

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

Officers

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

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Minutes of Meeting

BIX

Tuesday, November 8, 2016

Auspicious Occasion

The PoV summoned us to meet at BIX restaurant in San Francisco's Jackson Square. This classic and classy supper club is a DHSOS favorite that we hadn't visited for a while, and we were excited to be there and together. Da Burd joined us for this auspicious occasion.

Election Night

It was election night and the crowd was sparse, but the talent was deep. A tableful of beautiful ladies greeted us on our way upstairs, where we were seated at a round table and waited on by a chap who was mystified by Da Burd, and by us.

BIX (from their website)

On an enticing alley in San Francisco's historic Jackson Square, a lone neon sign leads into a soaring room of fluted columns, mahogany paneling, plush banquettes and distinguished artwork.

White jacketed bartenders hold forth behind a gently curved bar, mixing what many have called the city's best classic cocktails. Various described as a civilized speakeasy, a supper club and an elegant saloon, BIX offers modern American cuisine served in a soaring two-story dining room to the strains of live jazz nightly.

A Toast

It had been awhile since this stately group of men had dined together. As DUH PREZ called the meeting to order at 6:29 PM, we raised our glasses in a toast to each other. We were given a double mea culpa from DUH PREZ and ListMan for having to re-schedule the meeting.

New Scheduling Process

From the Czar: Starting with this event, I will ask for your availability on weekdays (Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays). I will reconcile to a "primary date" (which will be our first choice) and a "secondary date" (which is a fallback in case the primary date no longer works). If someone messes up, meaning that both the primary and secondary dates do not work, they have the responsibility to reschedule the event ***and*** they have to buy drinks for the evening. Following this email, I will send a similar email but for Spring 2017 (so that we have our next two meetings scheduled).

Ruth's Birthday

Today was Ruth's birthday, and we toasted her. DUH PREZ reminded us of one of her sayings: "I don't paddle, and I don't pump gas." We toasted her again.

Earthquake Tip

ListMan informed the DHSOS of a tip that might make communication easier in the event of a severe earthquake: ensure you have some method of charging your cellphone. It's one of the primary recommendations issued by the FCC:

Before a Disaster: How to Prepare Your Home and Mobile Device

1. Maintain a list of emergency phone numbers in your cell phone and in or near your home phone.
2. Keep charged batteries and car-phone chargers available for back-up power for your cell phone.
3. If you have a traditional landline (non-broadband or VOIP) phone, keep at least one non-cordless phone in your home because it will work even if you lose power.
4. Prepare a family contact sheet. This should include at least one out-of-town contact that may be better able to reach family members in an emergency.
5. Program "In Case of Emergency" (ICE) contacts into your cell phone so emergency personnel can contact those people for you if you are unable to use your phone. Let your ICE contacts know that they are programmed into your phone and inform them of any medical issues or other special needs you may have.
6. If you are evacuated and have call-forwarding on your home phone, forward your home phone number to your cell phone number.
7. If you do not have a cell phone, keep a prepaid phone card to use if needed during or after a disaster.
8. Have a battery-powered radio or television available (with spare batteries).
9. Subscribe to text alert services from local or state governments to receive alerts in the event of a disaster. Parents should sign up for their school district emergency alert system.

Car Comparison Companies

ListMan and DUH PREZ are looking at cars and there was a request for comparison shopping guides. Here are a few:

- Edmunds
- CarGurus
- Kelly Blue Book
- TrueDelta
- Car and Driver
- Roadshow-CNET
- Autobytel
- The Car Guide

Drakesbad

a. Bridge

For years, the National Park Service has procrastinated on erecting a bridge over Hot Springs Creek near Drakesbad, thereby forcing "some" DHSOS spousal units to turn back. The PoV attempted to establish contact with the Park Superintendent, who has steadfastly refused to return communications. He asked the Czar to assist him with this effort.

b. Housing

It is nearing time to reserve lodging at Drakesbad for 2018, and the DHSOS coordinated room requests in the bungalows, to avoid complications:

Notes: bungalow #3

Czar: bungalow #4

ListMan: bungalow #5

McHikers: bungalow #6

(The rest of the DHSOS are staying in the lodge or cabins)

c. Tips

This past year Drakesbad instituted a complicated and rather bizarre method of allocating tips, asking guests to break down their tips among the hosts, wait staff, kitchen staff, housekeeping, etc. The PoV volunteered the Czar to contact the concessioner to request a change. The Czar suggested we had already turned in our complaints while at Drakesbad and we

should wait a year to see if they followed through and changed their system. Unable to reach a resolution, the matter was put to a vote, which came out 4-1 in favor of waiting.

\$43 Martini

What's in a \$43 martini? That was ListMan's rhetorical question, as he raised his martini glass. Epic Steak, located on San Francisco's Embarcadero, has begun serving Fog Point Martinis (\$43 apiece) made with Hangar 1 Fog Point vodka, Vya Vermouth, a lemon twist, and fog, collected from San Francisco. ListMan suggested with a wink that DUH PREZ's son, who lives in the San Francisco fog, should collect a few bottles of marine layer and parlay them into a few extra bucks.

Travelin' Men

Each of the DHSOS recently returned from excursions, and we were entertained by the tales. DUH PREZ rode the California Zephyr from Chicago to San Francisco (his suggestion to others: "Get the sleeper car!"). The PoV explored four sites in Tennessee (including a BBQ cook-off in Lynchburg and the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville). The Czar journeyed to Colorado Springs to comfort a friend's family. ListMan toured several National Parks in Utah and Colorado. And Notes visited Finland and cycled through the Baltic States.

Baseball Road Trip – 2017

The DHSOS has established a tradition of travelling to see baseball games and explore a city, and there was interest in repeating that in 2017. Potential cities mentioned included Seattle, San Diego, Denver, St. Louis, and Chicago. ListMan volunteered to find a baseball schedule and begin to seek a match of dates and games.

Cabo

The DHSOS and their spousal units will vacation in Cabo, Mexico next February, and a brief discussion of logistics took place. The PoV has secured rental cars, and he

distributed information on them, and on how to handle ourselves in the Cabo airport. Some officers discussed whether to take golf clubs, which prompted DUH PREZ to say he might take his. "Yours aren't golf clubs," was the response from the two officers who donated their used sticks to him.

World Series

The recently-completed World Series matched the Chicago Cubs and Cleveland Indians and resulted in one of the most exciting and widely-watched Series in history. The Cubs broke their 108-year drought in the 10th inning of a back-and-forth, action-packed, rain-delayed game that was one of the best World Series games in baseball history.

There were many wonderful comments on the Series. Here's one from comedian Bill Murray:

"I've been imagining this for a long time. I didn't think it would happen in Cleveland, but I thought it would happen. I thought we'd have it in Wrigley Field. Just being in Wrigley Field and seeing all that excitement this week and the last few weeks is dreamy. It's really pretty cool."

Blast from the DHSOS Past

(This is from Note's book of short stories; this one is titled *Dashiell Hammett: One of the Tough Guys*).

"The problem with putting two and two together is that sometimes you get four, and sometimes you get twenty-two."

- Dashiell Hammett

Samuel Dashiell Hammett lived and wrote in San Francisco, and many of his stories are based there. He became a writer in the City and he honed his writing skills there, creating and refining the "modern hard-boiled detective story", as his biographer, Don Herron put it. Hammett penned his most famous novel, *The Maltese Falcon*, while he lived in furnished rooms in the northern end of San

Francisco, and he often used the city's streets, neighborhoods, and restaurants as settings in his novels.

But Hammett was not born in San Francisco; rather on a farm in southern Maryland, on May 27, 1894. "Sam," as he was called, grew up in Philadelphia and Baltimore, left school when he was 13 to help his father run a small business, and toiled at various odd jobs. Eventually, he became an operative for the Pinkerton National Detective Agency, working in Baltimore, Spokane, and eventually San Francisco. He was a tough guy, and his experience provided material for his detective stories.

Hammett enlisted in the Army in 1918 and became ill with influenza and later contracted tuberculosis. He recovered in a hospital in Tacoma, Washington where he met a nurse, Josephine Dolan. They dated and fell in love. He was transferred to a hospital near San Diego and they corresponded by mail while he recovered. When he was discharged, he went to San Francisco to find an apartment where they could live together. He and Josephine, whom he called Jose (pronounced Joe's) were married at St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco in 1921, and their daughter, Mary Jane, was born later that year.

Hammett returned to work as a detective, but soon was too ill to continue. He began writing fiction, based on his experiences as a detective, to supplement his disability income, and he sold his work to pulp magazines.

In 1926, Jose gave birth to a second daughter, Josephine, and Hammett decided to find work to provide more money for the family. He worked briefly as a copywriter for a San Francisco jeweler, but he began drinking heavily, and collapsed at his office, suffering from hepatitis and tuberculosis. He could no longer work full time. Fortunately, about that time the editor of a pulp fiction magazine hired him to write mysteries. That was the break Hammett

needed, and he thrived. He wrote short stories for the magazine and published his first novel.

As these things sometimes go, when Hammett's career took off his personal life fell apart. Forced to live apart from his wife and daughters because of fear he would spread his tuberculosis to them, Hammett drank, had affairs, and became increasingly weakened. At times, he was unable to get to the bathroom without help. He continued to write, however, publishing *Red Harvest* and *The Dain Curse* in 1929 and *The Maltese Falcon* in 1930.

During World War II, at age 48, Hammett volunteered for military service and was assigned to the Aleutian Islands (Alaska) where he edited a military newspaper. He emerged from the War with emphysema and suffered the rest of his life from it and from tuberculosis.

As he aged, a lifetime of heavy drinking and smoking worsened his other illnesses, and the jail time Hammett served for refusing to name Communists made him thin and sickly. He died in 1961 at age 67, a broken-down shadow of the tough guys he wrote about and the tough guy he was.

Adjournment

It had been a very special evening, with an appropriate mix of fine food, good knowledge, and noble friends.

We thanked our waiter, took a look at the men's room artwork, issued hearty handshakes all around, and walked off into the warm San Francisco night.

That's it for now, man.

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