



The Hudson Valley Bullshit Society

Official Minutes of the 1st HVBS Meeting of 2012 on February 1 at the Hoffman House in Kingston, NY.

- 1- Starting in rain, **Shadow** drove South with increasing temperatures, going from the mid-thirties to a balmy 61 degrees. Arriving at the **Hoffman House** a bit premature at 11:15 AM, **Shadow** and **PC Wiz** found **Ramrod's** Acura already in the parking lot - quite empty. Entering the premises, we were heartily greeted by **Ginny, Pat and Lorayne**. We informed **Pat** that we were a group of three - with a missing member. The staff had not seen **Ramrod** and we waited for his arrival to order drinks. **Shadow** surmised, correctly, that **Ramrod** might have taken the opportunity to visit his broker, Smith, Barney, across the street. It turned out to be the case. **Ramrod** ordered, if available, a Murphy's Irish Red Ale. **Lorayne** checked and it was available; **PC Wiz** selected Keegan's Mother's Milk Stout (**Wingit's** choice) and **Shadow** a Cabernet Sauvignon.

- 2- Curious to try it, **Ramrod** asked **PC Wiz** for a taste of the Mother's Milk. He then proclaimed he had a major announcement to make. **Ramrod** had signed the papers for a 2012 VW Passat! Members immediately toasted to his declaration and asked for details of his conversion from a dedicated "Japanese" auto buyer to German. He said he was influenced by the reputation that Germans are "efficiency orientated". **Ramrod** detailed his search for a new vehicle together with son **Dan**. He had been leaning to an Infinity when **Dan** suggested either a BMW (he owns a Series 3), Mercedes or VW. The Passat, a completely new model, intrigued his interest - resulting in a search of dealers with cars in stock. After a search, **Ramrod** re-checked a nearby dealer and found they had one in stock to test-drive. The rest is now history. His new VW Passat SEL Premium V-6 is scheduled to arrive in March. Incidentally, the Passat comes with "proximity" keyless access and push-button starting. **Shadow** asked the color and **Ramrod** said "Tungsten Silver Metallic" with camel upholstery. Both **Shadow** and **PC Wiz** said they like the lighter interior.



- 3- **Ramrod** informed us that VW has a factory in Tennessee and his car would be manufactured there. The car comes with three year servicing included. **Shadow** responded with a report on his recent first included servicing of the Fusion Hybrid. All went routinely. **Ramrod** asked if there was any problem related to the recent transmission cooler repair and **Shadow** said nothing showed up on the diagnostics. He also stated that he would not again lease a new car. **Ramrod** said he "is not a fan of leasing" but asked **Shadow** to elaborate on his statement. **Shadow** said he ordered the Fusion with all the options that he would if he were buying the car, not leasing it. Except for the navigation system with its dash display with accessible automobile diagnostics at \$2500 extra. At the end of the lease he will have no car (**Ramrod** said "You can buy it") and will have had much higher monthly payments because of the extras.
- 4- At this point **Ramrod** proposed a toast to **Shadow** for being closest in his prediction of Sunday's Superbowl XLVI contestants. **Shadow** then made his prediction of the score of the game - Giants 31, New England 14. May it come to pass! **Ramrod** insistent that the Giants have to "get to Brady" and **Shadow** hoping for Giant ball possession to "get the clock on their side". **PC Wiz** heard that Mad Dog Russo had recently visited Francessa on the FAN. He opined that Dog had been a good foil for Francessa but couldn't stand the stridency of Dog's voice. **Shadow**, who does listen to Francessa, said he is on an ego trip - always the "expert" with the final word. **Ramrod** brought up the catcher/DH Jesus Montero trade to the Mariners. He said the "pitchers did nothing last year" and applauded the signing of Hiroki Kuroda RHP (13-16 2011) from the Los Angeles Dodgers for a one-year deal. **HVBS** members thereupon toasted to retiring stalwart Jorge Posada, a ball-player on **Deliberator's** favorite team, the New York Yankees.

- 5- **Ramrod** mentioned listening to Don Eimus who "hates Gingrich and likes Christy and Romney". In family news we learned that **Dan** has bought a Honda CRV for **Chako** to drive. He reminded us of the steep driveway they have from the road to the house on the side of the slope facing the Hudson River. It has a sharp turn in the middle of two straight slopes. The car has a camera that makes parking and the sharp turn easier. **Shadow** told us of the camera and close-object-sensors on his Fusion Hybrid that make driving safer. **PC Wiz** told the group that the latest Consumer Reports has a review of the 2012 Toyota Camry. They lamented the fact that only the top model, the XLE, has the camera - it would be very useful in all the new models. We learned that **Chako's** sister from Japan is visiting for three weeks. To **Shadow's** question as to her proficiency in English, **Ramrod** replied "less than **Chako**" so they mostly converse in Japanese. Visiting **Dan** and family for **Dan's** birthday, **Ramrod** told us he stopped at the Pastry Garden next to Adams for a cake and pastries to bring along. **Ramrod** then brought us up-to-date on **Dan's** situation at Turtle Beach. A buy-out of the firm was being negotiated by the company that owns Boston Acoustics, **Dan's** former employer. His boss is a "micro-manager", hard to work for and **Dan** was hoping for the buy-out but it didn't happen.
- 6- **PC Wiz** informed **Ramrod** that NASCAR this year has mandated fuel-injection for their engines for the first time. **Ramrod** thought they were injected but **Shadow** informed him that they have always been carbureted. **Shadow** elaborated with his conviction that NASCAR is a dictatorship that does not respond to the drivers' concerns since they have no union and no power. **Shadow** then told us of Brad Keselowski, who drives for Penske Racing, who criticized the new fuel injection system - saying that they have gone from a 50 year-old technology to a 35 year-old; using a throttle body instead of the modern electronic injection. He was fined secretly (thought to be \$25,000) by NASCAR, who stated it was part of their "green initiative".
- 7- In miscellaneous news, **Ramrod** mentioned a news item about a factory in China that made parts for Apple (and Microsoft and others) where they had to put a net around the building to prevent worker suicides. **PC Wiz** has heard the story and said the workers had received a pay increase. **Ramrod** then repeated **Dan's** experience in China - with a modern, highly developed coastal region and a terribly backward interior. **PC Wiz** cited watching Angela Merkel, German Prime Minister, give a speech at the European financial conference in Davos, Switzerland. She referred to the dream of a "United States of Europe" which **PC Wiz** thought quite impossible. Referring to Michael Savage, he said that (for the U.S.) language, culture and borders are a necessity. Since they have no common language **PC Wiz** suggested that English would be the most logical - most already have some proficiency. But --- can anyone imagine the, for instance, French giving up their language? And the cultures are obviously different so he concluded that the central government in Brussels will not succeed.
- 8- **Shadow** brought up the top news story concerning the liner Costa Cordia running aground in Tuscany. Captain Schettino claims he was harangued by a cruise manager to come close to shore for a "salute" where the ship ran aground and capsized with at least 17 dead. The loss is estimated at up to \$175 million. In miscellaneous news **Ramrod** mentioned a survey of the "rudest" cities - to no-ones surprise New York City was in first place. Then **Ramrod** told us about what he had heard concerning the Oktoberfest in Munich, Germany. Everyone is very friendly, they have a great celebration and if necessary, a place to sleep and a ride home in the morning! Sehr Gemutlich!
- 9- **Ramrod** and **PC Wiz** selected their entrees from the specials list - penne ala vodka with chicken and shrimp. **Ramrod** asked **Lorayne** to have the chef leave out the shrimp while **Shadow** had ordered a cheeseburger. Both **PC Wiz** and **Ramrod** sent compliments via **Lorayne** on the very attractive dish and flavorful sauce. At the end **HVBS** members decided to have coffee but no desserts. **PC Wiz's** lunch, as adopted in our bylaws, was "on the house" because of his pending 82nd birthday. **Hostess Ginny** stopped by our table to chat and affirmed the dates of the Winter closing of the **Hoffman House**. A date for our next meeting was discussed and ratified. Weather permitting, it will be held on **Wednesday March 21, 2012**. The meeting adjourned.

Thanks to **Ramrod** for his laudatory review and doubling of **PC Wiz's** salary and to **Shadow** for his seconding the review.

HVBS Official Scribe Laureate **PC Wiz**

February 7, 2012