

THE BEST

God saw you getting tired
And a cure was not to be.
So He put His arms around you
And whispered

"Come to Me."

With tearful eyes we watched you,
And saw you pass away.
Although we loved you dearly,
We could not make you stay.
A golden heart stopped beating,
Hard working hands at rest.
God broke our hearts to prove to us,

HE ONLY TAKES THE BEST.



Walk Through Visitation:

5:00 - 7:00 p.m., Friday, January 15, 2021
Our Savior Lutheran Church
Highmore, South Dakota

Funeral Service:

10:30 a.m., Saturday, January 16, 2021
Our Savior Lutheran Church
Highmore, South Dakota

Minister:

Pastor Sara Feld

Pallbearers:

Ryan Spilde - Randy Houdek
Nathan Spilde - Doug Kroeplin
John Heezen - Steve Chavez

Honorary Pallbearers:

Highmore Fire Department

Pianist: Chantrel LaMont

Reader: Paula Spilde

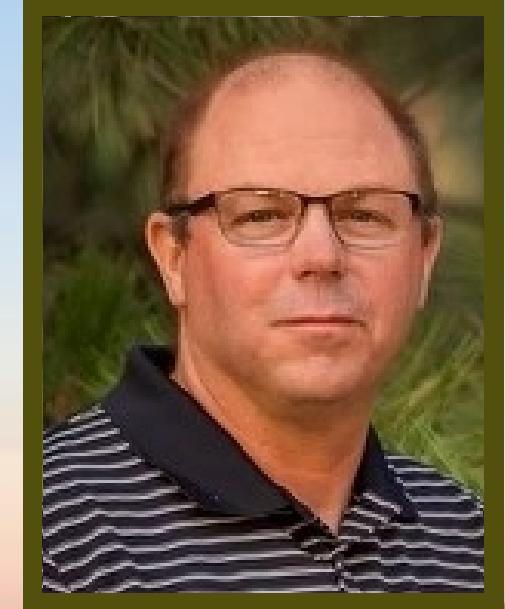
Vocalist: April Crago
"Amazing Grace"
"Old Rugged Cross"

Congregational Selection:

"I Was There to Hear Your Burning Cry"

Interment:

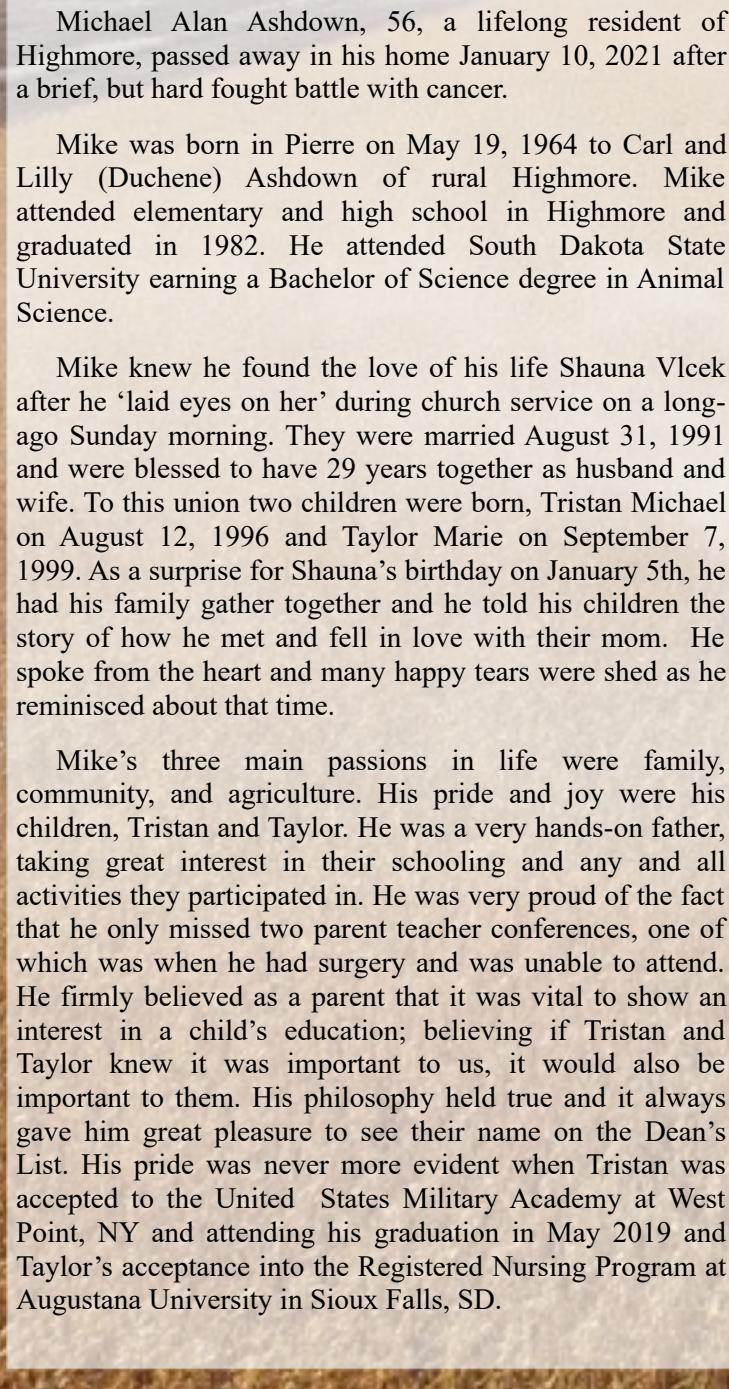
11:30 a.m., Saturday, January 16, 2021
Highmore Cemetery
Highmore, South Dakota



IN LOVING
Memory

Mike Ashdown

May 19, 1964 - January 10, 2021

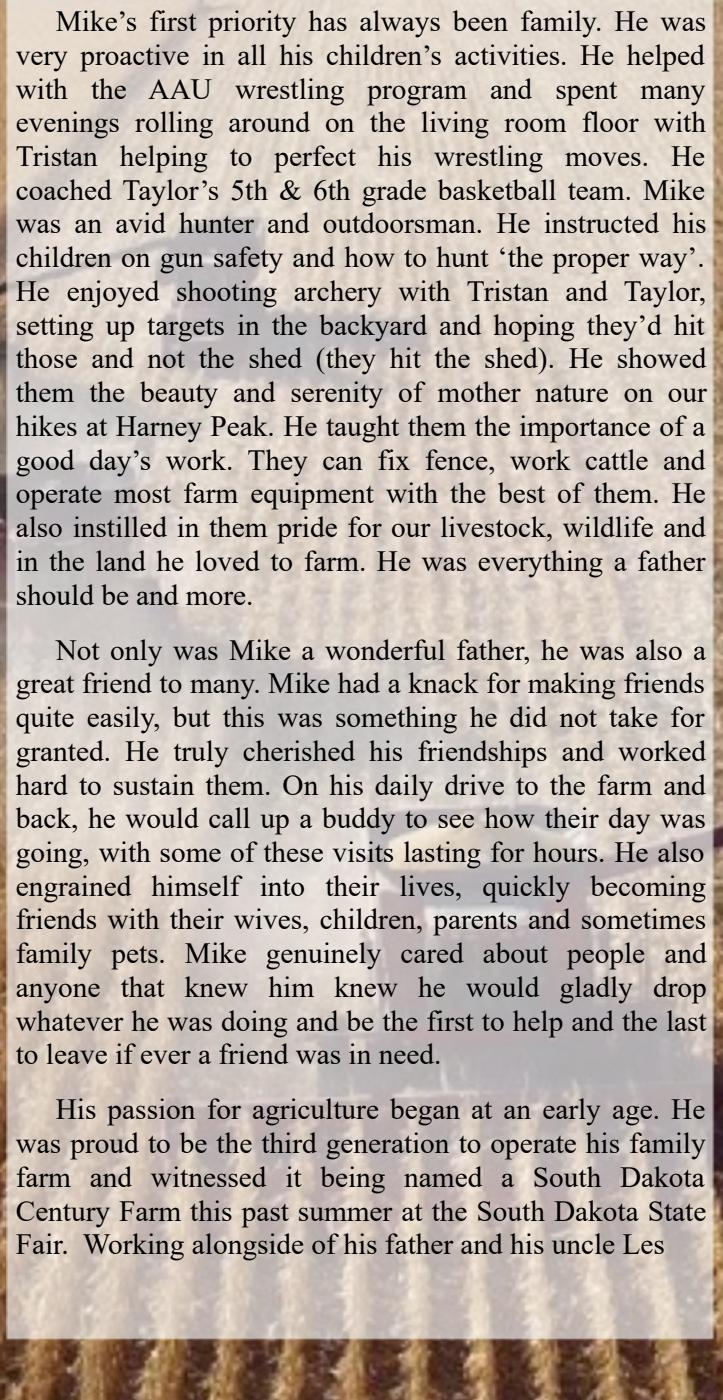


Michael Alan Ashdown, 56, a lifelong resident of Highmore, passed away in his home January 10, 2021 after a brief, but hard fought battle with cancer.

Mike was born in Pierre on May 19, 1964 to Carl and Lilly (Duchene) Ashdown of rural Highmore. Mike attended elementary and high school in Highmore and graduated in 1982. He attended South Dakota State University earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science.

Mike knew he found the love of his life Shauna Vlcek after he 'laid eyes on her' during church service on a long-ago Sunday morning. They were married August 31, 1991 and were blessed to have 29 years together as husband and wife. To this union two children were born, Tristan Michael on August 12, 1996 and Taylor Marie on September 7, 1999. As a surprise for Shauna's birthday on January 5th, he had his family gather together and he told his children the story of how he met and fell in love with their mom. He spoke from the heart and many happy tears were shed as he reminisced about that time.

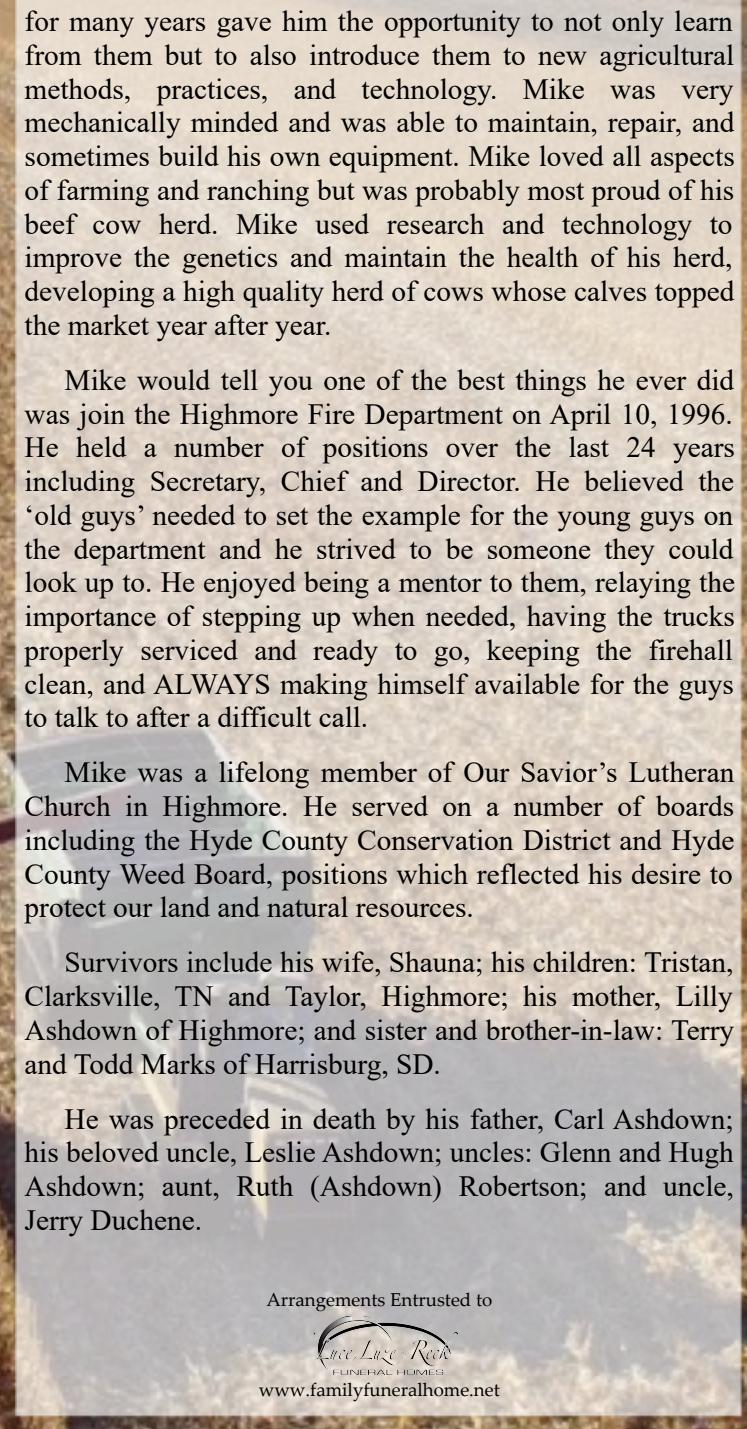
Mike's three main passions in life were family, community, and agriculture. His pride and joy were his children, Tristan and Taylor. He was a very hands-on father, taking great interest in their schooling and any and all activities they participated in. He was very proud of the fact that he only missed two parent teacher conferences, one of which was when he had surgery and was unable to attend. He firmly believed as a parent that it was vital to show an interest in a child's education; believing if Tristan and Taylor knew it was important to us, it would also be important to them. His philosophy held true and it always gave him great pleasure to see their name on the Dean's List. His pride was never more evident when Tristan was accepted to the United States Military Academy at West Point, NY and attending his graduation in May 2019 and Taylor's acceptance into the Registered Nursing Program at Augustana University in Sioux Falls, SD.



Mike's first priority has always been family. He was very proactive in all his children's activities. He helped with the AAU wrestling program and spent many evenings rolling around on the living room floor with Tristan helping to perfect his wrestling moves. He coached Taylor's 5th & 6th grade basketball team. Mike was an avid hunter and outdoorsman. He instructed his children on gun safety and how to hunt 'the proper way'. He enjoyed shooting archery with Tristan and Taylor, setting up targets in the backyard and hoping they'd hit those and not the shed (they hit the shed). He showed them the beauty and serenity of mother nature on our hikes at Harney Peak. He taught them the importance of a good day's work. They can fix fence, work cattle and operate most farm equipment with the best of them. He also instilled in them pride for our livestock, wildlife and in the land he loved to farm. He was everything a father should be and more.

Not only was Mike a wonderful father, he was also a great friend to many. Mike had a knack for making friends quite easily, but this was something he did not take for granted. He truly cherished his friendships and worked hard to sustain them. On his daily drive to the farm and back, he would call up a buddy to see how their day was going, with some of these visits lasting for hours. He also engrained himself into their lives, quickly becoming friends with their wives, children, parents and sometimes family pets. Mike genuinely cared about people and anyone that knew him knew he would gladly drop whatever he was doing and be the first to help and the last to leave if ever a friend was in need.

His passion for agriculture began at an early age. He was proud to be the third generation to operate his family farm and witnessed it being named a South Dakota Century Farm this past summer at the South Dakota State Fair. Working alongside of his father and his uncle Les



for many years gave him the opportunity to not only learn from them but to also introduce them to new agricultural methods, practices, and technology. Mike was very mechanically minded and was able to maintain, repair, and sometimes build his own equipment. Mike loved all aspects of farming and ranching but was probably most proud of his beef cow herd. Mike used research and technology to improve the genetics and maintain the health of his herd, developing a high quality herd of cows whose calves topped the market year after year.

Mike would tell you one of the best things he ever did was join the Highmore Fire Department on April 10, 1996. He held a number of positions over the last 24 years including Secretary, Chief and Director. He believed the 'old guys' needed to set the example for the young guys on the department and he strived to be someone they could look up to. He enjoyed being a mentor to them, relaying the importance of stepping up when needed, having the trucks properly serviced and ready to go, keeping the firehall clean, and ALWAYS making himself available for the guys to talk to after a difficult call.

Mike was a lifelong member of Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Highmore. He served on a number of boards including the Hyde County Conservation District and Hyde County Weed Board, positions which reflected his desire to protect our land and natural resources.

Survivors include his wife, Shauna; his children: Tristan, Clarksville, TN and Taylor, Highmore; his mother, Lilly Ashdown of Highmore; and sister and brother-in-law: Terry and Todd Marks of Harrisburg, SD.

He was preceded in death by his father, Carl Ashdown; his beloved uncle, Leslie Ashdown; uncles: Glenn and Hugh Ashdown; aunt, Ruth (Ashdown) Robertson; and uncle, Jerry Duchene.