

Southwest Montana Veteran's Home. Update #50

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 Veteran's Home".

The outward appearance of our Veteran's Home Site keeps on the forward march of that dream completion date, at the end of September. Construction Site Superintendent Mike Ascheman said that when a job starts on a positive footing, it is usually that way to the end. He as well as Carpenter General Foreman John Kotka, are both, very happy/encouraged with the quality and progress that is going forward, with this construction of our SW MT VET HOME.

After getting my usual good briefing from both of these "Key Guys", Liaison Mark Gollinger and I did a walk-through, of the complete site on Friday and were again impressed with how things are continuing to progress.

Construction Updates:

Community Center Building: Interior: The inside of this building continues to look more complete. We were able to talk with "Collin's Painting's" Sheetrock - Foreman Bob Okrusch, who was spraying the final "Sheet-Rock Mud" finish on the walls. This is a specialized process, which leaves a smooth glass-like finish, which then allows the walls to be painted. Bob has 25 plus years in the dry-wall industry, is very particular about the final out-come, and makes one, confident of a job being well-done. Some seismograph ceiling frame-work has taken place and will continue. This is all installed by a laser, to make the ceilings to be precisely framed in place. Once these ceilings are in place, the Electricians and Sheetmetal folks can put their final light fixtures and heat/cooling vents in place. Each of these crafts, as well as the plumbers, had a guy working here, doing a bit of catch-up work. Johnson Control Systems got all caught-up with their work until the walls are ceilings are complete. **Exterior:** The siders got their lift machine in and are working on the Gable ends of the outside walls. They should be close to having the siding completed this week and then can move to Cottage #1.

Cottage #1: Interior: The Sheetmetal guys continue working on the heating/cooling ductwork/system. The Plumbers are working on the Boiler with the gas piping and components involved with it. The Electricians did a little mop-up work. The sheetrock taping and mud work will go full force, once the Community Center is completed. Bob Okrusch said it should be started this week. **Exterior:** Ready for the siders to begin siding. Tentatively that could also start this week.

Cottage #2: Interior: Lots of sheetrock hanging, still going on here. The corridor walls and ceilings are completely sheet rocked, which allows the Sheetmetal guys to continue to do their work. Electricians are completing a bit of rough-in work. ARJO will be in to work on the Patient-Lift Hangers this week. **Exterior:** The foam insulation Blue Board is just about complete with all the exterior door-frames and windows installed.

Cottage #3: Interior: This building had an "Electrical Inspection", which went well. The Sheetmetal guys were insulating some of the mechanical piping. The Insulators were/are putting heavy mill plastic sheeting on the bottom of the roof trusses so the sheet rockers can get the double sheetrock lid screwed in place, over it. The inside of the exterior walls will also be

insulated this week. **Exterior:** GF John Kotka said that all the exterior door-jams will be installed this week, as well as the continuation of the 3M Peel and Stick Outside Vapor Barrier Sheeting. As this goes on over the window openings, those windows will be installed at the same time.

Cottage #4: Interior: The Carpenter Framers are working on soffits and putting in wall blocking/backing (very extensive). The big push is to get this building all dried in and it, should be this week. This will then allow the other Crafts, to move in, and do their work. This will open the door for them to do exactly that, this week. **Exterior:** The Roofer is busy doing his thing. He works alone and does a great job. To put this building in perspective, three weeks ago the framers were building walls on the floor/deck, getting them ready to stand up and now the walls and roof are up and in place.

Excavating; Mike Zemlijak and his people are busy digging and putting in the extensive storm-drain system. He's usually the operator of the big "Cat Excavator", from where he directs the operations going on. People kid him and say "a big boy on a big toy", but in all reality he and his excavating company have been around for a long time and are well respected and sought after, for the high quality work they do.

Cottage #5: Interior: Most of the interior walls in the east resident wing, are built and standing. **Exterior:** All the exterior walls are standing, except for the entryway. That should be completed this week. Site Supt. Mike Ascheman ordered the roof trusses to be delivered on this Wed., May 20th. Carpenter GF John Kotka wants to start rolling them up into place, on the resident wings, on Thursday, May 21st. Good to remember, this is the last Cottage to be built, on this phase of the SW MT VET Home Project, as funded. There is a place for a sixth cottage on the Construction Prints, but that's a future endeavor, the Veterans and the political establishment, will have to fight for as we have had the Vet Home.

In visiting with our SW MT Vet Home Liaison Mark Gollinger, I received some good information to pass on. Mark has begun the acquisition process for all the equipment, needed to operate the Veteran's Home, not covered by the construction contract. This includes things like all the linen, cooking and eating utensils, pots and pans, as well as all the maintenance tools needed to maintain a facility of this size.

The proposals for the Operations Contractor are due this Friday, May 22 at 2:00 PM. The next big step will be evaluating the proposals and awarding the contract.

The SWMVH Foundation has selected the winning logo and it will be announced shortly, in a press release from the DPHHS Communications Division.

Applications are being accepted for residences in the "SW MT VET HOME", so please apply. You may download an application at our website at SWMVH.MT.GOV and if you can't assess a computer, please call Mark at (406) 465-3908 and other arrangements can be made.

In closing, drive by and see the excitement of the building process moving forward. We're waiting to open the Viewing Hooch" up, during Phase #2 of the reopening by Gov Bullock. If you do see my truck or another vehicle parked there, stop in, but wear a mask, to be on the safe side. All of you take care and be safe.