



Bret B Baker

June 13, 1950 - January 10, 2024

Bret B Baker, age 73, of Grove, OK, lost his battle with COPD on Wednesday, January

10, 2024, at his home.

On June 13, 1950, Bret was born, the oldest of four sons, to Robert and Norma

(Saunders) Baker in Joplin, MO. He grew up and graduated from high school in Webb

City, MO, Valedictorian, Class of 1968. Following graduation, Bret attended college and

graduated from the University of Missouri, Columbia, 1974.

On August 31, 1986, Bret married Marsha Cole at the family lake house in Grove. The

marriage included the opportunity for Bret to experience the joys and challenges of

parenting Marsha's teenage daughter, Amy, and eventually becoming a grandfather and

great-grandfather. Bret took great pride in watching them grow up and contributing in

so many ways in each of their lives.

After college, Bret spent 10 years as a CPA with a national firm in Kansas City and two

years with a local CPA firm in Memphis. He then became a CFO, first for a

publicly

traded banking software company and then for a family-owned manufacturing company.

In 1993 Bret began a career as an ad hoc financial officer working with a variety of small

and medium size businesses. He helped owners and their management teams develop

effective strategies, evaluate business alternatives, and improve cash flow and

profitability. Bret felt most successful helping people develop and hone their management skills. He was a trusted business advisor and mentor for many.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Bret and Marsha traveled at every opportunity. They were not just sightseers, they traveled to engage with people and

experience different cultures. Bret was known for his love of fine wines – the history,

the process, the taste, but most of all the people he met as he explored and shared

wines in both Europe and the U.S.

Bret was a voracious reader, always seeking to expand his knowledge and understanding of the world. He met weekly with a study group to learn and engage in

intellectual discussions. He was truly a critical thinker who was willing to challenge his

own beliefs and was open-minded to the ideas and beliefs of others. His wisdom and

intellectual curiosity were truly inspiring, leaving an impact on all who had the privilege

of knowing him.

Bret Baker will be remembered as a compassionate friend, a dedicated mentor, and a

true connoisseur of life. His legacy will continue to inspire and guide us, reminding us to embrace knowledge, seek adventure, and cherish the friendships that enrich our lives.

He will be dearly missed, but his spirit will forever live on in our hearts.

Bret is preceded in death by his parents.

Left to cherish his memory, wife, Marsha Cole; daughter, Amy Gifford;

Grandson, Jake

Gifford, his wife Alyssa, their two children Madisson and Cole; Grandson Zack Gifford

and his partner Monika Doktor; brother Bruce Baker and his wife Becky;

brother Brad

Baker and his wife Linda Ann; brother Kurt Baker and his wife Connie; and

many

cherished nieces and nephews and their families.

A memorial service for Bret will be at 4pm Friday, January 19, 2024, at

Nichols-

Stephens Funeral Chapel followed by a Toast to His Memory until 6pm.

Donations in Bret's memory may be made to: Community Crisis Center of NE

Oklahoma, Wild Heart Ranch Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation, Oklahoma

Educational

Television Authority, KOSU Public Radio, or other favorite charity of your

choice.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JAN 19. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Nichols-Stephens Funeral and Cremation Service
10201 U.S. Highway 59
Grove, OK 74344
(918) 786-6761
nicholsfunerals@yahoo.com

Toast to His Memory

JAN 19. 4:45 PM (CT)

Nichols-Stephens Funeral and Cremation Service
10201 U.S. Highway 59
Grove, OK 74344
(918) 786-6761
nicholsfunerals@yahoo.com

This will be immediately after the service at approximately 4:45.

Tribute Wall



“ Nichols Funeral & Cremation Services created a Tribute Video in memory of Bret B Baker



Nichols-Stephens Funeral & Cremation Services - January 19, 2024 at 01:26 PM

LM

“ So grateful to have shared many years of friendship and good wine together, such special memories. Cheers to Bret 🍷
Lissa & Chris



Lissa Merillat - January 19, 2024 at 09:50 AM

SR

“ I'm so grateful to have known Bret. I remember in times of struggle when I didn't know where to turn I reached out to Bret and Marsha. I felt not one bit of judgement. Bret had such a big heart and wanted all good things for me. Always offering me guidance such a kind man. I'll never forget what he and Marsha have done for me truly. Sending love and prayers

Shelby Rainey - January 18, 2024 at 09:26 PM


OS

“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



Oundré-A and Shakiya - January 18, 2024 at 04:44 AM

OS

“ Thank you for going out of your way to be a family to us while we were so far from home. You have a special place in our hearts and we are deeply saddened to have not spent your last moments with you. You are dearly missed, Bret. Thank you for spreading a little more kindness and joy to the world. We love you. 



Oundré-A and Shakiya - January 18, 2024 at 04:42 AM



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Bret B Baker.



January 17, 2024 at 09:16 PM

DM

“ Don & Debra Malone planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Bret B Baker.

Don & Debra Malone - January 17, 2024 at 09:16 PM

MK

“ Mark Holliday & Debra Klingsporn purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Bret B Baker.



Mark Holliday & Debra Klingsporn - January 17, 2024 at 04:14 PM

MK

“ Mark Holliday & Debra Klingsporn planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Bret B Baker.

Mark Holliday & Debra Klingsporn - January 17, 2024 at 04:14 PM

MJ

“ Marsha J. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Bret B Baker.

Marsha J. - January 17, 2024 at 11:26 AM

AD

“ Anna Doktor purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Bret B Baker.



Anna Doktor - January 16, 2024 at 12:00 PM

AD

“ Anna Doktor planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Bret B Baker.

Anna Doktor - January 16, 2024 at 12:00 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Bret B Baker.



January 16, 2024 at 11:56 AM

JW

“ Jack and Rejeanna Williams planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Bret B Baker.

Jack and Rejeanna Williams - January 16, 2024 at 11:56 AM

LM

“ Thankful Bret and Marsha stopped to see us in Mesa last winter! Bret you were such an important part of my growing up years! I have a thousand stories of you going through my head! Loved you my Brother, my Friend!
So sorry you left us Way Too Soon!
LB



Laura Beth Miller - January 16, 2024 at 10:57 AM

SK

“ Even though I did not have the opportunity to know Bret better or longer, what I did know was amazing! I always enjoyed his knowledge and perspective on our weekly discussion group calls, he had so much to share. I learned quickly to listen closely to him and hopefully I became a bit smarter or thoughtful because of him. My condolences to Marsha and the family. Rest in peace, Bret, and keep on learning and teaching!

SUZANNE KNOTT - January 15, 2024 at 01:07 PM

SS

Very sorry to hear of Bret's passing. My heart felt condolences to his family. From a friend of our younger days. Stephen Smith Class of 68 WCHS.

Stephen Smith - January 16, 2024 at 11:15 AM



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Bret B Baker.



January 15, 2024 at 10:31 AM

SL

“ Literally a lifetime of memories old friend. God Bless. Rip. Steve Lightle class of 68 Webb City High.

Steve Lightle - January 15, 2024 at 09:58 AM

BR

“ 5 files added to the tribute wall



Brandy - January 14, 2024 at 01:30 PM

MC

“ 2 files added to the album Bret B Baker



Marsha Cole - January 13, 2024 at 04:59 PM

CS

“ Bret was a friend from way back: high school and Explorer Scouts in Webb City, Missouri; ski trips to Colorado, and working summer jobs in Estes Park. May his family be comforted in their bereavement.
– Christopher Stone, Ogden, Utah

Christopher Stone - January 13, 2024 at 12:46 PM

NM

“ When my wife and I bought our first house, one of the first orders of business was to put on a new roof. We had little money to pay to have the roof put on, of course. We were able to come up with enough money to buy the shingles, but we did not know how to roof. At that time, Bret was in the National Guard and the military taught him how to put shingles on, (for some reason). Bret came down and taught me how to roof! Sometimes, we would do something that this didn't quite look right, and Bret would say “That's good enough for government work.”

Since then, I have put on 5 roofs and taught my kids, and then a couple of my grandkids, how to shingle a roof! Thank you Bret! I will miss you!

Ned Miller - January 13, 2024 at 10:52 AM

LK

Bret was a very nice Man, a true friend & will be missed! So sorry for your loss! We are praying for the family!

larry Kamler - January 13, 2024 at 04:40 PM

MH

“ So very sorry for your loss. Bret was a special guy at Webb City High School. Prayers for his family.



Mary Steele Hensley - January 13, 2024 at 10:42 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Bret B Baker.



January 13, 2024 at 10:35 AM



“ Alan Winston and Zee Hayley planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Bret B Baker.

Alan Winston and Zee Hayley - January 13, 2024 at 10:35 AM



“ I am from the BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS and this gentleman and his wife mentored my daughter while she traveled for school. With a heart of compassion and love she was cared for as one of their own. You are loving and kind and your positive energy is felt thousands of miles around the earth. I'm blessed to have met you and thank you for all you did for my daughter OUNDRE'-A. My heart prayers and tears are with the family no words can do just to express your loss. Hugs and kisses..may his soul rest in eternal peace.

Tracia Petersen - January 13, 2024 at 09:30 AM