TOWER-SOUDAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
404 PINE STREET • P.O. BOX 465 • TOWER, MN 55790

# TSHS Annual Meeting September 8, 2026

## *Annual Accomplishments*

**Train Depot Museum – 2026 Accomplishments**

- Completed exterior improvements to address water infiltration at the Depot Museum
- Painted the interior of Passenger Coach Car 81 in May
- Continued preservation planning for the Depot Museum and historic train cars
- Volunteers assisted over 30 visitors who stopped by the Depot despite not being open this summer season

**Historic Fire Hall – 2026 Accomplishments**

- Hosted six public tours of the Historic Fire Hall
- Removed the deteriorated south wall and constructed two new arch openings replicating the historic design
- Began fabrication of a new historic door to replicate the original north doors
- Repaired and painted ceilings in the original City Hall space
- Refinished the original wood flooring in the City Hall space
- Made the entrance to the new City Hall space handicap accessible
- Installed audio/visual equipment
- Prepared the original 1895 City Hall space for occupancy by city administrative offices in September
- Continued construction on the final interior improvements, with completion anticipated by October 31, 2026

**Volunteers - 2026**

- 34 TSHS volunteers contributed time and expertise to Society activities
- 3,914 volunteer hours were reported to St Louis County Historical Society as of June 2026

**Community Networking, Marketing and Public Relations - 2026**

- Adjusted summer programming because of construction at the Depot campus
- Held two Train Tales programs in June
- Published six new history videos on the Tower-Soudan Historical Society YouTube Channel
- Shared TSHS history videos through Facebook, including the TSHS, What's Up Tower and Lake Vermilion Cabin Owners pages
- Hosted History Happy Hour at the Farmer's Market the last Friday of each month
- Sold Charlemagne's 52 Club raffle tickets at community events, including the Friday Farmers' Market, 4th of July Pancake Breakfast, Old Settlers' Picnic, Lake Vermilion Community Bash
- Celebrated Heritage Week, July 12-18, proclaimed by the City of Tower and Breitung Township
- Received coverage through 26 articles and announcements in the Timberjay and Tower News
- Published 178 Facebook posts across TSHS, What's Up Tower and Lake Vermilion Cabin Owners Facebook pages
- TSHS Facebook posts generated 220,122 views with 4,800 content interactions/active responses
- TSHS Facebook had 44,561 viewers and reached 2,367 Facebook followers

**TSHS Membership - 2026**

- 137 active memberships as of August 31, 2026
- Improved membership tracking and recordkeeping through PastPerfect.

**Financial Support - 2026**

- Received $617,867 in grants during 2025-206 for Historic Fire Hall restoration, Depot and train improvements, and the Past Perfect archives project
- Total grants received since 2019 for Fire Hall design and construction reached approximately $2.2 million
- Received $28,765 in Founding Supporter contributions, memorials, and private community donations
- Received $16,608 from St. Louis County Historical Society to support annual operating expenses

- Sold all 300 tickets for the fourth annual Charlemagne's 52 Club raffle, generating $15,600 in revenue
- Raised $2,200 through the auction and sale of items at the Lake Vermilion Community Bash

**Administrative Accomplishments - 2026**

- Held nine Board of Director meetings, with in-person and Zoom participation available
- Made one Executive Committee decisions through email discussion
- Updated Committee Roles and Responsibilities
- Submitted 17 grant applications supporting Fire Hall restoration, Coach Car painting, Past Perfect archives, Depot and train projects
- Responded to 38 community requests for information and assistance
- Established a system for distributing the TSHS newsletter electronically to members
- Updated the organizational planning calendar
- Created marketing materials for programs and events

**Committee Accomplishments - 2026**

- Produced and distributed two newsletters - December 2025 and June 2026
- Continued updating online cemetery records throughout the year
- Held two Train Tales programs with 6 volunteers assisting
- Collected more than 100 children's books, games and puzzles for Train Tales giveaways
- Distributed 45 *Stone Soup* books to children at the Vermilion Old Settlers Booyah Picnic
- Added six new videos to the TSHS website, www.towersoudanhistory.com
- Awarded $5,650 in 52 Charlemagne's 52 Club prize winnings

## *Looking Ahead to 2027*

**Historic Train Depot Museum**

- Complete exterior rehabilitation, including chimney repairs, painting, and repair and restoration of windows and doors
- Repair and paint the backside of Engine 1218
- Install exterior interpretive signs at each historic train car
- Improve landscaping and add new amenities to the green space surrounding the Depot and train cars
- Paint the exterior of the Worker Train Car and Coach Car 81
- Install new step extensions at the train cars and caboose
- Repair the baggage room floor and prepare it for collections storage space
- Continue categorizing and organizing TSHS files and artifacts stored on the second-floor

**Historic Fire Hall – History Education Center**

- Welcome the City of Tower administrative offices into the original 1895 City Hall space
- Prepare the Fire Hall space for public use and install exhibit furnishings
- Create and install Interpretive signage
- Begin planning for the back patio and memorial garden
- Host the Charlemagne's 52 Club Reception in July

**Administration & Organizational Development**

- Hire the Executive Director
- Develop comprehensive building and event calendar
- Establish policies and procedures for event operations and use of the History Education Center
- Develop grant applications to support Fire Hall patio and outdoor spaces
- Begin planning for "What's Next" following completion of the Fire Hall restoration
- Develop a grant application for collections management policies and procedures and a core collections long-range planning project
- Publish the TSHS newsletter for summer distribution

**Programs & Committees**

- Present three History Talks
- Produce two Personal Life Story history videos
- Present four Train Tales
- Host three History Happy Hours at the Farmer's Market
- Host the Lake Vermilion Community Bash at Gruben's Marina
- Promote Passenger Coach Car 81 availability for private rental events