

**Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs
San Francisco International Headquarters**

President
Communications Czar
Procurer of Venues
AgendaMeister
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**Minutes of Meeting
Tuesday, September 6, 2005**

“A North Beach Experience”

The September dinner and business meeting of the Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs was held on Tuesday, September 6, at various locations in North Beach. Cocktails were at the Tosca Café, dinner at Tommaso Ristorante Italiano, drinks and the Giants game at Northstar Cafe and coffee and dessert at Caffe Grecco.

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North Beach is our kind of place. This is a neighborhood where stuff is always going on – the home of good food, attractive women and clean fun. Here, within a couple of blocks, you can get your teeth whitened, have your palm read, buy the “nastiest videos in town,” and get “two-for-one” on a lap dance.

Drinks were poured at the Tosca Café, which is not really a café at all, but is an old watering hole that has been in existence longer than Dashiell. It



was a quiet evening at Tosca -- no Sean Penn, and no babes -- just five ugly guys, a bartender, and the owner, Jeanette, who has also been in existence longer than Dashiell.

For dinner, we moved one block east to Tommaso Ristorante Italiano, which has



reportedly been in continuous operation since 1935. As the Procurer of Venues predicted, we immediately recognized it as a place that Dashiell would have hung out. It's also a

place our wives wouldn't be caught dead in.

With its patrons rubbing elbows with their neighbors while drinking liters of house red at long community tables, this subterranean, old-school, family-style Southern Italian hidden among the X-rated theaters and strip clubs inspires images of the North Beach restaurants of yore.

-- Zagat Survey, on Tommaso's

As forewarned, there were no round tables, so we squeezed in elbows-to-assholes around a postage stamp-sized

table in a booth. Each restroom outing required a major body re-organization, and when the AgendaMeister asked to be let out, the PREZ asked him was wrong with getting out “THAT way?”

The PREZ called the meeting to order at 7:21 PM. The AgendaMeister whipped out the first official DHSOS agenda and we began.

The first item was a de-briefing following the “1st Annual Monig Labor Day Cookout Party and High-Falutin Fandango.” Everyone congratulated the AgendaMeister on a job well done, and complimented him on his organization, choice and quality of food, and the updated kitchen and house. There was some talk about next year maybe getting to see the AgendaMeister actually do some barbequing, which seemed to fall on deaf ears. The AgendaMeister commented that this had been a learning experience, and noted that he had bought significantly more ribs than needed, which will not a long-term problem, as he can serve the leftovers at next year’s party.

North Beach has the unhurried feeling of a village with all the amenities of an exciting big city. Generally regarded one of the country’s top urban neighborhoods, North Beach is referred to as the heart and soul of San Francisco. Named for a beach that became landfill in the 1800s, North Beach is nestled in an urban valley between Russian Hill and Telegraph Hill.

-- www.sfnorthbeach.org

FEMA’s response to the devastation caused in the Gulf Coast by hurricane Katrina was discussed, and the conclusion was there is likely a

considerable difference between perception and fact.

The next item was a follow-up to a discussion that began at Drakesbad. It seems another family at Drakesbad “writes off” their trip because for them it is a “business meeting” for their family business – and the DSHOS wanted to explore doing likewise. Various possible business opportunities were discussed, and it was agreed that any business ventures would require a sizeable infusion of capital. A collection was taken up, which yielded just \$2, which is \$798 short of the cost of a business license for one year. The idea was tabled for the time being, and the \$2 was applied to the dinner bill.

A continuation of last meeting’s discussion of online banking followed. Most DHSOS members currently do some online banking, and all indicated a desire to do more. This is a forward-thinking group.

The upcoming trip to Peru of the PREZ and Archivist of Knowledge was reviewed. There was much concern for the safety and well being of these two members – especially with regard to the altitudes they will be reaching.



“Lessons learned” at Drakesbad this year was an interesting, albeit brief, topic. The AgendaMeister concluded that he had learned the value of Top Shelf Margarita mix.

Health and well being are always concerns of the DHSOS, and discussions were held regarding colonoscopies, heart scans, and

earthquake preparedness. The PREZ brought and distributed an article on how to survive a heart attack, which reviews all of the available kinds of heart scanning techniques. The Procurer of Venues circulated literature on how to survive an earthquake, and a discussion ensued on where to keep an earthquake kit. Everyone has theirs in a different place, and everyone had a good reason for where they kept theirs. The Procurer of Venues indicated that he intends to move his to his front porch, immediately in front of the door. Perhaps Martha Stewart would have suggestions to help him decorate it, 'cause Misty ain't going to like it out there.

This being the first weekend of college football season, a short-lived conversation was started. Keenly aware that USC is poised to become the first team to ever 3-peat, the group seemed disinterested. The Communications Czar refrained from gloating (a new first).

The archivist noted that the McFehries now have a new TemperPedic mattress. The initial sensation is that of sleeping on cinder block. We'll need to come back to this in a future meeting.

At this point, someone had to go to the bathroom, and rather than going to all the trouble of letting him out, we paid up and left.

Along the way to our next stop, we encountered former San Francisco mayor Willie Brown walking alone. The Communications Czar thought of presenting him a DHSOS business card and asking his opinion about Hurricane Katrina. Remembering that Willie can't

see nor answer anything quickly, we just moved on.

After dinner, we headed to the North Star Café, to watch the end of the Giants/Dodgers game. As usual, we took over the place – coercing the bartender to turn off the music and turn up the game. While we were there, a couple of hot babes walked by, looked in, then walked on down the street. They must not have been baseball fans. The AgendaMeister mumbled some sort of excuse and left the café, presumably to go home.



The next stop was Caffè Grecco, for coffee and dessert. The Communications Czar called his 14-year-old, 5'10" daughter Katharine, and ordered her to stay up and call us if the Giants' score changed. That borders on teenager abuse.

By this time, the DHSOS was spent. Ken had bailed, it was past Lee's bedtime, and it was time to call it a night. We wandered past the strip clubs to our cars and headed home.