Jerrold Allan Berke, Sr.

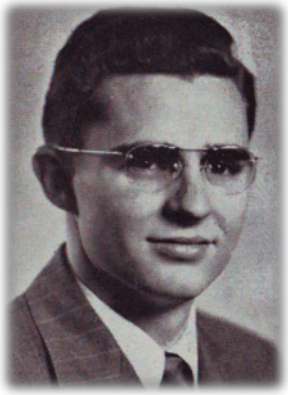
July 30, 1932 – December 16, 2006



Jerrold Allan Berke, age 75, of Mesa , AZ and formerly Sioux Falls, passed away on December 16, 2006, in Mesa.

Jerrold was born in Britton, SD on June 7, 1931, to Roman and Florence Berke.

Jerrold attended and graduated from the South Dakota School for the Deaf in Sioux Falls. On August 16, 1952 Jerrold was united in marriage to Florence Granum, in Sioux Falls. He was employed for 37 years at John Morrell and Company and was an active member of the Deaf Seniors of South Dakota, National Fraternal Society of the Deaf (Division #74) and the South Dakota Association of the Deaf. Jerrold enjoyed bowling, camping, spending his winters in Arizona after his retirement, and attending his grandchildren's sporting events.



Grateful for having shared his life were four sons, Greg Berke and his wife, Heidi, Sioux Falls, SD, Jerry Berke, Jr. and his wife, Becky, Sioux Falls, SD, Robin Berke, Yankton, SD, Bruce Berke and his wife, Renae, Sioux Falls, SD; a daughter, Deb Barber, and her husband, Jerry, Tea, SD; 14 grandchildren; five great grandchildren; one brother, Don (Nina), of Phoenix, AZ; one sister, Phillis (bill) Heldenbrand, of Mason City, IA; his fiancé, Mabel Mercer, of Mesa, AZ; and many other relatives and friends.

Preceding Jerrold in death is his wife, Florence; his parents; two brothers and an infant granddaughter, Cynthia.

Funeral services began at 11:00 AM on Friday, December 22, 2006 at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Tea, SD with burial at Hills of Rest Memorial Park.



District 18 Champs
L to R: Ken Czerny, Bob Ellis, Dana Dillman, Coach Roy Holcomb, Jerrold Berke, Dean Lee, and Walter Baumgartner.

Taken From South Dakota Association of the Deaf Hall of Fame:

Jerrold A. Berke, Sr. is a classic example of a self-made man. His character and integrity are above reproach and he is often identified as a benchmark for others in the deaf community to measure up to. He fought his way up, slowly but surely, to become one of South Dakota's legendary public servants with a long record of achievement and success as an advocate, consultant, program developer, and leader.

Down through the years, he has been a source of adice and information to many Sioux Falls residents. He has

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established himself as an outstanding influence at meetings. His knowledge of lie parliamentarian procedures, constitution and bylaws, legislative statutes, rules and regulations is considered second to none. He is generous with his time and experience in helping others, always able to take a firm grasp upon a situation and offer beneficial input into the matter at hand. His political savvy has done much for the state of South Dakota, especially its responsibility for the well-being for the deaf and hard of hearing population and its awareness of the needs and interests unique to deafness and hearing loss.





Born on June 7, 1931 in Britton, South Dakota to Roman and Florence Berke, Jerrold attended the Britton public school system until he was six years old when he lost his hearing through whooping cough. The family moved to Sioux Falls in 1942 in order to create a health home-school environment for his enrollment at the South Dakota School for the Deaf. Jerrold completed his 5DM education in 1950 and immediately embarked upon a 37-year employment at the John Morrell Meat Packing Plant in Sioux Falls, doubling for 15 years as a part-time SDSD dormitory counselor. He occasionally served as a special assistant for a period of time in the SDSD kitchen and as a substitute academic teacher. He is a wonderful role model for the young people and they benefited much from exposure to his special qualities as a person to emulated.

Jerrold served 10 years as president of the South Dakota Association of the Deaf and as a board member for 45 years. He was largely responsible for the emergence of telecommunications services (TTY) in the area of Sioux Falls when the nationwide program originated in the early 1960's. He was an all-round athlete at SDSD and, upon graduation, competed with flying colors for the Sioux Falls Association of the Deaf teams.

Many of his peers credited him for the establishment of a football program at SDSD which lasted for a brief yet successful period of time.

