



Festival of Trees Designer/Donor Guidelines

Overview (Revised 08/01/25)

The Festival of Trees has been a magical community celebration benefiting Sandhills Children's Center since 1997. As the premier event of the holiday season, Festival of Trees enhances our community by creating a wonderful opportunity for business, civic and community members to come together to support the valuable services provided by Sandhills Children's Center.

Over \$4 million has been raised over the years to provide therapies for the children at Sandhills Children's Center. Working with an annual budget of over \$4 million, the Festival is an important part of the financial support. Thank you for being a part of our family.

Decorating Day

Sunday, November 16 by appointment . Sign-up will be online.

Noon - 8:00 p.m. Decorating of greenery on site (Large trees 5' and taller)

2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Delivery of tabletop trees, gift baskets, wreaths, garlands, centerpieces, and all other auction contributions . You will receive an email to sign up for a time to bring your decorated greenery to The Carolina Hall.

ALL decorating MUST BE COMPLETED by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, November 17, 2025.

Basic Guidelines

Time to get creative! We ask our designers to create the most exciting and eye-popping display packages possible. All types of décor sell, but the best selling items are imaginative, lavishly decorated and filled with color and texture.

The Festival Committee reserves the right to adjust displays as necessary to enhance their salability.

Lights MUST BE NEW. Please use new lights that are independent of each other so that if one burns out, the rest stay on. There is a limit of three strands plugged together. You will be contacted to refresh lights that are not working.

By registering as a Festival Designer, you agree to wiring ALL decorations onto your greenery with floral wire. Wire hooks are not acceptable.

ALL items placed in your display will be included in the auction.

Pricing & Sales

Festival of Trees Committee members set the prices using the Fair Market (retail) Value you supply for your decorations. Items will remain on display throughout the festival, even if they sell "Buy Now". Your design item helps to raise over \$25,000 at the door and over \$75,000 in sponsorships in addition to the amount it brings in the auction. Your contribution is greatly appreciated!



Festival of Trees Guidelines - Page 2

Designer Name(s) & Theme Title

Theme Titles should be appropriate for any home or business.

Theme Title Examples: *Garden of Peace & Joy, A Chef's Dream, Celestial Angels, Ruby Rhapsody*

Theme Title Card: A title card will be generated from the auction page. **ALL descriptions are due ASAP but no later than November 4, 2025.** Descriptions are limited to one detailed paragraph. The card will include the item #, description, donor/decorator. These are printed on one page, so if necessary, they will be edited to fit one page.

Designer Name(s) : The Festival Committee will create a card with the item number and designer name for each item that will be available when you arrive at The Carolina Hall to attach to your item.

Photographs

Photographs will be taken after final checkout by the designer. There will be a master list of all auction items to ensure everything is complete and accounted for; see Tammy Genthe or Heather Medlin if there are any questions. If you would like to take pictures of your item and submit them ahead of time, that would be great! Please make sure the pictures have a solid background. We will use them if they fit the auction page format.

Online Auction

Please view your online auction page by Noon on Monday, November 17 to make sure everything is correct. Corrections can only be made before the auction goes live, so submit edits Monday afternoon to tgenthe@sandhillschildrenscenter.org by 2 p.m. It is VERY IMPORTANT to submit your descriptions on time so that the auction is ready to go live on time.

Directions - The Carolina Hall

Please bring all small items through the front of The Carolina Hotel.

Larger items may be driven to the back of The Carolina Hall near the loading dock. Off Hwy 5, turn onto McLean Rd. (across from Linden Rd.) Look for Festival of Trees signs to guide you to the loading dock. Bring help to unload your items. 5 minute parking limit in the loading area and then you must move your car to the front of the hotel. Please keep the loading area clear for deliveries. Hotel security will tow any vehicles left in the loading zone or the employee parking behind the hotel.

Upon arrival at The Carolina Hall, please visit the designer check-in desk where you will receive your packet with your design item tags.

Security

The Festival of Trees hires security to ensure the safety of all entries beginning on Sunday. On site cameras and guards will patrol the room throughout the event.



Festival of Trees Guidelines - Page 3

Holiday Trees

LARGE TREES

- Large trees include 5' and 7.5'
- All large tree decorations and gifts must have a minimum retail value of \$350. The Festival committee will determine opening bid, bid increment, and Buy Now price.
- **All ornaments MUST be wired on with floral wire (or some other type of wire.)**
- Floor space for large trees is 6' X 6'. Additional space must be requested before October 14.

TABLETOP TREES

- Tabletop trees include 2', 3' and 4' trees.
- All tabletop tree decorations and gifts must have a minimum retail value of \$100. The Festival committee will determine opening bid, bid increment, and Buy Now price.
- **All ornaments MUST be wired on with floral wire (or some other type of wire.)**
- **Tabletop trees will have a 2' x 2' space available for display.**
- **Additional space must be requested ahead of time due to limited space.**
- **If additional space is approved, the minimum retail value increases to \$150.**

LIGHTS MUST BE NEW. Please use new lights that are independent of each other so that if one burns out, the rest stay on. It is recommended to use 100 lights per foot (height) of the tree. There is a limit of three strands plugged into each other. You will be contacted to refresh lights that are not working.

DECORATIONS & ORNAMENTS

- ALL Decorations must be **WIRED** onto the tree securely. Floral wire is the best to withstand moving of trees and delivery.
- Please do not use dried flowers or perishable items on your designs.
- Ornaments with an inserted or slip-on hanging attachment usually found on glass balls should be glued where the two pieces meet so the hanger cannot slip out.
- Minimum ornament recommendations:
 - 3' tree = 60-80 ornaments
 - 4' tree = 120 ornaments
 - 5' -7.5' tree = 210 - 300 ornaments

UNDERNEATH/AROUND Display

- A tree skirt or appropriate covering for the base of the tree is required. Gift wrapped boxes coordinating with your tree theme enhance the overall look of your tree and appeal.
- Gifts under your tree should compliment your title and theme and be in proportion to its size. Gifts should have an accompanying box for transporting purposes, which you should incorporate into your display under your tree. Gift certificates may not be displayed on the tree, but may be represented with a photo. **ALL gift certificates are due to the Festival of Trees when you deliver/decorate your design.**
- **ALL items placed under/around your display are included in the auction.**
- Signs will be posted with a description of your design and the online auction item number for patrons to find your auction page. You are welcome to make signs with donors and descriptions to place around the tree as long as they are no larger than 18" x 24".

TREE TOPPER

Please decorate the top of your tree by including a topper or large bow.

FILL EMPTY SPACES

A lavishly decorated tree leaves no empty spaces. A variety of materials can be used to fill empty spaces, cover the tree trunk and add shape to the tree. Suggestions include garland, ribbon, tulle, pinecones, silk flowers, picks, etc...



Festival of Trees Guidelines - Page 4

WREATHS/GARLANDS - Greenery is supplied by the Festival of Trees. Designers may bring greenery upon approval.

WREATHS

- 30" wreaths are provided by the festival.
- Wreaths should have a minimum value of \$100. The Festival committee will determine opening bid, bid increment, and Buy Now price.
- Hooks should be added to the back of your wreath (at the "top") so they may be hung in the Festival.
- All decorations **MUST** be wired onto the wreath securely.

MAILBOX GARLANDS

- Mailbox garlands should have a minimum value of \$75. The Festival committee will determine opening bid, bid increment, and Buy Now price.
- All decorations **MUST** be wired onto the garland securely.
- Ornaments and decorations should be made for **outdoors**.
- Ribbon should be made for **outdoor use**.

GIFT BASKETS may range in size and can have values similar to some trees.

- Baskets should have a minimum value of \$50.
- Wrapping Baskets in cellophane is recommended but optional.
- Please provide a list of items in your basket that compliments your design. List your best gifts first.
- Make sure all food items are non-perishable.
- Use wicker/metal/plastic baskets/wood crates or tubs, baby bath tubs, garden planters, luggage, briefcases, hat boxes, stockpots, etc. to display your gifts.

IDEAS for baskets: Gourmet Food Baskets; Bath, Body & Beauty Baskets; Tea and Coffee Baskets, Office Baskets; Tool Man Basket or Box; Family/Fun Basket; Dining/Hotel/Show Basket Packages; Wine Baskets

HOLIDAY VIGNETTE

- There are a few spaces available for designers to create a special holiday themed vignette for auction. These are available by special request. Call 910.692.3323 and ask for Tammy.
- Vignettes should have a cohesive theme.
- Vignettes should have a minimum value of \$350.
- Spaces are 6' x 6'. Requests for larger spaces will be considered prior to September 30.
- Examples include dining table with dinnerware, bedroom, living room, and reading nook.

CENTERPIECES AND TEARDROP SWAG

- Centerpieces/swags should have a minimum value of \$50. The Festival committee will determine opening bid, bid increment, and Buy Now price.



Festival of Trees Guidelines - Page 5

OTHER

Hand Crafted Items may include pottery, paintings, quilts, and gingerbread houses. They will be displayed throughout the hall after the trees have been decorated.

Gift Certificates may be used within a tree display, the raffle, or for door prizes. Gift certificates will be kept in a secure location until the buyer picks up on Sunday, November 23. ALL gift certificates must be delivered when you decorate/deliver your donation.

DESIGNER CHECKLIST

- ___ **LIGHTS** (100 for each foot i.e. 3 ft. tree = 300 lights)
- ___ **ORNAMENTS**
- ___ **FLORAL WIRE**
- ___ **WIRE CUTTERS**
- ___ **TAPE**
- ___ **STEP STOOL OR LADDER**
- ___ **TREE SKIRT**
- ___ **TREE TOPPER**
- ___ **EXTENSION CORD** (Used to connect to festival power)
- ___ **HOT GLUE GUN** (Used to secure hanging attachments on ornaments)
- ___ **RIBBON**
- ___ **SCISSORS**
- ___ **THEME/TITLE CARD WITH LIST OF ITEMS/GIFTS INCLUDED**
- ___ **GIFTS OR GIFT BOXES** (Gifts under the tree are not required, but you should fill the empty space with empty gift boxes or other filler that matches your theme)

Designers/Donor Receive:

1. Acknowledgment as the Donor/Designer on a sign on your donated/decorated item
2. Visibility to the thousands of patrons at Festival of Trees
3. Online visibility with option for a video on your auction page
4. Recognition at FestivalofTrees.org
5. Joy from helping some special children at Sandhills Children's Center

Thank you!