



WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler
District 32



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Southwest Missouri Pauses to Honor a Fallen Hero – Staff Sergeant Daniel Kisling Jr.

The War on Terror touched close to home, as Neosho's own Staff Sergeant Daniel Kisling Jr. was laid to rest on Feb. 8 in the Oakwood Church Cemetery. This brave young man gave his life in defense of freedom and represented the best of what America stands for.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the Kisling family including his wife, Georgie, and the couple's three children: Nathan, 13, Jessie, 10; and Riley, 5. His parents Daniel Kisling Sr. and Velinda Kisling continue to make their home in Neosho.

Sgt. Kisling was a member of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment – the "Night Stalkers." The unit flies Special Forces commandos behind enemy lines. Sgt. Kisling was killed on Jan. 30 along with four other soldiers in a helicopter crash during a training mission in Afghanistan.

He joined the Army after graduating from Neosho High School and working at La-Z-Boy Midwest, and was an 8-year veteran who had intended to make the Army a career.

Many of his comrades have called Sgt. Kisling a "crew chief poster child," who was a brave soldier, a good husband and an even better father. He unfailingly loved his country and was prepared to lay down his life in defense of it.

We must always remember the brave men and women – like Sgt. Kisling – who die in defense of our country. It is our duty to keep the legacy of our nation's patriots forever fresh in the memories of future generations. We are bound by honor to do so. They fought and died to preserve this land of hopes and dreams.

The United States remains a free country because of their sacrifices.

Since Sept. 11, we have all lived with a sense of fear and foreboding.

We are involved in a war where the enemy seeks to create fear and to destroy the confidence of Americans. They seek to destroy the confidence we have in the institutions designed to protect us. They want to destroy our confidence in America's future. This is the only way the enemy can win.

Americans must remain determined and not display fear; fear is what our enemy wants. It is a war for the American spirit.

The world is different now and we must all be prepared.

I assure you that your state government is taking every possible precaution to keep Missouri and its residents safe.

The Night Stalkers' Creed includes these words: "As a member of the Night Stalkers, I am a tested volunteer seeking only to safeguard the honor and prestige of my country."

Sgt. Kisling lived by this creed, as do all the men and women of the armed forces.

Sgt. Kisling expressed his faith in democracy by committing the most selfless act of all – he sacrificed his life.

We will remain forever grateful.

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