

Ramrod



Shadow



PC Wiz



Surveyor



The Hudson Valley Bullshit Society

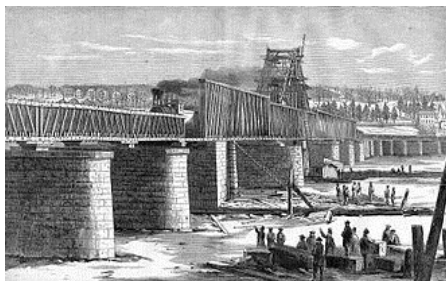
Official Minutes: 6th HVBS Meeting, October 29, 2014 at the Hoffman House in Kingston, NY.

1- It was a gloomy, rainy day as **Surveyor** completed his “great circle” route, picking up **Shadow** and **PC Wiz** for the journey to the **Hoffman House** for our **HVBS** meeting. Along the Thruway we ran into showers with one area of heavy rain. Arriving early at 11:00 AM, the Upstate Trio had a quiet conversation until **Ramrod** arrived in timely fashion



at 11:23 AM. Entering the premises, we made our entrance with enthusiastic greetings from Host **Pat Bradley** at the waitress’ station, the bartender and Hostess **Ginny** at the stairs to our rear. **HVBS Official Waitress Lorayne** greeted us and took us to the dining room to the left because our usual haunt was going to be occupied by a class of teen agers. Taking up our positions at the corner table, **HVBS** members made their beverage selections: **Ramrod** asked if an Oktoberfest beer was available. Assured that they had Samuel Adams Oktoberfest she received three orders, **Shadow** opting for water with a slice of lemon. The Oktoberfest came in Samuel Adams glasses and members toasted **Shadow’s** birthday and to **Deliberator**. **PC Wiz** asked **Lorayne** to take a group picture but she asked a few minutes to take care of the noisy youth group in the other room.

2- After perusing the “special” menu, **Ramrod** said the quesadilla sounded good. **PC Wiz**, being unfamiliar with most Mexican specialties, asked what exactly a “quesadilla” is. **Surveyor** said it was like a pizza with a top crust. Upon **Lorayne’s** return she took our group picture and we ordered our lunches – three orders for the chicken quesadilla’s and one order of a grilled chicken breast sandwich for **Shadow**. **Lorayne** commented, “You’re making it easy for me”. The quesadilla turned out to be exactly as **Surveyor** had explained – two flour tortillas filled with chicken and vegetables, cut into quarters and served with sour cream and a small bowl of guacamole. Also on the plate was a portion of refried beans and fried rice. **Surveyor** commented on the effect that the beans would have on us, prompting **PC Wiz** to quote an old German saying, “every bean has its own sound”.



3- **Surveyor** asked **PC Wiz** how he liked the History Channel’s “The Men Who Built America”. He replied that it is a great historical series except that the DVD’s repeated the same scenes at the beginning of each separate story. **PC Wiz** especially liked the story of John D. Rockefeller, who became the richest man in America by controlling the oil industry (and kerosene, the principal source for lighting). **PC Wiz** was upset by the picture of the “Hudson River Bridge” concerned in the Vanderbilt story about not allowing transfers for his railroad’s Hudson River Bridge in 1866 to put pressure on the New York Central. The program shows a high bridge (similar to the RR bridge at Poughkeepsie). It was actually a river level “turntable” bridge to allow river traffic. **Surveyor** asked if he had borrowed the DVD’s. **PC Wiz** bought the set from Amazon (free shipping) for \$9.96, half the History Channel’s asking price (+ shipping).

PC Wiz mentioned the news item that Amazon is looking into making home deliveries using drones. At **Bobbi and Randy's** birthday bash for **Randy** one of their friends had brought a battery "drone" helicopter with two rotors which hovered and flitted around the house – very impressive performance. **Shadow** said the railroads are looking into drone technology to keep tabs on trains and infrastructure.

4- **Shadow** mentioned that **Randy** will shortly leave for an assignment in New Delhi, India. **PC Wiz** said **Randy** has already gotten a series of vaccinations. **Ramrod** was not enthusiastic about visiting India. **Shadow** told us **Randy** has an experienced companion with him and they are staying in a first class hotel. We were reminded that India is the world's leading producer of pharmaceuticals when informed by **Shadow** on why the Express Scripts Company would be sending them to that country. When told the hotel supplies bottled water, **Surveyor** concluded there was no chance that **Randy** would be taking a dip in the Ganges. **Shadow** informed **HVBS** members that **Randy (Bobbi's)** foot still is not fully healed) will be running in the NYC Marathon on Sunday November 2. **Ramrod** commented that it is predicted to be rainy and wondered how that would affect the run. **Surveyor** asked if any members had visited Normandy (negative). He said being on the site of the cemeteries for the Allied D-Day dead, officially American soil, is affecting and overwhelming. **HVBS** members commented on the stories they have heard of the locals caring for the area and holding ceremonies on the anniversary of D-Day. **Shadow** pointed to the cap he was wearing with its D-Day Memorial emblem, citing the times he has visited the site in Bedford, Virginia which, **PC Wiz** pointed out, was officially dedicated by President George W. Bush. **Ramrod** informed us that, on a recent trip to France, **Dan** had visited the wine country in Burgundy.

5- **Ramrod** told us that he has received the State check promised us by Governor Cuomo as a rebate for locally holding the tax increases "below 2%". **Shadow** and **Surveyor** thought it was restricted to families with children but **Ramrod** assured us everyone qualified. His check amounted to \$117, which is related to the amount local taxes went up. He also told us **Dan** had received a check for \$350, larger in consideration of the children. To objections that he now lives in Maryland, **Ramrod** explained that it was based on the property he had owned in Rockland County. **Surveyor** told us he is having solar panels installed on the roof of his house at no cost to him. The installation is subsidized by the State to reduce power consumption and has conditions; such as having a roof properly oriented for the panels. The panels belong to the Company; they sell the power generated to him at a low rate for 20 years – the surplus being fed into the grid. Members asked him about damage to the panels or the roof having to be replaced. **Surveyor** informed us that the company guaranteed the house roof for its warranted life; for instance, if the roofing failed with 10 years remaining on a 30 year roof the company would replace the roof, etc. In reply to **Ramrod's** question, **Surveyor** said they will replace any solar panels that fail – so it is basically a "win-win" situation for him.

6- **Ramrod** raised the "hot topic" of hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking", which has become a political issue in New York State because of Governor Cuomo's obfuscation. **Shadow** said following Federal guide lines allows safe fracking and **Surveyor** commented that the reviews were "mostly positive". **Shadow** said the railroads in the country were making a fortune moving fracking sand – a crush-resistant sand of a specific particle size. **PC Wiz** observed that the wells go down 6 to 8,000 feet and, if properly cased, cannot affect the surface water. **Ramrod** and **Surveyor** concurred that the problem is the fracking fluids which have proprietary additives to the water which may be harmful. **PC Wiz** raised the agenda topic of a recent problem **Shadow** had with his iMac computer when he tried to access a train-watching video from Cresson PA. Both he and **HVBS Associate Member Shirley** had rejected an update message from Adobe Flash. This resulted in not being able to view any videos with the message that a plug-in was missing. **Shirley** checked Google and learned that the Adobe "ap" had a flaw that had been hacked and required an update. She and **PC Wiz** managed to download the new version 15 and all is well again.

7- Which prompted **Ramrod** to tell us about a recent problem with Windows – fortunately corrected by a ***Dell Tech*** on the telephone taking over his computer to remove the virus infecting it. **Ramrod** said he is very worried about hackers. **PC Wiz** again recommended the Malwarebytes program – the \$24.95 a year version (which he uses) has real-time protection. **Ramrod** said **Dan** installed a free program – Driver Booster – to update outdated drivers. **PC Wiz** noted that he purchased Raxco's "Perfect Updater" and was amazed at the number of drivers on his computer – many "ancient". While on the topic, **Surveyor** mentioned a recent update for his iPhone that has resulted in the phone turning itself on at times. **Shadow** told us how much he enjoys his new arrangement with Time Warner, especially the "caller ID" feature on the telephone. He doesn't answer the phone unless the number is familiar. **Ramrod** says he is keeping his land-line despite the fact that **Randy** and most young people do not have them anymore. Both he and **PC Wiz** are getting a lot of "robo-calls" from pollsters and politicians. **PC Wiz** observed that he is getting a lot of "junk mail" on the computer; that blocking the caller doesn't seem to be working.

Shadow noted a lack of junk emails which **Ramrod** attributed to his new Time Warner address. **Ramrod** asked **Surveyor** if he has the Time Warner “triple-play” telephone, internet and TV – he does not.

8- **Lorayne** stopped by to ask about coffee; everyone ****but Shadow**** agreed. When the coffees arrived she inquired about dessert. **Shadow** said he did not wish any dessert – **Ramrod** asked what variety of cheesecake was offered. Upon being informed that it was Bailey’s, he accepted and **Surveyor** also ordered a serving. **PC Wiz** opted (as usual) for the crème brulee. When the desserts arrived **Ramrod** wanted the smaller of the two slices – unfortunately they were identical in size. **Ramrod** brought up the recent news item that IBM had sold their “chip” operations to Global Foundries, who have an upstate NY facility in Malta. He was intrigued by the fact that IBM had to pay Global Foundries 1 ½ billion dollars to assume ownership of the operation with its main center in Fishkill, near Poughkeepsie. **PC Wiz** said he had checked out the story and found it was true – IBM had to pay the buyer to shed the business! IBM is keeping their server operation and will buy all their chips from Global Foundries for 10 years with “substantially all” employees being retained by the new owner.

9- **Ramrod** complained about all the campaign ads in his area by the politicians, especially Eric Schneiderman running for Attorney General, this year. **PC Wiz** noted the number of mailed brochures he is receiving – all on large size glossy cards. Members agreed on the cards and said it seemed to be the style this campaign. **Ramrod** was surprised that New York ranked 49th in the business tax climate – and not actually 50th, which spot is occupied by New Jersey. Another news item raised by **Ramrod** concerned the story about Apple’s new “Apple Pay” electronic bill payment plan using the new iPhone 6 being rejected by Rite Aid and CVS. **Shadow** announced his determination to pay his bills “with an envelope and stamp” as much as possible. **PC Wiz** felt that the new methods are being accepted and are the future, with personal checks being slowly phased out by the banks.

10- **Lorayne** dropped off the bill which **Ramrod** checked and handed off to **PC Wiz** for confirmation. In honor of **Shadow’s** impending birthday, per our bylaws, his lunch was free. Members concurred and **Lorayne** was paid in cash – which she says is “always good”. With our meeting winding down **Surveyor** noted that no date had been selected for our next meeting. After some discussion concerning the Christmas holidays, **Wednesday December 10, 2014** was decided upon. It will of course, per the **HVBS** bylaws, be a special free luncheon for **Surveyor** because of his impending birthday. The meeting was adjourned.

Thanks to Shadow ****** and Ramrod ******* for their corrections.

HVBS Official Scribe Laureate **PC Wiz**

November 25, 2014