

SOUTHWEST MONTANA VETERAN'S HOME UPDATE #78

By Mike Lawson

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

It seems like the finish work is a never ending, time consuming task. It's now about us having patience and allowing it to happen. The company who does the final programming and checks everything in precise detail, through a variety of testing procedures, is the "McKinstry Company". They are checking the different systems like the Mechanical, Ventilation, etc., in the Community Center and Cottage #1. December 1st they're scheduled to do a test to see how airtight these two buildings are. The strict quality control measures continue and are an assurance, we'll get a topnotch end product. I would encourage any of you to drive by our Veteran's Home after dark and see how beautifully lit up, things are. I did so tonight, and it was like Christmas for me. All the indirect lighting is shining on each of the building's walls, the entrance door lights have the entry ways well lit up, as well as the streetlamp lights, lighting the inside roadway/parking areas up. It was impressive, as you'll see when you go by. The bottom line, on our Vet Home site, is things are coming together in a variety of ways. As usual my go-to guys, Mike Ascheman and John Kotka, continue to come through in our weekly briefing sessions. This really helps bring me up to date, on our Vet Home construction progress. In addition to this, it's always a treat for Liaison Mark Gollinger and I to do our weekly walk through, of all the Cottages and the Community Center. It's impressive to see the knowledge and skill these different Journeyman /Apprentices have, pertaining to their particular construction trade. The conduit/wires, piping, insulation, ductwork, insulation in the walls/ceilings/floors is incredible. The walls, ceiling and floor covering to finish it all off is a head shaker. The big puzzle pieces of putting each building together, is beyond what any average person could even begin to imagine. Believe me when I say it's been a privilege for me to watch this happen.

Construction Updates:

Community Center—Interior: Not a lot left to do, in this building, other than the rest of the ceiling acoustical tiles left to be put in, which won't take long. This is scheduled for Monday. Painters finished the punch-list of touch-up painting, that needed to be done. Parts for the bathroom sinks are back ordered and still haven't come in. Other than that, the big show is the McKinstry Construction doing the final start-up tests/programming. Once this is done and test certified, this building will be pretty well complete. The cleaning contractor will be there on this Tuesday and Wednesday, cleaning from top to bottom. In the near future, after this, will be the furniture/equipment being brought in. It really is, getting closer, to being ready for occupancy.

Exterior: Nothing at this time.

Cottage #1—Interior: This Cottage is really closing the gap toward completion, with McKinstry Construction, knocking on the door, to start doing start-up testing/programming. The Floor Layer guys, are in the North Residential Wing laying the floor linoleum. The West Residential Wing, the kitchen and dining areas are completed. Mike said they should have everything finished by the first week in December. The rest of the acoustical ceiling tile could be installed next week, if time allows. The Sheet Metal guys are done. The Carpenters are waiting on the door jams, for the Nursing Station Office, to come in so they can get it and the door installed. This will pretty much finish the Carpenter work, in this Cottage on the interior. The Plumbers are completing their last pieces of trim-out work. The cleaning company is scheduled to come in this week and do the initial cleaning in this Cottage.

Exterior: The outside handrail that goes from the front entrance around to the west side entrance is left to do. The back-patio medallions that border the cement pad, also need to be in place, in the near future.

Cottage #2—Interior: The work in this Cottage has been moving well, with the tapers and painters scheduled to have their part done by the time this article comes out, on Wednesday. The Carpenters have been moving right behind them installing door jams and hanging doors. They have the corridors, main area all trimmed out with the

handrail/picture-rail, doors through-out with resident room bathrooms left until the Tiler Installers get those rooms tiled. The Tile guys are expected to move into this Cottage, this week. The Plumbers are close to being done with their gas and plumbing pipe. The gas line test passed which allows connecting to the gas bar and for the gas meter to be installed. The Electricians continue to pull wire to the electric breaker-box panels. Yellowstone Acoustical, out of Billings, are scheduled to start installing the suspended T-Bar metal ceiling grid, for the acoustical ceiling tile. The expectation is that Cottage #2 & #3 will be turned over to the state at the same time.

Exterior: Nothing at this time.

Cottage #3—Interior: This Cottage is closer to the finish line than what Cottage #2 is. The Plumbers are ready for the gas-line test, which once passed will allow the hook-up to the gas-bar and the gas-meter install. Start-up will be ready to follow, for the Air Handlers/Programmers, by McKinstry Construction. Johnson Controls (Dean) will also be part of this process in the testing of the Low -Voltage systems that concern the thermostats/etc. The Tile Layers are close to being done with the grouting, and will move on, into Cottage #2. The Sheet Metal guys have the HVAC trim-out, completed. The Electricians are installing lights/switches/outlets/etc.

John said the FF&E package, finally came in which will enable his Carpenters to install the soap dishes, towel holders, shower curtain rods, grab-bars, etc... Next week, after this Thanksgiving week, Custom Cabinets out of Great Falls will be in this building to install countertops through-out, in places like the kitchen area, the resident room bathrooms, offices, etc...

Exterior: Nothing at this time.

Cottage #4—Interior: All the walls are sheet rocked out. The metal seismograph ceiling grid framework is being installed, with sheetrock to follow this week. The Fire Suppression Sprinkler Fitters are setting their sprinkler heads to the proper height. The Electricians are setting their ceiling light cans/boxes. Some Plumber rough-in. More activity will be taking place there, after this Thanksgiving week.

Exterior: Patio will hopefully be poured this week or next.

Cottage #5—Interior: Carpenters installed panic bars on some of the doors that will allow them to be locked. A small bit of Mechanical and Electrical rough-in. As more and more of the finish work in the other Cottages is completed, more of the different trade workers will move into this building.

Exterior: The siding crew is making great progress and have a lot of the blue colored siding in place. Looks good.

Electric Vault: Some sheetrock and setting of panels, which enabled the yard and other outside lights, to be turned on.

RK Concrete, is still struggling, especially with this cooler weather. Markovich is helping them by providing a Markovich ground warming machine. This warms the ground to a temperature that allows concrete to be poured/finished/cured correctly. The owner died at the beginning of the job, which left a huge vacuum of experience, disappear. Getting qualified finishers has been a challenge, with all the area construction going on. Markovich Construction is working with them and helping them, in getting this job completed. We're wishing them success, for sure.

Zemljak Excavating: Prepping sidewalks for RK Concrete as well doing dirt grading around Cottages #4 & #5

Too many of my friends here in Butte are getting Covid-19. They tell me they wouldn't wish this on anybody. I keep saying, please follow the health guidelines of masking, distancing and avoid gathering of ten or more. Hopefully this isn't falling on deaf ears. I feel things will turn around for the better next year, with vaccines coming online and medicines being approved for treatment.

Wishing you all a nice Thanksgiving. Take care until next time.