

**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, February 26, 2026

Red Jack's Saloon/Fior d'Italia

Call to Assemble

It was DUH PREZ's turn to host and he sent out a timely invitation:

Gentlemen,

I am considering Fior d' Italia on Mason between Chestnut and Francisco. The pre-party might start at Red Jack's Saloon, a quality dive. I recall Geoff specifically liked that place, as did I since they served the toonies right up to the top.

It'd Been a While

The DHSOS had done this paring before, but it'd been a while – the last time we had drinks at Red Jack's Saloon and dinner at Fior d'Italia was September 5, 2019.

We were younger then, but equally adventurous, and DUH PREZ had served as host (and paid the bar tab!). At Red Jack's that night, our minutes reported, "We sat on wooden chairs, breathed the wafting odors of stale beer, kept track of baseball and football games on wide screen televisions, and got caught up on personal and society business."

The topics that evening were: (1) the birth of Lydia Gray Diefenbach, (2) "Drakesbad Feedback" featuring "Martini Lynne's" notes to the concession management company and the National Park Service suggesting improvements (which were ignored), DUH PREZ's report on his recent trip to Scotland,

Note's 50th high school reunion, and pros and cons of earthquake and long-term health insurance.

"All-in-all," the minutes concluded, "it was a nice night out."

Red Jack's Saloon



We were back for another North Beach night, and Red Jack's was a good choice for drinks: we'd been there before, it was a short walk away from the dinner location, and the sticky tables kept our drinks from tipping over when the raucous dart game in the adjoining room rocked the place. (The stickiness also made it tough to pick up a martini glass without spilling it, too, but we managed.) As is our custom, DUH PREZ (as the Acting Prez) paid the bar tab. We exited Red Jack's and ambled down the street. It was a pleasant evening in our favorite city.

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"San Francisco is 49 square miles surrounded by reality."

- Paul Kantner

Call to Order

We had a full agenda, so DUH PREZ called the meeting to order at Red Jack's at 6:42 pm by clinking glasses together.

Drakesbad vs. Gray Eagle (2027)

We discussed the pros and cons of our favorite mountain getaway places: hiking trails, sleeping accommodation, food, etc., and agreed there are advantages to each place. Gray Eagle Lodge has pressed us for a commitment for 2027, and after some discussion, DUH PREZ agreed to survey the group and report his findings to Lynn at Gray Eagle.

Fior d'Italia



Dinner this evening was at Fior d'Italia. The family-owned Italian restaurant has been in business since 1886, and its website says it's the oldest continuously operating Italian restaurant in the U.S. It has moved several times, with its longest tenure on Union Square. It moved to its current location at 2237 Mason Street in 2005. (We previously dined at the restaurant in 1998 on Union Square, and in 2019 on Mason Street).

Da Burd



Da Burd entered Fior d'Italia, 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 waiter asked about the "eagle." When DUH PREZ began to explain the

history of Da Burd and the movie he said he wasn't interested in old movies and went to the next table. That was his loss. Other patrons at nearby tables inquired about da Burd and expressed their desire to be like us.

A Toast to Misty

Listman dug out his list of topics for the meeting and began to review them – he looked like Sherlock Holmes studying a murder scene. He raised his head and said we should probably start by talking about "The Trip." We lifted our water glasses and toasted Misty.

"The Trip"

With "The Trip" a little more than a month away, it's now taking shape, and our thoughts were pivoting to preparations. We've had meetings with health care professionals to discuss vaccines and are planning and gathering appropriate clothing and supplies. There was a discussion about flights (with recognition that some will have a long layover in Frankfurt), and we talked about what credit cards to carry and the best way to avoid being pickpocketed.



Regarding pickpockets, here is advice from Rick Steves: "blend in, stay vigilant in crowded areas, and secure valuables in a hidden, inaccessible place, such as a money belt worn under clothes (editor's note: "penis wallet"). Keep bags in front of you, avoid putting items in back pockets, and never set phones/wallets on tables."

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"If it wasn't for pickpockets, I'd have no sex life at all."

– Rodney Dangerfield

Pick Pockets: They're Everywhere!



DUH PREZ reported that he had recently been pickpocketed (again), this time on MUNI. We chuckled when he showed us the wrap-around sunglasses he was wearing at the time, and concluded the thief thought he was blind, but it's not a laughing matter to be pickpocketed, and we expressed our sympathy to him. He reported that it had taken him 20+ hours of work to report and replace all the cards in his stolen wallet.

Finances for Africa Trip

Discussions have taken place about how to handle miscellaneous expenses (tips, dinners, side trips, etc.) during our upcoming Africa trip. We decided it would be best if one person paid those expenses and he/she is later reimbursed from the "Misty Account." Two volunteers (Czar and Notes) raised their hands. They agreed that for all miscellaneous expenses that can be paid with a credit card, da Czar will pay; for all that require cash, Notes will pay. Those two will then seek reimbursement from the Misty Account after the trip.

The Trip ... No, the Other Trip

ListMan brought up the second trip we've been discussing, which is now scheduled for early 2027. We talked about the approximate amount of funds that will be available, possible time periods for the trip, places we could go, and various lodging options. The committee made up of ListMan, DUH PREZ, and Duh PREZ's wife will send something out to the rest of the group for discussion and feedback.

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I haven't been everywhere, but it's on my list.

- Susan Sontag

Matabanic

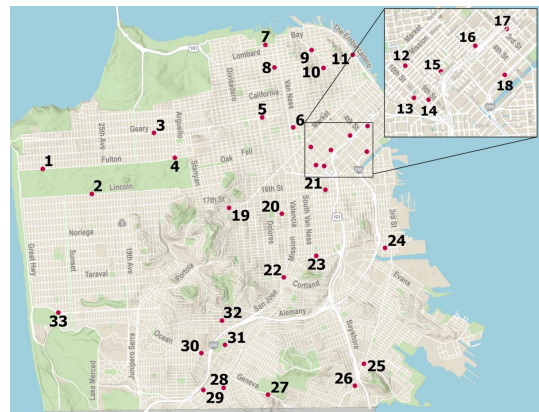
DUH PREZ extended an invitation to all DHSOS officers to join him and family members at the cabin in Matabanic this Fall. The dates are October 8-13.

Speeding in SF

The subject of San Francisco's speed camera program came up, and we were asked if we had been affected by it and if our driving habits have changed as a result. Notes and Da Czar have received warnings, and both reported they are driving slower as a result. Here's the poop from SFMTA:

The SFMTA Speed Safety Camera program launched on March 20, and all cameras were issuing warnings as of June 6, 2025. The program began issuing citations on August 5, 2025. Cameras enforce both directions of travel, unless noted otherwise.

Here's where the cameras are located.



How much will you be fined? (Per SFMTA)

- \$50 for driving 11-15 mph over the speed limit
- \$100 for driving 16-25 mph over the speed limit
- \$200 for driving 26+ mph over the speed limit
- \$500 for driving 100 mph or more over the speed limit

Housing

The topic of converting San Francisco office space to housing came up, because of a recent article in the *SF Chronicle* that compared conversions in San Francisco to Boston. Boston, the article reported, has generated more housing conversions.

One reason is that Boston's strong mayoral system allowed Mayor Michelle Wu to move fast to offer financial incentives for conversions, without passing local or state legislation.

Another reason: Boston has a senior-level manager who is in charge of personally ushering every project through every step from pre-application to construction permitting.

According to the article, while San Francisco is behind Boston, local SF developers and architects say it's not for lack of trying. The city has eliminated planning code requirements and streamlined permitting and approval processes. Former Mayor London Breed successfully passed Proposition C in 2024, which waived transfer tax fees for office-to-residential conversions once the building is converted to housing.

There are about 518 buildings within San Francisco's new financing district, about 50 of which the city has identified as being good candidates for conversion. If they were all to be converted to housing, it would produce about 4,400 units.

Will the Giants Improve?

The Giants finished last season 81-81, which was about as satisfying as watching paint dry. During the off-season they changed managers, paid a bunch of money to contract with infielders, outfielders, and starting pitchers, and now, they have a team that on the surface looks better offensively and defensively, but has a questionable pitching staff and a manager who's never spent a day in the major leagues. So, how will they do this season? This is the

DHSOS prediction of how the season will turn out:

DUH PREZ	86-76
Da Czar	83-79
ListMan	85-77
Notes	85-77

Note: Since the meeting, DUH PREZ asked that his prediction be changed to 84-78, thereby locking himself into a position of winning only if he is exactly right. His request was denied, and he is now hoping for a good Giants season.

Olympics



The Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics recently ended, and we discussed our favorite events and overall assessment of the games. We all watched some of it, and we all thought it provided a welcome break from news and regular TV programming. Figure skating, downhill racing, bobsled, and snowboarding were popular events, and while we all enjoyed metal ceremonies and "some" of the opening and closing ceremonies, most of us thought they were filled with fluff.

Next Meeting

Da Czar has scheduled the next gathering of the DHSOS for Thursday, May, 14. Notes will be the temporary PoV.

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He felt like somebody had taken the lid off life and let him look at the works.

– Dashiell Hammett, from *The Maltese Falcon*

Into the Night

We were at the end of our agenda and our food, wine, and coffee had been consumed, so it was time to make our way home. DUH PREZ collected money, counted it, handed it to our server, and we stood up to leave. The joint was shutting down, and we were the last to leave. On our way out we took a few minutes to admire the restaurant's collection of sports memorabilia accumulated over the years: Giants' pennants, bobbleheads, and autographed baseballs in a glass display; 49ers photos and gear in a private booth, and photos of notables on the walls make the place feel cozy and comfortable, like a well-worn shoe.

We stepped outside; restaurant employees were having a smoke on the sidewalk, and they expressed their gratitude for our business and shook our hands. It's possible they thought we were important people. It was a cool and windy evening in the north end of San Francisco, and the fog was swirling down Mason Street toward Telegraph Hill. We exchanged a hearty round of fist bumps and ListMan headed for his car while Da Czar loaded DUH PREZ and Notes in his vehicle. It had been another stellar evening together for the DHSOS.

That's it for now, man.

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