



Dean P. Baker

March 2, 1937 - September 12, 2023

Dean P. Baker, 86 of Akron, Indiana passed at 3:14 am, Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2023 at his residence.

Dean was born on March 2, 1937 in Canton, South Dakota to the late Edgar Paul and Annabelle Marie (Ellis) Baker. He married on June 6, 1959 in Clarion, Iowa to Suzanne Turk, she survives. They moved to Akron from Clarion, Iowa in 1964.

Dean retired in 1999 as President of Pike Lumber Company of Akron, but he would tell you he was a forester from Iowa State University. He was a longtime member of the Akron United Methodist Church, where he served numerous roles. He also was an active member in the Akron Lions Club and various industry associations, which included, the Indiana Hardwood Lumbermen's Association and the Indiana Forest and Woodland Owners' Association.

He is survived by his wife Suzanne Baker of Akron; son Chris and wife Darleen Baker of Rochester; daughter Sarah and husband Richard Solano of Akron; grandchildren Nathan Baker, Daniel and wife Sara Solano, Andrea Baker, Adam and wife Celia Solano, and Thomas Solano; and sister Lois Baker of Edina, Minnesota.

Dean was preceded in death by his parents.

Friends may gather at 10:00 am for a memorial service that will be held at 10:30 am, Saturday, October 7, 2023 at the Akron United Methodist Church 121 N. Mishawaka Street Akron, Indiana with Pastor David Eaton officiating.

Memorial contributions can be made in his memory to the Beaver Dam Community Church/Wheels on Fire to assist the community members who are fighting cancer or to the Akron United Methodist Church Endowment Fund.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

OCT 7. 10:30 AM (ET)

Akron United Methodist Church
121 N Mishawaka St
Akron, IN 46910
<http://a-umc.org/>

Tribute Wall



“ Hartzler Funeral Services created a Tribute Video in memory of Dean P. Baker



Hartzler Funeral Services - September 20, 2023 at 10:17 PM

KP

“ Roger and I met Dean when we moved to Indiana. Chris and Sara were young. Suzi showed me around Akron and the area. Dean had a lot of funny stories when we went out to eat. We moved away but Roger would recall the stories every once in a while. We send our sympathy to the family. RIP Dean.

Kathryn K Presl - November 03, 2023 at 04:27 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dean P. Baker.



October 05, 2023 at 09:36 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dean P. Baker.

October 05, 2023 at 09:36 AM

PM

“ To Suzanne, Chris , Darleen, and all the family of Dean, we send our sympathy.....he lived a fine life, serving many. We pray for God to bless you with comfort and strength. Phil and Katie McCarter

Phil and Katie McCarter - October 05, 2023 at 09:24 AM

TD

“ I was a Forestry student on the co-op program at Purdue University in the mid-70s when I first met Dean. In the co-op program I alternated semesters at the University with semesters working for Pike Lumber Company. Dean was my mentor. I remember him as a man who had a great passion for his profession. He told me when he first hired on at Pike as a timber buyer he memorized the entire Doyle log rule so he could tally logs as quickly as possible. I remember having dinner at his house with his family the one semester I worked in Akron. I also remember him giving me a ride in his model T. I remember Dean as being a kind, decent human being. He treated me with a great deal of respect. I will always fondly remember Dean even though I haven't seen him for over 40 years. I wish to express my deepest sympathy to his wife, children, their spouses and grandchildren.

Tom DeCamp - October 03, 2023 at 11:17 PM

JD

“ John and Deb planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dean P. Baker.

John and Deb - September 22, 2023 at 03:40 PM

JD

“ *John and Deb purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Dean P. Baker.*



John and Deb - September 22, 2023 at 03:40 PM

LT

“ *Merl & I have a lot of good memories of Dean. The four of us took a lot of trips together. He will be missed .*

linda tinkey - September 22, 2023 at 01:36 PM

JB

“Dean is best remembered for his passion for the hardwood resource in the acquiring of raw materials to feed our sawmills, purchasing forested tracts for our network of forestlands, and managing forested tracts for Pike and other private individuals to help attain management objectives. Dean loved to plant trees for the company, privately, and to pass his passion along during the annual Akron 2nd grader plant and forest tour and tree planting every April. Dean also was key to the success of Pike Lumber Company leading the management team as President and as a member of the Pike Board of Directors.

Dean with the help of Dennis LeMaster and David Downey of Purdue University lead the management team through a continuing education process of establishing a marketing plan that serves as a business guidance system.

His leadership in trade associations such as IHLA, where Dean was a past president, convinced the membership of the importance of the hardwood resource as vital to the health of the industry.

Eventually, due to Dean's persistence, the IHLA became a charter member of the Hardwood Tree Improvement and Regeneration (HTIRC) at Purdue and holds a seat on their advisory committee and supplies annual funding to support it.

His leadership at Pike Lumber Company, in the industry, and in the Akron Community serves as a shining example to others to follow his example he modeled so well throughout his life.

Serving as President of Pike Lumber Company, I often drew on Dean's advice and council in many areas including resource, operations, and support of the community. It was a pleasure serving with Dean on Pike Lumber Company Board of Directors giving direction and vision to the long term sustainability of a top corporate member of the hardwood industry.

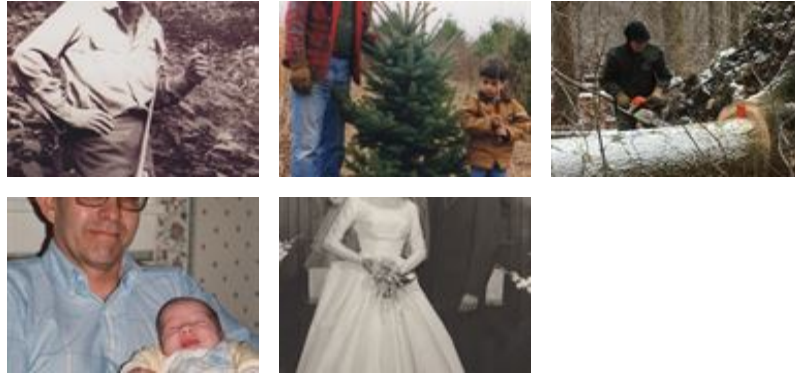
Dean touched many lives wherever he was and his enthusiasm was infectious; he will be sorely missed.

John R Brown
Pike Lumber Company
Board Chairman

John Brown - September 21, 2023 at 02:53 PM



“ 81 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Hartzler Funeral Services - September 20, 2023 at 10:17 PM

SG

“ *Dean, Susie and family were our very good neighbors for several years, he will be greatly missed. Rest in Peace Dean*



Shirley Gray - September 18, 2023 at 12:13 PM

EW

“ *I'll miss Dean. He had Phil hire me into the Pike Forestry Dept. in 1995 and away from the DNR Forestry Division who would not let us Service Foresters mark timber sales or even do any forestry labor on the side. It was good to work with people I respected at Pike like loggers and sawmill workers in a class outfit. I always loved sawmills and being with loggers in the woods - so I got out of bureaucracy prison and was able to apply my trade! It was great - all because of Dean and his vision for the Forestry Department complimenting the sawmill production efforts. Pat Walker*

Evan Patrick Walker - September 18, 2023 at 08:30 AM

SM

“ Mr. Baker, as I always knew him was my summer neighbor on Big Lake in Minnesota! He was one of the first people I met after moving onto Big Bear Ln! We exchanged words for almost an hour that first meeting, and would wave and say hello when we would meet during the summers! This past month I knew he wasn't doing so well as I saw his wife on our road, I always meant to stop and say HI but just couldn't find the time! Sorry Mr.Baker we will see each other again where I will give you a proper apology!RIP

Steve Manning - September 17, 2023 at 09:52 AM

ND

“ He was the first person to invite me to the Forum class which was life changing for me. I met Dean and Suzi at AUMC and they have been so kind to me. Love and hugs Suzi❤️❤️❤️ and to all the family❤️❤️❤️

Nikki Davis - September 15, 2023 at 05:26 PM

KS

“ Kara Whistler Steele lit a candle in memory of Dean P. Baker



Kara Whistler Steele - September 15, 2023 at 11:42 AM

BC

“ Dean & Suzie changed my life. I learned the importance of hard work, a solid education, and the importance of a relationship with God. Dean you are forever in my heart.



Bernadette Clark - September 15, 2023 at 01:50 AM

DM

I have a lot of fond memories of Dean (and the rest of the family) Susie, Sarah, and Chris (and all the rest of the family) shall be in my thoughts and prayers during this challenging time for you all!

Very Sincerely,

David McNeeley (and family)

David McNeeley - September 18, 2023 at 08:53 PM

LG

“ Linda Gillman lit a candle in memory of Dean P. Baker



Linda Gillman - September 14, 2023 at 05:51 PM

AS

“ Dean and I went to Clarion High School in Clarion Iowa and also Iowa State University. He was two years ahead of me. His wife Suzanne was in my high school class of 1957. I last visited them in Akron in 2017. He was a great guy.

arlan Stavnheim - September 14, 2023 at 08:49 AM

SB

“ *Shirley Bickel lit a candle in memory of Dean P. Baker*



Shirley Bickel - September 13, 2023 at 06:07 PM

JW

“ *Judy Walgamuth lit a candle in memory of Dean P. Baker*



Judy Walgamuth - September 13, 2023 at 04:24 PM