



Training the Trainers

by Marsha Caranci, Training Committee Chair

On April 28, 29, and 30, CGJA's Training Committee held our annual **New Trainer Orientation**, followed by a **Train-the-Trainer Workshop**. All but one of our 19 veteran trainers and 11 of our 12 new trainers for 2023 attended. The three days of workshops took place in Sacramento.



These workshops are held to introduce the new trainers to our program, review our curriculum for the upcoming training season, and clarify and prepare our best practices answers to the many questions we are asked each year. Our first such meeting was in 2008, so this is a well-established event that we believe has helped make the program stronger every year. We missed meeting in person during the pandemic, so it was great getting together again in Sacramento to get to know each other better and work on improving our skills and knowledge. [Read more.](#)

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: Do not take any response as legal advice and contact your local legal advisors to answer any question that might divulge confidential information.

You can 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. Is it okay to conduct exit interviews via telephone or videoconferencing?

A. Yes. Scheduling exit interviews, which are essential for the purpose of confirming findings before your report is released, can be done efficiently by phone or video conferencing (video is preferred so the parties can see each other and assure that no one else is in the room). This can be important if you need time to correct your report before it's released. [Read more.](#)

Q. One of our draft reports is more than 30 pages long. Will it ever be read? Is there a way to make it more reader friendly?

A. This is a great question. Excessive length will weaken a report's impact. Well-organized succinct reports are more likely to be covered by the media and read by the public. [Read more.](#)

Q. If there are no recommendations resulting from our required inquiry into our local jail, can we just report that we conducted the tour and found no problems?

A. No. While a grand jury is required to "inquire" into the management and condition of public prisons in the county (PC §919(b)), the penal code does not require the grand jury to write a report about that inquiry. In fact, no report is allowed unless a full investigation to verify the information gathered during the tour is conducted. [Read more.](#)

April 2023 Multichapter Meeting



Approximately thirty individuals, representing fourteen chapters, participated in the online multichapter meeting on April 26. [Check out the highlights.](#)

How Does Your County Recruit Grand Jurors?



When it comes time to recruit new grand jurors there are a lot of strategies counties and chapters employ. What works in one county does not necessarily work in all.

El Dorado, Santa Cruz, and Shasta chapter members placed yard signs and banners on busy corners, in neighborhoods, etc. Orange County posts announcements in the regular jury room.

Here is a [link](#) to a list of tactics used by some other counties around the state.



Social Media as a Communication and Recruiting Tool

Most everyone is familiar with *Facebook* and *Instagram*. There is another tool you can use to spread the word about grand jury reports and recruiting for new jurors. It's **Nextdoor**. Here is an easy "[How to](#)" to sign up. Nextdoor may not be in every community, but in many it can be a great way to get the word out.



2023 Annual Conference Program Coming Together

The 2023 Annual Conference will be held **October 22-23, 2023**, at the **Embassy Suites in Walnut Creek, California**. Our theme this year is *Building Bridges with Outreach and Awareness*.

We have secured a speaking commitment from Dan Borenstein, editorial page editor and columnist for the *East Bay Times* and strong grand jury supporter. He will share his thoughts on building grand jury awareness. Ethan Rarick, Executive Director of the *Little Hoover Commission* (as reported earlier) remains as the keynote speaker. His theme will be listed later. [Read more.](#)

Nomination Deadline
June 30
[Printer-friendly instructions](#)

*objective methodology
response publicity
rationale
change clarity
accurate
fair
findings
significance
discussion*

CGJA
Best Grand Jury Report Award
California Grand Jurors' Association

CGJA
Best Media Coverage Award
California Grand Jurors' Association

Nomination Deadline
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News from Around the State

El Dorado County: CGJA's Newest Chapter

by Tom Murphy, President, El Dorado County Chapter, CGJA



The El Dorado County Chapter is excited to have been accepted as the newest chapter of the California Grand Jurors' Association. Previously El Dorado County had an independent Grand Jury Association that performed similar functions as CGJA. It ceased activity during the height of the pandemic. It had been the county's primary recruitment tool for new jurors.

Thankfully, a small group consisting of both former association members and newer jurors recognized the gap in recruitment efforts, and worked to reestablish an association presence. This time around, the group decided to become a chapter of CGJA. With the support and assistance of CGJA, the El Dorado County Chapter was approved on February 28, 2023. [Read more.](#)



from the San Mateo Chapter

After a three-year hiatus the chapter's scholarship program has been revamped. This year all public high school seniors were eligible to apply for a scholarship. Students must have at least a 2.0 GPA, provide a letter of application which includes background, community service, clubs, offices held, and plans after high school.

Students are directed to the CGJA website where they will find the 4th edition of the book titled *California's Civil Grand Juries – History, Law, How They Operate*. Based on what students have learned from the CGJA website and reading the book they are asked to answer the following questions when writing their 300 minimum word essay

What is the purpose of the civil grand jury system (not to be confused with the criminal grand jury system) in California?

What are its historical origins?

Why do you think the civil grand jury system is important?

This year's recipient of a \$1000 scholarship is Aran O'Sullivan, Carlmont High School, Belmont. Read the essay [here](#).

from the Alameda County Chapter
**In 75 Words: The Urgent Need for Honest,
Unbiased Ballot Language**



by Michael Henn, Implementation Chair, and Janet Clark, President,
Alameda County Chapter

The 2021 Alameda County Civil Grand Jury report, "The Need for Accuracy and Impartiality of Ballot Measure Questions", should be particularly important to all Californians, and we hope that CGJA will support and endorse our good governance efforts. The report showed that partisan ballot wording misleads voters as to what our local ballot measures would do and cost. [Read more.](#)

More Celebrating of Grand Juries

We've become aware of three more counties that celebrated Grand Jury Awareness month since the April *Journal*. Sonoma County honored Grand Jury Awareness Month as did El Dorado and Monterey counties.



Sonoma County Supervisor David Rabbitt, presenting the proclamation to Judge Shelly Averill.



READ what good support looks like.

To submit a nomination, see **[Certificate of Special Recognition.](#)**

**from Larry
Herbst**



Once again, as CGJA webmaster, I find myself bringing about a redesign on our website as I did back in 2017. We are in partnership with Elevation Web, a Washington D.C based website design company with nonprofit focus. I anticipate launching the new website sometime in the second half of 2023 and will keep our members updated over the next few months in our CGJA Journal. **[Read more.](#)**

RECENT BOARD ACTIONS

KEEP US POSTED. Send chapter/association news and accomplishments. **[Read more.](#)**

[Join/Renew your membership](#)

Serve on a committee - fill out our [Volunteer Interest](#) form.

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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