

**Robert Owen Thornburg, WB6JPI. Jippy's**, key went silent on October 16, 2017, after battling stage 4 pancreatic cancer.

Bob was born March 1, 1934, in Portland, Oregon.

Always ready for a youthful dare, Bob swiped cars off his Dad's car lot for joy-riding, roller-skated down the steep hills of Portland, earned spending money by repairing radios, and attended summer school due to playing hooky.

Bob met Marlene while attending Vanport College just outside of Portland. They eloped when Marlene was 18 and Bob was 17. They celebrated 65 years of marriage on December 29, 2016.

After attending Vanport College, Bob attended Portland State for two years, while Marlene worked at the phone company living on \$25 a month. They eked out their supplies, like tea bags, by collecting them, and making one last pot during the weekend.

While studying in Corvallis, their first child, Michelle, was born. Bob graduated from Oregon State College in 1955 with a degree in Electronics Engineering.

Bob moved to Sunnyvale, California, where he was employed as an engineer for five years. The family moved to Santa Clara, ten miles from San Jose. His son Michael was born in 1956 and another daughter, Erin, was born in 1959..

The next job was with Bissett Berman and the family relocated to Woodland Hills in the San Fernando Valley. A favorite hobby in addition to ham radio, was driving his Sprite in car rallies. He and Marlene won the prestigious overnight rally to Las Vegas.

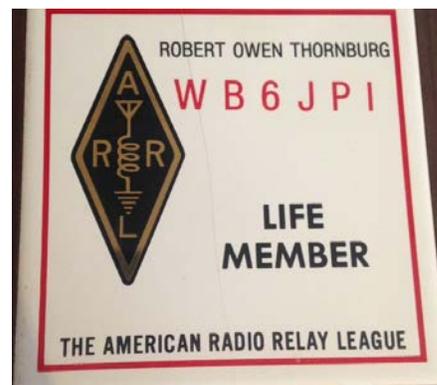
In 1960, Bob joined the Mount Wilson Repeater Association (MWRA) and was active in hunting down those breaking the FCC rules. T-hunting became a lifelong passion.

Other employers through the years were Electronic Specialties and Gillfillan. In the early 1970s, Bob started his own consulting company, Thortech, Inc.

Always possessed of an adventuresome spirit, during the Malibu Canyon fire of 1970, Bob was out riding his motorcycle and ended up on the wrong side of a

police barricade where he had just previously ventured past just 30 minutes earlier to innocently check on the progress the firefighters were making. He had run out of cigarettes, but still had his lighter in his pocket and a strange metal part from a wooden screwdriver. This led to some pithy interrogation and a brief stay in the Sheriff's office until Marlene could bail him out.

While he was a project manager at General Dynamics in 1974, Bob laid down his Kawasaki Z1-A while trying to outride a high-speed wobble commuting home on the 134. His bike was totaled, and he recovered from multiple broken bones but never rode a motorcycle again.



The family took up residence in Lake Arrowhead in 1979, and Marlene received her ham license. The couple was so involved in the activities of the Mount Wilson Repeater Association, that Bob became president and eventually, the owner of the repeater. He later shifted its location from Mount Wilson to Heap's Peak.

Bob began working at Northrop Grumman Corporation as a Technical Manager of EM Measurements and Control until he retired in 1999 at age 65. He was instrumental in the development of the technology of the B2 Stealth Bomber.

Bob and Marlene moved back to the lowlands; this time in the San Bernardino Valley, and Bob became an Official Observer of ARRL on Team Orange in Southern California.

With retirement came the fun of T-hunting, and meeting up with his colleagues for lunch. Bob also became fascinated and passionate with "Bots". Robot lawnmowers, Robot vacuums and especially Sony AIBO robotic dogs. He taught himself to repair them, developed a sales and service business, and attended the SAAG conference in Sacramento for several years.

With a techie's sense of humor, Bob delighted many with such stunts as flying a Pretty Fairy Drone around the tables, bouncing off the walls in a local Italian restaurant. On occasion, wearing flexible flashlights hooked to his glasses to better view the menu or letting one of his robotic dogs do tricks for the joy of the patrons.

Bob was fast to lend a hand or give the shirt off his back to anyone who needed help. His heart was made of gold. He was a mentor to many and was loved dearly.

Bob is preceded in death by his parents: James Owen Thornburg and Helen Fischer Thornburg, and his granddaughter, Maren Lorraine Wist. Bob is survived by his wife, Marlene Texianne Thornburg WD6FBI of Bloomington; his son, Michael Owen Thornburg KF6RR and his spouse Laura Horton of Northridge; his two daughters: Michelle Ann Thornburg Wist WD9DXI and her husband Andy Wist N9CLB, of Murphysboro, Illinois; and Erin Lynn Thornburg Tice NT6P and her husband Gary Tice of Temecula, California; and Bob's brother, Thomas Thornburg and nephew Kenn Thornburg of North Carolina; two grandsons: Micah Wist of Murphysboro, Illinois; and Jared Wist of Marion, Illinois, and one granddaughter, Holly Wist of Des Moines, Iowa.