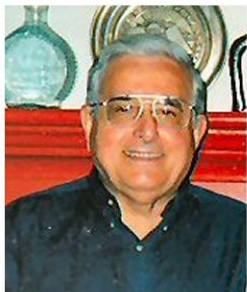


*Ramrod*



*Shadow*



*PC Wiz*



*Surveyor*



## *The Hudson Valley Bullshit Society*

Official Minutes: 3rd HVBS Meeting, June 4, 2014 at the Hoffman House in Kingston, NY.

1- We received the sad news that **Surveyor** could not attend our meeting because his father-in-law is very ill from a stroke. Since he was the designated driver next in rotation, **PC Wiz** drove the diminished duo to the meeting on a bright, sunny perfect Spring morning. Soon after our arrival **Ramrod** appeared and we explained why **Surveyor** was not with us. Entering the patio we encountered **Hostess Ginny** who greeted us warmly (host **Pat Bradley** had greeted us in the parking area as he left on an errand). Entering the premises, we greeted the staff and were told to take our regular table with **Ginny** shortly arriving with the menus. **HVBS Official Waitress Lorayne** appeared for our beverage orders. **Ramrod** ordered his favorite Tanqueray gin and tonic. **PC Wiz**, inquiring what they had on draft, opted for a Peroni Pale Lager and **Shadow** asked for a Malbec.

2- When the drinks arrived, **Shadow** and **Ramrod** noted a change in **Lorayne's** attire. She was promptly tagged as "**Quick Change Lorayne**". **HVBS** members toasted to the memory of our departed **Founding Member Deliberator**. **Ramrod** informed us that he had just been watching his lawn being mowed from the front window when "I moved only 2" and my back went out".\*\* **PC Wiz** commented on the many people in his neighborhood who are hiring lawn services, including his next door neighbor. **Shadow** asked how he was doing concerning his recent bout with back pain. **Ramrod** told us it was now just a dull ache. **Shadow** then told **Ramrod** how his knee had buckled and his adventures in purchasing an elastic knee-brace. He now has a full-range adjustable brace that hopefully will help with the problem.

3- **Shadow** informed **Ramrod** that **Randy** and **Bobbi** were back from their Italian trip last Saturday. They flew the Arab Emirates airline, both ways on Boeing 777's, and had fine flights. During their stay they took a high-speed train ride from Milan to Florence. The train attained a speed of 186 mph. and **Randy** marveled at how quickly they were passing the traffic on the adjoining Italian autostrade with its 81 mph. speed limit. **Ramrod** informed us that in the coming week he is going to visit **Dan** and family in Annapolis, taking the train. **Shadow** asked if he had booked the Acela and **Ramrod** said he had thought about it but the price difference was daunting. For one-half the Acela price he is getting a round-trip ticket on Northeast Regional for \$159! **Ramrod** chuckled and told us granddaughter Kristi, who will be a sophomore next semester, has a job – at a Greek diner. He then reminisced about working in his parents' Greek diner in his youth. **Shadow** asked the name of the diner in Annapolis, which **Ramrod** could not recall. **Shadow** then stated that it must be "Olympic" because most Greek diners are called "Olympic".

4- **Official Waitress Lorayne** appeared to take our luncheon orders. **Ramrod** informed her that he had no printed jokes (no suitable stories in the day's emails) but proceeded to tell her a pair of great jokes from memory. Expertly told, they hit the spot with raucous laughter resulting. **Lorayne** told us she has a friend who is a great story teller and envies the talent. **PC Wiz** interjected that President Reagan had a reputation for story telling – he was indeed a famous "raconteur". **Shadow** had to comment on **PC Wiz's** predilection for large

words. **Ramrod** ordered the pastrami Reuben from the menu. Although the Reuben is his favorite sandwich, **PC Wiz** ordered the Greek Boboli from the “specials” menu. **Ramrod** pointedly asked if **PC Wiz** “liked olives” since the Boboli had a lot of sliced black olives. To his “yes” **Ramrod** concluded “then you’ll like it”. **Shadow** decided on a burger “medium well” with cheese, inquiring about the sides that come with the choice.

5- Continuing with our “personal updates” **Shadow** brought up the subject of bird feeders. He related that his feeder had attracted large birds that emptied the feeder in a day. They got advice about the problem from the local Checker Hills Farm store, leaving the feeder empty for a couple of days and then filling it with seeds especially for small birds – thus not attracting **Ramrod’s** “boogie-birds” with the wrong feed. It worked and now attracts finches, etc. (Later **HVBS Associate Member Shirley** called the bird feeder maker and was instructed on how to correct the mechanism that closes the feeder to large birds. Worked like a charm!). **Ramrod** told us that he fills his feeder 2 to 3 times a week and recently found a dead mouse in the bag. **Ramrod** asked if **Shadow** hangs out suet. The answer was “no”.

6- **Shadow** then told us he had his Fusion Hybrid to the carwash. Upon wiping his wheels he discovered one rim was marred with gouges. **PC Wiz** opined that it could have been done when the tire was mounted at the factory while both **Shadow** and **Ramrod** thought it most likely was damaged in transport. **Shadow** went back to the dealer, Orange Ford, to report it to the salesman who sold him the car. He offered no solution (a new wheel costs \$800!).\*\*\* **Ramrod** advised **Shadow** he had to bypass the dealer and contact the factory rep directly. **Ramrod** observed that he has found some new faulty trim on his Passat similar to the problem trim the dealer replaced. **Ramrod** then asked if **Shadow** had a telephone number to call at Sirius. **Shadow** suggested their web site but was convinced he would likely get a foreign call center with their hard-to-understand responders. Evidently Sirius is conducting a 3 month experiment to June 25, replacing their popular “40’s on 4” 1940’s music programming with Billy Joel, an unpopular replacement for many subscribers. **Ramrod** mentioned that FM radio is contemplating going to satellite in the near future, **Shadow** was familiar with the prospect.

7- Turning to national news, **Ramrod** referred to the Bowe Bergdahl case, whom National Security Adviser Susan Rice praised as serving “with honor and distinction”. Members all considered it a case of desertion which should result in an investigation and court martial. **Ramrod’s** opinion was that in reality it is a cover for the Obama administration’s drive to “empty Gitmo”. **HVBS** members are appalled by the release of five Taliban hard-core terrorists, especially by not referring the matter to the Congress. **Shadow** ruminated that he watched the entire confirmation hearings for Supreme Court Chief Justice Roberts and considers that appointment led to the downfall of the country. **PC Wiz** agreed, saying that his vote against the unconstitutional “Obama-Care” would have changed the country’s course.

8- **Ramrod** mentioned rising rate problems in the Hudson Valley for electricity. He said they need new power plants since new Federal rules restricted the generating area (and power sources) for Central Hudson from South of Albany to North of New York. They are proposing an 8% rise in rates to pay for new power plants. **Shadow** interjected that the new EPA rules concerning coal-fired plants is “putting coal miners out of business”. **Ramrod** informed us of the bankruptcy sale of St. Francis Hospital in Poughkeepsie to Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla NY. **Shadow** raised the issue of Seattle proposing a \$15 hourly minimum wage which prompted **Ramrod** to inform us of the \$47 rate for welders on the new Tappan Zee Bridge. **Shadow** pointed out that the cost of benefits was not included in the \$47. **Ramrod** said they are going to use robotic welders to save on wage costs.

9- **Lorayne** took our orders for coffee; upon returning with the coffee she informed us of the dessert selections. **Ramrod** ordered the Bailey’s cheese cake while **PC Wiz** inquired about the parfait she had mentioned. **Lorayne** described the dessert and said only one was left; **PC Wiz** approved. It was then **Shadow’s** turn and he requested vanilla ice cream with chocolate topping. **Ramrod** (who has been watching the games)

asked **Shadow**, our resident hockey expert, to make a prediction for the Stanley Cup contest of the Rangers vs. the LA Kings. His best prediction is for a Ranger Cup victory in either 6 or 7 games. **Ramrod** inquired if **Shadow's** favorite baseball team, the Los Angeles Dodgers, is doing "good". They are presently in second place in the National League West – 9.5 games behind a "hot" San Francisco Giants team with team manager Don Mattingly commenting "basically, we're sh\*\*ty". (They won the next game).

**10-** It was time to conclude our meeting and **Shadow** passed a slip of paper to **PC Wiz**. It had the two July dates that **Surveyor** told **Shadow** he had other commitments and could not attend. **Ramrod** pulled out his handy-dandy calendar (no "smart" phones here!) and suggested **Wednesday July 16, 2014**. It was ratified and the meeting adjourned. On the way out we received hearty farewells from **Hostess Ginny**, the waitresses and bartender.

Thanks to Ramrod (\*\*) and Shadow (\*\*\*) for their corrections of the preliminary minutes.

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

June 14, 2014