

MARISSEN, Harry.

EDUCATION *Intel Aug 21/97, p. 10*

Federation honors former area teacher

Receives highest form of recognition, life membership in OPSTF

By Henry Bury *Intel Aug 21/97 p. 10*
The Intelligencer

A Quinte-area teacher has been honored by the provincial teachers' federation in which he served as local president.

Harry J. Marissen was presented with an honorary life membership in the Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation (OPSTF), the highest form of recognition for members retiring from teaching and who have given outstanding service to the federation at the provincial level.

The presentation of the traditional gold ring took place during the president's dinner, a gala occasion which forms a part of the federation's annual assembly held Aug. 14 in Toronto. Marissen was one of five recipients of the annual award.

Marissen served on the provincial federation for 20 of his 35 years in teaching, including president of the Hastings division for six years until his retirement in 1996.

The federation represents 32,000 members in Ontario's schools.

Marissen said Wednesday he's "honored and surprised" with the provincial award.

"I was very pleasantly surprised that I would be considered for this and that I actually did get it. I was very happy with it...it's a great honor," Marissen said.

Marissen, who retired from teaching in 1996, is still serving on the local federation executive.

Jeff Holmes, OPSTF president, told the banquet's 650 guests that Marissen is com-

mitted to education and to educators.

"He has been part of this annual assembly for more than 20 years, in the course of which he has represented both Elgin and Hastings districts," Holmes said.

Holmes noted that while Marissen was local federation president, he decided to organize Hastings County's occasional (supply) teachers.

"It wasn't easy. But having completed that task, he helped to negotiate his new members' first collective agreement, an innovative contract that in some important respects still stands as a model for other contracts."



Harry Marissen

The federation president said Marissen also contributed significantly at the provincial level. For 14 years, he served as instructor for the federation's credit courses, assisting hundreds of teachers reach their professional development goals. (Even though he's retired, Marissen is continuing to teach those credit courses).

"Meeting the needs of teachers, students and his community is a hallmark of Harry's life," Holmes said.

Marissen, whose last teaching position was at Susanna Moodie School, has also been an active member of the Belleville Lions Club, the United Church, Community Visions and Networking Quinte, a group for special needs adults and the Ontario Special Olympics.

"We are proud to honor Harry Marissen by awarding him an honorary life membership," Holmes said.