

Bartholomew continued from page 8

Princeton Pride extends deeply into the community, as well! The school continues to be the heart and focus of hundreds of local citizens, who give it their money, their time, their accolades, their defense, and their devotion. Not infrequently, parents of current students and former students credit the positive growth of their children to the learning environment and personal attention stressed by Mr. Bartholomew. "Parental support and appreciation for what we are trying to do definitely make it possible for us to fulfill our mission," he finished.

Bartholomew knows that both his style and his abilities have been molded and influenced by outside forces and mentors. He credits all four of the superintendents under whom he has served for their contributions to his educational philosophies and performance. "From J.R. Peeler I learned that there is no substitute for quality. Staff and building construction should always be first-rate. In the Johnston County schools, Evander S. Simpson was able to bring about the smoothest transition in integration in the state of North Carolina. I would have to say that he was a very far-sighted, very savvy educator. He was a genuine visionary who knew his way around the citizens, the Board of Education, the administrators, the County Commissioners, and even the students with whom he worked. When he wanted something he never stopped until he got it," Mr. B explained.

"From Dr. James Ellerbe I learned a very different management style," Fred continued. "He liked for local principals to run their own schools for the most part. I remember him as a capable organizer and a detail man. Our present superintendent, Dr. G. Thomas Houlihan, is likely years ahead of his time! He is clearly an innovator, a motivator, a debater, a facilitator, a super salesman, a bold risk taker, and has no rival at gaining the cooperation of the business world, the taxpayer, the institutions of higher learning, and the political figures who can do good things for public education in Johnston County and the state."

During his tenure, he says he has seen the founding of the North Carolina Principals/Assistant Principals Association. He adds that his professional organization is now called the Tarheel Association of Principals and Assistant Principals of which he the past president and he is proud of the accomplishments of the Association.

These days, Fred insists his greatest pride, however, comes from more local circumstances, mostly having to do with his staff and students. He remembers with special joy having the opportunity to present diplomas to his own three children as they graduated from Princeton High School. He relishes the thought of their taking on satisfying roles in society, as well as learning that ever increasing numbers of his former students are also earning university degrees, are finding fulfilling jobs, and are staying out of harm's way. He admits that he is particularly gladdened by the numbers of graduates who are becoming teachers, lawyers, pharmacists, etc. On the scene at Princeton High School, the faculty almost always contains eight to ten local alumni, who are carrying on the cherished traditions and emulating their former teachers who tried to light a flame within them in earlier times.

Mr. Bartholomew has had several opportunities to advance within the profession, but he has routinely declined to leave the spot at the head of a good school. "Advancement," he further explained, "would be important but would separate him from his chances to see young people mature, to assist new teachers entering the business, and to savor his friendships with co-workers with whom he has literally grown up with, especially at the Princeton Union School. I have been around Ricky Boyette, Debra Lane, Thelma Wall, Janet Wells, Janet Boyette, Tucker Twisdale, Matthew Sanders and Edith Creech for such a long time. I have counted on them and others for so much help in making a good school. I know only too well that I want to continue to associate with those who are not only sharp, but the best folks in the world!" he reminisced. "One other cohort, Gerald Poplin, has always been a mainstay. I'm a career Principal."