

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

40 years, brighter than ever

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Forty years is a long time to keep a tradition shining.

But this year, Festival of Trees isn't slowing down — it's leveling up. Every corner of the RiverCenter will carry new energy, new partnerships and new reasons to believe the magic Quad City Arts instills grows brighter with age.

The buzzword this year: intention. The Cultural Trust is baking it into everything they do.

Throughout this 40-day series, you've seen what makes Culture Bright special — the stories, people and purpose behind the sparkle. Now, that same intention is shaping the next chapter of the festival itself.

Culture Bright Lane

New this year: Culture Bright Lane — a bold new stretch of trees, featuring its first-ever 9-foot showpieces.

Why? Because homes, buildings and expectations have grown taller — and the festival is ready to grow with them.

If the 7 1/2-foot height limit ever kept you from finding a tree that fit your space, that changes now. Culture Bright Lane will showcase grand-scale trees designed by some of the Quad Cities' most seasoned decorators — each one built to fill the new generation of vaulted ceilings and expansive rooms with wonder.

Culture Bright VIP Lounge

For those who help make it all possible — the sponsors, partners and Culture Champions — this year introduces a reimagined VIP Lounge.

Created for comfort, creativity and connection, the lounge offers an exclusive space to slow down, toast the season and experience the magic up close — for one night only at the Premiere Party. If you haven't secured your tickets, you'll want to do so soon. Space is limited.

Culture Bright Neon Forest

Just across the river, the partners at the Quad City Botanical Center are unveiling "Winter Lights Powered by MidAmerican Energy Company" — featuring the season's signature installation: the Culture Bright Neon Forest.

The connection is intentional.

Festival of Trees celebrates what happens inside the community's walls; "Winter Lights" celebrates what happens outside them.

Together, they light both sides of the river — a shared expression of art, partnership and pride.

Partnership in motion

Partnership is what keeps culture moving — and this year, Landjet, one of Iowa's fastest-growing small businesses, is literally driving that movement forward.

They're generously chauffeuring the Culture Champions to both premieres: the Culture Bright Neon Forest on Thursday, Nov. 20, at the Botanical Center, and the Festival of Trees Premiere Party on Friday, Nov. 21, where the first-ever Culture Bright Lane will be unveiled.

Their collaboration embodies what Culture Bright stands for: innovation, connection and the belief that business and creativity thrive together. It is also testament to the notion that when you hear the words Culture Bright, it means that you don't want to miss it. Where else do you see partnership like this?

The next 40 years

Forty years marks a milestone — but it also marks a new beginning.

The Cultural Trust's investment ensures that every dollar raised this season doesn't just fund the moment; it fuels the future.

The festival has always been about joy. Now, it's also about legacy.

Whether you've been coming for decades or this will be your first visit, this year's Festival of Trees promises more than beauty — it promises belonging.

Come see what 40 years of creativity looks like when an entire community decides to go all in.

Coming tomorrow: The storyteller's gift: How partnership keeps culture bright

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40 STORIES IN 40 DAYS

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