

**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

☄ ☄ ☄

Minutes of Meeting

Thursday, April 18, 2024

Gino and Carlo/Firenze by Night

**Call to Assemble**

It was time to meet. ListMan, serving as temporary PoV, summoned us together:

*Here's the deal:*

*5:30 - drinks at Gino and Carlo. Could be some mafia types hanging out so be on good behavior. Been in business since 1942.*

*6:30 - dinner at Firenze by Night, an old favorite of the Prez.*

**Drinks at Gino and Carlo**

We waded down Green Street to Gino and Carlo through gaggles of tourists who were snarfing seafood and pasta at nearby Sotto Mare and Caffè Sport. It was good to smell the garlic, and good to see tourists back in SF! Gino and Carlo was quiet when we arrived, but it soon filled with locals and an after-work gang. An old guy sipped red wine at the table next to us and occasionally talked to an even older woman who sat alone at the table next to him.

ListMan bought a round of drinks (per the new DHSOS rule) and discovered to his chagrin that it was cash only. "Geez!" (a ListMan expression) "A North Beach bar that only takes cash?" We agreed.

**Offramp Betting**

ListMan and DUH PREZ bet on the details of a San Francisco freeway off ramp (Fell vs. Octavia). Not sure who won, but it didn't seem to matter, since ListMan didn't have enough cash to buy another round of drinks, anyway. He was financed by DUH PREZ, who flipped out a \$100 smacker, and he sauntered back to the bar for a second round.

It was about then that DUH PREZ showed off his yellow shirt with the large "M". "Geez -- how long is this going to go on?"



While procuring drinks, a dude at the bar struck up a conversation with ListMan. It seemed to be that kind of bar. He told Ken he has lived in North Beach since the 60s, which impressed us and made us reminisce about when we came to SF and what brought us here. As our one true native, ListMan just smiled.

As we got ready to head out to dinner, the old guy at the next-door table finished his glass of red wine and saluted us as he shuffled home.

### **Firenze by Night, Revisited**

This is a fav DHSOS hangout. Our most recent two meetings here were in April 2008 and October 2021:

When we met at Firenze in 2008, here's what was happening in our lives:

- The Czar was feuding with his next-door neighbor over a messy construction job that caused rain to leak into the Czar's house.
- DUH PREZ had visited Shaw's Crab House in Chicago on a business trip.
- Notes was nearly recovered from knee replacement surgery.
- ListMan was in the market for a new car.

When we met here In 2021, the world was just opening after the Covid shutdown, and Firenze by Night was hopping! All tables were full, both inside and outside, and everyone was enjoying being able to eat at restaurants again. There were even a few tourists, and it was nice to see them enjoying themselves in the City!

### **Firenze by Night, Good to be Back**



This quintessential North Beach Italian restaurant has been around for more than 30 years, and we had been here – but not for a while. It was good to be back! It looked familiar, although smaller than we remembered. We sat in the middle of the place, sort of featured guests! DUH PREZ extracted Da Burd from its carrying case and

it perched in the middle of the table. The young gent at the next-door table was impressed and he asked about it. "It's the original Maltese Falcon from the movie," our leader assured the dude, who turned to his date and explained what that was. She did not seem as impressed. Da Burd turned to face us.

### **Call to Order**

Da Prez clanged his dinner knife on his empty wine glass and called the meeting to order at 6:54pm. From now on, everything was official.

### **DUH PREZ in Peru**

Always eager to take the floor, DUH PREZ did a nice job of summarizing his recent trip to Peru with P.J., and he had us mesmerized for a while with his description of his flights to Lima and Quitos, and their stay on the Amazon River. We saw photos of their rainy day at Machu Picchu and their stay in Cusco, and some other stuff. It sounded like a great trip!

### **Omaha in June**

ListMan reported that he and Vicki have had to postpone their trip to Spain and France to later in the year, but to compensate they have planned a trip to Omaha in June to see relatives.

### **The Rain in Spain**

Notes and Patty have planned a trip to Spain in May (including time in Seville and cycling in southern Spain) after which they will spend a few days exploring Tunisia.

### **France Postponed**

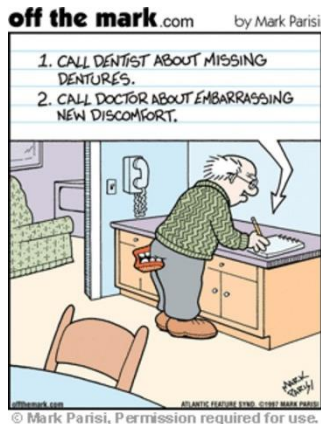
Da Czar and Nancy have postponed their trip to Normandy and Brittany until later because they have found out they will be grandparents in late September, which is when they would have been in France. Da Czar reported that the mother-to-be is expecting a baby girl and doing very well!

## Gray Eagle

The DHSOS is scheduled to convene with families and friends this August at Gray Eagle. There was an extensive discussion of the pros and cons of Gray Eagle versus Drakesbad, and a comparison of facilities, dining, hiking, and pricing. We concluded that the one significant advantage Gray Eagle has over Drakesbad is that it's open.



## Is the Doctor In?



This section of the meeting reflected both our age and life stage. We have all been physically active our entire adult lives, and we have taken good care of our bods, but we are at that age when things start to go wrong.

As a prelude, ListMan shared a story his niece (a nurse) told him: As we age, we start to notice signs of aging on the outside of our bodies – maybe some gray here and there, or perhaps a wrinkle or two – but, while we don't notice it, similar aging is occurring on the inside, too. Hmmm ...

Perhaps that set the stage for the rest of the discussion ...

We are all experiencing health issues, such as sore feet, an aching back, a tumor here and a sagging eyelid there. But so far, there aren't any incurable major illnesses, and we raised our now-nearly empty glasses in a toast to that!

## SF Mayor Race

San Francisco will hold an election this November that will include voting for a mayor. This is likely to be a crucial one, given that the City by the Bay has struggled with a homeless, drug, housing, and image problem over the past few years. ListMan polled the officers to see if we had picked our favorite candidate. We haven't. We talked a little about some of those running but left it as an open issue.

## Women's Sports



This was a short but salty conversation about why all the recent attention on women's sports, especially basketball, golf, tennis, and volleyball (By some reports, this year women's sports will generate a revenue over \$1 billion.) Some of us seemed to appreciate it more than others, and we concluded that at least some of the excitement is because this year's women's basketball teams included a few outstanding players -- notably Caitlin Clark.

Bonus points question: What was the most-attended single women's sporting event ever?

## Pitchers Pool

Duh PREZ admitted that he is not having much success in the baseball Pitchers Pool contest in which he participates. He sought

help from his comrades but found none. We moved on.

### **Noe Valley Toilet**

Notes announced the upcoming grand opening of a public restroom in his Noe Valley neighborhood and reported that it has garnered a good deal of attention. (This is the single-stall public toilet that was initially estimated to cost \$1.7 million and made national headlines.) There was little “movement” on the subject, and it soon crapped out.

### **Next Meeting**

It was moved, seconded, and thirded that our next meeting should take place in July at DUH PREZ’s Redwood Treehouse near Healdsburg. DUH PREZ will schedule it.

### **Giants Outing**

It was suggested and agreed that when the date of the Healdsburg meeting is known, Da Czar will send out a list of dates for possible group attendance at a Giants game. (Note: Da Czar has scheduled that event for Sunday, July 28 at Oracle Park, with dinner to follow at Mission Rock Resort. Officers at to meet at the Willie Mays statue in front of the ballpark at noon).

### **Into the Night**

We were at the end of our agenda, and our wine and coffee had been consumed. It was time to stumble home. DUH PREZ collected money, counted it, shoveled it to our waiter, and we stood up to leave. The youngish man at the table next to us pretended to be interested in Da Burd, which DUH PREZ carefully secured in its carrying case, and we assembled on the sidewalk in front of the restaurant.

Our waiter emerged from the restaurant carrying a backpack he believed a customer had left behind, and at our instructions ran down the street to locate its owner. He returned in a few minutes, huffing and puffing and still with the backpack. As we

said goodnight, a cute young thing emerged from the restaurant, collected the backpack from the waiter, and waltzed down the street. All was well ...

We issued a round of manly fist bumps, said our good-nights, and headed out into the cool, blustery North Beach night. It had been another stellar night out for a group of outstanding friends!

That’s it for now, man.

⊕ ⊕ ⊕

