes

Jim Glover – “Why I Volunteer” by John Bradley

Hard work, volunteering and ‘being a part of the solution’ have always been an integral part of Jim Glover’s life. He’s a California native, born and raised near the top of the state in Arcata on northern California’s Redwood Coast. Eighty years later, he still lives nearby. [Read more](#).





Solano, from Martha Saldaña-Wolf, Chapter President



In November 2023, CGJA Director Robert Finlayson (Contra Costa Chapter) met with an interested group of former grand jurors in Solano County to discuss his chapter functions and how to proceed in forming a chapter. [**See how far we have come.**](#)

In Remembrance – Judy Calpo

by Wayne Goodman, Solano County Civil Grand Jury

In Solano County, prior to civil grand jurors being volunteers in Solano County, panelists were appointed by local elected officials.

Rio Vista resident and denizen Judy Calpo lived in the Trilogy community developed during the 1990s. She regularly attended city council meetings, frequently speaking out about issues affecting the city. Eventually, Mayor Fred Harris selected her to serve on the Solano County Civil Grand Jury. [**Read more about Judy.**](#)



new MEMBERS

Name	County
Lia White	Butte
Sue Colby	El Dorado
Guy Aronoff	Humboldt
Vicky Joyce	Humboldt
Marlena Maloney	Humboldt
Doug Smith	Monterey
Patrick Muleady	Napa
Dan Louie	Orange
Phil Ochoa	San Diego
Linda Ferrell	San Joaquin
JT Verbeck	Santa Cruz
Karen Buchko	Yolo
Mike Familia	Yolo
Ahna Ligtenberg Heller	Yolo
Sherida Phibbs	Yolo

Recent Board Actions - click here

Keep us Posted

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 media for publication in the next issue.

March 23, 2026

Please [**update**](#) your contact information (if needed).

Join/Renew your membership

Serve on a committee - see the [committee descriptions**](#).**

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**.

STAY CONNECTED



[Visit our website](#)

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Civil Grand Jurors' Association of California | 1017 L Street # 320 | Sacramento, CA 95814 US

ASK THE TRAINER

Q. We have a quick follow-up question for someone we already interviewed once. Can a single juror be assigned to get the answer on their own? Does the admonition the interviewee signed earlier still apply?

A. Penal Code section 916 requires that all interviews are attended by no fewer than two grand jurors. We call this the Rule of Two. A new signed admonition is not required for follow-up interviews, but the jurors should remind the interviewee that the admonition is still in effect.

Q. When members of our grand jury are recused from an investigation due to a perceived conflict of interest, we know they must leave our meeting when this topic is being discussed. Do we also need to limit their access to the records kept on our shared drive for this investigation, including minutes, draft reports, etc.?

A. The purpose of the recusal is to make sure that a juror who might have a bias (or perceived bias) will not influence the grand jury in its investigating and reporting on that matter. If that recused juror happens to see minutes or other documents but does not comment on what they see to any other juror, there is probably no harm done. However, we think it would be best practice to ask jurors to refrain from reading any documents in the shared drive that have to do with the investigation from which they are recused. It should be emphasized that this is an ethical obligation and that the jury trusts them to do the right thing.

Q. What can the sitting grand jury do to assist the court and local CGJA chapter in recruiting viable candidates for the next grand jury?

A. The sitting grand jury should first find out what steps the court is taking to recruit new jurors and ask if they can assist. If there is a local CGJA chapter in their county, the grand jury should find out if the chapter is involved in recruiting and coordinate efforts with them as well.

Jurors can talk about their experience with friends and acquaintances who they think would be good candidates. **Talking points** about becoming a grand juror are available on CGJA's website. Jurors can also refer candidates to CGJA's website under Get Involved, Become a Civil Grand Juror if they are interested in learning more about grand jury service (**Become a Grand Juror – Civil Grand Jurors' Association**).

Jurors can participate in an orientation program for potential candidates, describing in general terms their current experience including the work involved and benefits derived, and answering any questions the applicants may have.

In their consolidated final report to the public, the jury can include an application form with information on how to apply to become a grand juror.

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Foreperson Discussion Roundtable

These sessions are designed to give forepersons and pro tems an opportunity to network with each other, share experiences, and ask questions at this mid-point of their term. Participants are encouraged to submit questions and topic ideas in advance, although additional questions may be addressed during the sessions as time permits.

Pre-registration is required by Friday, February 6, so we can send you the Zoom meeting information. There is no fee to attend this program. To register, please send an email to: cgjatraining@cgja.org and indicate which session you plan to attend. You can include any topic ideas or questions you may have in your registration email.

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Jim Glover – “Why I Volunteer”

by John Bradley

As a hearing son of two deaf-mute parents, Jim became aware at a very early age of their extra challenges. “I became aware of *their* needs to be supported – things like interpretive communications services at banks and other entities. When I saw people who helped them, I felt that I wanted to do something, too – not only for other deaf people, but for people who had a need,” Jim says. “I think that’s where my desire to volunteer and serve originally comes from.”

A high school student body president, Jim went on to spend three years at Humboldt State (now Cal Poly Humboldt). While working part-time at a drugstore, a neighbor offered him a full-time job in a local supermarket. He quit school and soon moved into grocery store management – a career which over the next forty years took him to several local supermarkets. At age 69, he retired. “That’s when I began to really take on other pursuits that could help the community.”

He discovered the civil grand jury. He served in 2016, was held over and elected foreperson, a position held three times, including one during the pandemic. He joined the local CGJA chapter, where he is currently secretary/treasurer.

A colleague suggested his getting involved with CGJA. Attending his first annual conference, he was buttonholed by then-president, Travis Gibbons, who persuaded him to chair the Member and Chapter Relations Committee (MCRC). Jim says “My goal was to try and find ways to increase involvement and interest in grand juries in general – though not necessarily (through) CGJA. I saw the association as vehicle to do that.”



Continuing as secretary for the MCRC, Jim helped Michael Hofman develop the membership database and served on the Nominations and Elections Committee.

He has been a CGJA director since 2022 – the favorite of his CGJA roles. “Being on the board is very interesting to me. Board service clarifies how the various parts of CGJA function.”

In addition to CGJA, Jim volunteers for the League of Women Voters, NAACP, and Humboldt County’s Human Rights Commission, where he has been involved for nine years and currently chairs.

Inspirationally based

As to CGJA, he’s pleased with what he’s seeing. “I like that we are modifying our approach; we’re no longer as much a ‘procedurally based’ introduction to people as an ‘inspirationally based’ introduction. People have to be inspired before they’ll put effort into following procedures and learning all that there is to learn (for a volunteer position). These people are the ones who will recruit members from the community to become new jurors.”

Asked if he would encourage others to similarly volunteer, “Oh, *absolutely!*” Jim concludes. As he would probably add: Never waste the opportunity to “be part of the solution.”

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Solano Chapter, by Martha Saldaña-Wolf

Deciding to develop the Solano Chapter, the formation committee met with the Solano County Presiding Superior Court Judge. They discussed their goals as well as the Court's goals and needs. Once the two reached an understanding of the chapter's role, the judge pledged the use of a jury meeting room as well as financial support for any recruitment efforts.

Then the real work started, e.g., paperwork. Finally, at its annual meeting in October 2024, CGJA officially recognized the Solano Chapter as the newest addition to the CGJA family.

Since then, the chapter has been busy developing and implementing its action plan. The chapter was out of the gate with recruitment/informational presentations to local community organizations.



Meeting with court administrator.

Farmers markets became second homes to some members as they spread the word about what a Civil Grand Jury is and the need for each and every member of the Solano community to step up to make the process effective.

Chapter members wrote articles about the Solano Civil Grand Jury and its successes. Members have started laying down the groundwork for producing podcasts to use as recruitment tools.

Since the court has begun cleaning up its website and deleting some of the older grand jury reports, the technology committee is developing a website which will include a drop box. The plan is to retrieve and save reports so that sitting grand juries can access them to get the history of grand jury investigations.

Meanwhile, the Solano Chapter continues to maintain a positive attitude as it grows its membership and stretches its reach into the community.

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In Memoriam – Judy Calpo, by Wayne Goodman

As a panelist, Judy frequently spearheaded investigations into county programs that cost too much, underprovided expected services, or had outlasted their usefulness. She also organized many of the grand jury's social events. Every month she would remind people of birthdays, and in December, everyone received a holiday card with a candy cane attached.

I first met Judy in 2008. She served as the Pro Tem that term. No one wanted to get stuff done more than she did, nor as quickly. The two of us worked as a team to represent the Solano County Civil Grand Jury at city council meetings in Dixon and her city of Rio Vista. I served with Judy a half dozen more times, and I have never met anyone as dedicated to improving conditions for the residents of the county.

In addition to her service to the Solano community, Judy often offered a hand at CGJA events. Her volunteerism

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Board actions

01-27-26

Adopted amendments to the CGJA Policy Manual sections 12.50 and 12.60.

Ratified NEC Appointments - Northern Region: Jon Tonsing, Chair (director) and Marsha Caranci (member), Central Region: Karen Michael (director) and Bruce Frank (member), Southern Region: Lori Macdonald (director) and Gary Hoffmann (member).

Ratified Martha Saldaña-Wolf as Awards Committee Chair.

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