

Ramrod



Gladiator



PC Wiz



Surveyor



The Hudson Valley Bullshit Society

June 28, 2017 – 3rd Meeting of the year.

- 1- On a cool, clear morning, after many rainy days, **Gladiator** arrived at **PC Wiz's** house with **HVBS Associate Member Shirley**. **PC Wiz**, designated driver, was thus saved the extra hours' drive (total) of picking him up at home. At the last moment **Surveyor** could not attend because his presence was required for home alterations. We duly arrived at the **Hoffman House** at 11:15 AM – **Ramrod** arriving shortly thereafter. We then inspected **Ramrod's** Honda in view of his recent accidental encounter with a low drain on a newly paved road in Connecticut. The repair included two new wheels, two new tires and refinishing the side 'rocker panel'. **Gladiator** and **PC Wiz** found the gleaming auto (the body shop had included a wash) 'good as new'.
- 2- We entered the premises, meeting **Hostess Ginny Bradley** in the patio with all the tables set. Asked if we wished to be inside or in the outside patio, members decided to stay outside on this sunny, cool morning. **HVBS Official Waitress Lorayne** appeared – stunned at our choice – 'I have never seen you in the patio'. We assured her that our meeting had in the past once made that choice. She commenced to take our drink orders: **Ramrod** opted for a Tanqueray gin and tonic – **Gladiator** ordered the same. **PC Wiz** asked for his usual Keegan's Mother's Milk. **Gladiator** pointed out that the wedges should be lime, not lemon, which **Lorayne** remembered perfectly. Drinks in hand, members proceeded to discuss **Ramrod's** mishap. He told us about the body man Joe who had inherited the business from his father Vince (whom the business was named after). **Ramrod** appreciated the fine work the shop did and insisted on paying Joe the slightly higher final bill (than the estimate) although Joe was willing to accept the estimate cost. 'It was only right', **Ramrod** concluded.
- 3- **Gladiator** thought **Ramrod** should have turned in a claim to his insurance company – why we pay for the insurance. **Ramrod** explained that it would jeopardize his policy cost since he had an 'excused' claim in the past. **PC Wiz** and **Gladiator** understood but felt someone should be responsible for the damage caused by the hazard. **Gladiator** pointed out that you first raise the drains with readily available spacers before paving – someone dropped the ball on this paving job. **Gladiator** told us about the new Cadillac CT6 (\$54,000+) with 'Super Cruise' – a rear-facing camera on the steering column which is focused on the drivers eyes. If the drivers' attention wanders a series of alerts commence. (It can only be used on limited access highways, not fully autonomous driving). **Gladiator** pointed out that this is GM 'giving Tesla a shot'.
- 4- **Ramrod** raised the issue which has been dominating the news – the continual NYC subway breakdowns which he laid to 'old switches'. Patrons have been stranded in the hot, humid subways in the dark – **HVBS** members sympathized with the riders' trials. **Gladiator** mentioned that the new M.T.A. chairman Joe Lhota is working on a 'transit rescue plan'. He then turned to the CSX accident in Washington's Union Station where two train conductors were killed – shutting down the Northeast Corridor from Washington to Philadelphia. **Gladiator** said the railroads spend billions on safety and still these accidents occur. Amtrak CEO Wick Moorman (formerly Norfolk Southern CEO) is leaving and the new Amtrak boss is going to be former Delta Airlines CEO Richard Anderson.

5- Gladiator rhetorically asked ‘why’ – the railroads need people with railroad backgrounds, not running an airline, a completely different business. **Ramrod** stated that he has decided that he will never again take a train to visit **Dan**. **PC Wiz** noted that railroad travel going through New York for the next two years is going to be difficult because of the repairs to Penn Station tracks. It will be a particular ‘hell’ for commuters. Meanwhile the patio was filling with groups of women. **Hostess Ginny** having dropped off the menus previously, **Lorayne** appeared to take our luncheon orders. **Ramrod** ordered the French onion steak sandwich (**Lorayne**: ‘medium well?’), **Gladiator** selected the roast beef French Dip with hot au jus. **PC Wiz** decided to try the Pulled BBQ chicken sandwich. **Gladiator** and **Ramrod** refreshed their drinks. While we were waiting **Gladiator** opened his NRA ‘America’s 1st Freedom’ magazine and read an article to us concerning Dr. Constantine Chaconas. He was outraged by Senator Tydings (D –Md) declaring that his re-election was a referendum on gun registration. Chaconas, running a one-man campaign caused ‘unbeatable’ Tydings to lose by 27,000 votes.

6- Concerning the matter of violence, **PC Wiz** mentioned that (surprisingly) the 2nd most violent country in 2016 was Mexico with 23,000 murders - #1 was Syria. The Grenfell Towers inferno in England then came up. It had inflammable cladding. **Gladiator** informed us that the cladding was made by Arconic – the company formed from Alcoa that **Russell** is employed by. They are being sued (79 deaths) regardless of the fact that they produce three types of cladding – one ‘fire-resistant’ and the other ‘non-combustible’. The use of the third flammable type was a change in plan to the cheaper type to reduce the towers’ cost by 300,000 English Pounds.

7- Ramrod told us about **Sharon** and the grand-daughters trip to Greece. He discovered a distant family connection in Greece and it has been a great help to them. **Ramrod** related a story about his recent trip to Greece with **Dan**. He found everyone very kind and helpful in the hilly tourist areas of Athens. Half-way up to a monument, waiting for **Dan**, **Ramrod** overheard a couple confused about the one path going up and another going downhill. To their pleasant astonishment, he told them which way the paths went in Greek. **PC Wiz** brought up the Agenda item about the ‘Greek rubbish crisis’. The collectors are on strike and the trash is piling up in the city.

8- Lorayne took our orders for coffee and members decided not to have any desserts. **Gladiator** mentioned that Phil Jackson, president of the NY Knicks was fired after three years. The team had an 80-166 record. MSG chairman James Dolan is a member of the Dolan family, founders of the Lustgarten Foundation which is searching for a pancreatic cancer cure. **Ramrod** referred to the previous night’s Yankee game, leading 3-1, lost it by 4-3 in the eighth and ninth innings. **PC Wiz** lamented the poor bull pen performance though the Yankees still lead the division.

9- Gladiator related he found that his Spectrum cable has music channels for the TV, especially #1945 Jazz; #1946 Blues; #1947 Singers and Swing; #1948 Easy Listening; #1949 Classical. He is considering giving up his Sirius subscription with this music available. In a final political note **Ramrod** mentioned Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban’s building a fence to keep out the Middle Eastern ‘refugees’. **PC Wiz** noted that the European Union Directorate in Brussels is threatening Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic with sanctions if they refuse to allow the foreign invasion.

10- Noting that the patio had emptied and the staff was setting up for dinner, it was decided at 2:30 PM to terminate this unusually productive meeting. The **HVBS** members present had unflinchingly faced and debated the dire threats to our Nation and the Trump administration. The meeting adjourned without determining a date for our next session.

Official Minutes: Thanks to **Ramrod** and **Gladiator** for their painstaking review of the preliminary minutes.
HVBS Official Scribe Laureate **PC Wiz**
July 1, 2017 (Placed on web site: July 3, 2017)