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Janet VanVolkenburg is a kind person. So it's really no surprise her name was drawn as the "Kindness Citizen of the Year" for 2003.

The 42-year-old Frankford resident and parent volunteer at Frankford Public School received the laurels from the Violence Awareness and Random Acts of Kindness Committee. She is the seventh recipient of the award after her name was drawn earlier this month at Kindness Court in the Quinte Mall.

Chris Fyke, co-chair of the Violence Awareness and Random Acts of Kindness Committee, said VanVolkenburg is a worthy recipient of the award.

"She gives willingly of her time and talent to help make a positive difference in the lives of many students and this is what the award is all about," she said.

VanVolkenburg said she was overwhelmed to be chosen "because there are so many other kind people in our community."

"I'm very honoured to be representing other kind people through this award," she said.

She makes a point of being kind in everything she does.

"I try to be positive and usually if you're positive, the kindness comes naturally."

She also believes kindness is contagious.

"If you're kind to someone, that person will be kind to someone else and then it goes on and on."

The Frankford native and Bayside Secondary School graduate worked for Wilkinson & Co. She left the firm in 1986, a year after her marriage to Dale, and began to raise three children.

When her children enrolled at Frankford Public School, VanVolkenburg decided to go there as well as a parent volunteer. And she has followed her children through the grades.

"My husband is great because he supports everything I do," she said. "Volunteering takes a lot of time and it's important to have your family's support and encouragement."

VanVolkenburg started out helping with the school choir and playing the piano for their performances.

When the piano teacher retired five years ago, she took over that position and has been giving private piano lessons at the school two days a week during regular class hours.

She has been co-chairman of the school council for four of the past five years, includ-

ing this year.

"Parental involvement in your child's education is very important and this is my way of being involved," said VanVolkenburg.

She volunteers for various fundraising events at the school as well as other school functions.

"I help with Jump Rope for Heart and I am proud our school raised \$6,800 just before the March break. This is an amazing amount for a small community school."

VanVolkenburg helps the director with all rehearsals for school musicals. She is hard at work on Frankford's ambitious project, Fiddler on the Roof, that will be presented May 27-28.

Last October, VanVolkenburg and teacher Donna Douglas started the Frankford Community Children's Choir for all students between the ages of four and 14 in the Frankford area "who love to sing."

There is no cost to join the choir.

Their first rehearsal last fall attracted eight participants. A practice earlier this month drew 43 students.

"The choir sounds wonderful and we have lots of fun," she said. "We have only been together four months and the children are getting better and better."

The community choir is getting known throughout the Quinte area.

Choir members sang "O Canada" at a Belleville Bulls game in February and have held performances for the Frankford skating carnival and local service clubs.

"We're hoping to hold more public events in the future," she said.

The choristers are busy rehearsing for their next big project. The choir will be recording a CD at the end of April to use as a fundraising tool.

VanVolkenburg said she gets a real kick out of working with students.

"They always have something funny to say and make me laugh."

She admits that with the community choir, the school musical and her own three children, life is extremely hectic.

"But I wouldn't want to change a thing. I get a lot of satisfaction in everything I do," said VanVolkenburg.

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