



Sergeant Robert G. "Bob" Kimberling

Badge #511
EOW ... October 6, 1999

In what way was Bob a leader? Where do we begin? I first met Bob in June 1990 after graduating from the Highway Patrol Academy. He was my training officer. Those that had the privilege to work with him or to know him knew he was the epitome of what a Missouri State Highway Patrol trooper was supposed to be.

Former prosecuting attorney of DeKalb County Bob Paden once told me "pay attention to Bob and you will become a very fine officer." Mr. Paden informed me that Bob

always made good cases and was highly respected by judges and defense lawyers. Bob was responsible for putting many of the well-known criminals in DeKalb, Daviess, and Clinton counties behind bars while living in Maysville and working Zone 8.

Bob continued the same amount of success in Andrew and Buchanan counties while working in St. Joseph, Zone 5, even though he had many other duties that had to be taken care of, including supervising the zone and being the Type II coordinator for the entire troop.

Bob was very kind and gentle to those who worked with him. We strived to do our best around him because we desired to please him. Bob would never belittle you. If he did correct you, he did it in a manner



*The Kimberling
family: Bob,
Kelly, Katie, and
Tobi, 1999.*



Sgt. Sheldon Lyon escorts the Kimberling family during the National Law Enforcement Memorial Ceremony in Washington, D.C., in 2000.

Katie Kimberling makes a rubbing of her dad's name.



that made you see things in a better or safer way that would help you in the future. Bob loved the Patrol and that was very obvious in his dedication.

Bob was intelligent. It wouldn't surprise us if his scores on the promotion tests were the highest in the troop or the state. We could ask him questions about Patrol policies, criminal law, and traffic law. Over 90 percent of the time, he could answer correctly. If he did not know the answer, it bothered him until he found the correct answer.

Bob would also quiz us to make us better at our job. If we did not know the answer, he would say, "Let's look that up," instead of telling us we were wrong. Bob was not judgmental, nor did he ever brag about his own personal accomplishments.

When in contact with the public, Bob was very clear and concise with his instructions. Co-workers and the community had a simple understanding of what Bob stood for and expected from them. Except for the occasional drunk, the public respected Bob.

People admired Bob as an example of what a good trooper is supposed to be.

We knew that, to Bob, the most important aspect of life was a healthy relationship with his family and God. Bob always took the time to be with his family and saw to it that they had everything in life they needed. He enjoyed the simple things in life and sharing times with his entire family. If he wasn't traveling to Jamesport to see his mother, he was visiting one of his sisters' families in Chillicothe, Columbia, or St. Joseph. Bob knew it was important to have the support of family and maintained the idea that family was number one in his life. We found out during the time of preparation for Bob's funeral that he also had a very strong relationship with God and his church family. Friends told me that Bob loved the kitchen at Huffman United Methodist Church and looked forward to cooking there on any Wednesday night he was available.

Bob enjoyed a well-rounded life and he

believed exercise and a proper diet were very important to living a healthy life. Except for the occasional favorite breakfast consisting of two eggs, hash browns, toast, bacon, and coffee, Bob ate very healthily. Bob exercised on a regular basis. He did this mainly because he enjoyed it, but also for how it made him look and feel both in and out of uniform. He enjoyed working out on his "total gym," which was also a well-used piece of furniture in his front room. Bob enjoyed running and physical labor. His home and his personal appearance were always well maintained and in immaculate condition.

We want you to know that Bob also had a lighter side. Corporal Sarah Eberhard told us she would always remember Bob standing in the zone office doorway, as if he was holding the door up. He'd listen to conversations, maybe chew on a cigar, laugh, and interject fitting one-liners. He enjoyed laughing and listening to good or poor taste jokes.



Kelli, Katie, and Tobi, in 2002.

He could use humor as a way of making you a better officer.

One of the humorous stories I remember occurred after we stopped a female violator for speeding. I commented on her looks. Bob was human, so he did agree that she was nice looking. But, then, he said, "But did you notice the AK-47 on her lap?" It is my understanding he had to use this line on other troopers he had trained. It became one of his famous one-liners, along with many others we will never forget. If you had the pleasure to be around him or work with him, I am sure you can think of a few.

We will miss Bob's warm smile, his professionalism, and his caring ways. We will always think of Bob and how he has affected each and every one of us. Bob does not know it, but he made us better people and officers because of his kindness and true professionalism. Please think of his family and say a prayer for them from time to time. I know we will.

(This article by Cpl. Dale Chenoweth and Zone 5, Troop H, first appeared in the No-

vember 1999 Patrol News. Sgt. Dale Chenoweth retired in 2016.)

Sergeant Robert G. Kimberling was survived by his wife, Kelly, their two daughters, Katie and Tobi, his mother, and three sisters. Sgt. Kimberling (511), 43, was shot and killed in the line of duty on October 6, 1999. The incident occurred on Interstate 29 in St. Joseph, MO, when he stopped a suspect who had left without paying for fuel. The suspect shot Sgt. Kimberling five times before taking his own life.

A memorial to Sgt. Kimberling is located just off Interstate 29 at exit 50 in a grassy area surrounded by oak trees. Dedicated June 28, 2000, this memorial is near where Sgt. Kimberling lost his life during a traffic stop. The memorial is a 50-foot rock outline of the state. In the center is a five-foot diameter piece of granite with a bronze plaque. Sergeant Robert G. Kimberling was the 20th member of the Patrol to make the Ultimate Sacrifice.



On September 17, 2001, a ceremony was held at Troop H to rename a portion of Interstate 29 the Sergeant Robert Kimberling Memorial Highway.