

South Dakota Firefighters Association Fall Fire Conference

**October 10-12, 2025
Spearfish, SD**



South Dakota Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service

Saturday, 11th October 2025

**Convention Center
Spearfish, SD**



Our SDFA Fall Conference Speakers

Rodney Foster is the Former Assistant Director of Oklahoma State Fire Service Training. He currently has over 25 years in the Oklahoma Fire Service and an educator of volunteer firefighters in Oklahoma. Rodney holds a master's degree in Fire and Emergency Management from Oklahoma State University.



- Staging is often not the most efficient aspect in most fire responses. We must be prepared to create a staging area that works to get assets assigned. To be deployed and sit in staging causes many firefighters for self-dispatch and go directly to the fire and not check in with IC. If we can identify assets sooner and get them out of staging, they might be more willing to go through the proper steps to be included in the event.

Tom Merrill is a 39-year fire department veteran and serves with the Snyder Fire Department, which is located in Amherst, New York (first ring suburb of the City of Buffalo). He served 26 years as a department officer including 15 years in the chief officer ranks. He was chief of department from 2007-2012 and currently serves as a Fire Commissioner for the Snyder Fire District. Tom has conducted various fire service presentations throughout the country including FDIC, The National Volunteer Fire Council Training Summit, VCOS and many other national, state and regional conferences.



Allison Barry & SDSU Research Team Allison Barry is an assistant professor in exercise science at SDSU. She is conducting focus groups to explore what physical activity and nutrition looks like in the South Dakota Volunteer Fire Service. These focus groups will include questions and discussion about health and wellness policies, facilitators & barriers to physical activity & nutrition implementation, knowledge and application of existing resources and health & wellness programs. This will be the second phase of a FEMA (EMW-2023-FP-00535) funded research project sponsored by the Dept. of Homeland Security entitled Empowering Volunteer Firefighters: A Community-Based Approach to Enhancing PA and Nutrition. Each focus group will last approximately 50-60minutes and will be conducted in-person at the respective conference. Each group will consist of 5-8 people and be asked to complete two focus group sessions (Day 1 and Day 2). You will only be allowed to participate in this if you are a volunteer and at the rank of a firefighter.



2025 SDFA Fall Fire Conference Schedule

Holiday Inn Convention Center

September 10th – 12th, 2025 - Spearfish, SD

All times Mountain Time

Friday 10 October

8:30am–12:00pm SDFA Board of Directors meetings
 1:00pm–3:30pm Joint Council of Emergency Services Mtg @ Convention Center
 5:00pm–7:00pm Registration Desk & Vendors open @ Convention Center

Saturday 11 October BREAKFAST ON YOUR OWN

7:30am–8:00am Registration Desk Open
 8:00am–8:30am General Membership Meeting & Discussions
 8:30am–9:30am Conference Speakers/Keynote Sessions

- **SDSU Research Team - Focus group session 1 “Empowering V Firefighters: A Community-Based Approach to Enhancing PA and Nutrition”**

9:30am–12:00pm Conference Speakers/Keynote Sessions

- **Tom Merrill – “The Professional Volunteer Fire Department”**

12:00pm–1:00pm Noon Meal @ Convention Center – (included with your registration)
 1:00pm–3:45pm Conference Speakers/Keynote Sessions Continued

- **Rodney Foster – “Rural Department Staging & Working Together”**

4:00pm–5:00pm **Annual SD Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service @ Convention Center**
 5:45pm–~8:00pm **Sponsored Conference & Dear Old Timers Social (hors d'oeuvres & cash bar) @ Convention Center**



Sunday 12 October BREAKFAST ON YOUR OWN

8:00am–11:00am Conference Speakers/Keynote Sessions

- **SDSU Research team – Focus group Session 2 “Empowering Volunteer Firefighters: A Community-Based Approach to Enhancing PA and Nutrition”**

11:00am thru Completion **SDFA General Membership Meeting & Discussions**
Safe Travels Home!



Enjoy the scenery of Spearfish Canyon

President
Charles Kludt
PO Box 606
Viborg, 57070
605-940-1087
Pres@sdfirefighters.org

Vice President
Don Ward
1202 Union St.
Belle Fourche, SD 57717
605-645-2689
VPres@sdfirefighters.org

Treasurer
Dennis Gorton
PO Box 1884
Rapid City, SD 57709
605-484-0806
Tres@sdfirefighters.org

Secretary
Samara Erickson
111 North Grand Ave
Pierre, SD 57501
605-940-1795
Sec@sdfirefighters.org

Southeast Dir.
Dave Jorgenson
501 NE 2nd St
Colton, SD 57018
605-351-5051
SEDir@sdfirefighters.org

Northeast Dir.
Mark Stoks
901 13th Ave SW
Aberdeen SD 57401
605-380-9817
NEDir@sdfirefighters.org

Central Dir.
Rick George
39604 227th St
Woonsocket SD 57385
605-461-9190
CenDir@sdfirefighters.org

Northwest Dir.
Chad Baumgarten
PO Box 599
Lemmon 57638
605-222-9702
NWDir@sdfirefighters.org

Black Hills Dir.
Cherise Evans
4555 Candlewood PI #308
Rapid City, SD 57702
605-393-7801
BHDir@sdfirefighters.org

Badlands Dir.
Jason Mosterd
526 Franklin St
Burke, SD 57523
605-840-0252
BLDir@sdfirefighters.org

South Central Dir.
Rick Gustad
PO Box 33
Platte 57369
605-680-2637
SCDir@sdfirefighters.org

South Dakota *Firefighters Association, Inc*

sdfirefighters.org



Welcome to the South Dakota Firefighters Association Fall Conference

The South Dakota Firefighters Association Board of Directors welcome all of you to the SDFA Fall Fire Conference, General Membership Meetings, and Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service.

This year's Fall Conference will have another outstanding docket of speakers. Tom Merrill and Rodney Foster will bring messages that relate to the rural volunteer fire department with ideas we can incorporate into our own situations.

The SDFA Board decided to move the Fall Conference for this year since we didn't have a new name to be added to the Fallen Firefighter Memorial.

The Fallen Firefighters Memorial service on Saturday afternoon at 400pm in the conference center. The short service is to honor all of those who have fallen in the execution of firefighting duties in South Dakota.

Please, stop by for the social events on Friday and Saturday at the conference. Friday is registration and a meet and greet with the guest speakers. Saturday evening is the Dear Old Timers social with funds raised to go to the High School Scholarship fund. Everyone is invited to the social events.

We truly appreciate the sponsorships from the companies that make these available. Relaxing and socializing can be equally educational, entertaining, and memorable.



I consider it a privilege to have met the people I have come to know through my time in the fire service. As my fire family continues to grow across our state and the country, I am thankful for the opportunities, friendships, and memories it has provided for my family and me.

Stay safe, and God Bless,
Charlie Kludt
SDFA President
Viborg VFD



South Dakota Firefighters Association

Officers & Board of Directors



Charlie Kludt
President & NVFC Rep.
Viborg
Term expires 2026



Don Ward
Vice-President
Belle Fourche
Term expires 2027



(Western SD) NVFC Rep. –
Position is open as Jeremy Walla
has stepped down from this
position this Fall



Samara Erickson
Secretary
Pierre



Dennis Gorton – Treasurer &
Past-President
North Haines, Rapid City



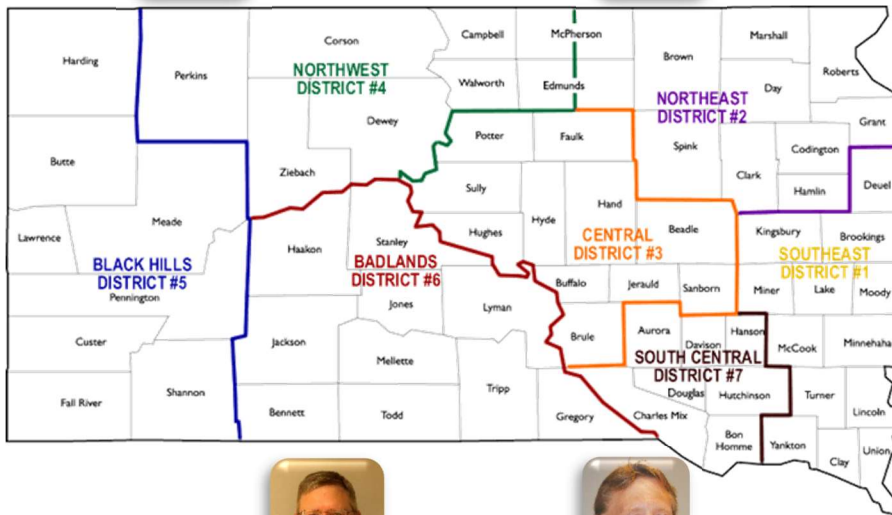
Northwest
Chad Baumgarten
Lemmon
2027



Northeast
Mark Stoks
Aberdeen Rural
2025



Black Hills
Cherise Evans
Doty, Rapid City
2027



Central
Rick George
Woonsocket
2025



Badlands
Jason Mosterd
Burke
2024



South Central
Rick Gustad
Platte
2026



Southeast
Dave Jorgenson
Colton
2026

SD Firefighters Association Membership

100% Department Membership - \$25.00 per member, per calendar year (Jan-Dec).

Please include a complete list of department members, their e-mail and mailing addresses with your application for 100% membership.

Department Only Membership - \$100.00 / year

Individual Only Membership– \$50.00 /year

Contact: South Dakota Firefighters Assn.
Samara Erickson, Secretary
Sec@sdfirefighters.org



100% Department Membership provides the following:

- \$25.00 Per Rostered Firefighter
- SD Firefighter newspaper e-mailed monthly to each registered member
- Voting Privileges at SDFA Membership meetings and elections
- Basic \$10,000 of Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D) insurance. 24 hrs/day
- \$10K of Line of Duty Health and fire related health incidents, i.e. heart attack, stroke, others
- Purchase up to \$250,000 additional AD&D for \$45 per \$50,000
- *Discount registration to State Fire School*

DEPARTMENT ONLY

- \$100.00 per department
- No Voting
- Allows individuals to purchase an individual membership and get basic insurance coverages

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

- \$50.00 per individual
- 1 copy of the SD Firefighter newspaper e-mailed to the individual monthly
- No Voting
- Insurance eligibility (if department is SDFA Department Only members)



SD Firefighter Newspaper

- We e-publish a monthly newspaper which keeps our 100% membership up-to-date on fire events throughout the State. The newspaper is sent to all State legislators, the congressional delegation, Governor, Secretary of Public Safety, and Secretary of Agriculture.

See the SDFA website at www.sdfirefighters.org for the latest information



South Dakota Firefighters Lifetime Membership

Firefighter and Year the year their Lifetime Membership was Granted

Art Summer—1968 *
Joseph Egger—1988 *
Squire Broel—1990
Patrick Smith—1996
Dale Hartmann—2005
LeRoy Koopman - 2010
Jesse Luce – 2011
Duane Hofer - 2018
Glenn Sealey - 2022

Gerald A. Brinkman—1987
Richard "Bud" Gould—1989
James E. Tish—1993
Orlen Norgaard—1996
Don Opie – 2005
Chuck Jarding – 2011
Paul Smith – 2015*
Dennis Gorton - 2018
Reuben Vollmer – 2022

A.E. "Murph" Anthony—1988 *
Lloyd Erickson—1990
Gail Johnson—1993
Oliver "Ole" Olson—1996
Russ Hendrix – 2008
Ben Huber – 2011
Mike Ball - 2017
Tarzan Mullinix - 2021
Harvey Jongeling – 2024



*indicates awarded posthumously

See the SDFA website at www.sdfirefighters.org for nomination information

South Dakota State Fire Auxiliary Board Members



Secretary; Courtney Walker, Sturgis
President; Toni Schmidt, Tea
Director; Jamie Rehlak, Brandon

Director Amy Horn, Brandon
Treasurer; Cheryl Anderson, Belle Fourche
Vice-President; Holly Bauer, Whitewood

The purpose of the South Dakota Firefighter Auxiliary shall be to promote friendship among the members of the South Dakota Firefighters, to counsel local auxiliaries and to cooperate with the South Dakota Firefighters Association and Annual State Fire School.

Auxiliary members are composed of all or any persons affiliated, associated or involved with active, retired or deceased firefighters.



Dear Old Timers

Dear Old Timers (DOTs) is a gathering of firefighters, husbands and wives, and families and friends of the fire service. Some with a few weeks, to over 50 years!

The DOTs Social will be held at the conference center Saturday evening after the Memorial Service.

Everyone is invited. Complimentary hors d'oeuvres will be provided.



Come and enjoy new acquaintances, longtime friendships and reminisce at Dear Old Timers.

If you wish to be an official member or donate, \$10.00 Membership dues to DOT are used to assist funding the annual scholarship given to a high school senior.



SOUTH DAKOTA FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL SERVICE

Posting of Flags: Honor Guard
and Pipes & Drums

Opening Prayer

Welcome: SDFA President

Remarks: SD Fire Marshal

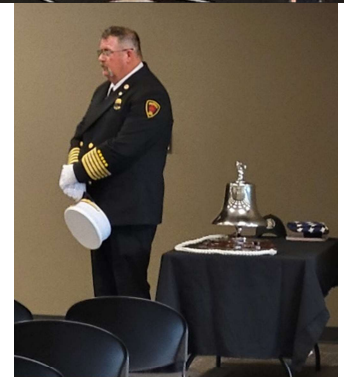
Memorial Message

Roll of Honor and Placing of
Roses

Moment of Silence in Respect
and Honor

Reading of Firefighters Prayer

Benediction



Firefighter's Prayer

When I am called to duty God, wherever flames
may rage,
Give me the strength to save some life,
Whatever be their age.
Help me embrace a little child before it is too late,
Or save an older person from the horror of that
fate.
Enable me to be alert and hear the weakest
shout,
And quickly and efficiently put the fire out.
I want to fill my calling and to give the best in me,
To guard my every neighbor and protect his
property.
And if, according to my fate, I am to lose my life,
Please, bless with your protecting hand those
who meant the most to me, in my earthly life.
Amen

South Dakota Fallen Firefighters Memorial



Honor Roll of Those Who Have Made the Supreme Sacrifice



Paul Babue — Rapid City Fire Department
Jim Thompson — Rapid City Fire Department
Ervin Voegelé — Civilian Conservation Corp.
Alex Kiesz — Bowdle Volunteer Fire Department
William Earl Burd — Martin Volunteer Fire Department
Ellsworth Gussler — Miller Volunteer Fire Department
Seigfried Hoogestraat — Miller Volunteer Fire Department
Merle Juhl — Miller Volunteer Fire Department
Lyle Haigh — Miller Volunteer Fire Department
Ernest Watson — McIntosh Volunteer Fire Department
Tom C. Masters — Sioux Falls Fire Department

Oscar Pearson — Brandon Volunteer Fire Department
John J. Korpi — Lead Fire Department
Charles E. Larson — Sioux Falls Fire Department
Leonard Evans — Rapid City Fire Department
Elmer Pontius — Deadwood Volunteer Fire Department
Robert Stephens — Rapid City Fire Department
George Carter — Rapid City Fire Department
George Sumners — Rapid City Fire Department
Henry Tank — Rapid City Fire Department
William H. Walker — State Fire Marshal



South Dakota Fallen Firefighters Memorial

Donald Marso — Pierre Volunteer Fire Department
Marvin Willey — Rapid City Fire Department
Richard McDonald — Rapid City Fire Department
Wayne Schlosser — Timber Lake Volunteer Fire Department
Curtis Dean Mikkelsen — Hurley Volunteer Fire Department
Robert Buhler — Delmont Volunteer Fire Department
Dave Martin — Opal Volunteer Fire Department
Roger McMillin — Martin Volunteer Fire Department
Nathan Hamro — Renner Volunteer Fire Department
Donald E. DeVries — Belvidere Volunteer Fire Department



Gerald “Jerry” Martinez — US Forest Service
Thomas “Emmett” Kuehl — Elkton Volunteer Fire Department
Leon James Lehmen — Cleghorn Volunteer Fire Department
Trampus Haskvitz – Hot Springs – SD Wildland Fire Suppression
William Waldner – Sunset Hutterite Colony
Jacob Waldner – Sunset Hutterite Colony
Lt Col Paul Mikreal – North Carolina Air National Guard
Major Joseph McCormick – North Carolina Air National Guard
Major Ryan Davis – North Carolina Air National Guard
SMSgt Robert Cannon - North Carolina Air National Guard



Dale Englund – Stockholm Volunteer Fire Department
Steven Ackerman – Valley Springs Volunteer Fire Department
David Ruhl – US Forest Service – Rapid City
Donny Manger – Presho Volunteer Fire Department
David Fischer – Sturgis Volunteer Fire Department
Dwain Hudson – Argyle Volunteer Fire Department
Archie Murphy – Civilian Conservation Corps
Fred Fedeler – Chester Volunteer Fire Department
Josh Kogel – Cavour Volunteer Fire Department



The South Dakota Fallen Firefighter Memorial was designed, built, and funded entirely through the donations of individual supporters and agencies of the fire service. If you or your department would like to contribute to the memorial fund, contact the SDFA.

FUTURE FIRE SCHOOLS

The South Dakota Firefighters Association & Auxiliary
Watertown Convention & Visitors Bureau
and Lake Area Technical College

We look forward to South Dakota State Fire School
in

Watertown, SD
June 11th-13th, 2026



NOTES AND MEMORIES

This image shows a full page of blank white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a template for writing or drawing. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.

South Dakota Local Assistance State Team

The LAST is a volunteer group of fellow emergency services individuals from our state, and surrounding states, that will assist a department, and family, with unfortunate incidents involving the loss of a firefighter, EMT, Law Enforcement, or other emergency responder.

They can provide assistance with planning a memorial service for the loss of a **current, retired, or longtime member or a Line-of-Duty Death**, with assistance, afterwards, of filing insurance benefits and getting the family back on their feet.

South Dakota
Local Assistance State Team

Dignity – Honor - Respect

NFFF

When tragedy strikes, people call for help.

When tragedy strikes a department,
Local Assistance State Team (LAST) is their help.

For more information visit SDLAST.org

They can provide assistance with planning a memorial service for the loss of a **current, retired, or longtime member or a Line-of-Duty Death**, with assistance, afterwards, of filing insurance benefits and getting the family back on their feet.



When tragedy strikes a department,
Local Assistance State Team (LAST) is their help.
For more information visit SDLAST.org



NOTES AND MEMORIES



To all the firefighters, spouses, partners, & family members,



Thank You!!





I AM RESPONDING



SUMMIT CARBON
SOLUTIONS



L3 Harris Technologies



Spearfish Convention Center

Everyone. Everywhere. Everyday.



We Support You

