



"Accountability"
The Government Watchdog

Information for the Thinking Person

Vanguard

News Service Vol V
Week of March 7, 2010

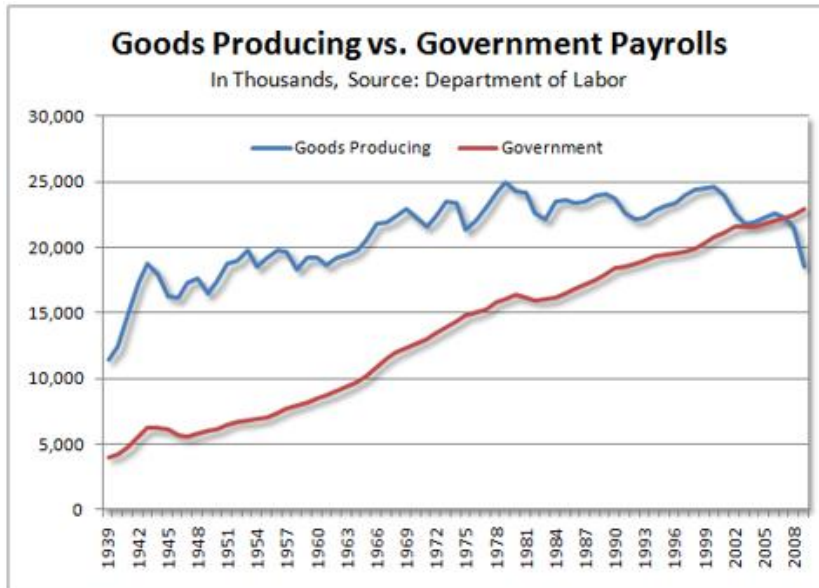
www.vanguardians.org
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THE STRONGEST MAN IN THE WORLD IS HE WHO STANDS MOST ALONE*

Vanguardians Purpose: To Inform, Educate, & Motivate for Involvement, Engagement & Advocacy



Let's keep LUNA Playhouse in Glendale. A new committee of performing arts minded people is working on several programs. Watch Vanguard for further information.



The Goods Producing category currently includes less than a million workers in mining and logging, about 6 million in construction, and 11.7 million in manufacturing. The Government category includes 2.8 million federal employees and almost 20 million state and local workers, just over half of whom work in education. Data from US Census and Bureau of Labor Statistics [Tim Iacono](#)

The bottom line is that the US has become government heavy. There is more government than we can afford

WOW



What do a holocaust-survivor/ social scientist/ author, a global AIDS physician and a musician have in common?

Fifty/Fifty Leadership and UNA Pasadena/Foothills Chapter cordially invite you to celebrate the 2nd Annual Women of the World (WOW) Awards to:

Dr. Riane Eisler, Dr. Shilpa Sayana and Whitney Kroenke Burditt
(pictured above, left to right) outstanding women being honored at the
2nd Annual Women of the World Awards on
Saturday, March 13th from 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Mijares Mexican Restaurant, 145 Palmetto Drive, Pasadena, CA 91105

Experience an extraordinary afternoon with the opportunity to mingle, talk with and listen to these adventurous, committed, difference-making women while meeting other people committed to making a difference and enjoying refreshments.

Imagine how your life could be impacted by these women as they tell their stories and speak of the fulfillment of the hope to so many.

Tickets are available at www.5050Leadership.org. Reduced price for students

David Warren, a Jewish Chaplain, had this to say about legislative ostriches: "People in the Capitol don't understand how bad things are right now," he said. "When things hit the fan ... and the legislators have to run for cover, they are going to say nobody told me."

America's Deadliest Jobs 2009: A Top 10 List

A list of America's deadliest jobs has been compiled from recently released data from the Department of Labor. According to Forbes.com and the Department of Labor statistics, the **top 10 most deadly jobs in America are:**

1. [Fishers and Related Fishing Workers](#)
2. [Logging Workers](#)
3. [Aircraft Pilots and Flight Engineers](#)
4. [Structural Iron and Steel Workers](#)
5. [Farmers and ranchers](#)
6. [Refuse and Recyclable Material Collectors](#)
7. [Roofers](#)
8. [Electrical Power-Line Repairers and Installers](#)
9. [Drivers:Traveling Sales/Truck Drivers](#)
10. [Taxi Drivers/Chauffeurs](#)

Fire and Police didn't make the list

[See the America's Deadliest Jobs Slideshow](#)

Vanguardians is embarking on an ambitious program that will allow the public to see comparable wages and benefits paid by cities in Los Angeles County. The request for information can be found on the [home page](#).

Vanguardians requested information from Planning Director Haghani to determine if two Glendale City Council members got a free ride by allegedly violating zoning codes and permit requirements. The document can be found on the [home page](#).

Vanguard is following the Charter Cable Lawsuit (2); the 5 GPD officers; Ovasapyan; Foothill Lumber; AIG (Gladys); Montrose Collection and other actions. They can be found at www.vanguardians.org

Welcome to Peter Moskal of Minneapolis who has taken on the role of Vanguardians Volunteer Forensic Accountant. **Vanguardians** is a local government accountability organization. We sometimes find it necessary to review public documents such as budgets and CAFRs, analyze the data and prepare our reports.

Vanguardians is looking for a volunteer construction project manager. **Vanguardians** is a local government accountability organization. We sometimes find it necessary to review public documents such as construction plans, bid documents, work and change orders and want a chartered professional to prepare our reports.

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1 COMMENTARY

You may agree or disagree with the views below. Feel free to comment on them. The commentaries do not necessarily reflect the position of Vanguardians

From the Publisher... DRACONIAN MEASURES TO REDUCE GOVERNMENT SPENDING



The burden our present elected officials have placed on the public not only in voting for unsustainable pensions and post-employment healthcare benefits but in borrowing by bonding and credit cards means there needs to be draconian measures taken to put the country, the state and the cities back on the right track.

Government employment for years was the least desirable. In 1940 at the beginning of WWII there were only 5,000,000 government employees and the government had just years before come out of a severe depression. Today there are over 20,000,000 government employees at a cost of over THREE TRILLION DOLLARS A YEAR using a cost factor of \$150,000 an employee. In fact the public option for health is only \$100B a year or \$1T in 10 years. A health care benefit that will move the taxpayer burden to the beneficiary as is done in Medicare. If government reduces the number of government employees by 25% the healthcare program is paid for.

But what can local government do?

- They can cut employment 25%
- They can cut salaries over \$100,000 by 24%
- They can stop overtime for managers such as Fire Battalion Chiefs
- They can replace CalPERS with social security where both employer and employee contribute an equal amount.
- They can support a national healthcare program
- They can hold salary negotiations in public
- They can stop double-dipping
- They can turn the clock back on their mistakes

What can the State government do in addition to the local government?

- They can do away with disability tax waivers
- They can tax the employer paid portion of pensions and retirement benefits 80%
- They can require that local government salary negotiations are public

The combination of the Social Security tax and the Medicare tax is often referred to as FICA. Combining the Medicare and Social Security, the FICA rate for 2009 is 7.65% withheld from the first \$106,800 of each employee's earnings and 1.45% on any employee's earnings above \$106,800. Since the employer matches these amounts, the employer must remit 15.3% of each employee's first \$106,800 of earnings plus 2.90% of any employee's 2009 earnings that are greater than \$106,800.

Self-employed individuals are responsible for both the employee and employer portions of Social Security and Medicare taxes.

My observation is that many career politicians are not running for re-election because they don't want to be caught red-handed with the hot potato, being blamed for fiscal irresponsibility which they actually caused while some newbie will get elected and proclaim his innocence in causing the problems. I asked Mike Gatto, a candidate for the 43rd Assembly District for his solutions to the fiscal crises. His response was to suggest I go to his webpage and watch his YouTube presentation. I went to his webpage and saw a recapitulation of the problems with no hard solutions. Tax oil depletion -- that of course will raise the price of gasoline -- a voter pocket book hit. There is not

one mention about reducing pensions, payroll and benefits, only to increase the costs of day to day living for Californians.

Most people want the benefits of an accountable government but are afraid to support those that work toward that end often because they fear retaliation or are the beneficiaries of the largesse or corruption of government

MORE NEXT WEEK...See you at the budget hearings.

BARRY ALLEN

"THE WORLD OF POLITICS IS ALWAYS TWENTY YEARS BEHIND THE WORLD OF THOUGHT." - JOHN JAY CHAPMAN

NEXT WEEK: SOLUTIONS

Coming Weeks – Glendale the business, homeowner friendly city; The new upper class created by City Councils; Leaders and Followers.



COMMENTARY: LAUREL MILLER IS ON ASSIGNMENT

COMMENTARY: Coming to a refurbished theater near you: HONEY, I SHRUNK THE COUNCILMEN

The Amazing story of the diminishing Glendale councilmen



With each passing year, as I watch councilmen respond to my inquiries, or observations, I've experienced the gradual discovery of very thin educational or business experience demonstrated by the men we've elected to office, followed by a subservient disposition toward the city manager and staff.

We can forget about empathy for the public's burden from these guys. All that compassion and looks of concern they demonstrated when they ran for office was just drama - A well-rehearsed show for the public that emanates just prior to and during the election. It took me three years to get over Quintero's Democratic credentials and concerned homilies. It took less than a year to recognize Drayman's boffo acting performance as a man of the people. Najarian's demonstration of empathy during his election rested on his claim to Armenians as the savior of Section 8 subsidized housing. As for Weaver, there was never any compassion there. He got elected on a platform of ethnic divisiveness and fear mongering. "The Armenians are coming. The Armenians are coming!"



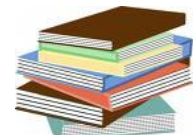
Surely, we assumed, when it came to looking out for the city's money, these men would be discerning about the way the city management wants to spend the taxpayers' hard-earned dollars. I thought they would look with a skeptical eye at multi-million dollar expenditures. We are sadly mistaken. There is just not enough business experience for them to tap into. We are lucky if they ever had to supervise one employee let alone understand an MOU or the payroll for two and a half thousand. Payroll and benefits are the driving force of the city's expenditures and the main cause for the city budget shortfall.

For the city manager, having at least a troika of inexperienced councilmen is a godsend. But having councilmen who are largely uninterested in reading, let alone, understanding the city's large contracts and obligations is just the ticket he needed to drive the city's budget to the precipice of a financial crisis and enhance the pay and benefits of his supporting cast - the city unions.

There was a time when 50% of the money from sales taxes used to go to capital improvements. In 2004 he convinced the city council to change that to only 15%. Starbird makes a big show out of the capital improvement process, but then transfers the diminishing funds from CIP into the general fund. But just where is that money going?

MAJOR UNIONS DRAINING THE COFFERS

The real sad story for Glendale is that all the extra money is going into an ever expanding payroll, pension and benefits sinkhole. The major city unions: Management, Police, and Fire, are draining the city's coffers faster than we can replenish it from sales taxes, property taxes, fee increase, and borrowed money. Ask the councilmen if they understand the simple concept of full-time-equivalent employees, and they seem lost as to the importance of getting that number. Starbird refuses to tell them. Glendale might just be the only medium-sized city in California where management does not feel it essential to provide that kind of information.



Councilman Weaver continually demonstrates his unwillingness to synthesize information or demonstrate critical thinking from the dais. He's even implied that the bulk size of the budget (about two inches) is testament to its complexity and thoroughness. I guess he never looked at the Federal Budget which is about half the size of Glendale's. Yet he sits in judgment of the employee agreements, the MOU, where

hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money are committed. Not surprisingly, his allegiance has demonstrably been toward the city unions instead of the public.

When Jim Starbird gave orders to the Finance department to stop producing the budget summary under the pretense of saving money, he effectively knocked out the most concise and informative document the councilmen needed. Yet these clueless and wimpy guys never utter a peep.

To me, Starbird is by far the savviest and most controlling politician the city has had since Larry Zarian. He effectively controls the endorsements given by the police and fire fighters association. In essence, he handed each multi-million dollar retirements in 2001. He did the same for the management association in 2005. But Starbird has had his hand in the Chamber of Commerce (Payroll deductions from the fire department to the chamber). He influences the public activities of the Glendale Adventist Hospital. (Through bond guarantees by the city) He controls the speaking engagements at the Home Owner's Coordinating Council. He very likely controls the opinion page and front page focus of the Glendale News-Press (Through ever expanding no-bid contracts for city ads and notices)

Starbird has been the driving force in helping to drain the city's reserves. The stupefying pension increases were his handiwork. The huge construction cost overruns never had any accountability. The huge multi-million dollar lawsuits the city undertakes don't have any sign of abating, yet the losses keep mounting.

LILLIPUTIAN AND OBSEQUIOUS

So our Lilliputian and obsequious councilmen sit and wait for the next marching orders from their boss or the next command to rubber stamp the next MOU, ordinance, or vendor contract. Gone is the oversight. Gone is the responsibility. Gone is a financially prudent government. Gone is even the pretense of asking the hard questions to management. Yet perplexing to us all, Drayman waxes proudly that they can now have a council session finish in less than one hour.

To me, these councilmen have more than sealed their fate to their allegiance to the city employee political organizations rather than to the needs of the public. The MOU process next week will more than prove it. They will commiserate for the plight of residents in public, but they'll rubber stamp the agreements behind closed doors. Expect the same results. Pay raises and benefits will continue to hammer the city's budget.

Diminutive councilmen? It is as though Starbird had promised to give them sun-tan lotion when they got elected, but all they got was a relabeled jar of vanishing cream. **HERBERT MOLANO**

COMMENTARY II: GETTING A PIECE OF THE ROCK - THE GPD SCARE-A-FEST *Scaring the bejesus out of homeowners for fun and profit*

In what may be one of the most disappointing meetings I've attended in Glendale, last Monday, I attended the Scare-a-Fest conducted by the Glendale Police in their community room. Topic: The California early prisoner release program.

The disappointment is in recognizing that the days of heavy public relations, misinformation or outright distortion of information are not yet over despite a new police chief at the helm.

The meeting conducted by captain Rock, started with a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the long history of Glendale as one of the ten safest cities over one hundred thousand population. It then proceeded to scare the homeowner association's members on the impending release of one thousand, criminals, murderers, robbers, burglars and pedophiles into our communities. (The tri-city area)

The news was more ominous after that. According to captain Rock, the GPD has lost 17 warm and breathing sworn personnel in the last two years. In a nutshell, more criminals and fewer cops mean we lose our ranking.

Of course the discussion did not bring up to how changes in the pension system approved in Glendale in 2001 allows sworn personnel to retire on 90% of their last annual pay and how those changes have impacted the city finances and the police budget. Would they be willing to retire with 75% of their last annual pay as they did prior to 2001 so we could re-hire many more officers? Of course not.

So back to the core question. How did the GPD arrive at the estimate of 315 parolees to be released to the streets of Glendale in the next two years? Will prison authorities send a busload of criminals every month and deposit them in the center of the Royal Oaks neighborhood? Will hard core prisoners be moved to lower security prisons, those at lower security moved to half-way houses, and those in half-way houses then released? If so, how many half-way houses are there in Glendale? Or will prisoners simply walk out and go back to their old neighborhoods?

[Sex offenders in your neighborhood](#)

Even in the worse-case scenario, the few prisoners who left Glendale for prison would most likely go back to south Glendale where most of the parolees in Glendale reside now. Captain Rock was kind enough to show homeowner groups that the areas they represent have practically no parolees today. In fact, the police map at the meeting clearly identified the hot spots as apartment buildings in the Mariposa district and other surrounding neighborhoods. That's where the police focus should be.

But what would happen if we gather the building managers and property owners of the forty most poorly managed apartment buildings for an intense focus on proper tenant screening and intense scrutiny by the GPD?



The neighborhood services office has a record of who these people are. The police know that as well. So why scare the bejesus out of people who hardly would be impacted by the early release of prisoners and not have already pursued actions to head off any impending rise in criminals looking for an apartment where to live? But, thankfully, the audience was not taking the bait to call for more police. They started asking how they could be of help. Others posed solutions on exporting criminals to less costly private prisons.

Captain Rock quickly added anecdotes on prisoners escaping a private prison, but conveniently left out the escape of seven hard-core prisoners at a state-run maximum-security prison in Texas. He then pulled all the stops on the emotional organ by recounting the running gun battle with one parolee a year ago. It was a script worthy of a television hit show. Of course, no city is crime free, and pulling archive anecdotal footage to suggest citywide policy only derails a reasoned approach to the problems the city faces.

Will the GPD continue the pet-my-canine children's workshop? Will they continue the Ride-my-Pony transformational experience? Will they continue the DARE to waste the taxpayer's money sinkhole? Let's move critical police resources away from the elementary school classrooms where hardened criminals are not likely to be found. Leave that work for the non-profits.

Despite the disappointment, I still have high hopes for police chief DePompa to change the culture at the GPD to one based on hard metrics and quick response times. Let's create a no-nonsense, hard-nosed, polished force that'll be the envy of the rest of the country.

HERBERT MOLANO

[ED – In maintaining the scare talk the GNP [published a story](#) on March 4, “Three reputed gang members were arrested Monday night after allegedly stealing a purse from a car and leading police on a chase into Pasadena, officials said Wednesday.” The conclusion drawn by Sgt. Tom Lorenz of the GPD was, “the incident shows that nonresidents are more frequently coming into Glendale to commit crimes, which affects how police patrol the community.” This conclusion was inferred from a single incident. Questions arise such as: what gangs are represented by these arrests? Did this occurrence come about because of the change in police districts? Were these three on parole? The Galleria and the Americana are magnets for out-of-towners...are larcenies up? Glendale is spending thousands to bring in nonresidents. Maybe the plan is working. An observation that can be concluded from Sgt. Lorenz' statement.]

COMMENTARY III: WHY CITIES STAGNATE

Where mediocrity trumps meritocracy

With much hoopla, the city council and senior managers uphold the wondrous achievement of a city employee who stayed put long enough to accumulate thirty years of continuous service. Is that worth all the acclamation and adulation?

The most common description of bureaucratic career success is concise: Don't criticize, don't raise a fuzz, don't work harder than your colleagues, don't rock the boat, play it safe, kiss up to your boss frequently, hide his mistakes, wait for your promotion then hang on for retirement.

But we would imagine that the longer someone is employed, the greater the knowledge and the competence. But that is not likely to make a city government more effective or productive. Such a system, where jobs are protected by civil service is a stagnating pool of inefficiencies for a good reason – Lack of risk-taking, a lack new blood, and lack of effective ideas.

There just aren't enough fresh ideas to energize change, and where those ideas are expressed, the lack of risk-taking from colleagues creates a self-dampening effect. There are few ideas to trade and very few idea entrepreneurs.

Economists have traced the most successful nations to their exposure to trade. Trading makes new tools available to a whole new group. Tools, like ideas, can be copied and improved. When an advantage emanates from one group, those susceptible to the stronger group either adopt their ideas or perish. But in an environment where you can't perish (be fired) and promotions parceled out, there is little incentive to explore new ideas as a way to advance or compete more effectively.

After a while, even after exposure to other cities' bureaucrats and their ideas, an energized employee would probably be frowned upon by a supervisor who feels that he has already mastered what he needs to know and does not need to sacrifice his free time to unsettling the harmony of his work day.

In some black communities, there is the stigma of “Acting White” that is, being the dutiful student who has been suckered into believing that there will be equal opportunities with whites. In bureaucracies, a similar cognitive malady possibly prevails. Instead of Acting White, there is the “Real World.” As in, “In the real world they may try that idea but we don't have time for that kind of thinking here.”

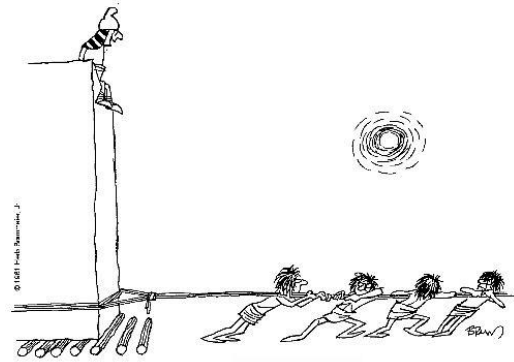
The no-risk, do-as-you-are-told work life can be quite comfortable if somewhat boring with drudgery; that's why vacations and days off are so eagerly sought. But pity the poor bureaucrat who transfers to a job with an intellectually lazy and boorish authoritarian department head. Now everyone has to cover his boss' behind and their own behind as well.

When inept, kiss-up managers get promoted; there may be an oppressive blanket, a kind of malaise of inefficiencies protected by the implied threat of retribution if you stand out. Inept authoritarians can't handle leadership roles well or employees who demonstrate initiative. Such environments are often infected with supervisors going up the ladder via cronyism, nepotism, or gerontocracy.

Effective leadership comes from those who can surround themselves with bright and dynamic managers. They feel secure enough to acknowledge competence, reward new ideas and tolerate failure in the pursuit of significant goals.

Show me a leader who brings only mediocre and complacent yes-men, and I'll show you an organization stagnating into inefficiencies, bulging payroll, lost opportunities and a demoralized work force. That such organizations commonly run budget deficits is now old news. It is now obvious to see those results in cities faltering around us despite a guaranteed customer base – The taxpayer.

So whose picture is that on your wall? **HERBERT MOLANO**



"Believe me, fellows, everyone from the Pharaoh on down is an equally valued member of the team."

867 Glendale foreclosures as of 3/5/10

TAKE ACTION – GET INVOLVED – BE INFORMED – SHARE VANGUARD – VOLUNTEER

2 Shout Box

ED – Letters published do not necessarily express the opinion of Vanguardians, Vanguard News Service, the organization or Barry Allen. Names are used only when requested. Initials are used as there are people, believe it or not, who are concerned with retaliation or have issues before a legislative body. Letters will be published that are signed and are not hate oriented.



After all the dust has settled on the "Glendale Gate" issue with the actress, I noticed that right around the corner from the Cordova and Stocker location there are other homes that also have gates and pilasters and have no setback. Along with that I noticed that along Rossmoyne are a number of pilasters, steps and similar that appear to encroach on the setback. I am curious to learn when the city will address those locations. Some of these are the same locations where the city just planted trees in the "right of way". ACC

[ED – Occasionally Vanguard gets unsigned letters in the US mail accusing us of all sorts of things such as making up letters. Then they want us to publish their unsigned, unsubstantiated letter claiming that we publish anonymous letters. It is obvious their letters aren't well intentioned as they hadn't bothered reading the disclaimer immediately following the SHOUT BOX which states, in part, "Names are used only when requested. Initials are used as there are people, believe it or not, who are concerned with retaliation or have issues before a legislative body. Letters will be published that are signed and are not hate oriented." Often we have a backlog of letters because there is not enough space as we attempt to keep Vanguard at 8-10 pages to be able to mail them to voters that aren't computer literate. The same person conjectured that the Insiders aren't really city employees. It is really sad that a person that claims their interest in a well managed city can't appreciate those that work for it and send their missives anonymously.]

Open Letter to GWP Commissioners and city council **URGENT - IS AMI A BOTTOMLESS MONEY PIT FOR THE GWP?** Given the astonishing answers to the questions I posed on the AMI smart grid capital investment yesterday at the GWP meeting, we should, at this late stage, start asking the tough questions no one appears to have asked. Please take five minutes to review the experience of other cities with AMI

I find it hard to accept that the GWP did not truly evaluate thoroughly the experience with AMI at other cities and simply labels this effort as Glendale leading with the technology. If so, let the other bigger players take the bleeding-edge. See sample link below or check Wikipedia on smart meters.

<http://www.itworldcanada.com/news/smart-meters-not-so-smart-idea-for-residential-users/100117>

Tens of millions of installations of smart meters in Europe completed years ago. Canada has extensive experience, and GWP claims not to know what the expected costs are by household or the expected savings by dwelling usage level?

Is this really a bleeding edge installation with no parameters on expected costs?




My guess is that if we have not finalized the contract for the AMI, we must stop right now and truly evaluate what the city is getting into. Irrespective of the Federal award, we can't proceed if these core and so very basic questions have not been asked nor answered. Herbert Molano

I know it's hard to believe, but \$15 for breakfast is a luxury some of your constituents cannot afford these days. It's still a stretch at lunch, but a more substantial meal might prove attractive for those of us who are retired and must make daily budget decisions that don't include many meals out. Unlike City Manager Starbird, our elected pol's, bloated overpaid city employees like Sam Engel, Steve Zurn, Hassan Haghani and cartoonish puppets like the Alice In Wonderland Fire Chief many of us who support you are living on a razor's edge these days.

How about holding luncheons at the city employee cafeteria where some of us surmise that these overstuffed bottom feeders gorge themselves on caviar and parfais every day--on our hard-earned tax, fee and utility dollars of course! Or how about luncheon at one of the Glendale firehouses with award-winning chili, corn bread and greens prepared by the well-rested public safety heroes who sat by in their lawn chairs watching the Station fire burn our hillside neighborhoods to the ground. Or in the alternative, tall cocktails of Jack Daniels bourbon and big plates of beefsteak in the company of Dave Weaver at Damon's while we review the glossy photos of the latest Miss Asia Beauty pageant contestants. You get the idea--it's Glendale where the over the top is the order of the day and nothing ever changes. WG

[ED – In response to whether Vanguardians should opt for lunch instead of dinner...]

3  **Public**  **Information**

"Just the facts"

Glendale CA -- The City employee \$200K club

Name	Title	2009	2008
1. Starbird, James	City Manager	251,196.00	251,196.00
2. Vartanians, Vartan	City Resource Specialist	245,083.75	236,747.30
3. Steiger, Glenn	General Manager - GWP	230,268.00	189,971.10
4. Howard, Scott	City Attorney	229,620.00	229,348.50
5. Doyle, Robert	Fire Battalion Chief	220,551.17	229,021.61
6. De Pompa, Ronald	Police Chief	218,989.39	203,192.00
7. Scoggins, Harold	Fire Chief	214,223.00	204,342.82
8. Lynch, William	Fire Captain	211,154.80	202,711.28
9. McFall, Robert	Asst. City Manager	209,148.00	209,148.00
10. Duncan, Bryan	Police Officer	207,611.58	112,449.45
11. Clark. James	Fire Captain	206,717.38	216,348.98
12. Fish, Gregory	Fire Battalion Chief	206,657.32	214,713.66
13. Smith. Cody	Fire Captain	204,312.32	188,484.53
14. Parrish, Steven	Fire Captain	203,734.62	199,232.28
15. Nyeholt, Douglas	Fire Captain	201,860.41	186,713.74
		\$3,261,127.74	\$3,073,621.25

[Home Page of Open Government \(???\) in Glendale California](#)

 Click to view the agenda [City Council](#) [Housing Authority](#) [Redevelopment Agency](#)
Meetings at City Hall (CH) are in the Council Chambers, 2nd Floor at 613 E Broadway.
Meetings at the Municipal Services Bldg. (MSB) are in room 105 at 633 E Broadway.
Meetings at the Perkins Bldg (PB) are in the Conference Room at 141 N Glendale Ave.
Phone numbers are in area code 818 unless noted otherwise

Please note: City Council Chambers will be closed from March 17 through May 31. All meetings that are normally held in Chambers will be moved to Room 105 of the Municipal Services Building, 633 E. Broadway, during this time

Monday, March 8
 Commission on the Status of Women – 6:30 pm, CH 548-4844

2:30 CH Housing Authority –548-2060;
 Redevelopment Agency -- 548-2005
Joint Meeting –RE: Proposed Development at

Tuesday, March 9

Wednesday, March 10
Planning Hearing Officer – 9:30 am, MSB 548-2140

4 *Vanguardians*

VANGUARDIANS is selling a 1975 34' Silverton twin engine Cabin Cruiser located in Long Beach. Serious inquiries only. Revenue will be used for Vanguardians operations.

Get breaking News by signing up for an RSS feed at www.vanguardians.org

VANGUARDIANS needs your Continuing Financial Support


Please make checks payable to “*VANGUARDIANS*” Mail to: POB 11202 Glendale, CA 91226
Your contributions are tax deductible. You will receive a receipt for income tax purposes
You may donate online at www.vanguardians.org


The [Ralph M Brown Act](#) that mandates legislative bodies to provide each of us an opportunity to speak and requires that agendas are posted and meetings open.

The [California Public Records Act](#) (PRA) is the tool we use to get information about the operations of government.

The [Political Reform Act of 1974](#) allows public access to the financial reports of public officials.

To become more involved in your community, to learn how to use these important tools, you can go online to www.vanguardians.org or call 818 243 1502

5  **the Insider** is a report from city employees that care about the way the City is run. As they are concerned about retaliation, their identities are secret. Vanguard provides them the opportunity to have this forum. The comments are their own.

 For those following Jan Edwards efforts to work through the glass ceiling in Building and Safety, we should have an answer soon. Since her competition is a person with an engineering license less than a year, a plan checker who has been with the City less than a year and a half and a person who no less than the Civil Service Commission rule was not qualified to supervise any staff, the outcome looks promising for the City to do the right thing. We'll keep you posted.

As budget talks progress it's looking iffy as to whether the budget can be balanced without cutting staff and making fundamental changes to the services the City provides. The cost of many special projects will need to be reconsidered.

The public can expect to see a lot of articles in the NewsPress to create buzz for questionable City programs looking for support from Council during the coming budget discussions.

6 THE ILLUSTRIOUS CITY COUNCIL

Some men are born mediocre, some men achieve mediocrity, and some men have mediocrity thrust upon them. -- Joseph Heller, Catch 22.

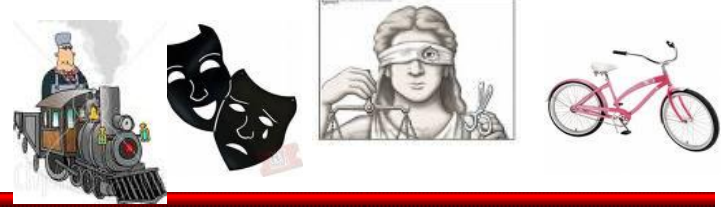


Do you recognize the dais occupants?

When did it begin?

Weaver*	Quintero	Najarian	Drayman*	Friedman
1997	2001	2005	2007	2009

* Drayman and Weaver term ends in April 2011



7 NEWS BRIEFS FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Opinion: Why we need to innovate By Thomas L. Friedman

I was traveling via Los Angeles International Airport last week. Walking through its faded, cramped domestic terminal, I got the feeling of a place that once thought of itself as modern but has had one too many face-lifts and can't hide the wrinkles anymore. In some ways, LAX is us. We are the United States of Deferred Maintenance. China is the People's Republic of Deferred Gratification. They save, invest and build. We spend, borrow and patch. And this contrast is playing out in the worst way — just slowly enough so the crisis never seems acute enough to take urgent action. But, eventually, infrastructure, education and innovation policies matter.

From the Economist: DON NOVEY used to be the most important man in Californian politics that no one had ever heard of. As president of California's prison-guards' association from 1982 to 2002, Mr Novey turned that union into the most powerful in the state. On his watch, California built 21 new prisons. Mr Novey's organisation also sponsored or supported tough laws that helped to fill those prisons to almost twice their capacity at times. It helped elect two Republican governors and one Democratic one, besides countless state legislators. "We sent candidates 13 questions," he happily recalls, ranging from their stance on the death penalty to labour issues.

He is especially proud that he won his members by far the most generous wages and benefits that prison officers get anywhere in the country. Under the last deal he negotiated, which expired in 2006, the average member of the California Correctional Peace Officers Association (CCPOA) earned around \$70,000 a year and more than \$100,000 with overtime. (Since then, wages have gone up again.) Mr Novey negotiated pensions of up to 90% of salary starting at as early as 50—more than teachers, nurses or firefighters get, and matched only by the state's highway patrol.

MONTEREY PARK - County prosecutors have charged a former City Councilwoman and her political consultant with several felonies in connection with a 2007 campaign mailer, officials said Wednesday.

Sharon Martinez, 43, of Monterey Park and Melrose Castillo, 33, of Alhambra, each face five-year state prison sentences for their roles in producing a hit piece that targeted City Councilman Frank Venti, according to Deputy District Attorney David Demerjian.

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***Henrik Ibsen "An Enemy of the People" Dr. Stockmann, Act 5.**