

Southwest Montana Veterans Home Update

By Mike Lawson

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

It's been a day of butchering the bull and cow elk we were able to harvest while at hunting camp this past week. We've had our hunting camp for forty-four years and this year has been the coldest we've ever experienced, in all that time. Two mornings we woke to -20 and -30 degrees below zero which takes the fun out of hunting, for sure.

Speaking of the cold temperatures this past week, concerning our Vet Home, we saw things slow down. Mike Ascheman, in giving me our Vet Home construction update, said his crew were working partial days, as the bitter cold limits what a construction worker is able to do.

In spite of the cold, the “Community Center” building saw a crane lift the west and east roof gables into place, as well as the roof trusses running west and east. A portion of the roof runs north and south and will probably be put in place this week, followed by being covered with sheeting, roof wrap and at some point, with shingles. The framers will then get windows and doors installed, which will enable the other contractors to work inside doing electrical, plumbing, sheetrock, etc.. Things are moving well with this building, for sure.

Cottage #1 is seeing interior wall work being focused on. The roof trusses are ordered and should be delivered this week, with the hope of being put up in place next week. Then, like the Community Center building, it will get closed in. This will allow heating and then will enable other contractors to work inside.

Cottage #2, Cottage #3, and Cottage #4 are idle, as the work concentration is being focused on the Community Center and Cottage #1, to get roofed and closed in.

Cottage #5 is in a dilemma due to the ground freezing down a foot. The debate is whether to put ground thawing equipment in place to thaw the ground or wait until spring when the ground will thaw in warmer weather. (The ground thawing is expensive and will have to be weighed out as to the pros and cons.)

The construction workers have to be commended for doing a great job working in the weather conditions they're working in!!

Our “Viewing Hooch” is insulated, wired and most of the 1/4” plywood sheeting nailed in place. It has become a cozy warm place. Stop in and

visit. Electrician Dave Risenhower, did the wiring with Tom Goyette and Mike Lawson, helping with the insulation and sheeting. It can be fun to volunteer and this project, was just that for us.

The "Southwest Montana Veterans Home Foundation" is meeting the first Monday of every month at 1:00 PM at the Butte Archives building. Any of you are welcome to attend.

I'll close until next time. Take care.