

Frontier Housing: Community Partner

For its nearly 35-year history, Frontier Housing has been committed to the community by providing affordable housing. "By helping people meet their housing needs, we hope not only to improve individual lives, but also to build better, stronger communities that are good for all of us." (<http://www.frontierhousing.org/history.htm>) But Frontier's commitment to community doesn't end there. Here are a couple of examples of Frontier partnerships I have observed in my short semester with them.

Following up on one I mentioned in last month's column on outdoor lighting: Frontier Housing, through a **Change a Light, Change the World grant**, supported and worked with a team of Rowan County Senior High School students to write a mock bill on energy efficient, earth and sky-friendly outdoor lighting. The team, Andi Sharp, Claire Schack, and Adam Pinks presented their bill to 1300 students at the Kentucky Youth Assembly, the largest Youth Assembly in the nation. The bill passed both houses but was vetoed by the Youth Assembly Governor because of a concern involving lighting of monuments. The RCSHS students rallied, distributed several hundred brochures, and were able to get the needed number of signatures for a petition to bring the bill to a vote of the entire group of 1300 students. Though the bill didn't quite get the 2/3 majority needed to pass, the students learned much about energy efficiency, the effects of poor outdoor lighting, as well as democracy. Claire Schack, my daughter, received an outstanding speaker award. I'm encouraging the team to tweak the bill and present it again at next year's Assembly.

Frontier is also a partner in the **First Annual Morehead-Rowan County Repair Affair**, a community-wide project to repair homes of low-income, elderly and disabled homeowners in Morehead and Rowan County. In addition to Frontier, the partners include an impressive cross-section of our community, including the 2008 Morehead-Rowan County Chamber of Commerce Leadership Academy, Morehead State University Center for Regional Engagement, and Gateway Community Action.

Morehead-Rowan County Repair Affair is funded through grants from Kentucky Housing Corporation and Morehead State University's Center for Regional Engagement and the generosity of local businesses and individuals. Applications for home repair or to join the effort as a volunteer are available at Christian Social Services, Office of Family Support, Frontier Housing and other select locations throughout the community. Completed home repair applications must be received no later than Monday, Feb. 16.

Wendy Puckett, Chair of 2009 Repair Affair, an employee of Frontier Housing and a member of the Chamber Leadership Academy sums up the impact of the partnership, "This project has the potential to touch many lives in our community. From the homeowners who receive assistance to the volunteers who perform the repairs, this event will bring a sense of community and accomplishment to everyone involved." Both skilled and unskilled volunteers are needed. For more information contact the Morehead-Rowan County Repair Affair committee at 606-784-2131 or visit the website at <http://www.moreheadstate.edu/mrcra/>.

I cannot end this week's column without thanking both MSU and Frontier Housing for giving me the opportunity to be a part of these partnerships now and in the future. My sabbatical was made possible through MSU's commitment to Regional Engagement and

the support of President Andrews, Provost Hughes, Deans Rudy and Gunn, Dept Chair Knoll, Frontier's Stacey Epperson, and Tom Carew, The Morehead News' Stephanie Ockerman as well as many others. I've seen the community through new eyes and I've been humbled by the commitment of so many in our community. I learned about our community, about energy efficiency and construction, about organizations and people. My sabbatical is ending but I will continue to write a guest column a little less frequently. This has been a sabbatical in the true sense of the word.

Rowan County Senior High School students Andi Sharp and Claire Schack stand by the presentation board they made to support their mock bill on quality outdoor lighting at the Kentucky Youth Assembly in November. Frontier Housing supported their efforts through a Change a Light, Change the World – Start with ENERGY STAR[®] and KY NEED grant and contributions from Big Four Lumber and Lighting by Branford. (Not pictured: Adam Pinks)