

Southwest Montana Veterans Home Update #41

By Mike Lawson

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

I have to use that old cartoon character's phrase, "Boy-oh-Boy-oh-Boy", when I see what's happening in the Community Center Building and Cottage #1. It really makes one realize that these two buildings, especially, will probably be occupied or ready to be, within two months, or so. I was able to get a good overall picture of what was happening this past week, concerning the SW Vet Home Site, from none other than, Construction Site Superintendent Mike Ascheman. He's got a lot on his plate in keeping everything coordinated and solving the various problems that are going to always come up, on any big construction job, like this one. We're fortunate to have him running the show.

SW Mt Vet Home Construction Update:

Community Center: Interior; This is the building that is really the place where big visual changes are taking place, on a daily to weekly basis. Semi-finishing work is the name of the game in this building. Starting with the sheetrock (Dry Wall) being hung (nailed in place) and the joints being taped and mudded, really gives one, a more complete picture of what the finished interior will look like. All the construction steps before this step, are now being covered up with this sheetrock, which will then be painted, to be beautiful to the eye. There will be a special water repelling fiberglass sheetrock, called "Densschild" that will go behind any wall surfaces with tile, mainly in the bathrooms. (Another quality control) The store front doors didn't get in yet but are expected to be here this week and installed. The doors/walls will be painted this week and next. Suspended ceiling will come after painting is completed. Be a week or two before the suspended ceilings are started. The ceiling panels will be sheetrock and acoustical, depending on the location within the building. There will be quite a bit of finish carpentry work as these end phases, of construction are taking place. The flooring, electrical, plumbing, Sheetmetal/ductwork, etc., finish work will all be happening at the same time, until finished.

Exterior; The outside soffit is close to being done and the siding contractor from Great Falls was expected to be on the job on Monday, to start the outside siding.

Cottage #1: Interior: Lots of carpenters, electricians and Sheetmetal craftsmen working inside this building, getting it ready for the sheet rock (dry wall) phase. This should get started in another week or so. A company based out of Chicago, called ARJO is expected to be in this building, this week, installing the man-lift overhead rails in each of the resident rooms. Some soffit and coffered ceiling framing is ongoing, for the carpenters. Light at the end of the tunnel things are quickly happening here!!**Exterior;** The Air Barrier 3M stick and seal material is being applied over the outside walls. One thing being done differently, on this building, then on the Community Center Building, is that once this 3M material is applied over a window opening, the window is immediately installed. This didn't happen before, until all the 3M material had been applied. This should all be done by the end of next week. Depending on factors like the weather.

Cottage #2; Interior: Some framing of soffits and blocking/backing. Plumbers doing some rough plumbing. Not a lot happening until everyone moves over from #1. Once the big push from Cottage #1 is winding down, then that same big push will be happening here.

Cottage #3; Interior: Some ongoing activity happening in here. The fireplace was framed in, as well as soffits and coffered ceiling framework. The Laundry Room had a change made to it. It had to be divided, to keep the soiled laundry, separated from the clean laundry. The architect made the change, the charge to make the change by Markovich Construction, was accepted.

This Laundry Room Revision Change was made or is being made in #1, #2, and #3, and will carry over to #4 & #5.

Exterior: The Roofers are laying the underlayment down and should finish that this week, as well as getting a good start on the shingles. The Gable Roof Entry should be framed in this week also. The excavation contractor, Zemljak Excavating, dug a trench, between #3 & #4. This was for a temporary power line to be installed, to bring power to these two buildings.

Cottage #4; Some layout and the beginning of wall framing work has been started here. The roof trusses for the wing portions of #4 are on the ground, until the walls are raised up (tipped up) in place, and then they will be rolled up into place on top of these walls.

Cottage #5; On hold for now but will be active in another two or three weeks.

Liaison Mark Gollinger said all the Vet Home Operators Bids are in, and each will go through a standardized scoring process, by the state. Once that is completed, a contractor will be awarded the bid. Another piece of the puzzle for our Southwest Montana Veteran Home will then be in place. It's my understanding that this contractor would be on site, two or three months before the construction is completed. It will be interesting to see how this takes place. I'll keep you updated.

The Vet Home LOGO Contest is completed. The judging will be by the Foundation and Department of Public Health and Human Services. The winner will be announced by the end of March or the early part of April.

I'll close for now, hopefully you were able to enjoy St Patrick's Day, to some extent. Take care