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LOCAL/STATE

INSIDE

■ **Editorial:** Oregonians should aspire to live up to the state's new slogan: "Oregon. We Love Dreamers." **10C**

SECTION

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LORI CAIN / Statesman Journal

WAITING HIS TURN: Alex Weeks, 8, a member of the Salem Boys Choir, holds antlers beneath his chin Tuesday as he waits for his cue to sing.

Stories, Santa highlight event

More than 1,000 converge at the Capitol to ring in the holiday season.

BY PETER WONG
Statesman Journal

The 22nd annual Holidays at the Capitol began Tuesday night with a welcome from Gov. Ted Kulongoski, a story read aloud by his wife, music by Salem and Keizer schoolchildren and an appearance by San-

ta Claus.

But amid the decorations and good cheer, Kulongoski sounded a couple of serious notes in his first year of opening the festivities.

"There are few places more beautiful than the Capitol at Christmas," Kulongoski told more than 1,000 children and adults gathered in the Capitol rotunda and adjacent staircases. "One of the reasons it is so beautiful is not just the decorations — it's the

kids. This is what the holiday season is all about."

He had a particular child on his mind — 11-year-old Codi Frazier of Keizer, who died of cancer Sept. 23.

"For an 11-year-old, she was probably the bravest little girl I've ever met in my life," said Kulongoski, who has three grown children of his own from his first marriage.

"This Christmas is going

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What's next

The music schedule of "Holidays at the Capitol" begins today with performances by students from Valley Catholic High School in Beaverton at 10 a.m. and Sumpter Elementary School in Salem at noon. Performances continue almost daily through Dec. 23. To see a full schedule, see this story at [Statesman Journal.com](http://StatesmanJournal.com)

INSIDE

CEREMONY: Keizer lights its Christmas tree. **3C**

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