

# MINUTES OF THE 2024 MIDWINTER PETITE PROMENADE BLACK RIVER FALLS, WISCONSIN FEBRUARY 9<sup>TH</sup> & 10<sup>TH</sup>

**COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEE** - Grand Chef de Gare Dave Behling called the meeting to order at 1:00 P. M. After the Pledge of Allegiance and Salute to the Flag; he turned the meeting over to Grand Correspondant Tom Orval. Voyageur Orval read of the resolving clauses to all of the nomination papers that were sent in. They are as follows.

Cheminot National – John Edelblute IV  
Alternate Cheminot National – Dave Behling  
Grand Chef de Gare – Ken Laatsch  
Grand Chef de Train – **In Route** Melissa Guthmiller  
Grand Sous Chef de Train – George Heck  
Grand Conducteur – Jack Vissers  
Grand Garde de La Porte – Andrew Minch  
Grand Commis Voyageur – Lori Zimmerman  
Grand Commissaire Intendant – Jim Vissers

It was agreed on that all were qualified Voyageurs. Grand Sous Chef de Train Guthmiller will have her nomination papers turned in later this afternoon.

A special resolution was read but no action can be taken at this time for Jim Vissers who is running for Chef de Chemin de Fer for 2025-2026 or 2026-2027. This will be voted on at the Grande Promenade in August and immediately forwarded to Voiture Nationale.

The meeting was closed in proper Forty et Eight manner.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING** - Grand Chef de Gare Dave Behling called the meeting to order at 1:00 P. M. After the Pledge of Allegiance and Salute to the Flag; he turned the meeting over to Grand Commissaire Intendant Jim Vissers. A review of the 2023-2024 financial report to date. All accounts are in line with the budget. Tax Preparation was filed with the accounting firm. As of February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 our portfolio is valued at \$935,167,12.

\$44,011.97 was received from the Robert Polaske estate which is restricted for Nurses Training Scholarships. It was also suggested that \$10,000.00 from the Harald Kahlert that was put into the Nurses Training account be put back into the general account.

In restricted Funds there is \$20.00 for the Carville Star account. It was donated by a Cabane member. It was also suggested the money be sent to Carville Star and the account be deleted.

The Child Disaster Relief Fund was brought up by V. Tom Orval. V. Orval spoke on the changes of the Ardery Fund. It's now \$500 per child and \$2,000 per family. After speaking to John Digilio on the Ardery Fund, no legitimate Ardery application will be denied. The Wisconsin Child Disaster Relief Fund was started to assist children who were victims of fires or other natural disasters when the Ardery Fund in Wisconsin had reached the limit years ago. This will be brought up on the floor tomorrow.

Jim Vissers explained that he has over \$66,000 in the checking account and wants to transfer \$30,000 of it into our investments. Motion by the Committee members and voted on to transfer the money to investments.

Meeting was then closed in proper Forty et Eight manner.

**TIME AND PLACE MEETING** - Grand Chef de Gare Dave Behling called the meeting to order at 1:00 P. M. After the Pledge of Allegiance and Salute to the Flag; he turned the meeting over to Grand Correspondant Tom Orval. V. Orval then introduced V. John Aasen from Trempealeau

Voiture # 260. He started out by saying that this could be a complete disaster before it's over with. John then got serious and let everyone know where we will go for the buffet this evening and also the past Grand Chef's Breakfast tomorrow morning. The banquet is at 6:00 PM.

George Bloom was called upon to say a few words on this summers Grande Promenade and Rendezvous. Everything will be at the Cranberry Lodge in Tomah. It is July 1<sup>st</sup> – August 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Bids were asked for the 2025 Midwinter Petite Promenade of Grande Promenade. Nothing Yet! John Edelblute was called on to give an update on the 2024 Great Lakes Promenade in Appleton. Rates for the Hotel are \$75.00 per night. V. Edelblute then gave a very detailed report on what will be happening during the entire time with assistance from V. Jim Vissers. All bases were covered to include raffles, food for the hospitality room, and the banquet.

Discussion on where any tours should go. The EAA, the Railroad Museum and the WWII Museum in Oshkosh.

A discussion on the Saturday afternoon picnic at the Rainbow Flowage for 40 et 8 Days at Camp American Legion. After some debate, Barbara Dotzauer will again get the special brats and hamburger patties from the grocery store where she works. Someone other than V. Larry Winger and Tom Orval will get the buns. Last year they bought uncut ones. Beth Laatsch will make the potato salad and other items will be purchased at the grocery store in downtown St. Germain.

We went right into the Badger Forty et Eighter Committee meeting. Grand L'editeur Tom Orval told who owes for their Ad yet and how much. The deadline for the spring edition is March 7<sup>th</sup>.

Get your articles and pictures in before then. Articles are required from all Line Officers and Directeurs if possible.

Meeting was closed by Grand Chef de Gare Dave Behling with a Salute to the Colors.

## **SATURDAY FEBRUARY 10, 2024**

### **2024 MIDWINTER PETITE PROMENADE**

Grand Chef de Gare Dave Behling opened the 2024 Midwinter Petite Promenade in proper order with a Salute to the Colors, Pledge of Allegiance, placing of the Alter Cloth on the Alter, placing of the POW-MIA Seat Cover, and the opening prayer by acting Grand Aumonier Ken Laatsch.

Greetings and introduction by National Cheminot Larry Winger who introduced Sous Chef de Chemin de Fer John Edelblute of Cudahy Wisconsin as our National Guest.

Greetings were given by Trempealeau County # 260 Chef de Gare Gavin Johnson. Also giving greetings was Area # 4 Cheminot John Helgeson.

Approval of the **OFFICIAL CALL** as emailed in a recent Wisconsin Correspondants Corner. A notion was offered and seconded for approval. Carried!

Roll Call by the Grand Correspondant of the Grande Voiture Officers and Locales was then taken.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:** Grand Commissaire Intendant Jim Vissers reported that all accounts are in line with the budget. A new computer system and new speaker system purchased this Grande fiscal year. Our investment portfolio is valued at \$874,498.63. There is \$60,668.49 in the checking and the Grande Voiture net worth is \$935,167.12. Notion was offered to accept the Finance Report as given. Seconded and carried.

\$44,011.97 was donated to the Grande Voiture from the Robert Polaske estate which is earmarked for Nurses Training Scholarships.

A suggestion that \$10,000 be transferred back to the General Account from the Nurses Training that was put in there a few years ago when the funds were getting low. Also, there is \$20.00 in the Carville Star fund that should be deleted and the money sent to the National Carville Star fund. Separate action is to be taken on these suggestions. Jim Vissers then brought up getting permission on taking \$30,000 out of the checking account and putting it into the portfolio so it can earn more money.

Steve Bradley spoke on increasing the Nurses Training Scholarships that the Grande Voiture gives out. Dale Mitchell talked about the different scholarships his Locale gives out. The increase of scholarships will be brought up on the Nurses Training report.

The notion on transferring \$30,000 from the checking to the portfolio account was voted on and passed.

**TIME & PLACE REPORT:** V. Orval reported on what is happening on this Midwinter Petite. Monroe County # 804 will have their reservation and registration forms to Grande headquarters next weekend. John Edelblute spoke on the upcoming Great Lakes Promenade and a discussion on who is bringing what for the Saturday picnic at the Rainbow Flowage for 40 et 8 Days at Camp.

**CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS:** Grand Correspondant Orval stated that he has received absolutely nothing from National or any other Grande Voiture's. Grand Avocat has not received anything either. Notion for acceptance! Carried!

### **PROGRAM DIRECTEURS REPORTS**

**VOITURE ACTIVITIES:** V. Ken Kozubek stated that it's that time of year again when he has to beg and plead for reports. He reminded everyone that just about anything you do is considered as long as it is with another Voyageur. Just going out for a meal or meeting for a cocktail is considered a Voiture activity. By the time this Midwinter Petite is over with many of us will have spent over 48 hours. Get your time, mileage and money entered in the report. The Activities report is one way of showing National that we are an active Grande Voiture.

**AMERICANISM:** V. Ken Laatsch spoke on the Flags for 1<sup>st</sup> Grader program. He also has some Americanism pins yet to sell. His report is on his desk at home. Oops!

**BADGER FORTY & EIGHTER:** V. Orval let the membership know that the deadline for the spring edition of the Badger Forty et Eighter is February 29<sup>th</sup>. He has collected \$900 in Ad money and has \$350 to go yet. Can use all decent pictures and additional articles. This is the 9<sup>th</sup> time that Wisconsin won the John Kilgus award in the 19 years V. Orval has been the Grand Correspondant. He then went on getting your respective articles and pictures to him on time.

**NATIONAL BOX CAR ASSOCIATION:** Report given by V. John Aasen. Before he began, at the Past Grand Chef's breakfast a Voyageur from Trempealeau County was spotted wearing his chapeau while eating. \$5.00 was donated to the Grand Chefs fine box. He thanked Sous Directeur Jack Vissers for all of his help. V. John then gave a very detailed report on the beginning of the National Box Car Association. He still has some 2024 Box Car pins left to sell. Notion was offered and seconded for acceptance of the Box Car Report. Carried!

**CARVILLE STAR:** Report given by V. Jim Witte. He also passed around the Star Piggy Bank. V. Witte still has 2024 pins for sale. He will also take donations. Ken Laatsch gave a talk on how the Carville Star piggy bank came into existence. The bank was built by someone from the Golden Guernsey Dairy in Waukesha. The Directeur's name at the time was Harry Barkholtz and he was from Appleton. A notion was offered and seconded to accept the report as given. Seconded and Carried!

**CHILD WELFARE:** V. Eric Diekmann reported there were three fires in Wisconsin so far this year involving children. Monroe County had two of them and La Crosse # 830 experienced one. These fires totaled \$2,695. He reminded everyone that you can now spend up to \$500 per child and \$2,000 per family.

Voyageur Eric also spoke on the **No Child Sleeps On The Floor program.**

**CHARLES W. ARDERY FUND:** Report given by V. Tom Orval. Total monies in the Arderly fund is \$2,449,560.77. He also spoke with John Digilio about the total amount a Grande Voiture can use per year. It was \$5,000 but at this last years National Promenade that amount was not addressed. The Committee will honor any legitimate request for reimbursement.

**WISCONSIN DISASTER RELIEF:** As reported by V. Vissers. The fund was established in 2009 intended to supplement the Ardery Fund once funding was used up during the fiscal year. \$100.00 per child, \$500.00 per family and \$2,000.00 per year can come out of the fund. Currently there is \$5,952.82 in the fund. V. Jim also explained the working of the oversight committee consisting of the last three surviving Grand Chef de Gares Pass'e along with the Grand Correspondant and Grand Commissaire Intendant shall approve any and all expenditures. \$93.00 was collected at the last Grande Promenade.

A discussion on the Wisconsin Disaster Relief fund. We really don't need the money in that account anymore. Ron Pfalzgraf spoke on turning the money over to the Badger Boys State and sponsor a boy every year.

A lot of discussion on this matter; 13 minutes to be exact. Different opinions and thoughts on just what should be done. It is \$400 per year per Badger Boy. Tom Orval asked who is going to take care of it. More thoughts or opinions.

Jim Hying who was on the Badger Boys State Committee for many years enlightened everyone on the proper procedure in getting a form from Portage. Eric Diekmann looked it up on his smart phone and told everyone the rules on Badger Boys State.

Voyageur Jim Vissers will take care of sending in the Funds every year. One Badger Boy will be sponsored every year and the funds will come out of the Wisconsin Disaster Relief Fund. The fund will be renamed the 40 et 8 Badger Boys State Fund. This was voted on and passed. Question on how this will be administered. Question on if we will collect for this fund every year.

**NURSES TRAINING:** V. Dale Mitchell sold out all of his pins for the year. Currently Wisconsin is sponsoring two students on the Grande Program this year. Need to submit an application correctly to be considered. The Grande received over \$40,000 for Nurses Training scholarships. Many questions why there are only two applicants.

**JACK D. WILSON FUND:** As reported by Grand Commissaire Intendant Jim Vissers, the fund has a total of \$20,000.95. One check was written out to a Amanda Schauland for \$500. With the addition of the money donated from the Robert Polaske estate, the balance is now up to \$63,012.92.

A notion was offered to raise the Grande Voiture Scholarship to \$1,000 per year instead of \$500. A lot of discussion on the administrative part mostly concerning National. A notion on the floor raising the Scholarship to \$1,000 per student. Passed! After the notion was passed to raise the Grande Voiture Nurses Training Scholarship up to \$1,000 per year one Voyageur thought their Locale had to raise their scholarship up to keep track with the Grande Voiture. More discussion but things did get straightened out.

**GEORGE B. BOLAND FUND:** V. Orval reported that there is \$1,187,702.75 total in the account. Talk of all the Rules pertaining to the Boland Trust fund. He has the rules and regulations with him if anyone wishes to look at it.

**POW-MIA:** Grand Directeur Jim Bassett was excused. His report was read by Grand Chef de Gare Behling. All 101 of the 2024 pins were sold. A donation of \$96.00 from Wisconsin made it \$500.00 for the year. There is a new consolidated report you can do online.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS:** V. Orval spoke on maintaining a positive image with the community. Need to release articles and pictures to the local community through local newspapers. Possibly each locale can develop brochures to pass out to potential members. Always use the Who What When Where and Why. He then talked about using a phone camera compared to a 35mm digital camera and changing lenses.

**RITUAL:** V. Bradley wants everyone to make plans for next months 104th Birthday celebration. Make sure you take pictures of the event to send in to the local newspapers for publicity. It can become a great recruiting tool if correctly followed. He has copies of the Birthday Ceremony available to anyone interested.

He also spoke on the correct way to acknowledge when a Voyageur has permission to speak at a Promenade and not three or four Voyageurs speaking all at once.

V. Orval offered a notion to fine V. Doug Schaller \$1.00 for staying awake and paying attention to the Promenade instead of falling asleep as he usually does and that just isn't right. Notion was seconded and carried!

V. John Aasen offered a notion that V. Steve Bradley be fined \$1.00 for giving a French salute to the US flag instead of the military righthand salute. Seconded and carried.

**SPECIAL AWARDS:** Report was given by V. Ron Pfalzgraf. Applications must be in by June 15<sup>th</sup>. Has to be sent to National by July 1<sup>st</sup>. He was very disappointed because last year all he received were applications for Voyageur of the year. He asked for everyone to consider joining the Generals Club for this is how the Special Awards program is supported.

**VAVS:** Directeur Edelblute let the membership know that he is learning the ropes as new Grand VAVS Directeur for the State.

**MADISON VAVS:** Not in attendance

**VAVS MILWAUKEE:** V. Edelblute stated that at the Milwaukee Zablocki he puts in between 26 to 32 hours a week. This past year he received \$400 from the Keep Those Wheelchairs Rolling for supplies for the Baby Shower Event. Through the Grande Voiture he purchased 4 \$25.00 gift cards from Pick & Save. He also spoke on working for the VA transportation hub.

V. John Aasen offered a notion to fine V. Edelblute \$1.00 for rendering the French salute to the US flag and the military salute to the Sous Grand Chef de Train. V. Bradley stated that we do not fine the National Guest. V. Aasen then stated that maybe V. Bradley does not fine the National Guest but he does. V. Edelblute made a donation to the fine box anyway.

V. Mitchell offered a notion to fine V. Aasen \$1.00 for a useless fine. Seconded and carried!

V. Schaller offered a notion to fine Mitchell for holding up the Promenade. Seconded and carried!

**TOMAH VA:** V. George Bloom stated that he had to miss the Grande Promenade due to his grandson's wedding. He then gave the totals for the last year working at the Tomah VA. 404 hours, 10,938 miles and transporting 404 Veterans to different locations.

V. Orval offered a notion to fine V. Bloom the sum of \$1.00 for having such a well typed report. Mostly it is scratched on a note pad. Seconded and carried.

Question from Joe Ternes on criteria for Voiture Activities hours. Mileage and hours. Questions were answered by both Grand Directeur Ken Kozubek and National Directeur John Helgeson.

**YOUTH SPORTS:** Directeur Matt McCallson gave his Youth Sports report to include the selling of pins and any applications turned in for reimbursement for sponsoring Youth Sports teams.

## COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS REPORT

**EMBLEM SALES:** Dale Mitchell has emblems for sale and he has sent some out by mail to different Grande Voitures.

**CAMP AMERICAN LEGION CONSULTANT:** John Helgeson said that cabin 1-2-3 is ready to start building this spring. The new Kubota tractor is working well and he has referred the rest of the report to George Heck. A lot of rebuilding is going to be happening. Cabin 8 is being tore down. Other cabins are in need of a sponsor. Many other improvements were presented. The DNR now has to approve all new designs. The century wall should be finished before the new season. The retail store just needs a counter and cabinets. The 100 year celebration will be June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025. V. Heck then presented to the members some new projects such as a new storage building as a 50" by 80" foot structure. They have nine pontoon boats.

**FORTY AND EIGHT DAYS AT CAMP:** Chairman Tom Orval gave an update on the 55<sup>th</sup> Forty et Eight Days at Camp. It will take place on June 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Friday picnic along with the Bean Bag tournament, wineries in Three Lakes, the Camp pontoon rides, and Saturday morning fishing tournament! Saturday afternoon at the Rainbow Flowage, etc. One slight twist and that is on Friday morning we are planning a shopping spree to Eagle River. Notion was offered for acceptance. Seconded and carried.

Area #1 Cheminot Ray Pasbrig gave his verbal report.

Area #2 Cheminot Nikki Bradley was excused.

Area #3 Cheminot V. Jim Vissers gave an update on his respected Locales within his area along with all of his travels he has done.

Area #4 Cheminot John Helgeson also gave an update on the 10<sup>th</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Districts

## RECESS

### REPORT OF THE GRAND OFFICERS

Grand Correspondant

Tom Orval

Grand Avocat

John Helgeson

Grand Commissaire Intendant

Jim Vissers

Questions were asked about filing a 990. A lot of opinions and suggestions.

Grand Historiat

Dale Mitchell

Grand Aumonier

Ray Kline was excused. He was

recovering from hernia surgery.

Cheminot National

Larry (Studmuffin) Winger

Alternate Cheminot National

John Edelblute

Grand Commis Voyageur

Andrew Minch

Grand Garde de La Porte

Jack Vissers was excused due to

surgery on Monday. His report was read by his twin brother Jim.

Grand Conducteur

George Heck

Grand Sous Chef de Train

Melissa Guthmiller

Grand Chef de Train

Ken Laatsch

Grand Chef de Gare

Dave Behling

**OLD BUSINESS:** March 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Richland Center American Legion; Richland County # 1268 will be having their annual Pancake & Sausage Breakfast for their Nurses training Scholarship.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Commis Voyageur Andrew Minch made a presentation about the Grande Voiture purchasing a recertified AED defibrillator. Most hotels do not have them and with the age of our membership, we should have one on hand whenever possible. Cost is \$675.00 plus tax. This was put into a notion and passed.

**GOOD OOF THE GRANDE:** Grand Conducteur George Heck wanted to clarify that when making donations to Camp American Legion, send it to camp with the check earmarked as to where you wish the donation to go.

With no further business to come before this Grande Midwinter Petite Promenade, it was closed in proper Forty et Eight manner with the removal of the POW-MIA seat cover, alter cloth, closing prayer Voyageurs catechism and a salute to the colors.

Thomas J. Orval - Grand Correspondant 19 ½ years and counting!

Grande Voiture de Wisconsin