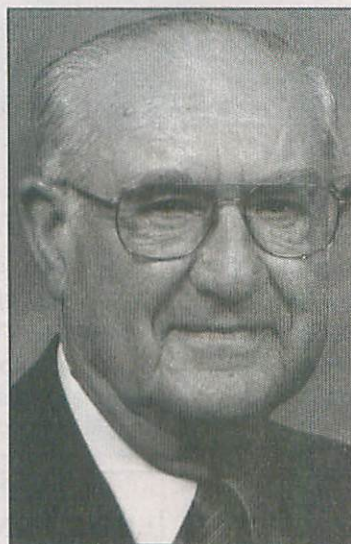


## Gene Raymond Baker, 87, of Marshalltown

Gene Raymond Baker, 87, of Marshalltown, died January 13, 2009 at Grandview Heights while in the care of Iowa River Hospice. Funeral services will be at 11:00 a.m. January 24, 2009 at St. Henry's Catholic Church, with Father Don Czapla officiating. Visitation will be from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the church preceding the funeral service. Mitchell Family Funeral Home is caring for Gene and his family. Memorials may be directed to Iowa River Hospice or the Central Iowa Fair Association.

Gene R. Baker, son of Oliver N. Baker and Sara (Deegan) Baker, was born on Good Friday, March 25, 1921, in rural Pomeroy, Iowa. After graduating from Pomeroy High School in 1938, he attended Iowa State College and met Wilma L. Buck while serving as her dormitory waiter. Gene enlisted in the Army Air Corps during his senior year (1942). He and Wilma were married on June 3, 1944, at the Lubbock, Texas, base chapel. After graduation from Pilot Training, 1st Lieutenant Baker was stationed in Italy and flew 23 missions over Europe as a B-24 co-pilot in the 15th Air Force 454th Bomb Group. Following his military service, he returned to Iowa State, graduating in 1946 with a degree in Animal Husbandry.

Gene and Wilma farmed near Burnside in Webster County for 5 years and then for 38 years at Baker's Akers near State Center until retirement. While in Burnside, they were members of the Central Iowa Farm Business Association. They were finalists, representing Webster County, in a statewide GI Farm Family contest. In 1952, they moved to the State Center area, where during the next 47 years Gene was active in numerous organizations. He was a member of the St. Joseph Catholic Church Council, 4th Degree Knights of Columbus, American Legion, Farm Bureau, and Lincoln Valley Golf Course. He was also a 4-H leader, a 9-year President and Hall of Fame inductee of the Central Iowa Fair Association,



tion, a member of Marshall County Pork Producers, and was named an Iowa Master Pork Producer.

In 1999, Gene and Wilma moved to the Embers in Marshalltown, where he

later served as President of the Residents' Board. They were members of St. Henry's Catholic Church.

During their 63 years of marriage, Gene and Wilma traveled extensively, including trips to each of the 50 states and to Europe. Gene served as the 2003 President of the 454th Bomb Group, presiding over the Memphis reunion meeting; they attended all 22 annual reunions. His many hobbies included golf, carpentry, playing cards, fishing, supporting West Marshall and Iowa State sports, repairing clocks and woodworking. Friends and relatives were the recipients of more than 200 clocks Gene made from native oak and black walnut from the Baker's Akers farm.

Gene is survived by two sisters, Janet Rystedt of Federal Way, Washington, and Maryetta Harrington of Cape Coral, Florida; two sons, Dennis (Kathy) Baker of Clemons and Robert (Mary) Baker of The Villages, Florida; one daughter, Joan (Matt) Aten of Las Vegas, Nevada; a foster son, Nathan John Riley of California; five grandchildren, three step-grandchildren, six great grandchildren, three step great grandchildren, and three sisters-in-law as well as numerous cousins, nieces and nephews. Gene was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Wilma in March, 2008; and his brother Jack (Margaret) Baker.