



The Hudson Valley Bullshit Society

Official Minutes of the 4th HVBS Meeting June 19, 2013 at the Hoffman House in Kingston, NY.

1- On a bright, sunny clear day the Northern contingent in **PC Wiz's** Camry made a routine transit to the **Hoffman House**, arriving at 11:19 AM, only to find **Ramrod** had preceded us and was waiting in the parking lot. **Ramrod** pointed out that he had acquired a handicap parking tag and had taken the "handicap reserved" first space next to the entrance path. He recommended members to apply also, finding its use very advantageous. The patio tables were complete with settings but **HVBS** members entered the open door premises on this beautiful morning. We were met by **HVBS Official Waitress Lorayne** and her assistant. **Lorayne** informed us that our usual room to the right was reserved for a funeral party and we would have to use the room to the left. Seated at the corner table, members considered their choices of a beverage. **Ramrod** ordered a Tom Collins which, remembering past problems with the choice of citrus garnish, led to some bantering over orange versus lime or lemon wedges. Changing his order to a gin and tonic, he then asked what gin the bar offered – preferring the Scottish Tanqueray gin – which **Lorayne** confirmed was available. **Shadow** then ordered the same while **PC Wiz** opted for a glass of merlot.

2- **PC Wiz** commented on a recent e-mail in which **Ramrod** said that, on rare occasions, he had been known to be wrong. **PC Wiz** sent a complementary, not historically accurate, reply: that he could not remember when **Ramrod** had last been wrong - calculated to likely provoke a response. It duly came from **Wingit**, who reminisced about the legendary disagreements between **Deliberator** and **Ramrod** on different topics, especially concerning the Yankees! One of them had to be incorrect! **Shadow** commented that he would enjoy having **Wingit** joining our conversation some session – **Ramrod** and **PC Wiz** agreed. Members were discussing the recent weather. **PC Wiz** mentioned that he had to start up his sump pump; common in the Spring melts but never as late as mid-June. He added that his entire neighborhood has homes with hoses out to the street. **Shadow** added that **PC Wiz** had measured 17" of water in his sump necessitating pumping. **Lorayne** told us how the frequent rain was affecting her son. His Little League games have usually been canceled after they have arrived for the game and it then had started raining. **PC Wiz** asked if he had his own bat which he heard on a radio talk show could cost as much as \$175 for a good bat. **Lorayne** told us it is true – her son's bat actually cost \$150.

3- Since **Lorayne** was at our table members ordered their lunches. **PC Wiz** ordered off the "specials" menu: penne pasta with shrimp and vegetables. **Ramrod**, on the same menu, was torn between the Boboli and the quesadilla. He asked **Lorayne** what a quesadilla was. She described the cheese and vegetable filled soft pancake cut into triangles to serve and **Ramrod** decided to try it. **Shadow** ordered a burger with fries. **PC Wiz** pointed out an update to the Agenda: **Shadow** purchased a new mower. The John Deere hand mower was 11 years old, in response to **Ramrod's** question. It turned out to be a long story. A control cable broke on the mower and **Shadow** went to the John Deere dealer for a replacement. The parts man couldn't find a replacement with the proper end fitting; to repair it **Shadow** had to buy a cable, a new control panel at the handle end and an expensive washer (nut?), totaling about \$85! **Shadow** had noticed on entering the premises that there were no Deere mowers on display. The man informed him that Deere had ended production of the mowers two years ago, they now sold Hondas and, of course, the complete line of John Deere tractors. With an expensive repair on an obsolete mower, **Shadow** decided to cut his losses and purchase a new machine. After a bit of haggling with the salesman, he went for the "top-of-the-line" model complete with battery-powered electric start.

4- The story prompted **Ramrod** to comment on his home situation. He is very satisfied with the lawn service he has – they mow, string trim and blow the area clear. **Ramrod** stated that he now has no use for his tractor or, in fact, his mower. **Shadow** asked how much his service costs: they do the lawn – a good job in 20 minutes - once a week for \$35, a reasonable sum for not having to do the mowing, cleaning the mower, bagging, etc.

Ramrod then told us of his Father's Day experience. **Grandson Travis** sent him a nice card and called on the telephone – unfortunately **Ramrod** was not at home at the time. **Dan** took him out to a nice dinner in celebration of the event.

Shadow related how he and **PC Wiz** were treated to a “Dad and Uncle” breakfast on Father's Day. **Randy** flew them to the Barnes Airport in Massachusetts. He brought along a container of “genuine maple syrup” for the blueberry pancake he was going to order, not trusting the menu maple syrup item. Sure enough, they were out of the “real thing” so Dad also enjoyed it on his waffle. **Ramrod** then related how he got a telephone call from **Sharon** that she needed his help. She is shortly going to Portugal on business for the specialty paper firm she works for in Connecticut and required help from grandpa to “house sit” **Casey** and the dog. **Kristy** has been accepted by Loyola University in Baltimore; father **Bob** was asked and refused to come up with money for her education.

5- Dan's new employment being full time, he goes to Baltimore for the week and then returns home for the weekend. He drove just once, according to **Ramrod**, and that was sufficient. Going via Metro-North and Amtrak, **Ramrod** drives him to the Croton station where **Dan** gets the train to Penn Station, then to Baltimore via the Acela. **Dan's** company has bought the former Polk Audio facility where **Dan** used to work, so he is quite familiar with the location. With the family flying to Japan a few days after the house closing and searching for a new residence, **Dan** will be quite busy. **Ramrod** said **Dan** had searched for recent photos of his family and couldn't find any. Children being especially difficult to photograph, they turned to a professional photographer but the deal fell through. So **Dan** decided to try his hand at getting a good picture (he is an excellent amateur photographer with fine equipment). According to **Ramrod**, he was lucky to get a really great family portrait with the boys; grandpa will get a framed copy.

6- Shadow replied to a question about how the Yankees are faring by stating, “they are falling apart”. **Ramrod** commented that they have six starters on the DL, including Mark Teixeira, with Cano the only regular in the infield. **Shadow** brought up the fact that Robinson Cano is in the final year of his contract and that he will soon be going for the “big bucks”. **Ramrod** remarked that he thinks catcher Chris Stewart is a better defensive catcher than Francisco Cervelli, who is presently on the DL***. He then asked **Shadow** how his long-time favorite team, the LA Dodgers (presently a dismal 33-42), were doing since Don Mattingly became their new manager in 2011, succeeding Joe Torre. **Shadow** replied that they are “hurt all the time”. **PC Wiz** stated that he remembered Mattingly from his Yankee playing days at first base and admired him a lot. Asked about the NY Rangers and their new coach, **Shadow** said that John Tortorella, who coached the team for 5 seasons, had “lost the team”. The new coach, Alain Vigneault, managed the Vancouver Canucks for seven seasons. **PC Wiz** felt that the Rangers had done well in actually getting to the playoffs. **Shadow** pointed out that 16 of 30 teams in the NHL make the playoffs – not a big deal. **HVBS** member attention then turned to golf with **Shadow** reporting that Tiger Woods, back in good graces with Nike, had just signed an undisclosed multi-million dollar 10 year deal. Woods complaint of trouble with his arm raised no sympathy from members.

7- HVBS Official Waitress Lorayne arrived to take our orders for coffees. She related the dessert items and, this time, members made their selections. Reverting to habit, **PC Wiz** ordered the crème brulee, **Ramrod** a serving of cheesecake, and **Shadow** selected the apple cobbler with vanilla ice cream. **Shadow** informed us that the International Speedway Corporation plans to re-develop the Daytona NASCAR track – a \$400 million project due to be completed in 2016. He pointed out that they are going to remove the entire back-stretch grandstand – eliminating 40,000 seats. Seats will be wider and more comfortable. **Ramrod** inferred that they would most likely be adding high-value “sky boxes”. **Shadow** said they certainly will, to get money and commitment from companies and corporations. **Ramrod** and **Shadow** went on to reminisce about their experiences on Dutchess County projects and the people they had worked with. Time to set up the date for our next session; **Shadow** whipped out a small calendar, counted the weeks and came up with a proposal.

Lorayne, who was present for collecting the bill (and, incidentally, being given one of Ramrod's choice jokes which she had to show to the staff), thought we should come more often (evidently we have won over the **Hoffman House** staff).

Shadow duly moved it back one week to ****Wednesday August 7, 2013****. It was so moved and ratified; our latest foray now history as we retired to the parking lot.

Thanks to **Ramrod** for his review of the preliminary notes.

HVBS Official Scribe Laureate **PC Wiz**

July 6, 2013

****** Date change due to **PC Wiz** and **Ramrod** doctor appointments

******* Statement corrected by Ramrod