



NUTSEA

NATIONAL UTILITY TRAINING & SAFETY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



As the new year gets under way, we count our blessings and come to realize what a privilege it is to bear the responsibility for providing safe, reliable electrical power to our cooperative members across the country. And what an honor it is to work alongside our fellow cooperative employees performing day-to-day duties on behalf of our members, and in the process building bonds of lasting, lifelong friendships. As a long-time member of NUTSEA, I have had the pleasure to meet so many kind and friendly people, and one of those was Mike Stamper. In losing Mike unexpectedly at the age of 63, just as he was embarking on a new journey in retirement, we lost a warm and wonderful friend. Mike was capable and competent, with a profound passion for safety and for the physical well-being of those line workers who put their lives at risk on a daily basis. Mike was a past NUTSEA Board Member, a member of Quad States, and the RESAP Area Administrator for the state of Wisconsin and established himself as a true leader in his field.

Mike was a country kid from rural Menomonie, Wisconsin, where he was raised by his parents, Jess and Pauline, who taught him about the value of family, patriotism, hard work, and good citizenship. After graduating from high school, Mike joined the U.S. Navy in 1965 and was a member of the "Beach Jumpers" Unit II. He married Carolyn Gustafson on June 17, 1967, in Racine, WI, and started working as a lineman in 1968 for Wisconsin Electric Power. In 1974, he moved to Westby Electric and Utility and later worked for Vernon Electric in Westby in 1977. In 1989, he started at Northeast Technical College as a job training and safety instructor, and in 1993, he held the same position at WECA. He retired as safety manager for Dairyland Power on January 7, 2011. Mike enjoyed hunting, fishing, and spending time in the outdoors. He especially treasured and loved the time with his children and grandchildren. He was an active member, Sunday school teacher, and board member at the First Church of the Nazarene in Menomonie. He was also a member of the Wisconsin District Advisory Board of the Church of the Nazarene.

In the void left by the passing of Mike Stamper, we sense a quiet sadness, a longing for one more day, one more word to share with our friend. We may not understand why he left this earth so soon, or why he left before we were ready to say good-bye, but little by little, we begin to remember not just that he died, but that he lived. His life gave us memories too beautiful to forget.

Mike and his family are in our prayers, 'God gave us a true brother that remains with us through the rest of our lives, so close yet not with us in body any longer'.

I take great pride in saying, Mike Stamper was my friend.

Mike Bergeaux
NUTSEA Chairman