

SOUTHWEST MONTANA VETERANS HOME UPDATE. #26

By Mike Lawson

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

Our winter is here, for sure!! I plowed a lot of snow today and can just imagine the removal of snow on our Vet Home Site, before any framing/carpentry work can begin. Last Wednesday, before all this snow came, a ferocious wind blew from the East, down the East Ridge and played havoc on our Vet Home construction site. The day before, Tuesday, the carpenters stood two corner section walls up, on Cottage #2. The wind, on Wednesday, blew so hard that one of those walls blew over. Quickly the framing crew laid the other one down before it had a chance to blow over. The wind conditions were so bad that Construction Superintendent Mike Ascheman had to send the crew home early, before someone got hurt. Hard to work in those conditions, for sure.

Getting feedback from Mike Ascheman is important and appreciated as too what is actually going on beyond what we can observe from outside the fence. The following has happened this past Thanksgiving week:

Community Center: All the roof sheeting has been laid/nailed down, except for some of the eaves. There was an eave problem with the engineering/architecture prints which Mike had to get corrected and get the ok to continue. (Corrections are common on most construction jobs and usually it's a simple fix.) This put them behind while waiting for the correction, but they had other things that they were able to work on. Visqueen plastic sheeting was put over all the windows/doors to keep the weather from coming into the building. This will allow the Sub-contractors to do their work in a dry environment. The drive under roof, at this buildings entrance, is scheduled to be erected within a week or so. Lots going on with this Community Center Building.

Cottage #1: This building, like all the Cottages, has two wings coming off the center section of the building. The wings are where the individual Veteran-Resident rooms are located. The central center has, mainly, the kitchen/dining/living area locations.

The roof trusses have been put in place over both wings of Cottage #1. The truss makers had to clarify some things, to the contractor, on the trusses they sent. That should have happened by now, with the expectation that these trusses will be put in place this week. The other big push is getting the interior framing completed and move on to Cottage #2.

Cottage #2: Framing is in full swing on this building. The carpenters stood two corner wall sections up, but due to the wind blowing the one down, they will be put back up with other wall sections to follow, this week.

Cottage #3: On hold and curing.

Cottage #4: On hold and curing.

Cottage #5: On hold and curing.

I have to take my hat off to Mike Ascheman and his crew of craftsmen, who are working out in this cold weather we're having. Having worked construction, in my younger days, I can relate what it's like to work in these conditions. They dress for it, for sure, but it's not easy. The great work they're doing is a testament to who they are. Included on this crew are three "carpenter apprentices, one being a young woman, who are learning the invaluable skills of the Carpenter Trade, from the Journeyman Carpenters working on our Vet Home Site. They are the future and it's a tribute to the Contractors, the Carpenters Union and the Journeyman Carpenters who are their teachers. We the Veterans salute everyone involved in bringing them onto our SW MT VET Home Site to work and learn.

Our SW. MT. Vet Home Liaison, Mark Gollinger, is a frequent visitor to the Vet Home site. He and Mike Ascherman stay on the same page for the betterment of the finished product, which is our Vet Home being completed. We'll hear more from Mark as the site work progresses.

The Viewing Hooch is nice and warm, with coffee pods of many different flavors to choose from. You can also have cookies/M&Ms/pretzels as a snack. Come and relax and watch the action of our Vet Home being built.

Take Care until next time.