

Steel June 24/02 p. 3

By Trevor Sinker

SPECIAL TO THE INTELLIGENCER

When classes start this fall Lyn Harrington will not be at school.

The Trenton High School principal is retiring but his absence will not be without sadness.

"I'll miss students, staff and the great spirit Trenton High School has and the different ways you can have an impact on young people lives," Harrington said.

Born and raised in Belleville, he attended Trent University and then Queen's for his teaching degree.

His first year was spent at Belleville's Centennial Secondary, but he moved to Trenton High School in 1972 and taught history, law and economics until 1985.

After a year as executive assistant with Quinte MPP Hugh O'Neil, Harrington returned to THS to fill the vice principal's role.

The next decade saw Harrington at Bayside, the curriculum co-ordinator at the board, the principal at Moira and finally a return to Trenton High as principal.

His education career ends on a positive note.

"THS has always been known for having an excellent staff, having an excellent program and a student body that excels in a number of different ways," he said.

Over the decades he has been witness to patterns of change among students. The "issues they face and how they deal with these do change. They enter high school at a young age but mature very quickly and face all the challenges that are common to teenagers," Harrington said.

He explained a principal must "like dealing with students, parents and staff." With 850 students, 50 teachers and 30 support staff all coming together, there are many "complex inter-relationships and problems you're going to have to deal with."

How Harrington handled these relationships imprinted on staff

and students.

Librarian Paul McAllister, who is also retiring this year, has much praise for Harrington. He was "very approachable" easy to get along with, helpful — a true gentle man."

Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board Director of Education Larry Langdon regrets losing the long-time educator. "When he was at Moira my three youngsters thought very highly of him," said Langdon.

Langdon compared Harrington's retirement to "losing a good friend" and explained. He has served the board in a wide capacity over the years. "We're going to miss him," he said.

Grade 10 student Blair Ashby

agrees. "He was very understanding," she said.

Current vice principal Lisa Vincent understands the challenges and rewards that come with a high school principal's job.

She has been learning the ropes from Harrington and calls her new position as principal next year an "honour."

"I really love being at Trenton High and so being able to move into the principalship and stay at the school I want to — you get the best of both worlds," said Vincent.

She plans to "look at how we best serve our students" and "maintain the excellence we have here while continuing to look at improvement." Prior to her role as vice principal, Vincent was the

careers curriculum co-ordinator at the board office in Belleville. She said her acquired leadership skills from the job at the board will be a valuable asset in her new position.

While looking forward to her new job, Vincent will miss her colleague.

"I think it's a big loss for the school," she said. "He's so good at what he does. I think very highly of him."

Harrington plans to join his wife, Yvonne, and start a second career in financial services. He said he is going to learn new talents but hopes "to bring old skills to that area."

"You have mixed feelings," Harrington said. "I know the school is in good hands."