

Southwest Montana Veterans Home Update #107

By Mike Lawson

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

I have to say that great and wonderful things are happening at our SW MT Vet Home. The long awaited inspections have been completed in their entirety and the finished Cottages have passed with flying colors. Eduro is quickly moving to get 20 veterans admitted. These veterans are being admitted into Cottages #1/#2/#3. Once the 20 are admitted, then the VA can come and do their inspections. When these inspections are completed/passed, then Eduro can fill each cottage to the full 12 Veteran capacity, that they are legally allowed to do. This equates to 36 total resident veterans! Once Cottage #4 is accepted by the state from Markovich Construction and turned over to the operations contractor, then Eduro can be allowed to staff Cottage #4 and admit 12 more Resident Veterans, bringing the total to 48 Veterans. The same scenario will then happen with Cottage #5 when completed, which will bring the total to 60 resident veterans. The timeline for Cottage #4 to admit veterans will be after the end of this month. Cottage #5 will likely be toward the end of July. Eduro is admitting an average of two or three resident veterans a day during each coming week until they reach 20 resident veterans. The Eduro Staff and any veterans that can make it there greet these veterans when they arrive. We clap and one of our Veteran Foundation Members presents each of these arriving resident veterans with a welcome bundle. It's been nice to see some of these resident Veterans able to walk in without assistance. This has been a long time coming and we're thankful. The other great bit of news is the "SW MT VET HOME" Grand Opening will be June 29th at 2pm, so watch the newspapers/news outlets for the details.

This last Memorial Day was a great one from the veteran's point of view. The Veteran's Memorial Day activities were not only well attended in SW MT, and across all of Montana, but it seemed to be that way across our nation. It was uplifting to say the least. Seeing all the flags on the Veteran's graves, was worth all the work of placing them there and picking them up after Memorial Day. Many thanks to the youth organizations and folks from our communities who helped the veterans accomplish this task.

Construction Updates:

Community Center, Maintenance Bld, and Cottages #1/#2/#3, are all under the operational control of our Vet Home Operation's Contractor Eduro.

Cottage #4: The Painters are doing clean-up and their own painting punch-list. Hopefully the start-up final inspection will be good for them, with minimal corrections to do. The Carpenters will be close to having their work completed in this Cottage this week. They received the Corridor Handrails from Cabinet Masters out of Great Falls and have them installed. They will have finished the door trim consisting of the knobs/stops/etc. as well as all the door casing this week. Cabinet Masters have all the vanities installed. The Tile guys have cleaned their work areas up and have moved to Cottage #5. Dean from Johnson Control was pulling low-voltage wire through his conduit. This wire goes to different system controls, thermostats, etc. The Plumbers have started their trim-out consisting of setting sinks/toilets/water valves/etc. The Floor Layers will hopefully be laying the floor linoleum this week as they were elsewhere last week. Pretty important to get this done now, as everything else is getting finished up. During the Grand Opening on the 29th, guided tours are scheduled to be given through this Cottage. After the 29th, new Resident Veterans will start being admitted.

Cottage #5: The Carpenters continue to build window jambs. The sheetrock-tapers continue to do their tap-mud operation. The Painters have completely painted out the west-wing and have spray-primed the south-wing. The Plumbers are ongoing with the gas-line installation. They did finish the copper water-line installation to the Air Handlers. The Sheet-metal guys were working on the main duct-runs in the Mechanical Room.

Becker Landscaping: They continue spreading black dirt as well as work on their sprinkler-lines installation. They are also digging holes in the shrub-beds for the shrubs to be planted. The shrubs are watered with what are called weep-lines and these are being installed. Lots of labor-intensive work left to do.

The CBOC or Veteran's medical center being built by Wayne Paffhausen's crew, is really worth driving by to see the progress being made. The central steel I-beam, going the length of the building, was installed and now the roof trusses can be set in place. The trusses were to be delivered this week. Wayne's son, Todd, is running this operation and doing a great job. When this article comes out, they will have all the wall sheeting nailed in place and will probably be setting roof trusses. It's going to be a beautiful building when finished.

Another Veteran's point of interest is the Veteran's Court, presided over by Judge Jerome McCarthy and Judge Bob Whelan. Veteran candidates needing help are being interviewed and a couple are going to be assigned to mentors this week. More will be assigned in weeks to come. They are picked for this program with the chance to get their lives turned around for the better. Wonderful way to help a veteran in need who wants to become a better person for not only him/herself but for their loved ones and the society we are all part of.

The weather is hot and then cold as is typical in Butte. Cover your plants/gardens and enjoy the new colors of the trees and plants with the robin-red-breasts being fun to watch. Take care until next time.