



Balanced budget nothing to be proud of during hard times.

Were Commissioners Dennis Stuckey, Scott Martin and Craig Lehman correct in congratulated their staffs and themselves for having made sufficient cost cuts in programs to both balance the county budget and avoid any tax increase?

According to the widely accepted views first set forth by John Maynard Keynes in the 1930's, during times of large unemployment, government deficit spending is desirable and, since it utilizes idle resources, also is economical.

There is a greater social need for county services than ever during hard times.

During comment period, Bill Bonanno, an ALCOA retiree, said he *"would have accepted a small tax increase if we would not have hurt the library and some of rehabilitation folks and people who are sick and handicapped. I know that industries have asked their employees if you would accept a cut to keep a fellow worker from being laid off. Two out of 3 said we will take a cut."*

Do we really care if the county runs a million dollar deficit in 2009 and again in 2010? That only amounts to \$20 per Lancastrian each year. As Keynes advises, upon recovery raise taxes a little bit to pay off the debt.

Library fragmentation, not funding, half the problem

According to the Dec. 14 *Sunday News* article, highly paid executive director Susan Hauer justifies her Library System consuming half of the money provided by the state and county for libraries *"because member libraries had counseled the library system to spend the additional funds on upgrades that would make the system and the services it provides more efficient."*

Balderdash!

Prior to the misbegotten creation of the now bloated System, most of the same services were provided by one of its members, the Lancaster Public Library (Duke Street), at a fraction of the

current expense. But other independent libraries felt Duke Street was being paid too much. So the System was created. Now they pay much more!

The sixteen different libraries are irreparably fragmented, with the boards of each vying with the others for a portion of the crumbs off of the System's table. For the most part, their separate boards of trustees are made up of unqualified volunteers rather than experienced leaders.

Lancaster needs to follow the lead of other counties throughout the country and place all the libraries and the System under a single county authority in order to achieve efficiency and strong leadership.

Is newspaper coverage complicit in inmate suicide?

No matter how vile the crimes for which David Villafane had served time and was currently accused, he was entitled to fair treatment and protection while in custody. **We live in a nation of laws, not vigilantism.**

How the media reports on sex related crimes plays a part in generating the attitudes of the citizenry including prison officials, guards, and inmates.

We credit the *New Era* for currently investigating possible prison abuse of inmates and wish them Godspeed.

But we also hold the *New Era* in part

responsible for sensationalism about persons accused or convicted of sex crimes, of unnecessarily publicizing the identities and locations of those who have 'paid for their crimes', and disproportionately focusing attention on sex crimes, both playing on fears and publishing accounts which approach voyeurism and titillation.

When we dehumanize individuals, we make them vulnerable. The measure of a just society is how it deals with those least popular.

We appreciate that the *New Era* has restrained from such practices over the past year.

Want ad: *NewsLanc* has opening for experienced reporter

Competitive wages and benefits are available for a qualified journalist. Applicants must be self starters. Healthy skepticism and commitment to justice considered attributes. Here is an opportunity to make a difference!

Resumes should be sent to info@NewsLanc.com. Experienced journalists may call 717-940-1221 to discuss opening. All inquiries treated with discretion.

LETTER: Rail Yard relocation controversy

"In reference to the Dillerville Rail Yard, this project should have been under the direction of an independent board – with absolutely no connections with either F&M or Norfolk Southern – from the start. (LGH has simply gone along for the ride, pardon the pun.)"

NEW ERA: The Dec. 13 editorial headed "Armstrong served state and city well" states: *"The job's important, but the day you leave office you'll be forgotten pretty quickly, easily."* The *New Era* went on to say *"That won't be true of Armstrong. He served eight years in the House and 24 in the Senate and accomplished more than most of his peers."*

WATCHDOG: If it weren't for the need to sell the naming rights, we would propose **"The Gibson Armstrong Convention Center."** Then, over the years, Armstrong would be assured of the recognition that he merits, depending on whether his project succeeds or fails.

Talk about poetic justice!

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