



A North Country Festival of Trees
Dates – November 28th – December 7th, 2025
New Location ** The Dulles State Office Building
TREE DECORATOR GUIDELINES

2025 Theme

“A Winter Wonderland”

Decorating Dates

Wednesday, November 19th, 2025 – 9am -9pm

Thursday, November 20th, 2025 - 9am – 9pm

Auction Dates

Online Auction Opens – Friday, November 28th, 2025, at 11am

People’s Choice Voting Opens (in person and online) – Friday, November 28th, 2025, 11am

People’s Choice Voting Closes – Wednesday, December 3rd, 2025, at 9pm

Live Auction – Friday, December 5th, 2025 – Gala at 5:30pm

Online Auction Closes - Sunday, December 7th, 2025, at 2 p.m.

****Tree Forms must be completed in person or online and turned in by 7 p.m. on Thursday, November 20th**

If you would like to pick up your tree early to begin decorating at home, please contact Samantha Hamilton @ shamilton@nnyymca.org. We encourage all decorators to prepare your decorations ahead of time, as much as possible.

Materials and Decorations

As a decorator, please take note of the following to ensure your tree is complete and in compliance with the event:

- The tree and all decorations, lights, anything under or around the tree and trim on the tree become the property of FESTIVAL OF TREES or the eventual purchaser.
- **An 8-foot x 8-foot space is available for each decorator as our overall space is limited.**
- Please do not use living materials or untreated, unwrapped food (no popcorn) on the tree, as they will be displayed in businesses or homes throughout the holiday season, and hopefully for many years to come.
- When decorating with fragile or delicate items such as hydrangea, please remember that your tree will be transported.
- All decorations, lights, and trim **MUST BE WIRED OR GLUED** to the tree.
- Glue the ornaments to their caps to make them more durable for delivery.
- The treetop **must** be secured.
- **DO NOT USE GLASS** decorations.
- **DO NOT USE** Food, Fruit or any other items that can spoil.
- We will have a supply of bidding “stands” next to the trees, which will identify your tree name and information. You are welcome to decorate the stand if you would like to match your tree, but please note that if your tree goes to live auction the stand may be disassembled and moved.
- You will receive five sets of white lights for a 7 ft. tree, three for a 4 ft tree, three for youth 6ft tree, 2 for wreaths. More lights may be added at your own expense. If adding additional lights, limit the number of strands to two sets per foot. If you have more than 6 strings of lights, you must use a power strip to accommodate the additional lights.
- We will not supply step ladders; we encourage you to bring all the items necessary to decorate your tree.

- To create a more saleable tree, you may add a special prize(s) or gift item(s) with/beneath the tree. However, the items placed under the tree become the property of Festival of Trees and the eventual purchaser.
- Designers are responsible for placing litter and garbage in the trash cans provided.
- Once a tree number is assigned, we cannot accommodate changes, this is critical with this year's event timeline and work required.

Judging

Judging will take place prior to the opening of the event. Award winning tree decorators will be notified. Award winning trees will be highlighted and on the tree signage.

The People's Choice Award will be online and announced once the voting ends. There will be a 4-foot and 7-foot tree award for each of the following categories:

- The Jim Henry Most Whimsical – The tree that displays the most whimsy and humor.
- Best Use of Festival Theme – Most fittingly presents this year's Festival theme of "A Winter Wonderland!"
- Most Traditional – Best characterization of the traditions of Christmas.
- Most Innovative – Most unusual and unique use of materials and tree design.
- Judge's Choice – A tree that the judges feel is deserving of special recognition (not fitting into the above categories.)
- Most Elegant – Most ornate and sophisticated use of ornaments and decorations.
- People's Choice - Recognizes the tree that receives the most votes from the community.

Tree Pricing

- Decorators will receive a tree description and an itemized cost sheet to complete and return with their tree to the festival **no later than Tuesday, November 20th at 7:00 p.m.** Your tree description and value are very important for the committee to properly promote and price your tree. This form helps us market your tree and tell your story!
- Each tree will receive a "Purchase Now Price" unless it is determined to go to live auction.
- If someone wishes to purchase your tree at the "Purchase Now Price" they can pay the set price, and the tree will be eliminated from the bidding process. If a tree is designated for live auction, there is not a buy it now price.
- Trees sold during the live auction are at the discretion of the Festival of Trees committee.

Decorator Recognition

We love recognizing your hard work! To ensure the signage next to your tree is complete and accurate, we ask that you provide all details as early as possible.

- The sign next to your tree will include the tree sponsor, the name(s) of the decorator(s), tree name, you're your design inspiration.
- Names of decorators are listed on the Festival of Trees auction website.
- Each Decorator will get a ticket(s) to our annual Gala event on Friday, December 5th at 6pm. If you decorate a 4ft, youth tree or wreaths then you/your group will get 1 ticket. If you decorate a 7ft tree, then you/your group will get 2 tickets total. You can purchase more tickets if additional people would like to attend the gala.
- For your convenience, entry will be managed through a guest list at the entrance, no physical tickets are required.
- Decorators, who are informed that they are receiving an award, we ask you to arrive between 5pm-5:30pm for award winning photos with your tree.
- **Changes to tree decorator names and stories cannot be accepted any later than Thursday, November 20th at 7:00 p.m.**

If you have any questions about the Decorator Guidelines prior to the decorating dates, please contact Kristan Donoghue at kdonoghue1@shsny.com or 315-785-5745. Feel free to stop by the Decorator Check-in Table during decorating dates with any questions or concerns. Thank you for helping us make A North Country Festival of Trees a successful event supporting children's programming and healthcare services in the North Country community!