



Donald W. Becker

December 22, 1924 - March 9, 2010

Donald W. Becker of San Antonio, Texas, passed away on March 9, 2010, at the age of 85. He was born in St. Louis, Missouri on Dec. 22, 1924 to Lester S. and Marion Becker. He was preceded in death last year by his loving wife of 62 years, Joetta. After graduation from high school in 1943, he began attending Stanford University under a US Army deferred enlistment program. When the shortage of able-bodied men to fight in the war became dire, his program was cancelled and he was sent to France and served as a combat infantryman with the 106th Division. Amidst brutally frozen conditions in France's Ardennes Forest in December of 1944, his rifle company was overwhelmed by advancing German tank forces and he was captured during the Battle of the Bulge. Forced by the Germans to march for days through snow and ice, he suffered severe frostbite. He was then held as a prisoner of war in Germany's Bad Orb Prison Camp from January 1945 until he was liberated by General Patton's tank forces on Easter Sunday, April 1945. Nearly dying of starvation during captivity, he weighed only 106 pounds when finally liberated. He was awarded the Purple Heart for wounds suffered during his capture.

Immediately after the war, he courted and married Joetta and began his career in the photographic industry with Stanley Photo Service in St. Louis. Starting in retail store management, and under the guidance of his mentor, Stanley Wurtz, Don became Vice President, General Manager of Stanley

Photo Service in 1952. In 1961, Stanley Photo merged with The Fox Company of San Antonio, Texas, and became a publicly traded company known as Fox Stanley Photo Products, Inc. Don was named Executive Vice President, General Manager and a Director of the newly formed company. He and his family relocated to San Antonio, Texas in 1962.

In 1970, Don became President and Chief Operating Officer of the company. Under his direction, Fox enjoyed its most explosive growth to a company having over 500 retail locations and 4,500 employees, leading to its listing on the New York Stock Exchange in 1978. In 1979 he was elected Chairman of the Board. According to former Fox Photo colleagues, Don's mark on the company and the industry was his strategic market positioning of Fox Photo as the industry leader in guaranteed speed of service which included the highly successful retail campaign, "Ready Tomorrow or Free". His strategy necessitated a major change in operational philosophy from traditional daytime photofinishing production to night time production in order to meet the marketing commitments of Fox. Fox's sales skyrocketed and guaranteed speed of service became the standard of expectation for consumers and the legacy of Don Becker at Fox Photo.

He retired from Fox Photo in 1982 and became a business consultant. Over the years his client list has included Kodak, PMA, Fuji and numerous regional photofinishers as well as other non-photo industry companies. Because of his knowledge and understanding of the photographic industry, Don served as an expert witness in several high profile industry related federal court trials, mostly notably the lifting of the Kodak antitrust consent decree in 1994. Becker also served as President of Photo Marketing Association International, the industry trade association, from 1978 to 1979. On behalf of PMA, he traveled the world as an ambassador for the picture taking industry on behalf of PMA's 17,000 members from over 100 countries. In 1989 he received the PMA's Distinguished Service Award and in 2005, was inducted into the PMA Hall of Fame, the highest honor given by PMA for achieving personal success

and helping advance the photo imaging industry.

He served on numerous boards over the years, including the Methodist Healthcare Ministries Board of Trustees, the Methodist Hospital Board of Trustees, and Oak Hills Country Club Board of Directors.

An avid hobbyist, he enjoyed flying planes, playing golf, collecting stamps, guns and cars, operating his ham radio and ranching. He was a mentor to many friends and was loved and respected by all who knew him. There is no question that he will quickly locate the nearest Jim's Coffee Shop in Heaven where he will be available to dispense sage advice.

He is survived by his brother Douglas L. Becker of Austin, his daughter Dona Becker Berchermann and her husband Judge David Berchermann, Jr. of San Antonio, and by his son Douglas W. Becker and his wife Kim of San Antonio; granddaughters Ashley Berchermann Sholiton and her husband Mike, Laura Becker Fontaine and her husband Christopher, Shelby Berchermann, Mackenzie Becker and Mallory Becker; grandson David Berchermann III and his wife Mallory; and numerous nieces and nephews. David Berchermann, Jr., David Bechermann III, Gary Greenberg, Mike Kelly, Mike Sholiton, John Thurman will serve as active pallbearers and Jack Bergmann, Preston Clancy, Jack Merrell, Don Mueller, and Bruce Zilbert will serve as honorary pallbearers.

The family would like to thank Peggy Brown at Jim's Coffee Shop and the staffs at Morningside Manor at Menger Springs-Kendall House, Caring Senior Services, and AMed Hospice for their compassion and loving care.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that contributions be made to the Alzheimer's Association, The American Cancer Society or to the charity of your choice in Don's memory.

Services

The family will receive friends from 5:30 - 7:00 PM Friday, March 12, 2010 at Mission Park Funeral Chapels North. Church services will be held at 2:30 PM Saturday, March 13, 2010 at Oak Hills Presbyterian Church with Reverend Katheryn Barlow-Williams officiating. Interment will follow at Mission Burial Park North.

Tribute Wall

BM

“ I met Mr.Becker when he came to me as a customer at a Toyota dealership. Many years and great stories were shared. The love of driving , our families and experiencing life were what we shared. He was never to busy to share time. He would come by just to

Brad McDanel - April 20, 2011 at 12:00 AM

KB

“ Alzheimer's Association received a donation in memory of Mr. Donald Becker from Mr. Ken Batchelor

Ken Batchelor - April 15, 2010 at 12:00 AM

EW

“ I have known Don and Joetta since 1978. I was even in in-law for a time. I was able to get to know Don through the years and always loved his heartfelt laugh and high energy spirit. I was saddened to hear about his illness and then passing. I kept up

Ethel Warshafsky - March 15, 2010 at 12:00 AM

AJ

“ I loved Uncle Don and had the utmost respect for him as a father, husband and respected leader in the business community. I have many fond memories growing up with him as my Moms brother and learned a great deal from him. I will miss Uncle Don and keep

Art Johnson - March 14, 2010 at 12:00 AM

LI

“ Although I hadn't seen Uncle Don for many years, I have such pleasant memories growing up with him and his family. My mom was his sister and I remember our families spending holidays together at my grandparents. My love and sympathy to all of his family

Linda - March 14, 2010 at 12:00 AM

AR

“ Dona, I am sorry to hear about your father's death. I remember that you were very close and you had many good stories that you shared during your early teaching days at Shenandoah. You and your family are in my thoughts and prayers at this difficult tim

Alyce Robbins - March 13, 2010 at 12:00 AM

GG

“ It has been a privilege and honor for me to have been counted among Don's closest friends and business associates for these past fifty years. In business his moral compass, integrity, and honesty led him in one direction only -to serve the best interests

Gary Greenberg - March 13, 2010 at 12:00 AM

WC

“ Deepest Sympathy to the family. A Great Man. Will surely be missed and will always remember him, for he was my second customer when I opened my Pest Control Business in 1977.

Wes Evans/Oak Hills Pest Control - March 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

ET

“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with you. God Bless!*

Erica and Vestal Tomblin - March 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

MK

“ *corned beef hash and two poached eggs. only you and i would understand that. i owe you my life.*

Bye for now.

Mike

mike kelly - March 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

LC

“ *I am going to miss you. You always brighten my day at Jim's. I am glad you will be able to be with your wife. We all miss you at Jim's*

Laura Cantu - March 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

ZO

“ *To the Becker family - I am so sorry for the loss of your beloved father, brother and grandfather. I've had the privilege of knowing Mr. Becker please call me Don! since I started working for PMA. We will miss his calls to PMA - he was always so cheerfu*

Zonie - March 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM



“ *My thoughts are with each of you at this difficult time.*
Joetta Drake

March 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SB

“ My sympathies to Mr Becker's family. He was a wonderful & thoughtful man. We can all take comfort in knowing he and Jo are now together again.

Suzi Barger - March 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JF

“ I wish I could go visit & pay my respects this evening but I have to work at Lorenzos tonight where I would enjoy waiting on you & your lovely wife weekly. I'm going to miss those nights. Ya'll were my favorite customers. But I am glad you're going to be

Jenna Flores - March 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

KS

“ I will truly miss Donald Becker.He was a very special customer to me @Frost Bank on Louis Pasteur.He was so plesant and would come to the teller line and say, "Hi Kathy Donald Becker here." He always put a smile on my face. My thoughts and prayers to the

Kathleen Setser - March 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

KS

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LB

“ My thoughts are with you as you wish Uncle Don a speedy trip to heaven. He was an amazing man and leaves a legacy of the same. He is responsible, in part, for me living in California. 6 years ago I took him out for a burger and told him about my Califor

Lisa Becker - March 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ What a wonderful "life story" of Mr. Becker. Our many thanks to him for his service to our country. Our prayers go out to each of you for your loss - but what a wonderful blessing to finally be with our Lord.

John & Jackie Browning - March 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

BM

“ Please accept my condolences. My prayers are with you at this time. He will be deeply missed!

Balous Miller - March 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ Dona & Doug:

Your father was my friend, my mentor, fellow member of the Brotherhood of Warriors and the older brother I never had. We shared the good and bad times and had fun and laughs along the way. He was always talking about his family, he loved y

Jack Merrell - March 12, 2010 at 12:00 AM

C&

“ Over the past 30 years, Don was a great customer, trusted business mentor and always a true ham radio and golfing compadre. He enriched our lives in so many ways. Rest in peace, old friend. To say you will be missed would be an incredible understa

Craig and Debbie Kennedy & - March 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JJ

“ Dona and Family,

We want to send our thoughts and prayers to your entire family during these sad days. I know your Dad was so sad this past year without his loving wife by his side. I hope it gives you comfort, knowing they are together again.

John & Sharon Jacobs - March 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JB

“ goodbye old friend--we had some great years!!

jack bergmann - March 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

MM

“ I have known Don Becker since 1968 when I first met him and Mrs Becker with their daughter Dona and my brother David. They were so welcoming and very "down to earth". I have had the pleasure of seeing them from time to time all these years, especially at

Mick & Penny Muller - March 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

CC

“ I believe a person's place in Heaven is partly based on how often his friends think of him on Earth. I'll think of Don often.

Crutch Crutchfield - March 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

BD

“ Dona and family,
Your father was a wonderful man who has left a lasting legacy for your family. You're in my thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. May your memories of your mom and dad bring you comfort. They are now together again.
Love you,

Barbara Davis - March 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

BJ

“ We are heartbroken over Don's passing and our hearts go out to Doug, Donna and their families. Don was such a special friend and mentor to Bill in his career in the photo industry. Don was a remarkable businessman and leader and he will be sorely missed

Bill & JanKirkman - March 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

SF

“ Dona and Family,
You are in our thoughts and prayers. The memories of your Mom and Dad throughout our high school years, college years, and our Weddings as well as those of our children are such happy, loving ones. May those memories bring you grea

Sue Piper Fay - March 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

GA

“ *A wonderful man and a tragic loss. Our very best wishes to the family and our prayers for Don.*

Gary & Debra Ackerman - March 11, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JG

“ *As a former employee of one of Mr. Becker's companies over 20 years ago, I never had any idea of his past except for the fact that he was an integral part of Fox Photo.*

To read his obituary a day after his death, and to find out this truly remarkable sto

Jason Guy - March 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

JL

“ *Ashley and the Berchelmann family, I am so sorry to hear about your loss. It sure sounds like your Gramps was a great guy! I am thinking of you and sending you guys prayers and hugs. Love Jen and Casey*

Jen and Casey Lowrey - March 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

TF

“ *What a moving tribute about an incredible man. Our thoughts are with the Becker/ Berchelmann families.*

The Amsellem family - March 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM

GB

“ *Words cannot express what Don Mr. Becker to me has meant to me for the past 30 years. He has been a mentor, friend and business partner for many years. May God Bless him. Glynn Bloomquist*

glynn bloomquist - March 10, 2010 at 12:00 AM