

CANDIDATES HAVE BEEN SELECTED, THE POLLS ARE OPEN!

ONLINE VOTING BEGINS TODAY FOR THIS YEAR'S CHRISTMAS TREE

For the first time, Chicagoans will be choosing the City's Christmas Tree. From a selection of more than 70 trees ranging in height from 55 feet to 70 feet, three finalists have been selected to grace Daley Plaza as the Official Christmas Tree of the City of Chicago. Beginning **today through October 24**, you can vote to select this year's tree. The winner will be announced the week of October 25.

The three finalists are (in alphabetical order):

The Colomer Family, McHenry, Illinois – 70 foot blue spruce
The Smith Family, Willowbrook, Illinois – 56 foot blue spruce
The Spangler Family, Western Springs, Illinois – 55 foot blue spruce

"The Holiday Season is about families coming together." said Mayor Richard M. Daley "It's a wonderful thing to see Chicagoland collectively choosing the City's Official Christmas Tree, much like we all do with our own families."

More than seventy trees from Chicago, Illinois and Indiana were submitted for consideration. With the assistance of The Brickman Group, landscaping/tree professionals, The Mayor's Office of Special Events selected three finalists based on the following criteria: A Spruce or Fir tree (no pines), it must be at least 55 feet or more, tree must be accessible to insure a safe removal and must be within 100 miles from Chicago's Loop.

Once the polls have closed and the votes are tallied, we will announce the winning tree and the family that donated it will join Mayor Richard M. Daley on Daley Plaza for the official Tree Lighting Ceremony presented by Underwriters Laboratories, on Wednesday, November 24 at 4:30 p.m. and help flip the switch. Additionally, the winner will receive decorative LED lights courtesy of Underwriter Laboratories.

To view the three finalists and instructions on how to cast your vote please visit www.explorechicago.org/specialevents or go directly to www.suntimes.com/win

###