

Robert Dale Blankenship

January 10, 1937 – January 27, 2012

(From Pivont Funeral Home January 2012)

Former Tallahassee Democrat Executive Sports Editor Bob Blankenship died January 27, 2012 in Austin, Texas after a brief battle with cancer.

Born January 10, 1937 in Sandstone, West Virginia he was the son of the late W. Basil and Lucille Bryant Blankenship.

After serving in the US Air Force, he followed his passion for sports into a career as a sports writer for several newspapers. He began with the Beckley Register-Herald in the early 1960's then moved to covering Marshall University sports for the Huntington Herald-Dispatch. As a sportswriter for the Florida Times Union in Jacksonville, he was courtside at the NCAA Final Four while covering the Jacksonville University basketball team when they lost in the 1970 title game. Later that year, he covered the College World Series when the Florida State baseball team was in the finals.

In 1971, he became the Executive Sports Editor for the Democrat. One of his most vivid assignments was the Championship game that pitted the FSU basketball team against UCLA in the 1972 Final Four.

Bob later joined the staff of former Florida Agriculture Secretary Doyle Conner as a media liaison. After his retirement from the State of Florida, Bob spent many years traveling to Virginia to be with his great grandchildren. He also was an avid fan and devoted follower of the FSU women's basketball team.

Besides his parents, he was preceded in death by his daughter, Lea Ann Blankenship. His beloved dog Ring.

He is survived by two sons, Bob Blankenship and wife Anne and Mike Blankenship, both of Tallahassee, FL. A daughter, Karen L. Blankenship of Tallahassee, FL. A sister, Patricia A. Weeks of St. Augustine, FL. His companion, Patricia Iacovazzi of Austin, TX. Granddaughters, Nikki Midkiff and Sheila Blankenship, both of Wytheville, VA. Grandsons, Brian Blankenship of

Tallahassee, FL and Michael Blankenship of Charlotte, NC. Great grandchildren; Hannah, Madison, Audrey-Kate and Trey. Nephews, John Weeks and Mark Weeks of Florida. Nieces, Kim Parker and Tabbi Brownschidle of Virginia.

Funeral services will be held at 12:00 p.m. Saturday February 4, 2012 at Pivont Funeral Home Chapel in Hinton with Pastor Ronald Cobb officiating. Burial will follow in Hilltop Cemetery near Hinton. Friends may call from 11:00 a.m. until time of services on Saturday at the funeral home.

The family kindly requests that in lieu of flowers that memorial contributions be made to Christopher House, a Hospice facility in Austin, Texas by contacting the at HospiceAustin.org.