



Garfield County Administration
108 8th Street, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601

PRESS RELEASE

November 21, 2013

Grand Avenue tree lighting revives a historic tradition

GARFIELD COUNTY, CO – Garfield County will hold a simple tree lighting outside its 1102 Grand Avenue building in Glenwood Springs, as a complement to a more elaborate ceremony at the Hotel Colorado. Clear lights adorning a historic tree at the corner of 11th and Grand will honor a Glenwood Springs citizen the tree was originally dedicated to when its lights are illuminated Friday, November 29, at 5:30 p.m. County Commissioners will hold a brief commemorative ceremony, and residents are welcome to come by.

The tree is a blue spruce towering nearly 100 feet over Glenwood Springs. It is dedicated to Louisa Schwarz, it came from the White River National Forest near Sweetwater, and was planted in her memory when it was just six feet tall in 1933. The county is re-establishing this tradition in Schwarz's name, a citizen of Glenwood Springs known for her generosity, according to historic accounts. She was a member of a garden club in Glenwood Springs that exists today, and that is why she was honored with a tree planting. According to Deborah Williams, a historian, Schwarz had a child who died at the age of three years old. She entertained community schoolchildren with her beautiful garden, tea parties and a music box. A decorated plaque at the foot of the tree carries her name and the year that the tree was dedicated to her.

"We are bringing this tradition back to the community to create a celebration of light," shared County Commissioner John Martin. The tradition began in the 1910s when a fully decorated tree was placed in the center of the main thoroughfare in downtown Glenwood Springs. The tree that was planted in Mrs. Schwarz's memory became the official tree of Glenwood Springs in 1950 when heavier traffic made it necessary to change its location to a park at 11th and Grand Avenue, called "City Park".

The county building at 1102 Grand Avenue will provide learning space for University of Denver (DU) Graduate School of Social Work students working on their Master's of Social Work degrees in Garfield County.