

# NEWS RELEASE



**For immediate release**

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## **Early Memorial Day observance to honor veterans past and present**

HELENA, Mont. — Memorial Day has special significance to those who have served or have family members currently serving in the military, and that will be the focus of Touchmark's Memorial Day observance on Friday, May 26 at 1 p.m. The public is invited to attend at 915 Saddle Drive.

As it has done for several years, Touchmark is lining the drive leading to the retirement community with small flags placed in recognition of family and friends who have served or are serving our country. Individuals may donate \$5 or more per flag; all the money is donated to the Military Museum at Fort Harrison.

“This annual event focuses on the history of Memorial Day, what it means to those who have served or are serving and how meaningful the holiday is to those who celebrate it at home,” says Life Enrichment/Wellness Director Nanette Whitman-Holmes. She adds that in addition to the keynote speaker, “the day will feature a moving flag ceremony and patriotic music.”

This year's keynote speaker is First Sergeant Amanda Sell, currently serving as the first female First Sergeant in an Infantry Company in the Montana National Guard.

A Helena native, Sell has served in the Montana National Guard since 1990. As a flight medic, she served in the 1022 Medical Company Air Ambulance for 12 years. During that time she was part of several home missions as well as being deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2004.

Sell is one of the few women to be selected to attend the Sergeant's Major Academy to become a Command Sergeant's Major. She explains this honor is the result of hard work, good training and opportunity.

“The opportunity to become one of few female Command Sergeant's Major is an honor not to be passed up,” says Sell of her current role in the Montana National Guard. “To become a Command Sergeant Major, I needed to serve as a First Sergeant and was recently selected for a First Sergeant position in India Company 145, Forward Support Company. I have been truly blessed to be part of some amazing units serving with outstanding mentors and leaders.”

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For Sell, the military is a family tradition. “My grandfather, my uncle, my dad, both of my siblings; we have all served.” She is thrilled to have the opportunity to speak about the importance of Memorial Day. “Memorial Day is important, because it is the day we honor those who gave the ultimate sacrifice. Most importantly, it is a time to reflect on the sacrifices made by so many men and women so that we may all be free.”

A full-service retirement community, Touchmark on Saddle Drive offers people a wide range of homes and lifestyle options, including memory care services. More information is available at [Touchmark.com](https://www.touchmark.com).

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