

Ramrod



Shadow



PC Wiz



Surveyor



The Hudson Valley Bullshit Society

Official Minutes: 7th HVBS Meeting, December 10, 2014 at the Hoffman House in Kingston, NY.

- 1- With the temperature at 33 degrees and a forecast of some snow, the Northern **HVBS** Contingent decided that attending our last meeting of the year was "in the cards". **Surveyor** had volunteered to transport the group to relieve **PC Wiz**, whose turn it was, of a Wintry drive. As compensation, **Surveyor** suggested **PC Wiz** take the first two turns in the New Year. Quite acceptable. With **Shadow** and **Surveyor** at his house, **PC Wiz** telephoned **Ramrod** to confirm the Northerners were on the way, regardless of the Nor'easter. As we went South the Thruway turned from snowy and slippery to no snow at all – and then to green grass on the road shoulders. We arrived in Kingston at 11:10 with **Ramrod** appearing at 11:15. After waiting a few moments we entered the premises with **Ramrod** leading the way.
- 2- We found the staff in our usual dining room. With a hearty welcome from all we took our accustomed seats. **HVBS Official Waitress Lorayne** set a fourth place at the table for **Surveyor** with their seasonal red napkins and green place mats. **PC Wiz** commented that it was very Christmassy, to which **Lorayne** replied "Merry Christmas". It was time to order our "suitable adult beverages". **Ramrod** wanted "something warm"; **Lorayne** suggested a hot cider and rum. He agreed, **PC Wiz** thought it sounded good and seconded the order – **Surveyor** also chose the hot drink. **Shadow** opted for a merlot. Arriving with a stick of cinnamon and a wedge of orange, the rum drinks "hit the spot" – as satisfying as **Ramrod** had predicted.
- 3- **Shadow** asked **Ramrod** to tell us the story of his trip to visit **Dan** and family in Annapolis, Maryland. Intending to travel via Amtrak, **Ramrod** and his brother drove to daughter **Sharon's** house in Stamford. While loading their luggage in **Sharon's** Honda to go to the station the trunk lid dropped on **Ramrod's** head. Profusely bleeding from his scalp wound, **Ramrod** was taken to the hospital – thereby missing their Acela connection. The doctor used four staples to close the wound and the pair were finally ready to travel. Unfortunately the commuter they got on went to Grand Central Station while Amtrak uses Penn Station. The "adventure", as **Surveyor** called it, continued when they found a taxi driver who knew where the station was located. Arriving in front of Madison Square Garden, built on top of Penn Station which is underground, our trusty travelers momentarily thought they were in the wrong location. The story ended with a 9 PM arrival and a memorable family visit. After taking a shower **Ramrod** noticed his grandson intently studying his head. When asked why he said he wanted to see if the staples were rusting. (Incidentally, we heard that young Max is frequently using the word ***"copasetic"*** – taught him by **Ramrod**, of course.) When **Ramrod** had to get the staples removed they wanted to shave the scalp area. **Ramrod** refused, stating that his head of hair had taken 85 years to grow to its present state and no-one was going to shave it! He prevailed; the staples were removed and **Ramrod's** mane remained intact.
- 4- **Shadow** suggested that **Ramrod** should get a cell phone for these situations. **Ramrod** replied that he had a cell phone that he had not used for a long time and decided to charge the battery in the car in case they might need it. Unfortunately, he found it dead when he tried to use it in Penn Station. **PC Wiz** asked how **Dan's** job is going and **Ramrod** informed us that it is fine and **Dan** is expecting to go to China in the near future on business. **Shadow** said **Randy** was recently sent to India for Express Scripts to confer with the Company's IT operation people there. He and a companion stayed in a first-rate hotel. When traveling from New Delhi to Accra by chauffeured car they also had an escort.

5- As the dining room filled **Lorayne** returned to take our lunch orders. **Ramrod** ordered his favorite French onion steak sandwich – **Surveyor** ordered the same. **PC Wiz** went to the “special” menu and opted for the linguini with smoked salmon in a cream sauce; **Shadow** requested the Pulled BBQ Pork sandwich. Conversation turned to current events beginning with the demonstrations over the deaths of Michael Brown in Jefferson MO and Eric Garner in Staten Island. **Shadow** brought up LeBron James wearing the “I can’t breathe” shirt. He followed it by NBA Hall of Famer Charles Barkley’s statement, “Them jackasses who are looting those aren’t real black people; those are scumbags” – something we all agree with. **Ramrod** gloomily concluded, considering the effect of minute scrutiny of police responses, that “local enforcement is finished”. **Surveyor** commented that “facts don’t matter”. **PC Wiz** agreed, noting that people like Al Sharpton (a frequent visitor to the White House) espouse vague grievances of police behavior toward blacks to promote frequently violent demonstrations. **HVBS** members commented on the destruction of the local businesses in Jefferson who had nothing to do with the grand jury verdict.

6- **Surveyor** informed us what he found at the end of the Affordable Health Care application – a form for registering to vote! Evidently one aim of ObamaCare is to register a certain group of people. **PC Wiz** inquired why **Surveyor** would be checking out the ObamaCare web site since he assumed that CHA would provide some health coverage to retirees. **Surveyor** informed us that they did have a plan. It did not meet the requirements for small business and so was not allowed under the Affordable Act which meant **Surveyor** had to go to the government web site to find coverage. He concluded that if you don’t qualify for a “subsidy” there is no reason to use the site. While shopping **Surveyor** was covered by the COBRA program (which **Shadow** said he was well acquainted with) which would continue his original coverage for as much as 18 months. Meanwhile **Surveyor** personally checked out various insurers and finally signed up with the MVP Silver plan. Its’ family deductible is \$3000 – no coverage until that amount is reached. **Ramrod** told us of his experience with his urologist. He kept getting further appointments for no real reason. Finally the office had a problem and couldn’t make the next appointment. He gave them his cell phone number and was told “the urologist will call”. **HVBS** members chuckled when **Ramrod** told us he is still waiting.

7- It was time for our round of coffees and **Lorayne** hopefully asked for our dessert orders. After hearing what was available **Ramrod** ordered carrot cake. **Surveyor** opted for the mango crème brulee while **PC Wiz** asked for the cheese cake. **Shadow** went for vanilla ice cream topped with chocolate syrup. **Ramrod** reminded us that “ARod is coming back”. He also commented that the Yankees Brian Cashman is looking forward to a draft choice to strengthen the starting rotation. **PC Wiz** referred to the news that Oakland free agent lefty pitcher Jon Lester had signed a six year \$155 million dollar contract with the Chicago Cubs. **Ramrod** inquired how **Shadow’s** Rangers are doing. **Shadow** said they won the game on Monday with the Pittsburgh Penguins 4-3 in overtime. Unfortunately, they lost last Saturday’s game with the Detroit Redwings by 3-2.

8- **Ramrod** told us he bought a new medium sized microwave. **Shadow** mentioned that they do not have one at present but he has been thinking about a microwave that would fit above the kitchen stove. **PC Wiz** has been using the Stouffers frozen microwave entrees which he highly recommends, especially the fish filet. They include mashed potatoes or mac and cheese but no vegetable, which is easily added by microwaving a Green Giant “steamer” package. **HVBS Official Waitress Lorayne** arrived with the bill which **Shadow** had volunteered to pay. **Ramrod** and **PC Wiz** split **Lorayne’s** tip while a spirited discussion went on concerning the percentage it should be. **Surveyor** enjoyed a free lunch, as provided in the **HVBS** bylaws, because of his pending birthday this month. **Lorayne**, picking up the table and payment, was asked her opinion of tips. She gave us a lively review of the wait staffs \$5 minimum wage and their dependence on tipping income.

9- Our meeting adjourned and **Surveyor** brought up the question of a date for our next meeting. He will be in Florida (lucky guy) and, of course, the Hoffman House will be closed for their Winter shutdown February 14 to March 17. If weather permits a January meeting it will be without our “newbie” member **Surveyor**.

Thanks to **Surveyor** for his review, understanding for **Ramrod’s** frustration in checking the facts, and thanks to **Shadow** for his spelling question: According to Webster – there are two spellings for the slang word “copasetic” or “copesetic” – meaning good, satisfactory, excellent. Congratulations to **Ramrod** for teaching his grandson a really hard word.

HVBS Official Scribe Laureate PC Wiz
December 18, 2014