# CULTURE BRIGHT:

## A WINTER ESSAY SERIES

**Reflections on art, culture, and the future *of the Quad Cities from* *Jen Lewis-Snyder,***
*President & CEO of The Cultural Trust.*

# A Little Pink, A Little Christmas, A Lot of Dolly



*"Art gives that self a voice. Music gives it somewhere to go."*

**For one night, the road to Dolly runs through Davenport.**

Tonight, we are turning Common Chord's Redstone Room to Culture Bright pink.

Fringe, holiday sparkle, and a room full of people ready to sing along to iconic songs that will carry Tennessee spirit to the banks of the Mississippi.

Nashville and Pigeon Forge can wait. Your invitation is right here at home.

Rhonda Vincent, Dolly's friend and musical collaborator, headlines Hard Candy Christmas, a Dolly Parton tribute created as part of the Culture Bright Winter Series.

Local artists will help open an evening devoted to the songs, kindness, and generosity Dolly left with us.

Doors open at 5 p.m. The show begins at 6. Come early. Let the room welcome you.

We have considered the space around the music because the feeling should begin before the first note. Pink overhead. Holiday nostalgia in the details. Places to pause, take a picture, remember, and become part of the evening yourself.

You deserve an occasion worth dressing for. Our community deserves places that make you want to.

Dolly understood the invitation inside a song. You could arrive carrying something heavy and hear a voice that seemed to recognize it. Her music made room for struggle, humor, ambition, and tenderness. Her generosity gave that tenderness somewhere to go.

To me, that is the heart of Culture Bright. Be yourself. Be kind. Use what you have, to give someone else a little more light.

Tonight, that belief takes shape through partnership.

Common Chord opens its home and musical expertise. The Cultural Trust brings investment and a vision. Artists bring their voices.

The evening also supports cancer research and treatment at the University of Iowa's Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center.

My mother survived breast cancer and ovarian cancer. My aunt is a cancer survivor, too. I am grateful I get to write those sentences.

But I want their lives to hold so much beyond what they survived.

I want evenings they look forward to. Pictures taken because they felt beautiful. A favorite song begins and someone reaches for their hand so they can sway together.

Cancer takes up enough room.

Tonight, we are making room for everything else.

For the part of a person that wants to dress up, laugh loudly, sing badly, and feel something besides afraid.

For the self that can get buried beneath the hardest thing that has happened to us.

Art gives that self a voice. Music gives it somewhere to go.

Dolly kept music and philanthropy close until the end of her life.

She left us songs we could find ourselves in and an example of what generosity looks like when you keep practicing it.

That is the legacy I want this evening to carry.

We will raise funds for cancer research and treatment at the University of Iowa.

And here, in this room, we will celebrate the life those efforts work to protect.

The ordinary, extraordinary privilege of being here. With your mother. Your aunt. Your people.

Hearing a song you love and realizing you still know every word.

That is why I believe so deeply in the work of The Cultural Trust and our Legacy Partners.

The Cultural Trust

We help create places where people can bring their whole selves.

Tonight, bring yours.

Lean in and see what happens when you choose collaboration over competition.

Join us, as we give that belief a pink room and a soundtrack.

Wear something that makes you feel like yourself, perhaps with more sparkle than your average day.

Bring someone you love.

Let the songs do what songs have done: carry a story from one heart to another.

Hard Candy Christmas takes place tonight, November 22, at Common Chord.

We poured all the cups of ambition into this one.

Dolly, we hope this event and the mission behind Culture Bright Winter Series honors you properly.

Check remaining tickets at CultureBright.org.

Culture Matters Here.
And it always will.

**Come see why Culture Matters Here. And why it always will.**

**To learn more about the Culture Bright Winter Series go to CultureBright.org.**

CULTURE BRIGHT

