



Joe Don Baker

February 12, 1936 - May 7, 2025

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Joe Don, a noted member of the Performing Arts Community, who left us on May 07, 2025 at the age of 89.

Born on February 12, 1936, Joe Don was a beacon of kindness and generosity. His intellectual curiosity made him a voracious reader, inspiring a great love of nature and animals, particularly cats. Throughout his life, Joe Don touched many lives with his warmth and compassion, leaving an indelible mark on everyone fortunate enough to know him.

Joe Don spent his early years in Groesbeck, Texas, where he attended Groesbeck High School and excelled in Football and Basketball. His athletic skills led him to secure a scholarship at North Texas State College, where he joined the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity and graduated in 1958 with a bachelor's degree in business administration. In 1994 he received the Distinguished Alumni award from his College, now renamed University of North Texas.

Following a two year period of service in the U.S. Army, Joe Don moved to New York City, where he studied at the Actor's Studio, becoming a life member. During this time, he gained valuable acting experience performing in the lively NY Theater scene. Eventually, he moved to Los Angeles where his

acting career gradually took off. Starting with small television parts, he eventually progressed to major acting roles as leading man and later in life as a character actor. During his long career, until his retirement in 2012, he performed in 57 movies, starring in “Walking Tall”, “Mitchell”, and more. Additionally, he landed co-starring roles and supporting parts in other major projects, including “Charlie Varrick” and three “Bond” films. His film acting accolades include winning the Robert Altman Award for his role on “Mud” and nominations for the for the miniseries “George Wallace”. He performed in numerous television productions, including a starring role in the popular series “Eischied”, and an outstanding performance on the acclaimed British television production of “Edge of Darkness”, which earned him a Best Actor nomination from the British Academy of Television.

Joe Don’s 11 year marriage produced no offspring. He is survived by relations in his native Groesbeck, who will forever cherish his memory. He is mourned by a small but very close circle of friends who will miss him eternally.

A funeral service to honor Joe Don’s life will be held on May 20, 2025 at Utter McKinley Mortuary beginning at 10:00 AM. Friends and family are invited to gather and share memories, celebrating the extraordinary life he led.

As we say goodbye to Joe Don, we hold onto the memories and the love he shared with us. Though he may no longer be with us in body, his spirit will always remain, a guiding light in the lives he touched. Rest in peace, Joe Don. You will be dearly missed but never forgotten.

Cemetery Details

Oakwood Memorial Park

22601 Lassen St.
Chatsworth , CA 91311

Previous Events

Funeral Service

MAY 20. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (PT)

Utter McKinley San Fernando Mission Mortuary
11071 Columbus Avenue
Mission Hills, CA 91345
(818) 361-4751
<https://www.uttermckinley.com/>

Burial

MAY 20. 11:30 AM (PT)

Oakwood Memorial Park
22601 Lassen St.
Chatsworth , CA 91311

Tribute Wall

RW

“ I’m so sad to hear of Joe’s passing. He was such an incredible person on and off screen. He and I had our last phone conversation on 2/13/2025. I wished him a Happy Birthday and wished him well. We talked about his growing up in Texas and about his aunt and grandmother. He shared some personal stories about his mom passing and how his dad left to look for work.

We laughed and he told me some behind the scenes stories while he was making the movie *Walking Tall*. About the real Sheriff Buford Pusser. Said he enjoyed making the movie. We talked about many other things as well. He said he had some health issues and was just getting through day by day.

I’m going miss you ole friend. 🙏❤️🙏❤️

Robert Wiggins - June 17, 2025 at 09:47 PM



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

May 19, 2025 at 06:36 PM

AM

“ Alfonso M. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Joe Don Baker.

Alfonso M. - May 18, 2025 at 11:22 AM

IM

“ Have so many of your works on DVD, a love that really blossomed upon seeing "The Living Daylights". Looking forward to seeing your turns on "Judd For The Defence" and "The Streets of San Francisco" on YouTube. Please rest well, but not before seeing "hello" to Elizabeth Hartman for me.

Sincerely,

Ian McMaster
Mississauga, Ont.
Canada

IAN MCMASTER - May 18, 2025 at 12:27 AM

MC

“ It is said that he didn't care for the sendup of his movies on "Mystery Science Theatre", but please know that the show's fans are heartbroken to learn of his passing. May God bless and keep him, and may He also care for his family in this sad time.

Mike Chapman - May 15, 2025 at 03:43 PM

IS

Joe Don has been part of my family since I was 13 he was married to my cousin Marlo Baker. He will live in our hearts forever. He was a great man. His love for cats amazing and I'm sure he is in heaven feeding every feral cat that comes his way. God bless him always! You are loved!

Isabel Sanchez - May 17, 2025 at 05:41 PM

MC

“ Michael C. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Joe Don Baker.

Michael C. - May 15, 2025 at 03:39 PM

BC

“ Brenda, Linda, Karla & Al , TX cousins. purchased the Yellow & White Sympathy Standing Spray for the family of Joe Don Baker.



Brenda, Linda, Karla & Al , TX cousins. - May 14, 2025 at 08:51 PM

BC

“ Brenda, Linda, Karla & Al , TX cousins. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Joe Don Baker.

Brenda, Linda, Karla & Al , TX cousins. - May 14, 2025 at 08:51 PM



“ Yellow & White Sympathy Basket was purchased for the family of Joe Don Baker.



May 14, 2025 at 01:37 PM

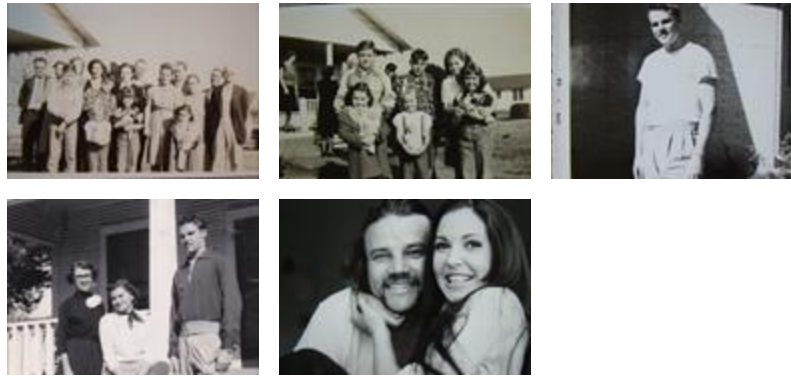


“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Joe Don Baker.

May 14, 2025 at 01:37 PM

KH

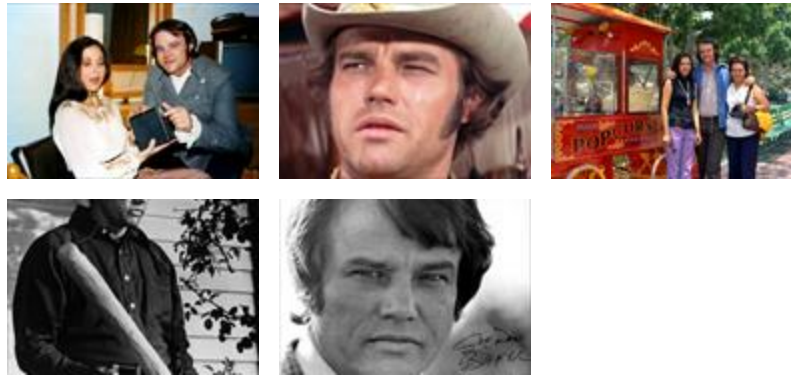
“ *Photo memories with love from your Baker cousins. Rest in peace, we love you.* ”



Karla Hardy - May 13, 2025 at 09:46 PM



“ *6 files added to the album Memories* ”



Utter McKinley Mortuaries - May 13, 2025 at 11:21 AM