



OCTOBER 19, 2023 | ISSUE 72

Rattle Watch

Proudly informing South Carolina firefighters.



Save the dates for these upcoming events

We're in the final quarter of 2023, and we're already looking forward to what 2024 has to offer. We have several trainings and events scheduled, and we hope to see you there.

Officer Academy 24-01 applications are due October 31

Fresh off OA 23-02, applications are open for the Fire Officer Academy: The Company Officer, March 3-8, 2024. We expect another highly competitive selection process; if you are applying, be sure to have a peer or friend review your application, resume, and cover letter. The deadline to apply is **October 31, 2023, at 11:59 p.m.** and will not be extended.

Don't wait to [submit your application](#)! Get a preview of what the in-person portion of the program is like with [pictures from OA 23-02](#) earlier this month.

Quarterly Training and Business Meeting is on October 25

Recruitment and retention are hot topics in the fire service, and the upcoming switch from NFIRS to NERIS is sure to be a big change. We're excited to welcome to Quarterly recruitment and retention expert **Dr. Candice McDonald**, Deputy CEO of the National Volunteer Fire Council; **Rebecca Harned**, data advisor for the U.S. Fire Administration and Chief Programs Officer for the International Association of Fire Chiefs; and **Chief Tom Jenkins**, senior advisor/research manager for the NERIS project.

Quarterly offers something for everyone. We hope to see you at **Trident Tech in Charleston on October 25, 2023, at 10 a.m.** for Quarterly Training. Lunch is on us; just [let us know you're coming](#).

Fire Service Improvement Conference is January 18-21, 2024 in Columbia

Our hands-on-training conference is back with a few favorites and a couple new highly requested courses, too. All class times are 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Class size is limited and there will be no waiting list. Engine and Truck filled up in record time; [save your spot](#) sooner rather than later!

Thursday, January 18, 2024—Saturday, January 20, 2024

- **SOLD OUT:** Hand in Hand Engine School, led by Jonah Smith
- **SOLD OUT:** Truck School, led by Blake Cartee
- Effective Command Process: Practical Incident Command, led by Nicholas Ray

Thursday, January 18, 2024—Friday, January 19, 2024

- Hook Up and Stretch: High-Rise and Mid-Rise Operations, led by Micah Rains
- Grain Bin Rescue, led by Brian Roberson
- Basic Shoring for the Initial Engine Company, led by Chad Beam

Saturday, January 20, 2024—Sunday, January 21, 2024

- Winning on the Fireground: Limited Staffing, led by Michael Dozier
- Make the Grab: Creating Aggressive Search Culture, led by Micah Rains
- National FARMEDIC, led by David Dennison
- School Bus Extrication

Saturday, January 20

- Lithium Ion Battery Fires Response, led by Webster Marshal

Affordability is important to us; *the entire weekend is just \$50*, regardless of how many classes you take. Mix and match at your convenience.

The DoubleTree by Hilton at 2100 Bush River Road is the host hotel for the weekend. Room reservations should be made before December 19, 2023. [Book your stay](#) and we'll see you there!

The Firefighter Memorial Service is February 3, 2024, in Irmo

The yearly Memorial Service honoring members we've lost is one of our most important responsibilities. It is a privilege and honor to create a space where the fire service and the families of those who have passed can come together to formally recognize the impact their loved one had on the South Carolina fire service. In a time of immeasurable grief, we hope that remembering those who have passed will help you find peace and comfort.

We are looking for escorts for families. Please email [Colleen Quillen](#) if you would like to be on the escort list.

The Firefighter Memorial Service is on **February 3, 2024, at Riverland Hills Baptist Church in Irmo at 2 p.m.** Please join us as we memorialize the legacy of these Association members.

We're going to the State House on April 17, 2024 for Legislative Day

As a South Carolina firefighter, it is essential that your voice is heard by

state lawmakers. Legislative Day is your opportunity to meet with representatives at the State House and discuss the issues that matter most to your community and department.

Your presence at Legislative Day shows your community that you are willing, ready, and able to take an active role in shaping the policies that impact how you operate. This is your opportunity to show your dedication to the fire service and your desire to make a difference.

[Legislative Day](#) is on **April 17** on the State House grounds. We'll share more information on escorts in the weeks leading up to the event.

Fire-Rescue is June 12-15, 2024 in Myrtle Beach

Go ahead and mark your calendar for [Fire-Rescue, June 12-15, 2024](#). We had an incredible turnout for Fire-Rescue 2023, and we hope to see you and your families again in 2024.

Golfers, the **Foundation Golf Tournament** is **June 12 at Legends Golf Resort** in Myrtle Beach. Get your teams ready! We've consistently seen an increase in teams and funds raised every year for the past few years; we are hopeful to continue that trend. Thank you for your support of the Foundation!

Thank you for what you do, and for allowing us to support you. We hope to see you in the coming months.



Hornet Fire Training donates guidon holder in memory of J Muller to Fire Officer Academy

The Officers Section hosted its third **Fire Officer Academy: The Company Officer** in early October. The first-ever graduating class of the program, 22-01, joined forces shortly after their graduation and decided to give back to the program that reignited their passion for the job and gave them an extended family. The guidon pole that they gifted is stunning and carries with it the significance of alumni remaining active in the ever-growing alumni network.

Emergency services and the military have many similar themes intertwined in their cultures. The Fire Officer Academy has roots in the military, specifically the Noncommissioned Officer Academy (NCO). The NCO Academy is the second level of Enlisted Professional Military Education and prepares those enlisted with managing and leading units. The design and intentionality of the FOA draws inspiration from the NCOA.

The tradition of a guidon also stems from the military.

The guidon pole donated by 22-01 follows each Fire Officer Academy class from place to place throughout the week. On the pole is the actual guidon, a flag that companies carry to identify their unit. Each class has had a guidon that details their graduating year and class number. Every classmate signs the guidon at the end of the week, and this is gifted to the recipient of the David Lee Crenshaw Leadership Award. The guidon is important to the culture of the Fire Officer Academy.

Jonah Smith, Battalion Chief at Charlotte Fire and man behind **Hornet Fire Training**, is an integral piece of the Fire Officer Academy puzzle. Chief Smith has taught for the Association on numerous occasions, and the South Carolina fire services loves his Hand in Hand Enjin course. The Hornet Fire Training cadre has been part of the Fire Officer Academy since its first program, bonding with the students and other instructors.

Jonah and his cadre taught **J Muller**, graduate of FOA 23-01. J was killed in the line of duty on May 26, 2023, just a few short months after his time in the Fire Officer Academy. To attempt to put into words the impact J's life and legacy have had on the program is futile; there are just simply not enough catchy phrases and no words meaningful enough to do it justice. Losing J not only impacted his fellow FOA 23-01 classmates, but the instructors he met throughout the journey, too.

When it was time for FOA 23-02 to do engine work, the Hornet Fire cadre donated a guidon holder in memory of James "J" Michael Muller, FOA 23-01.

Jonah shared on social media about the donation, stating, "The last time this class was offered, a man named James Michael Muller was in class. As many know, he was killed in the Line of Duty a few short months later... Through the generosity of Elkhart Brass and Jamie Fulk, we were able to create an awesome remembrance and gift to honor Jay," he wrote.

"It was a true honor for our cadre to present this remembrance to the staff and facilitators of this excellent school," Jonah concluded.

The gift from Hornet Fire Training is a testament to J's impact on everyone who had the pleasure of knowing him and is a physical reminder of his lasting legacy on the foundation of the Fire Officer Academy.

Thank you, Jonah and cadre, for your continued brotherhood and support of the Fire Officer Academy and the Association.

Applications for FOA 24-01 are [open](#) until 11:59 p.m. on October 31, 2023.



Cozy up this fall with our new winter weather gear

Community events

Stay warm and stylish this winter season with our new cold weather merch! Items include a variety of cozy and comfortable hoodies and jackets perfect for the chilly weather.

As a bonus, new items come in the classic colors that paint South Carolina in the fall: *garnet and orange*.

Don't let the cold weather get in the way of proudly showing your Association pride! [Visit our store](#) today to check out our new collection of cold weather merchandise.



Prepare for Crash Responder Safety Week

Crash Responder Safety Week is November 13-17, 2023. The initiative encourages all Traffic Management Incident communities to make a difference by raising awareness about roadway safety so safe, quick roadway clearance is possible. Learn more about CRSW on the Federal Highway Administration [website](#).



Forestry's Horse + Buggy Show is October 21

The Forestry Commission's annual **Fire Department Horse and Buggy Show** is on Saturday, October 21! The show runs from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Forestry Commission Headquarters (5500 Broad River Road in Columbia).

Departments are encouraged to bring at least one piece of converted federal surplus equipment that they've received from the Forestry Commission to showcase during the "show and tell" portion of the event.

Don't miss out on the truck pull event from 10-11 a.m. Gather a team of 5-7 people and register on-site for a fee of \$100 per team. The proceeds from the truck pull event will be donated to Special Olympics of South Carolina.

After the truck pull, vote for your favorite vehicle and enjoy some refreshments. The Forestry Commission will also have a table set up for departments to learn more about the Federal Surplus Property and Grant programs.

Please contact [Jonathan Calore](mailto:Jonathan.Calore@forestry.com) [(803) 667-1200] with questions.



Welcome To
The Team

Kim Voisine

Kim joins the South Carolina State Firefighters' Association after 25 years at John Deere in Maine.

Welcome to the team, Kim!

As the needs of the South Carolina fire service grow, so does the need for additional Association staff to continue to serve our membership at a high level. We're excited to welcome Kim Voisine to the team as our Administrative Assistant.

We spoke with Kim for a quick interview to introduce her to you.

What is your connection to the fire service?

In 1996 I started working as a volunteer driver for Poland Fire Rescue in Poland Maine. I resigned from the department in 2003 when I was expecting my second child. I had missed and wanted to get back into the fire service. In 2014 I returned to Poland Fire Rescue as a driver, completed Advanced Driving Courses and Pumps class to be able to drive the ambulances and engines. In winter of 2014 I completed my Basic EMT Class and became a Nationally Registered EMT in the State of Maine. In 2019 I completed my Firefighter I/II Pro-Board for the State of Maine Firefighter I/II from Southern Maine Community College.

Where did you work previously?

I've worked for John Deere for the past 25 years. I started out answering the phones and worked my way up within the company, learning all that I could about parts, sales and service. In my career with John Deere, I spent 18 years in the Construction and Forestry division, 7 years in the Agricultural and Turf division, and was the Service Manager for the local John Deere dealership.

Why are you passionate about the fire service?

I'm passionate about helping people. As a firefighter I help people on their worst days. Whether it's because there is an auto accident or a house fire as a firefighter, I'm one of the passionate few that run toward the danger and those that need help the most.

Our Chief at Poland Fire Rescue was retiring and at his retirement party he said in his speech something that I passionately believe to be true... "an individual that has a passion to become a firefighter has something unique within them, it can't be bottled and sold. It's not something that you can teach or learn, it's something that you have or don't. It's something deep within the person's core."

What are you most excited about in your move to South Carolina?

Starting my new job with the South Carolina State Firefighters' Association and the warmer weather. Maine is a beautiful state but the Maine winters with its snow, ice and very cold temperatures for 5 to 6 months a year can be challenging and make the winters the longest season of the year.

What are your hobbies?

I haven't had any real hobbies in quite a while. When I'm not working for John Deere, I spend my free time working for or at Poland Fire Rescue either picking up an open shift on a Sunday, training, working on fundraiser events or working as the treasures for the Benevolent Association. My husband says Poland Fire Rescue is my "hobby."

What do you want the South Carolina fire service to know about you?

I'm looking forward to getting the opportunity to meet and work with everyone within the South Carolina fire service. My husband, our two dogs and I are very excited about moving to South Carolina and making it our home. We have two adult children. Our son Brandon, his wife Lela and grandson Charlie that live in Westbrook, Maine and our daughter Amber that lives in St. Louis, Missouri. They're all looking forward to visiting us in South Carolina.

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- [October 25 - Quarterly Training + Business Meeting](#)
- [January 18-21 - Fire Service Improvement Conference](#)
- February 3, 2024 - Firefighter Memorial Service
- [March 3-8, 2024 - Fire Officer Academy: The Company Officer 24-01](#)
- April 17, 2024 - Legislative Day
- [June 12-15, 2024 - Fire-Rescue](#)



South Carolina State Firefighters' Association

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