



THE NEWSLETTER

GRAND JURORS ASSOCIATION OF ORANGE COUNTY

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10064 Sunn Circle, Fountain Valley CA 92708

February 2011

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JOIN US FOR LUNCH
Thursday March 3
at Meridian Sports Club
1535 Deerpark, Fullerton

Speaker
Reed L. Royalty
President - O.C. Tax

"Financing State Programs
with Local Taxes"

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

GREETINGS!!!

From the President's Keyboard

My message for this quarterly newsletter relates to a topic that often arises when former grand jurors congregate... Do grand jury reports truly bring about meaningful change in the operation, efficiency, and effectiveness of local governments or are we little more than noisy toothless tigers?

All too often I have heard that local agencies have perfected the art of dismissing our concerns through obfuscation, denial, delay, or outright rejection. It is true that most of the agencies that have been the subject of our studies have had numerous opportunities to respond to grand jury reports and it is little wonder that they know full well that grand jury terms expire after a year. Obfuscation can be an excellent tool to divert attention from the issues we have raised. Challenging our investigators' expertise or understanding of complex issues can form the basis for denial. Delaying tactics can buy time until the in-

(continued on p.2)

MARCH LUNCHEON SPEAKER



Our speaker for the March 3, 2011 luncheon meeting will be Reed L. Royalty, President of the Orange County Taxpayers Association (OCTax).

He will comment on some of the controversial implications of items included in the 2011-12 State Budget package released in January by Governor Jerry Brown.

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Message (contd. from p.1)

investigators' terms have expired allowing the issue to fade into the sunset. Outright rejection of our recommendations can be based on budgetary constraints or limited legislative authority, whether true or not.

Grand juries have developed a number of ways to avoid these often cynical tactics. We are taught, for example, to approach investigations in a collaborative manner and not conduct inquisitions. If investigators and agency staff can reach consensus on problems and solutions, reports can be an afterthought rather than an expose'. Our goal should primarily be the correction of problems and improvement in government function, not playing "Gotcha Journalism". Issuing reports (when ever feasible) early in the jury's term would oblige agencies to respond directly to the original investigators rather than the next grand jury who may or may not have interest or time to challenge response deficiencies. Although every Orange County Grand Jury is a unique body, each generally impanels a committee to ensure continuity from one panel to the next. An important element of continuity is tracking agency responses to previous years' investigations. The thoroughness of these response reviews varies from year to year but, at the very least, the committee catalogues responses and ensures that they are posted on the Grand Jury web site for public view. (Does anyone else wonder why the media, which often headlines the release of our reports, rarely men-

tions agency responses?)

Is there any recourse if a termed-out panel member finds fault with the responses offered by an agency after his/her service ends? Well, it depends. The original investigative team could ask the sitting grand jury to review the responses or submit a formal complaint requesting further action. If the sitting grand jury is convinced that responses are, in fact, inadequate, they can initiate a follow-up study (if time and interest allows). Writing letters to the editor might also be an option but probably wouldn't bring much satisfaction. The Grand Jurors Association of San Diego has a formal agreement with the County CEO to conduct a thorough review of all county agency responses and summarize the findings in a report to the CEO by the end of each calendar year. The CEO initiated the process more than 10 years ago and is very supportive of the concept. He personally reads the summary report and directs all agencies to take corrective action, if needed. Our Association has a mechanism in place to form a Tracking and Implementation Committee under a formal agreement with the Orange County CEO. The Committee would be empowered to review agency responses to grand jury reports and submit findings to the CEO. Our Board, being cognizant of the structure of Orange County grand juries, is mindful of the potential conflict that could arise if the sitting grand jury chooses to address inadequate agency responses on any investi-

gations conducted by them or their predecessors. To avoid any infringement upon sitting grand jury authority, we defer to them on the subject of adequacy of agency responses. If the sitting grand jury is unable or unwilling to respond to an investigator's concerns, we are authorized to initiate a review for the CEO's consideration. This applies, of course, only to those agencies or departments under the CEO's purview.

If a former grand juror asks us to consider the adequacy of responses to their report, we will consult with the sitting grand jury foreperson to determine if the Association has a role to play. If we do, an Ad Hoc Tracking and Implementation committee will be impaneled which would include one or more members of the original study team and selected Board and regular Association members with expertise in the subject matter. It is a given that the first step in the process would be to determine if a complaint has merit and warrants further study.

We believe that this process gives us considerable power to challenge the adequacy of County agency responses without infringing or interfering with the sitting grand jury's authority and prerogative.

As always, I welcome your comments on any subject. Please feel free to share your thoughts or ideas by calling 714-328-3255 or emailing *morelandjoe@hotmail.com*.

NOTES & MISCELLANY

TREASURER'S REPORT

As of Jan 28, 2011
Orange County Credit Union
Business Checking Balance
\$4,915.00
.Certificate of Deposit
\$8,832.57
Total
\$13,747.57
Joe Quiros, Treasurer

MEMBERSHIP

There are 123 GJAOC paid memberships for 2011, as we go to press. Charlotte Fox will be sending a "reminder" renewal letter on February 15th to folks on our roster that have not rejoined.

GJAOC AUDIT

In accordance with the Bylaws, Bob Fauteux and Pat Coakley credited the books of the Grand Jurors Association of Orange County for the year 2010. They reported all in good order at the February meeting of the GJAOC Board.

We want to take this opportunity to thank Pat and Bob for volunteering their time and expertise in performing this audit.

OC SENIOR GUIDE 2011

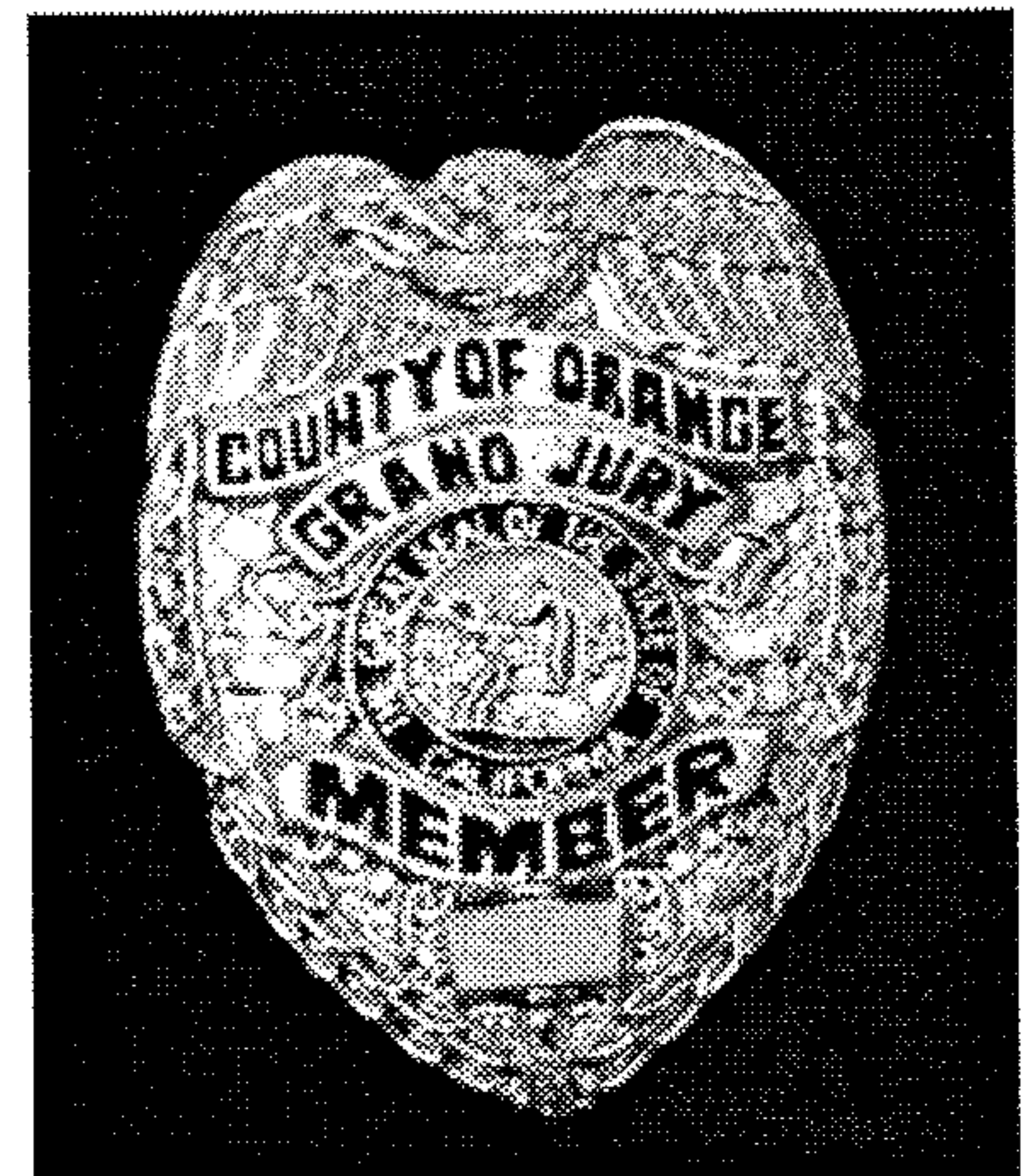
Did you get a copy of the OC Senior Guide distributed at the December luncheon? If you did and had a chance to go through it, please take the time to share your opinion about it. What features did you like, which ones do you think should be deleted? What features would you like to see added to the 2012 guide? Any other changes? Please e-mail your comments to Rose Moreno at rsmoreno35@verizon.net. If you would like to help put the next guide together at the Council on Aging, please indicate so to Rose. Copies of the 2011 edition are still available.

NOMINATIONS

Carol Duensing will chair the 2011 Nominating Committee. Thinking ahead to 2012 - if you might be interested in serving on the Association Board of Directors, contact Carol.

IN MEMORIAM

Dorothy Janet Taylor
Dunn
1971 panel
Nancy Feinstein
1989 -90 panel
Bob Linn
1994-95 panel



Grand Jury lapel pins are available from Glen Stroud, gmstroud@aol.com, for \$6. Submit your request for delivery at our quarterly luncheon, or we will make other arrangements. Please do not include the \$6 with any other fee: quarterly luncheon or membership dues. You may purchase one or more.

Luncheon Speaker
(contd. from p.1)

As you are aware, the Governor has proposed a wide ranging package of tax increases and program cuts to fill an estimated \$25 billion budget shortfall. The increased tax proposals may result in a special election in June, 2011. Program tax cuts range from the reallocation of Redevelopment Commission funding to shifting a number of state level health programs and criminal justice activities down to local governments.

Reed has been involved with business, local and state government and political matters for many years. He served as AT&T's Area Vice President-Southern California, and founding Vice President of AirTouch Cellular (now Verizon Wireless). He has many years of experience as a lobbyist to the federal and state governments, county governments, including Orange, Los Angeles and San Diego, and many cities.

He has chaired over 30 community and business organizations, including the Orange County Business Council, San Diego Chamber of Commerce, including the presidency of the Orange County Taxpayers Association. He is a board member of the Orange County Employees Retirement System (OCERS). His political and legislation opinion pieces are widely published.

Reed has degrees (with honors) from Harvard University and

Pepperdine. He and his wife Gina reside in San Juan Capistrano. They have three children and 10 grandchildren.

-Bob Fauteux

**YOUR TAX DOLLARS
AT WORK**

An important part of the Measure M2 transportation sales tax in Orange County is an 11-member Taxpayers Oversight Committee (TOC) that monitors the Orange County Transportation Authority's use of funds. The committee's goal is to make sure that all revenue collected from Measure M1 and Renewed Measure M2 is spent on voter-approved transportation projects.

Applications to become a member of the TOC for its 2011-2014 term will be accepted from March 15 to May 2. Two positions are open, one each in the Second and Third Supervisorial Districts. Orange County residents residing in these areas are eligible to apply. Please note that this is a volunteer position and no monetary compensation will be paid to committee members.

The Grand Jurors Association of Orange County is conducting the recruitment program. To request an application, call GJAOC's Selection Panel at (714) 970-9329 or visit octa.net/tocrecruitment after March 15th.

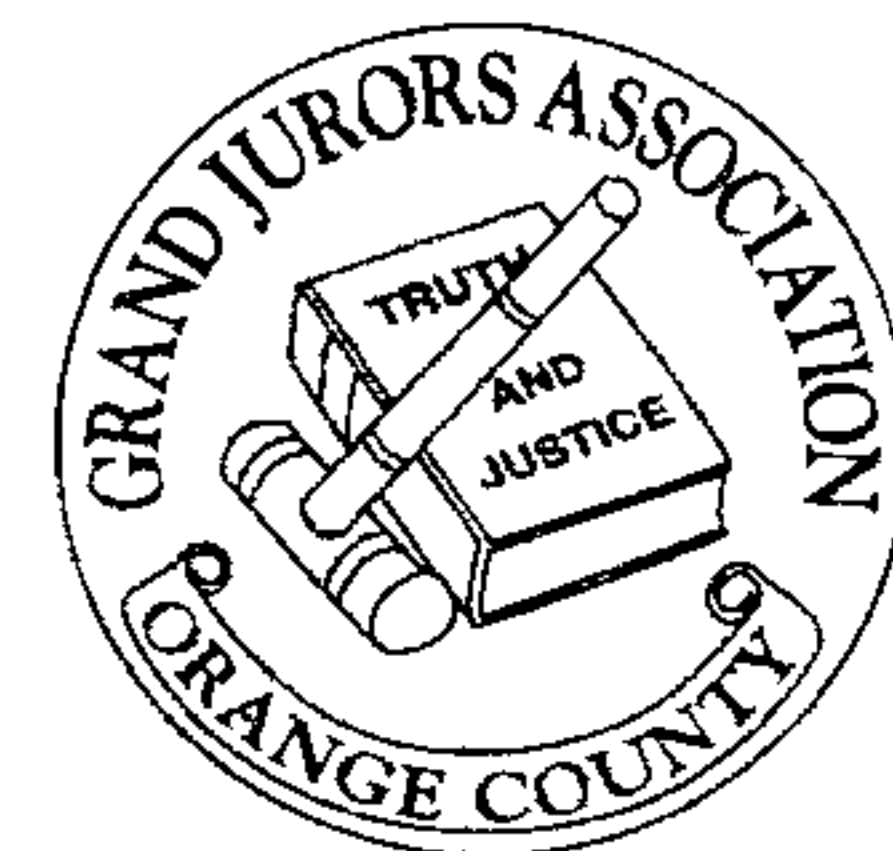
BYLAWS BOOKLET

For the Bylaws Booklet, see Cheryl Brothers at the March 3 meeting if you did not pick up the new by-laws booklet in December.

All remaining member books will be mailed following the March meeting.

NEED YOUR INPUT

Your Board of Directors are asking for your help. What can we do to make the general public aware of who the Association is and what we do? What do you think we should be doing? Send your thoughts to Glen Stroud, gmstroud@aol.com, by February 24. Association President Moreland will have an update at our March luncheon.



Join us at the March Luncheon