

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

Officers

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

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Minutes of Meeting

Thursday, November 10, 2022

Li Po Bar/Far East Café/Vesuvio Café

Mai Tai at Li Po



It was DUH PREZ's turn to pick venues tonight, and he came through big time! His invitation to meet was straight-forward, just like the leader he is:

As the APoV, I am hereby announcing that our official quarterly Board Meeting will occur this Thursday.

We will congregate at Li Po bar at 901 Grant St. east side, north of Washington St. at 5:30 for cocktails. A nice dive bar.

Then we travel 2 1/2 blocks south to Far East Cafe at 631 Grant St. west side at 6:30 for dinner. I am trying to convince them to give us a booth, normally reserved for 6 or more. 5 of us with the bird.

Then if I can keep you guys awake long enough, maybe I can convince you to go

to Vesuvio Cafe at 255 Columbus north of Pacific for an Irish or Bohemian Coffee.

As asked, we assembled inside Li Po, a hole-in-the-wall dive bar smack in the middle of Chinatown (as we found out, the "real" address is 916 Grant). The joint was packed with young tourists, drawn in by the place's famous Mai Tai drinks and cheesy atmosphere. It was loud, as those around us slammed down shots of Jagermeister and shouted at each other above the sounds of football games on giant TVs. We were the classiest act in the place, which says more about it than us. DUH PREZ launched into a story about his recent trip to France and his ... well, he was getting ahead of himself.

Call to Order



Someone asked DUH PREZ if he was broaching an agenda item, and if so we

should make it official. So he quickly called the meeting to order at 5:48 PM by clinking his Chinese Mai Tai glass against Notes' bottle of ginger beer. We were off and running.

Wedding of the Century



DUH PREZ was bubbling with news!

"Save the dates," he started, "June 3 and 4. There's going to be a wedding at our church, then a dinner at the Metropolitan Club, and the next day I've chartered the USS Potomac, and we will repeat what we did for my 70th, and then we're going to spend our honeymoon exploring National Parks in California, Oregon and Washington and staying in National Park lodges. It's all going to be great!"

It was good to see him excited again, since he once reported that the highlight of his pandemic days was changing dirty diapers. He talked about his trip down the Rhone River, and his time in Paris, and how he had picked the perfect day and time and place to propose to P.J., and how she had said "yes."

He mentioned that he had wondered who to ask to marry them: he had thought about Victor (who married ListMan) – but decided he might be in prison, and he briefly considered marrying himself (he is still legally qualified to conduct weddings). But in the end, he decided to ask the priest at his church (P.J. "might" have had some influence on his decision).

We all congratulated him and told him we're looking forward to it. Then da Czar asked a question that had apparently been on his mind: "Do you have to get married?"

Da Burd



It was somewhere around then that Da Burd emerged from his traveling container and took a place on the bar. We thanked DUH PREZ for bringing him and waited for questions about him from the aforementioned tourists, which never came. It was a young crowd, and they had probably never seen *The Maltese Falcon*. So da Burd sat quietly on the bar, sipping a Mai Tai.

Belated Birthday

Each officer slipped DUH PREZ a birthday card, which he seemed to enjoy. We had been scheduled to meet on his birthday in August, but travel and Covid and other conflicts had led to a postponement.

College Football

We moved on to a discussion of college football and whether we thought Michigan could beat the point spread against Nebraska (30 points) over the weekend (they did). DUH PREZ and da Czar were animated, because their teams (Michigan #3 and USC #8) are having great seasons, with both still in the mix to make the college playoffs. Notes and ListMan were noticeably quiet during this discussion and soon changed the topic.

Wandering Thru Chinatown

We paid for our Mai Tais and wandered down Grant Street through Chinatown, noticing along the way how clean and orderly things looked. New Chinese lantern lights had been strung across the streets and nearly every store was open and full. It looked better than we had seen it in years, and we hoped it would stay this way.

Far East Café

DUH PREZ had selected the Far East Café for our dining place. He knew it well, as it is close to the school he sent his kids to, and he had dined there after ball games, plays, and special events. It hasn't changed much over the years, except most of the private booths had been removed and the rest were closed. So we sat at a round table, ordered drinks and food, and dug in to the itinerary. Just as we were getting started a group of 60 German tourists came in, sat next to our table, and took the place over.

Here's what the Far East Café says about itself (btw, we weren't overwhelmed ...)

Far East Café is centrally located in the heart of Chinatown and is two blocks away from the gateway of Chinatown and directly across from the Old St. Mary's Church. Far East Café cordially invites you to our enchanting restaurant that will bring you back in time. The restaurant itself has been established since 1920. As you and your visitors enter the doorway, you will be overwhelmed by the palace chandeliers hanging from our high ceilings, painted murals on the walls, the carved screens, and the emperor's throne. These delicate artworks were brought over from China over a hundred years ago.

Warriors Troubles

There was a brief discussion of the Golden State Warriors and why they aren't kicking everyone's butts, as they usually do (they were 6-9 as of November 18). Is this a temporary problem that will right itself, or are the W's really in trouble? Low team morale and lack of commitment to winning might be the deep-seated problems, according to head coach Steve Kerr.

"I think we're feeling sorry for ourselves," he told the *SF Chronicle*, "and nobody's going to feel sorry for us. Everyone can't wait to play us and kick our ass. We've had a lot of success and a lot of fun, a lot

of joy beating people over the years, and teams don't forget that. So, they're having their fun now, as they should."

Gray Eagle



The DHSOS recently received cabin assignments from Gray Eagle Lodge for our stay there next August. **Payments are due by December 15.** Gray Eagle is the alternative destination the DHSOS used this year because of the damage done to Drakesbad by wildfires. It proved to be a very suitable substitute, and all officers said they are looking forward to staying there again next August.

Upcoming Trips

With the pandemic now under control, the DHSOS is again exploring the world. We talked about our travel plans for 2023. ListMan and his spouse plan a trip to Europe including Denmark, Germany, and possibly a third country. Notes and wife have booked a bicycle trip in May to Italy, Austria, and Slovenia. And DUH PREZ and finance plan a honeymoon trip to several National Parks in western U.S.

Katharine/Hunter's Abode

Construction has begun on the home of Katharine and Hunter, with remodeling being done on the kitchen and two bathrooms. The work will take 3-4 months, during which time the couple are holing up in Marin County.

Halloween Update

Reports were provided on recent Halloween events. It appears that with the pandemic mostly behind us the tradition of “trick-or-treating” has come back full force.

- Da Czar noted that people living on Belvedere Street (next to his house) had blocked off the street and provided a variety of Halloween treats for local kids, including giving away 500-600 pieces of candy.
- DUH PREZ held his annual Halloween party at his house and gave away 435 pieces of candy. He thinks there would have been even more kids if not for competition from nearby Lake Street, which held a mega Halloween party.
- ListMan reported that he ran out of candy and turned out the lights.

Aches and Pains Update



With all DHSOS members approaching late middle age, we are beginning to suffer some minor health issues. In this meeting's installment, da Czar reported that he has a torn meniscus in his knee that gives him trouble. He has seen a doctor about it and was given a shot of cortisone and prescribed physical therapy. That seems to have helped, but he now has a problem with his quadricep. The rest of us nodded knowingly -- or were we getting sleepy?

ISP Services

Da Czar queried the group about ISP services they use, stating that his has gotten rather expensive. Others agreed, citing the number of additional streaming services added during the pandemic and the higher cost of internet access. It was suggested that we might take a look at AT&T Direct TV streaming service: (<https://www.directv.com/att-tv/>)

Can We ask You about the Bird?

As we were leaving the Far East Café a couple at a nearby table stopped us: “Can we ask you about the bird?” they wanted to know. We told them it was the Maltese Falcon from the movie, and they got real excited and asked about our organization and how we were able to obtain it. The man even asked how he could “sign up” to join our group. Turns out they were from San Diego and had come to San Francisco to see their son and check out the City. They were having a fabulous time, which they admitted was made even better by meeting us and seeing Da Burd.

We get this a lot, and it made up for the people ignoring him at Li Po. We kindly answered their questions and wished them a good night.

Nightcap at Vesuvio



DUH PREZ enticed us to wander over to North Beach for a nightcap (Bohemian coffee) at Vesuvio Café. Just as we walked in a group abandoned their table, leaving window seats open for the DHSOS. From there we observed the

historic-funky atmosphere of a legendary North Beach saloon. Here's what they say about it:

This world-renowned San Francisco saloon located in North Beach just across from the infamous City Lights Bookstore, was first established in 1948 and remains an historical monument to jazz, poetry, art and the good life of the Beat Generation. Vesuvio attracts a diverse clientele: artists, chess players, cab drivers, seamen and business people, European visitors, off-duty exotic dancers and bon vivants from all walks of life.

From our perspective, the bar's claims rang true, and we consider ourselves to be bon vivants, but we didn't notice any off-duty exotic dancers (though it would be a convenient place for employees of the Condor Club, which is across the street).

Hearty Good Night

It was time to go home. We had enjoyed Mai Tais at a Chinese dive bar, shared Chinese food with a huge group of German tourists, and sipped Bohemian coffees in a legendary North Beach saloon.

We wandered down Grant Street through the heart of Chinatown to our cars and issued fist bumps all around, wishing each other good night. Off we went into the chilly San Francisco evening.

It had been another good night in an interesting part of our favorite city with very special friends!

That's it for now, man.

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