

Crossings' Richardson Cottage ready to open

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Before the first occupants move into St. John's Ministries' Richardson Cottage at the Crossings, located at East Maryland and Alder, the staff will hold a special public tour of the building after a ribbon cutting ceremony by the Laurel Chamber of Commerce.

The ribbon cutting will be held next Tuesday, May 15, at 7:30 am. After the ribbon cutting, Richardson Cottage's staff will serve coffee and donuts and provide tours of the building to the public until 10 am.

St. John's Lutheran Ministries Richardson Cottage opens for occupants Wednesday, May 16. The Richardson Cottage is a state-of-the-art 12 bedroom home that will house a dozen elders with Alzheimer's or other dementias causing memory impairments.

The cottage was named after Dr. Lee and Erma Richardson, for their long service to both the Laurel community and their involvement with St. John's Lutheran Ministries. "St. John's presence in Laurel was at the invitation and encouragement of Dr. Richardson to complement the services already existing in the community," said David Trost, VP of Management and Outreach Services for St. John's Lutheran Ministries.

When the cottage opens for services on May 16, it becomes "home" to 12 elders and will be closed to the public. "A home-owner would not expect the public to come and go as they please without invitation. The same respect should be extended to the residents of the Richardson Cottage," Mary Herr, Health Director for The Richardson Cottage said.

For the first month following the opening, the cottage will provide services for residents of Laurel, Red Lodge, Park City, and Columbus, before opening its doors to the Billings community. In Billings, similar services are provided on the campus of St. John's, however, an active waiting list at St. John's will be accommodated in The Richardson Cottage after one month of being open.

"The cottage was built to provide service in an area where similar services were not offered. The Laurel community has been so supportive and the services being offered should begin to serve the local community first," Trost said.