Students respect professionalism

Plum shares his newsroom experience with students

By Jeffrey R. Plum
Staff Writer

ADRIAN — Adrian High School journalism teacher Ken Clark did not know what to expect when he was told he would have an associate teacher observing his class.

"Would it be someone who could help his students?" Clark wondered.

Well, it did not take long for Clark to realize he had an experienced reporter and educator working with his students.

The associate teacher's name was Jeffrey R. Plum.

"His individual work with the students was terrific," said Clark, who cited Plum's promptness and willingness to work and help others in class. "He displayed good listening skills, a sure knowledge of reporting and a genuine concern for others."

Plum, who also observed Adrian High's yearbook class as well as taught three English classes and a study period, provided a source of journalism knowledge for his students, Clark said.

"Students respected his experience as a reporter," said Clark, noting Plum would often get around to those having difficulty and provide ideas for students to develop their own thoughts. "They approached him daily for his opinions and ideas." In classes like journalism and yearbook, the atmosphere is more non-structured than structured, and Plum kept things light, Clark said.

"Jeff dealt with others in a nice, relaxed manner," Clark said. "He was always polite and, through his personal behavior, he helped foster a cooperative working relationship between members of The Maple Leaf staff."

"I truly appreciated his contributions to the class." Tom Pryor, who teaches the yearbook class at Adrian High School, said Plum exhibited positive characteristics in his classroom. And in unstructured classrooms, it is a major plus.

"Jeff got along well with the students and displayed a sense of humor, two important attributes for this type of unstructured classroom setting," Pryor said.

Plum was learning as well as helping the students during his yearbook observations.

What skills he lacked in photojournalism, he made up for in print journalism, Pryor said.

"He was also helpful in assisting students in writing," Pryor added.