Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs
San Francisco International Headquarters

Officers

President	Bill Diefenbach
Communications Czar	Geoff Noakes
Procurer of Venues	Lee Tyree
AgendaMeister	Ken Monk
Archivist of Knowledge	Dale Fehringer

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Minutes of Meeting

Thursday, January 12, 2006

Whining and Dining at Izzy's

The January dinner and business meeting of the Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs was held on Thursday, January 12, at Izzy's Steak & Chop House in San Francisco's trendy and fashionable Marina District. All Studs were present for this evening of bountiful drinks, manly food, and stimulating conversation.

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Our Kind of Place

Izzy's wasn't around when Dashiell was alive, but we're pretty sure he would have gone there if it had been. It's a time-honored neighborhood steakhouse with wood floors, wide-screen TVs, and self-assured waiters; perfect for the DHSOS who, as Ken put it, "drink like fish and eat like lions."

Izzy's is known for its steaks, scalloped potatoes, and creamed spinach (a cardiac perfect storm) and along with your steak they present a gigantic knife that would impress Crocodile Dundee.

Our wives would never set foot in Izzy's. It isn't big on "atmosphere," the menu is straight-forward (none of this "served with a medley of organic Sonoma greens with champagne vinaigrette" crap), and they would probably be grossed out by the row of condiments that line the dining room walls.

Izzy's is in the Marina District, a happening part of town teeming with young, attractive women. There were enough at Izzys that night to provide all the atmosphere we needed.

President Diefenbach was the first to arrive and he wisely selected seats at the bar with a good view of the wide-screen TV. He also reserved space for the others, all of whom were late. Bartender John served up drinks and provided commentary on the Golden State Warriors, who were being embarrassed on TV. The conversation

turned to technology, and a discussion of how far behind the times Lee's house is and how much it would cost to bring it into the 21 century. Geoff reported that he had recently been in a large electronics store and was surprised by the number of "big-ass TVs" on display, including one that was at least 5' x 7'. Who buys those things, we wondered?

After a few rounds, we made our way to a nice round table (deftly secured by the Procurer of Venues) in the dining room. As we were settling in, a '67 Mustang thundered past. The stage was set.

Izzy Gomez was a legendary San Francisco saloon keeper, and his namesake eatery carries on the tradition. This old-fashioned, clamorous spot has terrific steaks -- especially dry-aged sirloins -- chops, and seafood, plus all the trimmings, from cheesy scalloped potatoes to creamed spinach.

-- Fodor's

The PREZ called the meeting to order at 6:41 PM. The AgendaMeister whipped out the official DHSOS agenda and we began.

As usual, this meeting ran like a well-oiled machine -- thanks to the first-rate efforts of the Communications Czar, AgendaMeister, Procurer of Venues, and Archivist of Knowledge. It's like USC's backfield – everyone working together in unison. *There is no I in TEAM.*

A Surprising Amount of Whining

Though the DHSOS is not a group known to complain, there was a good deal of whining at this meeting. Maybe it was the added stress of the holidays; or could it be that some members are getting a little crotchety?

The Procurer of Venue started it. His e-mail announcing the venue location said, "No one appreciates how hard I work at finding a venue that is appropriate for our esteemed organization," and went on for some time about how hard he works and how little feedback he receives for his efforts. At the meeting he started on us again about how hard he works to find and test these dining establishments. All right, Lee: "Thank you!"

Then, at the meeting the PREZ whined about how the officials "stole" the Alamo Bowl game from his poor, little Michigan Wolverines. Hell, they were beaten fair and square by a superior Nebraska team (so says the Archivist of Knowledge, who is a good ole Nebraska farm boy).

Since he is the PREZ, we tried to make him feel better by pointing out that last year Michigan lost to Texas by one point, while this year USC lost to Texas by three points -- which makes Michigan two points better than USC. The PREZ saw great logic in this observation.

Izzy's is a dump."

-- Herb Caen

A Great Football Game!

Everyone agreed this year's Rose Bowl game between Texas and USC was a great football game. This is the kind of topic the DHSOS can sink its teeth into, and we chewed it up as we waited for our meals. Texas narrowly defeated USC, thereby overtaking them as the #1 team in the nation and preventing a three-peat national championship.

The group agreed the game was a classic offensive battle, which in the end came down to whichever team had the ball last. There were expressions of admiration for Texas quarterback, Vince Young, who carried his team. But Lee doubts he will be successful in the NFL, referring to him as "another Kordell Stewart."

Lee made two long-term bets on this year's college players in the pros:

> *Bet #1:*
> *If Brad Smith plays quarterback in the CFL, he will be more productive than Vince Young is at quarterback in the NFL. (If Brad Smith winds up in the NFL as a wide receiver, then there is no comparison and the bet is off).*
>
> *Bet #2:*
> *Between 2006 and 2010, LenDale White will out gain Reggie Bush in total yards and touchdowns.*

There is some discrepancy about what was bet. Ken thinks it was drinks for the DHSOS; Lee remembers promising to buy creamed spinach.

Tech Talk: Amazon to iPods

Members of the DHSOS, who cling perilously to the cutting edge, held a discussion of technology, including iPods, downloading music, and Internet marketing.

The conversation started at the bar, with a discussion of Howard Stern's move to Sirius Satellite Radio. To hear his show you now need a Sirius-compatible radio and a $13 monthly subscription.

> Lee: "Why would anyone pay to hear Howard Stern?"
>
> Geoff: "If Rush Limbaugh went to satellite radio, would you pay to hear him?"
>
> Lee: "No way! There are plenty of other guys like him I could listen to for free."

Ken pointed out that all television reception is to be digital by law by 2007. He also brought up some interesting stats from the recent holiday shopping period:

- 32 million iPods were sold
- 25-30 percent of Amazon's holiday business was beyond what traditional brick-and-mortar bookstores can provide

He cited the success of Amazon.com's referral service ("Others who have bought … also bought …"), and pointed out the unfairness of illegally downloading music from the Internet. He also introduced the DHSOS to a new term – "Quasi Illegal" – to describe his method of getting music from the Internet.

A rousing discussion ensued on cable versus satellite television. A survey of Society members revealed that cable is preferred today, but the PREZ indicated that he is "ready to go satellite." He promised to give a progress report at the next DHSOS meeting.

Life is like a long road -- take it easy. When you come to a pool on that long road, don't muddy it; it may be you'll pass that way again and you'll be thirsty.

-- Izzy Gomez

Lee initiated a discussion of "rogue" e-mail attachments, admitting he had inadvertently sent one to a distribution list, thus unintentionally contributing to the sex education of a minor. Geoff provided an answer: Don't forward attachments. Instead, save them to your desktop, create a new message, and attach the file you just saved before sending them on to others.

Diversity is Good

A survey showed there continues to be diversity among DHSOS members:

Members who have ever had SFO parking privileges	Lee
Members who passed the Internet citizenship test	Ken
Members who got a flu shot this year	Dale
Members who checked e-mail during this meeting	Geoff
Members who rode MUNI home from their colonoscopy, LASIK, back surgery, and after a hard day at work	Bill

Giants Update

As is his custom, Lee issued a prophecy on the Giants chances this year: "The whole season hinges on Barry," he said. "If Barry gets hurt, the team will fail. If he stays healthy, they will go to the World Series." (Geoff thinks Lee is being a fool, again).

You read it here first, folks.

A Strange Tale of Medical Malfeasance

Lee recited a most unusual tale, which he shared with his father-in-law this past holiday season. It seems one of his golfing buddies told him about a 72-year-old man who had recently been circumcised to solve a urinary problem. Apparently something went drastically wrong during the surgery and the man lost his entire member.

After hearing this story and thinking about his own recent painful circumcision, Lee's father-in-law replied, "Is that supposed to make me feel better?"

That story prompted Ken to re-count a legendary tale of a "good old fashioned ball washing," which occurred when a golfer naively placed his testicle in a golf ball washer.

Bird Flu to Bathroom Habits

At this point, the conversation began to drift – from preparing for the bird flu, to who got a flu shot, to avoiding the flu by washing your hands, to how many people wash their hands after using the bathroom. Geoff washes his hands after riding MUNI. Ken washes after having dinner with the DHSOS.

Note: DHSOS members are to return all borrowed books at the next meeting!

-- By order of the PREZ

Clubhouse Report

The PREZ reported on the idea for a DHSOS clubhouse to be erected on the Fehringer estate. The group concluded the scheme has foresight and vision. All we lack is money. The group voted for Dale to fund the project since it would be for his long-term gain.

Shoelaces

Ever had your shoelaces loosen? It's no longer a problem for the DHSOS, thanks to "Grandma Diefenbach's Shoelace Tying Method." The PREZ demonstrated this failsafe technique, which involves wrapping the loop around twice, and he guaranteed it will keep shoelaces tight.

Fruitcake Feedback

Lee made fruitcake for his fellow DHSOS members this past Christmas, and he used this venue to seek feedback:

- ☺ Bill cherishes it.
- ☺ Ken likes it and puts it in the top 100 fruitcakes he has ever received.
- ☹ Geoff heaved it.
- 😐 Dale tasted it but hasn't been back for more.

Lee promised it will be better next year.

Christmas Card Survey

A survey of Christmas card habits indicated quite a variation among members:

Stud	Approx. # of Cards Sent/Rec'd	Christmas Letters Received
Bill	40	20
Dale	100	30-40
Geoff	A Few	30-40
Ken	A Few	2
Lee	150	60

Clearly, Ken needs to make more friends.

Announcements

- Dale reminded the group of the exhibit of earthquake photos at the Legion of Honor through June 4.
- Geoff reported on a recent private plane trip to Chicago with his CEO, to meet with counterparts at Motorola.
- Ken reported that Vicki had her colonoscopy, which leaves Misty as the only "untested" one among DHSOS members and spouses.
- Bill had dinner recently in Baltimore with Christina, and went by to see Camden Yards.
- Lee has reflected on his political affiliations after taking an Internet test and reading a book on the history and philosophy of the Libertarian Party. "I am a natural libertarian," he declared, "and I'm thinking about joining the Libertarian Party."

Flipping the Bird

Stewardship of the Maltese Falcon was passed from Dale to Geoff at the end of the meeting.

While the Bird was with Dale, it was proudly displayed on his fireplace mantle.

An early sighting in the Noakes house found it on a cake plate in the dining room.

Thinking ahead, Lee thinks he will probably put it on his mantle and assumes Misty will see its arrival as another "occasion" and decorate around it. Ken thinks it will go in his garage.

At this point, there seemed little left to say, nothing left to eat or drink, and little reason to carry on. The DHSOS adjourned at 9:30 PM and made their way home. It was another good evening with good friends.

The next meeting of the DHSOS will take place on Wednesday, March 22.

Each blames the other for shoving match at party

San Francisco Examiner
May 2, 1996

SAN FRANCISCO -- District Attorney Terence Hallinan and a prominent developer engaged in a public shoving match at a birthday party for political consultant Jack Davis that left both men pointing fingers at each other. The argument between Hallinan and Joe O'Donoghue, president of the Residential Builders Association, began as the birthday bash began to wind down late Wednesday at Izzy**'s** Steaks and Chops restaurant on Steiner Street, the two said.

Hallinan said O'Donoghue had picked the fight over the firing of a prosecutor friend of his in January, and that he had retaliated only after the developer pushed him while he was walking down a flight of stairs. Other party-goers broke up the scuffle. "I was just defending myself," Hallinan said, adding that he was not injured. "He had been drinking, and I couldn't believe the way he was acting." O'Donoghue said he didn't drink and hadn't pushed Hallinan down the stairs. "If I do something, I'll tell you I did it," O'Donoghue said. "I guess he had a bee in his bonnet that he was not able to constrain."

O'Donoghue said the district attorney was the one showing signs of drinking. "Terry probably was a bit loaded," O'Donoghue said. "He had obviously taken some wine." Hallinan denied he had been drinking. Asked whether Hallinan had punched him, O'Donoghue would neither confirm nor deny it. Both men are known to have strongly held opinions. Hallinan, a former amateur boxer, earned the nickname Kayo as a child as part of a family noted for settling many matters with fisticuffs. But he denied resorting to his childhood behavior at the birthday party, saying, "I did not hit him. He was trying to pick a fight with me, and I was trying to avoid it."