

**Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs  
San Francisco International Headquarters**

Officers

President (Duh PREZ)	Bill D_____
Communications Czar	Geoff Noakes
Procurer of Venues	Lee Tyree
AgendaMeister	Ken Monk
Archivist of Knowledge	Dale Fehringer

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Minutes of Meeting

Zare at Fly Trap Restaurant

Thursday January 29, 2009

**Assembling at the Bar**

A meeting of the Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs (DHSOS) was held at *Zare at Fly Trap* Restaurant on Thursday, January 29, 2009. All officers were present, as was Duh Burd\*.

As usual, the Studs met in the bar and greeted each other with firm handshakes and manly remarks. It had been awhile.

**Martinis by Alice**



Our cocktails were ably served by Alice, a lanky, well-dressed blond who looked like she wasn't used to taking a lot of backtalk from her customers. She makes a good martini and has a playful sense of humor, so she was popular with our group. We sipped our drinks and caught up with each other.

**History of the Fly Trap**

*(Provided by the Procurer of Venues)*

The Fly Trap restaurant has been in business at Folsom and 2<sup>nd</sup> since being

moved there after the 1906 earthquake. It was started in 1898 by an Italian gentleman named Louis and for a short time was called Louis' Restaurant. In those days many patrons arrived by horse drawn carriages. With the horses came flies which created a bother for the diners. So Louis put a small piece of fly paper on each table to trap the pests; a thoughtful if not appetizing gesture. Legend has it that one of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders dubbed the place a "fly trap". Totally pissed off by this moniker, Louis sold the restaurant and went back home to Italy.



Louis' cousin had a much better sense of humor however, and he bought the establishment. After the great earthquake and fire, he reopened the place as The Fly Trap. It has changed owners and menus several times over the last 100 years, but the name and the location have not changed. It has always been considered a fine restaurant and I am certain our idol, Dashiell Hammett, must have frequented the place for cocktails and dinner with one of his many lady friends.

**The "New" Fly Trap**

Actually, it is more appropriate to refer to it as the new-old Fly Trap. In August of last

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\* Duh Burd is an authentic replica of the Maltese Falcon, which was first seen in the movie with the same name. It is now attends our meetings as an honorary, non-voting member of the DHSOS.

year it officially became known as *Zaré at Fly Trap*.

Hoss Zaré is the chef owner; he has been around San Francisco for a long time; starting at Ernie's, migrating through several other well established places, and eventually moving to Napa Valley to open his own restaurant. He returned to San Francisco last year and bought the Fly Trap.

### The Chef



(From Hoss's website: Born in Tabriz, Persia (Iran), Hoss Zaré immigrated to the United States in 1986 and landed in San Francisco to join his older brother who had moved to the city a decade earlier. Almost immediately, Zaré began cooking to pay the bills while working his way through pre-medical coursework at University of California at Davis.

By 1989, Zaré was faced with the reality that work in the kitchen had become an essential creative outlet. He decided to continue cooking at The Fly Trap in San Francisco, where he met Craig Thomas, former Executive Chef of *Ernie's* on Jackson Square. As Thomas' sous chef, Zaré was encouraged to add his own perspective to the art of fine dining. After about a year, he was primed to take over the helm and ran the kitchen at *The Fly Trap* to rave reviews until 1992.

As a self-trained chef with a solid grasp of traditional French and American cuisine, Zaré decided to expand his culinary knowledge at South Park's Ristorante Ecco. He found the restaurant's Italian style of

cuisine to align with his own background and perspective. Within a year, he took over the stove at Ecco, where again he garnered rave reviews.

Next up for Zaré was Aromi, a popular Italian spot on Polk St. Zaré took over the restaurant, infused it with his style and began to gain the recognition necessary to go out on his own. In 1996, Zaré did just that on Sacramento St. with his first restaurant, Zaré.

Thanks to his over-the-top sense of hospitality and unique style of Mediterranean cuisine, Zaré built a devoutly loyal following at his Pacific Heights location. Things were going so well that, in 1999, he reclaimed Aromi, a space that was very close to his heart, and reincarnated the restaurant as Bistro Zaré. The new Bistro became an overnight success story.

After years building a name for himself in San Francisco, Zaré's passion for wine and the Slow Food movement lured him to relocate to Napa. In 2005, he launched Zaré Napa featuring a Mediterranean-inspired wine country menu focused on community-provided produce.

Zaré spent two beautiful years cooking from his restaurant's private garden and building a great appreciation for the abundance of wine country. Yet as time went on, he began to crave the energy of the city and his "family" in San Francisco. He set his sights on returning to the place that so warmly embraced him when he first arrived in the U.S.

In 2008, Zaré returned to reopen The Fly Trap in SoMa. He is delighted to call San Francisco home again. At Zaré at Fly Trap, Zaré entertains diners all week long with food and beverage programs created by the best Bay Area talents in an extraordinary space that pays tribute to the history of San Francisco.



## The Neighborhood



SoMa (South of Market) is a coming-back San Francisco neighborhood whose borders are Market Street to the north-northwest, the San Francisco Bay to the east, Townsend Street to the south-southeast, and U.S. Route 101 (Central Freeway) to the west-southwest.

SoMa is the part of the City where the street grid runs parallel and perpendicular to Market Street. The eastern edge along the Embarcadero and southeastern corner of this area is known as South Beach, and the border below Townsend Street begins Mission Bay.



The SoMa District of San Francisco

### Katie the “Coon Ass” Waitress

Our orders were taken and meals served by a delightful young lady named Katie, who had a great nature and a wonderful smile.

Katie is from Louisiana, and when Lee found that out he was all over it like a cheap suit. He told us that people from her part of Louisiana are called “Coon-ass,” which he tried to explain to us. We were having trouble with the concept, so he asked Katie for her understanding of the term. She thought for a minute and then said she thought it meant something like “poor white trash.” Then she flashed us a smile and headed off for the kitchen.



## The Food

The food was excellent, and dangerously close to being good enough for our wives. Everything was well-prepared and well-presented. Lee especially enjoyed his Lamburger.

Zare came around a couple of times to make sure we were enjoying the evening. We were.

Nancy L from Oakland wrote this on Yelp about the food at Fly Trap:

*My dog loved my left over rib bone!!! and I forgot about anything else I ate there but I recall it was um good, I think.*

Nancy rated it four stars out of five.

## Call to Order

Duh PREZ called us to order at 6:51PM. His decisiveness was somewhat startling.

## Officer Titles

A short discussion was held regarding titles for DHSOS officers; primary was the title of the president. Our leader proposed changing his title from The PREZ to Mr. President. After a brief discussion we settled on “Duh PREZ.”

## Inauguration Survey

The Procurer of Venues conducted a survey to determine where DHSOS Officers were during President Obama's inauguration speech.

Lee was at Yerba Buena park in San Francisco, where (despite the wishes of those around him) he stood while watching the speech on a big TV screen. Next to him were a bald-headed man from India and a large African-American guy. In the crowd he heard a lot of cheering and a few spiteful comments about the departing president, of which Lee and his companions disapproved.

Bill was at work. His company hosted an employee gathering in conference rooms

to watch the speech, broadcast over the Internet. They wound up watching the video that way, but the audio feed gave out and they listened to it on a portable radio.

Ken was in Omaha with Vicki's family. He read about the speech and is optimistic about the change in administrations.

Geoff was in Redmond, Washington for meetings with Microsoft. He attended a breakfast meeting and listened to the speech on the radio in his car on his way to another meeting.

Dale watched the speech at home with his bride. He expressed his hope that the new guys will be able to get us out of the mess we're in.

### Miss K's Inauguration Experience

Miss Katharine, a favorite daughter of the DHSOS, was at the inauguration. She flew to D.C. with classmates, toured D.C., did a little shopping, and attended the inauguration speech and a ball. For her, it was an amazing experience she will never forget. As she told her father, "I've never been so cold in my life!"

### Lee's presidential picks



Bobby Jindall,  
Lee's pick for  
next president.

Lee predicted the U.S. presidential elections for the next quarter-century.

He believes Obama will be a two-term president, followed by Bobby Jindall (currently Louisiana's governor), and then a gay man.

After that, Lee envisions Texas seceding from the union and electing George Bush as its first president.

☼ ☼ ☼

I deserve all the love you can spare me. And I want a lot more than I deserve.  
- Dashiell Hammett

### Ashes to Ashes

For some reason we started talking about where we want our ashes scattered; we decided a portion should go to our favorite spots at Drakesbad Guest Ranch.

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Match the DHSOS Officer with his preferred final resting spot at Drakesbad:

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1 Duh PREZ                | a. Willow Lake   |
| 2. Procurer of Venues     | b. Warm Springs Creek                                  |
| 3. Archivist of Knowledge | c. 50% near Sifford Lake, 50% in Matabanic             |
| 4. AgendaMeister          | d. Bridge at Warm Springs Creek                        |
| 5. Communication Czar     | e. 50% in the creek near the waterwheels, 50% Missouri |

(answer key: 1. c.; 2. e.; 3. a.; 4. b; 5. d.)

### What to Do With the "Man Purse?"

Geoff brought his "Man Purse," an over-the-shoulder bag that all DHSOS officers received from Duh PREZ for Christmas. Few of us have figured out what to do with them, despite numerous explanations from Duh PREZ.

Geoff had his filled with all the essentials: a memo pad, pen, a pack of Trojans, olives for martinis, a girly magazine, and band-aids.

### John's Grill: 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The Communication Czar represented the DHSOS at John's Grill (the original home of the Maltese Falcon) for the restaurant's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, on November 14. There was a band outside and a huge line waiting



to get in, so Geoff maneuvered around the line, flashed his DHSOS business card to the guard at the front door, and was immediately welcomed inside.

Chairs and tables had been removed on all levels at John's Grill to accommodate the crowd, and there were men in raincoats and dress hats and women in period dresses with gloves, and everyone was enjoying themselves.



John's had intended to charge 5 cents for a martini (the price a century ago) but soon realized it was easier to give them away.

Geoff noticed three plaques hung upstairs which refer to previous Dashiell Hammett groups, including one for the *Dashiell Hammett Society of SF*, dated October 21, 1977. It had this inscription:

*"This society will carry on in the finest tradition, as long as we can sense that Dash is still staking the streets and alleys of San Francisco."*

Geoff reported that John's Grill is selling Maltese falcon replicas for \$100, with the following advertisement:

#### ***A Maltese falcon for your mantle?***

*A certain fierce-eyed figurine played a starring role in the 1941 movie The Maltese Falcon. In the Dashiell Hammett novel of the same name, San Francisco private eye Sam Spade dines at John's Grill – the Ellis Street eatery that's home to a bronze version of the legendary "dingus." To honor the restaurant's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, John's is offering 12-inch replicas for \$100.*

## **Solar Power**

The DHSOS supports green initiatives, and we have previously discussed the possibility of adding solar panels to our homes. To date, the installation cost and payback

period have been prohibitive, but the Communications Czar reported a possible solution.

SolarCity (<http://www.solarcity.com>) basically leases your roof and installs solar panels on it. They pay lease payments to the homeowner and apply energy from the panels toward the homeowner's electric bill. Their literature says, "With SolarLease, you can install solar without the high upfront cost. Your lease payment plus your lower electric bill is typically less than your current electric bill."

San Francisco has developed a website ([sf.solarmap.org](http://sf.solarmap.org)) that tracks recent solar installations and viability for San Francisco residences.

## **Armory tour**

Lee is arranging a tour of the San Francisco National Guard Armory for DHSOS officers.

Armory Studios, a producer of adult movies, acquired the National Guard Armory, located at 14<sup>th</sup> and Mission Street, in January, 2007.

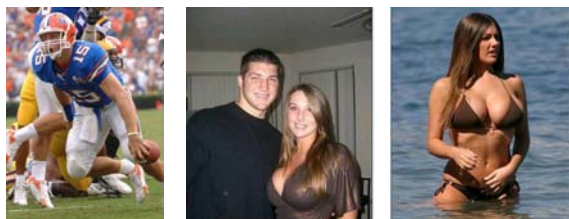


The 200,000 square foot reproduction Moorish Castle was completed in 1914 and used as a National Guard facility until 1976. It retains original period details including wainscoting, stone staircases, sweeping corridors, cavernous access to Mission Creek, and a gigantic drill court spanning almost an acre. It served as both a barricade and safety point for officers during rioting in San Francisco in 1934, and was later used by George Lucas to film the first Star Wars movie.

The Armory was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 and has been out of official use since that time. Previous conversion plans met with community resistance for various reasons including gentrification and broader concerns relating to social and environmental impact. Armory Studios,

remaining mindful of these concerns, plans to restore and renovate the Armory to its original splendor, style and beauty.

### Tebow's No-Fumble Secret



All-American Tim Tebow and his girlfriend.

Florida's Heisman trophy winning quarterback, Tim Tebow, hasn't fumbled the football – ever. Word has it the reason is he practices with various handholds, to get just the right one. We wondered what he is practicing on.

### Lee's Letter to the Editor

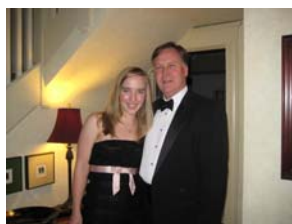
Lee wrote a letter to the editor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, which was published on December 6. Lee's letter read:

#### Media bias

*Editor – The article by Debra J. Saunders, "Warming science and science fiction": (Nov. 30), was indeed refreshing. She should be commended for reporting that the media is biased on the subject of global warming. Those who have studied the warming phenomenon have recognized this for many years. The science that supports the common orthodoxy is weak and unconvincing, but no one challenges it. And everyone drinks the Kool-Aid.*

Lee Tyree  
San Francisco

### Father/Daughter Dance



Geoff and Katharine were gearing up for the father/daughter dance the next weekend. Geoff looks forward to these and said he hates the fact that he only has one more, and then Miss K will be off to college.

### Drakesbad Reservations

The new computerized reservation system for Drakesbad was implemented without any major hitches, and all DHSOS officers were able to secure reservations for 2010 (Lee's influence with the National Park secured our reservations for 2009).

The AgendaMeister was a little perturbed that he didn't get the cabin he wanted for 2010 because someone else in the group reserved it first. He received little sympathy from the DHSOS, and that dwindled even more after we discovered that Christina, the perfect daughter of the PREZ (and a unanimous DHSOS favorite), beat Ken to the punch. The message from the Studs was "tough noogies, Ken; better luck next time."

### Becker's Blog



Duh PREZ reported that Beck, the brilliant son of the DHSOS, is doing well in DeKalb, Illinois. This young photojournalist (and potential future DHSOS member) is climbing the career ladder and along the way building an impressive portfolio of photographic work.

Beck has posted a report on his trip to Europe at: <http://beckdiefenbach.com/blog/>

### Duh Burd Takes a Detour

Duh Prez asked whether anyone else wanted to roost Duh Burd. The Procurer of Venues, who has long asked to host it (he says Misty likes having it in their house), spoke up and took possession. He wrapped it up and took it home, and now reports it is proudly displayed in a prominent place in his home -- in the living room with Misty's crystal.

**Samuel Dashiell Hammett** (May 27, 1894—January 10, 1961) was an American author of hardboiled detective novels and short stories.

- Wikipedia

## Tour of the Mission District and Noe Valley



The DHSOS took a walking tour of the Mission District and Noe Valley on Saturday, January 31 that included some of the oldest parts of San Francisco. We hoofed it through Mission Dolores; past Mission High and the gold-painted fire hydrant; hiked the Liberty Hill Historic District and took in “Sunny Jim” Rolph’s house in Noe Valley (which he allegedly had built for his mistress). We had lunch at Bistro Le Zinc, and then journeyed home; it was another good outing for the DHSOS.

## Next Meeting

The next meeting of the DHSOS will take place Thursday, March 26, 2009.

## Adjournment

It had been a stellar evening filled with good food, strong drink, and noble friends. We paid the check, issued hearty handshakes, and walked out into the clear night air.

That’s it for now, Man.

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