

Gov. Evers, First Lady: Share hope this holiday season

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers and First Lady Kathy Evers today announced that more than 5,000 “Hope” themed handmade [ornaments](#) crafted by students across Wisconsin were sent to more than 50 hospitals, assisted living facilities and nursing homes, service providers for people with disabilities, and veterans homes and housing centers to help spread hope across the state this holiday season. Students sent in nearly double the number of ornaments typically received in previous years. A full list of hope ornament recipients is available [here](#).

The governor previously [announced](#) “Hope” would be the 2020 theme for holiday ornaments created by Wisconsin students to celebrate and reflect on what hope means to them, their families, and their communities. Ornaments created by students in Wisconsin are traditionally displayed on a tree in the Wisconsin State Capitol Rotunda. As the Capitol remains closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Gov. Evers announced ornaments would instead be sent across the state to share hope with frontline healthcare workers and Wisconsinites who might not be able to see their loved ones this holiday season.

“We were frankly blown away by the number of ornaments we received to send statewide, which speaks to not only the creativity of our students, but the overwhelming hope and resilience you’ll find across our state,” said Gov. Evers. “These ornaments are a true act of kindness that will bring holiday joy and hope to many of our frontline healthcare workers, essential workers, and the vulnerable folks they care for.”

Gov. Evers and First Lady Evers have also adapted Executive Residence holiday decorations to ensure Wisconsinites can enjoy the residence safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. Much of the Executive Residence’s holiday decorations have

been moved outside this holiday season for Wisconsinites to enjoy safely as they drive, bike, or walk past. Wisconsinites can also virtually tour featured decorations in the interior of the Residence [here](#), including the “Hope” tree, which is decorated with a collection of “Hope” ornaments from students across Wisconsin.

“Many families across the state have had to adjust or change their holiday traditions in order to keep everyone healthy and safe, and here at the Executive Residence it is no different,” said First Lady Evers. “I am glad that we were able to continue this holiday tradition of honoring our service members and sharing the stories of Wisconsinites through the decorations at the Residence.”

The interior decorations also include the “Tribute to our Troops” tree honoring Gold Star families, which features cabin-themed ornaments, created and donated by Linda Hughes and Joan Johnson, that represent a new cabin to be built in Northern Wisconsin for use by past and present service members and their families. Additionally, the tree features ornaments contributed by the family members and loved ones of those who have served or are currently serving our country, and representation from each branch of the armed forces. Wisconsinites can enjoy the “Tribute to our Troops” tree virtually [here](#).

In addition to the “Hope” tree and “Tribute to our Troops” tree, the living room features Alzheimer’s and Dementia Awareness Trees and purple holiday décor, which is the recognized color of the Alzheimer’s awareness movement.

A more complete description of both the interior and exterior decorations at the Executive Residence is available [here](#).

First Lady Evers and the Wisconsin Executive Residence Foundation (WERF) are once again conducting holiday book and food drives throughout the holiday season. Both drives will be conducted virtually this year. True to the First Lady’s work in this area, the book drive focuses on social and emotional wellness books for kids. More information can be found and donations made at <https://www.-mysterytomebooks.com/>. Food drive monetary donations can be made at <https://www.secondharvestmadison.org/> and <https://www.-waukeshafoodpantry.org/>.