



## DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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### **Inmates, DOC staff members in spirit of holiday season**

(Pierre)- State prison inmates and staff members from the Department of Corrections are helping to make the holiday season brighter for others.

Inmates at the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls and the Mike Durfee State Prison in Springfield raised more than \$5,000 for area charities through their appetites. Inmates were allowed to order pizzas with money in their prison commissary accounts. A portion of the cost of each pie was earmarked to aid the Salvation Army, Family Connection and the Bon Homme County Food Bank.

Items made by state prison inmates were distributed recently to various service organizations across South Dakota. Inmates produce wooden toys such as cars, puzzles and jewelry boxes from scrap lumber, hand-knit stocking caps, make mittens out of leftover fleece from the Pheasantland Industry shops and make items such as lap blankets and dolls from donated materials.

Penitentiary staff delivered more than 18-hundred knit stocking caps, 800 pairs of mittens and 23-hundred toys to groups such as the Sioux Falls school district, Special Olympics, Ronald McDonald House, Children's Inn, Avera McKennan Assistance Program, Native American tribes and various law enforcement agencies to be given to those in need.

More than 500 bicycles that were refurbished by inmates at the Mike Durfee State Prison now have new homes. The bikes were distributed to law enforcement from across the state during the annual Law Enforcement Appreciation Game Feed in Sioux Falls in November. The bikes are taken back to their communities and given to underprivileged youth.

Springfield inmates also decorated a Christmas tree with inmate-made craft items for display at the Yankton Mall. Shoppers voted for their favorite tree by placing non-perishable food items in the boxes in front of each tree. All of the food items were donated to the Yankton Food Pantry. The tree was later given to a needy family by the United Way in Yankton.

Twenty-seven lap blankets that were hand-sewn by inmates at the South Dakota Women's Prison Unit H, were donated to the Maryhouse Long Term Care Center in Pierre on November 1st. Materials for the lap blankets were donated to the prison by community organizations and individuals.

Inmate made toys, dolls and stocking caps were also donated from the Women's Prison to Missouri Shores, a domestic violence shelter, in Pierre this holiday season.

The Employees Club at the Penitentiary helped make the holiday season special for two Sioux Falls area families. SDSP staff sponsored the two families, buying them gifts and food for the holiday season as part of a program sponsored by the Help!Line Center's Holiday Clearing House. The Juvenile Community Corrections staff in Sioux Falls also sponsored a family and provided gifts for them as part of the program.

"I am extremely proud of the generosity demonstrated by everyone associated with these fundraising efforts," said Corrections Secretary Tim Reisch.