



SEPTEMBER 14, 2023 | ISSUE 67

# Rattle Watch

Proudly informing South Carolina firefighters.



## You're invited: Quarterly Training on October 25

You're invited to attend our upcoming [Quarterly Training and Business Meeting](#) on October 25 in Charleston where we have the pleasure of hosting guest speaker **Dr. Candice McDonald**, Deputy CEO of **National Volunteer Fire Council**. Dr. McDonald is an expert in recruitment and retention in the fire service and will be sharing her insights and strategies with us.

We know how important it is to have a strong and committed team, and we know many departments across the state are struggling to find and keep new members. Dr. McDonald's presentation will provide valuable information on how we can attract and retain high-quality individuals in the fire service. We hope you learn from her expertise and apply it at home in your department.

Take advantage of this opportunity to learn from Dr. McDonald and connect with your peers. We look forward to seeing you there and working together to strengthen the South Carolina fire service.

[Let us know you're coming.](#)

**From the CDC**



## CDC opens "Health Effects of 9/11" exhibition

The CDC's new exhibit, "**The Health Effects of 9/11**," opened on Monday, September 11, 2023, the 22nd anniversary of our nation's worst tragedy. Many survivors, including first responders, are suffering the health ramifications of the carcinogens released on that fateful day and in the months that followed. According to the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, "The exhibition was developed through a partnership between the World Trade Center Health Program, the CDC Museum and the 9/11 community to raise awareness about lingering health effects of that day."

The exhibit will be on display through April 24, 2024 and is also available [online](#).



### Community events



## NVFC hosting HAZMAT Train the Trainer

Our friends at the **National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC)** are hosting a free [hazmat train-the-trainer program](#) in Orangeburg, November 4-5. The training is made possible by partnership between NVFC and the **U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)**.

The training will equip first responders with the skills and knowledge necessary to train others in their communities on hazmat safety and response. Experienced hazmat trainers and those new to the field are welcome. [Save your spot](#).



## Aiken County Fire Fest is October 7

The **New Holland** and **Monetta Volunteer Fire Departments** are hosting the second annual [Aiken County Fire Fest](#) on Saturday, October 7 at new holland Acres in Batesburg. Fire Fest includes a silent auction, brisket cook off, vehicle extrication demonstrations, firefighter challenges, and live music.

Tickets can be [purchased in advance](#) for \$10 or for \$15 at the gate. Children 10 and under are free.



## Greenville Swamp Rabbits' First Responder Night is October 27

Upstate friends, the **Greenville Swamp Rabbits** is hosting First Responder Night on Friday, October 27. Bring the family for touch-a-truck and trunk-or-treating before the game. Use promo code SCSFA to receive a discount on your [tickets](#).

### Member benefits



**Member discounts offered at Mattress Firm**

The Member Benefits Committee announced last month a new member discount at Mattress Firm to both individual members and fire departments.

As a first responder, you selflessly serve and protect lives. Mattress Firm is expressing their gratitude for your unwavering dedication through the special Home Mattress Discount Program. You can now buy mattresses for up to 40% off retail prices.

Whether you're an individual or representing a fire department, Mattress Firm's got you covered.

### Individuals

To get started on your purchase, complete [this form](#) and send it back to our Mattress Firm Sleep Expert, Kevin McGrath at [kevin.mcgrath@mfrm.com](mailto:kevin.mcgrath@mfrm.com), as an attached photo or PDF file or hit "submit" at the end of the form. Kevin will work with you to select your mattress(es) and process the order for delivery and set-up.

### Fire departments

Mattress Firm assists fire departments across the country with purchasing top quality mattresses, platform frames, and encasements to outfit sleeping quarters. Mattress Firm offers prices that can save a department up to 50% off what they would spend on mattresses and accessories in a typical retail store.

The [Top 9 Fire Department Mattress List](#) showcases popular mattresses across the country, but you have the freedom to choose from hundreds of mattresses on the MattressFirm.com website. If you're interested in a particular mattress, please email our Mattress Firm representative, Kevin, to receive the discount price for that mattress.

You can reach Kevin Monday through Friday, 10am-7pm on 346-718-5127 or at [kevin.mcgrath@mfrm.com](mailto:kevin.mcgrath@mfrm.com).

Don't miss this fantastic opportunity to enjoy quality mattresses at discounted rates!

## Member tribute



## J. Muller honored in Columbia Metro Magazine

**Columbia Metropolitan Magazine** in its September 2023 issue featured a tribute to the late Irmo firefighter **James Michael Muller** who died in the line of duty in May of this year. "A Fallen Hero: The legacy of firefighter James Michael Muller" by **Kasey Huss** details Muller's introduction to the fire service, the unbreakable bond he shared with his crew, and the stories that keep his memory alive and well.

The article reads in part:

*Nine men pull up chairs around the long table in the firehouse kitchen. Among them are Nick Macken and Dylan Williams — the last two firefighters to see J alive. A young woman in a red skirt and tortoiseshell glasses nervously sits at the table next to Capt. Dominick Boyce. She's a writer, and she's there to learn about James Michael Muller.*

*"We just called him J," says Rich Gross, "Not Jay. Just, 'J.'"*

*The nervous writer makes the note and asks, "What did J love?"*

*Without hesitation, Capt. Michael Klawer says, "Firefighting." The other men nod in agreement. "And his family."*

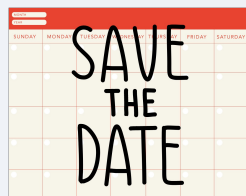
*"He had this amazing mix of knowledge and vulnerability," remembers Chief Sloane Valentino. "He could talk about something so passionately but approach it with so much humility. And he had the best damn mustache I've ever seen."*

*The guys each crack a smile. The tension in the room lifts, and before long, they forget the writer in the red skirt and swap stories about J amongst themselves. They remember making him read his letter aloud as an intern. They joke about how his driving never improved. They talk about the hot sauce and his hair. They share about Emma and Cole visiting the firehouse and how crazy J was about them. And they remember him as a passionate and dedicated firefighter. And they laugh — a lot.*

*As they laugh, they honor J. Each day, they take another step into an unknown future, ready to give 110 percent, just like J.*

[Read the full Columbia Metro article.](#)

**Was this email forwarded to you? Subscribe to receive Rattle Watch every Thursday.**



- [October 1-6 - Fire Officer Academy: The Company Officer class 23-02](#)
- [October 17 - 1% Regional Training Class: York County](#)
- [October 25 - Quarterly Training + Business Meeting](#)
- January 18-21 - Fire Service Improvement Conference
- June 12-15, 2024 - Fire-Rescue



**South Carolina State Firefighters' Association**

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