

# Southwest Montana Veteran's Home Update #43

By Mike Lawson

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

This Coronavirus Pandemic is frightening and taking a toll on all aspects of our society. Southwest Montana is no exception. Many things have come to a grinding halt, with most of us, being very careful in, how we live. Our SW MT Veteran's Nursing Home is no exception. When getting filled in, as to the construction progress, of this Vet Home Construction Site, Construction Site Superintendent Mike Ascheman, said they have been working with "Skeleton Crews". If someone gets sick, they send him home, or they stay home on their own. The fear of spreading this Coronavirus, is paralyzing as no-one wants to get it and no-one wants to give it to those around them, especially their loved ones. Even so, the men who are working on our Vet Home, are getting a lot done. The visual changes, on the exterior of some of these buildings, is continuing to be up-lifting.

## Construction Update:

### Community Center Building:

**Interior:** Liaison Mark Gollinger and I did a walk-through on Friday, of the whole site, and this, building is seeing the sheetrock phase, fast coming to an end. The sheetrock hanging is done, and the tape/mud seam phase is about done. The Sprinkler Fitters are close to having the overhead Fire Suppressant System completed and Mike Ascheman, expected them to be done, the first of this week. The Tinnners (sheet metal workers) and Plumber's, with their work made up of many parts and pieces, will hopefully be done this week or next week for sure. Mark and I did meet a guy, from Helena, who was running the wire for the Electrical Controls/Panels. He said this building has a lot of that, for a building this size. Another piece of the puzzle, most of us wouldn't think about. After all this, is completed, the "Suspended Ceiling" will go in, followed by the electricians putting the drop lights in.

**Exterior:** Finally, the "Siding Crew" from S & H Aluminum, from Great Falls, Mt., are on our Vet Home Construction Site. I watched them put trim around some of the windows and also saw where they put the first piece of siding on the bottom of one of the southern exposures, walls. This is exciting, as it is a finishing phase on the outside of this building, that you and I, the public, can visually see. This is what we'll see, long into the future.

### Cottage #1:

**Interior:** The Electricians have their Rough-in, of the walls/ceiling completed and have moved into Cottage #2. The insulators have got the plastic vapor barrier for the lid (bottom of the roof trusses) in place as well as the baffles, where the roof and walls come together, installed. The sheet rockers will now put a double layer, 5/8 type X, sheetrock on the Lid. The reason for this double layer, is according to the "Building Fire Codes", and any resident occupied building, is required to have it. (This is standard for Apartment Buildings). A change that was put in for and approved, for this Building, concerned insulating the Bay Widow (Bump-outs) walls. It was requested that Cordon foam insulation be sprayed, in the Bay Window and surrounding exterior walls. The reason was to get a better seal, prevent leaks and bind these walls together in a stronger way, (Quality control continues). The rest of the walls will be blown insulation, behind the plastic vapor barrier, followed by the sheet rock over that, on the inside of the exterior walls. The interior-walls will have one side sheet-rocked, with the noise barrier insulation, installed against this sheetrock. This will be followed by sheetrock on un-sheet-rocked side. Depending on the working crew size, this phase, will hopefully be done in two or three weeks. Lots of ifs in this time of crisis, for sure.

**Exterior:** Continuation of the "3M Air Barrier Peel and Stick" material, being applied on the outside, exterior wall surfaces, and then, followed by the blue foam insulation board over that. The southern exposure walls of

Cottage #1 are left to do in this process. Some of the 3M Air Barrier has been applied on this south side. The exterior windows continue to be installed, as the 3M material is applied in and around these window openings. The metal door frames, Mike has been waiting for, are on site and are presently being installed in this building. The sheet metal workers have installed flashing on top of the HVAC Units, on the roof. Things are moving in a very positive direction with this Cottage #1 building.

### **Cottage #2:**

**Interior:** The good news here is, the electricians have moved from Cottage #1 into this Cottage #2 building. Their work is always worth taking a picture of, as they take pride in what they do. Check out our SW MT Website and see the pictures of our different Craftsman's work. It's more than impressive and speaks to American Quality Workmanship. The Plumber's have their wall rough-in done for now. Mike's not sure if he can get any of the sheet-metal workers in this building, for another week or so, due to them being so busy with the Community Center and Cottage #1.

**Exterior:** The "3M Air Barrier Peel and Stick" material will start to be applied this week, followed by window installation and then the installation of the Blue Foam Board over that. Now that the door frames have arrived on site, the exterior door frames for this building will begin to be installed, starting this week. Again, with this Coronavirus Pandemic going on, we can only hope our construction crews, can keep working.

### **Cottage#3:**

**Interior:** Some activity going on here. The plumbers are getting close to having their wall rough-in, completed. Some framing of blocking/backing as well as the fireplace and coffered ceiling being framed.

**Exterior:** Two things, concerning exterior work have been and are being done here. One is the Roofers working on the roof. I think they're short on workers also, as I only saw one guy working on this roof, throughout the week. It is getting done. The other is the Gable Entry being framed. It will, in all probability, be completed at the time this article is released.

**Cottage #4:** Weather conditions and shortage of framers is, definitely, a factor concerning the progress of this building, coupled with the Coronavirus issue we're dealing with. Even so, the exterior walls of both resident wings, of this building, are tipped/raised up and are in place. The wing roof trusses are stacked on the ground next to this building and should be rolled up into place this week. The framers can continue to frame the Common Area (middle area), while this is going on. Only one more Cottage for this process to take place. Optimism is alive and well, as we see progress moving forward, with this our SW MT Veteran's Home. This is happening, in spite of the crisis we're in the middle of.

Last week, when I talked about what our Liaison Mark Gollinger was up to, I mistakenly said he was scoring the single Contractors Proposal, submitted, to operate our Southwest Montana Veterans Home. He in fact was not scoring, but looking/checking that everything was covered, that was supposed to be covered. I did get a statement from Mark, explaining what is happening and his part in it. My apologies to both he and Shaunda, who is his boss at the State level. Here's Mark's official statement. "We received one proposal from Avalon Healthcare. An award has not been made at this time. The State is working diligently to ensure a complete and thorough review of the proposal". As more information becomes available from the State, that is allowed to be shared, I will do so. Mark and his friend with the Drone, plan on doing a "eye in the sky view" of our Vet Home site, possibly next week. Will let you know, if that happened. Check it out on our website. SWMVH.Mt.GOV.

I'll bring this to a close with the encouragement, that we'll beat this Coronavirus and be stronger for it. Hopefully Southwest Montana will stay on the low side, of people being infected. Following the safety procedures that are mandated and encouraged, is critical even though a pain, in many ways. We're not only trying to protect ourselves but those around us. My thoughts and prayers are with you all.