



# NEWSLETTER

## President's Message - Lynn Bonas

### December Luncheon

Judge David O. Carter was unable to be our speaker in December due to a hearing that was scheduled at the last minute on a case. But Judge Carter did send flyers to the luncheon with his annual invitation to his Christmas Pancake Breakfast, where he presided over the case of Santa Claus' unlawful entry into the U.S. Mark Takla represented the prosecution, and his wife, a federal public defender served as Santa's counsel.



Mark Takla, chief of the Dept. of Justice, Santa Ana filled in as our December speaker. His presentation on a case his team prosecuted was an interesting close look at the evidence presented that was featured on the TV show, Dateline. "Death at the Spa" aired Dec. 26th, 2025, season 32, Episode 26.

### March Luncheon

The board voted to provide food to Orangewood Foundation because of the food insecurity forced by the shutdown, GJAOC provided food to those young adults who have been emancipated at 18 yrs. of age. Numerous reports by the Grand Jury have documented the problems with the system. The Foundation that was headed by Bill Steiner for many years has breached the gap by providing many services for young people who have aged out of the system. Michelle Estrada, Community



Invitations with menu options and RSVP information will be mailed out in a few weeks.

## Spotlight on Terri Elders

GJAOC Director, Terri Elders, will introduce speaker Gaddi Vasquez. She worked with him at Peace Corps Headquarters when he was Director there. A former English and Journalism teacher, Terri Elders became a licensed clinical social worker after earning an MSW from UCLA. She's worked with such agencies as the LA County Department of Public Social Services, Arkansas Department of Health, and both Peace Corps and AmeriCorps\*VISTA.

As a Peace Corps Volunteer, Terri served in Belize, Dominican Republic, Republic of Seychelles, and USA with the Hurricane Katrina Initiative. From 2000 to 2004, at Peace Corps Headquarters in Washington DC, she was a program and training specialist for community health and HIV/AIDS, first for InterAmerica/Pacific Region and subsequently for Europe/Mediterranean/Asia Region.

In 2003, UCLA's School of Public Policy and Social Affairs honored her as a Distinguished Alumna. In 2006, she received the UCLA Alumni Award for Community Service. A lifelong writer, her stories have appeared in dozens of anthologies, including the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series.

From 2006 to 2014, Terri served as a public member of the Washington State Medical Commission, appointed by then-Governor Christine Gregoire. She was a member of the 2018-2019 OC Grand Jury.

## OC Fair Volunteers Needed

A primary mission of the GJAOC is to recruit Grand Jurors. One of the recruiting events that has had success in the past was having a table at the OC Fair. This year the Courts have scheduled Friday Aug 7- Sunday Aug 9 as days at the OC Fair. The GJAOC have been invited to come in pairs doing 2 hour shifts from 11-7 PM each day (3 days). The Court staff person was asking for names by the first week in May to share with the OC Fair team, so please complete this by April 25.

Please talk to a buddy about when you might be available and when you would prefer to cover a shift or two. Mark your availability and preferred times on the form whose link is below. If you and a buddy want to run a shift together, please name each other on the form with the same preferred times.

[GJ Recruiting at OC Fair - Volunteer Availability Survey Aug 7-9 2026 – Fill out form](#)



## Measure M

The Measure M2 Taxpayer Oversight Committee (TOC), formerly known also as OC Go, is an independent committee representing all five supervisorial districts in the County and that is responsible for ensuring the transportation projects in M2 are implemented according to the M2 Investment Plan approved by the voters. The 11-member committee has a balanced representation of all supervisorial districts, with ten private citizens plus the Orange County Auditor-Controller who is the Chairperson. The TOC meets bimonthly to review progress on the implementation of the M2 program.

Each year, as terms of appointed members on the TOC end, a recruitment process is conducted to fill vacancies. The recruitment process is conducted by the GJAOC. The GJAOC acts as an independent body serving in the interest of Orange County citizens. The GJAOC five-member selection panel conducts the recruitment process. The panel currently consists of GJAOC members Bill Underwood (panel chair), Chris Evans, Bette Flick, Peter Hersh, and Patti Whitman. They screen all applications, conduct interviews and recommend potential candidates for membership on the Taxpayer Oversight Committee once a year as terms expire. New TOC members are chosen by lottery from among the finalists at a meeting of the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Board of Directors.

This year there are openings for the TOC Board for Districts #2 and #3. The effort to recruit new members of the TOC has begun with the application solicitation process that started in January. Advertisements for these openings has appeared in seven local publications. To date they have received 10 applications, six for District #3, one for District #2, and for people living in the wrong district.

For more information see the [Measure M2 website](#) or email the [Measure M2 Committee Chair](#).

# Civil Grand Jurors' Association

The Civil Grand Jurors' Association of California (CGJA) consists of California county civil grand jury organizations and their members. Any county civil grand jury and individual current or ex civil grand juror can become a member for a small annual fee. Their mission is "To promote, preserve, and support the civil grand jury system through training, education, and outreach." The CGJA provides support for the county organizations, particularly the smaller county associations that don't have the resources the larger organizations, like the GJAOC, have. Most of the larger county civil grand juror organizations are not part of the CGJA since they have enough members and are adequately supported by their courts that they don't need the extra help.

The GJAOC Board is considering joining the CGJA and the CGJA Board has encouraged us to do so. Several individual GJAOC members are also members of the CGJA, several are CGJA certified trainers, and several have attended the annual CGJA Convention held in the fall. The goal of joining would be to support the CGJA and smaller county organizations where we can help. However, the GJAOC is self-sufficient and we have a great relationship with the Court so we do not want to make any significant changes in our operations or By-Laws. If it appears joining the CGJA would result in significant changes, we would decline and continue as we have been. For further information or to express your opinion, please contact any of the GJAOC Directors or attend a Board meeting or Luncheon. You may also email them. See the Contacts page on the website at [gjaoc.org/contacts](http://gjaoc.org/contacts). And for more information about CGJA, see their website at [cgja.org](http://cgja.org).

## Membership

Annual Dues are \$20 per July-June year. If you haven't paid your dues for the 2024-2025 term, please do so soon. Dues can be paid by cash, check, or credit card at our next luncheon. If members prefer, they can mail a check to:

**Grand Jurors' Association of Orange County**  
P.O. Box 354  
Orange, CA 92856

Remember: only GJAOC members who have paid their yearly dues are eligible to vote and enjoy a discount on luncheon fees! Membership information can be found on the website [gjaoc.org/membership](http://gjaoc.org/membership). If you have any questions pertaining to dues, feel free to email the Membership Chairman at [membership@gjaoc.org](mailto:membership@gjaoc.org)



## Court Ambassador Tour

### *Interested in volunteering?*

Contact April Lancaster, Ambassador Lead, at 714-865-2205 or by email at [ambassador@gjaoc.org](mailto:ambassador@gjaoc.org) if you, or someone you know, would be interested in serving as an Ambassador tour guide. Visit the web page at [gjaoc.org/ambassador](http://gjaoc.org/ambassador) for further information.

## Volunteer

Volunteers are the heart of our organization.

Get Involved contribute Give Inspire Teamwork  
help connect VOLUNTEER at GJAOC Purpose Make a difference DONATE Service

Grand Jurors' Association  
Orange County CA

Check out the many opportunities to become involved in the Grand Jurors' Association as described on the website Volunteer page at [gjaoc.org/volunteer](http://gjaoc.org/volunteer)

## Grand Jury Recruitment

**Orange County Grand Jury**

Accountant | Farmer | Writer | Insurance Adjuster | Barber | Marketing Manager | County Worker | Professor | Statistician | Writer  
Nurse | Physician | Business Owner | City Official | IT Leader | Social Worker

**You**

**Volunteer for a Rewarding Year**

You may be eligible to become part of a team of internal investigators who serve a one-year term to improve Orange County. **Apply to be a part of the Orange County Grand Jury!**

- Make a difference to your community
- Meet with top County leaders
- Get exclusive tours of jails, public works, and other key county facilities
- Work on a high-performing team
- ~\$1000 monthly stipend plus mileage with free preferred parking
- Serve as a watchdog entity, ensuring the performance of county, city & other local agencies are proper and ethical.
- Improve your government by making recommendations.
- Issue Indictments for serious crimes

*"Serving on the Grand Jury has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life."*  
- 2024-25 Grand Jury Member

**Apply Now!**  
OCGrandJury.org or scan

Only 19 Grand Jurors are selected for the panel.  
Next Term July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

The role of a Grand Jury differs substantially from a trial jury. It is a full-time assignment. Approximately 80% of the time is spent in a civil watching role with the remaining time spent in criminal indictment hearings and investigation hearings, not jury trials. Grand Jury proceedings are closed to the public.

To be eligible you must be a County of Orange resident, a U.S. Citizen, 18 years of age or older, have command of the English language, and possess sound judgement

**Recruitment is year-round.**

The [ocgrandjury.org](http://ocgrandjury.org) website has been updated to include on-line applications which can be filled out all year long. Check it out at [ocgrandjury.org](http://ocgrandjury.org).

We can all help the recruiting effort by talking to friends, family, acquaintances and posting on your favorite social media sites. Recruitment materials are on the website at [gjaoc.org/recruitment](http://gjaoc.org/recruitment)

**May 7, 2026, 1:00 PM  
GJAOC BOARD MEETING**

The next GJAOC Board meeting will be held in person and via Zoom. For more information, see the website Calendar page.

**June 4, 2026, 11:00 AM  
MEETING & LUNCHEON**

# CALENDAR

*Mark your  
Calendars*

# FUTURE PROGRAMS CORNER

Honestly, the GJAOC has been known for its excellent, high-caliber programs and speakers at the luncheons.

Invitations will be mailed to you in a couple of weeks.

Gaddi H. Vasquez will speak about his career in Public Service.

## *for future GJAOC Luncheons*

GJAOC Luncheons are typically held quarterly at the Santa Ana Elks Lodge. Generally, meetings start at 11:00 am while lunch will be served at 11:30 am. Dates and times, particularly many months out, may be changed, as needed, but will be updated in this Newsletter as well as on the website Calendar page at [gjaoc.org/calendar](http://gjaoc.org/calendar)

**Elks Lodge  
1751 S. Lyon Street  
Santa Ana, CA**

**Do you have a suggestion for a GJAOC speaker? If so, please email the contact information and why you think our members would enjoy hearing from this person/organization to Programs chair Chris Evans at [programs@gjaoc.org](mailto:programs@gjaoc.org)**

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Mailing Address: P.O. Box 354 , Orange, CA 92856

This email was sent to: [greg.tettermer@gmail.com](mailto:greg.tettermer@gmail.com)  
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