

Pittsboro company has role in temporary roof project at courthouse

By Bill Willcox

A Pittsboro roofing company will install part of the temporary roof on the Chatham County Courthouse later this month.

Divine Construction Company, Inc., of Pittsboro was chosen by the general contractor to place a rubber waterproof membrane on the courthouse with the two-day job beginning around August 24.

Renee Sweeley, president and owner of the business said work is progressing on schedule in advance of their role in the renovation.

The general contractor, Monteith Construction, Inc. of Wilmington, has boarded up the windows and is laying blocks along the top walls.

Bill Sweeley, general manager with the firm, explained that "the fire destroyed the block at the top so they had to replace it. A lot of people don't realize they are redoing the top rows all over again. Once they get that done they will set the trusses and put on a deck, and then we will put the roof on."

Divine Construction will install a rubber weatherproof sheet, technically called Fully Adhered, Reinforced EPDM Roofing, to keep moisture out. Also, the company will install gutters and downspouts to prevent birds and other animals from getting into the structure.

The company was awarded the project with a low bid of \$12,900, but the fact that Divine Construction is a local business probably played a role.

"I told them we were sentimentally attached to the courthouse," Renee said. "We live here and we work here. I told them we would feel blessed to be able to work on it, and so they were able to give us the job."

The installation of adhered roofing represents only a small part of the entire project to secure and stabilize the building which is costing the county \$243,000.

Bill said most of those funds are devoted to structural reinforcement.

"The money is being spent to maintain what is there," he said. "A lot of the structural part is going to stay. It is being done for the future. If you didn't do anything you would lose everything, even what you have there."

Being involved in protecting the courthouse from the elements is a gratifying job for the Sweeleys who met and formed their company in 2007.

Renee is from North Carolina and grew up in Raleigh. She was in the mortgage business for many years in Raleigh and Florida.

The couple met on a cruise in 2007.

Bill is from Pennsylvania. He has been in roofing and construction for 35 years.

The year 2007 was a busy one for the couple. They formed Divine Construction and were married shortly afterwards. They also decided to make their home in Pittsboro.

"I didn't want to move to Pennsylvania," Renee said. "It is too cold and he wanted to move south."

There business venture is succeeding in spite of the recession, that has hit builders and construction firms especially hard.

The company focuses on commercial roofing, mostly within a 100-mile radius of Pittsboro, but they are also approved to do work in South Carolina.

Divine Construction built new roofs for buildings at Harnett County High School, the new Southern Durham County Library and many other jobs.

But Renee said none will have the same sentimental attachment as the small job of helping protect the remains of the Chatham County Courthouse.