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LaTwyla Mathias

• Wed, Dec 29, 2010

The 44th Annual Governor's Carolighting was nearly a figment of our Capitol's past until the determination of one local club, a local TV station, four local legislators, and Columbia's mayor persevered and this longstanding tradition literally came to light. With the help of Senator John Courson, Rep. James Smith, Rep. Kenny Bingham, Rep. Rick Quinn, Mayor Steve Benjamin, WISTV, and The Columbia Breakfast Optimist Club, the tradition of Carolighting survived another year. On Sunday a crowd of about 250 people gathered at the Statehouse to witness one of the highlights of the holiday season. The ceremony had many different types of Christmas music, sung by the Carolighting Community Choir, the Carolighting Children's Choir, and the Benedict Gospel Choir along with other musical ensembles including the Together For Him trio and the First Baptist Church Handbell Choir. The Mistress of Ceremonies, Dawndy Mercer Plank, introduced the Governor, and the Mayor who both gave Christmas address, followed by the lighting of the Christmas tree. The brisk night was made a little warmer by the generous donation of hot chocolate and hot apple cider for guests by Liberty Tax Service. **The spirit of Christmas was in the air because the ceremony was held on the 89th birthday of the event's original creator, Eddie Williams, who held the first Carolighting in 1967.**

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