

**News Release**  
**Moore County, NC**

**NEW INDUSTRY LOCATES IN MOORE COUNTY**

Moore County will soon see a new and unique manufacturer locate within its boundaries. Blarney Stoneworks, Inc., a fabricator of natural stone products, will be the only business of its kind in the Pinehurst/Southern Pines/Aberdeen area.

Moore County Partners in Progress, the County's economic development organization, has been working with Pat and Cathy Walsh, principals of Blarney Stoneworks, since mid-December, 2003, to assist them with finding suitable space for their operations in Moore County.

Blarney Stoneworks will be involved in the marketing, manufacturing and installation of stone products, such as kitchen and bath countertops, shower surrounds and fireplace surrounds, for the residential and commercial construction market. Pat Walsh will serve as President/CEO, handling all sales, manufacturing and installation functions, and Cathy Walsh will be Executive Vice President in charge of accounting, customer service, purchasing and scheduling. Both of the Walshes are certified stone fabricators.

In making their decision of where to locate, the Walshes, who are from Raleigh, chose the Pinehurst area because it meets many of the market characteristics suitable for this industry. Among these characteristics are the high number of custom-built homes and forecasted strong housing starts in the \$200,000-plus range. Currently, stone is used in 50% to 60% of homes in this price range. Their primary market will be Moore, Lee, Montgomery and Chatham Counties.

Blarney Stoneworks anticipates hiring up to five (5) employees initially and will invest \$180,000 to get the business started. The business will be located on Main Street, one block off of Highway 211, in Taylortown.

Ray Ogden, Executive Director of Partners in Progress commented, "We are very excited to have this business locate in Moore County. As the only manufacturer of these stone products in the area, Blarney Stoneworks

will have distinct advantages over longer distance competitors who have to ship their products from 50 to 100 miles away. We wish Blarney Stoneworks every success.”

“We are pleased to already be calling Pinehurst home”, said Pat Walsh. “We look forward to fabricating and delivering our first countertop as soon as next month, and to establishing our presence in this growing market.”

Ogden added, “Blarney Stoneworks is a good example of the type of business we hope to recruit to Moore County.” Partners in Progress is focusing its efforts on selected targeted businesses, including niche manufacturers like Blarney Stoneworks. “Moore County is well suited for smaller businesses that we can help grow, and Partners in Progress will do whatever we can to help Blarney Stoneworks now and in the future.”

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