



**Festival of Trees and Lights  
2022 – 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Gala**

**DESIGNER GUIDELINES**

**Open to the Public ONLY  
November 19, 11:00 am – 3:00 pm**

**Reception and Silent Auction  
November 19, 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm  
Gala Main Celebration 7:00 pm – Until**

**Registration Opens 4:30 pm**

The Down Syndrome Organization of Southern Nevada is honored and excited to welcome you as a Designer for the 2022 Festival of Trees and Lights. We wish you success in your journey with the beautiful trees, wreaths, and menorahs. We are confident and grateful knowing your talent and dedication will make 2022 a highlight in the long history of the Festival of Trees and Lights.

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**Who To Contact For Assistance**

Tree, Wreath Committee Chair	Fern Adair	702-498-7523	FadairFOTLtrees@gmail.com
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# WELCOME DESIGNERS!

## Planning Your Event

Although your company may be the sponsor of your tree its decorations should not be its theme, i.e., a casino sponsored tree will not be covered with miniature slot machines. Gifts of course, should represent the quality and generosity of the company as will the clever beauty of the tree.

Convey a cohesive theme with decorations, and color concepts that complement the tree and its full display. Request approval of your theme as soon as you decide but with final approval due by **October 4**. Your theme is subject to approval by the Tree Chair to avoid duplications. You will be contacted to advise if your proposed theme and display have been accepted for the Festival of Trees and Lights 2022. Limited spots are available.

We encourage you to choose a theme with artistic creativity and imagination which should be acceptable and appropriate for any home or business.

NOTE: Some buyers may only be interested in the purchase of an exquisitely decorated tree which is beyond their imagination to create, having no interest in a lavish list of gifts. This does not limit the designer's imagination to create an elaborate vision. FOTL reserves the right to limit those trees to balance a variety of trees available. Therefore, it is important to submit your theme request early.

## Theme Ideas

- Holiday: Nutcracker, Nativity, Snowmen, Reindeer, Santa Claus
- International Cultural: Christmas in Germany, France, Spain, Asia
- Children, Family, Baby
- Cultural: Art, Ballet, Music, Circus,
- Nostalgic Christmas: Homemade, Old-Fashioned Holiday, Children's Memories
- Outdoors: Camping, Lake, Lodge, Summer Sports, Winter Sports
- Religious: Nativity, Angels, Silent Night, Hanukkah
- Seasonal: Winter Wonderland
- Sports: Basketball, Hockey, Football, Baseball, Soccer
- Vehicles: Trains, Planes, Automobiles, Boats, Motorcycles, Cars

## Trees

Taking possession of your tree: DSOSN will provide a limited number of sizes of pre-lit trees on a first come basis for you at no cost. You may visit the DSOSN office located at 5300 Vegas Dr, Las Vegas, 89108 to make your choice and pickup. Please call 702-648-1990 to confirm an appointment time.

From traditional to unique, let your creativity soar at the Festival of Trees and Lights by choosing to decorate a 4' or under or a 5' to 7.5' artificial tree. If you choose to supply your own tree or your entry is larger than 7.5', you must have this pre-approved by the Tree Chair. Trees will be displayed on risers, with your required tree skirt or something similar provided by you covering the tree stand. Creatively display the gifts included.

## **Security**

Although FOTL will provide security throughout the event it is recommended that you protect expensive items and gift certificates that may be “shoplifted.” Please make a copy and place it with your tree. The originals will be secured by FOTL Event Chair and/or Tree Chair. Forms are provided to list these items.

For your display, creatively show boldly readable tags or photos on decorated gift boxes marked “copy.” Show the excitement of gifts inclusion!

Items will be returned to the designer on November 20 at 9:00 am to be boxed and sealed for delivery. The complete list of items are also shown on your story board described elsewhere.

All donated and in-kind items must also be reported by October 4 and **MUST** be with the tree or wreath at the time of check-in on November 18 or they will be eliminated for inclusion.

## **Requests & Receipts For Donated Items**

We encourage the use of available Festival letterhead for any gift requests and/or receipts. A sample letter is available.

**FOTL Auction Donation Forms** are to be given to the Tree Chair as soon as possible in order to assure appropriate recognition is given. Maintain a copy for your files or a copy will be returned to you.

## **How to Determine Value**

Of course, it's easy to track your costs with paid receipts. Does that reflect the Fair Market Value? Not necessarily. What if you have smartly shopped and/or been lucky to receive donated items for your design?

A merchant only buys wholesale or in bulk or closeouts at prices not revealed to his customers. If the item is timely and sellable in a competitive market that price indicates the “Fair Market Value” having nothing to do with the cost that was wisely, (or not) expended. Further, in the FOTL world you have creatively assembled various items into a design which now gives it its own and another identity... therefore a unique value.

A common and average merchandise markup is 100% meaning wholesale \$10 retail \$20 to cover cost, overhead, and profit margin, to bring the item to market. That's only an average. Think of industries you know are even using a 300% plus markup due to their fair market value. FOTL does not disclose your costs which are due by November 4. Does that help?

## **Designer? Sponsor? Both?**

The Designer has the creative responsibility while the Sponsor provides the funds to “make it happen”. Often it is a team leader of a company heading up the effort to bring employees/staff together in a great bonding experience to create an amazing display of pride and delight for all...especially the Down Syndrome Organization of Southern Nevada. In this case the company and/or owners are the sponsors.

Also, a Designer may find a sponsor to support a design dream. Or a Company may find a Designer to bring credit and awareness to their community support actions such as a winning and exquisite tree display.

Often too a Designer may have a dream and the creativity to design a tree to self-sponsor by seeking donations of support if needed.

## **Tree Designer Guidelines & Helpful Hints**

**The lighting design** in the ballroom will dim over the displays to enhance your lighting scheme. Use decorations of high quality, as the buyer may use them for years. Keep in mind that your display must survive a vigorous move which will include tipping, transporting, loading & unloading to and from truck and delivering through narrow doorways and hallways. Small decorations are not easily visible and often overlooked. Use large, lightweight ornaments. They show up better and fewer are needed.

**Tree toppers** must be detachable for delivery purposes, especially if it makes your tree over 7.5' or is fragile and may not safely fit into the delivery truck. Please provide a protective container for the tree topper.

**Glass ornaments** are irresistible but require special care. Please include notice in your description to the buyer and also to the delivery volunteers. Consider bubble wrap where needed.

**Remember...** It is essential that each and every ornament and all decorations be secured (wired) to the tree. An ornament having parts should be glued together as one piece then to be wired to the tree. Do not glue to the tree. Use the same color wire/pipe cleaner as the color of your tree.

**All greenery** and trees must be artificial.

Beware the riser surface will not contribute to the beauty of your creation; they are dark grey or black. Therefore, consider an enhancement beyond the tree skirt. All displays are on 2' risers.

**For delivery purposes**, trees may be up to 7.5 feet tall. Width is also an important consideration. Fully decorated trees must fit through doorways and residential hallways.

**All items under the tree** will be part of the tree when purchased (*unless otherwise noted, as display only*). Therefore, a Display Number must be attached to each item included.

**Although the trees may be viewed** from all sides and require total decoration, choose a front focus for your gifts, story board and lists of included contents.

**To increase the purchase value** of an item, the Tree Chair has the option to adjust an entry as needed and will notify the designer.

**Trees must be new** or like-new condition. Broken or poorly repaired trees are not accepted. Make sure to fully fluff your tree before decorating.

## **Describe Your Display Including Storyboard & Gift Lists**

The description of your display is essential. Interested buyers will view your information from their cell phones with short visions on the jumbo screen. Therefore, keep your important description short with high impact.

Capture attention while highlighting YOUR design as the most likely to excite the high bidding or even a bidding war! FOTL may edit as needed. Prepare your eye-catching description within a single page portrait format suitable to be scanned containing Display Number, list of gifts (list highest prices first), value of your entire creation (never your costs), and any **short story** you consider of interest to enhance your display.

**November 4** is the deadline for all auction designers to provide their gift list to the Tree Chair.



### Tree Matching Wreaths

Get creative! Throwing in something extra is ok! Adding a little extra might be just what is needed to really appeal to the buyer! Nothing like having their entryway decorated with a beautiful tree-matching wreath, adorned with lights, or a stocking, ribbon, and the themed ornaments.

### Menorahs

Beautifully tasteful and appropriate Menorahs are encouraged to include additional items relating to the holiday. Of course, flame on candles cannot be displayed. They can range in size having values similar to some trees. Again, **creative gifts of value intrigue buyers.**

### The WOW Factor!

The “**WOW**” factor means exceeding the expectations of the audience! Think **BIG** to create the most exciting and eye-catching entry possible! Brainstorming with your team is fun and can make the difference between a nice display and one that excites the imagination!

### Tree Committee Visits Designers

As you develop your beautiful tree design, the tree committee will schedule an appointment to view your progress, offer encouragement, answer questions and assist with guidelines. This gives the committee a chance to identify the three to five trees that will participate in the live auction, award considerations and planning the display layout of the ballroom.

## **Who Moves My Display?**

No One But You. The integrity of your designed display is as safe as you designed it.

- You may choose to decorate your tree at your home or business and then transport it to its assigned place in the ballroom on Friday, November 18 from 9:00 am to 8:00 pm. There you will have an opportunity to finalize and fluff for your desired creative presentation.

OR

- You may choose to bring your tree and decorations to the ballroom on Friday, November 18 to decorate in place from 9:00 am to 8:00 pm.

Sunday, November 20 at 8:00 am we ask that you personally box and label the contents of your gifts display along with all items which now belong to the purchaser in preparation for FOTL volunteers to box the tree or wreath for delivery.

## **Prospective Buyers**

There are some key elements to consider in planning competitive bidding on your tree and/or wreath. Which buyer is in your sights?

**Individual buyers** are looking for more traditional items to decorate their home or the home of a family member.

**Business buyers** are looking to enhance their business office, lobby or showroom with items or ornaments to give key customers or employees. They look for a tree that is interesting but not too “over-the-top.”

**Charitable buyers** will donate to their favorite church or hospital.

## **Lights**

Your tree should be pre-lit. *It is not recommended to add additional lights.* But if you choose to add more new lights be sure they are not in series, (if one goes out the string goes out). Maximum three strings connected together. For LED lights, the number of strings that can be plugged end to end is indicated on the packaging. Test lights before stringing and before all other decorations. The additional light wires must match the tree or wreath. Lights should remain on while attaching them to be sure none are loose or faulty. White lights are a preference, but it is your choice.

Adding more than five (5) strands of lights – please wire a power strip to the base of your tree.

Lights must be securely fastened to your tree or wreath. Match color wire ties. Two twists are sufficient.

## **Filling Empty Spaces**

A variety of materials can be used to fill empty spaces and add shape to your tree.

Suggestions: floral and paper ribbon wraps and bows, raffia, tulle, pinecones, moss, holly, flowers, etc. It's your imagination!

Bows and ribbon garlands can be an economical and an appealing finishing touch. Some things to remember when selecting ribbon:

- Florist satin wire with dozens of colors, is easier to tie than any other kind of ribbon.
- Velvet is more difficult to tie. You might want to find someone with experience tying bows.
- Ribbon comes in many widths, but it takes 2 to 4 yards to make a bow.
- Tie the center of your bow with pliable wire, using a long enough piece that you can wire the bow directly onto the tree.

## **Tree Stand Regulations**

Selecting the proper tree stand is important. Tree stands can be found that are impossible to collapse. The tree stand must be permanently affixed to the tree.

When you set up your tree in the ballroom volunteers are available to put self-tapping screws through each section of the tree.

If you plan on decorating your tree before set-up day, firmly attached the rods of the ALL sections of your tree with self-tapping screws. Please note that some trees incorporate electrical wiring in the trunk of the tree. Caution that self-tapping screws do not penetrate the electrical.

## **Wreath Designer Guidelines & Helpful Tips**

Wreaths can be made of any artificial material. Be creative! Designs should fit a 30" door with a secure loop for hanging and limited to 20 lbs. max. Wreaths may have a theme and include gifts. Please indicate whether the wreath is for indoor or outdoor noting weather resistant materials. All elements are to be secured the same as the trees. See instructions in tree section above.

- Wreaths must be in new or like-new condition. Broken or poorly repaired wreaths are **not** accepted.
- All wreaths will require an adequate storage bag or container with string tag attached to the handle and clearly marked with entry title, number, and Designer. Please do not write on the container that now belongs to the purchaser.
- Sponsorship and Donations forms are available in the Designer Packet or from the Tree Chair. Completed forms are to be turned in to the Tree Chair as soon as possible.

## **Basket Designer Guidelines**

- All Baskets should be wrapped in cellophane or similar and tied with a bow, ribbon, or other decoration.
- Please attach a tag with, Display Number, Designer, contents, and Value. A list will help bidder understand the true value of your basket.
- List your best gifts first.
- All food items are to be non-perishable only.

### Basket Creative Ideas

Use wicker/metal/plastic baskets/wood crates or tubs, garden planters, luggage, briefcases, hat boxes, stockpots, etc. for a more creative basket.

## **Historically Proven Hot Items at Auction!**

- Exclusive Meet and Greet
- Travel
- Quilts
- Upscale Handbags
- Valuable Jewelry
- Behind-Scenes-Tours
- Local Sport Teams Tickets
- Gingerbread Houses
- Art
- Perfumes
- Limited Edition Liquors
- Sports Memorabilia
- NASCAR Events
- Utah Ski Trips

## **Check In**

Good News for Designers ... Historically DSOSN has used strong boxes, each measuring 3'x3'x3', open top (then, stretch film wrapped), for delivering the trees to the buyers following the festival. These boxes are now available to you this year to transport your tree more conveniently to the festival. The same box will then be used to transport your tree to its new holiday show place.

All Designers must first check in with the Tree Chair before unloading their vehicle on November 18. You must submit, or have submitted, your signed agreement AND provided your gift list by this time.

- A map showing your entry's site will be available at check in.
- Directions to the loading dock will be furnished prior to November 18 with a map available.
- Yahoo!! The loading dock opens directly into our assigned festival ballrooms!

## **Extension Cord Requirements**

- Designers provide their own cords (minimum of 12' cord from tree to electrical source).
- Only 12-gauge cords accepted.

## **Check Out**

- Before a tree can be considered finished, Designers must check out with the Tree Chair.
- All decorating must be completed for judging by 8:00 pm, November 18 allowing time for Festival Chairs to coordinate and dress the entire room and for judging.

## **PLEASE NOTE:**

- Designers will be asked to assist with adjustments of decorations if necessary, during the Festival.
- Remember, the trees will be delivered to the winning bidders Sunday, November 20. Designers or their representatives are required to securely box and seal just the gift items on display and label with identifying labels to be provided.
- We will be boxing up trees on Sunday – November 20 starting at 8 am. Again, this is not mandatory that you box up your tree but if you can help, that would be great!
- All trees must be boxed up by noon and loaded onto the trucks for delivery. Upon purchase, the buyers will provide a three-hour window of their availability for delivery.



## Designer's Toolbox

Designers must bring their own construction materials and tools as needed for their set-up. Here are some recommended items:

- A blanket to place on the floor around your entry while decorating to prevent broken ornaments.
- Extension cord and power strip
- Floral wire or pipe cleaners to attach ornaments and lights
- Glue gun and glue sticks
- Rub-on glue stick or glue dots
- Ladder or step stool to reach the height of your tree
- Needle nose, wire cutters, regular pliers, and scissors
- Tape – electrical, floral, masking, duct, double-sided, etc.
- Cart, wagon, or dolly to help moving items to your set-up location
- Trash bag(s), broom & dustpan to clean up your area when finished

## Judging Categories and Awards

The Designer designates the category. For categories to be included, there must be two or more trees selected for a specific category, or the category will be eliminated. Winning entries will have the ribbon attached on display. Winners will be encouraged to have their photo taken alongside their winning item for recognition in promotional pieces and social media.

- **Live Auction** – Top three to five trees will be selected for the live auction.
- **Most Elegant** – Glows with exquisite and sophisticated style.
- **Most Traditional** – Best exemplifies the spirit of Christmas.
- **Most Whimsical** – An enchanting tree designed with fanciful ideas and is magical.
- **Judges Choice** – Favorite tree among the judges.



*Thank you for your time, talent, donations, and your continued and generous support!*

*All proceeds from the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Festival of Trees and Lights supports the Down Syndrome Organization of Southern Nevada (DSOSN) and remains in the Las Vegas area.*