



Montana Veterans Memorial Association

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MEDIA RELEASE

Veterans Day observance at Montana Veterans Memorial

GREAT FALLS, Mont.— A Veterans Day ceremony will be conducted virtually at the Montana Veterans Memorial in Great Falls, Wednesday, November 11, 2020.

The public is encouraged to view the ceremony via Facebook Live on the Montana Veterans Memorial Facebook page beginning at 11 a.m. City-County Health Department guidance limits attendance at the ceremony to participants only.

Retired Army Command Sgt. Maj. Starnell Darko will serve as the master of ceremonies during the event. Command Sgt. Maj. Darko last served as the sergeant major for the 652nd Regional Support Command (Rear Detachment) located at Fort Harrison, Mont.

The commander of the 341st Missile Wing at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Col. Anita Feugate Opperman, will provide the keynote address during the Veterans Day ceremony.

Malmstrom personnel will also participate in the ceremony. Members of the 341st Missile Wing Honor Guard will present the colors and Air Force Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Heather Bodwell will provide the invocation.

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Retired Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Dana Darko, Command Sgt. Maj. Darko's husband, will sing the "Star-Spangled Banner." Chief Darko last served as the 120th Maintenance Group quality assurance chief at the 120th Fighter Wing in Great Falls.

Cadets from the Air Force Junior ROTC program at Great Falls High School will lead participants in the Pledge of Allegiance.

A bagpipe salute will be performed by bagpiper Jesse Callender. A well-known local piper, Callender has performed for many of the past ceremonial events held at the memorial.

Disabled American Veterans 2nd Junior Vice Commander Joe Parsetich will recognize the 100th anniversary of the DAV. According to the organization's national website (dav.org), the DAV currently serves more than 1 million members and seeks to help America's 4 million disabled veterans gain access to important benefits like medical care, employment, and education.

To conclude the ceremony, Taps will be performed by a member of Detachment 688 of the Marine Corps League.

The Montana Veterans Memorial has been recognized by the Veterans Administration and Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert Wilkie as being an official 2020 National Veterans Day Regional Site.

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The memorial was selected by the Veterans Day National Committee for providing a proper tribute to veterans and for serving as a role model for other communities planning Veterans Day ceremonies.

Members of the local media are encouraged to attend and cover the event. Montana Veterans Memorial representatives will be available for interviews following the ceremony.

The Montana Veterans Memorial is located at 1009 25th Street North, in Great Falls.

For more information on the Montana Veterans Memorial Veterans Day ceremony, please contact Michael Winters at 799-0179, email: mjwinters@bresnan.net, or Richard Liebert at 736-5791, email: wwranch@3rivers.net.

VETERANS DAY

NOVEMBER 11, 2020

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