



Office of the Mayor

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DEAN R. KAUFERT

MAYOR

MEDIA ADVISORY

DATE: 23:23
TO: Local Media Outlets
FROM: Mayor Dean R. Kaufert
RE: Mayor Kaufert Responds to the Passing of Mike Ellis

Neenah, WI (July 20, 2018) Sadly, while getting on a train to travel from Denali to Anchorage this morning, I learned of the passing of Mike Ellis. Mike was a mentor and a colleague to me, but most importantly he was my best friend. Mike was one of the States true leaders whose legacy of work as our State Senator will continue to have a positive impact for generations to come.

Most folks may never know the full impact that Mike had on our community, this region, and the State of Wisconsin. So many policies, initiatives and state budgets had Mike's fingerprints on them. His passion for the state finances and budget process, combined with the historical knowledge he brought to the discussions was unequalled. His passionate commitment to insure all citizens were listened to and had their voices heard was something I greatly admired about Mike. He cared about all the citizens of the state regardless of their background or political philosophy, party affiliation, race or creed, union blue collar or businessman white collar.

Mike knew the value of hard work through his parent's upbringing and his years growing up on the island ("Dogtown" as he passionately called it). Mike often spoke with me about his love for his wife Sandy, his family and his horse farm. He embraced the importance of the hard work it took to care for the horses. He also drilled into me to "never forget your roots" and to stand up and challenge initiatives and policies when you felt it was necessary.

Mike would spend hours understanding the budget proposal and knew more facts and figures than any other legislator in the building. He was tenacious and would challenge anyone including his Governor or leaders when changes were necessary.

Representing people for over 40 years and to this day, Mike continued to be a valuable part of his community and region, meeting often with Senators, Assemblymen and other government leaders to share his experience and insight. Folks loved listening to his views on the weekly radio station WHBY and at local service clubs where he was willing to share his knowledge.

Mike still loved the political game and would share his opinion with anyone that asked. Mike and I would speak often and he would give me valuable advice which I treasured and utilized often. In 1990 when I decided to enter state politics, Mike met with me to discuss my dreams and vision for the city and state. He taught me so much about government and representing people during my career. I owe much of my success to his mentoring and friendship. I will miss my friend and this community and state has lost a true statesman. His wit, humor, sharp tongue and quotable quotes will long be remembered.

My condolences to Sandy, his brothers and sister along with his family on this sad day.

Contact:

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Neenah Mayor

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