



TSHS Annual Meeting

September 9, 2025

Annual Accomplishments

Train Depot Museum 2025

- 1,316 registered visitors at Train Depot Museum—33 more than 2024
- 17 Volunteer Greeters at Train Depot Museum; 317 hours logged by volunteer greeters
- \$785 collected in visitor donations
- Volunteers cleaned the Train Depot Museum and train cars prior to opening and prior to events
- Volunteers repaired and painted the exterior of Caboose #73; repair and painting the exterior of Engine 1218 has begun
- Historic architect conducted building assessment and developed construction plans for Train Depot repairs
- Bid received for phase one to repair foundation and exterior rehabilitation

Historic Fire Hall 2025

- 10 public tours of the Historic Fire Hall during 2025
- HVAC and electrical systems upgraded; Interior walls, windows, doors, and some floors refinished
- Building addition sided; Interior walls framed, drywalled and painted; restrooms constructed
- Bid received for the final phase to rehabilitate south entrance, replace the door, repair metal ceilings and refinish wood floors

Volunteers 2025

- 26 TSHS volunteers to date
- 4,698 volunteer hours reported to St Louis County Historical Society in the past 12 months
- 100 hours to update the TSHS website www.towersoudanhistory.com

Community Networking, Marketing and Public Relations 2025

- 55 days during the summer that the Train Depot Museum was open to the public, staffed by volunteers
- 5 events held in Coach Car 81 (4 Train Tales and the Miner's Breakfast)
- 2 Main Street History Talks with total of 155 people in attendance
- 3 History Video Interviews conducted
- 3 History Happy Hours held the last Friday of each month during Farmers' Market
- Charlemagne's 52 Club Raffle tickets sold at Friday Farmers' Market, 4th of July Pancake Breakfast, St Martin's Church Salad Luncheon, Old Settlers' Picnic, Lake Vermilion Community Bash, and 2 Main Street History Talks
- 43 articles and announcements about TSHS events published in the Timberjay, Tower News and North Country Free Press
- 190 Facebook posts made to TSHS, What's Up Tower and Lake Vermilion Cabin Owners Facebook pages
- TSHS Facebook posts had 4,483 content interactions
- 2,288 TSHS Facebook followers; 32 new followers since September 2024

TSHS Membership 2025

- 141 active memberships as of 08-31-2025. Memberships are counted on a rolling basis and are active for 12 full months after last date paid. New membership recording procedure began with Past Perfect software in January 2025

Financial Support 2025

- \$364,000 grants awarded in 2024-25 for Historic Fire Hall restoration
- \$1,900,368 total grants TSHS received since 2019 for fire hall design and construction documents.
- \$7,065 received in 2025 memorials, pledges and other community contributions
- \$15,608 allocation from St. Louis County to support TSHS annual operating expenses
- 300 tickets sold in 2025 for the 3rd annual Charlemagne's 52 Club raffle for total revenue of \$15,600
- \$1,889 in revenue and income from the auction and sale items raised from the Lake Vermilion Community Bash and Miner's Breakfast

Administrative Accomplishments 2025

- 9 Board of Director meetings held in person with the option to participate via zoom
- 2 Executive Committee decisions made via email discussion
- Committee Roles and Responsibilities updated
- 13 Grant applications submitted; 4 funded, 3 not funded, and 6 pending
- 36 community requests made during 2025
- Created an organizational planning calendar
- Created marketing materials for programs and events

Committee Accomplishments 2025

- Online cemetery records updated throughout the year
- 4 Train Tales events held with 14 volunteers assisting; 137 children and their adults participating in program
- 200 + children's books, games and puzzles collected for giveaways at Train Tales
- 3 History Happy Hour events provided 27 quarts of lemonade at the Farmers Market in appreciation for community support
- YouTube Tower-Soudan Historical Society channel updated with 3 new videos
- Soudan Mine Miners' Memorial information added to the TSHS website
- Received 88 books of the original Tower News newspapers for preservation and research
- Two new community events launched—Miner's Breakfast and Lake Vermilion Community Bash.

Future Activities

Historic Train Depot Museum

- Grant applications will be submitted by the city to repair the train depot foundation and exterior rehabilitation
- TSHS files and artifacts stored in the 2nd floor telephone exchange room and attic will continue to be categorized and organized
- Sidewalks will be replaced around the depot
- Coach Car 81 interior will be painted
- Engine 1218 exterior will be repaired and painted; access will be improved with new steps
- Addition of a donated ore-hauling railcar will be explored with the city
- Exterior signs highlighting each train car's function and history will be created

Historic Fire Hall

- South entry will be rehabilitated and door replaced, metal ceilings repaired, wood floors refinished
- Audio/Visual and security system will be installed
- City will make a decision on leasing the original city hall space to provide city hall services from that location
- Exhibit plan for the History Education Event Center will be created for content, layout, and furnishings

Administrative

- Archivist will be engaged to standardize PastPerfect records and establish metadata protocol standards
- Manual will be created to train volunteers on cataloging and search processes in PastPerfect Collections software
- Collections management policy will be developed
- Rental guidelines for public use of the fire hall will be developed

Committees

- 3 History Talks planned
- 3 Personal Life Story history videos planned
- 4 Train Tales and 3 History Happy Hour programs planned
- Lake Vermilion Community Bash will be held on August 1, 2026 at Gruben's Marina
- Miner's Breakfast will be held in July 2026
- Charlemagne's 52 Club fundraiser will be continued with a reception for supporters planned for summer 2026
- Coach Car 81 will continue to be rented out to the public for private events
- The James Tippet fire engine will be in the July 4 parade
- Capital Campaign will commence in 2025/26
- A newsletter will be created for publication twice a year.