



Joseph Carrol Dadisman

May 24, 1934 - August 19, 2021

Joseph Carrol Dadisman, loving husband, father and grandfather, died at his home Thursday, August 19th, at the age of 87.

A Tallahasseean since 1980, Carrol was president and publisher of the Tallahassee Democrat, 1981-97; founding chairman of the Community Foundation of North Florida, and active community leader for more than 40 years.

Born to Howard Dean and Mary Lou Moore Dadisman on May 24, 1934, he grew up in Jefferson, Georgia, and graduated from Jefferson High School. In 1956, he received an A.B. in journalism from the University of Georgia, where he was editor of The Red and Black student newspaper, president of Blue Key and a member of Gridiron, Sigma Delta Chi and Omicron Delta Kappa. In retirement, he wrote and The Red and Black published "Dear Old U-G-A," a history of student life at UGA, as told in the student newspaper since 1893. In 1994 Carrol received UGA's Grady College outstanding alumnus award, and he was in the first class of Grady Fellows, honoring journalism school graduates and supporters.

It was at UGA that Carrol met Mildred Jean Sparks of Commerce, Georgia, and they were married in 1956. He died on their 65th wedding anniversary. He served two years in the Army during their 10 years in Augusta, Georgia, where Carrol progressed from reporter to managing editor of The Augusta Chronicle. Son David and daughter Ellen were born in Augusta.

In 1966 Carrol became editor of The Marietta (Ga.) Daily Journal, and in 1972

he realized a longtime dream of joining Knight Newspapers, the nation's premier newspaper group. He became managing editor of Knight's Macon (Ga.) News. Two years later, when Knight bought The Columbus (Ga.) Ledger and Enquirer, Carrol was promoted to executive editor and vice president there.

Carrol and Mildred moved to Tallahassee in 1980, when he became general manager of the Democrat. Promoted to president and publisher in 1981, he held that position during a prosperous time for American newspapers. The Democrat achieved record financial success and the highest circulation in its history, was significantly increased in size and added multiple special weekly sections. Carrol was elected president of the Florida Press Association and was first president of the Florida A&M School of Journalism Board of Visitors. He served a three-year term as Florida's representative on the board of Southern Newspaper Publishers Association. In 2009, he was inducted into the Florida Newspaper Hall of Fame.

Carrol was particularly proud of the vital role of journalism in our nation and world, and of the excellent journalists with whom he worked and mentored. He received many honors and recognitions, but he believed legacies are built -- not on awards and honors -- but on the influence of one's life on individuals, institutions and communities.

In Tallahassee, Carrol was president of the Governors Club, president and campaign chairman of United Way, trustee chairman of Trinity United Methodist Church and a longtime member of Capital Tiger Bay Club and the Tallahassee Rotary Club. In 1995 he was Leadership Tallahassee's first "Leader of the Year." In 1997, he received the Excellence Award in Community Service among all employees at Knight-Ridder's 32 newspapers. Carrol was especially active in the Economic Club of Florida, which he served as chairman, president and chairman emeritus. In 2019 he received the club's Stan Tait Award for club and community leadership.

In 1998, Carrol and Mildred lived in Russia for three months; as a Knight International Press Fellow, he was consultant to newspapers there and wrote

a widely-distributed international manual on newspaper market research. Later he completed three shorter consulting missions with newspapers in Russia and Ukraine.

Following retirement, Carrol joined forces with the Estate Planning Council of North Florida, which had chartered the Community Foundation of North Florida. He was the foundation's first chairman and led in raising its initial operating funds, recruiting its first president and educating the community about the foundation.

Carrol loved tennis since he played his first games as a young boy on a red clay court in Jefferson. Mildred joined him in that passion, and they were active in Tallahassee's tennis community. Carrol served on the Tallahassee Tennis Association board, and one of his favorite retirement activities was playing in the Earlybird and Golden Boy men's groups. He cherished friendships made there and the chance to play 2-3 days a week.

Carrol is survived by Mildred, the love of his life for 65 years; son David (Beth) of Great Falls, VA; daughter Ellen of Tallahassee; granddaughter Sally Dadisman Soden (Walter) of Detroit, MI; grandson Alex Carrol Dadisman (Ashlee) of Bothell, WA; sister-in-law Fran Dadisman of West Columbia, S.C.; nieces, nephews and cousins. He was predeceased by his parents, brother Dean Dadisman and sister Anne Dadisman Collier.

Services are scheduled for Friday, August 27, 11 a.m., Trinity United Methodist Church, 120 Park Avenue, Tallahassee. COVID precautions: Trinity is blocking off every other pew and the family expects attendees to mask. For friends and family who cannot attend, Trinity will live stream the service at: <https://youtu.be/QjX-I-X8cw0> Family will greet attendees in the narthex following the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Community Foundation of North Florida, 3600 Maclay Blvd. S., Suite 200, Tallahassee, FL 32312, or to the organization or cause of one's choice.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

AUG 27. 11:00 AM (ET)

Trinity United Methodist Church
120 West Park Avenue
Tallahassee, FL 32303

Tribute Wall

MB

“ *Rest in peace. You were a gentle giant among men.* ”



Mary Christine Binns - August 27, 2021 at 04:01 PM

ML

“ *We extend our sincere condolences to the Dadisman family. Carrol was instrumental in supporting our careers while at the Democrat. His smile was infectious and his advice inspiring. May his memory be a blessing to the family.* ”

Marilyn & Gary Lawhon - August 27, 2021 at 08:02 AM