Mary Bryant Home is going strong

The Mary Bryant Home is moving forward and it used the Community Foundation for a launching pad. The home, which provides residential services to the blind, has established the Mary Bryant Home Endowment Fund through the Community Foundation.

“We want to get the word out to the community that the home is there, it’s thriving and doing well,” Dennis Dougherty said. “We’re hoping to increase donations and get the word out to more individuals. A lot of people don’t know about the Mary Bryant Home and it’s been in Springfield since 1946. … (The creation of this fund) will increase publicity and increase awareness for the home to the community.”

It’s a time of excitement for those closely associated with the home.

“It’s a great opportunity,” Executive Director Jerry Curry said. “This gives people the opportunity to secure their donation.”

In the past, donations have been used for daily operating expenses. Since July 2004, the home has become able to not rely on donations for operational expenses and instead earmark them for specific purposes. The creation of the endowment fund will further this change and provide donors with security in how their donations may be restricted to specific purposes at the home.

“In prior years any donations that came in to the home were totally used for daily operating expenses. We’ve passed that hurdle,” Dougherty said. “Donations now are used for specific purposes.”

The major current purpose is a remodeling that will enable the home to house six more residents, increasing the total to 42. The project, the second part of the home’s expansion plan, is expected to be completed by July 2006. The home currently houses 30 residents.

“People come here to live,” Curry said. “We don’t have a turnover. We aren’t an agency that treats you and then you leave.”