

The 40 et 8 has lost a lion. Verne Eccleston was dedicated to veterans organizations, including Voiture 997 of La Societe. Verne was Grand Chef de Gare, Grand du Michigan, in 1986-87, and achieved the title of Chef de Chemin de Fer from 1998 to 1999. Sadly, he succumbed on Jan. 16 to the cancer that he had bravely fought for the final years of his life.

For me, Verne was a dear friend. He was there the day I became a Voyageur when I was wrecked in March of 1995 at Post 324 in Michigan Center. My friend Vern was in attendance. Vern was instrumental in me getting the Nationale VAVS appointment. I have attended Wrecks and Promenades Nationale with Vern and Judy. He was a great man and will be greatly missed by everyone who knew him.

I was privileged to take part in his memorial on Jan. 25, joining Chefs de Chemin de Fer passe, Grand officers and Voyageurs in offering him a final salute, which he richly deserved. Rest in peace, my friend.

As we prepare for Spring Cheminot in March, it is important for Voitures Locale to report any members who have passed away during the time between Grand Promenades. We want to make sure they are remembered during the memorial service at Grand Promenade in August.

Spring Cheminot is just around the corner on March 16 at American Legion Post 315, 211 Chicago St. in Brooklyn, MI. The Official Call is in this edition of The Whistle Stop. My Homecoming will take place shortly after Spring Cheminot ends, at the same location. Registration for that

event is also in this edition.

Finally, if you haven't paid your dues by this time, you have forfeited your benefits as a Voyageur in the Grand du Michigan. If you fail to pay dues in two years, you risk being dropped from Michigan's roster. Please pay the membership dues you owe so you do not lose any of the benefits that go with being a member of the 40 et 8.

Yours in Service,

Yours in comradeship ,

Your Grand Chef de Gare

Clare W Knickerbocker

Grand du Michigan

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