

Ramrod

Gladiator

PC Wiz

Surveyor



The Hudson Valley Bullshit Society

Preliminary Minutes: 4th HVBS Meeting, July 15, 2015 at the Hoffman House in Kingston, NY.

1- **Surveyor** and **Gladiator** arrived at **PC Wiz's** abode. After a short chat the Northern Nabobs left in **PC Wiz's** Camry, destination the **Hoffman House**. It was sprinkling lightly as we started with rain on the Thruway. The rain stopped just beyond Albany – the rest of the journey was cloudy with intervals of sunshine. Arriving shortly after 11 AM, **PC Wiz** parked next to **Pat Bradley's** Suzuki Boulevard motorcycle (in the handicapped spot). As **Pat** walked by, **PC Wiz** commented on his spotless cycle. **Pat** said, "Go ahead and try it, the key is in the ignition". **PC Wiz** objected, mentioning a special license was required. **Pat** replied that was true. **Ramrod** arrived at 11:20 in his recently repaired Passat. Entering the patio, members had to make the difficult 'inside or outside' decision. The weather being quite agreeable, the patio was selected and we took the corner most table.

2- **Hostess Ginny Bradley** had greeted us from the patio door. After a short delay **HVBS Official Waitress Lorayne** took our orders for suitable adult beverages. **Ramrod** ordered his favorite cocktail, gin and tonic with Tanqueray gin, and **Gladiator** ordered the same. **Surveyor** followed with a vodka and tonic with a wedge of orange (it arrived with a lime wedge which **Lorayne** replaced at **Surveyor's** request). **PC Wiz** opted for a Keegan's Ales 'Mother's Milk' stout (named one of the top ten stouts in North America by the New York Times). **PC Wiz** asked **Ramrod** how he knew his car needed repairs – was there a driving problem or a 'check engine' dash light. It was the light and, under close questioning by **Gladiator** and **Surveyor**, **Ramrod** said the light was flashing which indicated a serious problem. The fuel pump, which required replacement, had to be ordered. Luckily, it was completed in time for **Ramrod** to attend our meeting.

3- **Ramrod** took a photograph out of an envelope and showed it to members. It was of **Ramrod** and **Gladiator** playing billiards in **Ramrod's** house about 50 years ago – circa the 1960's! He asked **PC Wiz** if he could copy the picture and **PC Wiz** said he would be glad to. **Gladiator** reminisced on how they had played hand ball at the time – because of the hard ball **Gladiator** actually bought a glove for the games. **Ramrod** returned to his stated desire to own a 2-door coupe, rather than a 4-door sedan. In reply to **Gladiator**, he admitted he had visited the local BMW dealer and had taken a test drive in a car with the turbo-4 he had in mind. They did not have a model in stock which he would consider so **Ramrod** is still pondering a purchase. He noted to **PC Wiz** that his (and **PC Wiz's** Camry) have a trade-in value of only 50% of the new car cost in just three years, a tough reduction to swallow. **Ramrod** asked **PC Wiz** if he is still thinking about a new



Camry and was told **PC Wiz** thought the 2015 Camry's 'ugly'. Also getting the upgrades he wanted (V-6 with back-up camera) required going to a different model with features he really didn't want. So we shall see how the 2016's turn out.

4- **Lorayne** returned to get our luncheon orders as the patio started to fill up due to the excellent weather for outdoor dining. **Gladiator** asked for a BLT with the bacon crispy, on a hard roll and French fries while **Surveyor** opted for the garlic steak sandwich. **Ramrod** went for his tried and true French onion steak sandwich. After a moment, **PC Wiz** finally decided on the pasta with shrimp special. Returning to his car plans, **Ramrod** stated that he really didn't need the expensive navigation system – he still appreciated the printed maps of yore, easily read and understood. **Surveyor** said you really do not need navigation built in since you can get it on any 'smart phone'. This led to a question by **Gladiator** if **Ramrod** had his cell phone handy and if it was fully charged. Assuring us it was, **Ramrod** displayed his new red 'Consumer Cellular Doro PhoneEasy' that he bought from Target, list \$49.99, (or also available at Sears). It has a camera (which **Surveyor** helped **Ramrod** take his first picture with) and blue tooth for hands-free in your car. **Gladiator** thought it imperative **Ramrod** buy an inexpensive charging adapter to plug his phone into his car's outlet to make sure it is always fully charged. **PC Wiz** said he had one and **Surveyor** noted 'be sure that the adapter will fit **Ramrod's** Doro', since there are different sized plugs on cell phones.



5- **Ramrod** startled the group by stating that he had 'fired Sirius last week'. His subscription was up for renewal. **Surveyor** advised him to be sure to negotiate the price. **Ramrod** said he had gotten a better price at his last renewal for a one year period – now expired. He mentioned the service had only one channel with the music he likes and decided to call and cancel. After he was on the line for a half hour the sales rep said he had to transfer the call to someone else and the line went dead. So much for Sirius! **Gladiator** mentioned how much he enjoys his Sirius music even though **PC Wiz** had convinced him that the home radio was really on the Internet, not a satellite transmission like the automobile Sirius.

6- **Surveyor** asked **Ramrod** for the latest news from Greece. He said the situation is very desperate and Prime Minister Tsipras has agreed to 'austerity' measures which, with the fresh money injection, will help the situation. **PC Wiz** said that unfortunately the European money will be used to make the missed interest payments on the previous debt. They will not be in default – and can then borrow more money? Confusing. **Ramrod** concluded that the Greek people will have to face reality and take cuts in social programs (as the Euro group insists). **PC Wiz** interrupted with a local story he heard. In Schenectady a house in a good neighborhood was sold after a family death. It was a 1500 sq. ft. house in good shape but sold for \$110,000 due to the very high Schenectady city taxes of \$7000 a year. Now, after two years, it recently sold for \$55,000! **PC Wiz** was concerned since the owner, most people do not realize, is liable for the remaining mortgage payments minus the net selling price. **Surveyor** noted that it was not true if the bank agreed to a 'short sale'. Good point.

7- It was time for a round of coffees. **Lorayne** returned and took orders for desserts. One she listed was a frozen lemon pie which sounded good to **PC Wiz**; **Ramrod** and **Surveyor** ordered the same. **Gladiator** asked for a scoop of vanilla ice cream with chocolate syrup. The discussion turned to sports. **Surveyor** stated that JPP (Jason Pierre-Paul of the NY Giants) will have to pass a physical because of the loss of his index finger and broken thumb in a fire-cracker accident. **Gladiator** commented on the 'bone-head' who would hold a fire-cracker in his hand. **Ramrod** wanted to 'retract' his previous statement predicting the Yankee season (April 15 meeting at the **Hoffman House**). At that time he called the Yankee team 'the worst since World War II'. Following them so far this season, **Ramrod** now thinks they are good enough to make the playoffs but not the World Series. **PC Wiz** mentioned that Pete Rose, who asked for re-instatement, is not included in the coming Baseball Hall of Fame inductions. **Gladiator** noted that Rose's gambling offense did not approach the players involved in the steroid scandal. (In the news, the ESPN investigation concluded on June 22 (5 days after our meeting) that Pete had bet on baseball while still a player from 1984 to 1986.)

8- **Gladiator** offered to buy **HVBS** members a drink to celebrate the day. Everyone declined with thanks – **PC Wiz** and **Ramrod** driving. Undeterred, **Gladiator** told members to be prepared for an after-dinner drink on him at our next meeting. At which **Surveyor** took out his cell phone (and **Ramrod** his handy printed calendar) to select a date for our next meeting. It was finally set for **Thursday August 20** at the **Hoffman House**. **Ramrod** told us he will be visiting **Dan**, whose family will still be in Japan. He invited **Gladiator** to join him in the visit. **Gladiator** accepted and, if seating is available, will join him on the Amtrak journey.

Thanks to **HVBS** members for their reviews of the preliminary minutes.

HVBS Scribe Laureate **PC Wiz**

August 19, 2015