



"Accountability"
The Government Watchdog

Vanguard

Los Angeles CA Vol VI
Week of October 31, 2010
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CALM BEFORE THE STORM

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

Your tax deductible contributions support the work we do. Please help!

"I predict future happiness for Americans if they can prevent the government from wasting the labors of the people under the pretense of taking care of them." – Thomas Jefferson.

CONTENTS:

News:

ADI
Bell
WDC
New Rules
Irwindale

1) [Commentary](#)

[Barry Allen:](#)
Road to Corruption

[Herbert Molano:](#)

Take back the GWP
Local Merchants are Overwhelmed

[Michael Fuss](#)

Off Today

[Bruce Philpott](#)

Off Today

2) [Shout Box](#)
Villify

3) [Public Records](#)
Overtime

4) [Vanguardians](#)
Vanguardians Training

5) [The Insider](#)
Police issues

6) [The Denizens on the Dais](#)
Circumventing the plan



- [Mithaiwala's Firm Being Investigated for Fraud](#) India Journal
Advanced Development and Investment Inc, is being looked into for building unsafe apartments and swindling millions of dollars of taxpayers' money. ...
- [City of Bell Forced to Accept Monitor and Subpoenas Testimony in ...](#) Imperial Valley News
... former assistant city manager Angela Spaccia; former **police** chief **Randy Adams**; council members Oscar Hernandez, Teresa Jacobo and George Mirabel; ...
- Average value of the 2009 salary and benefits paid to federal government workers was \$115,182 compared to private-sector workers \$61,050, according to the US Bureau of Economic Analysis.
- **Proposed FASB Standard Has Some U.S. Contractors Worried** Washington, D.C.--A proposed new accounting standard has some general contractors concerned that it might make it more difficult to proceed on construction projects as demand returns for new structures such as multifamily. [More](#).
- Irwindale officials accused of using city funds for travel Four Irwindale officials used city funds to go to Yankees and Mets games and attend Broadway shows such as "Phantom of the Opera" and "Mamma Mia," according to charges filed by the Los Angeles County district attorney's office. The officials, including one current City Council member, are accused of misappropriating public funds. Those named in the complaint include Councilman Mark Brededa, retired city manager Steve Blancarte, finance director Abe De Dios and former Councilwoman Rosemary Ramirez. The four are accused of traveling to New York for up to six days at a time, allegedly in an effort to get a higher bond rating for the city. Prosecutors allege that during each trip, the officials bought tickets to shows and sporting events that had nothing to do with city business. [More](#)

SAMUEL ADAMS: It does not require a majority to prevail, but rather an irate, tireless minority keen to set brush fires in people's minds.

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Vanguard is published independently by Vanguardians, Inc. Advocating for Accountability— Our vision is to live in a community where all people can enjoy accountability, integrity, effectiveness and responsiveness from our government.

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...



A phone call, an email message, dinner with friends, people on the street – they are all asking questions about political corruption. The common thread is their wanting to know if it is going to get worse. The answer to me is simple. It isn't worse. It is more visible as the low hanging 'fruit' has been picked. Now it is on to the more sophisticated.

I use an analogy that goes back to my past in the security industry. We had a section that did nothing but retail store security, basically apprehending shoplifters. Our detectives weren't just good, they were great. Fantastic arrest records. One store's shrinkage rate went from 15% to less than three.

Once the low hanging fruit was out of the way we started after store employees and outside contractors. One manager was caught when he violated corporate policy by entering the store alone. He would then steal merchandise and secret it until he left for the evening, taking it with him.

Then there was the night cleanup crew. They would steal jewelry, wrap it in waterproof bags, put it in the buckets of mop water they were using and then, when they were let out in the morning, they would dump the mop water and throw the buckets in the maintenance vans, retrieving the jewelry.

Our detectives arrested the manager and the maintenance crew...they all denied their guilt. Corporate didn't believe the safeguards they had effected could have been so easily compromised. We had pictures and eye witnesses.

In Glendale we informed city management about one of their achilles tendons – the dismal failure of access control for the city buildings. Everyone has after hours access with absolutely zero accountability. The old sign in sheets were bogus. There had been complaints of permits being issued and plans being stamped after hours. Further denial from management.



Today, after five years, the access control system is still incomplete. During that time a new phone system has been installed, a retrofit of the Municipal Services Building and 5 holiday trees erected. Yet no access control.

That is where we are today. A strategic standoff between the executives and the policy makers; 10 employees suing the city; two city unions without contracts; ADA violations and more.

Vanguardians is building our case against corruption one photograph, one eye witness, one piece of paper at a time while we prepare ourselves for more major attacks from the dais that we know will come.

Those on the dais have defamed, libeled and slandered Vanguardians before and we anticipate they will continue to unless muzzled by the City Attorney who will have to defend their actions.

BARRY ALLEN

Parrot: One who imitates the words or actions of another, especially without understanding them.

Pundit: A learned person. Someone who, by long study, has gained mastery in one or more disciplines

The penalty good men and women pay for indifference to public affairs is to be ruled by evil men. PLATO

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

GWP – THE EMPLOYEE-OWNED UTILITY

IT'S HIGH TIME FOR RESIDENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS TO TAKE THE UTILITY BACK



One of the city's greatest fallacies is that the public – the Glendale stakeholders - own the Water and Power utility. That may have been one of the objectives nearly 100 years ago, but today, the beneficiaries of the net proceeds of the utility are the four city unions who are the de-facto rulers.

In an investor-owned utility the stockholders are beneficiaries of any dividends declared and the risk-takers in the event that a major investment goes awry. But with the GWP, not only are the net-proceeds directed towards the city's relentlessly increasing payroll and benefits, but should anything go wrong, it's the taxpayers and residents who take the hit.

In Glendale, property tax revenues have continued their steady upward movement year after year. In the last ten years alone property tax proceeds have increased well over 200%. But those increases have been insufficient to meet the huge increases in payroll and benefits. That money has come via the back-door – the GWP utility transfers.

As such, in the simplest of terms, the extra money that the utility generates each year is not plowed back into infrastructure to keep the utility viable. Money that should have gone toward critically needed repair of water mains, or electrical generators, have, to a large extent, been moved into the general fund. There, along with the other increases in revenues due to fee increases, these funds help pay for the astronomical pension increases and other benefits that the city council has approved for the city's four employee unions.

The backlog of infrastructure repair to keep just the water utility viable was \$222 million according to a study funded by the utility in 2007. At a minimum, the water utility should be allocating eleven million dollars yearly towards capital improvements annually. But this discussion was never held in front of the GWP commission nor discussed when the pay and benefits increases to fire and police personnel were being considered.



From my nearly ten years of experience watching city councilmen at budget sessions and watching them acquiesce to every employee union demand, it is patently obvious that they first increase the pensions, then the salaries, then the benefits, then add more personnel, and then wonder where they will get the money to pay for their tax money giveaway. They look toward the GWP utility - their cash cow. Up go the electrical rates. Up go the water rates.

To fulfill employee demands, the city council violates the law. They violate the state constitution (Proposition 218) without regard to the welfare of the residents, the school district, or businesses, they rubber-stamp their approval to hike the fees. Where does the public interest come in?

To me the answer lies in a charter amendment that will stop all transfers to the General Fund and, after allocating a sustainable amount towards capital improvements, the GWP would lower rates or refund utility payers. Either way, that would be money in the pockets of utility consumers who've been hammered much too long by these harsh economic times and the predatory tactics by the city unions and their bought representatives on the city council.

It is time to retake the utility from the grubby hands of city managers, fire department and police employee unions whose members generally neither live in the city nor seem to care for the burden they've placed on the finances of its residents. Let's take the utility back and make it a publicly owned utility once again.

HERBERT MOLANO Click here [Glendale Today](#)

SWALLOW HARD AND TAKE IT IN THE CHIN. MORE HARD TIMES FOR THE DISENFRANCHISED MERCHANTS OF GLENDALE

For those who've been downsized, part-timed, and booted out of a job, these hard times don't seem to end. For city merchants whose small businesses have been surviving on a shoe-string, hard times have been getting harder. It has been especially hard for businesses along Brand Blvd where the picture looks bleak with no relief in sight.

What may seem to some as just an economic downturn hitting restaurants and merchant shops, it's much more than that if you stop to ask a proprietor. I had just such a conversation recently.

Down Brand Blvd, just below Maple there sits a small, clean, quaint 300 square foot restaurant with home-made traditional middle-Eastern food, with a proprietor who wears a ready smile and greets her customers warmly. But her smile belies a deep concern for her future. When I asked her a few questions about how she is handling the economic mess we are in, she walked to the back and came holding a piece of paper. It was her GWP utility bill with a menacing message – Final Shut-Off notice: Utilities will be turned off if \$1368.50 is not paid by 10-18-2010. What would she do?

For many immigrants, the trip to America is filled with hope. They know that without mastering English, their options are limited and few jobs would be available. They also know that their degrees or diplomas may mean little to state boards that don't accept their foreign-earned diplomas. So, for many, pulling their family's money together and getting themselves up by the bootstraps means that you open your own business.



But their future has an unexpected obstacle in Glendale – the boot of the official charges for the most basic of commodities – water and electricity. A city that spends hundreds of thousands promoting Glendale as a business destination probably has one of the highest commercial electricity rates in California. Add to those utility charges the “hazardous” waste charges and the “industrial waste” fees that feed the fire department's coffers.

These restaurants must comply with grease-trap regulations and pay up top dollar for the inspections, but they will pay with every utility bill thereafter whether they get inspected or

not. The official boot is on the neck of the proprietor. Pay up because city employees will need their \$120,000 per year pensions. This restaurant owner thought that she had left harsh conditions in the middle-east, only to find that in America it's just the color of the official uniform that is different.

Drive northbound on Brand and stop near California. There, a much larger Argentinean restaurant is also being hammered by the high utility rates. The proprietor would love to speak his mind at the Redevelopment Agency or

at the city council meeting if he could free himself long enough from his daily chores. Ask him, and he'll tell you about how hard it has been to keep his business going in Glendale. Two years ago, during the Brand reconstruction his restaurants and many others had a 40% drop in business. I urged the city council to encourage city employees to patronize those restaurants and businesses, but only got back the silent look from Najarian and Dryman too timid to expect a higher moral response from the city managers and employees.

The problem we face in Glendale, on Brand Blvd, and along the many business districts of this city, is not just the national economic downturn. There is the growing nasty dialogue that makes up our city politics, and the endemic corruption of our values deep within the fabric of our governments.

Pepto-Bismol anyone?

HERBERT MOLANO Click here [Glendale Today](#)

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.



It is time that the City Council wakes up. They need to stop vilifying Vanguard and those knowledgeable speakers that come before them. Aram Kazazian spoke at the Housing Authority and Chair Quintero wanted to know the nexus between housing and water rates. Harry Zavos, a retired law professor, spoke on the potential impact of Prop 218 on the transfers of water profits to the General Fund. Bruce Philpott spoke on the need to restructure the fire department to meet the medical emergency needs today along with a plan to address the costs. Herbert Molano comes prepared with not only his articulation of the financial issues but the charts so even the newest of the policy makers can understand them. Richard Espiritu has developed an expertise on ADA issues and speaks often on those compliance issues. Mike Mohill does his best to keep the fires burning under the seats of the Council. Barry Allen spoke at a CDBG meeting about his findings on New Horizons.

These people should be listened to. They really have something to say about the finances in this City.

Each day I am waiting to hear about which one or how many of the elected officials will be arrested and charged with suborning and accepting bribes that come from taxpayer pockets. Will these people be brought to justice before or after the April election?

The next question is whether the taxpayers will have to pay the legal defenses. We are all happy that Vanguard exists for us. I certainly have gotten my money's worth. BH

3



Public



Information

"Just the facts"

Were any of those on duty firemen that cooked dinner at Mayor Najarian's house on overtime? That would be an absolute disgrace in the face of this economy. I am told something like thirty percent of all the firemen working any given day in Glendale are on overtime. Even the chiefs and administrative firemen get overtime. What a sham. RC

[ED -- So far the city hasn't provided the info re overtime. We do believe there were several personnel that were there on overtime. We requested the telestaff report and the City Attorney redacted the part that shows overtime.]

"All truths are easy to understand once they have been discovered; the point is to discover them." - Galileo Galilei.

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

Agendas for the City of Glendale CA

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

City Council – 6:00 pm, CH 548-4844

Monday, November 1

Water & Power Commission – 4:00 pm, CH 548-2107

Tuesday, November 2

Housing Authority – 2:30 pm, CH 548-2060

Redevelopment Agency – 2:30 pm, CH 548-2005

Joint Meeting –Re: Re-Design of Griffith Manor Park to Include Dog Park – 2:30 pm, CH 548-4844

Joint Meeting RE: Bidding Results for Pacific Park Pool – 2:30 pm, CH 548-4844

Wednesday, November 3

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

Planning Commission – 5:00 pm, MSB 548-2140

Thursday, November 4

Committee for a Clean & Beautiful Glendale – 8:30 am, Perkins Community Room, PB 548-3700

Design Review Board #2 – 5:00 pm, MSB 548-2140

4 *Vanguardians*

People from all over LA County are asking for Vanguard and Vanguardians training. We are expanding our coverage of LA County activities to accommodate the needs of the community.

Vanguard opens its 'Shout Box' to Glendale News Press (GNP) letter writers whose letters regarding City Government issues, questions and criticisms are not being published by the GNP. Vanguard Editor Pauline Field received approval from the editorial advisory board to make this opportunity available to all stakeholders.

Your employee Association doesn't support you, DON'T support them. Instead, send your union dues to Vanguardians as allowed by the [Meyers-Milias-Brown Act](#) for LOCAL PUBLIC EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATIONS

Vanguard is following these lawsuits: the 5 GPD officers; Rodriguez: Gillespie; Hayn; Hunter; Mendoza & Ovasapyan. The cases cited are from the Randy Adams regime and continue under Chief DePompa.


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

- The [Ralph M Brown Act](#) mandates legislative bodies to provide each person an opportunity to speak and requires that agendas are posted and meetings are open.
- The [California Public Records Act](#) (PRA) is the tool to get information about the operations of government.
- The [Political Reform Act of 1974](#) allows public access to the financial reports of public officials.
- www.maplight.org to follow the money trail from special interests to the policy maker

To become more involved in your community, to learn how to use these important tools, you can call 818 243 1502

5  **the Insider** is written by 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.



You need to look at former Police Chief Randy Adams city p-card purchases. You will find misuse of taxpayer money.

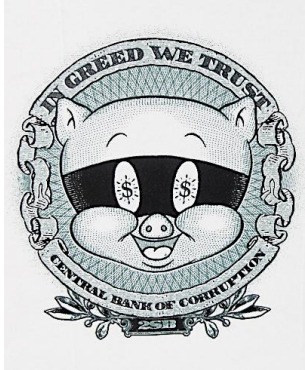
Management staff is preparing for a slew of new Commissioners as they don't see Drayman on the dais much longer.

Two GPD officers are in hot water. One for DUI being picked up and booked by CHP and the other who was involved in a road rage incident in Burbank. The other driver was beaten senseless. The GPD officer teaches others about the use of excessive force. [ED – Vanguard requested the Glendale Police PIO to verify this and as of distribution, time we haven't heard back.]

6 THE DENIZENS ON THE DAIS



If the money doesn't move there is nothing to skim from. Since John Drayman has been in office the taxpayers have spent millions on Rockhaven and on the Neon Museum. When Mr. Drayman was the chair of redevelopment he made sure that a Komar Development issue was going to be held in closed session. Now the issue of changing the land lease rate for the Neon Museum will be done in closed session just as was done recently for Trader Joe's and for a Komar development at Central and Wilson.

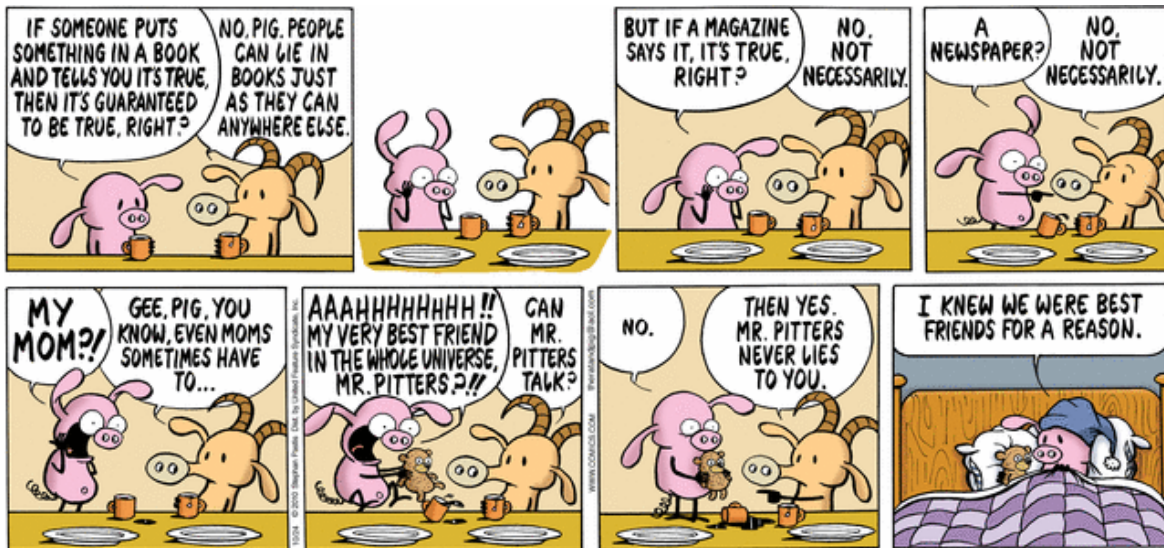


Drayman's neighbors are very upset over the time it has taken to complete the rumored to be \$200,000 remodel job on a 1400 square foot condo he owns. Explanatory stories for the new wealth include inheritance, selling a patent, selling a business, insurance payout, winning the lottery, a refi and others even more inspired.

Dave Weaver must have hit the jackpot as well. The dumpster in front of his house is loaded with building materials from demolition.

The question to ask one CCM is whether or not her husband has the landscaping contract with ADI.

The penalty good men and women pay for indifference to public affairs is to be ruled by evil men. PLATO
"You can't win an argument with a Moron, an Idiot, or a Political Bigot" Kraft



When did it begin?

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

* Drayman and Weaver terms end in April 2011

The Lie-O-Meter moves from week to week showing the official telling the most outrageous lies.





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