

*Ramrod*



*Shadow*



*PC Wiz*



*Surveyor*



## *The Hudson Valley Bullshit Society*

Official Minutes: 5th HVBS Meeting, September 3, 2014 at the Hoffman House in Kingston, NY.

1- On a fine, sunny late summer morning, **Surveyor** arrived at **PC Wiz's** house for transportation to our hallowed meeting ground in Kingston. Since he arrived a few minutes early **PC Wiz** showed him a computer video that **Ramrod** had recommended. It was an address to the Congress by Trey Gowdy, former Federal prosecutor and representative from South Carolina. **Shadow** could not attend so the two of us departed for the **Hoffman House**. We arrived with time to spare and **Ramrod** quickly appeared and managed to attach his handicap tag to his mirror. After hearty greetings **Ramrod** said we would miss the presence of our incendiary member. The meeting probably would turn out tamer than usual. **Hostess Ginny**, tidying up the patio, greeted us most warmly. Entering the premises the bartender joined in with **HVBS Official Waitress Lorayne** waiting at the waitress' station.

2- **Lorayne** then took our orders for adult beverages: **Ramrod** wanted his usual Tanqueray Gin and tonic with lime, **Surveyor** chose a Stoli (Stolichnaya) Vodka and tonic. After some thought, **PC Wiz** asked about the on-tap beers, especially an October Fest. Since the keg of October Fest was unopened (to be tapped later) **PC Wiz** opted for a Samuel Adams Summer Ale. The first toast was to **Shadow**, wishing him to be present at our next BS session. Further toasts were to the memory of **HVBS** Founding Member **Deliberator** and also congratulations to **Wingit** on his retirement. **Ramrod** had invited **Wingit** to our confab but he couldn't attend. **PC Wiz** then informed **Ramrod** that **Surveyor** had great news for our meeting: he is going to fully retire on September 19! This naturally led to another toast.

3- We then discussed **Ramrod's** video of Congressman Gowdy (South Carolina), member of the House Judiciary Committee (Chairman Goodlatte) addressing the House on the meaning of law. It is a great 5 minute speech that takes issue with the President ignoring, changing or selectively enforcing laws. Those passed by the Congress and approved by the Supreme Court "are not suggestions or ideas, they are the law", Gowdy said. **HVBS** members agreed with the importance of enforcing passed laws, including border security. **Ramrod** stunned the meeting with the announcement that the doctor that had replaced his hip is in jail. Luckily it is not medical malpractice but guilt of hanky-panky in his Medicare billings. **Ramrod** says he has known the doctor for many years and finds the news very upsetting. **PC Wiz** mentioned the new GE facility being built in Malta – near the Global Foundries plant. **Surveyor** noted that they will be manufacturing fuel cells at the facility. **PC Wiz** is convinced the plant comes under Governor Cuomo's 10 year tax forgiveness plan, since it most likely is near enough to SUNY Empire State College in Saratoga Springs to qualify.

4- **Ramrod** related the sinking fortunes of IBM, the largest employer in Dutchess County, with employment presently about 7000 – (Gannett). At its peak, employment in the Hudson Valley was more than 31,000. This brought us to President Obama's "inversion" complaint. Burger King's acquiring Canada's Tim Horton chain a perfect example – companies moving their headquarters to Oakville Ontario for lower taxes, tentatively 26% top rate compared to 40% in the U.S. **PC Wiz** pointed out that Burger King is actually owned by Brazilians, not really an American firm. **Ramrod** said he was familiar with the foreign ownership of the chain.

5- It was time for lunch and **Lorayne** arrived to take our orders. **Ramrod** without hesitation ordered his favorite – the French onion steak sandwich, **Surveyor** requested the ever-popular fish and chips. **PC Wiz** had to peruse the "specials" menu to find his choice – cheese raviolis with bay scallops in a tomato-cream sauce. **Ramrod** then raised the issue of a debate between Zephyr Teachout and Governor Cuomo before the coming primary election. Teachout and

Republican candidate Rob Astorino debated an empty chair (a la Clint Eastwood) when Cuomo refused to attend any debates. **PC Wiz** opined the prevailing view is that Cuomo feels debating her would raise Teachout's stature. **HVBS** members were in agreement that debates are essential to inform the public on the candidate positions. **Surveyor** brought up the issue of the Governor's problem with tax evasion on his "girlfriend", Food Network star Sandra Lee who lives in Westchester County. She had an \$11,000 gazebo and shed built without a required building permit – thus evading a tax reassessment. **Ramrod** then queried us, based on discussions with his naturalized Greek acquaintances, how Greek voters decide whom to vote for. Upon no response he told us. They vote for the one with the Greek name – party affiliation not important. **Surveyor** noted that it reminded him of the movie "My Fat Greek Wedding" where the father worked out the derivation of any word mentioned (including "kimono") from the Greek base.

6- **PC Wiz** received a cell phone call from **Shadow** who wished to talk to **Ramrod** and **Surveyor**. They got an update from him on how he is feeling and his schedule for future medication. The **HVBS** members present missed the presence of **Shadow** and were very pleased to speak to him personally. Returning to the agenda **Ramrod** informed us of his lawn's condition - concerning the round, brown dead spots. **Ramrod** said his "lawn guy" has Mexican workers who work hard and do a good a good job. **Ramrod** also said he was told that the name of the disease is "pythium". **PC Wiz** said it sounded like a fungus infection. Pythium is a blight that thrives in hot, humid weather and can be controlled by trying to keep the lawn dry or by fungicides. **Surveyor**, who has a large area to mow, told us he has joined **Ramrod** and **Shadow** in hiring someone to do the chore. **Surveyor** informed us that his man is actually a big executive with Key Bank who loves to mow grass in his spare time.

7- **Surveyor** turned to the subject of TV and highly recommended the History Channel. **Ramrod** concurred, stating that he frequently watched it and enjoyed the historical programs. **PC Wiz** unfortunately only has the basic service – no History Channel - only the local broadcast channels. However, a DVD is available of **Surveyor's** favorite series "The Men Who Built America" – containing the stories of Ford, Rockefeller, Carnegie, Morgan and Vanderbilt. **PC Wiz** is considering the purchase. **Surveyor** told us of an episode with the fascinating story of Edison and Nikola Tesla – who worked for Edison for a time. They had a falling out over DC current, which Edison favored, and AC, which Tesla saw as the future. Later Tesla sold his patents to George Westinghouse (for \$1 million).

8- In sports **Ramrod** stated flatly that the Yankees "are done" – not going to make the playoffs. The question of whether manager Joe Girardi will stay was scotched by **Surveyor**, who mentioned the Yankee 2009 World Series win. On the subject of Yankee catchers, both **Ramrod** and **Surveyor** prefer Francisco Cervelli at the plate. Of course the case of A-Rod came up, with members adopting a wait and see attitude, expecting him to return. **HVBS** members commented on Derek Jeter's final year, again not agreeing with the extended celebration. **PC Wiz** opined that it has been orchestrated for publicity purposes. **Surveyor** talked about the extreme (and successful) statistics that baseball teams are using – resulting in batters hitting into the shifts, lowering batting averages.

9- **HVBS Official Waitress Lorayne** came with coffees to take possible dessert orders. **PC Wiz** ordered his usual Crème Brûlée while **Surveyor** opted for the ever popular apple cobbler. After some thought **Ramrod** settled for cheese cake. **Ramrod** informed us that he has signed up for the coming season's oil supply. **Surveyor** mentioned he heard construction of the new Tappan Zee Bridge had stopped. **Ramrod** said there had been complaints about noise and that no money source had been found yet. Returning to **Surveyor's** retirement, **Ramrod** advised him "don't wait, leave New York" before too much time goes by. **Surveyor** said he would be interested in the Carolinas but was not adverse to Florida. His firm having diverse offices, **Surveyor** is familiar with Texas – a choice advanced by **Ramrod** and **PC Wiz**. He found the Fort Worth area very hot and dry. **Surveyor** tallied up the bill, covering **Ramrod's** free luncheon due to his imminent birthday. He and **PC Wiz** paid with cash to **Lorayne's** evident delight. She said she prefers cash since the credit card 3½% charge also comes out of her tip. Members then discussed a date for our next meeting to enhance the possibility of **Shadow's** attendance. Wednesday October 29, 2014 was proposed and ratified. Our meeting adjourned.

Thanks to **Ramrod** and our new member **Surveyor** for their prompt review and approval of the Preliminary Minutes.  
**HVBS** Official Scribe Laureate **PC Wiz**  
September 10, 2014