



PRESS & DAKOTAN



The Loss Of A Brother

State President Says Firefighter's Death Felt Across South Dakota

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
randy.dockendorf@yankton.net

VIBORG – For Viborg fireman Charlie Kludt, this week's death of Valley Springs firefighter Steven Ackerman feels like losing a family member.

It's a sentiment shared across the state, said

Kludt, president of the South Dakota Firefighters Association (SDFA).

"Our hearts go out to the Ackerman family and the Valley Springs Fire Department," Kludt said. "The loss of Firefighter Ackerman was tragic and unfortunate. The emotional aspects are going



Kludt

to be hard to get through for all the individuals involved."

The 38-year-old Ackerman, a volunteer firefighter, lost his life when he responded Sunday night to a Brandon house fire. The homeowner, 47-year-old David Smith, also perished in the blaze.

Ackerman's visitation will be held from noon to 5 p.m. Saturday at the George Boom Funeral Home in Brandon. A funeral service is scheduled for 2 p.m. Sunday at the Brandon Valley High School gymnasium in Brandon.

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Worker Hurt In Dome Mishap

BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
randy.dockendorf@yankton.net

VERMILLION – A construction worker was listed in critical but stable condition Wednesday after falling about 30 feet at a DakotaDome work site, according to one official.

Wednesday's incident occurred in the 900 block of N. Dakota Street, according to Vermillion Fire/EMS Chief Shannon Draper. The accident occurred on the north side of the construction site for the DakotaDome addition.

Draper declined to release the injured man's name.

Draper did identify the man as an iron worker but was unsure which construction company was the employer. No other persons were involved in the incident, he added.

"We transported (the worker) by ambulance from the accident scene to Sanford Vermillion Hospital," the fire chief said. "Then, he was flown by helicopter out of the Vermilion hospital to Sanford Hospital in Sioux Falls. He was in critical but stable condition at the time."

The Vermillion Fire/EMS Department was dispatched to the scene at 7:53 a.m., Draper said. The University of South Dakota police department was also called to the scene.

The first units on the scene identified a male patient who had fallen approximately 30 feet and had sustained moderate injuries, Draper said.

"Originally, this was listed as a fall of 15 to 20 feet, but we confirmed when we arrived that it was at least 30 feet," the fire chief said. "He was working on an I-beam, a steel girder. He was harnessed, but it was some sort of failure in the safety equipment and he fell."

The fire chief didn't believe that wind or other weather conditions contributed to the incident.

Fire personnel were requested to respond to the scene to assist in the patient packaging and extraction from the area, the fire chief said.

"(The patient) had fallen from an elevated level to below grade," Draper said.

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COURTESY PHOTO

Yankton native Rosco Wuestewald (right, on stage) is gearing up for the Vans Warped Tour and will perform Friday, April 17 at Rounding 3rd Bar and Casino in downtown Yankton.

Local Musician To Join Major Tour

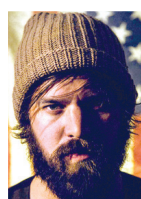
BY RANDY DOCKENDORF
randy.dockendorf@yankton.net

This summer, life will get pretty "warped" for musician Rosco Wuestewald – and the Yankton native can't wait. Wuestewald, whose Onward Etc. band already holds an international footprint, has been selected for another major gig. He will play the entire Vans Warped Tour 2015, taking him across the nation for what promises to be an exciting but exhausting tour.

"I'll be on the whole tour. It's pretty unheard of to do the whole thing," he told the *Press & Dakotan* this week in a phone interview. "It's a big honor and a big step in my career. It's one of the biggest and longest music festivals in the world."

How big? Wuestewald estimates average daily attendance at the Vans Warped Tour runs 40,000 to 70,000 fans. And that doesn't count the much greater audience he will reach.

"This will be supreme exposure," he said. "Some (musicians) like the Warped Tour because they can get access to really big labels, and there are just a lot of important things (like these ap-



Wuestewald

pearances) that go into the music industry. You hope you get noticed. This is your profession, but it's also your art and what you love to do."

Wuestewald learned in December he would play the Vans Warped Tour. However, he couldn't go public with the news until March because of a confidentiality agreement.

"It was one of the most frustrating things," he said. "It's one of the best things to ever happen to me, but I had to keep it a secret."

The tour held its official kick-off party April 7 in Los Angeles. The schedule currently lists 42 concerts, starting June 17 in Anchorage, Alaska, and then literally running coast to coast through Aug. 8.

But first, Wuestewald is returning home for his own "kick-off" concert Friday at the Rounding 3rd Bar and Casino in downtown Yankton. His set starts at 9:30 p.m. and actually features

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Volunteers Recognized For 25 Years Of Service

BY JORDYNNE HART
jordynne.hart@yankton.net

This week is a time to appreciate and honor those who donate their time and energy to positively impact the lives of others.

Avera Sacred Heart (ASH) honored Delaine Kuestermeyer, Myrtle Andersen, Peggy Mulloy and Claris (Jeff) Harm for volunteering 25 years at ASH on Tuesday for National Volunteer Week at its annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet.

"All of our volunteers are very much appreciated for their contributions, but the dedication of having volunteered for 25 years is huge, and we want to celebrate with them!" ASH Director of Volunteer Services Carla Hummel wrote to the *Press and Dakotan*. "I truly believe that volunteering is what keeps these volunteers young and so dedicated to others. They are such a great example of volunteerism and what it can do for your life. Their outlooks on life are so positive and their willingness to help others is inspiring."

Kuestermeyer said she couldn't believe it has been 25 years since she started her volunteer work at ASH.

"Time has gone by so fast," she said. "It is just pleasant work."



COURTESY PHOTO

Avera Sacred Heart (ASH) honored Delaine Kuestermeyer, Myrtle Andersen, Peggy Mulloy and Claris (Jeff) Harm for 25 years of volunteer service at ASH at its annual Volunteer Appreciation Banquet. Pictured are CEO and President of ASH, Doug Ekeren, Harm, Kuestermeyer, Mulloy, and director of volunteer services, Carla Hummel.

When Kuestermeyer first started volunteering, she helped out in the obstetrics and gynecology unit. ASH was the first place at which she ever volunteered.

"I first started on that floor because, at that time, we were allowed to carry the babies," she said. "I would help in the nursery,

and sometimes I would help the mothers with getting their dinners ordered."

Over time, rules changed and Kuestermeyer was moved to the information desk downstairs, where she has volunteered ever

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SD Athletes May Get To Take More In Merchandise

BY BOB MERCER
State Capitol Bureau

PIERRE — Starting later this summer, high school athletes in South Dakota might be allowed to each accept gifts such as clothing, shoes and other merchandise worth as much as \$300 in total retail value from each camp or select event they attend.

Athletics and activities directors from high schools throughout South Dakota recently voted 131-0 to recommend the rule change. The current limit in the state for what are known as amateurism awards is \$75 per event.

The South Dakota High School Activities Association's board of directors will give first reading to the \$300 proposal next week during the board's meeting Tuesday and Wednesday.

The schedule calls for the board to take public comments during the next two months and make a final decision at the

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