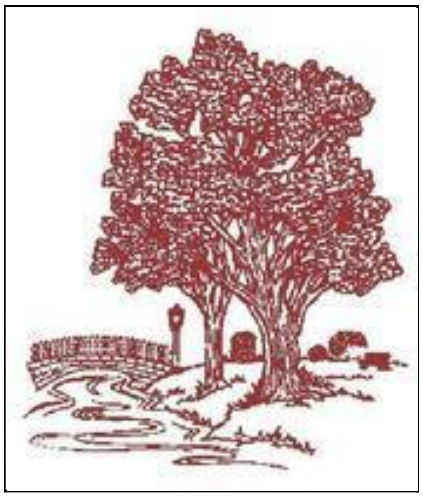
Marion Nelson Funeral Home

William Baker, Jr.



(April 20, 1941 - September 23, 2013)

William Thomas “Bill” Baker, Jr., of Ocklawaha, Florida, died in his home on September 23, 2013.

Bill was born April 20, 1941, in Baltimore, Maryland, the son of William Thomas Baker and Vivian Anderson. Bill will be warmly remembered by family, friends, and colleagues as a gentle soul with a searching, compassionate spirit and a sharp, inquisitive intellect.

Bill graduated from Lakes Wales High School in 1958, where he excelled in academics and baseball. As a National Merit Scholar, Bill attended Vanderbilt University for his undergraduate degree and then went on to attend Vanderbilt Law School. Newly married to Mary Ann Williams and proud father of his first child, he began his law career in Orlando in 1966. In 1969 he became a founding partner of what is today known as Lowndes, Drosdick, Doster, Kantor and Reed, P.A. As an accomplished real estate lawyer and later as a developer and conservation consultant, Bill played an integral role in the dynamic growth of Central Florida in the 1970s and 1980s.

Bill would happily report that his greatest life successes came not in the practice of law, but in his deep and varied relationships with family and friends. He is survived by three adoring children, Scott Baker of Orlando, Jennifer Baker of Breckenridge, Colorado, and Brett Baker of Georgetown, South Carolina. To each of his children Dad left special gifts and wisdom that will always be cherished. Bill also relished his role as “Grandpa Bill” or “Nonno Bill” to his grandchildren Jonah Rampini, Dana Rampini, Taylor Baker, Lauren Baker, Ava Baker, and Jacob Baker. Among many friends left behind is John Fletcher, Dad’s special companion since childhood with whom he spent many days in deep conversation and fruitless attempts to fix broken hunting and fishing gear.

Among the many gifts Bill shared with his children and grandchildren was an abiding love of nature and outdoor pursuits. Bill was a lifelong hunter and fisherman, and cherished marking up his calendar with plans for fall duck hunts in Texas, spring turkey shoots in Polk County, and everything in between. He thought nothing of careening across the country in his RV with family and close friends, even as the ravages of disease began to challenge his strength and endurance in the field.

Bill is preceded in death by his brother John A. “Jack” Baker, formerly of Kingsville, Texas.

A memorial service is scheduled for Bill on Friday, September 27, 2013, at 11 a.m. at Marion Nelson Funeral Home, 454 South Buck Moore Road, Lake Wales, Florida, 33853.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations be made in Bill’s name to Ducks Unlimited, Inc., One Waterfowl Way, Memphis, TN, 38120, and Hospice of Marion County, Inc., PO Box 4860, Ocala, FL 34478-4860, Attn. Fund Development.

To view the memorial service, please click here.