



KUBAN FAMILY STATEMENT

“We are saddened to announce the passing of our beloved Bob Kuban, a St. Louis musical legend who entertained generations of St. Louisans. Bob died peacefully in his sleep following complications from a stroke. He was dearly loved and will be greatly missed. We encourage those impacted by Bob and his musical legacy to share their memories.”

DEATH NOTICE – ROBERT (BOB) KUBAN – WILDWOOD, MO

1-20-2025

Funeral Services: **TBD**

Beloved St. Louis Musician and Rock & Roll Hall of Famer **ROBERT (BOB) KUBAN** died peacefully on January **20**, 2025 surrounded by his family, following complications from a stroke.

Kuban came from humble beginnings in St. Louis but went on to perform alongside some of the world’s most renown musicians – Chuck Berry, Ike & Tina Turner, Little Richard, The Four Tops, The Temptations, The Righteous Brothers, The Turtles, The Drifters and The Beach Boys, to name a few.

Most notably, in 1966, he and his band, **Bob Kuban and the In-Men**, appeared on American Bandstand with Dick Clark, when their Top 40 hit, **“The Cheater,”** climbed the **Billboard charts to #12**. Kuban said, *“That was one of the greatest things of our lives. Every musician ... that was your goal, to be on American Bandstand and go meet Dick Clark and perform.”*

Kuban was born August 19, 1940, to Dorothy (Shaffer) Kuban, a secretary and at-home typist, who earned one penny per label typed, and Marion Kuban, a milkman for Pevely Dairy.

Kuban, 84, of Wildwood, MO, described himself as *“a North County guy”* – having lived much of his life in St. Ann and Bellefontaine Neighbors and having entertained thousands of fans at St. Louis institutions like **Club Imperial**, **Gaslight Square** and on the **S.S. Admiral**. Thousands of fans remember the **“Teen Town”** performances that made him a local celebrity. Kuban’s band played before St. Louis Football Cardinal games and many special occasions for decades at St. Louis Baseball Cardinals games, the annual Veiled Prophet and Fleur de Lis Balls, hundreds of proms and private events, as well as headlined yearly community concerts in the parks where adoring fans enjoyed the entertainment year after year.

Kuban is survived by Juanita Wheeler; Nancy Rickert; sister Madonna “Donna” Kuban; late brother, Larry Kuban and sister-in-law Mary [Schuermann] Kuban; granddaughter Finnley Hope; great grandchildren Stella Hope and Edison Drier; and nieces and nephews, Andrea (Hoeflerlin) Winslett, Derek Hoeflerlin, Chris Kuban, Bryan Kuban, Kelly (Kuban) Mitchell, friends and adoring fans.

Kuban attended Ascension Catholic Church in Chesterfield.

Bob Kuban Historical Background Information:

At age nine, young Mr. Kuban had an early interest in music, particularly drums, but school music programs didn't exist in those days, and the family couldn't afford private lessons. He had never touched a musical instrument until **CHUCK BERRY** visited his school and asked whether anyone in the auditorium could play drums. Mr. Kuban's friends volunteered him. He took the stage and played for 10 minutes.

Afterward, Berry said, *"You did a good job! How long have you been playing?"*
Mr. Kuban responded, *"10 minutes."*

That recognition from Chuck Berry launched a career that would last decades and which landed Mr. Kuban in the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame as a "one-hit wonder" for his hit single, **"The Cheater,"** recorded by his band **BOB KUBAN AND THE IN-MEN.**

The band's 1966 hit record, "The Cheater" went all the way to number 12 on the charts. The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame honored Kuban and his hit as part of their permanent exhibit of *One Hit Wonders.*

When asked whether he considered that designation a put down, Kuban responded, *"I don't regard it as a put down because I say I would rather have one hit than no hits. I would rather be a one-hit wonder than a no-hit wonder. There's a million groups out there that are no-hit wonders. That sort of shuts 'em up right there."*

From 1963 to 1970, while "The Cheater" made him famous, Kuban taught music to high schoolers and was the band director at Bishop DuBourgh High School.

"It was kind of neat," Kuban recalled in an interview with music historian Gary James. *"The kids were all knocked out by the fact I had a Top 40 hit song, and here it's their band teacher. Stop and think about it: Band teachers in Rock 'n' Roll, that was kind of unheard of. I was sort of blazing the trail and then to come out with a hit record to boot. ... It was all new. The administration didn't know what to do about it. I showed up for work every day. I was never late. I didn't fall asleep during class. We were working a lot back then. If we were traveling, I would fly out on, like a Friday, and we'd play a gig in Chicago or L.A. I'd be back in time on Monday morning."*

"The Cheater" rose to #1 on the Australian charts. The band planned a nine-city tour in Australia, but the Draft board told Kuban that his status as a high-school teacher had earned him a draft deferment. If he were to tour, that draft status would change to 1A, meaning he'd be drafted.

In his book, *My Side of the Bandstand*, Mr. Kuban recalled in an interview, *"I have no regrets. If we had become another Rolling Stones, you never know. Apparently, this is the way it was supposed to be. I'm thankful. I have a nice home. I hope to play 'til the day I die."*

He did have two other top 100 hits: **"The Teaser"** peaked at No. 70; and a remake of the **Lennon–McCartney** song **"Drive My Car"** went to No. 93. Bob Kuban and the In-Men performed for the Opening Ceremonies of Busch Stadium on May 10, 1966; and The Bob Kuban Brass performed before the last regular-season baseball game at the old Busch Stadium on October 2, 2005.

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