Northern Lights Installs Permanent Outdoor Lighting for Appleton Family Recovering from Traumatic Injury

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APPLETON, WI - March 16, 2026 -
The Jedwabny family in Appleton, Wisconsin, recently received a special gift from their community in the form of permanent holiday lighting. Nominated by a local resident through a Facebook contest hosted by Northern Lights, the family was selected to have smart, app-controlled soffit lights installed at their home. This gesture came at a meaningful time for the family, as they continue to recover from a traumatic injury that affected their son Brett in July 2024.

Brett Jedwabny sustained a severe traumatic brain injury when a wheel shattered during a power-washing accident, resulting in significant damage to his eye and skull. He spent months in a medically induced coma, underwent multiple surgeries, and participated in intensive rehabilitation. Now back home in Appleton, Brett has made notable progress, regaining speech and mobility with the help of ongoing therapy and community encouragement. The family's journey has highlighted the strength found in local support networks during challenging periods.

The nomination originated from Michelle Curry, who learned of the family's situation through professional connections. Tyler Jedwabny works in real estate, and Michelle Curry, employed at a local title company,

became aware of Brett's accident and the family's resilience. In her nomination comment, Curry described how Brett overcame life-threatening obstacles and how the community rallied around the family. She noted that last Christmas was spent in a hospital, and expressed hope that lighting up their home this year would bring joy to Brett and his loved ones as they continue their recovery.

Tyler Jedwabny recalled the moment they learned of the nomination. "Actually, it was a total shock. Somebody called and said you?re going to get this, I kinda thought, yeah, right. So we were super stoked about it," he said. The installation has restored a cherished family tradition that Brett previously handled. Christmas lights held special significance for Brett, who enjoyed putting them up each year, while his father avoided ladders due to a fear of heights. Following the accident, the family worried about maintaining this custom.

"I am afraid of heights, so Christmas lights were not my thing. So with the accident, I was like oh man, I?m going to have to buck up. So we actually ran the first year (after the accident) with the lights that he (Brett) put up. And then this opportunity came along," Tyler Jedwabny explained.

His wife, Nicole Jedwabny, shared similar sentiments. "We just know that Brett loved hanging up Christmas lights; it still is his favorite holiday, and this just brought a lot of joy, a big surprise for our family," she said.

The permanent lighting offers practical benefits by eliminating the need for annual setups that involve climbing ladders, reducing physical strain and risk, especially important during the family's recovery phase. Brett's favorite theme reflects his interests. When asked, he responded, "The Green Bay Packers."

Tyler Jedwabny commented on the variety of themes available. "That?s one thing we do really like. We have fun with that," he said.

Nicole Jedwabny added, "Our neighbors have really enjoyed what theme we?re going with. I look forward to having the patterns change as the themes come up. So it?s pretty fun."

The installation, completed on December 11, 2025, involved 126 feet of Northern Lights smart permanent, app-controlled soffit lights. These lights feature schedules, RGBW lighting, and UL listing, allowing for customization through an app. The process provided emotional continuity, enabling the family to celebrate holidays without the previous physical demands.

Tyler Jedwabny praised the experience. "The process of it was phenomenal, the workers were awesome. They came, they got it done, and were very polite. It?s such an easy process, it really is. And it?s so much fun once you have it. It?s like addicting to play around with the different patterns and the lasers, and the different things it can do," he said.

Amber Ruffing, Owner of Northern Lights, reflected on the initiative. "Northern Lights ran this contest to give back to the community and brighten someone's day, particularly during times of hardship," she said. The company's involvement underscores the role of local businesses in fostering community-based giving.

Ruffing observed the broader effects. "The nomination from Michelle Curry and the support shown to the Jedwabny family demonstrate how communities come together in meaningful ways," she added. She also noted the significance of such gestures. "Light and celebration can provide a sense of normalcy and joy during recovery, helping families maintain traditions that bring comfort."

This act of community support has resonated in Appleton, where neighbors have engaged with the family's changing light themes. The permanent outdoor lighting in Appleton, WI, serves as a symbol of resilience and collective care. By facilitating this installation, Northern Lights participated in a local effort to aid the Jedwabny family's healing process.

The Jedwabny family's story illustrates how small acts, amplified by community involvement, can restore elements of normalcy after trauma. Grant Jedwabny, the younger son, has witnessed his brother's progress alongside these developments. The lights not only illuminate the home but also represent ongoing hope and adaptation.

Northern Lights specializes in smart, permanent outdoor lighting that enhances homes and businesses year-round. With discreet LED installations, app-controlled customization, and durable performance in all seasons, Northern Lights delivers beauty, safety, and curb appeal every night. The company focuses on providing lighting solutions that blend innovation and design to meet specific needs.

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Northern Lights is an Appleton, WI based exterior lighting company specializing in smart, permanent outdoor lighting. We design elegant solutions that enhance beauty, safety, and functionality, bringing homes and businesses to life after dark year round.

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