



## Marvin S. Baker Jr.

August 8, 1920 - May 19, 2017

Marvin S. Baker, Jr.---96 years, 8 months, and 11 days old, left all of his infirmities of body behind and took his zest for life to his new home in Heaven on May 19th, 2017. In the resume of his life, he entered this world as the oldest of five children born to Eunice and Marvin Baker, Sr. (He, Corinne, Firmin, Marjorie and Helen, his baby sister). He attended school in Hugoton, Kansas, lived through the Dust Bowl, the Depression, and the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps, Camp 27 46, Alcester, S. Dakota 1938-1940) as the survey crew medic. He hoped to start university, but then he got caught up in something called World War II and meeting the girl of his dreams, Catherine, a tenant in one of his father's apartments. He loved riding his Indian Motorcycle through Wichita, and despite the evenings of roaring to the local dance hall with her skirt blowing up in her face, she finally agreed to marry him in April of 1943, when he was on leave from the army and before he was shipped to the South Pacific. The following May, Marvin Baker III was born, and he saw his boy for the first time when he was two years old. During his service from 1942 to 1945, he was a corporal, working as a surgical technician in New Guinea and the Philippines. He decided, like his mother and his Grandmother Firmin, he wanted to become a teacher. In 1948, he received a degree in education from Wichita State University, his daughter Kathleen was born, and he went to work teaching at Gove Rural High School (KS) until 1950. He would have stayed longer because he really loved his students and the work, but then the Korean Conflict broke out. In December 1950, he reenlisted to serve his country as a Captain in the Adjutant General Corps, as a Special Services Officer. And in 1952 his youngest daughter Patricia was born at Ft. Meade Army Hospital, MD. After a two-year residence in St. John's, Newfoundland and a side trip to Greenland, he was transferred to Ft. Sam Houston in 1954, where he remained until he was honorably discharged in 1957. He moved his family to Marion, Texas and went to work as a teacher and administrator at Schertz-Cibolo schools from 1957-1961. After attaining a master's degree from Incarnate Word in reading, he worked as 4th grade reading specialist at Canyon Elementary School in New Braunfels until 1962, when he decided to move to South Texas to take a teaching position at McHi. There he remained as a biology, biochemistry, and ecology teacher until 1987, when he retired. During summer National Science Foundation studies around the US, he enhanced his knowledge

of many scientific principles and earned further certificates and degrees. He was always proudest of his discovery of two new species of Demodex (armadillo and jack rabbit hosts) during the summers of 1967 and 1968 in a research project at the University of Massachusetts, under the mentorship of Dr. William Nutting. This parasitology research went on to become instrumental in finding causes for certain types of skin disorders, including a form of skin cancer. In 1989, he founded and participated in the Rio Grande Old Farm Equipment Club for 12 years, joining in numerous S. TX parades and antique farm equipment shows with his 1928 International 1 ton 6 speed truck. He researched and wrote articles about antique farm equipment and put out the club's periodical. He loved to collect rocks, vintage autos, old phonographs, 78 rpm records, stamps, magazines, books, new friends, the practice of kissing ladies' hands and doling out "magic rocks". He enjoyed bowling, gardening, auctions, garage sales, fishing, caring for his pets of all kinds, and nurturing his wife and children with his excellent stews made in the pressure cooker, pancakes on Sunday morning, and lots of encouragement and problem-solving. He was an avid reader to the very end; and well into his 80s, he fell in love with his computer when he learned how to email and Facebook. He was a member of Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church, the American Legion Post #37, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars #8788, NEA, TSTA, TCTA, but most of all he was just a valuable member of the human race, someone who saw something good and special in everyone he met. His son "Shorty" passed away in 2002, as did the great love of his life for 67 years, Catherine, in 2010. He is preceded in death by most of his oldest friends and family but his three sisters, a host of nieces and nephews, his 2 daughters Kathleen and Patricia, 6 grand-children Christine, Annette, Charles, Richard, Robert, and Jennifer, 14 great-grandchildren, and 1 great-great-granddaughter, Avery. He was a profoundly gentle, kind, intelligent, patriotic, generous, caring and lovable man. We will miss playing cribbage and being beaten by him, but we certainly enjoyed our time with him. In Tuesdays with Morrie, Morrie tells Mitch, "Death takes a life, not a relationship." The person lives on in our memories and the memories of others. And that will certainly be true of Marvin S. Baker as he fully embraces the heavenly adventures to come.

After all, he loved to explore, to learn new things, to travel and to pass along that knowledge to anyone who wanted to learn it. He possessed what the naturalist Rachel Carson called "a sense of wonder."

A celebration of his life will be held from 6 to 8 pm at Kreidler Funeral Home on Tuesday, May 30, 2017, where it is hoped that friends will come to share the best of their memories of this wonderful man. As expressions of sympathy, he would appreciate donations in his name to be made to Yaqui Animal Rescue, 1803 N Bryan Road, Mission, TX 78572. It is a no-kill animal ranch that cares for all kinds of animals, helping them to find new homes and happy lives. <http://www.YaquiAnimalRescue.com> or visit their Facebook page to see the good work that they are doing.



# Events

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**MAY** **Memorial Service** 06:00PM - 08:00PM

**30**

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Kreidler Funeral Home, Inc.

314 N 10th St., McAllen, TX, US, 78501

# Comments

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“ Rest Marvin, until you hear at dawn,  
the low, clear reveille of God.

Thank you for your service to this nation.



Harry Simpson - June 06, 2018 at 01:55 PM

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“ "Marvelous Marvin" Baker was my biology teacher 1969-70 at McAllen High School. He also was my older brother's, David (class of '65), and younger brother's, Douglas (class of '77) teacher. He knew how to engage students with earnestness, with kindness and encouragement, and with humor. One of the hurdles we had to jump through for sophomore biology was dissecting the goat's eye. Ewwww, big-time, but we had to do it, along with dissecting a frog...Mr. Baker kept those goat's eyes in his "EYES BOX" (the 'fridge in the back)--MAJOR groans, lots of smiles and appreciation that this teacher liked to make us laugh with his plays on words, ironies, and 'painful' puns. The secret to a SUPER teacher: have the kids learn and they don't even realize it they are so engaged in the challenges, fun, and success of absorbing new information!

One of the highlights of sophomore biology class with Mr. Baker was the field trip in May that we took out towards Rio Grande City. We explored, picnicked, played frisbee golf (with boxes) and, in general, just enjoyed a fun outing away from school. What a great outlet for kids a wee bit tired of school for the year...I will always remember!

Encouraging his female students to complete their full education and be independent thinkers/workers in the world, he was ahead of some of the culture in expecting women to have equal standing in the workplace and participating in being a breadwinner for a household, as well. I believe that his daughter, Patricia, helped inform his beliefs that women were capable of being strong, independent and powerful in their own right, which was quite an awesome message that he delivered, that I interpreted as I have described.

When I went back for the first class reunion, Fall of 1981, I went to his classroom at McHi to invite him to our gathering at The Elks Lodge on Friday night and he came!!! We were so delighted to see him and I think that he was equally tickled to see us. After that, he was on my Christmas card list and when he learned his computer skills,

we were e-mail friends, too. I always invited him to be part of our Friday night gatherings at each successive reunion, and here he came. In 2006, he visited with many students at the Border Buttermilk All Class event. He went to Ronnie Wright's shindig in 2011 at Ronnie's folk's home and saw many 'old' faces I went to his home to visit Katy and him and took him a stuffed toy armadillo. I will always associate these critters with Marvin due to his discovery of the parasite found on said armadillo's body, the demodex.

These are just a few of my remembrances of such a fine person, a sweet guy, and a super teacher. It is so true, friends: remembering who won the Oscar for something, who was the Superbowl MVP some year, who won the gold medal for this or that-- this stuff is fleeting, easily forgettable...what we DO remember, pretty easily? Outstanding teachers who made a difference in lives. Thank you, Lord, for them. Thank you, Lord, for the life of "Marvelous" Marvin Baker.

With love,

Susan Corbin McKinnon

**Susan Corbin McKinnon** - June 08, 2017 at 03:38 PM

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“ My condolences to the family of Marvin Baker, Jr. Our paths crossed briefly when he taught in Gove, Kansas, when I was just a boy. He was remembered fondly by those of us from Gove. I appreciated his daughter sharing his experiences these last few years. Marvin lived a wonderful life. Ramon Powers, Topeka, Kansas.

**Ramon Powers** - May 31, 2017 at 09:40 AM

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“ Mr. Baker - it seems like yesterday when I was in your Biology class. You introduced me to a subject that I had no interest in, but later became my major in college. You had a way of making learning a fun experience. Thank you for your unconventional teaching. You have always been in the hearts of many "student fans."

I truly enjoyed sharing some time with you later in life. You always made everyone smile. I always looked forward to your witty emails. You are truly a one in a million.

Rest in peace, Mr. Baker. Educators (and people) like you will be missed, but never forgotten. My sincerest condolences to the Baker family.

Your friend,  
Dr. Joey Cazares

**Joey Cazares, DDS** - May 30, 2017 at 11:38 AM

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“ I know Mr. Baker through Patricia, my room mate at one of the AP Reading in Daytona Beach. We had a conversation by phone, yet I felt at that moment his kindness and interest in people, especially those associated with his family. Later we kept in touch through e-mails, in which he shared his passionate views on a number of interests and ideas. A few years ago, he sent me a Christmas gift from his rare book collection. Though I never met him face to face, I knew Marvin S. Baker as a generous, kind soul, free of pretense, possessing genuine, hopeful interest in humanity. My deepest condolences to Patricia and the Baker family. -- Deborah LeSure Wilbourn

Deborah LeSure Wilbourn - May 27, 2017 at 03:16 PM

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“ Deborah LeSure Wilbourn sent a virtual gift in memory of Marvin S. Baker Jr.



Deborah LeSure Wilbourn - May 27, 2017 at 02:59 PM

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“ Mr. Baker was one of a kind and touched so many lives that I don't know if he ever realized how many. He will truly be missed by all of us who attended Schertz Cibolo High School. I missed the reunion but the notes that he shared that he mailed to many of us at our homes through out the United States. God Bless you Mr. Baker, I look forward to seeing you again one day as we walk those streets of Gold with our Father. This weekend is also Memorial Day Weekend. Thank you Sir for your service to our country.

Corky Smith  
Class of 1963  
USA Retired/NTSB Retired

Corky Smith - May 26, 2017 at 04:55 PM

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“ My deepest condolences to Mr. Baker's family and friends. I had the pleasure of knowing him when he attended several of the High School reunions we hold each year for attendees of SCHS. He was a Teacher and Principal there before I got into High School so all of my memories are of his later years.. For the reunions he would donate some vintage magazines from the 1930s and 1940s to pass out to classmates. He was a giving man who gave of not only his knowledge but material

things as well. He will be missed by many who knew him. RIP Mr. Baker

**Bill White** - May 26, 2017 at 10:13 AM

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“ Mr. Baker was my biology teacher at McAllen High School. I fondly remember him dressed in his overalls and plaid shirts. He was an excellent teacher and I really enjoyed being in his class. I wish everyone could have had the joy of having him for a teacher. He cared about his students and encouraged everyone to learn all they could.

My condolences go out to all his family at this very difficult time, and I for one would like to thank his family for sharing him with us. A great teacher, mentor and friend to all. God

Bless you all and know that Mr. Baker is probably stirring up some biology classes in Heaven..

Eva Higgins Markum

**EVA MARKUM** - May 26, 2017 at 12:40 AM

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“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



**Patricia** - May 25, 2017 at 09:16 PM