



Voiture Nationale 40&8



VOYAGEUR BRIEFS

Send your Articles and photos with descriptions to VoyageurBriefs@gmail.com

Jim Vissers – Chef de Chemin de Fer



Greetings from the not-yet “Frozen Tundra”! The holiday season is upon us, a time to gather with family and friends as we give thanks for our many blessings and remember the “reason for the season.” In Wisconsin, colder weather means there’s always the likelihood that snow will arrive to the pleasure of some and displeasure to others. By the time this is published, the nine day gun deer hunting season, which I look forward to every year, will have come to an end. It doesn’t matter if the hunt has been successful or not, it is nice to sit in the woods, enjoying what nature has to offer. Weather permitting, I hope to get a few projects done at home before my travels accelerate in the new year.

I would like to congratulate Chef Paul on his year as Chef de Chemin de Fer, knowing he spent a lot of time traveling. While he was in Wisconsin, I had the chance to take he and Christine to Camp American Legion in the northern part of the state. Camp American Legion is a rehabilitation camp for all Wisconsin veterans. Grand de Wisconsin supports this camp with yearly donations and some of our veterans do-

nate their time at camp. We have also helped with some major projects there. Two of the old cabins will be demolished this fall and rebuilt next year. Many have already been rebuilt.

Many thanks go out to Grand du Pennsylvania for hosting the 106th Promenade Nationale and the venue chosen for this event. Cher and I were impressed with the area and she enjoyed the bus tour of the Gettysburg Battlefield. We look forward to next year’s gathering.

Since Promenade Nationale, things have been pretty routine. I did make a few Locale and Grand events. A Wreck took place at Tomah, Wi. in early October, when four PGs were wrecked into La Societe. Mid-month was the Grand Cheminot, also in Tomah, where the committee meeting information from Nationale was shared. That evening, the banquet was held for our incoming Grand Chef de Gare, Melissa Guthmiller, Wisconsin’s first female Chef. Later in the month, I visited one of the Locales in my district, and my own Locale.



Words of Chef Jim (Cont'd)

On November 10th, I had the honor of being on the semi-frozen tundra at Lambeau Field for the Monday night Green Bay Packers/Philadelphia Eagles game as part of the Color Guard. I was invited by members of Brown/Kewanee Voiture 774. Many of their members belong to American Legion Post 11 who present the colors at the Packers Games during the National Anthem. This was televised on National TV. The following day, I received many photos and phone calls from the event.



I've been reading the correspondence from the membership team. They've sent out a lot of useful information so far this year, some of which are good recruiting methods. I hope everyone is reading it. They have also encouraged the PAID UP FOR LIFE membership for current members, which is a good way to take care of your dues to avoid correspondent reminders every year. Cards will be sent out in May or June to each life member for the new membership year.

At this time, I'd like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy Healthy New Year, making the most of it with family and friends. Hope to see many of you as I travel in 2026, looking forward to meeting new friends and getting together with long-time ones.

God bless all of you, God bless our troops, and God bless America.

Emblem Sales

It's that time again to consider gifts for your families, friends, fellow Voyageurs, and those people that you truly love. What could be better for the winter than a golf hat to keep the top of the dome warm? More golf hats to have all your friends match your gorgeous vibe!

They come in Royal Blue, White, Red, Light Blue, Athletic Gold, and my friend Bill's favorite color - Hunter Green.

**ONLY
\$20 + shipping**

Remember to include those three numbers on the back of your credit card (CCV) next to your name if you intend to pay with card. There is now a service charge of \$3.00 on every credit card transaction. No fees on checks.



Correspondent National

Ron Rolfes



Greetings Voyageurs!

From some of the largest crowds we have seen in many years to ghostly encounters, the 106th Promenade Nationale in Historic Gettysburg, PA. had something for everyone. That's right, Voyageurs and Dames if you missed this one you missed a good one! There was plenty to see and do and even the weather cooperated at the beginning of the week. Many have already started making plans for next year, in fact quite a few room reservations have already been made. I highly suggest contacting the hotel early to make your reservations. The hotel and registration information is located on the website at www.fortyandeight.org/promenade-nationale. As I have stated in a previous article, the hotels (Eisenhower and Aspire) themselves are nice. The Eisenhower is the older of the two, built in 1954 and still holds some of that eclectic charm. The Aspire is the newer of the two and a bit more modern. The pool, bar / restaurant, gift shop / deli is

located in the Eisenhower and the fitness room in the Aspire.

The town of Gettysburg is nearby (just a few miles) and there is a bus that runs on the hour from the hotel into town (\$1.25). There are plenty of restaurants, shops, and other things to see as well as the battlefields. If the 106th was any indication the 107th is going to be Great!!

We are entering a new membership year with a few new faces on the Membership Team. I am hopeful that they will bring fresh ideas to the table, turning the downward trend around giving us our first 100%+ year in many years. Time and the support of each and every member will determine their fate. Let us all get on board, stand behind our Team, and ride the rails into a sold-out station.

Lastly, anyone thinking of running for an elected National position for the 2027 membership year, now would be a good time to get your "Letter of Intent" to me.

Voyageur Briefs Concepts

Would you like some more publicity for your Locale, Grande, or Community? Submit an article in Microsoft Word with some clear photographs for inclusion into the Voyageur Briefs. You may email clear photos with a description of each photo including date, names of people, and location to voyageurbriefs@gmail.com.

Some quick guidelines....

First: Let's keep the Voyageur Briefs just that.... brief. Submit your short articles and photos (with names, dates, descriptions, and locations) and I'll get the quality photos into this format to enhance the effectivity of your harassment. Note: The photos cannot be blurry, must have appropriate zoom, and be of high enough resolution for print. I can help wordsmith some things for you if writing is not your strength.

Second: The Voyageur Briefs are published quarterly. This means articles for specific holidays may be best described for the next quarter. The next Voyageur Briefs will be published in April so articles for holidays in May through July would be most effective.

Third: Keep it fun! There is no formal requirement for photo or story submission but keep it brief. Chapeau's aren't required and reasonably PC photos will be published!

Lastly: Laugh a little. We are the "fun loving" veterans organization!

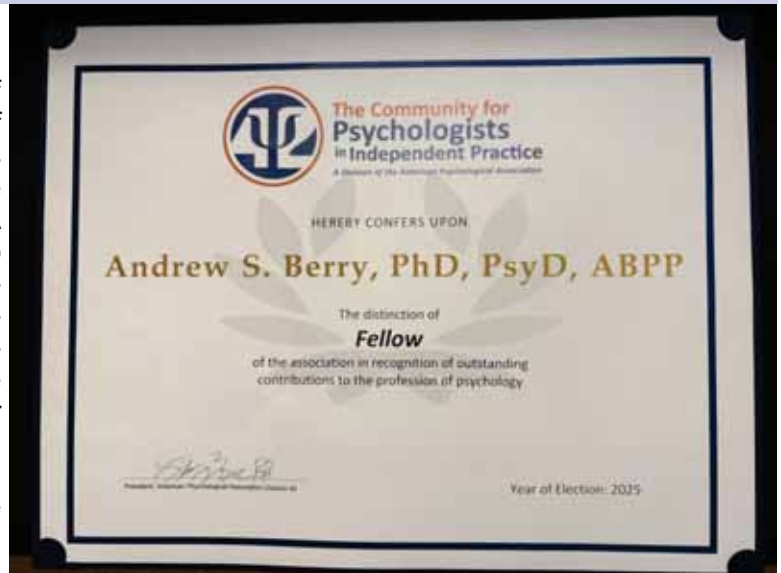
Please submit articles and photos to voyageurbriefs@gmail.com no later than **March 15th** for inclusion into the next Voyageur Briefs. **Spoiler alert!** This email address will remain the Briefs contact means after this edition. (See next page)



SAY HELLO TO OUR NEW FELLOW!

Wayne Sorrentino

Voyageur Andrew "Doc" Berry has been elected Fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA). He received this honor as recognition of his national and international impact on the field of psychology because of his advocacy for veterans and first responders. Fewer than 5% of the entire membership of APA go on to become full APA Fellows and what this will allow Doc to do is to advocate on higher levels as a subject matter expert for mainstream media contacts and interviews. He will be able to collaborate with his colleagues from around the country. Doc would like to express profound gratitude toward The 40&8 for allowing him to present on PTSD at the national promenades, and he presented another talk in Gettysburg at Promenade Nationale and we hope he will continue this great outreach!



As Doc would say: My "TALKS" are different every time. I can pretty much hold the audience's attention for an hour and make it thought-provoking. The subject matter will always be the same, posttraumatic stress disorder. As I often say, I'm the PTSD guy. Now, that being said, I never do it exactly the same way twice. I never tell the same stories, it's rearranged. Metaphorically speaking, the beef remains the same, but the sauce changes every time.

Congrats to Doc on this very special honor. WELL DONE! BZ!!

Time for New Life! Voyageur Briefs Welcomes New L'Editeur!

Nick Weyers



I have truly enjoyed serving as L'Editeur of the Voyageur Briefs since 2023, and it has been an honor to help shape a publication that reflects the spirit, pride, and dedication of our organization. Over these past years, I've learned just how strong our membership is when we come together creatively, and it has been a privilege to watch your stories and contributions bring the Briefs to life. **As we look to**

the future, I believe in bringing new lifeblood into the publication, which is why I am proud to hand the torch to Rich Adams of Michigan.

Rich brings many years of experience editing publications and will undoubtedly outshine my efforts; his enthusiasm and professionalism will carry the Briefs to new heights, and I am grateful to support him with a smooth and seamless handover.

Passing roles on to new people not only strengthens our organization, but also boosts morale, fosters engagement, and breathes new energy into what can sometimes become routine. Fresh voices and new ideas ensure we continue to grow rather than simply maintain, and that growth keeps us vibrant as a whole.

I also want to extend my heartfelt thanks for the National Best Publication Award last year. I could not have been more surprised or appreciative. That recognition belongs to all of you, because my job was simply to assemble the puzzle, and you provided every piece through your wonderful submissions. Thank you for making my life easy and for making the Briefs truly exceptional.

As for me, I will not be retiring anytime soon but will continue as the Special Awards Directeur, helping organize the *TWISTER* Wreck, and helping our team setting up the Promenade Nationale 2027 and 2028 in Wichita, Kansas. See you a lot more soon!

HOLIDAY MADNESS OR HOLIDAY GLADNESS?

Sous Aumonier David Trogden

WARNING! The Holidays are coming! While the Holiday madness and rush are almost unavoidable, we can choose either to respond to the Holidays with dread or with delight. How? The word "holiday" originated from an old English term which means "holy day." If we celebrate the holidays as "holy days" then we can face the upcoming holidays with delight.

Veteran's Day can be just free meals for us "Grumpy Old Vets" or about honoring all those who served and took the oath to "Support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, both foreign and domestic." All who were willing even to make the ultimate sacrifice as found in the example of my Lord, "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

Thanksgiving can be about food, football, and family (including in-laws and out-laws) followed by aptly named "Black Friday," with its crazed shoppers! Sound fun? How about celebrating Thanksgiving by remembering the blessings of God? Thankfulness is not an option but a command from God. "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever" (Psalm 107:1).

Christmas can mean shopping till we drop, maxing out credit cards, "tasty" fruit cakes, and the mad dash to find that "perfect gift." Once opened, we discover that "perfect gift" was the wrong size, did not work, or was not even what they wanted. Christmas should not be about bankruptcy, blinking lights or buying gifts. For me, Christmas is all about Christ, the Light in a dark world and the only perfect Gift ever given. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

New Year's does not only have to be parties, fireworks, staying awake until midnight, parades, more football games, making and then breaking resolutions, or hoping this New Year will be way better than the last. New Year's should remind us that we can enjoy the mercies and a new beginning from God every day as "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning" (Lamentations 3:22-23).



VOITURE 1015 du NEBRASKA CITY of GRANDE du NEBRASKA

Roger Kopf, Correspondant

A check was presented to registered nursing student Alexa Bohac at the Tuesday night dinner meeting of the Voiture 1015 of the 40 & 8 in Nebraska City, Nebraska.

Ms. Bohac is currently a Licensed Practical Nurse, and is studying at Iowa Western Community College in Clarinda, Iowa, and will graduate next year to become a registered nurse.

She was also presented with the 2025 40 & 8 Nurse's Training Pin.

Another separate achievement, Voiture 1015 of Nebraska City, NE, recently provided 120 small American flags to both St. Benedict's Catholic School, and Northside Public School for 40 & 8's "Flags for First Graders" program. The teachers will incorporate some flag trivia and history into their curriculum for the students in the Veteran's Day time frame.



(Above) Correspondant Roger L. Kopf, Alexa Bohac, and Chef de Gare Carl Christensen.

GRANDE du CALIFORNIA

Paul C. Pfeifer

Grand Chef de Gare Timothy Gilbert assembled the Fall Grandes Cheminot du California October 18-19, 2025. It hosted by Voiture 36 of San Bernadino at the American Legion Post 112 in Ontario California. The event was described as “Attendance was Grand, Business was Specific, After-Glo was Exceptional.” The “glo” on these Voyageurs faces shows the dedication to La Societe!



STANDING (L-R): Dennis Matarrese – National Sous Directeur Box Car, Michelle De La Cruz – Cheminot National, Daniel Dumas – National/Grand Commissaire Intendant, Gary Blackburn – Grand Conducteur, Ozan Evans – Grand Chef de Train, Timothy Gilbert – Grand Chef de Gare, Robert Mattson – Grand Advocat James Hadley – Grand Aumonier South, Paul Peifer – Grand Cheminot District 4, RD James – Voyageur, Voiture 36 & Event Chair, Mildred Wright-Pearson – National Sous Directeur Special Awards

SEATED (L-R): Joseph Donovan – Grand Correspondant, Michael Stadnick Jr – Grand Garde de La Porte, Frederick Clegg – Grand Aumonier North, Steve Villegas – National Sous Directeur Carville Star

Voyageur Briefs Plea for Your Content!

We need your help to keep the Voyageur Briefs vibrant, meaningful, and a true reflection of everything our organization can accomplish! Please consider submitting special articles of interest, stories from your Voiture Locale, and those well-deserved bragging rights to voyageurbriefs@gmail.com. Your contributions not only showcase the incredible work happening across our locales, but they also inspire fellow Voyageurs and strengthen the spirit of La Société. Let's show the entire Forty & Eight family what we can do when we share our successes and celebrate each other. Send in your stories! **We can't wait to highlight them!**



GRANDE du ILLINOIS

Gerald Terando

Grande du Illinois held their Grande Promenade on August 2nd, 2025 in Annawan, Illinois.



(Left) Vanessa Read was awarded the Nurse of the Year plaque by Nurse Procurement Directeur John Cole, and Grand Chef de Gare Todd Latham.

Vanessa (BSN/MSN) is employed by the Morris Hospital and Healthcare Centers as the Nursing Supervisor of Emergency Services, Stroke, and SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) Coordinator. Vanessa also serves as the Grundy County Child Advocacy Committee and Grundy County Sexual Assault Response Team. She has distinguished herself over the past 12 years in both performance and continued achievement and responsibility. She is also the Hospital liaison for the Grundy County Mental Health Commission

She has an outstanding resume and is highly regarded in letters of recommendation by Superiors

and peers alike. Vanessa is pictured with her husband, Grant, and children, Faye and Clive. We wish her continued success in her career.

Grande du Illinois Officers for 2025-26 were installed by Nationale PR Directeur Passe Robert Cearlock.



(Above) (L-R) Ralph Rounds II (Grand Aumonier); Larry Miller (Cheminot); Dwight Moss (Organizer North/Cheminot); Wally Hammond (Grand Correspondant); Todd Latham (Cheminot Nationale); Rob Dettmann (Grand Chef de Train); John Cole (Cheminot).



Concluding his installation, Grand Chef de Gare Jerry Terando is present with his gavel by Nationale PR Directeur Passe Robert Cearlock.

Laissez les bon ton roulet!!

VOITURE 145 du Marion/Johnson Counties of GRANDE du INDIANA Jay Collars

What is special about these 2 photos is the age of the respective Voyageurs - age 93 (Korean War) and age 103 (WWII) veterans.



(Left) Voyageur Andy Ackles signing up his 103 years old father Albert Arnold, a WWII veteran, into Voiture Locale 145.



(Right) Voyageur Richard Dennis introducing new Voyageur Mike Malast (a young 88 years old) to the National Officers who had just initiated Voyageurs into Voiture Locale 145

Voiture 145 continued their community service on Veterans Day by donating \$300 to Nicole Johnson and her family who had an emergency placement of two children that are enrolled at a local school in Clark Pleasant County Schools.



(Left) (L-R) Tim Morris, Nicole Johnson, Dr. Cassandra Shipp, and Terry Smiley

VOITURE 99 du Vancouver of GRANDE du Washington Bill Houser

On June 20, 2025, Clark College in Vancouver Washington held their 150th Class of graduating nursing students. Voiture 99 sponsored 4 of the students as shown.



(Left) (L-R) Frank Falbee, Grand Du WA Director of Nurses Training, Anne Beaton, National Sous Amonier, Kimber Calkins, Graduating Nurse, Geiry Villasenor, Graduating Nurse, Isabela Cruz, Graduating Nurse, Blake Roy, Graduating Nurse, Patrick Locke, Chef de Gare (Designate) Voiture 99, and Voiture 99 Voyageur Larry Smith, Former Mayor Pro-Tem, City of Vancouver WA.

VOITURE 58 du WICHITA of GRANDE du Kansas Ron McNany, Chef de Gare

October 19th, 2025 was a welcome sight for Voyageurs and families of Voiture 58 of Kansas. Members and their families gathered for a chili cookoff and watched the Kansas City Chiefs beat up on the Las Vegas Raiders!

Voiture 58 is very fortunate to have 80 acres with a chateau and full kitchen. They hope that you will visit in February for the *TWISTER* Wreck and at Promenade Nationale 2027 & 2028 in Wichita!

<https://www.voiture58.org/>

