

**Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs (DHSOS)
San Francisco International Headquarters**

Officers

President (DUH PREZ)	Bill D_____
Communications Czar (Czar)	Geoff Noakes
AgendaMeister (ListMan)	Ken Monk
Archivist of Knowledge (Notes)	Dale Fehringer

☄ ☄ ☄

Minutes of Meeting

Zoom Call

Thursday, September 3, 2020

A Hardy (and Cheerful) Group



The Coronavirus pandemic was still spreading across the U.S., one of the few developed countries that has yet to “flatten the curve.” Most local businesses have been affected at least to some degree, with some open for inside service (including the salon that did Nancy Pelosi’s hair), and others open only for outside service. In San Francisco, a few hair salons are operating outside on sidewalks, reminiscent of operations in Peru and India, and indoor dining is prohibited. Facial coverings are a required accessory throughout the city.

Because the atmosphere was not conducive to in-person gatherings the DHSOS assembled virtually, to rekindle Society activities and interests. This is a hardy group, and as you can tell from the screen capture, a cheerful group. The Czar instructed us to convene on Zoom at 6:30 and we were there with drinks in hand. We

issued greetings and raised our glasses to good cheer and good health.

Call to Order

DUH PREZ called the meeting to order at 6:47 PM by tapping a glass beaker against a drink shaker. Wait a minute – a glass beaker? “That’s right,” he assured us, “It’s what I use to measure and mix my ‘Diefendoodle’ drinks.” But who has a glass beaker in their house? I do,” he said, “Dr. Fong gave it to me years ago to deposit a sample and I took it home instead.” We sighed, raised our glasses in a toast to our leader, and got down to business.

Presidential Retirement

DUH PREZ is finally hanging it up after 44 years and six months of employment at the same firm. Though shocking to hear he assured us it’s true, and on October 22 he will be a free man after 45 years, but 53 years if you don’t count a short departure of 7 years. But he’s not the longest-serving employee in the history of the company. That distinction goes to Jerry Sinkewitz who retired in March after 50 years. DUH PREZ was planning on hiring a Motown hit man to knock off Jerry till he learned of Jerry’s retirement in March, lucky for Jerry. DUH PREZ now holds the record of being the “longest continuously-serving employee” of his company of 1400 staff. Is

he looking forward to retirement? “Yeah, I guess,” he told us, “But with Covid-19 not that much will change. I can’t travel and I will still spend my afternoons caring for the grandkids and changing diapers.”

But this was a milestone we sometimes doubted we would ever see, and now the entire DHSOS will be on Medicare. We raised our glasses, congratulated DUH PREZ on retirement, and welcomed him to the next chapter in his life.

America’s Favorite Past time



While there was a little grumbling about a shortened season with no fans and new rules, we agreed that amidst the shelter-in-place watching professional baseball gives us something to do. And L1stMan reminded us the Oakland A’s are in first place in their division and have one of the best records in baseball.

This is indeed a strange baseball season in a strange year. It started late, has a limited schedule, has no fans at games, and there have been several postponed games due to Covid-19.

We discussed a recent game between the San Francisco Giants and Colorado Rockies in which the Giants scored 23 runs. At the time, the Giants were just 18-19 and they had struggled to find consistency in the National League West. But, according to one sports writer, “they looked like the 1927 New York Yankees on Tuesday.”

“San Francisco exploded for a head-turning 23 runs in a 23-5 victory over the Colorado Rockies on the road,” the Bleacher Report read. “It is fair to assume everyone in the lineup put up good numbers on a day when the offense scored 23 runs, but left fielder Alex Dickerson led the way. He drilled a home run to start the scoring in the first inning, added another in the second inning and then hit a third long ball in the sixth inning.”

How Dey Do Dat?



The Presidential Son and his family were in the midst of moving from their house at the edge of the continent to a larger house a couple of miles east in the West Portal district. We could only imagine the complexity of orchestrating a total household change during a global pandemic, while both are working full-time, with two diaper-wearing children.

DUH PREZ had seen the inside of the new house and he gave it double thumbs-up. There might have even been a note of envy in his voice when he described the house.

Beck and Sarah seem delighted with their new digs and we raised our now nearly-empty glasses to Beck and Sarah ... and to DUH PREZ for helping out.

Camping



The topic of family vacations came up and we were asked if we ever went camping. “Ah yes,” we responded, and everyone smiled a little more broadly. The Czar remembered camping in his backyard with his daughter, while DUH PREZ told about snow camping with his son and a scout troop. ListMan camped with his family on summer vacations, and Notes told about the one (and only) time he took his bride camping (ever since, he reported, camping has involved a Holiday Inn).

Special Restaurants

The coronavirus pandemic has devastated San Francisco’s restaurants, as it has ravaged the dining industry throughout the world. Places we met at and assumed would always be there are closed; some for now, others aren’t so sure. We remembered meeting at Tadich Grill, for example, one of San Francisco’s oldest restaurants, which is closed at least for now.

Each of us shared the names of restaurants we had gone to for special occasions that are now closed.

The Czar remembered eating at Tadich Grill with his uncle, George.

DUH PREZ remembered meeting at Tadich Grill for lunch (he had to be there by 11:15 to get a table) and ordering a seafood casserole. He also fondly remembers dining at Bix for dinner, with their classy atmosphere, jazz bands, and beautiful women at the bar rail.

Listman remembered as a kid eating at Little Joe’s in San Francisco in the 1970s and also joining family members for a meal at Tarrantinos on San Francisco’s Fisherman’s Wharf.

Notes remembered birthday dinners at Miss Millie’s on 24th Street, with fried chicken, mashed potatoes, and the thickest pieces of coconut pie you’ve ever seen.

There have always been restaurants in San Francisco with the name “Joe.” What’s up with that? This obit by Carl Nolte helps explain it.

Franco Montarello, restaurateur behind Little Joe’s, dies at 82

By Carl Nolte

Wednesday, March 30, 2016

Franco Montarello, the former owner of the noted Little Joe’s restaurants, died at his home in Santa Rosa on March 23. He was 82 and had been suffering from cancer.

Mr. Montarello’s restaurants were old-time San Francisco classics of a certain genre, with simple food and plenty of it, developed well before the rise of modern California cuisine.

Restaurants of this genre all featured the name “Joe” but were not connected by ownership to each other. There was New Joe’s, Original Joe’s, Little Joe’s and Baby Joe’s in San Francisco, and Marin Joe’s and Westlake Joe’s beyond the county line. The most distant outpost is Original Joe’s in San Jose, not related to San Francisco’s Original Joe’s, or any other Joe.

All of them featured Italian food and always on the menu was a San Francisco-style dish called “Joe’s Special,” which combined eggs, spinach and ground beef.

Dad O'Rourke's Bench



The Czar recently made a pilgrimage to Mt. Tamalpais and the site of the Mountain Play, where the DHSOS and families typically go to see a play Memorial Day weekend. While there, he observed how different the outdoor theater looks when plays aren't in session and he hiked our traditional trail to a scenic outlook known as Dad O'Rourke's bench. At that site, the DHSOS has often congregated for beverages and occasionally received special announcements such as engagements or retirements. Here is what someone wrote about the stone bench:

Sitting at the end of a casual trailhead on California's Mount Tam is a stacked stone semi-circle with a brass plaque set into it. This spot is a scenic lookout bench created in honor of local man Richard Festus "Dad" O'Rourke, who was known to refer to the site as "the edge of the world." As the plaque states, the bench was built by O'Rourke's family and friends in honor of his 76th birthday in 1927. O'Rourke, a member of the Tamalpais Conservation Club who preserved the area, was known to bring people he knew to the spot to share its sites, as he considered it possibly the most beautiful spot in the world.

Hearty Good Night

Meeting by Zoom is not an adequate substitute for meeting in person. We missed hugging and fist bumps and giving high fives

now and then. But we agreed it was better than not meeting at all and one day soon (hopefully) we'll look back on this and say something like "that was a weird time ... but we got through it."

If Beck and Sarah can move houses while working full-time and cleaning out and renting the old house and running a Scout troop and managing kids and daycare, etc. etc. – then we can probably struggle through the challenges retired life throws at us.

We agreed to meet via Zoom again Thursday, November 5 at 6:30PM and we raised our glasses in a toast to our dearly-departed Procurer of Venues. We drained the last of our drinks and wished each other a hearty good night.

It was another good night under unusual conditions with special friends!

That's it for now, man.

☺ ☺ ☺

