

Southwest Montana Veteran's Home. Update #23

By Mike Lawson

Greetings once again to you, the six counties in SW Montana who are represented as the organizations and chief supporters of the SW MT Veterans Home.

What a difference a week makes here in SW Montana and particularly at our Veteran Home site. The weather has been much warmer which has allowed our on site construction workers make some great forward progress. Getting the particulars, of this weeks progress, from on-site Construction Superintendent Mike Ascheman is as follows;

The Community Center : Being able to visually see the roof trusses/gables go into the air and be placed on top of the Community Building walls, is exciting. Extra carpenters have been pulled from Cottage #1, to expedite this building phase of our Veteran Community Center Building. The east and west trusses are flat on top as they were designed to have an additional top piece added, called a "Piggyback Truss" which will make the overall truss complete. The reason for this is for allowing these trusses in be transported by truck on our highways, otherwise they would be too big height-wise. This week will see two steel vertical beams erected, with two horizontal horizontal laminated beams going on top of them to the main building. This will then have the drive-through roof built on top of them. Again, the closing in of this building with windows/doors/etc., will allow the other contractors to do completion work inside, during the course of the colder winter months. Go out to the Site and see what a difference the roof makes. It is really going to be a good looking building and gives us a glance as to how the Veteran Home Campus is going to look in the future.

Cottage #1 : The interior walls are all framed and this building is waiting for the roof trusses to arrive and put in place. Mike said that as soon as the roof on the Community Building is completed, the construction crew will move over to Cottage #1 and get the roof erected/completed. Following this will be the same process of closing it in with windows/doors/etc.

Cottage #2 : This building is ready for exterior walls to be erected/framed but until the Community Center and Cottage #1 are roofed and closed in, it is on hold.

Cottage #3 : This building is on hold.

Cottage #4 : This building had painting and foam performed on the outside foundation walls. Zemlijak Excavating had to dig the dirt away from these exterior walls to allow this process to be performed and now will put and compact it back in place. They also worked on getting water/sewer lines dug and connected to the respective main lines.

Cottage #5 : Lots happening here in a supreme effort being made in getting it ready for the final cement slab floor” to be poured. Once this is done, then weather won’t be such a factor for the framing to begin. After performing two ground thawing operations this past week, the electricians and plumbers got their lines in, with the conduct and pipe ends visibly sticking up in the air.

The carpenters put and glued the vapor barrier plastic to the inside of the foundation walls and pipe stubs with the rebar installation to follow. Hopefully the cement pour will quickly follow.

The “Viewing Hooch” is open for visitors after getting insulated and wall sheeting put in place.

Mark Gollinger, a retired SeaBee Senior Chief, is now our SW MT Vet Home Liaison”, which is a great deal for the Veterans and the state. We’ll be communicating with Mark on a regular basis in the future as he gets into his job.

On another subject, I was part of a flagpole/flag dedication, ceremony with the SW MT United Veterans Color Guard, in Centerville on Saturday. Paddy Dennehy who spearheaded this event, gave this stat one out of ten adults in Montana is a veteran, which is the third highest in the nation. Montana has the highest per capita veterans in the United States. The point of this for me is that this SW MT VET HOME is long overdue and seeing our Vet Home Campus develop is a great “Heads Up” for Southwest Montana. Take-care until next time.