

# DAVE FONS MEMORIAL FUND

## ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

### Embracing Change and Moving Forward



Garrett Fons  
President

I have always been someone who believes, "If it isn't broken, don't fix it." Reinventing the wheel has never been my style. While that mindset can be helpful at times, being too afraid of change can cause us to miss incredible opportunities. Wayne Gretzky said it best: "You miss 100% of the shots you don't take."

Over the last eight years, our board has only seen four changes—we've lost two members and gained two. Each time someone stepped away, my first reaction was panic. I worried about the impact on our future success. Most recently, Andy Decraene shared that he would be stepping down. Andy is like a brother to me. I fully support his decision and want to express my gratitude for his eight years of dedicated service. Andy, thank you for your friendship and the instrumental role you've played in our success.

Here's what I've learned: every time we've added new board members, we've gained momentum. Fresh perspectives bring new ideas, energy, and connections. Michelle Fons joined in 2019 and has been a ball of positive energy - helping elevate our fundraising events to the next level. Most recently, Stephen Disney joined in July. As the owner of a large trucking company in Florida, Stephen has already made an impact, and we're excited about what the future holds with him on the team.

The Dave Fons Memorial Fund is always looking for passionate people—not just for board positions, but also for volunteer opportunities throughout the year. We participate in many like-minded events and can always use extra hands. If you're interested in getting involved and helping us continue this mission, please reach out. Together, we can keep making a difference.

2025 was another successful year for the Dave Fons Memorial Fund. We proudly hosted two

major fundraising events, including the 8th Annual Dave Fons Memorial Fund Golf Tournament at Mystic Creek in Milford, Michigan (full capacity) and the 6th Annual Fins for Fons Fishing Tournament at The Westin in Cape Coral, Florida. Our events continue to grow thanks to the incredible support of our loyal community. Every year, you show up and make a difference.

We are extremely proud of our 2025 accomplishments. They include:

- Funded scholarships in Michigan & Florida
- Provided commercial driving scholarships
- Supported families affected by truck-related accidents
- Recognized Safe Drivers of the Month and expanded our program across the country
- Promoted driver safety trainings
- Hosted successful fundraising events in both Michigan & Florida
- Donated truck safety signs
- Truck safety awareness campaigns on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram
- Partnered with similar organizations to amplify impact
- Attended and volunteered at industry events with informational booths
- Shared our story at safety events

In 2026, we aim to make even greater strides in truck safety awareness by dedicating more resources to traffic enforcement and public safety education initiatives. We will continue partnerships with the Michigan Center for Truck Safety, Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, and Institute for Safer Trucking, but will also seek new collaborations with like-minded organizations. Additional 2026 goals include:

- Expand our academic and trucking scholarship programs
- Begin funding scholarships through the FTBA CDL Program for Trucking Education
- Increase billboard campaign exposure
- Enhance training efforts
- Encourage board members to take active roles in industry organizations
- Support law enforcement initiatives
- Collaborate on truck safety action plans
- Serve as a trusted truck safety resource
- Grow our support network
- Produce and provide informational videos

Your continued involvement and trust have been vital to our mission of bringing truck safety awareness to the forefront. On behalf of the Dave Fons Memorial Fund Board, thank you for being the foundation of our success.

### The 2025 Dave Fons Memorial Fund Fundraising Events



Michelle Fons  
Director of Public Relations & Events

We are thrilled to announce that we had another record-breaking year for the Dave Fons Memorial Fund. Your unwavering trust, support, and generosity are the heart of our success. Thanks to the incredible participation, 2025 was a phenomenal year for our annual events. We are thrilled to share the highlights and express our deepest gratitude.

### 8th Annual Dave Fons Memorial Fund Golf Tournament - A Hole-in-One Success!

On July 26, 2025, we hosted a sold-out tournament at the picturesque Mystic Creek Golf Course & Banquet Center in Milford, MI. Now in our fifth year at this great venue, the staff once again provided exceptional service. We switched things up this year, playing on the Meadows and Lakes courses. Sunny skies and pristine course conditions made for an outstanding day on the greens. Feedback on the course change was overwhelmingly positive, contributing to a positive and fun atmosphere for everyone involved. Our board members went above and beyond to enhance the experience, offering a variety of games and contests for golfers. The day was topped off with delicious food and beverages at the dinner banquet, and a lively raffle featuring amazing prizes from our generous sponsors.



Board members with the 2025 golf tournament winning team

We saw record-high sponsorship support and sold out the event in record time. A special thank you to both our loyal annual sponsors as well as the new sponsors who joined our mission this year. Your support helps us raise awareness for truck safety and achieve our goals. We look forward to seeing you at the 9th Annual outing in July 2026!

**6th Annual Fins for Fons Fishing Tournament - A Tidal Wave of Support!**

Due to popular demand, the 6th Annual Fins for Fons Fishing Tournament returned to Southwest Florida at The Westin Cape Coral Resort at Marina Village in Cape Coral. The weekend kicked off with a Welcome Cocktail Party and Captains Meeting on Friday, September 19, followed by the main event and Awards Dinner on Saturday, September 20.

We welcomed a record-breaking crowd of 158 anglers and over 300 guests! The event included both Adult Inshore and Offshore tournaments, as well as Inshore and Offshore Junior Angler Divisions. The enthusiasm and kindness of all our participants and sponsors truly humbled us.

We extend heartfelt thanks to our amazing collaborators: The Reel Chase and Monika Urbanski for our official tournament shirts; Captain Leiza Fitzgerald of the CCA for her expertise and charm; and Chelsea Aldrich Photography for beautifully capturing the tournament's essence. A special shoutout to Coca-Cola Beverages of Florida for a generous beverage sponsorship and product donation throughout the entire fishing tournament weekend. We can't wait to see everyone at the 7th Annual Fins for Fons Fishing Tournament next September!

Whether you shared a social media post, donated, volunteered, fished, golfed, sponsored, or joined as a guest, you made these events unforgettable. Your participation and generosity are the foundation of our success. We are profoundly grateful and can't wait to see you at our 2026 events! Stay tuned for details on our website and social media.

**Annual Financial Report**



Craig Fons  
Treasurer

As we look towards 2026, I'm happy to report that our financial strength is as strong or stronger than it ever was. My capacity on the board is treasurer and keeper of all things that keep us in compliance with the current laws and regulations that apply to us as a 501c3 Corporation. A new endeavor for us in 2025 was opening a brokerage account to hold the funds you've entrusted us with and make these funds work harder for us. We are at a point now where we would be able to operate for at least a year if times get tough. We value your donations and want to be the best stewards of it that we can be. However, if it got to a point where resources became tight and fundraising became a chore, our mission would not suffer. We could comfortably maintain our public awareness campaigns, scholarships, and donations to victims of truck crash tragedies.

Fundraising is a vital task to operating our nonprofit, and our board's younger members' hard work and boundless energy is what drives our mission. But without benefactors like you, we would not be able to promote truck safety and help families like we do. If you are taking the time to read this, thank you, but more importantly please get involved. Help to spread the word about our fund and aid our mission. Whether helping us to raise funds or helping us find useful ways to use our resources, we need friends like you to be involved.

A big thank you to our accounting firm - Pfeffer, Haniford, and Palka - for donating their accounting and tax services. Kristen (Pfeffer) Polonowski, in particular, for all her help with budgeting, accounting, and keeping us up to

date with all of the information we need.. There are many parts of the IRS code that apply to us and navigating those would be impossible with her knowledge and professionalism.

In conclusion, every year, I appeal to all involved to consider and think of new ways for us to make a difference. This year is no different. If you know of a meaningful way to utilize our resources, whether it is a good place for a billboard or a family you know that was touched by a tragedy involving a truck, please contact a board member or message us on social media. We cannot do all the positive things we do without your help. Thank you for taking the time to read this and God bless to you and yours.

**Truck Safety Objectives for 2026**



Courtney Sprague  
Vice-President

In 2025, we were again honored to continue our partnership with the Institute for Safer Trucking (IST). This wonderful organization works passionately to reduce crashes, injuries, and fatalities involving large trucks in the United States by implementing data-driven solutions. They are also committed to raising awareness and educating the public about truck safety, offering support to families impacted by crashes, and collaborating with all stakeholders to advance safety on roads. What an absolute privilege it is to have the opportunity to collaborate with and mutually support IST. We are looking forward to continuing and hopefully furthering this relationship in 2026.

An exciting project we began with IST and Road Safe America in 2025 was our monthly safety tips for truck drivers. These safety tips are disseminated via multiple infographics shared as social media posts throughout each month. Here is an example:



**Maintain at least 4/32" on steer tires and 2/32" on all other tires.**

FMSCA - 49 CFR § 393.75

Regularly inspecting tread depth helps prevent blowouts and improves vehicle handling, keeping your fleet and everyone on the road safe.



www.safertrucking.org



First Place Adult Division Inshore Team: Team Alta Equipment with a 90' Total Length



First Place Adult Division Offshore Team: Team United Rentals with a 60.4 lb Total Weight



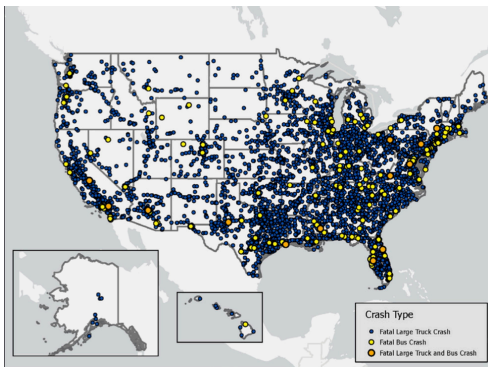
First Place Junior Division Inshore: Dylan Zima 67.75" total length



First Place Junior Division Offshore: Julih Krull with a 9.75 lb snapper

Each month features a different safety topic, such as avoiding distracted driving, improving visibility, and proper truck maintenance. We are thrilled to continue this campaign with IST and Road Safe America in 2026.

Each year, IST publishes the Annual Safer Trucking Report, in which they analyze truck crash data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). The report serves as a resource to learn more about truck safety in the United States and provide tangible solutions. This year's report focused on truck crash data from 2023, in which there were 5,472 truck crash fatalities nationwide. Further, there were 153,452 people injured and 528,177 truck crashes reported.



Fatal large truck crashes in 2023 (Source: IST 2025 Annual Safety Report)

Despite the fact that all of these statistics show a decrease from 2022, truck crash fatalities still show a 10% increase since 2020 and a 40% increase in truck crash fatalities in the past decade. Florida was once again the third most deadly state with 341 truck crash fatalities. This is especially concerning for our organization, as Michigan and Florida are currently our targeted states. Further, the top ten deadliest states for truck crashes account for almost half of all truck crash fatalities. Additionally, due to an increased number of trucks on the road, summer and fall months consistently show an increase in fatal truck crashes. August and October were the deadliest months in 2023. Thursday was also the deadliest day of the week, further supporting the statistic that 76% of fatal truck crashes occur during the work week when more trucks are operating.

An area of truck safety that is a major focus of our organization is work zone safety. In 2023, there were 252 fatal work zone crashes involving large trucks. This number is far too high and highlights the importance of targeted truck safety efforts in this domain. Over-the-road trucking is often the main focus of truck safety work, but we see the need for more attention to be devoted to work zone and local trucking.

Despite some improved statistics in 2023, there is clearly a need for more data-driven solutions

to improve truck safety and better prevent truck crash deaths. IST includes several calls to action to improve truck safety in their annual report. These include:

- Finalize the Automatic Emergency Braking (AEB) rule to mandate that all trucks be equipped with and use this safer technology.
- Increase the minimum insurance required to account for 40 years of inflation.
- Require the use of top-end speed limiters in large trucks.
- Side guards should be required on single-unit trucks as well as trailers.
- Implement a Beyond Compliance program that would recognize motor carriers that voluntarily adopt safety measures beyond minimum regulatory requirements.
- Reform the FMCSA's New Entrant Safety Assurance Program to require more rigorous and timely safety reviews, and more thorough education earlier in operations.
- Increase federal funding for safe and accessible parking options for trucks.

We are thrilled to continue working with IST and strongly believe in the work they are doing. We believe we can make a bigger impact together and are so grateful for their partnership.

### A Mutual Mission Towards Truck Safety



Stephen Disney  
Board Member at Large

I joined the Dave Fons Memorial Fund board this past July. From day one, it has been clear why this group makes such an impact. What really drew me in was the positive attitude everyone brings toward trucking and the shared belief that we can make this industry better by supporting the people at the heart of it. That is something I care deeply about too.

I have spent almost 20 years in transportation, managing a fleet of more than 800 trucks across Florida. One thing I have learned is just how essential trucking is to our daily lives. Our drivers keep this country moving. Making sure they have solid resources, good training, and real support is not just "nice to have" - it makes the roads safer and strengthens the industry for everyone. That is why I am excited to be part of this team and the mission behind it.

I also want to highlight how successful this year's Annual Fins for Fons Fishing Tournament was. It was a great turnout, and we would not be able to host events like that without the generosity of our sponsors, donors, and supporters. We genuinely appreciate you. I am looking forward to the year ahead and continuing the work we are doing together.

### Leave It Better Than You Found It



Andy Decraene  
Former Board Member

After several meaningful years serving on the board of the Dave Fons Memorial Fund, I've decided it's time for me to step down from my role. This decision was not made lightly. Initially, I joined to support my friend, Garrett, and his family through a difficult time. What I discovered was something much greater and more rewarding. Over the years, I've seen this organization grow from an idea sparked by love and loss into something impactful and lasting: supporting safe drivers, awarding scholarships, advocating for safety, and providing comfort and resources to survivors.

What I value most are the hearts behind their work. Every board member, donor, partner, and supporter brings their own energy, and that's what matters most: passion and caring people. I'm proud to have been part of this story's beginning - hopefully marking the start of a long journey.

As I leave the board, I do so with complete confidence in the Fund's direction. Exciting discussions are underway about how to adapt and expand our reach. One of my favorite qualities of this group is its fiscal responsibility, consistently ensuring funds go directly toward advancing the mission. I have no doubt the board will continue to make thoughtful, mission-driven decisions in the years to come.

Although I won't be involved in the daily operations anymore, I will always be a loyal supporter of this fund and its people. I'll continue to champion the mission and share Dave's story whenever I can.

Thank you to everyone who has walked alongside us, believed in the vision, and helped turn grief into purpose. You have made this journey fun.

Leave it better than you found it – I believe we are doing just that.



Garrett Fons, Andy Decraene, and Danny Banks, a loyal supporter of our organization, at the 2025 Fins for Fons Fishing Tournament

## 2025 Dave Fons Memorial Fund Award Recipients

The Dave Fons Memorial Fund for the Advocacy of Truck Safety funds scholarships for college-bound students and individuals attending truck driving school. We also select two safe truck drivers each month (nominations permitting) to recognize on social media and present with a financial award.

### 2025 Scholarship Recipients

Harinie Jeyisanker (FTBA Scholarship)  
Thomas Rivard (MAA Scholarship)  
Madylin McLean (MITA Scholarship)

### 2025 Safe Truck Drivers of the Month

Andrey Gurov (Ajax Paving Industries of Florida)  
Jan Holtz (LaRocca Trucking)  
Robert Bane (San Marino Excavating)  
Randy Hunt Sr. (T. Disney Trucking)  
Corey Richardson (Cobb Site Development)  
Rico Trice (AJ Trucking)  
Elvis Mariano (Bonness)  
Jose Sotolongo (T. Disney Trucking)  
Dylan Short (Eastern Highway Specialists)  
Osiris Santis Jr. (New Line Transport)  
Mike King (Tomahawk Construction)  
Jamie Lewis (Ring Power CAT)  
Tod Cash (Quickrete)  
Genaro Mejiah (South Florida Milling)  
James Hall (Trans-Phos)  
Patrick Spicer (Ajax Paving Industries)  
Rusty McCall (Ongrade Contracting Inc.)  
Alejo Amirkar (T. Disney Trucking)

## Thank You to Our 2025 Sponsors & Donors

AA Surface Pro  
Aaron Grove  
Accu-Temp Heating  
AIS Aggregate  
Ajax Paving Industries of Florida  
Ajax Paving Industries, Inc.  
Al Serra Auto Plaza  
Allison Transmission  
Alta Equipment Company  
American Pavement Sawing LLC  
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Fonson Company Inc  
Foote Bros Contracting, Inc  
Garrett Fons & Family  
GBM Recycled Concrete LLC  
GBM Sand & Gravel  
GM & Sons  
Gordon Food Services  
Gulfshore Trucking, LLC  
Guymann Construction of Florida  
Institute for Safer Trucking  
Integral Blue  
Jill Fons & Family  
John Michaels Diamond & Jewelry Studio  
Kates Enviro Fencing, Inc  
Kelly Tractor Co  
Kendra Scott  
Key West Express  
KeyBank  
Krullified Construction, Inc  
Krullified Paving  
Lovin Construction  
Marathon Petroleum  
Marine Trading Post  
Martin Marietta  
Matt Desotell  
McKearney Asphalt & Sealing Inc  
McShea Contracting, LLC  
Merrill Lynch - Eric Winkler Group  
Michigan Aggregates Association  
Michigan Awesome  
Michigan CAT  
Mike & Carol Horan  
Morita Custom Gaffs  
MSB Services, LLC

New Line Transport  
Northern Concrete Pipe, Inc  
OHLA USA  
Ongrade Contracting, Inc.  
Oriental Trading Company  
Outdoor Adventure Center  
Paramount Asphalt Sealcoating Corp.  
Pavement Maintenance, LLC  
Pfeffer, Hanniford, & Palka, CPAs P.C.  
Pins & Aces  
PK Contracting  
Poured Brick Walls  
Ring Power CAT  
RKS Consulting Engineers  
Rotterdam Jewelers  
San Marino Excavating, Inc.  
Sanibel Captiva Beach Resorts  
Schafer Construction Inc  
Shady Rays  
Spartan Barricading & Traffic Control Inc  
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The Reel Chase  
The Westin  
Thomas Marine Construction  
Tomahawk Construction  
Top Golf of Auburn Hills  
Trans-Phos  
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Vulcan Materials Company  
West Marine  
Wirtgen  
WonderWorks Orlando  
WPM Southern LLC

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