



2016 Quiz Committee Report

2016 Quiz Committee Members: John Taylor (San Francisco, Retired), Diane Patterson (Marin), Courtney Houle (Glenn), Gladys Coil (Napa), Jeanette Neiger (Solano), Angela Ford (Tehama)

On June 25, 2016, CCBSA lost a friend, a colleague, and a mentor in the passing of John Taylor. John, the retired Clerk of the Board for the City and County of San Francisco, was one of the founding members of CCBSA, a past CCBSA President (1989), and the creator of the *much beloved* Clerks' Quiz. John lived a rich life and touched the lives of *so many*.

Two years ago, the CCBSA Executive Committee identified the goal of “...ensuring maintenance of the Quiz in perpetuity.” The Quiz Committee **fully** supports this goal. CCBSA should be proud to carry on the Quiz as a legacy not only to John the colleague many of us knew and loved, but also to John, a respected leader with a rich, long, and varied career in public service.¹

Outlined below are some of the activities of the 2016 CCBSA Clerks' Quiz Committee.

Partnership with SouthTech Systems:

Understanding the budget challenges facing the Association, in mid-August 2016, Darlene Bloom (Orange County, Retired) and Diane Patterson proactively reached out to SouthTech Systems' Jose Dominguez and Grant Gyulnazaryan. Darlene, Jose, Grant and Diane discussed CCBSA budget challenges, concerns regarding Quiz costs, and our mutual fondness of, and admiration for, Quiz Creator John Taylor. Based on this outreach, SouthTech Systems generously offered to **cover \$4,800** in annual CCBSA expenses that had been paid by CCBSA since 2012.² This leaves CCBSA with \$1,460 in annual Quiz support costs - an expense that CCBSA has budgeted since 2006. It is the Quiz Committee's hope and expectation that CCBSA will continue budgeting \$1,460 to cover the annual Quiz costs.

It's important to note that before SouthTech partnered with CCBSA to rewrite the Quiz to a web-based platform in 2011, SouthTech was a generous sponsor of various CCBSA conference events for many years prior.³ The Quiz Committee hopes that CCBSA can provide SouthTech appropriate recognition for their generous contributions and partnership that enables CCBSA to continue not only the Quiz, which

¹ CCBSA recognized John as a role model when it established the “John Taylor Award of Excellence” in 2003.

² The \$4,800 reflected South Tech Systems providing Quiz hosting at \$3,000 a year and CCBSA covering the SouthTech Systems conference exhibitor booth space at \$1,800 as understood as part of a 2012 MOU between SouthTech Systems and CCBSA. It is unclear from CCBSA information available to the Quiz Committee if these costs were incurred beginning in 2012 or 2013.

³ While records available to the Quiz Committee are incomplete, CCBSA budgets reflect that SouthTech Systems made direct financial contributions to CCBSA in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009

has provided CCBSA a positive, high profile at CSAC conferences for over 25 years, but also supports John's legacy and his many contributions to CCBSA.

Additionally, it should be noted that upon hearing of SouthTech's offer, Angela Calvillo, Clerk of the Board for the City and County of San Francisco, also generously offered financial support for the Quiz. Other CCBSA members similarly shared ideas regarding supporting the funding needs of the Quiz. Clearly, John and the Quiz meant – and mean - a *great* deal to many. It is important that CCBSA continue to honor not only John's legacy, but to honor the goals CCBSA identified just two years ago of "...maintaining the Quiz in perpetuity."

John Taylor Tribute:

The Quiz Committee, led by Gladys Coil, worked with the CCBSA Conference Planning Committee to work towards scheduling a meaningful tribute of John Taylor at the 2016 Annual Conference.

Quiz Expenses:

Up until August 2016 when SouthTech Systems offered to cover annual Quiz costs, during the first 8 months of 2016, and in recent years, the Quiz expenses have garnered a high degree of scrutiny within the Executive Committee and within the Association. The Quiz Committee continues to welcome a broader discussion among *all* CCBSA members to identify Association budget priorities, including costs and priorities related to supporting the Quiz *and* CCBSA budget priorities *overall*.

CCBSA deficit spending, as proposed once again in the 2017 CCBSA budget, *cannot* continue.⁴ The Association should be proactive in identifying, through active engagement of the membership, budget priorities for securing a solid financial foundation for the Quiz and CCBSA and for being aggressive in seeking sponsorships.

Quiz Sponsorships:

The Quiz Committee fully supports any efforts of the CCBSA *Sponsorship Committee* in securing corporate sponsors⁵ of the Quiz to ensure its ongoing sustainability⁶. To this end, Quiz Committee was active in 2016 as follows:

⁴ Based on the proposed 2017 CCBSA budget and based on information available on the CCBSA website, CCBSA expenses *overall* have exceeded revenues for the last **five years**. (A deficit budget is again proposed for 2017.) Given that the Quiz costs in 2017 are projected to be \$1,460, and the budget unbalance proposed in the 2017 CCBSA budget is over \$4,000, it's clear that for 2017 and in the prior years when CCBSA has been running a deficit, CCBSA budget challenges are **not** due to the Quiz costs.

⁵ Annual CCBSA sponsorships from 2005-2008 averaged **\$5,000/year**. In the last 4 years (the same period that CCBSA has been operating at a deficit), the average sponsorship revenue has been around half of this amount (\$2,587.50). The 2016 proposed CCBSA budget circulated on November 7, 2016, reflects only \$1,000 in CCBSA sponsorships for 2016.

⁶ A response to a question in the recent 2016 CCBSA Executive Committee [Survey Question 7] "*Are there any line items of the CCBSA Annual budget that you feel do not support the Mission and Goals of CCBSA?*" stated "*the Quiz Committee should be responsible for obtaining funding for the quiz on an annual basis because the quiz is 100% discretionary.*" In 2016 the Quiz Committee **was very** proactive, starting 2 weeks after the 2015 CCBSA conference ended, in trying to engage the CCBSA leadership in seeking Quiz sponsors. However, the suggestions and efforts of the Quiz Committee were not acted upon. Additionally, CCBSA has a "Sponsorship Committee" charged with seeking sponsorships on behalf of the Association. While the Quiz is, as noted, "*100% discretionary*" so are **many** other things in the CCBSA budget (scholarships [Budget line 11], funding for regional meeting lunches [Budget lines 16-19], an open bar at the Installation of Officers' Reception [Budget line 34] and *many* other expenses. Should separate committees be established to seek funds for **these** "*100% discretionary*" expenses?

- In **December 2015**, following a discussion during the 2015 Executive Committee meeting, Quiz Committee members John Taylor and Diane Patterson provided a draft letter to the President/Executive Committee, proposed to be sent to Quiz supporters, to seek ideas for securing corporate partners to help offset Quiz expenses.
- In **January 2016**, Allan Krauter (Kern Co.) long-time Quiz player/supporter/competition prize winner contacted the CCBSA President providing suggestions for possible Quiz Sponsors
- In **mid March 2016** John Taylor and Diane Patterson, on behalf of Quiz Committee, participated on a March 17, 2016 Executive Committee Conference call related to the Executive Committee's agenda item to "*Review and approve the draft letter to be sent to Quiz takers at the 2015 Annual Conference to seek ideas for securing corporate sponsors to offset Quiz expenses.*"⁷
- In **early April 2016** John Taylor drafted a proposed Quiz sponsorship letter which was shared with the Association President.⁸
- In **early April 2016**, on behalf of the Quiz Committee, Diane contacted Jim Manker (CSAC Director of Corporate Relations) and David Liebler (CSAC Director of Public Affairs) related to CCBSA Quiz sponsorship efforts. Mr. Liebler offered to review any draft sponsorship letter CCBSA might craft. (These contacts/resources were shared with the President/Executive Committee.)
- In **mid-April 2016** Diane Patterson reached out to the *Portola Reporter* and CSAC, gaining their permission to reprint previous articles on the Quiz (as long as citation is provided) for use in any CCBSA Quiz promotion/sponsorship solicitation effort.
- **June 25, 2016**, Quiz Creator John Taylor died, not knowing whether any sponsors had been secured or whether the future of the Quiz was secure.
- In **August 2016**, Diane Patterson and Darlene Bloom reached out to SouthTech Systems and secured SouthTech's financial contributions towards the Quiz.

Quiz Participation Statistics:

The recent 2016 CCBSA Survey conducted by the Executive Committee included a question (#15) "Have you taken the Clerks' Quiz?" This question received 31 responses with 65% of the respondents noting "yes" they had taken the Quiz, and 35% of the respondents noting "no" they have not taken the Quiz. While getting CCBSA's own membership to take the Quiz has often been a challenge, the Clerks' Quiz continues to be enjoyed by *many* at the CSAC conference. The Quiz provides *high visibility* for CCBSA and a *positive profile* for Clerks at CSAC conferences.

The new web-based Quiz provides the opportunity to review various statistics of Quiz participants. Statistics from the 2015 Quiz reflect that there were 102 unique Quiz takers (that is, a person taking the Quiz only once), with the Quiz being taken **over 300** times representing participants from 39 of the 58 counties. (A participant can take the Quiz up to 10 times. The Quiz was taken 315 times in 2015, which includes those participants who took the Quiz more than once and a few who took it the maximum 10 times.) Some may view having 102 unique Quiz participants a low participation number,

⁷ The Quiz sponsorship letter discussed at the March 17, 2016, Executive Committee Conference Call had been agendaized for discussion at the January 21, 2016 Executive Committee meeting. The minutes of the January 21, 2016 Executive Committee meeting report "Item continued to next meeting." Apparently no Executive Committee meeting was held in February 2016, so the subject of the Quiz sponsorship letter, prepared by the Quiz Committee in **December 2015** had been deferred until March 2016. It was not until a Special Executive Committee meeting was held on **April 25, 2016** that the Committee authorized the "...CCBSA President to send out a single sponsorship letter on or about **May 1, 2016**..."

⁸ Quiz Committee is unaware if the letter John drafted was ever sent or any follow-up actions taken.

perhaps suggesting that the Quiz does not merit CCBSA's continued support. However, based on 1,000 registrants to the CSAC annual conference⁹, 102 unique Quiz participants represents **10%** of the CSAC conference attendees. What other CCBSA-sponsored event at the annual CSAC conference attracts and engages at least 10% of the *total CSAC conference population* (reflecting all disciplines)?¹⁰ The answer is **none**.

Additionally, statistics generated from the Quiz reflect that in 2015, the Quiz was taken nearly 16 times per hour. Given that the Quiz booth is only open during the hours of CSAC Registration¹¹, it can be expected that most of the activity at the Quiz booth would occur in between various conference sessions. Assuming the 5 minute Quiz could be taken at each of the 3 separate Quiz stations 6 times per hour allowing for time before/after each Quiz) would result in a total of the Quiz being taken 18 times/hour at the Quiz booth. Having the Quiz taken 18 times/hour generally reflects that all 3 Quiz stations are occupied fairly consistently during that hour. (Perhaps the statistic reflecting 102 unique Quiz takers took the Quiz in 2015 indicates a need for *additional* Quiz stations to respond to the interest!)

The Quiz final winners are generally announced during a general CSAC assembly luncheon. Again, what other CCBSA-sponsored event at the annual CSAC conference provides CCBSA this broad audience? The answer is **none**.

The Quiz is something that provides CCBSA with a high, *positive*, profile. It provides exposure to CSAC attendees that is ***unmatched*** by any other CCBSA Conference event at the CSAC Annual Conference. Sustaining the Quiz – and ***strengthening*** it - in the years ahead should be embraced.

Quiz History:

Given that there are several new CCBSA members who may not be familiar with the Quiz, and given that many Clerks have never taken the Quiz, outlined below is general information about the Quiz.

In **1988**, John Taylor (Retired Clerk of the Board for the City and County of San Francisco) proposed to the CCBSA membership to have a “...quiz about counties” at the CSAC Annual conference. CCBSA members enthusiastically embraced John's proposal. John created the Quiz as he thought it could raise awareness of the important partnership between Clerks of the Board and their county organizations – and it succeeded!

The Quiz is a 5 minute, multiple-choice Quiz that includes questions related to County seats, California geography, landmarks, CSAC and more. Each 5-minute Quiz randomly draws questions from a database of over 1300 questions, so each time a participant takes a Quiz it is really a different Quiz experience. Participants can take the Quiz up to ten times. It does not matter how many questions a participant answers, and there are no penalties for answering a question incorrectly, but speed is the most important factor in achieving a high score. Some participants are concerned that they won't do well and don't want their results known. Generally, the lower scores aren't revealed so there should

⁹ The “1,000” CSAC registrants number, is based on a response to the recent CCBSA Executive Committee Survey, which stated “In 2015, CSAC confirmed there were over 1,000 registrants to CSAC, including Clerks.”

¹⁰ The Clerks “Installation of Officers” reception attracts a fair number of County Supervisors. However, this reception includes an open bar which may account for the level of participation by some. CCBSA currently budgets \$5,000 for food and drinks for this event. Therefore, comparing attendance at the CCBSA Installation of Officers event with Quiz participation cannot be fairly done.

¹¹ Quiz Booth is generally open Tuesday 8:30-5:00 p.m., Wednesday 8:30-5:00 p.m. and Thursday 8:30 – 11:30 a.m. – a total of 20 hours.

be no hesitation to take the Quiz to see what some have called the “*best thing about the CSAC conference*”!¹² Participants can win two types of prizes – Instant Gratification Prizes and final cash prizes.¹³ Instant Gratification Prizes are prizes that are awarded immediately after a participant takes the Quiz with a qualifying number of questions answered correctly. There are also 10 cash prizes that are awarded at the end of the Quiz (generally during a CSAC general session – which is another way the Quiz provides CCBSA good exposure at the CSAC Conference).

Beginning around **2001** Nationwide Retirement Solutions annually provided contributions, in varying amounts, to CCBSA to offset the costs of the Quiz prizes.¹⁴ Nationwide ended their sponsorship in **2012**.¹⁵

In **2006**, the practice of providing \$10 “Instant Gratification Prizes” began, replacing the previous practice, which commenced in 2002, of awarding atlases, maps and books to the “Instant Gratification” prize winners.

In **2007** the “Quiz Committee” was formed for the purpose of ensuring the sustainability of the Quiz. The Quiz Committee membership initially consisted of John Taylor, Diane Patterson, Darlene Bloom (Orange) and Sylvia Bermudez (Imperial). The first Quiz Committee meeting was held with CSAC representatives in February 2007.

From 1989-2007, there was only 1 Quiz station for people to take the Quiz. As the Quiz is a 5 minute Quiz, allowing for transitions between participants taking the Quiz, having only 1 Quiz station allowed only between 6-8 Quiz participants to take the Quiz every hour. Given the popularity of the Quiz, there were requests to expand the Quiz booth from 1 Quiz station to multiple stations to allow for greater Quiz participation. To respond to this interest, in **2007** the CSAC Finance Corporation and Nationwide Retirement Solutions partnered with CCBSA to help underwrite the costs of computer programming to expand the Quiz from 1 computer station to the current 3 stations.¹⁶ (At the 2015 Quiz booth, volunteers reported they received requests from Quiz participants to further expand the number of Quiz stations!)

In **2010**, SouthTech Systems partnered with CCBSA to rewrite the Quiz to a more user-friendly, stable, web-based platform. (Prior to the web-based platform, on an annual basis, members of the Quiz Committee had to go to CSAC offices to update the Quiz database as CSAC provides the hardware at the annual conference for the Quiz booth.) CCBSA and SouthTech memorialized this partnership via a MOU that was executed in April 2011.

In **2014**, the CCBSA Executive Committee adopted a three-year Strategic Plan (2014-2016) identifying the goal of “*...maintenance of the California Clerks’ Quiz in perpetuity.*”

¹² Generally, the Quiz “leader boards” will report only the top 8 scores in each challenge category – Rookie League, Major League and Genius. So if a Quiz participant is concerned they won’t score well and wants to make sure their scores in their first attempt at taking the Quiz won’t show, wait until at least 8 people have taken the Quiz at that challenge level – something that is quickly accomplished at the start of the CSAC conference!

¹³ A total of 50 - \$10 Instant Gratification prizes (\$500) may be awarded. A total of \$960 in final Quiz cash prizes are awarded at the end of the Quiz, generally during a CSAC General Session providing additional exposure for CCBSA.)

¹⁴ Based on review of available CCBSA records, the following donations were provided by Nationwide: \$500 in 2001, \$1,290 in 2002, (No Quiz presented in 2003), \$1,290 in 2004, \$2,000 in 2005, \$2,000 in 2006, \$2,000 in 2007, \$3,000 in 2008, \$2,000 in 2009, and \$2,000 in 2010.

¹⁵ The Quiz Committee is not clear on the reason(s) why Nationwide ended their sponsorship.

¹⁶ \$1,000 provided by each Nationwide and CSAC Finance Corporation. Nationwide’s contributions for the Quiz in 2008, therefore, was a total of \$3,000: \$1,000 to expand the Quiz and \$2,000 for the Quiz prizes.

In **2014**, the Clerks' Quiz celebrated its 25th anniversary! A "Clerks' Quiz" logo was commissioned with a "look and feel" similar to the CCBSA logo.

In **2016**, SouthTech Systems again partnered with CCBSA to cover \$4,800 to offset Quiz expenses.

The future of the Quiz is in **YOUR** hands – the CCBSA membership. Hopefully, *preserving* the Quiz and *honoring* John Taylor's legacy – a legacy of not only what he did for CCBSA but for so many public service arenas and social justice causes – is something CCBSA will continue to support and promote for *years to come*.