

Festival of Trees

What is the Festival of Trees?

The **15th Annual Festival of Trees** is a community celebration featuring a spectacular display of 60+ holiday trees in a winter-wonderland setting. The trees are individually decorated by families, businesses, and civic organizations and enjoyed by hundreds of people. The majority of the trees are offered for silent auction during the week-long event. All trees must remain at the Festival venue until the end of the last day.

There are also 2-3' decorated tabletop trees for immediate sale, and there is a Gift Table.

How Can Volunteers Help?

There are multiple ways you can help. You can sponsor a tree or place an ad for your business or company. Volunteers are always needed to assist at this exciting event. Some of the choices allow for short-duration or one-time work sessions, others can be multiple hours or multiple days of aid. There are tasks for families/teens/groups to do together or single volunteers can sign-up to help and will be guided by FOT staff and/or will work with other community volunteers.

To volunteer contact Volunteer Coordinator, Jackie Millard, 908-876-4135, jackie.millard@comcast.net

Decorators:

The FOT committee provides volunteers who agree to decorate pre-lit artificial trees in a choice of three sizes. Decorators provide the decorations and these must be wired to the trees. The smaller trees may be taken home to decorate and must be delivered to the barn between Mon. and Fri. after Thanksgiving. All other trees need to be decorated at the barn. Decorators receive two tickets to attend the Opening Night Party as well as 2 entry tickets to the Festival. Note: To ensure inclusion of your tree and the attributes for who sponsored or decorated it in our event program, please provide the requested details on the application. **To volunteer to decorate, contact Janet Dietz, 908-879-6722, jdietz45@comcast.net**

Another way to volunteer as a decorator is to use our stock of ornaments to decorate the 2-3' tall tabletop trees, which we sell at the Festival as "cash 'n carry". This decorating is normally done anytime before Thanksgiving at the Church of the Messiah building where all our supplies are stored. A convenient time can be arranged for groups by contacting Volunteer Coordinator, Jackie Millard, 908-876-4135, jackie.millard@comcast.net or Tree Decorator Coordinator Janet Dietz, 908-879-6722, jdietz45@comcast.net. Decorating workshops are also scheduled starting in October. Check www.srcnj.org website for workshop dates.

Move-In Day @ the Barn: Sunday after Thanksgiving 11:30 AM - work as long as you wish. We hope you can stay until 2:00 pm

Since all our supplies are stored in the basement of the Church of the Messiah we rent/borrow a truck and volunteers help load & unload the supplies at either the church location or at the Barn destination. Many hands make the task shorter!! Strong arms and legs are needed as some of the items are quite heavy. This is not a task for young school children. Men's service groups are particularly welcome to help with this day!

Help Decorate the Barn interior: The week after Thanksgiving, 10 AM -5 PM

We will be decorating the venue space during the week prior to the Festival and will need lots of help hanging strings of lights, decorating all the window sills, hanging wreaths, decorating trees that are only for show, getting Santa's corner decorated, arranging the items for sale on our craft/gift tables, setting up the "Kid's Korner" where crafts are offered, etc. lots to do!

Music & Song Entertainment

Throughout the week long event we like to host community music groups, soloists, choirs, instrumentalist etc. to entertain our guests while they tour the tree festival. This year we will be having a Caroling & Wassail evening on Dec. 6 and there will be other performers scheduled. **If you have a group or individual who would like to perform contact Sue Underwood, Entertainment Coordinator, 908-876-9185 or suewholovesbirds@hotmail.com.**

Take-Down Day @ the Barn: two weeks after move in, 9:00 AM – stay as long as you can (usually finished by 3:00pm)

We do the reverse of Move-In day *with the added task of un-decorating unsold trees and the venue space*, boxing up all the FOT materials/supplies, loading and hauling everything back to the church basement. Once again, many hands make the task lighter, especially since we had five days to decorate the space and only one to undecorated it this time!! Strong arms and legs are needed as some of the items are quite heavy. This is not a task for young school children. Men's service groups are particularly welcome to help with this day!

Provide holiday cookies for the refreshment table.

During the Festival we provide a table of home baked holiday cookies and hot cider, coffee and tea for those attending and working at the Festival. Volunteers are needed to supply cookies that can be offered to our guests. Perhaps a troop or family would like to make this a fun event for them to share with the community attending.

Any further questions can be sent to either Jackie Millard or Sue Underwood and we will be happy to answer your queries.

There are over 60 decorated trees filling a rustic, renovated handicapped accessible barn with radiant heating, indoor toilet facilities, and thousands of twinkling lights all making a wonderland of enchantment!

Tickets cost \$8/Adults & \$5 seniors and school children.

Special Event days:
Caroling & Wassail Night,
The Baroque Group,
Sing-along & story-time with Mrs. Tonnesson,
Santa & Mrs. Claus,

*A benefit event which provides funding for the **Senior Resource Center (SRC)**.*

What is the Senior Resource Center?

The Senior Resource Center is a non-profit organization that provides advocacy, support, information, education, training and referral for seniors and their caregivers.

Ongoing programs include Lunch' N Learns at our local libraries, caregiver support and activities at the community center:

- Yoga and Chair Yoga
- Non-Impact Aerobics (NIA) Dance
- "Healthy Bones" Program
- Tai Chi
- Qi Gong
- Stretch Band Class
- Line Dancing
- Barre/Chair Pilates
- Medicare Assistance
- Health Fairs

The Community Center is located at: 50 Rt. 24, Chester (inside the Church of the Messiah) just 1 ¼ miles west of the junction of Routes 206 & 24.

The Community Center programs are open to **all seniors and their caregivers regardless of their residential location**. The classes are also provided for a \$2 donation for most classes. The *Festival of Trees* and the annual **Wine & Dine** event, held each May, are the two fundraisers that support the programs of the SRC.