WALLACE BARNETT, JR. CISM
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION
EST. 2017

Nebraska Critical Incident Stress Management Summit

October 17, 2026

Bellevue University
Hitchcock Humanities Building
Room 202
1040 Bruin Blvd., Bellevue, NE

SUMMIT INFORMATION

TRAVEL & LODGING: A block of 30 rooms has been reserved at Courtyard Marriott Bellevue at the Beardmore Event Center located at 3730 Raynor Parkway in Bellevue. Rooms are priced at $116.00 per night plus taxes. Reservations can be made by clicking this link https://bit.ly/CISMSUMMIT or by calling the front desk at the hotel at 402-408-5300 **by September 23rd and ask to book under the CISM Summit Group Block.**

CONTINUING EDUCATION: This program meets the criteria of an approved continuing education program for mental health practice, EMS, firefighters and law enforcement for a total of **6.0** hours. There are **NO** nursing CEU's offered during this conference.

This conference is sponsored by:

Wallace Barnett Jr. CISM Memorial Foundation
Nebraska CISM Program
Bellevue University, Bellevue, NE
88 Tachnical, Omaha, NE
Courtyard Marriott Bellevue

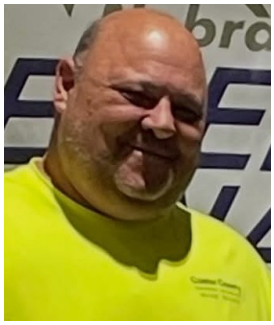
Questions: Contact Randy Ruhge at randyruhge@gmail.com, 402-660-1987 or Becka Neumiller at becka.neumiller@nebraska.gov, 402-560-4949.

SUMMIT SPEAKERS

Sgt. John Kelly Retired

John has dedicated his entire life to making sure that those he serves are empowered, protected, and committed to the pursuit of excellence. It was during his time in training that he realized there was a missing piece to the puzzle, that was holding back those he served from truly experiencing and realizing all that life had to offer. The obstacle was obvious, and yet it had been allowed to go unchecked. How can we expect those tasked with protecting and serving the community to perform at the highest level of competency and professionalism when their personal lives are in turmoil? How can an officer or deputy be placed in a critical incident and be expected to make the right decisions while they are experiencing their own personal critical incident? John has established himself as a man of direction, guidance, reassurance, and trust that is needed during these challenging times. John has developed a program to address these concerns in a meaningful, no-nonsense approach to establishing lasting progress.

Mark Rempe



Mark Rempe is an experienced emergency services provider currently based in Custer County, Nebraska, as the Emergency Manager, 911 Director, and Firefighter on the Merna Volunteer Fire Department. He brings over 25 years of public safety experience, including 26 years in the fire service—six as a career firefighter, rising to Lieutenant, and 20 as a volunteer, achieving Assistant Chief. Mark has worked across all aspects of firefighting, from front line response to Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting. He also has 21 years of experience as an EMT-Basic, demonstrating a strong commitment to emergency medical care.

For the past 12 years, Mark has served as the Custer County Emergency Manager and Director of 911 operations. He currently represents the Nebraska Association of County Officials (NACO) Central Region on the Nebraska Association of Emergency Managers Board and serves on the Nebraska 911 Advisory Committee. Throughout his career, Mark encountered multiple incidents that utilized CISM and partnered with the Custer County Sheriff to advocate for, and started, an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for all Custer County Employees. In the last 5 years, Mark has responded to a range of incidents including floods, severe weather, and major wildfires in excess of 10,000 acres, including five Mayday situations.

"WIRAT (Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team)

WIRAT is comprised of team members from Nebraska State Fire Marshal Agency and Nebraska Forest Service. The purpose of WIRAT is to provide assistance and guidance in matters necessary to prevent, control, suppress or otherwise mitigate wild land fire incidents occurring in or threatening the State of Nebraska, with the overall goal to favorable influence the outcome of an incident. WIRAT members have extensive training in incident command with the capability to work large/complex incidents, provide field supervision, provide strategic and tactical considerations, and overall incident support. WIRAT will not assume command of an incident, but will assist the local Incident Command staff with overall incident management."

Sergeant Dion Neumiller

Dion has been serving as a first responder for over three decades. His career began with the Ogallala Police Department, and he later served as Assistant Chief of the Ogallala Volunteer Fire Department. He subsequently relocated to Mesa, Arizona, where he worked as a paramedic in a high-volume metropolitan EMS system.

In 2007, Dion returned to Nebraska and joined the Nebraska State Patrol. He served as a road trooper for 10 years before transferring to the Patrol's Investigation Unit. He is a certified traffic crash re-constructionist, and a member of the Nebraska State Patrol Special Investigations Team, focusing on officer involved shootings. Throughout his investigative career, he has served as the lead investigator on numerous high-profile homicide cases, many of which have coincided with CISM team activations.

In addition to his law enforcement responsibilities, Dion serves as a member of the Nebraska State EMS Board, contributing to the advancement of emergency medical services across the state.

Dion's perspective on Critical Incident Stress Management is shaped by both his professional experience and personal insight. Following a particularly challenging homicide case, he believed he had effectively managed the associated stress. At the encouragement of his wife, he attended a CISM intervention for the EMS, fire, and law enforcement personnel involved. Although initially reluctant, the experience reinforced the value of support and demonstrated that even seasoned first responders who believe they are coping well can benefit from the resources and guidance provided through CISM.

SUMMIT AGENDA

SATURDAY, October 17, 2026

7:30 - 8:30 am **Registration**

8:30 am **Welcome**

8:45 - 12:00 pm **"Sometimes Heroes Need Help"**

There has never been a shortage of employer assistance programs available to the employee. The unfortunate fact of the matter is that these programs are often offered too little, too late. These programs are designed with a primary intent to reduce agency liability and secondly, to assist the employee. These programs of assistance are offered once the employee's situation can no longer be ignored, and reaches a level of unmanageably. Employees are directed to seek counseling and assistance. If they do not, they are punished or in some cases, terminated. These services and programs are available for every employee prior to the employees situation requiring the agencies involvement. The employee doesn't take advantage of this assistance during his or her time of need for several reasons. Simply stated, the employees lack of knowledge, trust, and honesty, prevent early intervention. We have developed a coping mechanism in our profession that actually does more harm than good. We have developed the ability to rationalize unacceptable behavior, both from within ourselves and from one another. We dismiss that which needs immediate attention and convince ourselves that the problem is of someone else's making. The second issue is one inherent to the profession, distrust of those on the outside. Trust is not easily obtained and there are very few people outside this profession that have the ability to open that door; John's record speaks for itself. There can be no progress without honesty and trust. Removing the perceived stigma associated with asking for help is what John does. His ability to understand the real issues facing our men and women in law enforcement is what sets him apart from all other coaches and motivational speakers. John has struggled with addiction, financial uncertainty, marital issues, and physical challenges. John rips open his life, peeling back the surface, exposing the man for all his faults, weaknesses, and issues. John becomes immediately relatable in that moment and provides to those he teaches a roadmap to deal with all the challenges life presents us.

John's unique approach of addressing the whole of the person has allowed him to thrive in an environment where most are still struggling. It is crucial to address all aspects of our lives in order to experience a passionate and rewarding life. Addressing the personal, professional, financial, and physical health of the individual is the key to establishing lasting progress. John is living proof that you can have it all. With hard work and a commitment to being better today than you were yesterday, obstacles become opportunities. John is the coach that can provide you with the correct guidance and direction to give you the ability to overcome all obstacles life throws at you with confidence and purpose.

12:00 -1:00 pm **LUNCH - On Your Own**

SUMMIT AGENDA

1:00 - 2:00 pm Fire on the Plains: Morrill Fires - Response and First Responder Wellness

The 2026 Morrill Fire became one of the most significant wildfire incidents in Nebraska's modern history, spreading rapidly across western Nebraska under extreme wind, drought, dry fuels, and Red Flag conditions. Reported in Morrill County on March 12, the fire moved east and southeast into Garden, Arthur, and Keith Counties, with reports indicating it traveled roughly 70 miles in less than 12 hours. The scale of the fire required a coordinated state, local, volunteer, and inter-agency response.
The Morrill Fire occurred during a period of unusually hazardous fire weather. Low humidity, warm temperatures, and strong winds created conditions in which grass, timber under story, cedar, cottonwood areas, and other fuels could ignite quickly and sustain fast-moving fire behavior.

Challenges for First Responders: First responders faced demanding conditions, including high winds, blowing dust, smoke, ash, reduced visibility, long shifts, changing fire behavior, rugged terrain, and the emotional strain of protecting communities during a fast-moving disaster. Many responders were volunteers serving their own communities while also managing personal concerns for family, property, livestock, and neighbors. Extended operations can increase risk for fatigue, dehydration, injury, impaired decision-making, sleep disruption, and cumulative stress. Conclusion:The Morrill Fire demonstrated both the severity of wildfire risk in Nebraska and the strength of coordinated emergency response. Protecting first responders requires more than equipment and tactics; it also requires sustained attention to rest, nutrition, peer support, behavioral health, family stability, and long-term recovery. A responder wellness approach should be treated as an operational necessity before, during, and after major wildfires.

2:15 - 3:15 pm Emergency Within the Emergency: Understanding the Need for CISM

Mark will discuss the range of emergency situations in which Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) can be used, drawing from his own career experiences. He will explain how critical incidents affect every part of the emergency response system, from 911 dispatchers and first responders to hospital staff and morgue personnel.

The presentation will also address how emergency scenes have become increasingly complex in recent years. Mark will explore how responders are now facing emergencies within emergencies, such as the need for mayday procedures during wildfire incidents, and why CISM is an important tool for supporting personnel before, during, and after these events.

3:30 - 4:30 pm Fine I'll Go!

What happens when your wife is the CISM program manager and she says you need to go to a debriefing surrounding a case you are working on, even though you tell her you are fine. You inform her that you are talking to your coworkers and are working through the stress, but she still insists. Having been married for 20 years you know she is not going to stop so you begrudgingly go, if only to prove you didn't need it...

Dion will walk through the common and not so common stressors of his job, what he has found works to deal with them, and what resources are typically available to law enforcement. He will identify some of the reasons he has heard on why law enforcement officers are unwilling to go to group interventions and give advice on how the team might break down those barriers.

He will also detail his experience the night his wife was right.

WALLACE BARNETT, JR. CISM

MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

EST. 2017

Summitt Registration
October 17, 2026

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone Number _____

MAIL-IN REGISTRATION FORM

Please check the appropriate line(s):

_____ REGISTRATION for CISM Members - $50

_____ REGISTRATION for Non CISM Members - $60

$_____ TOTAL ENCLOSED

Invoices can be sent upon request.

Mail Registration and check to: Wally Barnett CISM Foundation, 802 Country View, Firth, NE 68358 by October 12th.

PayPal

For Online Registration and Payment Options, visit our website wallybarnettfoundation.org/training