

Coast Guard Member Lights Washington State Capitol Christmas Tree

Local News

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SEATTLE — Coast Guard Petty Officer 1st Class Shane Abold, a Surfman at [Station Cape Disappointment](#) in Ilwaco, Wash., joined Gov. Christine Gregoire as they energized the lights of the capitol's Christmas tree during the Washington State ceremonial Christmas tree lighting at the rotunda of the state capitol in Olympia, Wash., Friday. Abold was accompanied by his wife, Erin, and their two sons, Trenton (4) and Taylor (2). The Winona, Calif., native is a model Coast Guardsman who has served as an active duty member since 2004. He graduated from Boatswain's Mate A-school in 2006 and earned his Surfman qualification in February 2010. As a Surfman, he performs search-and-rescue operations along the often treacherous waters that exist in and around the mouth of the Columbia River. Surfmen are the only coxswains qualified to operate rescue boats in breaking surf conditions. The title of Surfman is reserved for the service's most highly trained boat handlers. "He is a great guy who can do some remarkable things with a Motor Lifeboat," said Master Chief Jason Vanderhaden, the command master chief for the Thirteenth Coast Guard District in Seattle. "I am excited for him to participate in the Tree Lighting ceremony and I know he will represent the Coast Guard, the State of Washington, and all military members extremely well." The Washington State Christmas tree lighting is an annual event that kicks off the state's recognition of the holiday season.

Petty Officer 1st Class Shane Abold (second from left) and his wife, Erin (left), and two kids, Trenton and Taylor, stand alongside Washington State Gov. Christine Gregoire (second from right) and her husband Mike Gregoire (right) in the state capitol building in Olympia, Wash., Dec. 7, 2012. Abold and his family were selected to light the state capitol Christmas tree to kick off the state's recognition of the holiday season. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Nathan Bradshaw.

Petty Officer 1st Class Shane Abold and his family press a button to energize the lights on the Washington State Capitol's Christmas tree in a ceremony hosted by Gov. Christine Gregoire at the capitol building, Dec. 7, 2012. Abold was selected to light the tree due to his exemplary service to the Coast Guard and Washington State. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer Nathan W. Bradshaw.