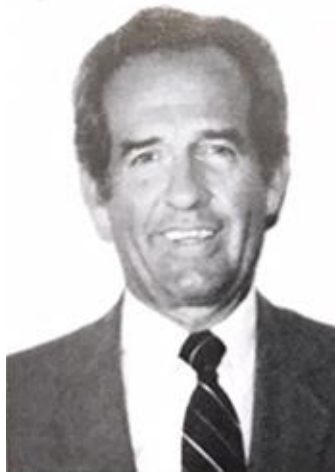


ROBERT W. 'BOB' STEELE

31st President SPIAA 1981-82

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CAPTAIN ROBERT "BOB" STEELE, Greensboro Police Department

Bob Steele was a much beloved Guilford County school bus driver. Steele is finding out exactly how much he means to children and parents at Sternberger Elementary, past and present. Bob Steele, a retired police captain who has shepherded children to and from school for years is very sick and the children came to cheer him up Friday, November 19, 2004 (News & Record, Jerry Wolford)

GREENSBORO - Bob Steele was never one to heap praise on himself. When Greg Newell visited Steele on Christmas Eve, Steele took the chance to spotlight the Newell family, telling a visitor what a great job the parents were doing with their three daughters. He never played up the role he played, Newell said. He deflected all the attention from himself. But people knew how special he was.

Steele, a former Greensboro police captain and beloved bus driver of hundreds of school children, died Tuesday after a two-month battle with brain cancer. He was 72.

The outpouring of love toward Steele during his illness was the subject of a News & Record story last month. At that time, he faced a prognosis of two to four months to live.

Steele was a Guilford County native, a graduate of Sumner High School and a veteran of the U.S. Air Force. He served with the Greensboro Police Department for 31 years. In his retirement, Steele adopted a new role: Bus Driver Bob. For nine years, he shuttled Sternberger Elementary children from home to school and back again.

He was a friend to the kids, a mentor, not just their bus driver,+said Terri Rotunda, a Sternberger parent. He took individual interest in the children and started their day in a positive way, ended it in a positive way. He gave them something to look forward to each day.+

Steele was known for his caring nature, often calling parents in the evening to check on a student if the child was acting out of character during the day. He learned about the children's families and their extracurricular activities. If one of his bus riders was named Sternberger's Student of the Month, Steele was at the %all.+

When news got out that he was battling brain cancer, Rotunda sent letters to other parents, asking them to assist the Steele family. And help they did, with about 50 families signing up to provide the Steeles lunch or dinner and another dozen calling to offer help.

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