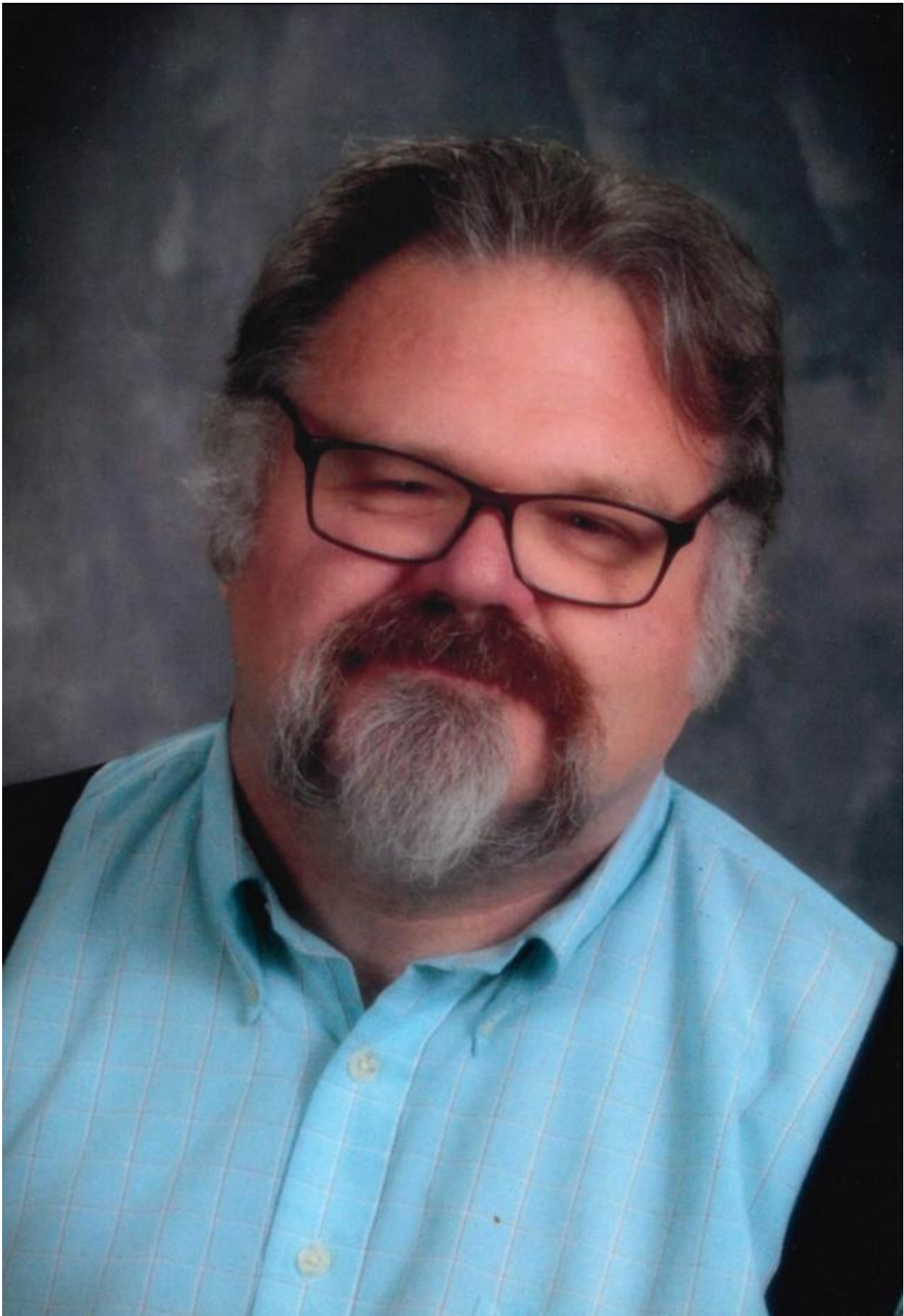




One-Of-A-Kind Teacher: Steven Heitzig Leaves Legacy With His North Greene High School Students That Will Last

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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WHITE HALL - Steven Douglas Heitzig, 59, a teacher in the North Greene High School system, left a legacy that won't soon be forgotten by his students. Heitzig died Tuesday, Nov. 17, at his home.

Heitzig started at North Greene High School and moved to White Hall in 1999. For 21 years he impacted thousands of students in his English classes, including courses such as creative writing, strategic reading, and economics. He sponsored a Chess Club and worked with a Scholar Bowl team, and was known for being available to help students with papers due in other courses, or whatever help he could give. He sought out and encouraged the talent and potential in his students.

North Greene Principal Amanda Macias said Steve would always take the students who didn't have a lot of faith in themselves and also at-risk students and show them the potential they had for writing.

"Steve would mentor those at-risk students in their writing," Macias said. "A lot of those same students would bring their papers they were writing for other classes and have him look at them and develop them."

One student - Ben Cox - ultimately became a writer. At the last North Greene board meeting, Cox gave a tribute to Steve and how he took him under his wing and how much he had meant to his life.

"Students recently all got together at the park and shared stories about Steve," Macias said. "It just goes to show how good our students really are. The students were really impacted here and we had counselors here for three days. I think the students lean so much on each other getting an opportunity to talk about it. It is a really difficult time for the students, faculty, and administration."

Principal Macias pointed out that one young lady had written a paper and some of her class were giving her a hard time about it and she was really upset.

"Steve was such an advocate for the underdog and he told them there would be no bullying in his class," Macias said. "He basically celebrated differences in kids and wouldn't let them be mean and ugly. He wanted the kids to show respect to one another. Steve taught a variety of classes, but mostly junior and senior English and creative writing. He was a lifelong learner. He was constantly taking classes."

Macias said Steve was literally the kindest person with his handlebar mustache and Harley.

“I think his death just crushed us because we all lost not only a valuable co-worker but a friend. I just feel there has been an outpouring of love in the community for Steve.

"Steve was the kindest soul you could ever meet.”