



## e-VT West Rutland 2010-2011 Re-Cap

The e-Vermont Community Broadband Project is a partnership between seven statewide organizations and leaders in two dozen Vermont towns to help close the digital divide through innovative use of Internet tools and training. Initiatives in West Rutland were spearheaded by Town Manager Mary Ann Goulette and a team from the West Rutland School, West Rutland Public Library, town government, and local businesses. In one short year, this team succeeded in bringing the following accomplishments to West Rutland:

- Fifty-three netbook packages for the West Rutland School, including Dell netbooks, netbook cases, printers, USB cables, extra ink cartridge, and Microsoft Office Pro 2010 to ensure that every student in grades 5 and 6 receives a 21<sup>st</sup> century education;
- Weekly training with community-based, NETS-S coordinated technology lessons for students and teachers in grades 5 and 6;
- A free community e-newsletter at frontporchforum.com that 82 subscribers in West Rutland are using to buy and trade household items, learn about local events and volunteer needs, share wildlife sightings, and support area businesses;
- Two new HP Pro desktop computers, two Acer laptops, and a scanner and webcam at the West Rutland Public Library to help more community members and visitors access the Internet, find social services and jobs, and connect to research and educational opportunities;
- Three workshops on the topics of *Basic Computer Skills*, *Web-based Communication Tools*, and *Evaluating Info on the Web* conducted by Vermont State Colleges instructors for West Rutland residents;
- One workshop on the topics of *Getting Your Business Online* conducted by the Vermont Small Business Development Center for West Rutland business owners and entrepreneurs;
- One-on-one assistance from the Vermont Small Business Development Center to West Rutland businesses designing websites and looking to improve their e-mail marketing skills and tactics;
- A duplex scanner which has been used to scan 130 documents and create 436 pages of land records for back-up preservation and public access – Town Hall now has a public station where the public (44 people so far) accesses the index and records.

While West Rutland's e-Vermont year is over, e-Vermont's impact in West Rutland is not. In the coming months, West Rutland can expect to see:

- A public access Wi-Fi zone stretching from NeighborWorks on Marble Street past Town Hall and down Main Street where residents and visitors will be able to freely access the Internet from their laptops and handheld devices;
- A new town portal site to be connected to the Wi-Fi zone that will feature local restaurants, shopping, events, and town services;
- A new platform for the Front Porch Forum e-newsletter that will include a comprehensive web-based community calendar, synthesizing all community events into one central place and freely allowing them to be displayed them on multiple websites (including any of West Rutland's municipal sites, school sites, social service agency sites, and church or civic organization sites);
- For teachers, a complete program of lesson and unit plans, worksheets, Internet links, advice, instruction, and video tutorials, so that cutting edge classroom education can continue in 2011-2012 and beyond;
- Webinars for businesses and individuals throughout the coming year;
- A tool kit of case studies, lessons learned, and best practices to be shared at [e4vt.org](http://e4vt.org);
- Regional workshops, a statewide conference, and continuing programs of e-Vermont partner organizations.

e-Vermont congratulates the West Rutland team for its collaboration and accomplishments over the past year and wishes them well in continuing to close the digital divide, use Internet tools to advance local goals, and serve as a model for rural towns all over Vermont and across the United States.

Please stay posted on the above developments and more by visiting e-Vermont at [www.e4vt.org](http://www.e4vt.org) and by following e-Vermont on Facebook (e-Vermont) and Twitter (@eVermont).

-Seán Sheehan, e-Vermont Community Director

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