



A rendering by Smith, Alvarez, Sienkiewicz Architects of the great room within the now-under-construction addition at Our Lady of the Meadows in Richford.

Ave Maria goes green with expansion

Richford employer adds space, jobs

RICHFORD — One of the largest employers in Richford, Ave Maria Community Care Homes, Inc. (Ave Maria CCH), is in the midst of a 6,800-square-foot expansion to its Memory Care Center located at Our Lady of the Meadows Home.

The project is infusing more than \$1 million into the local economy through the use of locally based construction firms, said the company in a press release issued Thursday.

Construction began in April and is expected to be completed by the end of the year. The addition will accommodate up to 19 new memory care residents in a warm expansive home-like setting. The company expects to hire a combination of 10 full- and part-time employees to serve the added residents.

The General Contractor is Paradis & Sons Construction of Berkshire, with most sub-con-

► See AVE MARIA on page 5A



*Photo courtesy of Ave Maria Community Care Homes
Steven Doe and Claire Doe pose with the new wood-fired Garn boiler at Our Lady of the Meadows in Richford. It is just one of the energy-saving facets of the nursing facilities expansion project.*

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Ave Maria

continued from page 1

tractors also based in the local area.

According to the press release issued by Loren A. Doe, CFO and project manager, the design incorporates a home-like layout with private rooms surrounding a great room with a stone hearth, exposed trusses and solid birch trim. A screened-in porch, den, outdoor terrace and greenhouse are also part of the living space.

The entire building is heated with a radiant floor heating system and has energy recovery ventilation with air conditioning.

Steven Doe, CEO and Administrator, in the written statement, said, "The company chose to adopt a design philosophy that offers a warm and "home-like" setting with aesthetically appealing interior features that would be attractive to anyone looking for a place to call home.

"Studies have shown that the elderly feel better, and in some cases, actually

experience physical health improvements by living in a more home-like settings rather than the traditional institutional setting with long hallways and hard surfaces."

He added, "By focusing on the quality of space and the quality of daily life we are minimizing the medical and physical care as a focal point of their existence."

The company spokespersons said they worked closely with Smith, Alvarez, Sienkiewicz Architects and LN Consulting on various sustainable building technologies and materials to reduce the environmental impact of the construction and future operating and maintenance costs.

Loren Doe, added, "A new cord wood-fired boiler to supply space heating and domestic hot water to the entire 26,000 square feet home will deliver major benefits. Burning cordwood will reduce our carbon dioxide emissions by replacing foreign oil with a local renewable fuel with net-zero CO2 emissions. We estimate that by heating with wood we

will reduce our annual oil consumption by up to 11,500 gallons and reduce our carbon dioxide emissions by 139 tons per year."

The Garn gasification boiler, the largest model made by Dectra Corp in Minnesota, can provide almost 1 million btu/hr of heat and is only the second model of its size installed in New England, said the Does.

The project also incorporates a spray-foam insulation system which offers improved insulating performance throughout the building envelope and high performance fiberglass frame windows and exterior doors.

The building also employs an energy recovery ventilation system, which recovers 80 percent of the energy and moisture from the exhaust air, which is transferred to the supply air. According to the press release, the ventilation system also will respond to higher levels of congestion and CO2 by increasing the volume of outside air until the indoor air qual-

ity is acceptable again. Low VOC paints and sustainable flooring products add to the green aspects of the design.

Loren Doe said that "... while this is a relatively large and complex project, we made a decision to use construction firms from Richford or adjacent towns because we were satisfied that they had the expertise and because they would be there down the road if we do encounter any problems."

More than 80 percent of the construction budget is allocated to firms from the immediate Richford area.

Founded in 1988 by Claire & Hibbard Doe, Ave Maria CCH is a family owned and managed Level III Residential Care Home operated with a passion for high quality elder care. The first home, Ave Maria Home, initially provided care for 14 residents. Over the last 21 years the business has grown to also include the Our Lady of the Meadows Home serving 67 residents and employing more than 60 staff members.

GARN 3200



© Reprinted from Friday, September 11, 2009 Edition of St. Alban's Messenger



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