

# Southwest Montana Veteran's Home, Update #12

By

Mike Lawson

Greeting once again to you the veterans/communities who make up the six counties in SW Montana who are represented as the organizers and chief supporters of the "SW MT Veteran's Home". This is the 12<sup>th</sup> update on our Veterans Home.

This week has been an exciting week to drive by the Vet Home Construction Site or stop at the "Viewing Hooch" and visually see things happening. If you remember me writing about the incredible amount of detailed work involved in just getting the foundations out of the ground, I can now write that the above the ground work on the Community Center is really starting to take off. As of this Thursday evening, all the north wall sections and most of the east side sections of the Community Center are erected. Cottage #1's floor slab was also poured by Steed Construction out of Helena today. They're specialists with the latest concrete finishing machines that put a beautiful smooth surface on the slab floors. The Steed Construction concrete workers started early and were still working at 7:00 this evening when I went by. The rain today was problematic but they worked through it.

Again my "go to guy:" Construction Site Superintendent "Mike Ascherman" was, as always, full of up to date information of what exactly is going on now and will be going on in the days to come. He has a plan and timeline laid out as to the sequence of each phase getting done or started. His hope is to have a "Cottage Slab Pour" take place every two weeks which would have the potential of all the five Cottage floors being done and ready for framing by the middle of October. (Still have the dream that somehow-someway Cottage #6 could be brought into the picture)

Cottage #1 will be ready for framing next week if Mike has the manpower to put on it.

Cottage #2's interior walls are on schedule to be formed and poured, as well as a footing pad, the week this article comes out.

Cottage #3 has the footing with four foot sticks of rebar sticking up out of them poured and are now ready for the foundation wall forms to be installed. Once that's done the walls will be ready for concrete.

Cottage #4 has the footings dug and when time permits the footing forms will be built.

Cottage #5 is laid out for digging but is in the wings waiting for this to happen. In reality it'll probably be awhile as there's a lot to do on the other Cottages, the site storm drain system, the sewer/water lines, etc, to make it feasible to do right away.

Every Thursday the General Contractor, Markovich Construction meets with the State (owners) represented by the State MTSWVH Site Construction Superintendent/Liaison, Engineer "Chris Ames" assigned by the State Div. of Architecture and Engineering. He checks and makes sure things are in compliance and going well. Chris is the go between with the Contractors, his Division and Mt Dept. of Public Health and Human Services (Chiefly Shaunda Hildebrand). Mike Ascheman said everything looks good and everyone is happy with how things are going so far. Again, he mentioned that when a construction project starts on a good note and continues that way, the project will end up on a good note.

The piece of the puzzle I want to spend a bit of time on in this article and possible the next two articles, concerns when the veterans are living in SWMTVH after the construction is complete. My focus is going to be the role of the SW MT Vet Home Foundation. Shaunda Hildebrand, who will be the State Overseer of this Vet Home as she is our other State Vet Rest Homes, put together a "Veteran Home Foundation Guideline". This will really help us know how we can assist our veterans in the best way possible. Our Foundation's purpose is: "To function as a non-profit entity whereby gifts, contributions, and grants can be utilized for the betterment of veterans' home residents." The first title, in this document, covers the "Foundations' Responsibilities". Eight guideline items are listed which give the Foundation great things to attempt to achieve for our Veterans. They also alert us to things we can't do that would be unlawful or go against rules established by the DPHHS, Senior & Long Term Care Division, who we are in partnership with. This working partnership is going to provide an environment that's going to make our veteran residents feel like they're in a true home situation. It's exciting as we learn just how much we can do. In the next article I'll address some examples of approved activities we the Foundation can do to make living in this home a happy "down home" experience.

Until next time, visit our Vet Home Construction Site and see the progress taking place. Take Care