

Dean B. Blankenship

SEPTEMBER 30, 1926 – JANUARY 12, 2021

Dean B. Blankenship, a member of America's Greatest Generation, passed away at age 94 on Tuesday, January 12, 2021.

Dean served in the United States Navy in the Pacific Theatre aboard the USS Boston CA-69 before graduating from high school, returning to Alexander City, Alabama, married Christine McDonald and began a college career playing football at Troy State University and raising a family.

He and Chris had four children, former United States Ambassador J. Richard Blankenship, Deanna Reagan, Lynne Driscoll and Dean B. Blankenship, Jr. After teaching in both Alabama and Florida, Dean obtained his master's degree in Science from Auburn University and moved his family to Florida where he began athletic programs at High Schools unable to gather resources by successfully reaching out to the communities to support kids whose parents were unable to do so. Known as Coach, he was able to obtain kids scholarships in football, basketball, and baseball at major colleges. Education was his passion, winning election as the youngest Superintendent of Nassau County Schools in 1964. In 1968 Duval County sought out his expertise as the community had lost accreditation of its schools and the entire county struggled to regain its reputation. Serving each year with different responsibilities, Dean and a number of Superintendents attained reaccreditation. During this time, he met and married Anne Tanzler, Guidance Counselor at Lee High School. They were married for 48 years and were very dedicated to the Ortega United Methodist Church and members of various clubs where they could both enjoy golfing and dining with friends. Their retirement years were spent traveling and enjoying the comfort each had brought to the others life. Our Dad and friend to many will be laid to rest in a private service for the family at Oaklawn Cemetery on Saturday, January 16, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. Arrangements by Hardage-Giddens Oaklawn Chapel, 4801 San Jose Blvd., Jacksonville 904-737-7171. Please sign the guestbook at www.hardagegiddensoaklawnchapel.com.