

**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, August 21, 2025

Bix and Tosca Cafe

Call to Assemble

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

Studs, we will have our drinks at Bix and then walk to dinner at Tosca. I will try to get there earlier to save some place for us at the bar, or to get a table.

Bix



We met at Bix and stood around the bar, discussing important business. Bar stools were first-come-first-served. A shapely young thing greeted us and took da Burd from DUH PREZ. The two of them (the greeter and da Burd) disappeared into the cloak room. She reemerged, complimented DUH PREZ on the capital "M" on his blue ballcap, and gave him several bright smiles. He might have reminded her of her grandfather.

We ordered drinks, watched as the after-work crowd filed in, and listened to DUH PREZ's report on Drakesbad.

Drakesbad Debrief



DUH PREZ gave a thorough report on Drakesbad Guest Ranch, the site where each August for decades the DHSOS and families went camping, hiking, and sharing each other's company. Some of the bungalows and other structures were destroyed by the Dixie Fire in 2021, and the DHSOS haven't been back since – until now (DUH PREZ, his family, and our friend, Lynne, spent a few days there earlier this month).

"It was good," he stated, "yes, there is devastation, and evidence of the fire everywhere, but it's still beautiful, and Drakesbad itself is open and operating."

He walked us through the good, the bad, and the in-between of the lodging, hikes, food, staff, and the damage caused by the fires. His presentation, while overly detailed, did provide a comprehensive overview of the status, and we resolved,

based on his recommendation, to avail ourselves of Drakesbad next August.

Tosca Cafe



As the hour neared 7:00, we exited Bix for our dinner appointment. Leaving Bix, an attractive blond, sitting at an outside table, asked us where we were going. She seemed interested in joining us, but as we headed down Gold Street, she turned around and flirted with the next set of guys leaving Bix. Columbus Street was lively at that hour with tourists, a few drunks, and an occasional call girl.

We were welcomed to Tosca Café by an attractive maître-de and escorted to our table. The place was less than half full. Our server, a pleasant woman originally from Mexico City, distributed menus and took drink orders.

Da Czar provided a brief background of the site for our dinner:

A legendary hangout in North Beach since it opened in 1919, and even more so from the 1980's when Jeanette Etheredge took over Tosca. Locals including Willie Brown, Lars Ulrich and Francis Ford Coppola were regular fixtures, Hunter S Thompson wrote his column for the SF Examiner in the corner booth, Bono, Lauren Hutton, and Mikhail Baryshnikov played pool in the back room, singing Opera and drinking Tosca House Cappuccinos. When Restaurateur Anna Weinberg and Interior Designer Ken Fulk heard Tosca Cafe was closing, they joined forces to save it. As the new owners and passionate fans of the original establishment their goal was to return Tosca to its rightful place as a San Francisco institution. As Mikey Rapin wrote in Bon Appétit magazine: "It's the kind of

joint Beats got bounced, Bono belted opera, and a bullet hole memorialized the night an A-LIST actor disagreed with a rockstar's choice of music"

Da Burd



Da Burd entered Tosca, emerged from its nest, and took up a commanding position in the center of our table. It sat proudly and quietly, waiting for its moment, which came when the couple at the next table asked about it. Duh PREZ fed them his usual spiel about it being the original Maltese Falcon, one of six produced*, and the one that fell on Humphrey Bogart's foot during filming of the movie. They were briefly intrigued and then returned to their conversation.

*Four were plaster and two were lead.

Call to Order

DUH PREZ called the meeting to order at 7:23 pm by banging his fork on his water glass. We were in business.

Africa Trip

We briefly discussed the status of our impending trip to Africa in April of 2026. The most notable item was the recent decision by Misty's executor to release the rest of the funds to the Gang. Everyone has signed and returned the requested waiver, so the money should shortly be deposited in the bank account set up to hold them.

The next item of discussion was the second "Misty" trip. ListMan asked for a discussion of dates and plans, and the consensus was that two decisions need to be made:

1. Timing (when the trip will be taken). Listman agreed to take the lead on that topic.

2. Location (where to go). Suggestions are welcome.

Chat GPT **



"We hear a lot about CHATGPT these days," Listman said, "Does anyone know exactly what it is?"

There were a couple of reasonable explanations offered, and a couple of us have used it, or some version of AI, for a variety of purposes. Here's the definition given by Google:

ChatGPT is an advanced AI chatbot, created by OpenAI, that understands and generates human-like text in response to user prompts. The name stands for "Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer," referring to its ability to create content, its extensive pre-training on vast internet data, and its underlying transformer architecture. ChatGPT can answer questions, write code, summarize text, generate images, and perform many other tasks by processing natural language input and producing relevant output.

**DUH PREZ asked that the minutes reflect that Ohio State University has a formal partnership with CHATGPT's creator, OpenAI.

What Happened to the Giants?



As our readers know, we are all fans of the San Francisco Giants. This season they started off well, and in June they were tied for first place in their division. Since then,

they've fallen on hard times. What's wrong with the Giants, we wondered.

No one has an answer – not the coaches, the players, management, or the broadcasters and journalists. We basically came up empty-handed. But ChatGPT knows:

The San Francisco Giants are losing many games lately due to a combination of insufficient offense, poor situational hitting, exhausted and inconsistent pitching, and a general lack of depth.

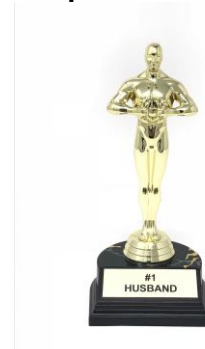
Vicki's Surgery

The beautiful, elegant, and esteemed spouse of Listman was due to have surgery the day after our meeting, and we all expressed our concerns and wishes for a successful procedure, and a quick and full recovery. We somberly raised our glasses in a toast to her.

Note's Eyes

Notes reported that he has been diagnosed with dry macular degeneration, a chronic deterioration of the center of the retina. It's in early stages and will (hopefully) develop slowly. While being checked for it, a small retina tear was discovered, which was "welded" by laser photo coagulation. Notes engaged in a vivid description of the treatment, and we quickly moved on to another topic.

Most Patient Spouse Award



Each officer has had his marital burdens lately, and each of us has responded with patience and kindness. In many ways

we're a remarkable group of spouses! As we inventoried the challenges we've faced, we drew comfort from the fact that we married well, have had a good deal of companionship, and we gave each other a round of hearty high fives and raised our glasses in a hopeful toast to many more years of the same.

Misty's Ashes

Notes polled various friends and relatives of our recently departed friend Misty, to determine the best date for a memorial ash-scattering service near the Golden Gate Bridge. Saturday, November 1, turned out to be the best date, and DUH PREZ located and chartered a service (Marin Memorial) to furnish a boat to take our group out from Sausalito to near the Golden Gate Bridge for the ceremony.

Michigan Cheating



Recent news articles indicated there was more to the scandal involving University of Michigan football program than has previously been reported by DUH PREZ. Confronted with that, he again attempted to minimize the extent, claiming that one low-ranking assistant coach went to one rival's game and took three photos of an opposing team's cheerleaders. But ChatGPT begs to differ:

The University of Michigan football sign-stealing scandal involves an NCAA investigation that found the program committed violations over three seasons, including an illegal off-campus, in-person scouting scheme run by former staffer Connor Stalions, impermissible recruiting, failure to monitor, and failure to cooperate with the investigation. The penalties include

a large fine, four years of probation, and a two-game suspension for head coach Sherrone Moore, though Moore received a separate, two-game suspension from the Big Ten for his role in the scandal.

Next Meeting

Da Czar has scheduled the next gathering of the DHSOS to take place Thursday, November 6, 2025. ListMan will be the temporary PoV.

Into the Night

We were at the end of our agenda, and our wine and coffee had been consumed. It was time to make our way home. DUH PREZ collected money, counted it, shoveled it to our server, and we stood up to leave. The server reappeared and said we were \$100 short. Yikes! After some scurrying, she found the "missing" \$100 bill on the floor. All was good, and we ambled out.

It was a warm and somewhat sultry evening in San Francisco (or as Al described it, "A warm and salty evening with persistent, warm coastal breezes carrying the distinct scent of salt from the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay.")

ListMan had already headed home, so the three remaining studs exchanged heaty fist bumps, Notes and da Czar jumped into an Uber and headed home, and DUH PREZ, carrying Da Burd and claiming to be headed home on foot, sauntered up the street.

That's it for now, man.

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