

**Dashiell Hammett Society of Studs (DHSOS)
San Francisco International Headquarters**

Officers

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

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Minutes of Meeting

Spec's and Park Tavern

Thursday, October 27, 2011

New Favorite Haunts

Each member of the DHSOS has a specialty – a skill that he performs better than anyone else – and by collectively performing those skills, the society clicks like a well-oiled machine.

A case in point: the PoV spent weeks searching the City by the Bay to find perfect locations for DHSOS libations and victuals. He logged countless hours evaluating the quality and value of martinis and sampling the menus of eateries to locate the perfect establishments for our meeting. He found them. The venues for this meeting were among the best we've had (and we've had some good ones). Interesting, appropriate, worthy – those were some of the accolades thrown the PoV's way.

It should be noted that Da Burd joined us for the evening's festivities. As our loyal readers know, Da Burd is the original replica of the Maltese Falcon, which was first made famous in the movie with the same name. It is now the mascot of the DHSOS.

In 1539 the Knight Templars of Malta paid tribute to Charles V of Spain by sending him a Golden Falcon encrusted from beak to claw with rarest jewels. But pirates seized the galley carrying this priceless token and the fate of the Maltese Falcon remains a mystery to this day.

-- The Maltese Falcon

Spec's



Our PoV found an unusual saloon for our libations called Spec's. It's a tiny old-fashioned dive bar on the east side of Columbus

Avenue just south of Broadway, surrounded by topless joints, cheap restaurants, and massage parlors. Spec's is like the DHSOS – rough around the edges, but intriguing inside.

At Spec's the drinks started off cheap (\$6 per martini) and then got free, when the bartender plied us with cost-free refills. He may have been trying to bribe us (see below).

Specs' eclectic décor consists of historic photos and memorabilia, including maritime flags hanging from the ceiling, dusty posters, and oddities like dried whale penises that line the walls. There is also an assortment of strange items brought back by seamen who drank here between voyages.

It was a sad day in Specs' history when the door connecting the bar to the upstairs strip club was closed off, corking the stream of scantily clad women who ventured down. The bartender, patrons,

and owner of the North Beach saloon dealt with the convulsive change in a traditional way: They had a drink.

The bar, which is formally called Specs Twelve Adler Museum Café, was opened in 1968. Over the years it has been home to a variety of misfits, from strippers and poets to longshoremen and merchant marines.

The Spec's bartender liked us, or more accurately, was suspicious of us. He approached our table twice: once to tell us he thought we were the most trouble in the bar, and a second time to tell us we looked suspicious, because we were the only ones in the bar with shirts that had collars. (Note: we think the bartender thought we were with the FBI, and the box Da Burd travels in contained a bomb or recording device).

A rather eclectic group of patrons joined us at Specs, including a customer at the table next to us with long hair and beard that would make ZZ Top jealous, a cane, an artificial voice box, and wearing knee-high black boots, a braided coat with tails, black dress gloves, and a top hat. Another bearded gent passed our table on the way to the restroom and mumbled something about a game of checkers, repeating the same unintelligible muttering on the way out of the restroom.

Call to Order

DUH PREZ called the meeting to order at 6:18 PM by banging a pencil on an empty martini glass. All officers were present and some were paying attention.

Drakesbad Reservations

It was nearly time for the DHSOS to make room reservations for Drakesbad in 2013, and a lengthy (and sometimes confusing) conversation ensued about the timing. When told we were to make our reservations at midnight on Monday, October 31, two factions developed: one who believed that meant at 12:01 AM on Monday; another held it to mean 12:01

Tuesday. A bet was made, money was exchanged, and the Communication Czar was assigned to contact Billie at Drakesbad for the correct answer.

Note: It turned out that the correct answer was 12:01 AM on Monday, DUH PREZ won the bet, and the PoV and AgendaMeister are poorer as a result. This is a new first for DUH PREZ.

Travels

The DHSOS reviewed recent travels by its members and spouses, including trips to Turkey, Quebec, Washington D.C. and Minneapolis, and Santa Fe and we discussed where we would like to go next.

Try to match DHSOS officers with the following bucket list travel destinations:

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|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Communications Czar | A. Africa |
| 2. Procurer of Venues | B. Antarctica |
| 3. AgendaMeister | C. Argentina |
| 4. Archivist of Knowledge | D. Spain |
| 5. DUH PREZ | E. Spain/France |

Sanction for DUH PREZ

As a society with high standards of morality and behavior, we rarely find it necessary to publically address issues that surround our behavior.

In this case, however, the AgendaMeister felt there was no option but to request a sanction for one of our members.

A complaint was made against an unnamed member (DUH PREZ) who was caught at Drakesbad laying down a bunt in a feeble attempt to get on base playing wiffleball against a group of children. It should be noted that DUH PREZ claims

the bunt turned out to be an inside the park home run.

ListMan concluded that this cowardly behavior is in opposition to the moral and manly codes the DHSOS stands for, and Notes called the behavior “weazely.”

After a strawpoll vote, it was decided that a verbal sanction was merited in this case against the aforementioned unnamed DHSOS officer (DUH PREZ), who was reprimanded and rebuked. He responded by ordering another free martini.

World Series

The DHSOS meeting coincided with game 6 of the baseball World Series between the St. Louis Cardinals and the Texas Rangers. Specs does not have a TV, so the DHSOS followed the progress of one of the most entertaining World Series games of all times on our smart phones and by stopping at bars on our way from Specs to Park Tavern to Caffe Trieste.

Park Tavern

The Park Tavern was a risky choice of venues:



it's trendy, upscale, and our wives would probably dine there. But, it worked! It's a cool restaurant with excellent food in an historic and

coveted location. And Dashiell Hammett more than likely would have dined there if it had been open in his day.

We were welcomed, seated at a round table in a prominent position, and well-treated by a server who knew her stuff. She made an appropriate number of favorable comments about Da Burd, our society, and our looks, and then took our orders and left us alone.

It was crowded and a little noisy, but the scenery was good (lots of hard-bodied 20-somethings), and the food was excellent and reasonably-priced.

A couple of days after we were there, Park Tavern was reviewed by the *San Francisco Chronicle*, a coincidence that ListMan called “unprecedented.” Here's a little of what the reviewer had to say:

Taking over the space of a famous restaurant like Moose's is a gamble. The previous tenant, Joey and Eddie's, made a valiant effort but never built much traction. Instead, it's taken a New Zealander to restore the prominent North Beach location to landmark status.

With Park Tavern, owner Anna Weinberg and chef Jennifer Puccio, who came together at Marlowe, have created a restaurant that feels like what New York's Balthazar might be if it were transported to San Francisco. The restaurant is still in its honeymoon period, but the place could end up being the Stars of the 21st century.

The menu is innovative but approachable, and the happening vibe attracts a wide range of patrons - young, old, artistic and business-minded. It's becoming a salon where everyone can enjoy themselves and hobnob with other types of people.



The beloved, late Ed Moose

Silky Smooth Skin



Notice the silky smooth skin on the Communications Czar? It's long been a mystery why someone who out of necessity has pretty thick skin could have it so smooth. Well, now the secret is out -- he has it done professionally.

In a weak moment, the Czar admitted to participating with his girls at the Sonoma Mission Inn for a spa weekend, including a day-long spa pass in the co-ed hydrotherapy baths, an exfoliating shower, two mineral water soaking pools, herbal steam bath, dry sauna, cool-down showers, outdoor spa loggia, whirlpool and bathhouse lounge.

We agreed that it left him looking fresh-faced, glowing, and relaxed. DUH PREZ intends to call for a vote of sanctions at our next meeting against the Czar for these unmanly activities.

Halloween

Preparations were being made for the annual Halloween bash at DUH PREZ's house, complete with scary decorations, coffin, chili dinner, and 600 pieces of candy. This year a special treat awaited the trick-or-treaters because the PoV was replaced by a new coffin dweller, Scary Sarie. It was an interesting evening.



Renesport 4



DUH PREZ and his favorite son recently attended the Renesport 4, a Porsche festival at Laguna Seca, near Monterrey, California.

This rally, which is held every three years, was a birthday gift to DUH PREZ, and he spent it with 35,000 fellow Porsche lovers, more than 50 legendary Porsche drivers, German music and food, museum quality display cars, walking the race track, and watching the on-track Porsche action.

Back to College at 62

DUH PREZ went back to college at age 62 to take an arctic engineering course to acquire his Architectural registration in Alaska. To earn his license, he had to register at the University of Alaska, take an online college-level course for five hours a day Monday – Friday for two weeks, and pass a five-hour on-line test.

He completed the course, passed the test (with a final score of 94), and is now doing architectural stuff legally in Alaska. We nearly wept with pride.

The Lost Art of Hitchhiking



ListMan posed a couple of hitching-related questions to us: (1) did you ever hitchhike?, and (2) what happened to the lost art of hitchhiking?

It turns out that most of the DSOS did hitchhike – some in Europe, others in college, and another in the Navy. It was a cheap way to get from one place to

another, and at the time it seemed relatively safe (although there were a couple of stories about sexual harassment during hitchhiking episodes),

So, what has happened to hitchhiking?

There are a lot of theories, and they generally revolve around three inter-related subjects: (1) development of the interstate highway system (with hitchhiking outlawed), (2) law enforcement taking a more stringent approach to hitchhikers, and (3) a generation that grew up hearing horror stories of what can happen if you hitchhike.

Phil Reed, automotive expert and Consumer Advice Editor for Edmunds.com, has this theory.

“It was the demise of the ‘60s mentality of love and trust and the belief in community,” Reed said. “Hitchhiking hippies were replaced by hitchhiking ex-cons. Even I wouldn’t pick up a hitchhiker today.”

So is hitchhiking still popular anywhere?

“There is no ‘safe’ place to hitchhike anywhere in the world,” said Tom Mercer of Let’s Go Publications, “but travelers still find success hitching their way from town to town in certain countries and regions of the globe.” In Europe, it’s still easy to catch rides in Britain, Ireland and Scandinavia, and hitching remains common in New Zealand, Chile, Argentina, and rural areas of Central America and China.

Baseball Weekend

The DHSOS are considering a baseball weekend away (BWA) during the 2012 major league season, and ListMan and Notes were assigned to explore possible weekends, cities, and opposing teams as suitable for the DHSOS.

Possibilities being explored include:

1. March 23-25 or March 30-April 1 for Spring Training in Scottsdale
2. April 6-8 in Phoenix
3. May 11-13 in Phoenix
4. August 31-Sept 2 in Chicago
5. September 14-16 in Phoenix
6. September 28-30 in San Diego

Ranked Choice Voting

The mayor of Oakland did not receive the most first-place votes. Could a similar thing happen in the upcoming mayoral election in San Francisco? We think so, because there are so many candidates and the City is using ranked choice voting.

Ranked choice voting, also called instant-runoff voting, preferential voting, and the alternative vote is a voting system used to elect a winner during a single election. Voters rank candidates in order of preference, and (in San Francisco) can include up to three choices, ranked first choice, second choice, and third choice.

First place votes are counted for each candidate, and if a candidate secures a majority of votes cast, that candidate wins.

If no candidate receives more than 50% of the first-choice votes, a process of eliminating candidates and transferring votes begins.

First, the candidate who received the fewest number of first-choice votes is eliminated from the race.

Second, voters who selected the eliminated candidate as their first choice will have their vote transferred to their second choice.

Third, all the votes are recounted.

Once the votes are recounted, if any candidate has received more than 50% of the votes, he or she is declared the winner.

If no candidate receives more than 50% of the votes, the process of eliminating candidates and transferring votes is repeated until one candidate has a winning majority.

The idea behind ranked choice voting is to save San Francisco taxpayers millions of dollars by avoiding a low turnout, December runoff election.

Instant runoff voting is used to elect members of the Australian House of Representatives, the President of India, the President of Ireland, the national parliament of Papua New Guinea, and the House of Representatives of Fiji.

It is also employed by several cities in the United States; including Portland, Maine; San Francisco, California; Oakland, California; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Saint Paul, Minnesota.

So the DHSOS is curious to see if the method of election that produces the President of India and the House of Representatives of Fiji can produce a San Francisco mayor who can represent the people and get things done.

The Czar is completely dead-set against this idea, but nobody cares what he thinks.

Caffe Trieste



After dinner, the DHSOS wandered through North Beach, stopping at several bars to follow the progress of the World Series game, on our way to Caffe Trieste for coffee and dessert. At Caffe Trieste, the first Espresso coffee house on the West Coast, we ordered manly coffees and cheesecake, watched the St. Louis Cardinals rally from two runs down in both the bottom of the ninth and bottom of the 10th, and then win the game in the 11th on David Freese's walk-off home run. With the victory, the Cardinals forced a winner-take-all Game 7. It also forced the DHSOS to think about heading for home.

Adjournment

It had been an enjoyable evening with an appropriate mix of fine food, good drink, and noble friends.

So we paid the check, issued hearty handshakes all around, and walked out into the balmy fall night air.

That's it for now, man.

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