

Rob Welling

Rob's Life Story

Some of us are content to lead pedestrian lives, unengaged,

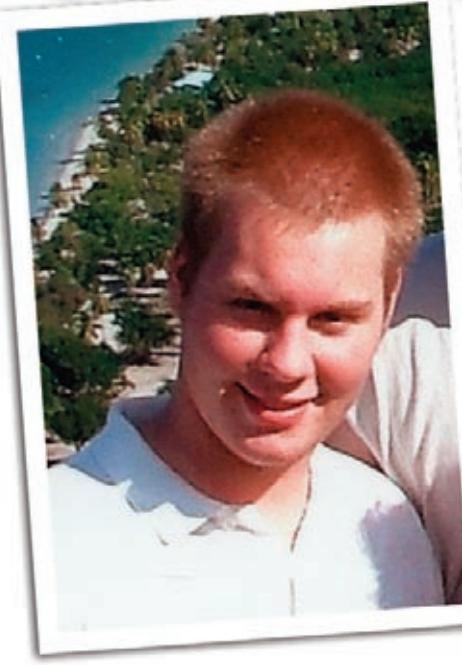
uninvolved and earthbound. Rob Welling certainly wasn't one of them. Rob was an incredible young man, who always reached for something higher, something farther, and something better. There are many things in this world we can't understand, yet this much we do: Rob was a gift to us, a gift we will cherish forever.

Rob's story began on a beautiful summer day in 1988, in the beautiful shoreline city of Holland, Michigan. Those were such turbulent times in this country, which battled rampant inflation and the Iran-Contra White House scandal, while the Cold War entered its final days with the Soviet Union. Amid these uncertain times, Tom and Mary Welling found reason to celebrate on June 17, 1988. On that beautiful summer Friday, they welcomed their second child, a baby boy, a son they named Robert.

Rob joined his older brother Josh in the family's Holland home, and would later be joined by his little brother Ryan, too. Being the middle child, Rob developed an outgoing personality from a young age, anxious to step out of his big brother's shadow, and to cast one of his own.

That's the way Rob lived his life, though. Always ready to step into the limelight, always ready for the next adventure, the next challenge, the next hurdle. He was a young man who grabbed life by the horns, and held on to enjoy the ride.

Rob was raised with a great faith in the Lord, and he and his family attended Central Wesleyan Church in Holland. As a boy, Rob enjoyed participating in the Younglife program, as well, the Christian youth ministry and volunteer organization. Rob always loved being a part of something special.



Rob was a very bright young man, too, and a good student at Holland Public Schools. Rob was always such a well-rounded person, and was beloved by everyone who met him. How could you not love him? He was so handsome, funny, outgoing ... clever yet modest, popular yet unpretentious, confident but not cocky.

By the time Rob reached Holland High School, he had grown into a very talented, friendly young man, with many friends and many interests, too. He was also a good athlete and loved baseball, and even worked his way onto the varsity baseball team for the Dutch, too.

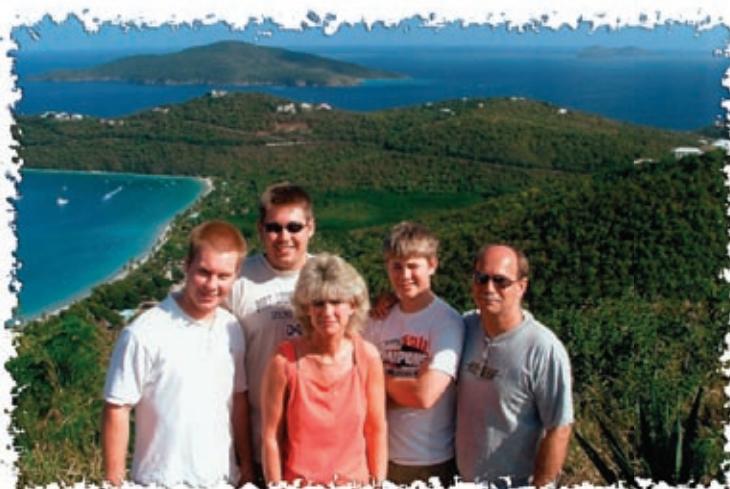
Rob also got involved in the theater productions in high school, and was a natural performer. He could sing, he could dance, and he would simply light up the stage. Rob was always comfortable in the limelight, yet never crowded out those around him. Everyone loved to be on stage with Rob, and he was a crowd favorite, too.

He was such a favorite, in fact, after he graduated from Holland High in 2006, theater instructor Kevin Schneider asked him to come back for a walk-on role in one play. Schneider called on Rob a lot, though, to help him troubleshoot problems on the set, or to fix his computer on multiple occasions. Rob always offered to help, so generous with his time and talents, always willing to help a friend in need.

After he graduated from Holland High, Rob headed off to Michigan State University in East Lansing for a semester. After a semester as a Spartan, however, Rob decided

to change his major to aviation and changed colleges, as well and enrolled in Western Michigan's College of Aviation, one of the best in the country.

Rob returned home to Holland in the summer of 2007, where he enjoyed spending time with his



parents, brothers, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and the many friends he left behind. He also loved being close to his girlfriend, Kaija vonWebsky, who was still at Holland High. He also worked hard that summer, laboring for Lamar Construction Company in his hometown.

That fall, he headed off to Kalamazoo, to resume his classes at Western. He came home often to be close to his family and friends, and to spend time with Kaija. Sadly, one evening that fall, he came home and went out with Kaija, when their car was hit by a drunk driver. Rob died as a result of the crash, on Friday, September 28, 2007, at the age of 19.

Rob always reached for something higher, something farther, and something better in his life, from his goals, to his dreams, to those he kept closest to him. There were so many people close to Rob, though. He was a loving son, brother and grandson, and friend to so many. He was taken from us too soon, yet his time with us was a gift, a gift we will love, cherish and remember forever. He will be so greatly missed.

Rob is survived by his parents, Tom and Mary Welling, brothers, Joshua of Ann Arbor, and Ryan of Holland, maternal grandparents, Marvin and Ruth (Vroon) Lansen of Holland, paternal grandparents Laverne "Pete" and Doris (Kole) Welling of Holland, aunts, Deb (Mike) Janicik of Sacramento, CA, Penny (Scott) Faustyn of Okemos, and Cheryl (David) Koeman of Holland, uncles, Steve Lansen and Jere Lansen, both of Holland, a special friend Kaija vonWebsky of Holland. Friends may call to see Rob at 10:00 AM Friday at the Central Wesleyan Church 446 W. 40th St. Holland. Funeral services will be held at 1:00 PM Friday at the Church. An informal celebration of Rob's life will be held at 1:00 PM Saturday at Central Wesleyan Church. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be given to Robert Welling Memorial Fund for Holland High School Baseball and Theatre activities or "Younglife." Arrangements are by the Mulder Chapel of Dykstra Life Story Funeral Home. Please visit www.lifestorynet.com to sign Rob's guestbook or share a memory or photo of him.



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