



## *The Hudson Valley Bullshit Society*

Official Minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> HVBS Meeting March 27, 2013 at the Hoffman House in Kingston, NY.

1. On a sparkling Spring morning **PC Wiz** piloted **Shadow** in his super-white Camry. On the Thruway **Shadow** noted a car going by had the NYS plate number "20", most likely a Senate member going home after the grueling budget "hard work" which terminated at 4:30 AM. We both wished him "thanks" for a return to the gimmicks and smoke and mirrors of previous administrations. A short time after our arrival **Ramrod** made his grand entrance. As our group made its way into the patio, members were heard making slightly off-color remarks. A white-haired gentleman checking the tables on the patio laughed and remarked that we must be talking "politics". With our affirmation, all had a hearty laugh and we entered the premises to the welcome to **HVBS Official Waitress Lorayne** and the perennial bar-tender. She directed us to our "regular table" which was already set for three.
2. **Lorayne** then took our beverage orders: a diet Coke for **Ramrod**, **PC Wiz** chose a house cabernet and **Shadow** asked what beers they had. He then selected a Peroni – imported from Italy. Members toasted to the memory of **Deliberator**, our esteemed **HVBS** Founding Member. **Ramrod** then read several very funny jokes that he had selected. **Ramrod** stated that he had read an article in the Wall Street Journal that the State was trying to expand the brewing of beer in the Hudson Valley. **Shadow** mentioned that he knew of a micro-brewery in Long Island that was doing good. **Shadow** then asked **Ramrod** for the latest on son **Dan's** employment situation. The company decision to eliminate their research department was final; **Dan** and the rest of the team were laid-off. To **Shadow's** inquiry, **Ramrod** said **Dan** is getting severance pay and is eligible for unemployment insurance. **PC Wiz** thought their house had been leased but **Ramrod** informed us that it had been a lease for one year with the "option to buy" – which he exercised. So the very desirable house will hopefully sell quickly.
3. With **Lorayne's** return members made their lunch selections. Noting the "Boboli pizza" on the special menu **Ramrod** asked what that was. **Shadow** said it was Boboli brand plain pizza dough that **HVBS Associate Member Shirley** tops with cheese and pepperoni, etc. for a tasty dinner he highly recommended. **Ramrod** ordered the Boboli and **PC Wiz**, true to his record, settled for the usually excellent "fish and chips". **Shadow** had a hankering for an item he had not ordered in a long time – French dip with hot au jus. Later **Shadow** confided that the French dip bread had been outstanding – excellent bread being rare these days. **Hostess Ginny Bradley** stopped by our table to greet us. **Shadow** asked her where she and **Pat** had gone on their vacation and she told us "Thailand". **Ginny** said they had really enjoyed the trip. In the mean-time **Pat Bradley** had been busily putting the outside of our window. He motioned to **Ginny** and she left to help him. **PC Wiz** opined that, having an old house, he knew about patching. **Shadow** retorted that the Hoffman House was a lot older than **PC Wiz's**.
4. **Ramrod** related that he had received a telephone call from Verizon, his land-line supplier, to switch his telephone to the new FiOS fiber optic cable. They offered the service at the same price and his present wire land-line. **Ramrod** asked several penetrating questions, such as service during storms when power-line failure is frequent but the telephones tend to keep working. **Shadow** interjected that the company has backup batteries to maintain the phones. The phone rep said the service would be exactly the same

so **Ramrod** signed up for the change. **PC Wiz** mentioned that FiOS also can supply Internet and TV – rated excellent in reviews. Not so on the TV replied **Ramrod**; it would require licensing by the \* Town of LaGrange \* which now contracts with Time-Warner.

5. **Shadow** said he is seriously considering a new HD TV to replace their old, bulky CRT set. **Ramrod** stated that the new LED and plasma sets are very reasonably priced. **PC Wiz**, mentioning frequent Consumer Reports reviews to help select the best set; offered the opinion that the size should be matched to the room. Also, although HD channels are provided, digital cable basic is quite limited with **PC Wiz** especially missing the Weather Channel and C-Span. **Ramrod** expounded on recent appearances of notorious rapper 50 cent (Curtis James Jackson III) on morning TV shows “The View” and “Rachel Ray”. **Ramrod**, recounting his sordid past and not impressed by the man’s re-made image, thought 50 cent should not be on national TV. Which led the discussion to the Agenda item: “Tiger’s back!” **PC Wiz** explained that he felt the relief in the voices of the tour anchors when Tiger Woods won the Arnold Palmer Invitational at the Bay Hill Club to re-gain first position in the Official World Golf Ranking. **PC Wiz** posited that his fame brings the public to view the matches and the money (always the money - \$1,080,000 payday at Bay Hill) generates the big purses for the other players and TV coverage.
6. **Shadow** then mentioned an interesting anecdote about Tiger Woods 155 foot Trideck Motor Yacht: his ex-wife Elin Nordgren is dating billionaire Chris Cline whose yacht is 164 feet in length – some 9 feet longer than Tiger’s! (Note: Greg Norman owns a 230 foot yacht.) **PC Wiz** commented that explains Elin’s reported comment “his is larger”. **Shadow** laughed and commented that could be understood in a different way. In local news **PC Wiz** referred to the news item **Ramrod** had sent in an e-mail; **Ramrod** condemned the construction of roundabouts on State Route 376, a highway that goes past Vassar College. Both **PC Wiz** and **Shadow** have concluded that the roundabouts have worked better than expected – except on Route 67 where they have three in a row very close together. **Ramrod** admitted that the College roundabouts were OK but they have changed a major 4-lane highway into a divided 2-lane boulevard, resulting in much traffic being diverted to parallel roads.



7. **Dan** has to cross the Tappan Zee bridge over the Hudson every day, coping with very heavy traffic (135,000 cars a day – 2010), not to mention the condition of the 57 year old bridge. On the left is a picture of the final accepted design of the new replacement to be built on the North side of the present bridge. Familiar with the designed 8-lane sharp turn to enter the bridge, **Dan** suggests they “have to re-think it”. **PC Wiz** brought an excerpt from Amity Schlaes “The Forgotten Man” re-visiting the Roosevelt years. It told of labor secretary Frances Perkins concerns

that the 1935 Social Security bill would be found unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Attending tea at his house, Perkins was told by Justice Harlan Stone that the act should be presented to the Court as a tax and not a government insurance plan. Did Chief Justice Roberts base his Obamacare decision on reading this account?

8. **Shadow** brought a Yahoo article entitled “NASCAR’s Greed and Sagging Attendance” which supported his long-held contention that NASCAR’s tight rules control was ruining the sport – especially the restrictor plate used to “lower speeds” at the super raceways. The author felt that they had moved away from the base of fans in the Southeast to make racing more popular and profitable. **Shadow** then mentioned the recent Auto Club 400 where Tony Stewart and Joey Logano had a scuffle after the race when Stewart accused Logano of cutting him off in a re-start. In the re-play it was obvious Stewart was wrong. **Shadow** has long disliked Tony because of his track behavior but, recently, thought he had finally matured. This incident laid his theory to rest.

9. **PC Wiz** had a commentary on the new NFL rule barring ball carriers from using their helmet crown to make contact. After watching videos, the owners voted passage by 31-1, with Cincinnati voting “no”. **Shadow** maintained that there is already a rule prohibiting helmet use. **Ramrod** responded by saying there is a “dirty play every play – **Shadow** agreed. **PC Wiz**, noting that football is obviously a contact sport, predicted that coaches (and fans) would now have more plays to dispute and video review with a 15 yard penalty at stake. Steelers President Art Rooney commented “Jim Brown never lowered his head. It can be done.”
10. **HVBS** members have concern for the Yankee team this year. **Ramrod** commented that the “Yanks will be lucky to escape the cellar this year” and hoped that Wells might help. **Shadow** said he felt ARod (60 day DL) is history. There are presently six players on the disabled list including – 15 day DL Teixeira, Granderson and Jeter. Also raised was the proposal by the Postal Service to cut their deficit by eliminating Saturday deliveries. Both **Shadow** and **Ramrod** said the move was OK. Much of previous mailings are now electronic and the post office is not as essential as it used to be. **PC Wiz** felt that their service, which covers every part of the country, was vital and should be supported as a government service.
11. Members ordered their coffees with only **PC Wiz** opting for an ice cream dessert. The date for our next meeting was decided to be **Wednesday May 8, 2013**. The meeting was adjourned with farewells to **Lorayne, Ginny** and the **bartender**.

Thanks to **Shadow** for his review and **Ramrod** for his correction concerning TV licensing \*.

**HVBS** Official Scribe Laureate **PC Wiz**

April 8, 2013