



## Robert Henry Baker

October 19, 1951 - May 13, 2020

Robert “Bob” Henry Baker, 68, passed away on May 13, 2020 at his home in Minnetonka, MN. Due to the Covid-19 situation, no services will be held at this time. Those who wish may send a memorial in Bob’s name to the Pleasant Valley Golf Course, 405 1st St N, Thornton, IA or The Minnesota Arboretum in Chaska, MN( <http://arb.umn.edu/>).

Robert Henry Baker was born on October 19, 1951 in Hampton, IA to Russell and Jean Baker. He grew up on the family farm south of Thornton, IA with his sisters Mary Ann and Barbara, and brother Roger. He graduated from Meservey-Thornton High School in 1970, lettering in multiple sports, including golf, baseball, basketball and football. He continued his academic and football career at Luther College, in Decorah, IA where he met his future wife Joy Tesmer. After college he moved to Des Moines and worked for the Chicago Northwestern Railroad as a conductor/brakeman, marrying Joy on June 21, 1975. In 1978 he decided to follow in his father Russ’s footsteps, moving to Sheffield, IA to join the family business as a farmer. He also enjoyed doing the greenskeeping work at the Pleasant Valley Golf Course in Thornton. While he and Joy lived in Sheffield, they added two children to the family – Kimberly in 1978, and Adam in 1980.

In 1988, Joy took a job in Forest City, and the family moved there, turning Bob into a commuter farmer for the next 11 years driving 45-60 miles each way to complete his farming operation. While there he also worked at Winnebago motorhomes, Totem Foods, and in carpentry. In 1992, again following Joy’s career, the family made another move to Waverly, IA to complete their children’s education, staying until 1999 when the kids had moved to college in Decorah and Iowa City. During this time, Bob continued to farm from a remote position, and in the offseason filled his extra times with jobs at a local construction firm, in maintenance at CUNA Mutual, and as a butcher at the Janesville, IA locker.

With the kids effectively off to college, Bob and Joy returned to their roots in Thornton in 1999. In 2004, he was diagnosed with tonsil cancer and for the next 16 years he fought with collectively more and more difficult health issues related to the cancer and the treatment’s side effects. He retired from farming in 2013, after which he spent his time golfing, assisting with maintenance at the Thornton golf course, gardening, and travelling, completing his tour of all 50 states. One of his favorite activities throughout his life was playing pinochle with friends and family, and he won his final game, defeating his wife and

daughter-in-law this past weekend. In 2016, they moved to Minnetonka, MN to be near family, with both children having relocated to the area after their college careers. He loved having his family drop by to visit, and the grandchildren always caused extra smiles. His favorite place to visit was the rose garden at The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. He is survived by his wife Joy, his children Kimberly (David) Herrema of Minnetonka, MN, Adam (Bonnie) of Minneapolis, MN, his grandchildren Christopher Baker, Olivia Herrema, and Gavin Herrema, his sister, Barbara Logan of Arden Hills, MN, his brother Roger (Sandy) Baker of Sheffield, IA, in-laws James Tesmer of Rochester, MN, Kathy Tesmer of Harmony, MN, Gene (Diane) Tesmer of Knob Noster, MO and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Russell & Jean Baker, his sister, Mary Ann Baker, and brother-in-law Jerrold Tesmer.

[www.Washburn-McReavy.com](http://www.Washburn-McReavy.com)

Strobeck Johnson 952-938-9020

# Comments

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“ Was an excellent pinochle player and even better person! Miss those games of pinochle and the sharing of stories. Our sympathies to Joy, Kim, Adam and their families.

Scott & Marilyn O'Brien

Scott O'Brien - May 17 at 04:36 PM

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“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Robert Henry Baker.



May 15 at 09:35 PM

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“ So sorry for your loss Joy. You and your family are in our prayers.

Jerry and Debbie Pfister, Knob Noster, Mo.

Deborah Pfister - May 15 at 05:09 PM

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“ So sorry Joy for your loss. Glad that you are living near Grandchildren and family. Prayers to all.

BARBARA HOPKEY - May 15 at 04:42 PM