



The Hudson Valley Bullshit Society

Official Minutes of the 6th HVBS Meeting of 2011 on September 7 at the Hoffman House in Kingston, NY.

- 1- On a stormy morning, **Shadow** and **PC Wiz** drove in heavy rain to arrive with a light sprinkle in Kingston. **Ramrod** arrived soon after and, with greetings and happy birthdays to **Ramrod**, members entered the Hoffman House premises. Sitting at the bar **HVBS Official Waitress Lorayne** cordially greeted us and **Hostess Ginny** joined in the welcome. We proceeded to our traditional corner window table and **Lorayne** took our beverage orders. **Shadow** and **PC Wiz** ordered Cabernet Sauvignons (Forest Glen) and **Ramrod** opted for a Sauvignon Blanc. Members toasted **Ramrod** on his recent **82nd birthday** and to our Armed Forces.
- 2- **Shadow** pulled a sheaf of papers out of his pocket and told us the story of Ford's latest "customer satisfaction" survey - an independent firm's exhaustive multi-page inquisition. **Ramrod** thought the entry for a prize-drawing was a suitable incentive but **Shadow** firmly objected that this latest intricate, lengthy owners' poll was outrageous. **Official Waitress Lorayne** approached to ask for lunch orders. **PC Wiz** and **Ramrod**, ready with their choices, ordered first while **Shadow** mulled over his selection. Ordering from the "special" menu, **PC Wiz** ordered the tortellini pasta dish while **Ramrod** opted for the prime rib steak sandwich. **Shadow**, still uncertain, was asked by **Lorayne** if he wanted to order his "regular". He did, going for the French dip sandwich.
- 3- The rain we arrived in was the remnants of Tropical Storm Lee, up from the Gulf, which raised the Agenda issue of generator use in Hurricane/Tropical Storm Irene. **PC Wiz** lucked out with no power failure but **Shadow** did lose power and his generator ran for 33 continuous hours. He is now waiting for the bill from National Grid to analyze how much the natural gas used for the generator cost. **Ramrod** related how he started up his new generator for the first time, going in the cellar to flip the entrance box switch to cut off the line power connection and enable the generator to start up and provide electricity for the house. He says it went well and was on for about five hours with not much gasoline use. **PC Wiz** asked him how much he stored for the machine and **Ramrod** replied, "five gallons". **PC Wiz** thought it not enough but realized the problem of gasoline not being stable in storage. **Ramrod** told us that he really made the decision to install the generator because of **Chako** and the children being in the house - and, of course, being dependent on a pump for their water supply.
- 4- **Ramrod** emphasized the importance of having a good electrician. He is still baffled how the man snaked a rather thick cable the length of the finished basement with nothing disturbed! His electrician said they have their ways leading **PC Wiz** to comment that we are not educating skilled people today, citing a shortage of welders mentioned by manufacturers. **Ramrod** agreed that apprentice programs are pretty much a thing of the past.
- 5- Our food arrived in the capable hands of **HVBS Official Waitress Lorayne**. **PC Wiz** got a brimming plate of pasta with an attractive aroma, **Ramrod** his prime rib steak sandwich which he promptly announced was the best steak he had in quite a while. Unfortunately, **Shadow** was not so fortunate. He pointed out to **Lorayne** that the meat in his French dip was quite raw - not the usual pink of roast beef. **Lorayne** protested that that was the way roast beef was served but **Shadow** prevailed on her to return it to the kitchen. After quite an interval it returned with the meat completely cooked. It is not likely **Shadow** will order this item in the future. **Ramrod** informed us that he now has a new printer. **PC Wiz** noted that he could now print in color instead of black and white - **Ramrod** replied that, yes, he now printed in "living color". His consultant, **Dan**, helped in the selection of the new Canon (same brand as **PC Wiz's** new machine) and he managed to use credit card "points" to pay the cost which made it "free". **Dan** installed it and the printer is working fine. Of course, **Ramrod** had the three new color cartridges that he tried and that would

not work in the old HP. Luckily, his neighbor **Dave** uses the same ink cartridges so **Ramrod** gave them to him (the problem was in the machine).

- 6- To **Ramrod's** question concerning **PC Wiz's** Dell printer he replied that he is still using up the ink in the old printer with the new Canon patiently waiting on the kitchen table. **PC Wiz** also mentioned that it might have been time to replace the Dell since he has lately been noticing the machine becoming noisier - perhaps wearing out. To **Shadow's** query as to jokes **Ramrod** had brought to the meeting, **Ramrod** admitted he had none. However, he remembered one and told us a good joke with a Superman twist. **Shadow** related his woes concerning school taxes and the STAR program. The bill arrived with no STAR adjustment so **Shadow**, anticipating losing his temper at Charlton Town Hall, sent **HVBS Associate Member Shirley** to make the inquiry. One of the clerks at the Hall went to the back of a file enclosed with a rubber band - found the missing **Shadow** file - and said, "Oh, my God!" **Shirley**, smiling inwardly, did not say a word. It seems the paper work was misfiled and never applied. They are to receive a corrected bill by the 16th or, if later, will be given an additional 20 days to pay their school taxes. **Ramrod** thought it eminently fair and informed us he had not yet received his tax bill. This will be the first year for an enhanced STAR exemption for him also. **PC Wiz** mentioned he showed his bill to **Shadow** and the reduction amounted to \$885.00.
- 7- Which brought up the case of the Charlton fire department treasurer who embezzled \$400,000 in the past ten years. Members were surprised that such a large sum missing was not detected almost immediately. **PC Wiz** showed members a story about a bill in the California legislature (passed by the Assembly) that will require baby-sitters to be covered by workmen's comp., paid vacation time and a substitute sitter every two hours for a rest and meal break! California evidently intends to lead the Nation in insanity - seriously, probably an attempt to promote institutional care instead of individuals. In other news **Ramrod** took out his drivers' license which he recently renewed - for eight years! **Ramrod** will be 90 when it comes up for renewal again. Incidentally, he went to the local DMV to renew with no problem in contrast to the Schenectady DMV at which **HVBS Associate Member Shirley** ran into the typical bureaucratic snafu. He had been anticipating the vision test with the chart on the wall but the clerk just stamped the forms and he was off.
- 8- **Ramrod** asked **Shadow** how his job is going. **Shadow** said he will likely have to retire shortly - again. His duties are becoming very tiring and stressful. **Shadow** informed us that he has a prospect for some income after retirement from DeBrino. He spoke to the engineer for Brookfield Power that he has done quite a lot of work for, asking her if she would consider hiring him as a independent contractor consultant. "In a heartbeat", she replied. **Shadow**, thinking **Ramrod's** original moniker of **Geronimo** special, suggested returning to the original name in quotes. **Ramrod**, deeply insulted by the use of **Geronimo** as the code name for Bin Laden, flatly turned down the suggestion. **PC Wiz** referred to the e-mail from **Ramrod** questioning the death of Bin Laden - especially no photographs of the body. **Ramrod** is convinced he died a years ago from his kidney failure which required dialysis - in a cave in the mountains? Not likely he survived. **Shadow** said he also is convinced the story is a fraud. In other news **Shadow** mentioned going on the Internet to check out a restaurant off Interstate 81 in Pennsylvania, Bingham's, that he is very familiar with. It burned down in 2010, the fire started by a disgruntled dishwasher who returned to fight the blaze as a fireman. The new Bingham's is now open for business.
- 9- Turning to sports, **Ramrod** brought up the item in the news that the Chinese government was considering buying the Los Angeles Dodgers! Members were angry that the owners could let the franchise decline so badly that a foreign owner might be in the cards. **Shadow** remarked that "the days of Tiger are gone". He was responsible for **Shadow's** following golf on TV with his spectacular play, remarkable drives and recoveries from impossible lies. We now know he took drugs to enhance his performance and members found his personal conduct unacceptable. **Ramrod** stated that he personally admires Arnie Palmer, a great golfer. Concerning the new season for the Giants **HVBS** members lamented the loss of line backer Jonathan Goff with a torn ACL. **Ramrod** commented that the Giants have a "lot of guys" on the disabled list. Members then looked into their crystal balls to predict this season's results. **Ramrod** promptly came up with 7-9, **PC Wiz** predicted a middling 8-8 while **Shadow** held back to make the last prediction. He came up with a surprising 11-5, win the playoffs and, on a roll, to win the Super Bowl. Needless to say the members were speechless with the scope and optimism of his prediction.
- 10- **Lorayne** took our orders for our final coffees and desserts. The date of **Wednesday October 26, 2011** for our next scheduled meeting was ratified. The meeting adjourned and **Ramrod** inspected **PC Wiz's** repaired rear panel and new trailer hitch from his recent accident with the Camry. He concluded that they had a perfect match for the color.

Thanks to **Ramrod** for his penetrating review and critique of the Preliminary Minutes.

HVBS Official Scribe Laureate **PC Wiz**

September 17, 2011