

H. James (Jim) Baum

March 20, 1938 - April 6, 2023 |



H. James (Jim) Baum died April 6, 2023 at the Kendal retirement community in Hanover, NH.

Jim was born March 20, 1938 to George and Iona (Gray) Baum in Morris, IL, where he attended 3 years of Morris High School and then two years at Culver Military Academy, IN, and received a BA from Dartmouth College in Hanover, NH. He met his wife, Carol, during college and they were married in Swarthmore, PA, on November 4, 1961.

After two years in Munich, Germany, with Carol, Lt Baum US Army Inf. returned to

Morris, where he became CEO of Baum's Inc and Here's Hallmark Shops. He was a third-generation retailer who, with Carol, operated a 132-year-old women's apparel and a chain of Hallmark Shops until he retired and moved to Kendal at Hanover, NH, in 2014. He was also the managing partner of two commercial real estate companies.

Jim was the past-chairman of the Illinois Retail Merchants Association and the chair of the National Retail Association's "Small Store Board of Directors". He served for over a decade on the Executive Committee and as Board Secretary for the NRF. He was named as the National Retail Federation's "1993 Small Store Retailer of the Year". In 1997 Jim and Carol were named the "Illinois Retailers of the Year."

Jim was a frequent speaker on issues of "Small Store Survival" and on the redevelopment of small town "Main Streets". He was the co-founder of the "National Small Store Institute, and a contributor of articles on issues confronting small retailers.

Jim spent considerable time on civic activities in Morris. He was the founder and president of the Community Foundation of Grundy County and the Morris Downtown Development Partnership (a Main Street

project). He was past president of the Morris Community High School Board of Education, of the Morris Hospital and of the Grundy County Chamber of Commerce. He was a 60-year member and elder of the First Presbyterian Church of Morris. Living in Hanover, he became a member of the Congregational Church at Dartmouth.

While in Hanover, Jim could not resist his love of retailing, so he ran for 6 years the local Clover Shop in the Kendal retirement community where they lived. Jim and Carol also contributed to numerous conservation initiatives in New Hampshire, such as the Pine Park Association and the renewal of the Moosilauke Ravine Lodge of Dartmouth. They also established the Baum Conservation Area on Moose Mountain just outside of Hanover.

Consistent with his support for youth development projects in Morris, he and Carol also contributed to the Dickey Center for International Understanding at Dartmouth for the establishment of an endowed fund to support student international internship opportunities.

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Carol Baum.



Honoring Jim Baum's legacy

In April, the Upper Valley sadly lost Jim Baum, a wonderful man and community leader. While Jim Baum's obituary was a lovely tribute to his career and life, we feel compelled to share a little more about the incredible contributions Jim and his wife, Carol, have made to regional conservation and trails.

It was a joy to sit with Jim over the years as he shared maps from his impressive collection, and told compelling stories about how his Illinois Boy Scout experiences led him to leadership of the Dartmouth Outing Club (DOC).

As Jim inspired and trained other students and volunteers, his DOC experiences locked in a true love for the Upper Valley. It is therefore not surprising that Jim and Carol were called back to New Hampshire 53 years after his Dartmouth graduation. They settled at Kendal and continued implementing philanthropic plans for their amazing piece of property on Moose Mountain.

They began by donating the Baum Cabin to the DOC for public use, and then conserved over 250 adjacent acres. This beautiful and historic land is now part of a larger conservation area and trail network on Moose Mountain. Their generosity helped to support and inspire the Shumways, Hanover Conservancy, town of Hanover, Dartmouth College and the DOC, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and others to make this possible.

Part of Jim's planning included reaching out to the Upper Valley Trails Alliance (UVTA) to help design and improve his trails. Jim and Carol quickly became UVTA leaders, particularly supportive of increasing public access and training the next generation of trail stewards. They generously seeded a legacy giving program and endowment.

In recent years, Jim and Carol also supported the continuing development of Pine Park. The Baums loved the park and wanted to help provide a fully accessible trail. They became early supporters and inspired many others to help make the trail a reality.

We would not be surprised to discover more projects and people positively influenced by Jim and Carol. Jim Baum has left a powerful and lasting legacy on trails and conservation in Hanover and the Upper Valley.

RUSSELL HIRSCHLER

executive director, Upper Valley Trails Alliance

ADAIR MULLIGAN

executive director, Hanover Conservancy

LINDA FOWLER

president, Pine Park Association

Letter to the Editor, Valley News, May 7, 2023

Jim & Carol Baum Donate Conservation Area

Hanover Selectboard votes to accept donation of 238-acre conservation area

By PATRICK ADRIAN

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HANOVER — Town officials are in the process of reacquiring a conservation area on the eastern side of Moose Mountain currently used for public recreation and education.

The Baum Foundation, founded by Hanover residents Jim and Carol Baum, are donating three parcels of conservation area totaling 238 acres to the town Conservation Commission, along with \$50,000 to cover maintenance costs.

On Monday the Selectboard voted unanimously to authorize the Conservation Commission to accept the land and monetary donation.

“This is wonderful,” Selectboard Chairman Athos Rassias said at Monday’s meeting. “It’s an amazing property, and the town is forever appreciative.”

The conservation area comprises three parcels of land and improvements that include a parking lot, more than 3 miles of hiking trails and a cabin that was donated to the Dartmouth Outing Club in 2008.

The trails — which are designed for “confident hikers with good trail skills” — provide an optional connection to the Ridge Trail, a former snowmobile passage that takes hikers to the top of the eastern ridge of Moose Mountain.

Jim and Carol Baum purchased the parcels in 2005 from the town and gave the town a conservation easement to the land.

Planning and Zoning Director Rob Houseman said the town wanted to turn the property over to “angel investors” who would maintain and protect the land for public use.

The Baums built the existing parking lot and worked with the Upper Valley Trails Alliance to improve the trails, according to the Hanover Conservancy, a private, nonprofit land trust.

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The Baum family is donating the land back to the town following the passing of Jim Baum on April 6 at the age of 85.

Houseman said Baum family representatives reached out last August to seek the town's interest in reacquiring the land.

Jim and Carol Baum were both Dartmouth College alumni who moved back to Hanover in 2014 from Morris, Ill. Jim Baum's obituary, published in the Morris Daily Herald, noted that the Baums contributed to "numerous conservation initiatives in New Hampshire," including the Moosilauke Ravine Lodge, a Dartmouth College-owned ski lodge in Warren, N.H.

Julianne Buck, executive director of the Community Foundation of Grundy County — a philanthropic organization in Illinois founded by Jim Baum — wrote in a 2017 newsletter that the Baums sought to preserve the conservation area's public access as well as its natural resources.

"We are grateful for all the Baums' work in protecting this property over the years," Houseman said. "We now have the opportunity to preserve this land in the Baum family name and to hold it in perpetuity and in their honor."

The Conservation Commission will need to schedule a public hearing to consider accepting the land and monetary donation. The commission's next meeting is July 12 at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall boardroom.

Houseman said the \$50,000 will be placed in an investment account to generate revenues to ensure the long-term upkeep of the property, including mowing and parking lot maintenance. He said the annual costs are approximately \$2,000 to \$3,000, with most of the maintenance performed by volunteers.

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