



## Gerald "Jerry" Blaisdell

October 4, 1938 - July 9, 2024

### Gerald Blaisdell

Jerry Blaisdell grew up in Wisconsin and Minnesota, but built his life and family in Tallahassee over the past 50 years. Jerry's life was defined by work, family, caring, and sports. He entered into rest July 9, 2024.

In his book *The Nine Nations of North America*, Joel Garreau claimed that the Midwest's defining characteristic was hard work. No one epitomized this strong work ethic more than Jerry. He was happiest when he was doing something, anything! Whether it was working long hours at Harmon Glass, helping his son, Jim Blaisdell, with any number of projects, or helping one of a dozen volunteer organizations, Jerry worked. Jerry simply could not stay idle. The sign welcoming friends to his retirement party at Harmon Glass simply read "Work Horse Retires." He transferred to Tallahassee as part of Harmon Glass to become the area manager in 1975. Under his supervision, the Tallahassee office ranked high nationally in customer service and productivity and won numerous awards including six Winner Circle Awards, two Golden Broom Awards, and a Profit Achievement Award. Jerry was also twice named Harmon Glass's Manager of the Year.

Working 50-to-60-hour weeks with Harmon, one would think Jerry had little time for anything else. Yet, as much as work defined Jerry, family did so even more. He shared his energy and expertise with his son, Jim, and his wife's

daughter and son, Juli O'Neal Downs and John O'Neal, respectively. Whether helping with projects when Jim was younger or helping Jim start his own successful business, Jerry gave generously of his time. Juli must have moved a dozen times; every time Jerry was there to lead the moving team. Most times he "was" the moving team.

Jerry also loved involving himself in his grandchildren's and great grandchildren's activities. Nicolas Blaisdell, Casey O'Neal Albrizio, Lauren Combs, Slade Downs, Raylan Combs, and Lyndon Combs all loved having Jerry in their lives, and Jerry was always available to share his love and energy.

Jerry met Onez O'Neal in the late 1980s and soon began a 10-year courtship. He finally convinced Onez to marry him in 1998 and they shared a wonderful celebration with one hundred family members and friends at the Governors Club. Together they shared over a quarter of a century ensconced in Tallahassee life. Of course, their time together was not limited to Tallahassee as they vacationed in Canada, Alaska, Hawaii, the Caribbean, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, France, Italy, Belgium, Austria, Greece, and Turkey.

Jerry and Onez found time for FSU sports. Their tailgate parties at FSU football games were legendary. In addition to locals, you could find FSU fans from South Carolina, various states in the Midwest, and even a few Gator fans. Of course, a few players' parents would stop by including parents of Heisman Award Winner Chris Winke.

Jerry was heavily involved with Tallahassee's Quarterback Club and served on the Board of Trustees for several years. In 1994 Jerry was one of the members who helped form The Tallahassee Quarterback Club Foundation, Inc., which annually presents the Biletnikoff Award to the nation's most outstanding collegiate wide receiver. Fred Biletnikoff, the Hall of Fame receiver after whom the award is named, and Jerry became friends and

golfing buddies.

Jerry's love for FSU sports was not limited to football, as he had season tickets for baseball and basketball, and he and Onez went to as many women's basketball, softball, and volleyball games as his busy schedule permitted. FSU Boosters also benefitted from Jerry's tireless efforts to raise money. Jerry was also a Charter member of the FSU University Club.

Jerry's contributions to associations and nonprofits were notable. He served on boards for The Salvation Army, the Glass Association of Florida, Tallahassee Builders Association, and the State of Florida Department of Juvenile Justice Advisory Council. He also was a longtime member of the Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce, American Legion, Independent Insurance Agents of Tallahassee, Springtime Tallahassee, and he was named the Associate Claims Person of the Year three times for the Tallahassee Claims Association. Jerry was a member of Wildwood Presbyterian Church where he helped feed those less fortunate during the church's weekly dinners for the community.

Jerry's service did not end with associations and family. Jerry entered the US Army in November, 1961, and was honorably discharged in November, 1963. He served at Fort Carson in Colorado and at Fort Snelling in Minnesota. He continued to serve in the Army Reserve until 1976. He cherished his Army friends and stayed in contact with members of his unit. Around 1990 they began having annual reunions and Jerry attended about twenty of these reunions in Colorado, Iowa, and Tennessee.

Jerry is survived by his wife of 25 years, Onez O'Neal; his son, Jim Blaisdell (Johanna); his children via Onez (Juli Downs (Phillip) and John O'Neal); his grandchildren (Nicolas Blaisdell, Lauren Combs, DVM (David), Slade Downs,

and Casey Albrizio) (Chris); his great grandchildren, Raylan Combs and Lyndon Combs, his sister Betty Hinz and hundreds of friends and colleagues whose lives Jerry touched.

A Celebration of Life service will be held 10:00 a.m. Friday, August 2, 2024 at Bevis Funeral Home. The family will receive friends following the service at the funeral home. Interment to follow at 12 noon at Tallahassee National Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to the Tracey Biletnikoff Foundation, 7080 Donlon Way Suite 126, Dublin, CA 94568.

Susie Mozolic of Bevis Funeral Home is assisting the Blaisdell family with the arrangements. ([www.bevisfh.com](http://www.bevisfh.com) 850-385-2193)

# Cemetery Details

## Tallahassee National Cemetery

5015 Apalachee Parkway  
Tallahassee, FL 32311

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

AUG 2. 10:00 AM (ET)

Bevis Funeral Home & Crematory  
200 John Knox Rd  
Tallahassee, FL 32303  
(850) 385-2193

## Inurnment

AUG 2. 12:00 PM (ET)

Tallahassee National Cemetery  
5015 Apalachee Parkway  
Tallahassee, FL 32311

# Tribute Wall



“ *Bevis Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Gerald "Jerry" Blaisdell*



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**Bevis Funeral Home** - August 29, 2024 at 09:22 AM



“ *Walter W. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gerald "Jerry" Blaisdell.*

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**Walter W.** - August 08, 2024 at 05:41 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Service Footage*



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**Bevis Funeral Home** - August 06, 2024 at 09:27 AM

RM

“ The mold that Jerry was made from has been broken. He was a true friend to all he ever met. Whether it was the shake of his hand, grin on his face, or the voice that said hello, you new that he wanted to be your friend. He will be sorely missed, but if I close my eyes, I can see him sitting by St. Peter saying hello when folks come through the gates. God bless Onez and the family in this time.

Richard Musgrove - August 02, 2024 at 09:28 AM

OO

Richard, thanks so much for your warm comforting words. You were always special to us. We have had so many references made to his greeting them with a smile. Please know that I love you and Sally very much. Thanks again for sharing your thoughts with m

onez oneal - August 17, 2024 at 09:00 PM

DG

“ Jerry was the first person I met when I walked into Red Hills Resort Living in Tallahassee. He was so friendly and with a big smile made a joke! His humor and mine clicked! From then on we became good friends.. we had many talks about Minnesota, he was in the same places there as I had been. It was a pleasure to see him every day, sometimes eat with Jerry and Onez. A good man was he! He will be missed. Rip Jerry. The Lord has you now. I'll see you again in Heaven 🙏🙏🙏

Doreen Grand-Jean - August 01, 2024 at 12:45 PM

BJ

“ We are thinking of Jerry today with lots of love and a lifetime of warm memories and sending prayers of peace and comfort to Onez and the entire family. God bless Jerry. Love, Bruce & Beth Johnson

Bruce Johnson - July 30, 2024 at 04:28 PM

TF

“ The Johnson & Maus Families purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Gerald "Jerry" Blaisdell.



The Johnson & Maus Families - July 30, 2024 at 04:21 PM

RF

“ Rayland and Bonnie Scholl and Family purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Gerald "Jerry" Blaisdell.



Rayland and Bonnie Scholl and Family - July 30, 2024 at 01:47 PM

EB

“ Emily & Jimmy Blythe planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gerald "Jerry" Blaisdell.

Emily & Jimmy Blythe - July 29, 2024 at 10:58 AM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Gerald "Jerry" Blaisdell.



July 29, 2024 at 10:58 AM

AT

“ Bob and I met Jerry and Onez in Springtime Tallahassee 20+ years ago. Jerry always had a smile and a joke! God rest his soul. Memory Eternal. Our prayers are with Onez and the family. Athena and Bob Gill

athena - July 28, 2024 at 06:16 PM

JT

“ Janis & Jacquelyn & Toni purchased the Fairest of All for the family of Gerald "Jerry" Blaisdell.



Janis & Jacquelyn & Toni - July 20, 2024 at 11:46 AM

KA

“ Jerry and Onez live in the same retirement home that we do. Jerry is a great friend. Lovable, caring, full of fun. Miss him deeply. May he have fun playing with the angels in heaven. Len & Kay

Kay - July 16, 2024 at 10:57 AM

WI

Jerry was a fine gentleman and a valued trustee of the Biletnikoff Award, which he served as a regular or honorary trustee beginning shortly after its founding by the TQC Foundation. We dearly will miss him and his delightful, sunny disposition. We have planted a grove of trees in his memory. Onez, Jim, and Family, please accept our condolences.

All the best.

Walter Manley II & The TQC Foundation/Biletnikoff Award

Walter Manley II - August 08, 2024 at 05:50 PM