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### Whitewood home lost in Wednesday fire

By MARK WATSON, Black Hills Pioneer

A home was destroyed Wednesday afternoon in a fire driven by

strong winds.

DJ Werlinger, Whitewood fire chief, said firefighters responded to the reported structure fire about eight miles north of Whiteon Whitewood Valley Road shortly after 2 p.m.

Upon their arrival, they discovered heavy fire and smoke coming from the main floor. Winds pushed the flames through

Werlinger said he believes that

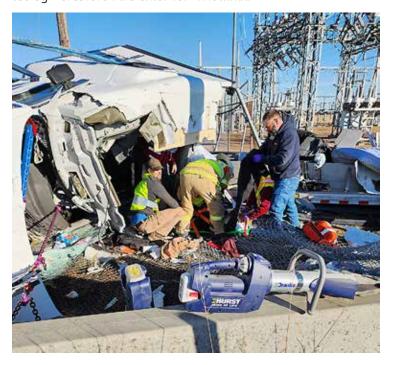
the building hampering firefighters' efforts.

Werlinger said the strong winds prevented crews from gaining access to the building. If it was not blowing as hard, he said firefighters could have gotten the fire knocked down quicker. As it was, it took about an hour to bring the fire under

Crews left the site around 6:40

### Semi crash reported near Beresford

Beresford Fire and Rescue was dispatched to a semi crash near the 49-mile marker on I-29. On arrival it was discovered that a semi-tractor trailer loaded with steel beams had left the roadway and crashed into an 115KV electrical power substation. The rig flattened several protective concrete barriers, went through a chain link fence and entered into the sub-station grounds near high powered transformers. The driver was pinned inside the vehicle. BFD rescue crews worked with numerous rescue tools and equipment to free the driver. The extrication took approximately 40 minutes. Effortlesslythe rescue crew worked in close proximity to the high voltage equipment and power lines. Several power companies responded to the scene and a 115KV line was shut down that was directly above the crash site for safety due to a damaged pole that was struck. The driver was transported to the hospital by a Beresford Ambulance. Submitted by Beresford Fire Chief Tarz Mullinix.

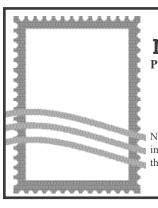


the fire started from a heater, but the fire and its cause remain under investigation.

The homeowner received minor burns when he was trying to extinguish the fire.

Fire crews from St. Onge, Sturgis, Fort Meade, Vale, Nisland-

Arpan, and Spearfish fire departments as well as members of Lawrence and Meade counties sheriff's office, Sturgis Police, South Dakota Highway Patrol, and Lawrence County Emergency Management responded to the



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Please send all corrections to: **South Dakota Firefighters Association** 1017 S. Cleveland Ave, Pierre, SD 57501 605-940-1795

NOTE: Please include the label with the incorrect address found on the front page of this newspaper.

Thank You!



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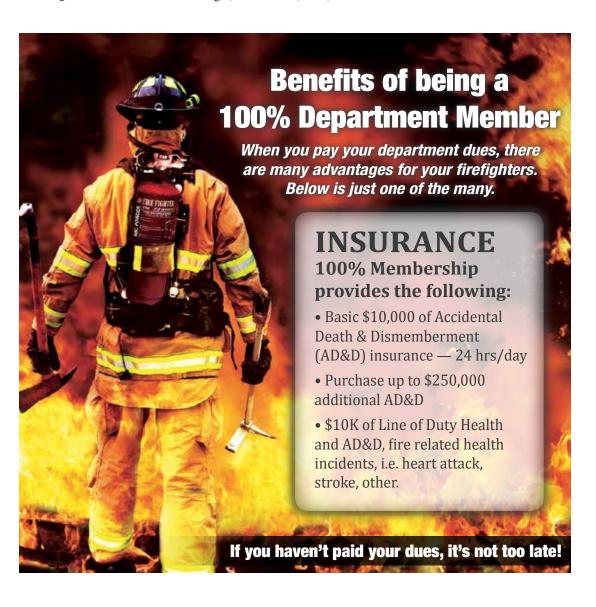
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**POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO SOUTH DAKOTA FIREFIGHTER** 1017 S. CLEVELAND AVE, PIERRE, SD 57501



# Rain Drop Fire Attack

By JERRY KNAPP

Necessity is the mother of invention. Call came in a working structure fire (private dwelling), fire thru the roof of a high ranch with possible people inside. It was Thursday morning around 1000 hrs so crews were short staffed.

When I arrived on scene it was clear there were 6 solar panels burning furiously and exposing the shingle roof and other pan-Size up showed the fire had not (yet) extended down into the attic or the roof or vinyl siding. I had my gear on so one of the other firefighters did a great job and stretched the first 13/4" me the nozzle. PD had kicked the door in and reported no one inside. Pump operator charged the line quickly.

So there I was, a good solid line looking at the solar panels burning wondering how the hell do I put this fire out? Typical domestic solar panels generate about 600 volts and around 6000 watts, enough to kill you. As we all know, a good electrical fire and a solid bore nozzle are a bad combination. It was a bright sunny day so the electricity was flowing as furiously as the fire was burning.

From the bravo side driveway and the nozzle in my hands I could see the flames and smoke but not the burning panels. A direct stream on energized electrical equipment was not an option. So I thought about making a 180 gpm rainstorm. I pointed the nozzle straight up, and water flowed up then gravity pulling it down would break up the stream so it would not conduct electricity keeping me safe and the 180 gpm raining down should at least

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Email your Upcoming Event** by the 10th of the previous month (ex. Aug. 10 for the September issue) to jeff@ southdakotafirefighter.com There is no charge

**DEC.** 6-8, 2024: South Dakota Fire Chiefs Annual Leadership Conference. Deadwood

JAN. 10-12, 2025: Rushmore Fire Conference, Box

FEB. 7-9, 2025: Les Lukert

Conference, Kearney, NE.

JUNE 12-14, 2025: South
Dakota State Fire School,

**SEPT. 21-25, 2025: NVFC** Fall Board meeting, Rapid

### **ACTION FIRE PHOTOS NEEDED!**

Please send them to jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com along with information to explain the photo.

cool the fire. With the nozzle pointed almost straight up, the solid stream went up and big separate rain drops (that could not conduct electricity) came down. It rained real hard on the burning panels and put the fire out and protected both the roof shingles and vinyl siding from radiant heat. The nozzle was repeatedly opened and closed after about 10 sec of water to make sure I had truly broken up the stream so it would not conduct fatal current flow back to me.

Bottom line: not sure this is a recommended practice but it worked, extinguished the fire and did not electrocute the nozzleman. To reduce the chance of electrocuting the nozzleman, two

1. Make sure your stream is broken up as much as possible.

2. Use as much reach of your stream as you can.

Jerry Knapp is the Chief of the Rockland County, NY Hazmat Team, and is a 49 year veteran Firefighter/EMT with the West Haverstraw NY Fire Department. He served on the technical panel for the UL residential fire attack study. Knapp is the co-author of two books: House Fires and Tactical Response to Explosive Gas Emergencies published by Fire Engineering He is the owner of Suburban Tactical Inc specializing in fire officer and firefighter





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### SDFA OFFICER REPORTS

I hope that since last month's article you have found time for a siesta. As promised, I am coming back to finish up this vital piece of information related to lack of sleep. Just a quick recap, last month talked about lack of sleep and the inability of the body to produce dopamine, serotonin and other good brain chemicals. However, that was only the first half of the report, as Toomey still has more to say. Without any further "ado" let me go back into the nitty gritty. As they used to say in the old television series shows, let me recap last month's article. The basis for this discussion about sleep deprivation is not because it makes us "cranky", it is because if it goes on long enough sleep deprivation leads to suicidal thoughts, attempts and even completed suicide. Then after making the case that this was serious stuff, you read about serotonin and cortisol. If you are like me, you learned that serotonin is produced in our gut, not our head! Who would have pictured that. If we don't sleep, that chemical doesn't get produced and we find ourselves deeper and deeper into the circle of depression.

So now, back to the nitty gritty of why we need to sleep and sleep on a regular basis. The next aspect of sleep deprivation is called Brain Hijacking. For many of us, our brains are incredibly scattered anyway, and having something that takes away what little we have left is a bit scary. What happens when are deprived

of sleep is that our body's fight or flight reflex kicks in. This was helpful during the time when we were a bit lower on the food chain and most other mammals out there would literally eat us for lunch. However, as firefighters, the frequency that we remain at this level due to regular calls for our services does have consequences for our health. Toomey warns that while this is necessary for survival in extreme circumstances, the long-term effect is that parts of our brains suffer damage.

By now you are wondering what part of the brain suffers? In simple terms, when our sleep cycle is disrupted by those late night, early morning calls, the amygdala, or the "Stress center" of the brain gets activated. When that happens, that little part of our brain hijacks our rational brain. So, the part of our brain that normally helps us make "rational" decisions, or moderates our social behavior, is no longer in control. Which might account for some people showing up at the hall in the middle of the night with their pants on backwards when responding to a call! Without sounding overly dramatic, when the amygdala is in control what we see is behavior that is out of character, often irrational and impulsive. If that is not enough, the increase stress dumps more cortisol into the system (your brain), and it is well documented that excess cortisol injures and kills parts our brain. If you are like me, you don't have any more brain cells to sacrifice. This excess cortisol is the situation often found in people who are depressed. If you are adding this up, depression, along with a loss of rational thought, leads to more impulsive behavior, which leads to increased risk for suicide. Boy, aren't you glad you are reading this??? However, it does begin to help you recog-nize what might be happening to someone around you and might just help you find a way to intervene to save their life. Or as the old commercial said, "The life you save, might be your own.

Wait, Toomey is not done yet, she has not addressed REM sleep! REM sleep, what is that you ask? Thanks for giving me the opportunity to dive into this. According to Toomey, the loss of the REM (Rapid Eye Movement) stage of the sleep cycle may be the greatest contributing factor to suicidal ideation for the sleep-deprived firefighter. What this is REM sleep anyway? REM, is the brain's cycle during our normal night's sleep that allows us to process the emotional responses and events of the day. If I remember my Psychology 101 correctly, this is the time of the sleep cycle when we dream. So, when your sleep is interrupted, no matter how short the interruption was, your body has to start all over again. As Toomey puts it: "This is the reason that many people will experience depression and irritability after a night with disrupted sleep. Your body physically never processed the events of the preceding day." The next time you wake up tired and grumpy, you can blame



Rodney Veldhuizen, Chaplain

"What happens when are deprived of sleep is that our body's fight or flight reflex kicks in.... as firefighters, the frequency that we remain at this level due to regular calls for our services does have consequences for our health."

it on not dreaming!

Now researchers are learning that depression does not cause sleep problems, but sleep problems are the cause of depression and mental health issues. The less sleep you receive, the more likely you are to have mental health issues that could result in death. As Toomey wonders: "Have you ever noticed as a firefighter that most suicides are committed during the late hours of the night and into early morning? There is something to be said about feeling alone in the dark turning over thoughts when there is nothing found in the light to distract you. The conscious, awake mind is not capable of processing emo-tions in the way REM sleep does, especially when the amygdala is in the driver's seat." I know, I am not exactly being the most cheerful person right now. However, if we are attempting to have a long and lasting career in fire service, and if we actually like the folks we serve with, it is time to pay attention to this stuff.

At the end of the day, what is being documented is that a lack of sleep leads to more suicidal ideation and suicide risk. Since most of us are volunteers, it is going to fall back on our own shoulders to monitor our own sleep patterns.

Maybe as a department we remind our fellow firefighters that is permitted to miss a call or two of you have been responding to a lot of calls lately. I know that the older I get the less resilient I am after a long day or even worse a long night. Toomey is adamant, learning how to optimize sleep is just one more element in our "tool box" to becoming a proficient first responder. Let me wrap this up with a warning or bit of advice from Toomey: "Most importantly, enhanced sleep may make or break a lifesaving moment. If you are groggy, or the amygdala is in the driver's seat, how well are you going to respond under pressure? There must be a shift in the attitude in the firehouse away from the "I'll sleep when I'm dead" mentality towards an understanding that sleep is valuable. Every aspect of our lives- and those who receive critically lifesaving emergency services- depends on it.

You know, after writing about sleep, I think it is time for a Siesta. By the way, Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year to each and every one of you.

CHAPLAIN RODNEY VVV

# DEPARTED FIREFIGHTERS

### U.S. Fire Administration Firefighter Fatality Notification

The following are U.S. Fire Administration Firefighter Fatality Notifications of firefighters who have died from across the United States. The South Dakota Fire Service extends its thoughts to the family and friends of these firefighters.

• TÓNY RAY GARRISON, 51, Fairview, NC, died Sept. 27, 2024. Tony was a battalion chief with the Fairview Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. and had attained 30 years of career service. On Friday, Sept. 27, 2024, Battalion Chief Tony Ray Garrison was assisting in the rescue of victims of a landslide during the response to Hurricane Helene, when a second landslide occurred. He passed away from the injuries sustained in this incident. Battalion Chief Garrison also served with the Garren Creek Fire Department.

• **SCOTT GLASS**, 43, Perryton, TX, died Oct. 20, 2024. Scott was the current assistant chief with Perryton Fire and EMS and had attained 17 years of career service. On Thursday, Oct. 17, 2024, Assistant Chief Scott Glass responded to a residential fire. As members were setting up a water supply a vehicle ran over the hose popping a coupling, causing 3 firefighters to fall to the ground. Assistant Chief Glass sustained serious head injuries and was airlifted to Northwest Texas Healthcare System in Amarillo. He passed away on Sunday, Oct. 20, 2024.

• ROBERT "SHARKY" SHARKEVICH, SR., 66, Wethersfield, CT, died Oct. 22, 2024. Robert was a volunteer firefighter with 47 years of service with the Wethersfield Volunteer Fire Department. On Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2024, Engineer Robert "Sharky" Sharkevich, Sr., was battling a brush fire on Lamentation Mountain in Berlin, CT, when the Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV) he was operating rolled over a steep, rocky incline. He was pronounced deceased at the scene. Three other firefighters were taken to local hospitals with non life-threatening injuries.

• GARRET MILLER, 44, Barstow, CA, died Oct. 21, 2024. Garret was a fire captain with 22 years of career service with Barstow Fire Protection District. On Tuesday, Oct. 8, 2024, Fire Captain Garret Miller was on duty at Fire Station 366 when he suffered a medical emergency. He was immediately transported to the hospital where he remained for two weeks until his passing from a cardiovascular event.

• MARCELO GARCIA, III, 42, Houston, TX, died Nov. 6, 2024. Marcelo was a firefighter with the Houston Fire Department and had attained 10 years of career service. On Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2024, firefighters were at the scene of a commercial structure fire. At approximately 11:05 p.m. a mayday was transmitted for a wall collapse. Firefighter Marcelo Garcia and another firefighter were immediately rescued and transported to the Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center. Firefighter Garcia passed away from the injuries he sustained in the collapse. The other firefighter has since been released.

# **CLASSIFIEDS**

### CLASSIFIED ADS FOR THE SOUTH DAKOTA FIREFIGHTER NEWSPAPER

Classified ads run \$10 for the first 10 words, and 25 cents a word after that. A photo is \$10 additional. Rates are the same in each state (Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas). Email the ad to jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com to place your personal or departmental ads.



# DEPARTED FIREFIGHTERS

### Bennie Lee Huber, Sr. 1936 - 2024

Chief, (Ret'd) Bennie Lee Huber, Sr. White River Volunteer Fire Department, passed away peacefully on November 09, 2024, in

Sioux Falls, SD, at the age of 88.

Funeral services were held on Thursday, November 14, 2024 at 11:00AM at the White River Community Event Center in White River, SD. Burial followed in the White River Cemetery. Chief Huber was

born on April 19, 1936, in Winner, South Dakota to Art and Anna (Hacker) Huber.

As a child, Chief Huber lived in Iona, South Dakota, where his parents were postmasters and ran a local grocery store.

The family moved to Minneapolis, MN, for three years eventually finding their way to White River, South Dakota. Ben completed his freshman year of high school, working at Clyde's Bakery for three years, transitioned to construction, and then enlisted in the army.

Chief Huber enlisted in the Army and served 2 years from 1958-1960. He completed basic training at Fort Carson Army Post, Colorado Springs, Colorado Ben was stationed at an Air Force Base in Alaska and was in the artillery regiment.

On January 3, 1959, Alaska became the 59th state in the union. He fondly remembers this celebratory day. A round of artillery was fired for each state already in the union. Private Ben Huber was honored with setting off the charge for the state of South Da-

He was released with the option to be called up for the reserves,' but he was not required for additional service. He was so proud of his service and often relayed many memories of duties, the cold weather, and all the experiences with the many people he served with.

Following his military dis-charge, Ben returned to White River. He began working heavy road construction. He was working construction in Montrose, South Dakota, where he met the love of his life, Muriel Muller. They married on June 1st, 1963. in Montrose, SD. To this union one child, Ben Jr. was born. They were married for 46 years until Muriel's passing in 2009.

Ben was a proud resident of White River, SD. He often noted

White River as, "The greatest little town in South Dakota, in the greatest county, in the greatest state." Ben helped with the con-

struction of the Mellette County courthouse 1964. He was a proud member of the American Legion. If there was something that needed to be done around town, you could find Ben volunteering his time.

Chief Huber joined the White

River Fire Department after returning from the military. He dedicated 43 years to the department serving as Chief for 35 years.

Collecting firetrucks and fire memorabilia was a hobby. He spent many hours admiring his collection. Chief Huber was also an EMT with the White River Ambulance.

Ben was proud to say he worked as a custodian for the White River School District for 33 years. His work ethic was relentless. He treasured all the relationships that he built with the students often being referred to as Grandpa Ben. One of the things he missed most after retiring was getting to visit with so many people.

Sporting events were Ben's all-time favorite activity. He was a diehard Minnesota Twins and Vikings fan. He enjoyed attending all of the White River games.

Ben was an avid pet lover hav-

ing cared for many stray dogs and cats. He was a kind and caring man often offering compliments to all. He gave the best hugs and always had time for people. He loved to tell jokes and was a long-time member of the Nazarene church.

Ben wanted to thank the staff at Stoneybrook Suites and Assisted Living where he resided for the past six years. Their care, warmth, and kind heartedness always made Ben say, "I love it

Chief Huber is survived by his son, Ben Jr., (Lynette) of Sioux Falls, SD, a granddaughter Samantha Muller, (Tyrell) of Omaha, NE, a grandson, Chance Huber, (Kiara Valentien) of Sioux Falls, SD, and great grandson's William and Remy Muller.

Chief Huber was proceeded in death by his wife, Muriel Huber, sister Sharyn Baumgartner, and parents Art and Anna Huber

What's an inch

### Kelly D. Moe 1977 - 2024

### In Loving Memory of

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Kelly D. Moe, age 47, who left this world on Oct. 18, 2024. A cherished son, devoted brother, and loyal friend, Kelly was a beacon of humor and warmth in

his community. Born on June 6, 1977, in Spearfish, SD, Kelly's spirited nature shone brightly from a young age. After earning a degree in Secondary Education from South Dakota State University, he answered the call to serve in the Peace Corps. dedicating himself to community development in Honduras. During this time, he touched countless lives with his compassion and unwavering commitment to making a difference.

In 2004, Kelly returned home to continue his family's legacy as a rancher in St. Onge, SD. For two decades, he poured his heart into the family ranch, cultivating

not just crops, but deep-rooted connections with neighbors and friends. He found immense joy in sharing stories about ranch life, enriching the lives of those around him with his passion for the land and community.

Kelly was known for his quick wit, effortlessly uplifting everyone he encountered. His ability to light up a room with a clever comment or a humorous tale made family gatherings, community events, and social gatherings unforgettable. He had a gift for making others laugh until they cried, and his genuine happiness came from spreading joy to those he loved.

Kelly is survived by his moth-

er, Patty Moe (John Edwards); his siblings, Chad Moe (Holly) and Robin Brown (Jeremy); his nephews, Benjamin, Jacob, Andrew, and William Moe, and Tyrel and Chase Brown: and his niece, Terryn Brown. He is also survived by his constant companion and "best friend", Buddy. He leaves behind a loving community of friends who will forever treasure the memories they shared with him.

Kelly is preceded in death by his father, Terry Moe; and his beloved grandparents, Bud and Fern Moe, and Leo and Regina McGuigan.

Visitation was held Monday, Oct. 21st at Fidler-Isburg Funeral Chapel in Spearfish, followed by a burial at the St. Onge Cemetery on Tuesday the 22nd. In honor of Kelly's remarkable life, a celebration of his life was held on Oct. 22 at the St. Onge Bar, where friends and family gathered to share laughter, stories, and memories of a man who embodied kindness, humor, and love for others.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requested donations be made to the St. Onge Fire Department or the Peace Corps, honoring Kelly's spirit of service and dedication to commu-

### Aaron Michael Anthony 1995 - 2024

Aaron Michael Anthony, 29, went to his heavenly home Monday, Oct. 14, 2024 at Sanford USD Medical Center in Sioux Falls. Funeral service were held Oct. 22 in Stickney.

Aaron was born July 25, 1995 to Terry and Brenda (Rus) Anthony in Mitchell, SD. He grew up in Stickney, SD where he graduated from Stickney High School in 2014. He attended Mitchell Technical Institute in Mitchell before working for Trail King for 5 years. For the past 6

years, Aaron worked for Steve's Welding in Stickney. He was a member of the Stickney Fire Department and loved to hang out with family and friends.

Grateful for having shared his life are his parents, Terry and Brenda Anthony of Stickney; 3 siblings: Tyler (Allyson) Anthony of Stickney; Makenzie Anthony of Chamberlain, SD; and Bailey (fiancee Bailey Dykstra) Anthony of Stickney; and a niece, Arcadia Pease.





### Vehicle fire near Alpena

Members of the Alpena and Town and Country Fire Departments responded to a car fire early on October 24. The fire was a result of a car vs. deer collision. No injuries were reported. Submitted by Rick George.

tall and can move a fire truck? A classified ad in the South Dakota Firefighter!

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# SDFA OFFICER REPORTS



Charlie Kludt, President

"This will be the final hardcopy of our monthly newspaper. Starting January 2025, our newspaper will be an electronic version. The monthly SDFA Firefighter will be emailed out to the individuals that have an email in our system. We highly recommend adding emails for your department members on your roster listing.

### December - Getting Ready

This time of year, some folks will look for a part-time job. I found a job at a Christmas tree farm. They liked how I worked so they made me a branch manager.

This will be the final hardcopy of our monthly newspaper. Start-

ing January 2025, our newspaper will be an electronic version. The monthly SDFA Firefighter will be emailed out to the individuals that have an email in our system. We highly recommend adding emails for your department

members on your roster listing.

There will be a link on the SDFA website to the newspaper for anyone to get the monthly information. Keep submitting your articles and photos to jeff@ southdakotafirefighter.com.

Now is the time to start reviewing and reestablishing contacts for winter emergencies.

Do you have a list of the local snowplow operators in your area?

Each year, hundreds of injuries are caused by slips and falls at emergency incidents. If you have a fire, do you have sand or ice melt available to sprinkle around your emergency area? Who can you call if you need a sander to come do a sprinkle on a street or road after you're finished?

If you have a car accident on icy roads, a bag of sand sprinkled around might help prevent further injury to workers and those involved

We don't want to leave behind a new hazard after we leave the scene. If you dropped tools or nails on the road, you would pick them up so no one would get hurt. If you spill water on the road during freezing weather, you are responsible to take care of it.

Hopefully, our fall wildfire season will be coming to a slowdown. As much as we may not like it, snow cover is our best suppression system.

Christmas get-togethers and family gatherings will be filling our weekend holiday schedules. I hope you all have an enjoyable time telling stories of the past and making new memories.

Hopefully you'll get to a Christmas program to celebrate the true reason for the season.

From our house to yours, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

CHARLIE & DAWN KLUDT SDFA President

### Thoughts from Your Treasurer

First and most important, I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas. I hope that your Christmas is filled with happiness and joy as we celebrate the birth of our Lord. After this past year of all the election hype and all that went on, hopefully we all can just thank the Lord for what America has to offer.

Another reminder is that this December issue will be the last one printed and mailed to you. In January those that we have email addresses for will be receiving the paper in their Inbox. Which is your queue to also look in your Spam/Junk folder for the paper each month. You never know where those electronic wizards are going to send stuff to.

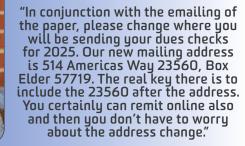
In conjunction with the emailing of the paper, please change where you will be sending your dues checks for 2025. Our new mailing address is 514 Americas Way 23560. Box Elder 57719.

The real key there is to include the 23560 after the address. You certainly can remit online also and then you don't have to worry about the address change.

Over the past several weeks I'm sure most of us have watched the wildland fires they have been having on the east coast. It seems that in past years we would sort of chuckle about a "massive" wildfire in New York state and it was reported as 30 acre's or less. This year was different, they were having thousands of acres. Our hearts were hurt when an 18-year-old firefighter died after being hit by a tree. Our thoughts are with all the firefighters "back east'

The Mobile Live Fire Trailers seem to have been getting a workout these past months. One unit was in Lemmon and then Belle Fourche for a couple of classes and I know it has been used around Tea and other places. That's good. That's why the state bought them for us. There have been a few technical issues and Draeger has been taking care

## Denny Gorton, Treasurer/Past President



of them under warranty. One of the best ways you can help everyone is if you go through the Train the Trainer class, give a fair evaluation. We can only make them better when we know what to improve on. Keep requesting them for your schools and training.

As I close for this month and the last article for 2024, I would like to thank the Board of Directors of the South Dakota Firefighters Association. Charlie your consistent steady hand and leadership is great to follow. Ron as past Vice-president and all as past work you did in coordinating the mobile live fire trailers was beyond words. Rick Gustad for all the time you spend with registration, and everything else in Growth Zone so firefighters can attend classes. Rick George for working with instructors and always searching for new ones that's a thankless job in bringing high level instruction to our firefighters. Don Ward who is always willing to go and represent South Dakota firefighters at regional conferences and looking to improve training for all. Dave Jorgensen is a steady voice and never fails to pitch in with anything. Mark Stoks is a great representative from the Northeast, who lends his talents at registration and fallen fighter's memorial service. Chad Baumgarten who is always pushing the Board to do better, to give more to the firefighters. Jason Mosterd who no matter what it is, seems to have a great ability to get it done. Cherise Evans the newest member

who will be bringing new ideas, challenging everyone as to why do we do it this way. Samara Erickson who has the thankless job of secretary. Thank you, Samara, for stepping up, no one knows all that you do, except me. A special thank you to Mike Jones with the Fire Marshal's office. Mike may not be an official member of the Board but what he does in helping line up NFA classes and all the others is huge. The South Dakota Firefighters Auxiliary for all they do at fire school, fall conference in working with the vendors.

The entire South Dakota Fire Service is better for all that these individuals put into their nonpaid jobs. I personally say THANK YOU to each of you. What a privilege and honor to work with and for each of you this past year.

Stay safe this season and all

**DENNIS GORTON** 



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## SDFA OFFICER REPORTS

Hello to all South Dakota Firefighters, I hope everyone had a good Thanksgiving and are getting ready for the Christmas season

It has been a crazy summer for me and time has moved fast. I have been remiss in writing articles for the newspaper, I would think about it and then it was already too late to submit a letter.

I attended the Multi-state Firefighter Association conference in Des Moines, IA Nov. 9th, hosted by the Iowa Firefighters Association. We discuss what is happening in the states that have representatives there. Good ideas are shared, I will put more in next month's paper about this.

Both of the associations live fire training trailers have been in Belle Fourche for about 6 weeks now. They were brought to the same location so Drager could perform warranty work on them. That work is done and one of them will be headed to Watertown for the winter. If you are interested is having one of these trailers for training, check out the South Dakota Firefighter Association web page and look for the MLFTU tab. There you will find information on scheduling and what is needed for training. The earlier you get your request the better your chances of getting your desired date.

Chiefs Conference is Dec. 6-8 in Deadwood. Next is Instructors Conference Jan. 4 & 5, 2025 in Mitchell. SDFA board members will have our Winter meeting Jan. 11 & 12 in Chamberlain.

#### Don Ward, Vice President

"If you are interested is having one of these trailers for training, check out the South Dakota Firefighter Association web page and look for the MLFTU tab. There you will find information on scheduling and what is needed for training. The earlier you get your request the better your chances of getting your desired date."

The South Dakota Legislature will be in session after the first of the year. Please stay informed and write your legislators on topics you are interested in.

DON WARD, Vice President

# STATE FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

As we approach the end of another year, it is evident that firefighters across the state have faced a demanding schedule. You have responded to structure and grass fires, engaged in community initiatives, managed severe weather-related damages, and tackled various emergencies, all while maintaining your training and recruitment efforts.

Throughout these challenges, South Dakota's firefighters have

consistently risen to the occasion. It is easy for the public to overlook this dedication, yet regardless of the circumstances or the number of personnel available, fire departments in South Dakota remain steadfast in their commitment to serve.

We all recognize the sacrifices inherent in this profession, particularly for your families. However, your commitment to helping others and contributing

to your communities exemplifies the spirit of public service.

Take this time to enjoy with your loved ones, and thank you for your unwavering dedication. Your efforts have undoubtedly made this holiday season safer and more enjoyable for many.

Stay safe.

PAUL MERRIMAN, State Fire Marshal



### Paul Merriman, State Fire Marshal

"We all recognize the sacrifices inherent in this profession, particularly for your families. However, your commitment to helping others and contributing to your communities exemplifies the spirit of public service."

# SDFA AUXILIARY REPORT

Holly Bauer, Auxiliary Director

"With the \$25 annual cost the State Auxiliary Membership covers the cost of the AD&D and NOT being prorated, we encourage dues to be paid in December or early January to ensure coverage

### 2024 SDFA AUXILIARY BOARD

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AMY HORN Brandon Well, this year has flown by! Now is the time to renew your state auxiliary membership. If you are a current member, you will receive an email to renew your membership. Memberships will also be accepted via mail.

With the \$25 annual cost the State Auxiliary Membership covers the cost of the AD&D and NOT being prorated, we encourage dues to be paid in December or early January to ensure coverage throughout the year.

HOLLY BAUER, Auxiliary Director

# 2025 SOUTH DAKOTA FIREFIGHTER'S AUXILIARY YEARLY MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION



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FIRE DEPARTMENT:			
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Сіту:	STATE:	ZIP CODE:	
E-MAIL ADDRESS:			

### South Dakota Firefighter's Auxiliary Purpose:

- to promote friendship
- to counsel local auxiliaries
- to cooperate with the South Dakota Firefighter's Association and Annual State Fire School

### Contact information:

South Dakota Fire Auxiliary Facebook Page; southdakotafireauxiliary@gmail.com

### Individual Membership – \$25 per calendar year – no prorating

- Basic \$10,000 of Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D) insurance.
   24hrs/day
- Purchase up to \$250,000 additional AD&D for \$45 per \$50,000
- \$10K of Line of Duty Health and fire related health incidents, i.e. heart attack, stroke, others

### Please make checks payable by December 31st to: South Dakota Firefighters Auxiliary or SDFFA

### Please mail to:

SDFFA
Attn: Cheryl Anderson
PO Box 54
Belle Fourche, SD 57717

# ACTION PHOTOS NEEDED!

Please send them to jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com

along with information to explain the photo.





# White Fire Department and Ambulance Service receive large donation

Invenergy recently donated \$5,000 to both the White Fire Department and the White Ambulance Service.

The White Fire Department includes: Levi Sell, Fire Chief Trever Schwartz, Trevor Pownell, Assistant Fire Chief Cory Byers, Gage Anderson, Denton

Schwartz, Chad Willmott, Michael Westberg, Larry Jensen, three Invenergy representatives, and Heidi Fieber.

White Ambulance Service includes: Joe Klein, Cheri Selleck, Lori Colberg, Tammy Byers.

Invenergy and affiliated companies have successfully devel-

oped more than 31,000 megawatts of projects in operation, construction or contracted, including wind, solar, transmission infrastructure, natural gas power generation, and advanced energy storage projects.

(White Tri-City Star, White, Nov. 14, 2024)

### Avon crews called to shed fire

On Oct. 19, at about 11:30 p.m., the Avon Volunteer Fire Department and the Avon Ambulance responded to a call of a hay shed on fire northwest of Avon. On arrival, the shed containing approximately 1,100 large square bales of hay, was fully engulfed. The Avon fire chief requested mutual aid and the Wagner Volunteer Fire Department, and the Dante Volunteer Fire Department responded. The shed and its contents were destroyed, but the surrounding fields and structures were protected and there were no injuries. The Avon Fire Department was on scene for approximately 56 hours. Submitted by Dennis Dodge, Avon Volunteer Fire Department.



# Manderson man in tribal prison following fatal fire

A Manderson man is in tribal custody on homicide and arson charges following a deadly fire on Oct. 19 in Manderson.

Reno Matthew Rondeau was arrested Saturday on tribal charges of first-degree homicide, first-degree arson, criminal mischief, damaging private property, and the sale and possession of an alcoholic beverage.

The fire killed 42-year-old Tanya White Butterfly, an aspiring criminal investigator and former corrections officer.

The fire broke out sometime around 8 a.m. Saturday. White Butterfly, who was at the residence visiting with friends, was trapped in the home.

More than 10 years ago, White Butterfly's brother Ivan was killed in a house fire. The incident is what caused White Butterfly to join law enforcement, her aunt, Hattie White Butterfly, said in an interview with ICT and the Journal.

"She was one of the backbones of the family," she said. "You'd call her and she'd be there."

White Butterfly was a mother of three, grandmother of one and was also taking care of two nieces

es.
"[The kids] were saying this

morning, 'When is Mom coming back?'" Hattie White Butterfly said. "I'm gonna have to go visit with them and let them know that she's an angel now."

Tanya White Butterfly's death has left a void in the family.

Additionally, her family's only vehicle was destroyed in the fire, along with some of their belongings

On Oct. 21, White Butterfly was set to start a new job with the Ogalala Lakota housing authority before returning to Artesia this January for the Indian Police Academy, continuing on her path toward becoming a criminal investigator.

"Someone knows more," Hattie White Butterfly said. "I was really upset about the officers not getting much information ... It's really upsetting"

really upsetting."

Tribal officials said the FBI now has jurisdiction over the case. Rondeau has not been indicted on federal charges.

Violent crime in Manderson is within the jurisdiction of the FBI, as the community is part of the Pine Ridge Reservation.

(Rapid City Journal, Rapid City, Oct. 24, 2024; written by Amelia Schafer, staff writer.)

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# Sanborn County grass fire

Approximately 80 firefighters from four counties and seven fire departments came together to battle a grass fire during red flag conditions on Thursday, October 17. The fire consumed approximately 1,120 acres before it was brought under control with the helo of local farmers with the help of local farmers with tractors and discs. There were no reported injuries or structures lost, however 300 haybales and several miles haybales and several miles of fence line were destroyed. Fire departments responding were Alpena, Artesian, Huron Rural, Letcher, Mount Vernon, Town & Country and Wessington Springs. Other agencies present were Sanborn County Ambulance and Sheriff units. Fire units were on scene for several days hitting hot soots several days hitting hot spots and monitoring the perimeter. Submitted by Rick George.











Please send them to jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com along with information to explain the photo.



### 2024 South Dakota Fall Conference



If you missed the fall conference this year here is a quick review. After a quick business meeting Ljay Geist stepped up to give his session. Ljay's high-power, high-energy talk left everyone motivated and energized. He spoke of leading from any position with pride, honor and humility. "We get to do this" was his powerful quote that struck a chord with the audience. Chief Dannis Piolly brought his decades of experience to talk Chief Dennis Rielly brought his decades of experience to talk about being ready for the "big one" regardless of the size of your department. He brought facts on fire behavior and the importance of having the right mindset. His no nonsense, never give up attitude comes from his military background, and it was evident he lives what he speaks. Then the two speakers joined forces for a questions and answers session. This is the first time something like this has been done and the audience did not disappoint. This session gave everyone a chance to ask whatever was on their mind and everyone got a chance to learn from other's questions. The board would like to thank everyone that took the time to attend and make this a successful event. We are working on next year's fall conference and have zeroed in on speakers. Next year's event will take place October 3-5, 2025. A new location will be coming next year so get ready for something new! Submitted by Rick George.





### **WANTED! Action Fire Photos**

Please send them to jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com along with information to explain the photo.



### GREASE FIRE LEADS TO MINOR INJURY IN BROOKINGS

A kitchen fire in an apartment complex on Monday afternoon in Brookings led to minor damage to one apartment and a minor burn injury to the apartment's occupant.

The incident occurred at approximately 4:57 p.m. and took place at 629 Heritage Drive, Brookings Fire Department Chief Pete Bolzer told the Brookings Register. Four units and 24 firefighters responded, he added.

"A grease fire on the stove had been extinguished; however, burning grease had spilled and burned floor covering material,"

Bolzer said. "Firefighters cooled smoldering areas and removed

smoke from the building."
The apartment suffered minor fire damage, he said. The apartment occupant was treated at the scene for a minor burn to a hand.

Bolzer said personnel were at the scene for 40 minutes, with assistance being provided by the Brookings Police Department

and Brookings Ambulance.

Beyond the apartment complex incident, firefighters also assisted with several other incidents between 4 and 8 p.m. Monday, including:

- A dumpster fire at 1830 Eighth St. S.
- A vehicle rollover at mile marker 135 on Interstate 29, 2 miles north of Brookings. The South Dakota Highway Patrol said the 31-year-old male driver sustained minor injuries in the incident, which occurred in a construction zone. Alcohol was not a factor, and the driver was using a seat belt.
- A motorcycle vs. deer accident on 212th Street.

(Brookings Register, Brookings, Sept. 25, 2024; written by Mondell Keck, staff writer.)



### Annual States Networking meeting

The annual States Networking meeting was held in Des Moines on Nov. 8-9. Pictured in front from left to right are: Don Ward, South Dakota; Terry Ford, Illinois; Kait Meeker, Illinois; Ed Allsman, Illinois; John Swan, Illinois: Adam Kutz, Iowa; Mike Kime, Iowa; Aaron Clemons, Iowa; Keith Smith, Missouri; Chad Mayberry, Kansas; and Shane Pearson, Kansas. Second row: Ron Hampton, Wisconsin; Ed Hoffmann, Minnesota; Zach Lundberg, Minnesota; John Bomar, Nebraska; Brenda Jenny, Nebraska; Lonnie Newhall, Iowa; Roger Carr, Iowa; Kent Brix, Iowa; Barry Kuenkel, Wisconsin; Laramie McPherson, Kansas; Justin Couse, Kansas; Ron Ewing, Kansas; and Jimmy Hubbard, Kansas.

### **GROVER HOME** CAUGHT ON FIRE SATURDAY

Early morning Saturday, Watertown Fire Rescue rescued one and spent four hours extinguishing a house fire in Codington County.

At about 11:40 a.m., WFR arrived at 44570 177th St., which is northwest of Grover, according to a release. The initial call reported there were four people in the home, but upon arrival WFR found that three people had escaped the flames on their own, but one person was still inside the home.

WFR immediately entered the home and located the person on the second floor and took them out of a bedroom window and down a ladder, a release said. The person was treated in an ambulance for smoke inhalation and transported to Prairie Lake Hospital and later transferred to Hennepin Burn Center in Minneapolis, the release stated. The other family members were examined on the scene, but they refused to be transferred to a hospital. There were no other injuries reported.

Along with both the Hayti and Hazel fire departments, WFR crews attacked the fire. However, it took all three fire companies four hours to extinguish it.

The cause of the fire is under investigation. A total of approximately 15,000 gallons were shuttled to the fire. Without the assistance of both the Hazel and Hayti fire departments, WFR reported it would not have had enough water. Codington County Sheriff's Office also assisted with the

(Watertown Public Opinion, Watertown, Oct. 22, 2024)



### Belle Fourche hosts training

On October 26, the Belle Fourche Volunteer Fire Department hosted a Senior Level MLFTU training session. A total of 17 certified instructors participated in the training, 15 of those from west river so that our cache of Senior Lever instructors now statewide. Submitted by Don Ward, VP







### Rollover accident near Midland

Midland Fire and Ambulance were paged out at 7:45 Oct. 29 to a one vehicle rollover seven miles south of Midland on what is often referred to as deadman's curve. No one has ever died at this curve but is at least an annual call location. Driver was out of truck upon arrival with minor bruises. SD Highway Patrol and Haakon County Sheriff worked the incident. The truck was hauling refrigerated foods. Submitted by Reuben Vollmer.



# 4-MILE FIRE NEAR WOONSOCKET CONTAINED

A grass fire, approximately four miles south of the junction of Highways 37 and 34 near Woonsocket, was reported Thursday afternoon.

The Woonsocket Fire Department responded and the call quickly went out for assistance, leading to fire departments from Alpena, Wessington Springs, Letcher, Artesian, Mount Vernon, and Huron's Rural responding to the blaze.

An estimated 1,120 acres were consumed, with no injuries, livestock or structures lost.

Sheriff department personnel from Sanborn, Jerald and Miner Counties were on hand, as well as the S.D. Highway Patrol.

A total of 80 people piloted 27 different vehicles, as well as 15 tractors and 15 water tender trailers were involved in fighting the 4-Mile Fire, which was declared contained just before noon on Friday.

Thanks go to all the volunteer efforts that assisted in keeping the fire controlled.

(Huron Daily Plainsman, Huron, Oct. 19, 2024)





### Midland holds training

On Thursday, Oct. 19, Black Hills LifeFlight brought a medical transport helicopter to Midland, landing on Main Street between the school and West Central Electric outpost. The crew told of proper approach to the helicopter for loading a patient and the many safety concerns dealing with helicopter and crew. Kids were allowed to check out the helicopter along with the many adults present. Groups in attendance were Midland Fire and Ambulance, Haakon County Sheriff's Department and West Central Electric employees. The flight crew with local first responders did a patient load onto the helicopter. Submitted by Reuben Vollmer.

# Platte Fire Department Called Out Twice Last Thursday

The Platte Volunteer Fire Department responded to a call around 8:30 a.m. last Thursday morning for a fire five miles east and a mile and a half south on Pistulka land where a burn pile/pit from quite some time ago restarted doing some smoldering.

Crews were then dispatched at

Crews were then dispatched at about 2:50 p.m. Thursday afternoon for a grass fire just east of the Mar- cella Strand residence near Torrey Lake. Much of that issue had been taken care of by the time crews arrived on scene.

(Platte Enterprise, Platte, Oct. 23, 2024)

### ACTION FIRE PHOTOS NEEDED!

Please send them to jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com along with information to explain the photo.

# Brownsville Fire Tender

By STEVE THOMAS, Chief BVFD

Brownsville Volunteer Fire Department has been seeking to upgrade its tender for some time. The old tender was a 1979 Ford, refurbished to be a 1,200-gallon 4X4 tender. With a tight budget in mind, BVFD decided to search for a water carrier that could be modified for fire purposes. Thanks to Assistant Chief Mike Anderson and Adam Altergott of Altergott Forestry LLC, a construction water truck was located in Oklahoma.

Adam, who is also a firefighter for the Spearfish Canyon FD, and a select Brownsville FD team worked on designing the modifications needed. The water truck was given to Adam and his business team to complete the transformation. Using everyone's expertise and innovative suggestions, a quality fire tender was built. The finished product was delivered to Brownsville

Fire this summer and exceeded expectations.

The new tender can carry up to 3,000 gallons of water which doubles the water capacity BVFD can deliver to a fire. The truck is a 4x4 with a diesel engine which suits the needs in reaching some of the backroads the department has to travel. The truck is equipped with a roof-mounted electronically controlled monitor, various hose connections, and a rear hose reel for pump and roll. The department decided to keep the road sprayers in case dust control or wetting down an area is called for.

The new tender recently had its "baptism of fire" when Brownsville assisted State Wildland, the Forest Service, and neighboring departments in fighting and sup-pressing the Meadow Creek Fire this summer in the Black Hills. The feedback regarding the tender was overwhelmingly positive, so BVFD is certainly proud of its newest member.





# Beresford Fire Department battles camper fire

At 6:44 a.m. on Sept. 12, Beresford Fire & Rescue was paged to the Windmill Campground for a report of a camper fully engulfed in flames. Police arriving on scene instantly started evacuating people from the nearby campers.

With no fire hydrants in the campground, the firemen directly attacked the fire from three fire trucks quickly knocking down the fire. During the attack, firefighters safely removed two propane fuel tanks that were in the burn area preventing them from possibly exploding.

There were no reported injuries, and the residents of the unit were able to escape the camper when the fire was noticed. The fire is believed to have started from a heating appliance that was in use at the

Fifteen BFD firefighters responded with six units. Alcester Fire Department was called for back-up and was cancelled when the fire was under control.

(Beresford Republic, Beresford, Sept. 19, 2024)

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# Beresford responds to hay fire

At 3 a.m. on Sunday morning, Oct. 27, Beresford Fire and Rescue received the call of numerous hay bales on fire at an Dalesburg area farm site 14 miles from town. Upon arrival Beresford command notified the Union County Dispatch center of the need of mutual aid from surrounding fire departments. The initial attack was to attempt to contain the fire to the general area and prevent it from spreading to a farm site and nearby fields. As responding fire units from Alcester, Centerville and Vermillion arrived the attack was focused on the burning hales

Local farmers were responding with field equipment to disc around the burn area for several hundred yards. This was to prevent any ground spread of the fire. Others had tractor/loaders that were placed into action to move burning bales and move unburnt bales to a safe location. Firefighters and units were assigned to these loaders to knock down the fire of the burning bales while they were being moved out of the fire area.

the fire area.
Clay Rural Water dispatched a crew to a fill site a short distance away and began refilling the fire tankers with water so they could return loaded to the fire in a short amount of time.

short amount of time. Law enforcement provided scene safety and support. BFD auxiliary also supported the firefighters while they were in action. Three 911 dispatch centers, Clay, Lincoln and Union counties worked simultaneously dispatching and monitoring this event. No injuries were reported and there was no equipment damage or loss. Beresford Fire, like many fire departments, have pre-arranged agree-ments with local farmers for their equipment and response during these events. This support comes non-conditionally. Neighbors assisting neighbors and supporting their firefight-

ers in times of need. Beresford Fire wants to thank all parties involved.



Please send them to jeff@southdakotafirefighter.com along with information to explain the photo.

# Community rehab doubles as fire training

By WENDY PITLICK, Black Hills Pioneer

Community rehabilitation efforts provided a valuable training op-

portunity for Belle Fourche fire-fighters, Saturday. NeighborWorks Dakota Home Resources partnered with the city of Belle Fourche to remove a dilapidated house and make room for a new governor's house to be placed in the neighborhood. The roof and floors of the house at 805 Aurora St., were caving in, and the nearby garage was falling down. The Belle Fourche Fire Department set the house on fire and used the opportunity to train all of its members, but especially the newest firefighters and cadets.

"We have cadets here," said Jim Groseclose, assistant chief of the Belle Fourche Fire Department. "They're usually high school kids who are on the department as cadets. It gives them a feel for the fire, what we do, and all the things in training that we do on live fires. One of the things we did is we had them get as close to the fire as they could put their face shields down and kind of test their gear, so they really understood how hot it is. You don't really fully under-stand how hot a structure fire is until you're actually there. That gives them some practice so someday, when they're on a real fire, they're familiar with it. For the cadets it's a hands-off training. You just have them observe the rookies who have two years or less, who can do everything anyone else can, they're just less trained. So, it's extremely good for our rookies.'

Once the fire was cleaned up, NeighborWorks Dakota Home Resources cleared the lot to prepare for a three bedroom, two bathroom governor's home that is expected to be completed in early 2025. The land is placed in the Dakota Land Trust, a program that leases the lot to the homeowner for 99 years, in an effort to take the price of land out of the cost of the home, effectively creating more affordable home owner- ship. Mike Walker, executive director of NeighborWorks, said by doing this, the new, 1,200 square foot home can be sold for less than

In addition, NeighborWorks affiliate Neighborhood Lending Services, plans to offer up to \$10,000 in down payment and closing cost assistance for qualified buyers toward the purchase of the new house to make it even more affordable. The home will be located in a redevelopment district where it may be eligible to receive certain property tax benefits as part of the discretion-ary formula keeping the monthly payment even lower.

Walker said projects like this allow NeighborWorks to partner with the city of Belle Fourche to help the city realize advance its strategic plan to remove blight, while meeting the needs of its housing study to provide more residential homes



Belle Fourche firefighters got some valuable training when the city partnered with NeighborWorks Dakota Home Resources to remove a dilapidated house on Aurora Street. Photos by Wendy Pitlick of the Black Hills Pioneer.



Firefighters attacked both sides of the fire with water during a training exercise, Saturday, Oct. 19.



Firefighters work on knocking down the walls of a dilapidated structure as part of their training exercise.



Belle Fourche firefighters were able to train while helping remove a dilapidated structure from town.



A blighted structure on Aurora Street provided an opportunity for Belle Fourche firefighters to practice techniques and familiarize themselves with equipment, as they set the dilapidated structure on fire to remove it from the neighborhood. The structure will be replaced with a brand new governor's house. Pioneer photos by Wendy Pitlick.







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