



DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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Deputy Secretary of Corrections Loses Battle With Cancer January 3, 2000

(Pierre) - Mike Durfee, Deputy Secretary of Corrections, died Sunday, January 2, 2000 following a long battle with cancer.

A funeral service is planned for 10:00 AM, Thursday, January 6th at St. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Pierre. Flags at Department of Corrections facilities are being flown at half staff in Durfee's memory.

Durfee was born March 6, 1944, in Pierre. He was raised on a farm near Highmore, graduating from Highmore High School in 1963. Mike attended Southern State College in Springfield where he was an outstanding athlete in football and wrestling. He graduated with honors in 1968 with a degree in Vocational Technical Teacher Education.

He joined the faculty of Southern State College in 1968 as a teacher in the Vocational Education Department, head wrestling coach and assistant football coach. During his 10-year tenure as wrestling coach, he compiled a 100-8-4 dual win-loss record and was named the South Dakota College Coach of the Year in 1976.

When the school was converted into a prison in 1984, Mike became Assistant Warden and later Director of Education. He established the prison's educational department, created prison policy and assisted with the initial recruitment of prison staff. Mike became the Deputy Secretary for the South Dakota State Department of Corrections in 1992, overseeing the adult correctional system and prison industries.

He received numerous awards, including the University of South Dakota/Springfield Outstanding Alumnus; South Dakota Intercollegiate Conference Hall of Fame; South Dakota Vocational Association Outstanding Service Award; South Dakota Wrestling Hall of Fame and Southern State College Pointer Hall of Fame.

In addition to his professional responsibilities, Mike was involved in the Springfield Fire Department, Springfield Chamber of Commerce, Bon Homme School District School Board, Springfield Development Corporation and St. Vincent Catholic Church.

He is survived by his wife Chere', their two children and four grandchildren.