



City of Yakima

NEWS RELEASE

Subject: Yakima Community Christmas Tree

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Blue Spruce Special to Selah Family to be Yakima Community Christmas Tree

About thirty years ago, Sandy Wooderson and a friend planted a blue spruce seedling near the home where she and her husband John lived next to their Selah apple orchard. Sandy named the tree “Clyde” in honor of her friend who had given Sandy a hand in helping the seedling get off to a good start.

Over the decades, Clyde the blue spruce would grow strong and tall. The tree also grew to hold a special place in the Wooderson’s hearts. The strong connection the Woodersons had to the tree next to the apple orchard became even more meaningful when Clyde, Sandy’s friend who had helped plant the blue spruce seedling, died several years ago. In August 2012, Sandy also passed away.

A few weeks ago, an idea occurred to John that a fitting tribute to his wife, her friend Clyde, and the blue spruce that meant so much to Sandy and the rest of the Wooderson family would be to offer the tree, now standing more than three stories high, to serve as the official 2013 Yakima Community Christmas Tree.

Out of the more than 25 trees from around the area that were nominated by their owners to be this year’s Yakima Community Christmas Tree, Clyde the blue spruce was chosen. The tree has officially been donated by the Wooderson family and the Crazy Horse Motorcycle Riding Club, which John is an active member of.

On Tuesday, November 26th at 10:00 am (weather permitting), the Wooderson’s tree will be cut down by staff from Yakima Parks & Recreation and then hoisted onto a Haney Trucking flatbed by crews from Russell Crane. Both Haney Trucking and Russell Crane are donating their services. Clyde the blue spruce will then make a six-mile journey from its home next to the apple orchard to the Millennium Plaza in Downtown Yakima where the tree will be installed and will serve as the centerpiece of the community’s holiday festivities, which will kick off with a new family-friendly, free *Light Up the Plaza* celebration on Friday, December 6th.

The *Light Up the Plaza* event will start at 5:30 pm at the Millennium Plaza and will feature performances by popular local artists Blake Noble, Planes on Paper, and Cody Beebe and the Crooks. At 7:30 pm, Clyde the blue spruce will spring to life as the 2013 Yakima Community Christmas Tree during a special lighting ceremony hosted by Mayor Micah Cawley.

“We are taking the Downtown Yakima holiday festivities up a notch this year, and we are honored to have Clyde the blue spruce play a key role in making our celebration truly enjoyable,” said Yakima Economic Development Manager Sean Hawkins.

On Sunday, December 8th, the 14th *Annual Yakima Holiday Light Parade* will fill downtown streets with cheer. At 6:00 pm that day, the parade will follow a route from 6th Avenue to the Millennium Plaza. An awards ceremony, which will take place near the 2013 Community Christmas Tree, will follow. More information can be found about the parade on the Yakima Sunfair Parade website at <http://yakimasunfairparade.com/christmas/>.