



Grand Jurors Association of Orange County



Edition #2020-01

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2020

Marie Whittington - temporary editor

GJAO C DEFINED

The **G**rand **J**urors' **A**ssociation of **O**range **C**ounty (GJAO C) is a non-partisan organization of former Grand Jurors. Formed in 1970, the Association is governed by a Board of Directors, with committees and general members. The 11 member Board of Directors usually meets monthly and all members are welcome to attend. Agendas and Minutes are on our website www.GJAO C.ORG. General membership meetings are held quarterly in luncheon format.

The purpose of GJAO C is to support the Grand Jury's role and functions through outreach and education, and to encourage Orange County citizens to apply for Grand Jury service.

THE NEWSLETTER RETURNS

We are advised that GJAO C at one time had regular Newsletters. Your current Board of Directors wants to reinstate the NEWSLETTER to keep our membership informed about Association activities and achievements. Marie Whittington (GJ 15-16) agreed to be

temporary editor until someone with real media talent comes available. We anticipate that the contents will be notices and brief overviews of events and efforts with links to more in-depth information.

2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT. Stan Ness
1st VICE PRESIDENT - PROGRAM Lynn Bonas
2d VICE PRESIDENT - MEMBERSHIP. . . . Alf Lyle
SECRETARY & PARLIAMENTARIAN Bart Harlon
TREASURER Joe Moreland,
DIRECTORS Ian Guajardo,
April Lancaster, Diana Merryman, Tim
Ogata, Wanda Shaffer, Marie Whittington

Committees are under review for possible re-organization and duties clarified.

SAVE THE DATES for 2020

luncheons

Phoenix Club at 11:30 am

- **March 5**
- **June 4**
- **September 3**
- **December 3**

You can pay your annual \$20 Association dues at the luncheon check-in table - or - send your check, made out to GJAOC , to Alf Lyle, 11511 Gilbert St, Garden Grove, CA 92841

The Quarterly luncheons can become a mini-reunion for the jurors you served with. Contact Alf Lyle (who handles luncheon

reservations) **714/833-7071** to reserve a table for your group. Best attendance occurs when a “lead person” makes personal contact and special invitations. Alf may have contact information if you’ve lost touch with some of your number. If the timing is right, the invitation can also be in this NEWSLETTER.

LUNCHEON NOTES

If you were not at the September luncheon you missed two great speakers. FBI agent ***Fred Simon*** shared the current domestic crime and terrorism efforts of the FBI and law enforcement partnerships. He encouraged us all to view on-line personal safety videos to increase our individual safety in public spaces.

Former County Supervisor ***Bill Steiner*** gave special praise to the Grand Juries of the 1970’s in pushing the County to form successful public/private partnerships, most notably for the replacement of the aging ***Albert Sitton Home for Dependent Children*** with the state-of-the-art ***Orangewood Facility***. He lamented that Grand Juries are

seldom credited with their work for the community.

GJAOC HOSTS NEW GRAND JURY

In an effort to build a strong partnership with each new Grand Jury, GJAOC has initiated a new practice of hosting each new Grand Jury for a get acquainted reception. The first event was last July at Dave Chapel's lovely home in Santa Ana. The interaction was warm and positive and we answered many questions for the new jurors. The July reception is now part of our annual calendar of events.

SPEAKER'S BUREAU

Sandy Dunkin has been the dedicated Chair of the Speakers Bureau for several years. The primary goals are:

- Educating the public about the role and impact of the Grand Jury.
- Recruiting citizens to apply for Grand Jury service.

Our speakers regularly present the Grand Jury story to Civic and educational groups of all sizes, plus those called for regular jury

duty at the Central Court House. She has developed a slide presentation and handout materials. If you belong to a community organization interested in learning about the impact of Grand Jury investigations in both criminal and civil matters, please call Lynn Bonas, **714/612-4677**.

Editor's note: Sandy Duncan recently resigned this post to deal with health issues and a replacement has yet to be appointed. If any of you are interested in taking the lead for our Speakers Bureau, please contact our President, Stan Ness sness2@cox.net.

SPEAKING OF RECRUITMENT .

Applications for Grand Jury duty are below expectations and a cause of concern. The Court has extended the deadline to March 1, 2020 in hopes additional applicants can be identified. If you know **anyone** who might apply, please encourage their application. Grand Jury duty **is a big commitment** - one year, 5 days a week, token compensation of \$50/day and mileage. The

question for you who have served is:

Are there changes we could recommend to the Court to make Grand Jury duty more attractive? Please contribute your ideas to Vice President Lynn Bonas, lynn.bonas@gmail.com

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

1. In Fall we need volunteers to become trained docents for student Courthouse tours. Hours are flexible, training provided and docents work in teams of two. April Lancaster is our lead on this project and will provide more information in future issues.
2. A second life-changing opportunity is organ donation. Current Grand Juror Greg Tettner donated a kidney to his sister 16 years ago and continues involvement in this worthy cause. The annual ***Donate Life Run/Walk*** fundraiser donatelifeoc.org is April 25,2020 at Cal State Fullerton. Per Greg, “From its inception almost 20 years

ago it has grown . . . to a big shindig with several thousand participants. . . it’s a great event with lots to do. This year several Grand Jury members plan to join Greg and invites GJAOC to join his “team”. Call him if interested **714/357-2308**.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORTS COUNTY COUNSEL OBSTRUCTION

Grand Jury duty in Riverside County appears to be a bit more “wild west”. Go to RIVERSIDE COUNTY GRAND JURY www.riverside.courts.ca.gov and read the 2017 and 2018 reports on how their work was obstructed by the County Counsel, of all people.

GJAOC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

As with most organizations, GJAOC periodically reviews and updates our foundational guides. Last Fall a small committee reviewed and updated our By-laws and Standard Procedures. In Spring we plan to review Committee structure, and our Goals and Objectives. Marie

Whittington chairs a committee of three to draft any recommended revisions which will later be presented to the Board of Directors and then to the membership. These efforts reflect the Board's increased activities and endeavors to increase the recognition and influence of the Association.

CONTINUITY

The Continuity Committee (ConCom) is developing strategies to better meet the legal response requirements by "target" agencies or services. The law lays out response deadlines that straddle Grand Jury's term of service. The last response is due in October, four months *after* the Grand Jury that did the investigation and wrote the report termed out. Follow-up by the succeeding Grand Jury has been inconsistent, leaving many FINDINGS RECOMMENDATIONS unanswered or unresolved.

The ComCon also identified a pattern of GJ RECOMMENDATIONS that are so vague or imprecise that the responding agency can avoid

taking final/formal action.

ComCon hopes to work with the current GJ Continuity Committee on several points:

- > Make an annual Continuity Report an expectation for each Grand Jury which will include any carry-over items from previous years.
- > Adopt a format for FINDINGS and RECOMMENDATIONS that make them precise, measureable, and time-specific.
- > Invite the GJAOC in as a resource on Continuity - not to influence content, but to pursue FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS that are precise, measureable and time-specific. Stay tuned to see if we make progress.

ASSOCIATION LOGO

The Board is working on a design for a new Logo for the Association to replace the faux book and Croquet mallet in the current logo. Samples will be featured in the next NEWSLETTER. If you have a graphics talent, please sing out and help us! Contact Diana Merryman dgmerryman@gmail.com.

IN MEMORIAM: We are sad to announce the passing of our faithful treasurer, John Gaillie.

CONTACT US

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***Comments/Suggestions about
the NEWSLETTER to:***

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