



President's Message

It's May, and we are all waiting for the first reports from this year's Grand Jury. Also, excitement is growing to see who will be on next year's Grand Jury. So much anticipation as to what agencies were investigated and what recommendations were made for improvement.

The pool of potential candidates has been narrowed down to 30, and the drawing for the new panel has been moved to May the 27th, one week earlier than previously advertised. I know that there are some "repeaters" in the pool of 30, so it will be interesting to hear the names that come out of the bingo ball machine on the 27th.

As we ever so slowly come away from the pandemic and try to discover a new normal, if there even is such a thing, I would like to direct the attention of all members of the Grand Jurors' Association of Orange County to some of our committees that have languished during the past two plus years. In reviewing our current structure, I noted that there are some opportunities for Association members who still want to be actively involved, but don't want to take on a full load to step into some of these Standing Committees and contribute to the Association's impact in a variety of areas.

The list includes:

- Editorial/Public Relations
- Membership
- Program
- Public Service
- Speaker Bureau

I am sure that those who are currently active in some of these committees would appreciate a little help, and for those committees that have been on hold, maybe it is time to review what their scope of work is and see if there are Association members willing to step in and step up and put these committees back into full service.

Please remember to RSVP for the upcoming Luncheon at the Elks Club on June 2nd at 11:30. Our guest speaker will be Judge Maria Hernandez, the Assistant Presiding Judge, who will be speaking about her past experiences in dealing with human trafficking. If you did not attend the last luncheon, and still have fond memories of the Phoenix Club, you will be pleasantly surprised at our new location. The Elks Club staff are very accommodating, the food is great, and the location is freeway close, just another freeway. With a membership roll of 90, it would be a real pleasure to see as many of you as possible on June the 2nd.

As a heads up, there will be no GJAOC Board meeting in July. However, if members of the Association would like to see what it is like to be inside of a 24 foot metal container with about 600 pounds of explosives, I would like to invite you to come and see what it is like to work inside of a Safe and Sane fireworks booth. Give me a call or e-mail and I will fill you in on the details. Consider this a new investigation on your own part.



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I don't know why, but I found myself reflecting on this time of year. After applying for the Grand Jury comes that period of waiting to hear if you had made it into the pool of 90. And one way you knew was receiving that request to come down to the Central Justice Center and interview with a couple of Judges.

Now, I don't know about you, but I found having to sit before two Judges and respond to questions to be intimidating. Why do you want to be on the Grand Jury? What skills do you bring? What is your current

understanding of what the Grand Jury does? Do you have any agendas or bias? Ouch, can I have a lawyer present?

So, we put on our best outfit, try to prepare ourselves mentally on how to respond, and step out in faith that we have what it takes to become a member of the Orange County Grand Jury. Now, it is obvious that if you are reading this, you were selected, were part of a panel or numerous panels, and still have a passion for what the Grand Jury contributes to Orange County.

Participating in a recent Zoom meeting with the California Grand Jurors' Association (CGJA) was very worthwhile. It provided an opportunity to hear what the CGJA has planned for 2022. The big news is that CGJA is planning outreach to inform the entire State of California about what the Grand Jury is, what the Grand Jury does, and how residents across the state can become involved. Welcome to Grand Jury Awareness 2022.

As part of this outreach, CGJA also published an e-book entitled "*California's Civil Grand Juries, History, Law, How They Operate*". Board members and some Committee Chairs have already received a copy, but if you would like an electronic copy, please reach out to members of the Board or myself. This e-book has already been distributed to over 1,800 media platforms across the State.

Going forward, CGJA is working with a marketing agency to compile a data base of media contacts for the entire State so that local Grand Juries as well as those Counties that have active Associations or Chapters such as ours, can inform, recruit, and publish information about current Grand Jury reports. Since the 2020-21 Grand Jury used social media to reach out for new applicants, CGJA asked some of our members who were part of that outreach for assistance on how to make these new platforms workable across the State. They have stepped up, and if others in the Association would like to contribute to these efforts, please let Karen or myself know.

For the past two years, CGJA has conducted training for incoming Orange County Grand Jury panels on the civil investigation process. This has taken pressure off of sitting R&O committees as CGJA conducts two days of intense training on activities that comprise a majority of our work. Establishing a firm foundation for new panels by providing an understanding of how our work is to be conducted is crucial in setting a high bar so that reports will have a positive impact on agencies as well as the County. CGJA has also conducted classes for seated Orange County panels on report writing.

Going forward as an Association, let us look for more opportunities to work with CGJA, as there are benefits as well as contributions we could make. Should we become a Chapter of this statewide organization, our members could work on State level committees, assist with new panel training, and promote increased awareness to residents across the state so that they understand the impact of the Grand Jury in their County.

So as the time approaches to see the first reports from this year's Grand Jury and also the selection of the next Grand Jury, we need to be aware that there is much more we as the Grand Jurors' Association can contribute to how Orange County understands what these volunteers can and have contributed to the quality of life in our County.

I look forward to your ideas, your commitment, and openness to new challenges.