

Southwest Mt. Veterans Home. Update #35

By Mike Lawson

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

Site Superintendent Mike Ascheman nailed it right on the head, when he told me that “we’ve really been lucky with this mild weather. It’s true, but it’s inevitable, that the other shoe is going to hit the deck and our normal cold winter weather is going to hit with a vengeance. So far, the construction guys, have made a lot of progress and are on schedule. Mike Ascheman tells all the contractors that come to work on our “Vet Home”, that this is a very special project, so pay attention to detail and do good quality work. With all the checks and balances that he and GF John Kotka do every day, on this job, as well as the state/local inspectors, it’s with a lot of confidence to say this is going to be one of the best complexes, ever built in this area. Not to leave our SW MT Vet Home “Liaison Mark Gollinger” out of this mix, as he has become and continues to be the guy, responsible for knowing everything that happens, when it happens on this job-site. This will continue after this Vet Home is up and running. Having a career veteran, who is one of the best advocates for the Veteran that I know, is tremendously reassuring. He’ll strive to make sure, that the very best treatment for the resident veterans, living in this our Veteran home, will be the normal standard of operation.

Buildings Update:

Community Center; The outside will have all the “Peel & Stick 3M” wrap material, in place this week. The 1” blue foam board that goes over that, will be on hold until the windows are installed. They have to butt-up against the outside window frames. Mike expects the windows for the whole job to be delivered on the 10th or 12th of Feb. The inside of this building should see most of the “Lid” (Ceiling), sheet-rocked this week as well as seeing the insulation put in. The Electricians met with the architects to modify/correct drawings, which allows them to continue the installing of their electrical conduit/boxes/etc. The Sheetmetal workers continue putting in their ductwork.

Cottage #1; Pick-up framing with the fireplace framed in, soffit framing and the never-ending blocking, is the order of the day. It is dried in, with the doors and windows being covered with plastic. This is the requirement, before the electricians can move in to do their work. They are expected to be in #1 this week and with more Cottages going up, it’s expected more electricians will be put to work, on our Vet Home Site. Painters are painting the eaves with the fire-resistant paint. The sheetrock for the “**Lid**” (Ceiling) is in the wings, waiting until the patient lift rail hardware, is installed on the bottom of the trusses in each room. This will allow the sheetrock to be fit in place around them. Due to Fire Code regulations, each resident’s rooms are required to have double ceilings (two layers of sheetrock). Mike Ascheman is hoping the contractor AKJO, will be here within the next couple of weeks to do this rail hardware lift installation.

Cottage #2; The roof should be done this week. Pick-up framing continues with blocking, soffits/fireplace/etc. Painters will be painting the eaves. Plumbers are putting their rough-in wall piping/vents/etc., in. Plastic will be put over the windows/doors to complete the dry-in. The resident wings, where the resident rooms are, have incredible detail work throughout them. This does take time to do it right and that’s where the quality control comes into play. This job keeps showing us what quality looks like.

Cottage #3; Mike Ascheman, hit me with another carpenter term, the word “tipping up” (standing up). This was in reference to the exterior walls which have been “tipped up”. The walls are built on the floor and when completely framed, these walls are tipped up into place with the help of some type of lifting machinery. Once the walls are in place, the framers will frame each

resident bump-outs (bay windows). The interior walls will then be framed, followed by the roof trusses being rolled into place. This Roof Truss process is probably a couple weeks out.

Cottage #4; General Foreman John Kotka has the exterior wall lines snaked and the wall plates laid out. The wall framing components (window/door headers, wall studs cut to proper length) are getting cut and put together. If things go just right, these walls will be framed and ready to be “tipped” up in a couple of weeks.

Cottage #5; This is the last Cottages and GF John Kota is hoping to snap lines and get plates laid along these lines. It may or may not be a reality, depending on a variety of factors, like the weather. Hope it can be a reality.

Our Liaison Mark Gollinger shared some super great news in that the “**Request For Proposal**” concerning the contract to operate the SW MT VET HOME once the construction is complete, was released January 31, 2020 at 5:00 PM. In layman terms, I call this the Contract Bid being let. The Proposals from the Contractors will have to be returned to the state, no later than March 22 at 14:00. Interested Venders will have to be registered in the Montana State “EMACS “system. This is all on line. Hopefully the contractor will be chosen by April or May.

The SW Mt Vet Home Foundation now has it's 501c3 tax ID and is getting a Logo Contest format put together for our Vet Home. You'll hear much more about it in the near future and hopefully, one of you will come up with a LOGO.

Take care until next time.