

# Computer connection!

## Colborne PS is wired

Colborne Chronicle  
By MANDY MARTIN JULY 1/04  
mmartin@northumberlandtoday.com

They're on a roll at Colborne Public School. There was the \$10,000 grant for new musical instruments to fire aspirations of the gold medal-winning orchestra. Now, comes news the school has been chosen for a \$50,000 laptop computer pilot program, a first for the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board.

"It's going to be really, really exciting," Principal Mike Filip says, negotiating the end-of-school boxes piled in his office, the reception area and on down the corridors of the school. "And, it's going to be wireless!"

Translation: starting this September, the rolling cart containing 30 lap top computers will circulate from class to class. Every Colborne Public School class will have a minimum 50-minutes per week learning computer skills - everything from spreadsheet calculations, word processing and communication skills to basics.

"We will be integrating computer training in the program of all grades one through eight. Not only that, we're getting the school completely rewired over the summer and we now have highspeed internet access. We'll also be getting upgraded systems for our stand-alone computers in the school, and a full training package from the board to provide staff with the training to move ahead."

"So, by the end of the year, on every student's report cards, parents will be able to



Principal Mike Filip, left, and teacher Mike Kerr with refurbished computers en route to the homes of Colborne Public School student this past Monday. PHOTO BY MANDY MARTIN

see what their children have had tyraining in.

Back to the basics. The 30 laptop computers remain on the rolling cart every night, being electronically recharged. "This is such a great thing for a small school," Mr. Filip elaborates. "You see, having a dedicated computer resource room or centre is almost impossible because the demands can change year to year, depending on the number of students enrolled. One year, you may need what was a computer rom the year before for a classroom."

continued on page 3

## DONNA RUSAW: CITIZEN OF THE YEAR



Donna Rusaw was named Citizen of the Year for 2004 by Colborne Rotary at the annual President's Night dinner last Friday Ms. Rusaw, above with Rotary presenter Hugh Spence, was clearly surprised and moved by the honour. PHOTO BY BOB OWEN

COLBORNE CHRONICLE  
By BOB OWEN JULY 1/04  
chronicle@bellnet.ca

Donna Rusaw was named Colborne Rotary's Citizen of the year last Friday. The award is presented to a community member who has shown dedication and an outstanding contribution to the community in the past year.

Rotary member Glenn Spence noted that Mrs. Rusaw is a helpful neighbour and friend, a former member of the Apple Route Committee, Apple Blossom Tyme and the Police Services Board. She has worked as a buyer for Knight's Appleden and managed the Big Apple. She was instrumental in luring the Rotary Club to the Keeler Centre for its weekly meetings. He added that she has brought many organizations to the Rotary Room.

The recognition was a total surprise to the Banquet and Special Events Coordinator, who was overcome when it was announced.

In typical fashion, Donna attempted to draw attention away from herself, welcoming guests to the Keeler Centre, "Cramahe Township's House of Entertainment". She added that "important people get this, not me". She just tries to do things for the community.

In closing, she put in another plug for the Rotary Room, asking the guests to let her know if there is anything else they would like.

# Colborne Computer connection!

continued from page 1

"This way, because the computer centre is actually on a rolling cart - it goes wherever needed, whenever needed. No storage, and I don't lose a library or classroom!"

There's added benefit for teaching staff, too, Mr. Filip notes. Staff will be able to take a laptop computer home after-hours to work on report cards, reports and/or lessons.

"We're also matching more experienced, computer-savvy staff with staff with lesser experience. That way, we all learn together, and have the support for the classrooms."

The concept for the rolling computer centre was devised by Mr. Filip. He's determined small, fundamentally rural public elementary schools shouldn't miss out on learning opportunities.

Initially, Mr. Filip garnered the enthusiastic support of major banks to fund the program. He also presented his concept to his own school board but that hit a roadblock when the question of equity was raised - that is, why was tiny Colborne Public School getting the opportunity and not all other schools within the KPR system?

After review and discussion, the board came through, endorsing the program not only ideologically but also financially. The \$50,000 cost of the program is now being borne

entirely by the board - no bank funding.

The good news gets better.

Federally funding through the Computers For Schools program was available. That program is working to extend computer literacy and education throughout the nation, especially to areas perceived to be "out of the loop."

Mr. Filip applied for assistance. Colborne Public School has distributed 30 computers, with 17-inch monitors, keyboards and Windows 98 software to 30 homes of Colborne students.

"We did a survey to see who needed a computer at home. I was surprised how many actually do have a computer at home, but from the list, we assigned 30 computers."

In fact, this past Monday morning, Mike drove a U-Hall to Belleville to pick up the last of the refurbished computer units to be picked up by Colborne families.

"It's been a good year for Colborne. Things are turning around here," Mr. Filip says with joy. He wants his students - and staff - to feel they have they are equal to any school anywhere - with room to compete for the title of "best".