

Southwest Montana Veteran Home Update #32

By Mike Lawson

Greetings once again, to you the Veterans/Counties/Communities who are represented as the organizers and chief supporters of the SWMT Veterans Home.

The weather is cooler but has held off without any significant amounts of snow or temperatures falling below zero, during working hours. This has allowed our construction crews to move forward, moving the work along, to getting our Vet Home done on time. I'm continually impressed at what I visually see getting constructed, on a daily basis. Talking with Construction Superintendent Mike Ascheman, as to the particulars going on both inside and outside these structures, is (as usual) enlightening. He clued me in on some construction "terms" that construction folks use for different processes that aren't normally heard, by us "non-construction" folks. Look for them to be highlighted in this update.

Years ago, when I was in the Construction Boilermaker Trade, all construction jobs had a General Foreman for each of the trades. The General Foreman's Job was to be supervisor over the various foreman who worked, on different parts of the job, running their own crews. Markovich Construction Superintendent Mike Ascheman has a top-notch guy filling this position, by the name of John Kotka. From all reports, he is well respected, expert at his carpenter trade and his carpenters like him. With these kinds of people, who take pride in their work building our rest home, we can be assured of the best quality of workmanship of the finished home package come Sept 30th.

Speaking of quality, every week I mention something that is being used that's above the norm, on our Vet Rest Home, compared to other commercial buildings. This week is no exception as Mike explained that the "tyvek" exterior wall covering usually used and stapled on over the outside walls, is instead replaced with a peel and stick 3M product material. It's a better-quality material and creates a better seal.

It's time to cover each building's progress update:

Community Center; *The fire painting is completed. *The main building Roof and Portico Roof are completely shingled and sealed. * The "HVA" (Heating/Ventilation/Air) workers (Sheet Metal/Tinners) were busy inside getting the Heating/Fans/Furnaces/etc. set up in the proper locations. (This will continue for a while). * A Billings Contractor put in tracks for the Accordion Door which will be a portable room separator. Once everything is completed this door can fold up into the wall. Having this tract installed, enabled the Carpenters to frame around it. * The Carpenters also framed in the Fire-Place. * The "Peel and Stick" 3M exterior wall covering may be applied this week. Good things are really happening here.

Cottage #1; *The Roof Underlayment paper is being put down on the completed framed/sheeted roof, with the shingles to follow. All the roof penetrations (vents/etc. for plumbing/heating), by the Plumbers and HVA workers, are close to being completed. * Frame Blocking/Hardware was being worked on inside. *Gable Roof" over main entrance, was worked on and should be completed this week. *The Dry-In phase is status-quo, at the present time, which allows the sub-contractors to move in to do their work.

Cottage#2; *This building has the Carpenter Framers all over it. The interior walls continue to be framed. *The Roof Trusses are being “Rolled “into place on top of the walls. Both wings where the resident rooms are located have the trusses “Rolled” into place, with the Central portion of the building left to be done. At the time this is published, the assumption is they’ll also have those trusses “Rolled” into place. *The north-end of the one wing was also sheeted with plywood. * Some laminated beams are still to be installed.

Cottage #3; This building has all the walls base plates/layout in place. The wall components (window/wall headers, wall studs/etc.) are being built/cut. *Once the roof is complete on Cottage #2 most of the framers will move to this building and get it framed. *Possibly some of the layout will take place on Cottage #4 this week but next week for sure if the weather allows it.

Cottage #4 & #5: Waiting their turn, and with tongue in cheek, Mike said they’re probably cured by now.

Our SW MT Vet Home Liaison, Mark Gollinger, recently traveled to Walla Walla, Wa., which has a similar set-up as our Vet Home. They have individual buildings connected by connecting buildings. He came away from there with some ideas, etc. that might be useful for our Vet Home. His job covers a lot of different things, for an example, picking out furniture and furniture material covering, types of equipment for each building and the list goes on.

The SW Vet Home Foundation met with good representation from our six involved counties. The foundation is in the planning stages for a Logo Contest for our SW MT VET HOME. We’ll say more about that when it’s closer to becoming a reality. If any of you are interested and have any ideas for our Logo, let us know.

Remember to check our web-site out, SWMVH.Mt.GOV . Some good pictures are on this site and even some “Drone” pictures may be on this site in the very near future.

Until next time, take care and stay warm.