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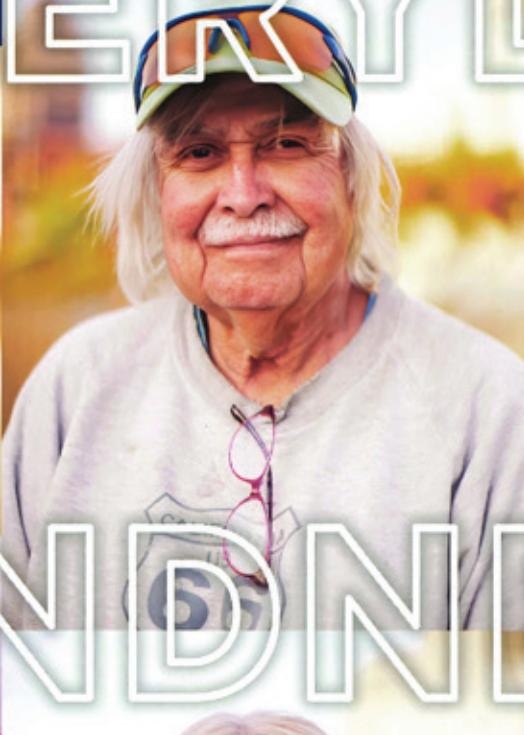
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# columbus

MONTHLY

# EVERYDAY



# KINDNESS

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# HEROES

DECEMBER 2024

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Jane Jacquemin-Clark

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We're honoring 18 people and Fiona the Therapy Dog, whose kindness is changing lives in Central Ohio.

### 40 THE NEW GAY + HIGH

Three art galleries opening in early 2025, a world-class sculpture garden and the evolution of one of Downtown's most prominent corners, all thanks to the vision of Jeff Edwards.

### 48 SAVVY INVESTOR, GENEROUS SOUL

The largest endowed gift in the Columbus Foundation's history comes from a modest Upper Arlington resident who bequeathed the wealth she built to benefit children.

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ON THE COVER:  
Photos by  
Courtney  
Hergesheimer

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# 2024 Everyday Kindness Heroes of Central Ohio

*Columbus Monthly, The Columbus Dispatch and Columbus CEO celebrate 19 community champions who quietly make Central Ohio better for everyone.*



# JANE JACQUEMIN-CLARK

After beating cancer twice, she founded Hope Hollow to help families facing the disease.

By Sophia Veneziano

**It is the story** of mother facing unknowns while trying to provide a Christmas for her family. It is the story of a teen misdiagnosed with blood clots only to find out he would lose his right leg and part of his pelvis.

It is a story of loss, gratitude and unforeseen miracles. It is the story of Hope Hollow and its founder, Jane Jacquemin-Clark.

Before she was a high school teacher and counselor married to her husband, Kevin Clark, Jacquemin-Clark was just 10 years old when she lost her mother to pancreatic cancer. Her mother's eldest sister, Lucille, became like a second mother to her, until Lucille, too, passed away from the disease.

After watching a second aunt, Ellen, battle and survive colon cancer and her father beat prostate cancer, Jane could not help but feel that cancer was an inescapable part of her story and her purpose.

She herself would be diagnosed with medullary thyroid cancer in 2007. Four years later, she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Unlike some of those she loved, she survived both.

"To have survived when people I loved most in this world died of cancer, I just felt I had to find a way to live the gratitude, and I said to my husband, 'I pray it. I speak it. I've got to find a way to live it.' And he said, 'Well, how do we do it?'" Jacquemin-Clark says.

From there, Hope Hollow was born.

After learning that Columbus was an international hub for cancer treatment with Nationwide Children's Hospital, OhioHealth's Bing Cancer Center and The James Cancer Hospital at Ohio State University, the couple bought and began fixing up a home 2008 to provide lodging to people traveling into Columbus for their treatments.

The nonprofit since has provided over 11,000 nights of lodging and has been able to expand to providing thousands of



Jane Jacquemin-Clark says she's found a way to live the gratitude she has for making it through her cancer ordeals.

dollars in meals, transportation and emotional support to patients and their families.

Beyond meeting the physical needs of the cancer patients, Kevin said one of the most important things about Hope Hollow has been the relationships it's built.

"I really attribute that almost 100 percent to Jane. She's one of those personalities that if you know her, you love her," he says.

In 2020, at just 15 years of age, Alex Nicholson was misdiagnosed with blood clots. In March 2023, he was diagnosed with leiomyosarcoma and transferred to Nationwide Children's for a clinical trial program.

Coming from nearly two hours away in North Canton, his mother, Jacinda Nicholson, has had to take time off work to help her son make his appointments.

"I said, 'I don't care, I'll sleep in my truck.' That's your kid, you know?" she says.

"I walked outside to take a breath, and Jane Clark called me, and she said, 'How can I help you?' By then I was bawling my eyes out, and I said, 'I just need a place to stay.'"

"We can do that," Jacquemin-Clark replied.

Jane noted that when people comment on the difference she is making, she responds with the impact the patients are making on her and Kevin's own lives.

"To be invited to share a person's life journey at one of the most difficult times they've faced in their life, if not the most difficult—maybe facing death—it is a privilege that doesn't have words to describe. The closest I can get to it is, 'We walk on sacred ground,'" she says tearfully.

"And if they survive their cancer, we celebrate with them."

These celebrations have turned into long-lasting relationships.

Nine years ago, Dayton-area native Jenny Turner was facing breast cancer treatment at The James. A few days after she started staying at Hope Hollow, she learned her cancer might have spread to her pancreas, delaying treatment. Even though they had just met, she said the first person she turned to for emotional support was Jane.

"I had known Jane for a day and a half, maybe two days, and all I could think about was going downstairs to find her," Turner says. "It was probably the most meaningful thing I've probably



Clark and a fellow cancer survivor, Jenny Turner. Below, Clark's welcoming, sunny kitchen.

## About Jane Jacquemin-Clark

### What is a challenge you have overcome?

My mother died of cancer when I was 10 years old, and I experienced the death of my father and my two aunts who were both mothers to me. Another major challenge was being diagnosed with cancer twice. I do believe that the challenges in life often call us to growth and lead to positive outcomes. My cancer led to my husband and I founding Hope Hollow.

### What inspires you?

I am inspired by the goodness and kindness of others in our world, including the other finalists being given this award. I also continue to be inspired by the persons with cancer that Hope Hollow supports. Their courage, resilience and hope while on their journey with cancer inspires me every day!

### What keeps you engaged?

My faith truly encourages me and gives me hope, and I believe that every person is called and is capable of making a difference for good in our world!

ever experienced with essentially a complete stranger."



Turner and Jacquemin-Clark now share what both refer to as a "mother-daughter-like" relationship, and Turner continues to be involved on Hope Hollow's board of directors.

When being selected as a finalist for the Everyday Kindness Heroes program, Jane continually noted that there are so many people deserving of the award, not just her and Hope Hollow.

Still, those impacted by her self-proclaimed "excessive empathy" made it clear that she deserves to be on the list.

"There still are great people out there among us. People with hearts. People that give. People that love strangers. She's not only a friend, she's part of our family," Nicholson says.

"She was my light in my darkest point."