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.*

What Keeps the Season Bright



"Start a new tradition or rekindle a past tradition. Just enjoy the incredible that surrounds you."

The holiday season requires a surprising amount of negotiation.

Whose family will we visit?

Yes, you must wear a coat.

How many pictures must we take before everyone can have hot cocoa?

Then you finally enjoy the moment you negotiated so hard to protect.

Someone reaches for your hand.

The child who complained about leaving the house asks how long you can stay.

You remember why you came.

Across the Quad Cities, cultural organizations create places where those moments happen.

We return with friends, bring our children, and eventually bring our grandchildren. An evening out becomes something we do every year.

Calling something a tradition can make it sound inevitable.

Anyone who has helped build real tradition knows how much work goes into bringing it back year after year.

At The Cultural Trust, we invest in that continuing work.

Our goal is to be the leader enriching art and culture for all.

Through our endowment, we provide annual unrestricted funding to six organizations we call Legacy Partners: Common Chord, Figge Art Museum, Putnam Museum and Science Center, Quad City Arts, Quad City Botanical Center, and Quad City Symphony Orchestra.

That partnership carries a forever commitment to the missions they serve. Our funding helps pay for people and daily operations, giving our partners room to plan ahead and develop their next idea.

Culture Bright brings those relationships into public view through shared planning, investment, promotion, and storytelling.

Each partner contributes its expertise. Together, we create experiences that give people new reasons to participate.

This weekend offers several. Tomorrow, November 20 Winter Lights opens its tenth season at the Quad City Botanical Center with 400,000 lights and new ways to enjoy the gardens.

Saturday, November 21 brings the Festival of Trees parade and the Quad City Symphony's Elf in Concert at the iconic Adler Theatre.

Sunday, November 22, Rhonda Vincent brings Hard Candy Christmas, a Dolly Parton tribute, to Common Chord.

December continues with Santa at the gardens and the Putnam's 20th season of Polar Express pajama parties.

The Cultural Trust Board Chair, Linda Bowers and I will share that work through the Culture Bright Winter Story Series over the coming month.

You will meet people who make guests feel welcome, take creative risks, and carry their missions into the community. Their stories will help explain what your participation supports and why these places deserve a lasting commitment.

Tomorrow, we begin a special anniversary collection within the series: Ten Years. Ten Stories. The Quad City Botanical Center's tenth season of Winter Lights gives us a reason to look closely at the garden behind the celebration.

Each story offers another way to understand the places we want our children to know and the community we want them to inherit.

Begin with an event that interests you. Follow the people and connections behind it. Let one evening introduce you to something you want to keep in your life.

Read along. Visit somewhere you have never been. Bring someone who needs a reason to leave the couch. Start a new tradition or rekindle a past tradition. Just enjoy the incredible that surrounds you.

Together, we are working to establish the Quad Cities as the most inclusive creative capital in the Midwest. Your participation helps that ambition take shape.

Find the series lineup and ticket information at CultureBright.org.

Culture Matters Here.
And it always will.

A Winter Essay Series, presented by The Cultural Trust

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

The Cultural Trust

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