



Association
of Washington
Business

Washington State's Chamber of Commerce

FACT SHEET: AWB's 23rd ANNUAL HOLIDAY KIDS' TREE PROJECT

What is the Holiday Kids' Tree Project? The Holiday Kids' Tree Project is a charitable project of the Association of Washington Business that benefits children and families in rural communities statewide. AWB members, including large and small employers from across the state and individuals support the program with donations.

AWB also hosts the annual tree-lighting ceremony at the state Capitol Rotunda where money and gifts are presented by AWB and the governor to the rural fire departments. While the tree-lighting ceremony is the most visible symbol of this effort, the real joy is in the hundreds of needy families supported through donations from AWB member businesses and individuals.

When did this program begin? The project first started in 1989. That year, AWB raised just enough money to set up the tree.

How much money has been raised this year? Who contributed to the effort? To date, 127 AWB member businesses and individuals from around the state have donated more than \$21,500 toward the project this year.

How much money has the project raised since it first began? Since 1989, AWB now has raised more than \$320,000 for families who benefit from this project.

What does AWB do with the money for this project? The money is distributed to 17 rural fire districts in seven counties, which use the funds to buy food and gifts for families in their communities. The counties that will receive funds are Grant, Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Spokane, Thurston and Walla Walla counties.

Who provides the tree? The state provides the tree, and this year, Port Blakely Tree Farms, an AWB member company, donated the tree. Port Blakely has previously donated trees for the 2004 and 2008 ceremonies.

Who decorates the tree? The State Visitor Services helps coordinate this event each year. Staff from the Department of General Administration put the tree in place and decorate the tree. This year, it will be decorated with 5,000 new LED lights donated by AWB.

How tall is the tree? What kind of tree is it? This year's tree is a 24-foot Noble fir tree.

ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON BUSINESS

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How long did it take to set up the tree in the Capitol Rotunda? Approximately one hour.

Who will light this year's tree? Gov. Chris Gregoire will light the tree with the help of Senior Airman Samuel Lovelady, a Patrol Leader from the 627th Security Forces Squadron/Joint Base Lewis-McChord, along with his wife Dana, their daughter Kaydance (age 4) and son Samuel (age 2).

Whom do I contact for more information? AWB's Bonnie Millikan at 360.943.1600 or BonnieM@awb.org.

Last updated Nov. 28, 2011