

Farewell the hero

Medal of Honor recipient
dies at age 70

BOBB HANE
Staff Writer

Fairfield County's home grown hero, Sgt. 1st Class (Ret.) Webster Anderson died Saturday.

Suffering from cancer, he died at his home on Highway 321 North (Webster Anderson Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient Highway) in Fairfield County.

Anderson, 70, was one of two men from South Carolina who won the Congressional Medal of Honor for heroism during the Vietnam War. He was also the only Fairfield County native to receive the award since its inception.

He was born in Winnsboro on July 15, 1933 and was a retired member of the United States Army, which he joined in 1953. Anderson was also the owner of a television repair business, which he ran from his home for a number of years.

"You feel so much for someone who gave so much to protect so many," County Council Chairman Carnell Murphy said. "He was just such a gentleman. It made us proud to be with him. It was an honor and a privilege to be around him."

Anderson was honored "for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action" for his actions in Tam Ky, Vietnam, on October 15, 1967, while serving as chief of section in Battery A, against a hostile force. He lost both legs and part of an arm during the hostilities. Anderson was 34, when he received the Congressional Medal of Honor in November 1969 from President Richard Nixon.

Anderson lost his first wife, Ida, in 1991 and married his second wife, Vickie, in 1996.

Fairfield County Council voted earlier this year to name a portion of 321 from the Chester County line into Winnsboro in honor of Anderson.

A dedication ceremony, which Anderson was



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able to attend, was held in June at the M.H. Boykin Community Center in Winnsboro.

Fairfield County Sheriff Herman Young met Anderson shortly after he returned from the War.

"When I learned about the story of Sgt. Anderson's action in Vietnam, I was so amazed that someone would put their life on the line for someone else," Young said.

He visited Anderson about a month before his death.

"I am so happy that I saw him," he said. "I wanted him to know I thought about him. ..."

"He was such a strong person. ...I admired him so much. I will continue to admire him."

John Baker, a Columbia resident and a Dorn V.A. Hospital employee met Anderson through the Medal of Honor Society.

"He was quiet, but friendly, and he was always smil-

ing," Baker said.

He visited Anderson every day during his final stay in the V.A. Hospital.

Anderson was the son of the late Frizell and Blanche Rabb Anderson and a stepson of Carrie Anderson. He was a retired member of the U.S. Army, VFW Post 4262, as well as the Medal of Honor Society.

He is survived by his wife, Vickie Anderson; daughters, Vonnie and Tanetta Anderson; stepdaughter, Amelia Thompson; sons Webster Anderson II, Davis Anderson, Webster Whitfield; stepsons Lee and Leon Thompson; four sisters, Frances Freeman, Alberta Lumpkin, Marjorie Byrd and Marie Jones; three brothers, Frizell Anderson, Jr., Billy Anderson and Larry Anderson; eight grandchildren, six step grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Services for Anderson were held at 3 p.m. Thursday Sept. 4 at Black Jack Baptist Church.

Burial followed in the Church cemetery.



Photo/BOB HANE

The uniform now stands empty, as part of the collection at the Fairfield County Museum. Other Anderson items including a portrait, a copy of his Congressional Medal of Honor citation and a picture of Anderson with President Richard Nixon who awarded the Medal of Honor.