

Sergeant Joseph G. Schuengel

Badge #970
EOW ... October 15, 2010



Sgt. Joseph G. "Joe" Schuengel: A man of integrity and honor, a man of dedication, pride, and friendliness. Those are only a few of the many words those who knew Joe could use to describe him. Joe has been a close friend of mine since 2004, when I was assigned to be his flight instructor for the helicopter. During his six weeks of flight training, his motivation to learn could never be questioned. He always arrived at the hangar ready to ask and answer questions, learn about the helicopter, and fly. He always had that positive attitude that would carry over to other people.

After he passed his FAA checkride, I could see the satisfaction on his face through that big smile we are all familiar with. His checkride had gone well and he was proud of his accomplishment. To this day, one of the most rewarding flight assignments I received was training Joe in the helicopter. Not just because of the flying, but because Joe was such a good man to be around. He was a man with an impeccable work ethic. He was dedicated to his career with the

This photo of Recruit Joe Schuengel and classmates from the 66th Recruit Class was taken during their training at the Patrol's Law Enforcement Academy.

Patrol and dedicated to his friendships with others.

Joe was a dedicated pilot for Troop C. He always strived to have quality traffic enforcement flights in the troop and he worked to maintain a positive working relationship with the troopers. I know of many occasions when Joe stopped or canceled his personal plans to be available for a search in the helicopter. On several occasions, we needed one extra pilot in Jefferson City to meet all of our flight requests for the day. When we called him, Joe was always willing to rearrange his schedule or cancel any personal plans he had, drive to Jefferson City, and help us fulfill all of our flights for the day. That is just the way Joe was ... always giving of himself to help others.

Joe loved kids. Over the last few years, my family shared a few meals with him when he was in Jefferson City. Joe knew how to talk to my daughters and other kids on their level, to put them at ease, and make them laugh. It was hard to believe that Joe,



Newly commissioned Trooper Joseph G. "Joe" Schuengel is shown with his family after the graduation ceremony for the 66th Recruit Class on February 4, 1994.

a man as big as he was, who could handily defeat someone on the defensive tactics floor, was the same person that could put kids at ease and make them laugh.

The area I truly saw how big of a heart Joe had was through his dedication to tak-



ing care of his mother. Joe always told me how appreciative he was of his mother for raising him to be the man that he was. Joe wanted to be there for his mother and he



Sgt. Joseph Schuengel standing proudly by the Patrol's Skylane II aircraft.

wanted to be there with his sisters to make sure his mother's needs were met.

I was blessed to have Joe Schuengel as a friend. I will never forget the friendly chats I had with Joe either over the phone or in person. People who have a positive attitude and always have a smile on their face have a lasting, positive effect on everybody around them. Joe definitely had that effect on those around him.

(This excerpt is from an article by Sgt. David K. Striegel, Q/AD, which originally appeared in the November/December 2010 Patrol News.)

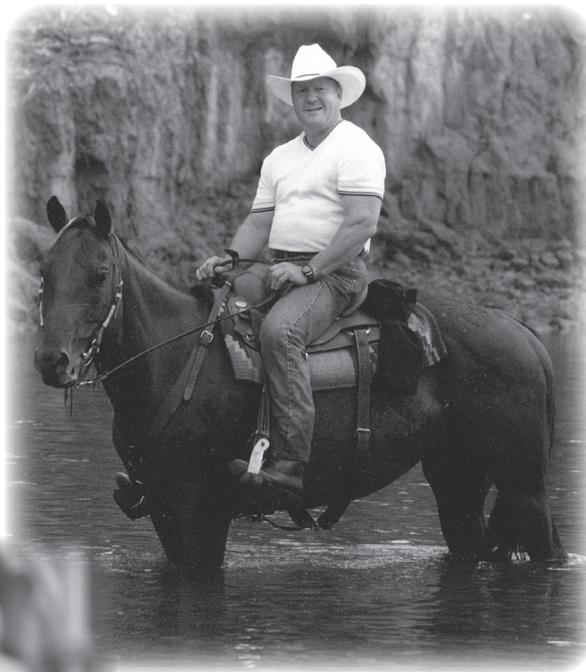
When then-Corporal Schuengel was interviewed for the pilot position at Troop C, it quickly became apparent that Cpl. Schuengel was a man of contemplative thoughts, wisdom and deep insight to his career goals, and the desire to do the best job possible for the Missouri State Highway Patrol. As a result of those impressions, the interview board easily recommended Cpl. Schuengel for selection as Troop C's new full-time pilot.

Goals and objectives were given to Cpl. Schuengel for him to meet before taking on

the tasks and responsibilities of being Troop C's full-time pilot. He tackled the assignments with gusto and quickly accomplished each assigned goal and objective, and became a very productive and successful law enforcement pilot.

After being promoted to sergeant, he applied for, interviewed for, and was selected to fill a vacancy in General Headquarters' Aircraft Division. Sergeant Schuengel reported to Jefferson City and applied himself to this new assignment with the same dedication and gusto that made him successful as Troop C's pilot. But, something with a bigger calling, a higher degree of importance than improving his career for his personal satisfaction was calling Sgt. Schuengel back to his former troop.

This calling was his unselfish desire and commitment to provide the care and attention that he wanted and needed to provide to his mother. Sgt. Schuengel worried, fretted, and pondered deeply the decision to return to Troop C. Not from the standpoint of regret that he was going back to support his



Sgt. Schuengel enjoyed Missouri's state parks with his horse, Rookie.



Sgt. Schuengel read the scripture during his nephew's wedding in 2008. (He was called out unexpectedly for duty that morning, but managed to make it on time.)

family—that was never a concern for Joe. His concern wasn't whether or not it was the correct thing to do; his concern was about not being able to support his second family—members of the Missouri State Highway Patrol and the Aircraft Division. Joe was concerned, as I came to know Joe better, that a perception would be formed of him that he was not doing his job to the best of his ability for the Patrol. Joe was deeply concerned and worried that he had disappointed me or the Patrol and let us down because of his decision to return to Troop C. Joe: You did not disappoint me or let me down. Sgt. Joseph G. Schuengel, it was an honor and a privilege to count you as a true friend. Rest in peace.

(This article by Lt. Gregory L. Word, Q/AD, originally appeared in the November/December 2010 Patrol News. Lt. Greg Word retired in 2011.)

I flew with Joe in 2009 during his instrument flight training. This type of training is difficult and challenging. Joe was always an exceptional student—prepared, focused, motivated, and eager to 'do the extra.' He worked diligently and never complained, overcoming small setbacks with a smile. As the training progressed, an FAA checkride was scheduled. The day before this test, I discovered Joe was in pain—from an abscessed tooth. I suggested we postpone the checkride to allow him time to seek treatment and get relief. Joe refused, took the test as scheduled (in pain), and did well.



Sgt. Jeffrey W. Paul, Q/DDCC, (right) stands with his good friend, Sgt. Joe Schuengel, Troop C.

I was amazed at his strength of character and firm commitment to complete the task at hand. But, for Joe, it was nothing new. In this case, he naturally did what he usually did—selflessly placed his needs second to the needs of everyone else.

(This excerpt by Sgt. Jeffrey G. Noack, Q/AD, is from an article that originally appeared in the November/December 2010 Patrol News.)

Joe was a huge redhead of German descent who barely fit into his flight suit. He ALWAYS wore a smile. Being one of the Troop C Clamp and Grasp instructors, he would always try and give you an unhealthy squeeze. Before becoming the Troop C pilot, Joe was also a member of Troop C SERT (now SWAT). During all that time, Joe was the consummate professional, treating everyone with the greatest respect and professionalism.

I will miss our talks in the afternoon when he came into the troop after flying all day. I could see he was physically tired, yet still saw the spark in his eyes because he

had just finished doing what he loved: flying and law enforcement. He was a kind and caring son, brother, uncle, and friend, and I will miss him.

(This article by Sgt. Jeffrey W. Paul, Q/DDCC, originally appeared in the November/December 2010 Patrol News.)

Joe was a mountain of a man with big arms and an even bigger heart. Many have said that if they were on a traffic stop and he pulled up to help there was a sense of ease, because if he was there it was like having a gladiator on your side. Joe would not only be there to help you, but he would give you the shirt off his back if you needed it. We have recently learned about a man's life he saved through CPR in late August 2010. He didn't speak about it, and knowing Joe, he probably wanted no recognition for it. Selfish he was not.

On October 15, 2010, a son, brother, uncle, friend, and fellow trooper was taken much too soon. He probably accomplished more in 47 short years than most men have done in a lifetime twice as long. He was concerned for his mother and family, but as we have learned, he was also concerned about the greater good. There are many people who have many of their own stories of Joe ... funny and serious. If you only met Joe one time, knew him for 17 years as a trooper, or knew him for a lifetime you can rest assured you met a real man. Even if you were one of his "demonstrations" and left with a bruise, just know that you were in the presence of a gentleman.

(This article by Cpl. Michael E. Broniec, Troop C, originally appeared in the November/December 2010 Patrol News. Sergeant Michael E. Broniec is still assigned to Troop C.)



Sgt. Schuengel knew the importance of taking a vacation. During this vacation, he explored the Mayan ruins and flew down a zipline in Mexico.

At approximately 11:10 a.m. on Friday, October 15, 2010, Sergeant Joseph G. Schuengel (#970), a Missouri State Highway Patrol pilot assigned to Troop C, Weldon Spring, was returning to Spirit of St. Louis Airport. He had just completed an aircraft speed enforcement operation in Jefferson County. As he was flying to the Spirit of St. Louis Airport, the Bell Jet Ranger helicopter he was piloting crashed near the intersection of Clarkson and Kehrs Mill Road, in St. Louis County. Sgt. Schuengel was pronounced dead at the scene. He was survived by his mother and three sisters. Sgt. Schuengel was the 29th member of the Patrol to make the Ultimate Sacrifice.