

Robert "Bob" Allen Throneburg

September 22, 1944 - February 05, 2020



Photo Above: USAF Sentry Dog Nemo A534 stands guard over twice wounded handler, A2C Robert A. Throneburg, December 4, 1966, 377th Security Police Squadron, Tan Son Nhut Air Base, SVN.

REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR ROBERT THRONEBURG'S FAMILY

-- [STEVE GATTIS](#). Sat. Feb 08, 2020, 15:53:36 PST

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I am writing to you on behalf of Robert Thornburg's family with the hope that his close friends and VSPA brothers might be able to assist his family with cremation expenses. Bob is VSPA Life Member #875. He will also be listed at Life Member #111 with his brothers who were KIA, and those VSPA members who have since stood their final Guardmount. Robert Throneburg served in the 377th Air Police Squadron, with K9 NEMO, at Tan Son Nhut Air Base in 1966-1967.

VSPA President Jerry Nelson has been in touch with Robert's family. His son Brian has advised us that due to medical bills and other financial issues, the family is having a great deal of difficulty paying the \$3,200 for Robert's cremation. Medical bills for Robert's hospitalization have made the family near destitute. For those of you who have met Bob and his wife Patricia at VSPA reunions, you know that they had custody of their great granddaughter, Elizabeth, something that reflected their deeply personal and loving commitment to family.

Bob will be cremated at a cost of \$3,200. Donations to cover his funeral expenses will be processed through the VSPA as tax deductible donations and then paid directly to the funeral home for the cremation expenses. Donations for Bob's cremation and funeral expenses will relieve some very intense financial pressure on his family.

Please make your donations payable to the Vietnam Security Police Association and mail them to our Treasurer, Richard Garcia. You may also use PayPal through our web site at the following link: <http://www.vspa.com/vspa-dues.htm>. Click on the DONATE button. *Then* send an email to VSPA Treasurer [Richard Garcia](mailto:cal400@optonline.net) at <mailto:cal400@optonline.net> advising him of the donation for Robert Throneburg's cremation expenses.

Thank you very much for remembering Bob and taking care of his family. *We take care of our own.* In brotherhood, I send my best to you. Steve

The following is the VSPA Citation to accompany the Warrior's Medal of Valor that was presented to Robert by the VSPA at our 2014 Reunion in Shreveport, Louisiana when we visited Barksdale AFB:

Robert Throneburg, Life Member #875 – For Valor under fire. Robert arrived at Tan Son Nhut Air Base in October of 1966 and was assigned to K9. Just after midnight on the morning of December 4, 1966, a large force of Viet Cong attacked Tan Son Nhut. Approximately 60 mortar rounds hit the base, and a Viet Cong guerilla force estimated to have included more than 75 saboteurs infiltrated the base perimeter. Three members of the 377th Air Police Squadron were killed defending Tan Son Nhut Air Base during this attack: A2C George M. Bevich, Jr., A2C John M. Cole, and A2C Oliver Riddle. Three sentry dogs, Cubby (612E), Toby (206F), and



Rebel (519X), were also killed. Fifteen American servicemen were wounded but thousands of lives were saved. When daylight returned, a sweep of the base was conducted. Unfortunately, K-9 teams were not included in the daylight patrols.

The enemy attackers had been forced to hide and wait for nightfall before they could try to escape. Just before total darkness fell again that night, **Sentry Dog Nemo A534** ([photo left](#)) and his handler, newly promoted A2C Robert A. Throneburg, were posted on Kilo-5. Suddenly, Nemo alerted and Throneburg released him to attack the Viet Cong, who had evaded detection throughout the day. Nemo took on two of them, taking both to the ground but a shot was fired, and Nemo went down. Nemo had been shot through his muzzle; the bullet destroyed his sinus area and exited his right eye. Throneburg opened fire but was overwhelmed by the force of the attack – he, too, was shot and fell to the ground.

Other Air Police eventually arrived on the scene, and even though grievously wounded, Nemo would not let any of them near A2C Throneburg. Nemo continued to protect A2C Throneburg as he had been trained and shielded his handler from anyone trying to approach the team. Nemo's previous handler, A2C Leonard Bryant, was quickly summoned to the scene of the attack and was able to secure Nemo and transport him to the kennels. Robert subsequently received *two* Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star w/V for valor.

Photo below: A2C Throneburg, Robert A., AF14840178 wounded in action on 4 Dec 1966, is being presented the Purple Heart at U. S. Army 3rd Field Hospital by Col Grover K. Coe, Tan Son Nhut's Base Commander. (Dec 1966)



The story does not end there. As many of you know, Nemo was saved and traveled throughout the United States with VSPA member, then Captain Robert Sullivan (Lt Col, retired). A2C Throneburg was transported to a base hospital for urgent care of his wounds and evacuated to a hospital in Japan where he recovered from his wounds.

The Air Force did not notify his wife, Patricia, because he had not been killed. She heard about the attack on radio and television, and later learned that Robert and Nemo had both been wounded when she was contacted by a local radio station and asked for comments. Therefore, The Warrior's Medal of Valor of the Native American Nations of the United States of America is presented to Robert Throneburg October 11, 2014 Shreveport,

Louisiana.

FUNERAL AND MEMORIAL SERVICE INFORMATION FOR ROBERT

THRONEBURG: The family will receive friends from 6 until 8 p.m. on Tuesday, February 11, 2020 at [Blakely Funeral Home](#) (See Obit). Memorial services will be held at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, February 12, 2020 at The Episcopal Church of the Incarnation with Reverend Jenny Gettys officiating.

If you live in the area and can attend, the family would be honored to have you at their side. They send their love and thanks for your generous assistance to help pay Bob's cremation and funeral expenses.