**Pride of the Bulldogs**

**Bruce Hefflinger**

Bruce Hefflinger was a 1974 Defiance High School graduate who went on to Bowling Green State University where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Journalism in 1978.

He went on to work as a sports writer at his hometown newspaper for nearly 37 years, including the position of Sports Editor for 26 years. In his time as a sports writer, Bruce had beats covering Defiance High School teams in wrestling, boys basketball, football and baseball. A member of the Ohio Prep Sportswriters Hall of Fame, Bruce won numerous awards from the Associated Press, United Press International and the Ohio Prep Sports Writers Association for his coverage of DHS athletics. He also was recipient of the Sportsmanship, Ethics & Integrity Media Award from the Northwest District in 2006-07 and the Northwest Ohio District 7 Coaches Association honoree in 2015 for years of dedication and devotion to high school basketball.

Bruce covered all six Defiance High School state baseball appearances to date, including all four state championships in 1992, 2013, 2015 and 2016. He also covered the Defiance state championship football game in 1997, the state championship basketball game in 2015, DHS wrestlers at the state tournament throughout the 1980s and the DHS girls cross country team at state in 2006.

In addition to covering Defiance athletics, Bruce also coached in the school system for more than 50 combined years. He coached Defiance fifth and sixth grade boys basketball for seven years and coached baseball in Defiance for 15 years at the Little League, Babe Ruth, Travel Team and Junior ACME levels, including the first two years Junior ACME came to Defiance. Bruce also coached fifth and sixth grade football for five years before becoming a seventh grade assistant coach for one year and eight grade assistant coach for one year. He then became the head eighth grade football coach for 23 years.

Bruce, who has been a member of the Defiance High School Athletic Hall of Fame committee for seven years, is currently working as Senior Writer for Prep Baseball Report and is also a stringer for the Paulding Progress.

Bruce is the fourth member of his family to become a part of the DHS Athletic Hall of Fame, joining his wife of 36 years Dianne (basketball cheerleader 1976), son Ben Kroeckel (football 1994) and son Dylan Hefflinger (baseball 2002). He also has a daughter Kelly and five grandchildren.