



The Hudson Valley Bullshit Society

Official Minutes of the 6th HVBS Meeting of December 6, 2012 at the Hoffman House in Kingston, NY.

- 1- On a cool clear morning in the 30's the Northern Sages, driven by **PC Wiz**, entered the **Hoffman House** parking lot a bit early at 11:15 AM. **Ramrod** arrived a few minutes later and remained in his Passat while **Shadow** exited the Camry. **Ramrod** remained behind the wheel – opening the window and explaining that he had a problem with back pain. Carefully getting out, he elucidated that he suffers from “spinal stenosis”. **Ramrod** said the word stenosis is based on an ancient Greek word denoting “narrowing” where the spinal canal presses on the spinal cord (1 person in 1,000 over 65 has the problem). Entering the premises we were enthusiastically greeted by **Hostess Ginny Bradley**, standing at the waitress station. A new young lady set up our traditional table in the corner. **PC Wiz** found out that HVBS **Official Waitress Lorayne** is present on Wednesdays and that our new waitress' name is **Kasey**, with a “K”. **Ramrod** told her that one of his grand-daughters is named **Casey**, with a “C”. **Kasey** blamed the K in her name on the bartender, a reference not clear to members
- 2- **PC Wiz** started the libation orders by asking for Keegan's Mothers Milk, **Shadow** ordered a Heineken while **Ramrod** asked what they had on draft. He opted for a Sam Adams and explained that he preferred draft, except when it gets to the bottom of the barrel. **PC Wiz** offered the opinion that, with modern cooling and storage, today's draft is probably more uniform. **Ramrod** chuckled and told us a story from his youth. His father had a bar with a large box below the beer taps with cooling coils for the beer. The box was filled with ice to cool the beer; **Ramrod** had to buy the bags of ice – reminding **Shadow** and **PC Wiz** of their youth and ice boxes in the kitchen.
- 3- **Shadow** then asked how the family is doing. **Ramrod** informed us that his Thanksgiving visit with his brother Jim to **Dan** and **Chako** went very well. **Dan** invited **Ramrod** to live with them. To **PC Wiz's** concern that the woman of the home had to make the invitation, **Ramrod** replied that **Dan** had her consent. Concerning **Dan**, he told us that his son is a very bright person and very good at his job but has problems with practical everyday items such as shoveling snow – which is certainly in our near future. They have no snow shovel. When **Ramrod** asked when he was going to purchase one he replied that he was thinking about it. **Sharon** is doing well, telephoned **Ramrod** and thanked him for gifts he sent her and the girls. **Sharon** also gave **Ramrod** a gift of premium wines – he is getting 2 bottles a month for the next six months! **PC Wiz** mentioned that **Russ** and **Kris** had given him and **Shadow** the same gift; the wines were great and introduced them to Malbec, a dark purple wine from South America.
- 4- **Ramrod** informed us that **Kristi** is making out applications for college and would like to go to Loyola. **Shadow** stated that it is in Maryland – a Jesuit Catholic University in Baltimore. **Max**, now 4 ½, is going to pre-school and speaks English! (He calls **Ramrod** “papou”, the Greek word for grandfather.) **Shadow** then updated **Ramrod** on the shocking news concerning **Russell**. He suffered a blood clot that lodged in his lungs. He drove himself to the hospital. Presently they are using “clot-buster” drugs and Coumadin. **Ramrod** predicted that **Russell** would be all right since the critical period is within a very short window – the sooner the treatment the better. He then told us that a pulmonary embolism was the cause of **HVBS Associate Member Kay's** death. She died in the ambulance before they could get her to the hospital.
- 5- **Shadow** told us that he had his annual physical on Tuesday – a shorter ritual than usual. It consisted of drawing blood, weighing on a scale, and taking blood pressure and pulse. He did not have an EKG because of the recent one he had when his kidney stone was removed. **Ramrod**, who is in the largest group practice in the Poughkeepsie area, said his understanding is that the doctor is allowed 7 ½ minutes per patient. **Ramrod** said that at his last physical he was not on a scale and did not have an EKG. Members then discussed ObamaCare which,

with his re-election, is now permanently the “law of the land” and will lead to “socialized medicine”. **Ramrod**, postulating that the “retirement” age will have to be raised from 65 to at least 67 because of the “boomer generation”, lamented the lack of General Practitioners. **Shadow** agreed; with the pressure of lower earnings, doctors are increasingly specializing – resulting in an extreme shortage of family doctors – not counting the additional millions insured under the Affordable Health Care Act.

- 6- **PC Wiz** recently had his three month visit to his ophthalmologist and got a prescription to change only his right lens – the eye that had the YAG laser treatment. **Shadow** related the recent experience of **HVBS Associate Member Shirley**. She was examined at Pearle Vision by a tech that came from China. In China the tech was an ophthalmologist but here she would have to re-qualify for a license. After a thorough exam she recommended **Shirley** to make an appointment with a local doctor. It was done and she is now under the doctor’s care for her rather high eye pressure. **Shadow** explained that different pressures are normal for people so the doctor will follow her case. **Ramrod** then told us of his problem with cataracts. While his doctor is waiting for the proper time for an operation **Ramrod** is experiencing a real problem with headlight glare. He avoids driving at night as much as possible. **PC Wiz** commented that part of our problem is the SUV’s and trucks – being taller the headlights shine directly into the sedans we drive.
- 7- In our news comments Hurricane Sandy was, of course, the main topic. **Ramrod** got through it quite well by running his generator intermittently. Later it would have been a problem with people coming up from NY to purchase gasoline at the Poughkeepsie gas stations – with resultant long lines. **PC Wiz** informed the group that he had telephoned the **Hoffman House** to make certain they were open. The storm didn’t affect them very much although low-lying areas of Kingston were flooded. **Shadow** told us they were re-building the sand dunes in New Jersey for the next possible storm. **Ramrod** expounded on the damage on Long Island while **PC Wiz** brought up the PATH disaster in Hoboken. A central control and switching facility was built (many years ago) below sea level! The Hoboken station and the control center were still closed. **Shadow** told of the NJ Transit locomotives and cars that were flooded by 11 feet of sea water. Members thought (hind-sight, of course) that, considering the predicted storm surge and full moon high tide, they should have been brought further inland. Continuing to the Hostess debacle – **Shadow** mentioned that one union had agreed (the teamsters!) while the bakers were responsible for 18,000 people losing their jobs.
- 8- **Shadow** showed **Ramrod** a print he had made of a photo he took of a new railroad bridge on our Glenridge Road, replacing a one-way ancient structure controlled by traffic lights. Two other bridges will also have to be replaced. When informed that a “round-about” was being constructed in the vicinity, **Ramrod** chuckled and wished us luck. In a recent e-mail **Ramrod** sent a video of a railroad bridge in Durham, NC where vehicles kept running into the low clearance (clearly marked) bridge. **Ramrod** and **PC Wiz** agreed the funniest case was a motor home where the bridge sheared off everything on the roof and the driver kept going. **Ramrod** said he heard the new Tappan Zee Thruway Bridge was now estimated to come under 5 Billion dollars – and the toll, presently \$5 one-way east, will go to \$14! **Shadow** and **Ramrod** agreed that it was extremely likely the bridge would be a lot more costly.
- 9- In sports the story was about the NY Giants loss to the Redskins, 17-16. **Ramrod** was upset by the nine penalties the offensive line suffered – one resulting in the loss of a touchdown, while he thought the defense played a good game. **Shadow** reiterated that he was sick of the “schizophrenic team”. **Waitress Kasey** arrived to get our orders for coffee and dessert. All members went for desserts – **Ramrod** and **PC Wiz** the pumpkin cheesecake and **Shadow** opted for a dish of vanilla ice cream. Adjourning the meeting, members ran into a discussion of the Giants at the bar with the bartender. Members lamented the sad performance; **Shadow** repeated his schizophrenic comment and all agreed it unlikely the team would make the playoffs, especially with the Redskins and Cowboys playing well.
- 10- In the parking lot **Ramrod** examined **PC Wiz’s** Camry and found no navigation system, although the display has a screen for tuning and functions. Members overlooked setting up a possible date for our “Winter before the Hoffman House closes” meeting. **Shadow** and **PC Wiz** have proposed **Thursday January 24, 2013**.

Thanks to **Ramrod** and **Shadow** for their review and approval of the preliminary minutes.

HVBS Official Scribe Laureate **PC Wiz**

December 18, 2012