



## Michael Lee DeBacker

February 11, 1947 - April 28, 2016

Michael Lee DeBacker died peacefully on April 28th 2016. He was born on his family farm in Topeka, Kansas on February 11, 1947 to Joann and Arthur DeBacker. Mike spent his early life on the farm and moved with his family “to town” when he was 6. He attended Most Pure Heart and Hayden High School in Topeka. Mike was an Eagle Scout, Football player and Student Council President and graduated from Hayden in 1965. Mike met Johanna (Jody) Nichols at Hayden and it was there that they started their life long adventure together. Mike and Jody married on July 20th, 1968 while Mike was attending Washburn University. Mike graduated, Suma Cum Laude, from Washburn with a degree in Political Science and stayed at Washburn to attend law school. He worked nights at the Goodyear plant during school and all 4 of his little kids were there when he graduated as one of the top 5 students in his class at The Washburn University School of Law (Go Ichabods!).

After passing the bar, Mike worked in the Anti Trust division of the Federal Trade Commission in Kansas City and as a corporate attorney at Phillips 66 Petroleum in Oklahoma. In 1979, he accepted a position at Dana Corporation in Toledo, OH. He worked at Dana as a Corporate Attorney, Assistant General Counsel, and General Counsel. He continued working for the reorganized Dana Holdings Company as its President and CEO until his death.

Mike enjoyed working in his vegetable patch, cooking, and was always up for a big, loud family gathering. He mostly enjoyed spending time with his family and, more than anything with his 7 grandchildren who loved him dearly. He

loved watching NASCAR races (don't judge) and investigating any car, boat, train or mechanical thing. He was brilliant, kind, loving and hilarious. Mike was also a life long supporter of the arts and spent many years on the Toledo Ballet Association Board.

Mike is survived by his wife Jody (Nichols) DeBacker, son Michael (Laura) DeBacker; daughters Gretchen DeBacker; Jennifer (Liz Casey) DeBacker; Liz (Mike) DeBacker Otto; and grandchildren Hannah, Jack, David, Jillian, Olive, Eloise, and Harriet. He is also survived by his siblings Arthur DeBacker, Jane McIntyre, and Dona (Mark) Nordstrom, as well as many close members of the Nichols family.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Marie Bollinger Vogt Endowment for The Toledo Ballet, or The Gretchen Gotthart Skeldon Fund. Both of which are managed by The Toledo Community Foundation, [www.toledocf.org](http://www.toledocf.org).

Friends may visit at the Coyle Funeral Home, 1770 S. Reynolds Rd. on Sunday, May 1 from 4-7 p.m. A Memorial Mass will be celebrated on Monday, May 2 at 10:30 a.m. at Corpus Christi University Parish. Interment will be private.

Please leave a condolence message for the family, and view Mike's video tribute at [CoyleFuneralHome.com](http://CoyleFuneralHome.com).

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY 1. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Coyle Funeral Home  
1770 S. Reynolds Road  
Toledo, OH 43614

## Memorial

MAY 2. 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Corpus Christi University Parish  
2955 Dorr St  
Toledo, OH 43607

# Tribute Wall

JA

“ Mike was a friend and colleague. A pragmatist in all matters corporate, Mike's loyalty to the cause was unparalleled. My respects to family and friends.

*Jack Simpson*



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**Jack** - May 02, 2016 at 06:55 PM

RD

“ Mr. DeBaker left an indelible impression regarding "the lobster bucket incident" up at the cottage a long time ago...One of the abundant warm and joyous occasions with the beautiful and creative DeBacker family. Please accept our deepest condolences.  
*Robyn (Duckworth) & Bruno*

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**Robyn Duckworth** - May 02, 2016 at 09:12 AM



“ Jennifer and family,

*I was so sad to hear of your father's passing. My thoughts and prayers are with you all. May angel wings and God's love surround you.*

*Much Love,  
Michelle Clay-Gartland*

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**Michelle Clay-Gartland** - May 02, 2016 at 08:39 AM

GI

“ I was deeply saddened to learn of Mike's death. We met over thirty years ago when we were working for Dana Corporation and he was legal counsel to the division in which I worked. He was knowledgeable, patient and easily approachable - a pleasure to work with. He was also very supportive when I told him of my interest in becoming an attorney. Although I haven't seen him for many years, I still have fond memories of our working relationship. He is greatly missed.

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**Glenn Ingersoll** - May 02, 2016 at 08:24 AM

CV

“ 1 file added to the album VIDEO TRIBUTE



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**COYLE FUNERAL HOME VIDEOS** - May 01, 2016 at 12:20 PM

AK

*What a beautiful sharing of memories. Thank you! As neighbors of Mike, he will truly be missed. He was always kind and smiling, seemingly a very peaceful and happy man who loved his family. Our condolences go out to the entire DeBacker family, along with our prayers, that you may find peace in knowing that he is resting in God's loving arms.*

*Ron and April King*

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**April King** - May 01, 2016 at 02:44 PM

SC

*Great tribute to an old friend.*

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**Steve Cavanaugh** - May 01, 2016 at 03:27 PM

SN

*Wonderful tribute that captured everything that was so wonderful about Mike my dear brother in law.  
Stephen Nichols*

stephen Nichols - May 05, 2016 at 07:36 PM

RJ

*“ Met Mike when he first pulled into Dorr St. in his old Audi that looked like a teenager's room inside. I'm sure the family knows what I'm talking about. Another time I bumped in to him coming out of Sufficient Grounds with a mop and bucket in his hands. Something about water in the basement at home. Mike was so down to earth and will be missed by all who knew him.*

Ron Johnston - May 01, 2016 at 12:03 PM

CY

*“ God called a special man and great friend home. May you be surrounded with God's love and peace!  
Our thoughts, prayers and love are with you!*

*Steve and Carol Ann Yarbrough*

carol yarbrough - May 01, 2016 at 10:02 AM



Joanne Horen

*May peace and great memories always be with you all. Sincerely, Scott and Joanne Horen and Family*

Joanne Horen - May 02, 2016 at 06:20 AM

SO

*“ Sending love to the entire family. Mike was always so kind to me. I will always remember his humor and how much he adored all of you. May you find some solace in your memories.*

Sally Oberski - May 01, 2016 at 08:55 AM

CV

“ 1 file added to the album VIDEO TRIBUTE



COYLE FUNERAL HOME VIDEOS - May 01, 2016 at 07:52 AM

BF

“ Bob Quinn Family purchased the Basket Full of Wishes for the family of Michael Lee DeBacker.



Bob Quinn Family - April 30, 2016 at 11:00 PM

SS

“ Dear Jody and Family,

*Bob and I were so saddened to learn of Mike's death. What a wonderful man he was, and a great example of courage and strength for all your family. We are so sorry that we cannot be with you to share a hug Sunday and Monday, but we are not home the early part of this week. Be assured of our prayers for your comfort and peace, and for Mike's soul. Fondly, Bob and Sue Savage*

Sue Savage - April 30, 2016 at 05:24 PM



“ *Beautiful Whisper was purchased for the family of Michael Lee DeBacker.*



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April 30, 2016 at 02:51 PM



“ *I worked with Mike at Dana from 1982-1984 as a paralegal. He was a super intelligent lawyer and taught me a lot, always so patient and thorough. And he had a wonderful sense of humor. His family was always first with him and he was always so proud of them. He will be sorely missed by those who knew and worked with him. Thoughts and prayers to the family!!*  
*Bobbi Crosson*

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**Bobbi Crosson** - April 30, 2016 at 02:39 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Michael Lee DeBacker.*



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April 30, 2016 at 11:47 AM

FT

“ Sincere Condolences To The DeBacker Family, May God Almighty bring you peace of mind to heal your broken heart, and give you the strength to cope at this difficult time. Through heartfelt prayers, we can come to experience "the peace of God that excel all thought." *Philippians 4:7.*  
With Sadness and Loving-Kindness,



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**FTaylor** - April 30, 2016 at 10:48 AM

BV

“ Doug and I are so sad to hear of Mike's death. I looked up to him in at Hayden and thought him a kind person. Jody, you are in our thoughts.

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**Bonnie And Doug Vanover** - April 30, 2016 at 09:19 AM

AC

“ Dearest Jody and family. We are so sorry for your loss of a great husband and father. Although our relationship was one of providing services to your family, we were embraced as if we were part of it. Our nightly prayers include you and yours.

*Jim & Audrey Chabot & Staff*  
*Gourmet Pastries*

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**Audrey Chabot** - April 30, 2016 at 08:54 AM

DW

“ Mike DeBacker was our friend. We loved his sense of humor, his love for Jody, his devotion to his children and grandchildren. A kind, gracious, honorable man.  
Our hearts are broken. Dan & Cher Weeks

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**Dan & Cheryl weeks** - April 30, 2016 at 08:36 AM

SS

“ *All our thoughts and prayers are with you. The heavens have inherited a great angel!*

*John & Suzanne Szul & Family*

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**suzanne szul** - April 30, 2016 at 05:56 AM

JH

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with the entire DeBacker family. Mike was the best boss I have ever worked for. He was kind, smart and family oriented.*

*He will be missed!!*

*Jeanie Hardman* 🙏😭

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**Jeanie Hardman** - April 29, 2016 at 08:09 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Michael Lee DeBacker.*



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April 29, 2016 at 06:19 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Michael Lee DeBacker.*



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April 29, 2016 at 05:43 PM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Michael Lee DeBacker.* ”



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April 29, 2016 at 03:55 PM