

# Southwest Montana Veteran's Home Update #79

By Mike Lawson

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

Of course, the story this week is it was Thanksgiving week, and it was also, the last week of our Hunting Season. This week was only a 3-day week with many of the working crew, in all the trades, leaving early for the holiday. Those from out of town especially, wanted to get home at a decent hour, while others were wanting to get home to plan for Thanksgiving, and for getting out to hunt for Elk/Deer those last four days. It's part of our Montana Hunting Culture for many of us. When Monday comes, everyone will have hunting out of their system until next year and will be ready to get back to the construction of our Veteran's Home. In spite of having a basically two-and-a-half day week, some neat things got accomplished in moving our Veteran's Home on the forward march of getting completed. In talking to my go-to guys, Mike Ascherman and John Kotka, the expectation of the Community Center and Cottage #1, being turned over to the state in the latter part of December, is in fact going to happen. Liaison Mark Gollinger and I did our walk-through on Wednesday, accompanied by Carpenter General Foreman, John Kotka. We continued to see the puzzle pieces of construction coming together. The final finishing pieces of construction are well scrutinized and have to be right. The change orders are part of this as some things on the drawings won't work, adjustments must be made, quality of material might not be acceptable and has to be changed, etc. etc. These are all minor things, but quality control/inspections are in place to demand things are top notch and correct. I, as a veteran and a strong advocate for our Southwest Montana Veteran's Home, am beyond thankful to see these "Quality Control" measures taking place. We, as Veterans, deserve nothing but the best in all aspects, concerning the building of our Vet Home.

## Construction Updates:

**Community Center—Interior:** Walking into this building was like walking into a completely finished building. One reason was that all the Acoustical Ceiling Tiles were installed. We were used to looking up and seeing the different duct work/conduit/piping/etc. We now see a completed ceiling that hides all that. There are some minor punch-list things that need to be finished up, but it is to the point now that the Cleaning Contractor is doing some major finish cleaning throughout this building. This building is just a week or so, from being complete. This will then allow getting some of the permanent equipment/furniture brought in. Exterior: Nothing at this time as only minor punch-list things left to mop up.

**Cottage #1—Interior:** The Floor Lay guys, are making good progress on this building and will probably move into Cottage #3 next week. The carpet in the corridors of the Resident Wings will be one of the last things done before turning this Cottage over to the State. This will keep it clean, from the construction activity. The Tapers/Painters are doing punch-list finish work. The carpenters installed their FF&E package in the rooms and bathrooms. These consisted of things like soap dispensers, paper towel holders, sanitary glove dispensers, etc. The Acoustical Ceiling tiles have been installed, throughout this building. The cleaning contractor is scheduled to come in on Friday, to do an initial cleaning. The start-up Contractor, McKinstry, was doing some programming on the Monday before Thanksgiving. Another couple of weeks will see this Cottage pretty well complete.

**Exterior:** Handrail left to install as well as the back-patio finish work to be done.

**Cottage #2—Interior:** JA& Sons Construction are now doing the Sheet rock Hanging/Taping. They're doing a good job and should be done in this Cottage, by the end of this week or before. They'll then move right into Cottage #4. The Carpenters are right behind these guys and are doing the door/window trim work. The Plumbers have the gas-lines completed/tested and are hooking the copper lines to the boiler hot-water heating units. The Electricians are continuing to pull wire, from throughout the building, to the electrical breaker panels.

Yellowstone Acoustical is getting the T-Bar Seismograph metal grid framework, installed, in the Resident Corridors and the Office.

**Exterior:** Nothing at this time.

**Cottage #3—Interior:** The Plumbers are busy in the Mechanical Room, hooking up copper hot-water lines to the boiler heating units/zone valves. Lots of work, doing this. The tile and grout work are complete, with these tile guys, now moving into Cottage #2. The Electricians are trimming out switches/plug-in receptacles/etc. and are installing light fixtures. The folks for the fire security system, were installing their low voltage wire to their breaker panels, for the alarm system, consisting of fire alarm/ beepers/etc. Johnson Controls was also working on their low voltage wire systems. Sheet metal guys did some minor modifications on some of their systems. The Carpenters did some work on the front door hardware but are pretty well caught-up for now.

**Exterior:** Nothing at this time.

**Cottage #4—Interior:** Plumbers were working on some of their rough-in. The Electricians were setting can lights and wiring in the seismograph ceiling T-Bar Seismograph grid framework. The sheet rockers will follow them and sheetrock this ceiling framework grid, this week.

**Exterior:** Nothing at this time.

**Cottage #5—Interior:** The Carpenters installed all the outside door hardware which now allows this building to be locked up.

**Exterior:** The Siding Crew, have most of this building sided and are doing the caulking, which is considerable. They have the fascia to do and then will start putting rain gutters up, on all the buildings.

Zemljak Excavating continues graveling in front of the cement finishers and is working on the final grading around Cottage #4 & #5, as well as the East edge of the overall site along Continental Drive.

R&K didn't pour any concrete, even though Markovich had some ground heated/thawed, due to being pulled off to work on another job, across town. Hopefully this week will see some concrete poured, as again Markovich will have some ground thawed and ready for them.

This week, when this article comes out, will be a full week and the hunting season will be over. The push is on to get the Community Center and Cottage #1, completed/furnished and turned over to the state no later than December 22<sup>nd</sup>. I believe that's a reality and am excited.

On another note, one of our older Marine Corps League Veterans called me and said one of his adult sons, who was living with he and his wife, had died. He went on to say he died of the Covid-19, which they did not know he had. He and his wife, both got checked and both tested positive, they are now in quarantine. There are too many people that I know who have Covid-19 or have had it. Again, this terrible virus is among us, so I ask again that you all to be safe, care about each other, and follow the health guidelines of masking/distancing and avoid large groups. Until next time, take care.