



Retired School Personnel

Newfletter

Affiliated with National Retired Teachers Association • Summer 2026

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Celebrating America

SDRSP Convention at Pierre

May 4-5, 2026

Convention Overview by *Carm Tobin*, SDRSP Secretary

Monday, May 4, 2026

Registration opened at 9:00.

The day began with a pre-convention tour of the **South Dakota Governor's Residence and the Veteran's Memorial**. The interest was so high that two groups were needed: a 10:00 group and a 10:30 tour group.

FIRST GENERAL SESSION:

The afternoon kicked off with **President Cathy Anderson** calling the 2026 State Convention to order and leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Riggs High School Choir under the direction of **Grace Wilford** beautifully sang the National Anthem.

Steve Harding, Mayor of Pierre, welcomed us to Pierre and wished us a great convention. He thanked us for our many, many years of educational impact. "Just think of the kids' lives you have touched! Teaching is the most noble profession in the world! Public Education is here to stay!" He concluded his speech with, "Please remember you all own a part of Pierre as it is *your* capital! Have a great two days! Welcome to **YOUR** city!"

The Pierre High School Drum Ensemble taught by **Gage Ruhlman** was extremely talented and very entertaining.

Gail Swenson introduced Pierre **Superintendent, Dr. Kelly Glodt**. Dr. Glodt has served as the Superintendent of the Pierre School District since 2007. Following nearly two decades of dedication to the students, families, and surrounding communities he shall be retiring effective June 30th, 2026. Dr. Glodt's strong leadership has been recognized statewide as he was named South Dakota Superintendent of the Year, an honor reflecting sustained excellence in educational leadership and service. He concluded his positive and impactful speech with this, "Call our community 'Pierre-a-dise' and please enjoy your two-day visit!"

Our next speaker was **Stephanie Hageman, SDEA President**. She began by sharing, "Past, present and foreseeable futures are impacted by students' success stories. Those success stories are connected to each

Convention Overview *(continued)*

of you in this room today. **Every** educator in the classroom owes a retired teacher a debt of gratitude. Your instincts, leadership skills and wisdom do not retire. Thank you for your continued advocacy and years of continued service.”

SDRSP President Cathy Anderson welcomed attendees to our two-day convention as we *Celebrate America's 250th Birthday!*

ROLL CALL BY UNITS:

Eight Units were present with 39 members in attendance.

Aberdeen	3
Black Hills	12
Madison	2 (one guest)
Milbank	3
Mitchell	1
Northern Hills	0
Oahe-Mobridge	0
Philip	1
Redfield	0
Sioux Falls	15 (one guest)
Sisseton	0
Watertown	2
Winner	0
Yankton	0
Total	39 members
	2 guests
	8 units

The **SDRSP Board Members** were introduced by **Cathy Anderson**. The **Past SDRSP Presidents** were asked to stand and be honored for their many years of service and dedication.

Our first guest speaker of the afternoon was **Tony Venhuizen, Lieutenant Governor**. Mr. Venhuizen is a politician and an attorney, who is serving as the 40th Lieutenant Governor of South Dakota since January 2025. He began his afternoon talk by saying, “Please tell all **NEW** teachers that they need to have two non-negotiables: *to love kids and *a strong desire to hone their craft. Venhuizen’s *Stories About South Dakota Governors* was riveting, historical and packed with very interesting and humorous facts. He concluded with, “If you have not visited *The Trail of Governors*, a true highlight of the city of Pierre, please, take the time to check it out! You won’t be disappointed!”

SNACK BREAK: Brownies, Gardetto snack packets and **Bill Z’s famous fudge** were available for an afternoon pick-me-up treat.

Dr. David Grabitske was the second guest speaker of the afternoon. Dr. Grabitske is the museum director of the *South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center* in Pierre. He is, also, on the 250th Celebration Committee. He shared that there are Four Levels of Involvement: •National Events •South Dakota Events •Your Own Community and •Personal Understanding. *Personal Understanding* entails watching historical movies and TV shows, reading books and attending community events. He concludes with this, “We **must** start *SEEING* our American history!”

Before concluding the First General Session, **Chloe** and **Harper**, both students of Riggs High School, presented their oral interpretation piece on Vietnam. The young ladies were excellent! They are coached by **Melinda Frank**.

Leadership Meeting: Unit Presidents, SDRSP Board and all interested were invited to a sharing time from 4:00 to 5:00. Many *new* ideas were exchanged, concerns were discussed and laughter was shared.

SECOND GENERAL SESSION:

The evening began at 6:00 with Social Time.

Gail Swenson, a SDRSP member, as well as a Sioux Falls School Board Member, offered the blessing prior to dinner and dessert being served.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Kevin Kumpf is an active member of the community arts theater. He also owns the historic 1904 Farr House in Pierre. He shared many interesting facts of his historic home which was built by a Civil War Colonel in the Georgia Revival style. The three-story house has the original woodwork and a spiral staircase. Each December, Kevin and his wife replicate the Christmas tree that was originally on display in the 1904 home.

AWARDS:

2026 Scholarship Recipients:

***Kayla Prasek** - Watertown

***Bob Julius** - Black Hills

Outstanding Service Award:

Vicki Sterling, President Elect was the recipient of this 2026 special award.

Florence Krieger Award:

The 2026 recipient of the coveted Florence Krieger Award was **Gerri Larson, Executive Director**.

Convention Overview *(continued)*

Community Service Awards:

Since **Diane Odland, Community Service Chair** was unable to attend the convention, **Cathy Anderson, SDRSP President** announced and passed out the awards for Volunteer Service Hours. The following Units received Gold Level certificates: Aberdeen (2855 hours), Black Hills (4445 hours), Milbank (4172 hours), Northern Hills (4322 hours), Redfield (2154 hours), Sisseton (2288), Sioux Falls (2570 hours), and Watertown (6389 hours). The **total** Community Service hours submitted for 2025-2026 was **31,641**. Based on the \$25 hourly wage, we earned **\$791,025** for the state of South Dakota. Way to go, *SDRSP Units and hardworking members!*

Prior to adjourning for the evening, **President Anderson** reminded everyone of the times for the Breakfast Buffet and the Memorial Service on Tuesday morning.

Tuesday, May 5, 2026

The Hotel Breakfast Buffet was available for all SDRSP convention attendees from 6:00 to 8:45 a.m.

THIRD GENERAL SESSION:

Memorial Service:

At 9:00, the 2026 Memorial Service entitled *Remember & Honor* was led by **Vice-President, Rhonda Preller**. We honored twenty-two (22) members lost from nine (9) units. **Preller** created an honorary PowerPoint with photos as **Bill Zubke** solemnly announced each name. Then **Rhonda** read a brief life synopsis as **Carm Tobin** placed a small American flag on the memorial table to designate each lost member.

Business Meeting:

At 9:25 a.m. the Business Meeting was called to order by **President Anderson**. Following the sharing of reports and the induction of the **2026-2028 SDRSP Board** the Annual Business Meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

FOURTH GENERAL SESSION:

Lindsey Holmquest, AARP State Volunteer Director was our first guest speaker of the morning. Lindsey began by saying that the goal of AARP is to consistently support SDRSP with resources, expertise and grants which enables SDRSP to do outreach to retirees. Holmquest added, "AARP's vision is that all

people live with dignity, purpose and fulfill their goals and dreams."

Lindsey brought a hands-on activity for members to work on together in groups of their respective units/towns. The project was entitled **Safe Routes to School Walk Audit**. The activity sheet was divided into four sections: (1) **WHERE:** Identify the Walk Audit Location (2) **WHAT:** Decide on a Type of Walk Audit (3) **WHO:** Invite People to Participate (4) **WHEN:** Choose a Date and Time. This activity allowed for much discussion and sharing of ideas within our own communities.

It is very evident that AARP cares for the 50+ and SDRSP values and appreciates their support. *Thank you, Lindsey!*

Next, we played a *USA Trivia Game* with fun prizes. It is no surprise that it was a fast-paced competition in a roomful of *EDUCATORS!*

Prior to lunch, we were asked to fill out our Convention Evaluation Sheets.

LUNCH:

Our noon banquet was a party for America celebrating its *250th Birthday* complete with beautifully decorated, patriotic cookies for dessert.

STATE GRANDPARENT ESSAY:

Anita Manning, Grandparent Essay Chair introduced **Kalista Aadland**, the fifth grader that had been chosen as the 2026 South Dakota Grandparent Essay winner. Kalista is from Aberdeen and took home the \$250 first place prize. Her essay was creative, interesting and well-written.

Vicki Sterling, the upcoming President, passed out artistic book markers as invitations to her convention in Rapid City on May 5-6, 2027. The 2027 Convention is entitled, **Through the Decades**.

The two-day event concluded with **President Cathy Anderson** thanking everyone for attending the **Pierre Celebrate America** Convention. Anderson was appreciative of all the support, guidance and friendships over the past two years of her presidency. Cathy concluded with, "Safe travels home and have GREAT summers!"

THANK YOU - THANK YOU - THANK YOU

***AARP for numerous convention expenses and their financial support of the Grandparent Essay Winners.**

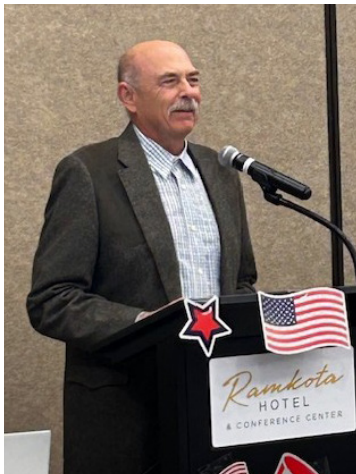
***SDRSP member's generosity to the Missouri Shores Domestic Violence Center - the Charitable Project for the 2026 Convention.**

Convention Photos



Two different groups of attendees toured the Governor's residence before the convention began.

Convention Speakers & Entertainment



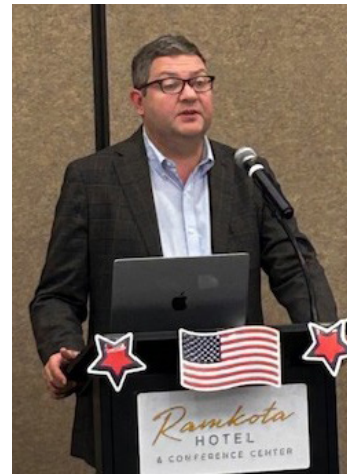
Pierre Mayor,
Steve Harding



Pierre Superintendent,
Dr. Kelly Glodt



SDEA President,
Stephanie Hageman



Tony Venhuizen
Lt. Governor of SD

*To say it was a beautiful day would not begin to explain it.
It was that day when the end of summer intersects perfectly
with the start of fall. ♥Ann Patchett*

Convention Speakers & Entertainment



Riggs HS Choir



Riggs HS Drum Ensemble



Dr. David Grabitske –
Museum Director of
SD Heritage Museum in
Pierre



Oral Interp – Chloe and
Harper from Riggs HS



Kevin Krumpf –
Farr House in Pierre



Lindsey Holmquist –
AARP State Volunteer
Director

Convention Awards

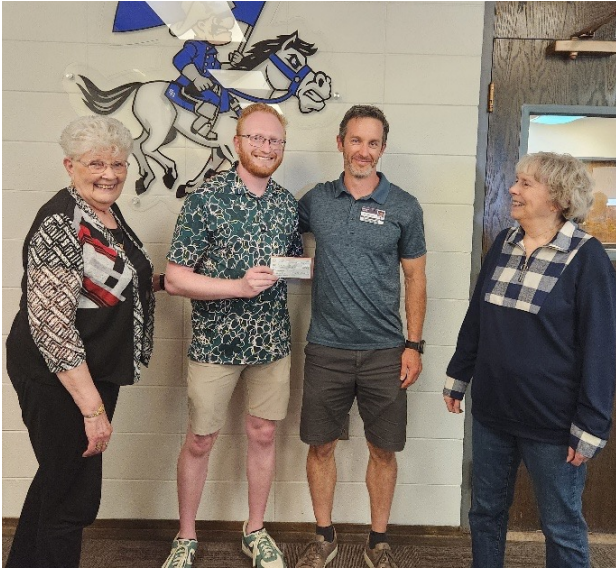


Gerri Larson from Rapid City was presented the prestigious Florence Krieger award by Cathy Anderson, president of SDRSP. Gerri is the Executive Director of SDRSP and liaison with the National Retired Teachers Association.



Vicki Sterling from Rapid City received the Outstanding Service award. She is the incoming SDRSP President.

Convention Awards



Robert Julius, a teacher in Rapid City, received a \$1000 scholarship from SDRSP. Doris Ann Werlinger, BHRSP president, and Vicki Sterling, scholarship chairperson, presented him the check, along with his colleague who nominated him.



Kayla Prasek, a teacher in Watertown, received a \$1000 scholarship from SDRSP. Pam Raeder, co-president of WARSP presented her with the check.



Celebrating America's birthday with red, white and blue decorations.



Five out of the nine units were represented and received their certificate for Community Service volunteer hours. This year's number totaled 31,641 reported hours.



Memorial Service - Carm Tobin and Rhonda Preller honored 22 SDRSP members who passed recently. Bill Zubke read the names as each person was recognized with a PowerPoint short bio of each person.

**WHAT GOOD IS THE WARMTH
OF SUMMER, WITHOUT THE
COLD OF WINTER TO GIVE IT
SWEETNESS.
~ JOHN STEINBECK**

**Summer has been great but
fall is here and I am ready
for a change. Goodbye
summer. ~quotesilove.com**

SDRSP 2026 Convention Evaluation

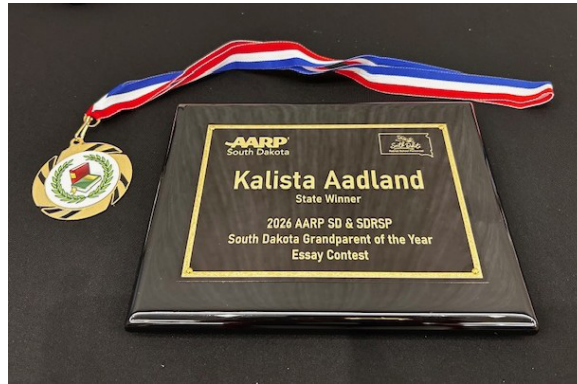
33 evaluations forms were completed.

1. Location and facilities? • Approved of location in Pierre 25 • Facilities 25 • No Pierre unit – Only Sioux Falls, Rapid, Watertown, & Aberdeen should hold the convention 3 • Good reasonable mileage in middle of the state 3 • Liked the rotation 5
2. Most informative/enjoyable speakers or presentations • Lt. Gov Venhuizen 20 • Grabitske, Museum 4 • Kumpt-Farr house 13 • Supt Glodt 5 • Tour of Gov Residence 3 • Mayor Harding 1 • Choir 12 • Drum line 12 • Oral interp. 15 • All entertainment 5 • Memorial Service 2 • AARP 3 (long presentation) • SDEA 1 • Tour 2
3. Were the meals/snacks satisfactory? Suggestion? • Meals 23 • Snacks 24 • More fruit/veggies 1 • Nice combination of sweet/salty 1 • Cut back on candies/treat at the table 1 • More than one meat choice for the evening meal 3
4. Suggestions for another convention? • Students should always be a part of our convention • Door prizes 7 • Baskets from units 4 • Book exchange 8 • School sports team shirts or favorite professional team • Have some movement activities • Gift bags were lovely • Community outreach • Bringing a guest • Keep doing things for kids and families • Items for needy projects – alternate to door prizes • Talk about education updates, legislation with a way retired people can be involved in schools, keep staff in the profession • Top unit volunteers should talk about how they volunteer and count up so many hours. • Magazine exchange • Mini rummage sale (no money needed) • Mixer of the US States was fun • More interactive activities
5. Additional comments • No place for “political” comments (to sign petitions) • Special thanks to Bill for the fudge • What are we saving the CDs for? Give more to Educators Rising • Thematic decoration and patriotic chocolates-well done • Do break-out groups to discuss issues • Tentative schedules of the convention in the newsletter and registration • All enjoyable • Vets Hospital in Hot Springs- some type of donations • Bring speakers from college to talk about the state of education • Person report from SDRS • Great convention 8 • Thank you 10 • Please check the SDRSP web pages- all downloads should be PDF format, so they load in iPad • Bus to convention possibly more attendance so people would not need to drive.

Grandparent Essay Winners

Winners for 2026 are as follows:

The 2026 winner is Kalista Aadland from Aberdeen. Second place goes to Camila Mendoza Veleta from Redfield. Third place goes to Hunter Shumway from Rapid City.



Kalista read her essay at the luncheon. She received \$250 from AARP for her first-place essay.

2026 Membership Memorial

Aberdeen
Bill Fuhrman
Katherine Moen
Lois Sollie
Black Hills
Barbara Culey
Eldene Henderson
Dorothea Lawson

Patricia O'Connor
Donna Peppers
Lucille Stickler
Madison
DeAnn Molskness
Milbank
Ken Saeger

Redfield
Viola Hardie
Sioux Falls
Dean Austad
Julie Day
Alyce Dummermuth
Dick Hubble
Lucy Lindsko

John McIntyre
Marlys Roskens
Pierre
Velma Becker
Mitchell
Mabel Nielson
Watertown
Marv Sherrill

Treasurer's Report - Myron Fuerst

At the July 14, 2026, board meeting, the board again decided to send \$750 to Educators Rising. Also, \$2000 would be transferred from the Horace Mann Account to provide two \$1000 scholarships to two teachers pursuing advanced education. AARP contributes \$2500

to cover the Grandparent Essay Contest and some additional convention expenses. The first-place winner of the Grandparent Essay Contest receives \$250, the second-place receives \$150, and the third-place winner receives \$100.

Membership - Jacque Sly

Thank you to Anita Manning for being membership chair for the past two years. It is a steep learning curve to keep track of over 800 members. There are a variety of membership options with SDRSP. First, there are *Life members*. They pay upfront for a lifetime state membership depending on their age when they move to that status. Second, there are *Renewing members*, which is the majority now. There are *New members* associated with a local unit. Since we began doing on-line membership in partnership with AMBA, there are also new members that do not belong to a local unit, but are a *State Only member* of SDRSP. They are scattered throughout South Dakota.

When you send in membership dues, please include contact information for each member. It is surprising how often addresses and email addresses change. Each time a newsletter goes out it costs money to mail and additional money to return undeliverable newsletters. The same goes for email addresses. Each time digital newsletters are sent, there are multiple ones returned. Sometimes it is as easy as one letter wrong or one dot in the wrong place, but the computer does not recognize that, so they are not delivered. Please send any member contact changes or member deaths to Jacque Sly, 22560 Potter Rd, Rapid City SD 57702, jacsly48@gmail.com or 605-381-9116 cell.

Greetings From President Vicki Sterling

Convention 2026:

Thank you, Cathy Anderson and her Sioux Falls group, for an outstanding convention in Pierre this May. This convention had all the elements to make people feel welcome, opportunities to learn something new throughout the gatherings, fun entertainment, good snacks and food. Of course, time to meet new friends and visit with old acquaintances.

Planning for 2026-2027 starts in the summer after the convention:

South Dakota Board Members met in Fort Pierre to discuss how to have a stronger convention and how to help individual units. The board is always concerned about how to help the units. The suggestions from the convention goers provide good ideas which are helpful for another convention and fresh ideas for the units also.

This year for the eastern side of SD the Leadership meeting will be in Watertown on Thursday, August 20th, at 1:00 pm. It will be held at Perkins at 600 9th Ave SE.

For the western side of SD, the Leadership meeting will be held in Rapid City on Monday, August 24, at 1:00 pm. It will be held at the AARP office located in the Uptown Rapid Mall at 2200 N. Maple Avenue.

Connect, Learn, Serve has been our slogan.

Connecting with newly retired school personnel seems to be discouraging to every unit. Has any organization found a way to recruit new members or retain members? We have continually asked ourselves if our programs are interesting and are members learning something new? Are members given the opportunity to give suggestions to programs? At the state convention, it was amazing to hear the number of hours members identify as community service. The list of how members serve is amazing.

2027 Convention

The next South Dakota Retired School Personnel Convention theme is *"Through the Decades."* It is to be held in Rapid City May 5 – 6, 2027. The reason for this theme is that people in this organization have had decades of experience. We need to embrace our abilities. We are lucky to have secured a local choir called *Bella Voce* and they will keep you entertained with the music we have known through the decades.

The Box Elder Events Center is commonly called The Box and is easy to get off at I-90 at Exit 61 to a service road to the address of 631 Watiki Way. The convention center is connected to the Courtyard by Marriott hotel. People can go between Courtyard and the convention center without getting wet and there are no steps.

SDRSP Executive Director – Gerri Larson

Another big Thank-you to President Cathy, the Sioux Falls Unit and all others that worked together to put on another fun, educational, and successful May 2026 Conference. If you did not attend this year, please consider doing so next year.

Many Units are now planning for the Fall and coming year Program and Activities. As always, membership recruitment is a big part of the planning.

AARP continues to be a source of help and support. They have a speaker's bureau that may have some ideas

for your programs this coming year. AARP continues to work on items of importance to the over 50 crowd. Among them are Fraud, Caregiving, Social Security, and Drug costs. They are also working on using their Audit Tool Kits to improve Walk-ability arounds schools and neighborhoods. A program on this was presented at the State Conference. If interested please contact the State Office in Sioux Falls.

Best Wishes for a Great Year!



Sunflowers end up facing the sun, but they go through a lot of dirt to find their way there. ~ J.R. Rim

Community Health And Services – Diane Odland

Looking at my Community Service report from 2025-2026, we had 9 Units reporting their Community Service hours with an **INCREASE** of hours to 31,641!! The total for 2024-2025 was 26,582 hours!

All 9 Units did an AWESOME job with each Unit receiving a **GOLD LEVEL** Certificate with over 2000 Hours recorded by each Unit at the State Convention.

Based on wages of \$25 an hour, we earned \$791,025 for **VOLUNTEERING! THANK YOU EVERYONE!**

Remember we continue to make an impact on those around us with a wide array of activities that we, as

Retired School Personnel, continue to be involved with. Keep recording ALL of your activities that you are involved with, within your church and community.

Here's to a Great 2026-2027 of Volunteering! Also, here's to the Dog Days of Summer and an Abundance of Prayers for Cooler Weather and an Increase of Rain as Fall quickly approaches!

As Vincent Van Gogh once said, "As long as Autumn lasts, I shall not have hands, canvas and colours enough to paint the beautiful things I see." Enjoy this beautiful season that is upon us!

Legislative News – Bob & Sharon Rose

Interesting issue: Bitcoin Depot went bankrupt. 115 ATM machines in SD closed, which is good news for the people who have been losing money on bitcoins. No

legislative news, yet. We will let you know when things start happening. Hopefully, you are enjoying your 1.56% SD Retirement raise.

Association Member Benefits Advisors (AMBA)

SDRSP has partnered with AMBA to provide supplemental insurance for our members. On the website (sdrsp.org) there is a list of benefits and descriptions of the available insurance. When one retires two of the most popular insurances that are no longer available are dental and vision. AMBA offers those at a reasonable rate. There are many more options. Check out the website and call the numbers listed for more information.

AMBA has a history of serving retired public employees and educators. Now AMBA offers benefits to those who are still active in the workforce and to supporters of education. They provide supplemental benefits to almost every state in the nation. South Dakota is one of the newest states to have AMBA benefits through SDRSP membership.

Part of the partnership with AMBA includes an annual \$2500 donation to SDRSP to help with ongoing expenses and activities.

August Leadership Meetings

Eastern SD Leadership meeting will be in Watertown on Thursday, August 20th, at 1:00 pm. It will be held at Perkins at 600 9th Ave SE.

Western SD Leadership meeting will be held in Rapid City on Monday, August 24, at 1:00 pm. It will be held

at the AARP office located in the Uptown Rapid Mall at 2200 N. Maple Avenue.

Everyone is invited to join the meetings, especially officers of local units.

Candida from the Convention



40
Years Ago

Information taken from the Annual SDRTA meeting in May of 1986.
These were the state committees for SDRTA in 1986:

- Audit
- Budget
- Standing Rules
- Legislative
- Membership
- Nominating
- Public Affairs
- Community Participation
- Informative & Protective Services
- Pre-Retirement
- Newsletter
- Assistant Editors
- Historian
- Memorial
- Parliamentary



Jacqueline Sly
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Rapid City, SD 57702

SDRSP.org

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

CHECK MEMBERSHIP ADDRESSES!

It is important for all unit officers to check with each member for their correct address.

Not having correct addresses costs the organization a great deal of money.

Send all address changes, as well as names and dates of deaths, to

Jacque Sly, 22560 Potter Rd, Rapid City SD 57702

Email: jacsly48@gmail.com Phone: 605-381-9116

I want to join South Dakota Retired School Personnel!



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Mail the above information and \$15 (annual state dues) to:

SDRSP Treasurer, Myron Fuerst

504 E Alder Lane

Sioux Falls, SD 57105