



News Release

Contact:
Jason Parent
Development and
College Relations Office
33 Edgemont Drive
Presque Isle, ME 04769
Phone: (207) 768-2808
Fax: (207) 760-1101
jparent@nmcc.edu

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Tompkins family anxiously awaiting the arrival of their new home

Aroostook County - With hard work, comes great rewards, as Presque Isle resident Kevin Tompkins recently learned. Tompkins, his wife Holly, and their children, Avery and Sadie, are anxiously awaiting the arrival and completion of their new home, a soon-to-be-completed 1,248 square foot modular ranch-style home. The house is the 32nd built through the partnership of Northern Maine Community College and the Kiwanis Club.

Throughout the past six months, more than four dozen students and their instructors in five trade and technical occupations programs have been constructing the house, while also earning an amazing learning experience. For over three decades, the College and Sinawik (Kiwanis spelled backward), a non-profit organization founded by the Presque Isle civic organization, have partnered to build a home each year that is contracted by, and sold to, an Aroostook County family.

“Today we are here to celebrate our 32nd Sinawik Home!” Janet Kelle, president of the Presque Isle Kiwanis Club, told the more than 200 campus and community members who attended an open house and barbecue at NMCC on April 28 to celebrate the occasion. “Working with local families to help them build the place where they will live and raise their family holds a special place in every Kiwanian’s heart. Today is the day we get to celebrate what a great accomplishment the Sinawik Project is. It is a time when we get to meet the students who have been working on the home and, for many of us, it is when we get to see the home for the first time!”

During her comments to attendees at the open house, Sinawik President Dawn Poitras explained, “Sinawik benefits from the construction of the home by turning any profit into scholarships for the students, and contributes to the charitable community projects of Kiwanis, but we are not the only ones served by this project. The community benefits from a brand new home, the homeowner benefits from getting a high quality, custom built home for a fair price, and, since we purchase materials locally, there is an increase in local business activity, as well as, of course, increased tax revenue to the town or city. We must not forget the experience and sense of satisfaction and pride that the students of NMCC receive by working on a real life project.”

The open house event included tours of the new house and an indoor barbeque, as well as the presentation of scholarships from Kiwanis to five students enrolled in the College programs that work on the structure. Receiving the awards were residential construction program seniors Brian Nadeau of Connor Township and Damien Tetlow of Caribou, residential construction freshman Matthew Guimond of Presque Isle, plumbing and heating senior Lucas Jarrett of Fort Kent, and electrical construction senior Shane Ireland of Chapman.

“It has been an honor to be in partnership with Kiwanis since 1976,” said Tim Crowley, NMCC president. “We have been able to provide the opportunity to present local families with affordable housing, in addition to rewarding NMCC students with scholarships for their hard work and contributions.”

“I have now been apart of this project for 28 years, and feel this project has been a great benefit to the college and Kiwanis Club,” said Guy Jackson, NMCC’s residential construction instructor. “This experience has become a vital teaching tool, and has given students and faculty great pride in helping the community while also earning a valuable learning experience.”

Sinawik 32, the Tompkin’s family home, features three bedrooms, two full baths, a kitchen/dining area and living room. A foundation for the raised ranch has been poured at 267 Houlton Road, just south of the turnoff to Aroostook State Park on U.S. Route 1. The family plans to add a two door garage and breezeway to attach the home and garage.

“It means a great deal to our family to be taking ownership of a Sinawik home, and it meant a great deal for me as a plumbing and heating student to work on building one 15 years ago. Work on that project and all that I learned at the College have helped me become a successful plumber and business owner,” said Tompkins. “I think it’s a great project. I’m anxious for the house to be finished. It’s well-built, well-designed and will make a great home for our family.”

Tompkins is the owner of Tompkin’s Plumbing and Heating. A 1994 graduate of Northern Maine Technical College (a forerunner of NMCC), Kevin worked on the 17th home built through the Sinawik project.

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Northern Maine Community College residential construction instructor Guy Jackson (front left) welcomes the Sinawik House #32 owners, Holly and Kevin Tompkins and their children Sadie and Avery, to their new, nearly completed home during the open house and barbecue hosted recently on campus to celebrate the occasion. Joining Jackson and the Tompkins family are residential construction seniors, back from left: Benjamin Goupille of Perham, Damien Tetlow of Caribou, Brian Nadeau of Connor Township, and Derek Clair of Presque Isle.



Five of the more than four dozen NMCC students who worked on the Sinawik #32 house were presented cash scholarships from the Presque Isle Kiwanis Club during the April 28 ceremony festivities. Recipients were, from left: Matthew Guimond of Presque Isle, Damien Tetlow of Caribou, Shane Ireland of Chapman, Brian Nadeau of Conner Township, and Lucas Jarrett of Fort Kent. With them are Janet Kelle, president of the Presque Isle Kiwanis Club, and Tim Crowley, president of Northern Maine Community College.