

December 2024



THE PARTNERSHIP

GREATER BURLINGTON PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER - VOL. 104 NO. 12





A YEAR OF PROGRESS AND POSSIBILITY

by Amy O'Brien

As we approach the close of 2024, I want to take a moment to reflect on all we've accomplished together and to share our vision for the future. This past year has been one of growth, collaboration, and resilience. Since stepping into the role of CEO, I have been inspired by a community dedicated to innovation, opportunity, and shared progress. I am deeply grateful for the support, enthusiasm, and commitment shown by each of you.

Together, we have made strides in workforce development, launching Leadership 2.0 and continuing programming with virtual reality headsets that allow students to explore career options "up close and personal." Our recent collaboration with the area school districts and Southeastern Community College focused on appreciating our teachers and equipping them with resources. It was a huge success!

Downtown Burlington saw exciting growth this year, with eight new businesses opening their doors, adding to the vibrancy and diversity of our community. One of these businesses, Thyme & Spice, achieved a significant milestone by topping four competitors in the statewide "Open 4 Business" contest, winning the grand prize of \$25,000. This win highlights the innovation and entrepreneurial spirit that flourishes here, and it reflects the supportive environment created by Downtown Partners, Inc.'s initiatives. By fostering resources, networking opportunities, and grant support, Downtown Partners, Inc. empowers local entrepreneurs, attracts new businesses, and strengthens Downtown as a hub of commerce and community activity.

Our region saw substantial economic growth with the arrival of Amazon's new \$16 million facility, which brought 100 jobs to a previously unused building. Western Smokehouse completed two expansion projects, investing millions and creating additional jobs. The IAAAP workforce exceeded 1,000 employees this year, with even more investment planned. Meanwhile, Toba Foods is finalizing their investment in the former Aldi facility on Mt. Pleasant Street, with operations beginning soon.

In July, Greater Burlington's tourism reached new heights as Iowa's RAGBRAI concluded its journey with the final tire "dip" at the Port of Burlington. Over 18,000 riders made their way through town. The event brought incredible energy and excitement to our community, highlighting Burlington as a welcoming and scenic destination for visitors worldwide!

Looking ahead to 2025, our goals are ambitious and focused on retention of businesses, continuously improving the quality of our communities with regards to walkability, safety, and supporting the educational systems to help meet the needs of our future workforce—all foundational elements of a sustainable and thriving community. While we expand our regional initiatives, we are also deepening local partnerships that fuel these critical efforts.

To our team, community members, and partners, thank you for the trust you place in the Greater Burlington Partnership. Your passion and dedication are the cornerstones of our achievements. As we move forward, I am excited to continue this journey with you, working together to shape a future where everyone can thrive.

Here's to an impactful year ahead and to new possibilities on the horizon. Wishing you a joyful holiday season and a bright New Year!

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ON THE COVER

#GBPETEY

Find #GBPetey at Chamber of Commerce member businesses and shop local this holiday season!

Santa's favorite little helper is back and out making mischief in Greater Burlington. The area's most famous elf on the shelf, #GBPetey, is up to his old tricks again at local businesses all holiday season to help remind you to shop local! #GBPetey knows that the stress of long road trips and overcrowded stores can zap the holiday spirit out of anyone. Keep a jingle in your step and find the perfect gift for everyone just a few minutes from home. From the most popular new toys for the kids, the coolest new technology for your spouse, or the hottest new fashion trends for your best friend, you can find it right here in Greater Burlington.

When it is time to start your holiday shopping this season, stay close to home and look for #GBPetey. He knows all the best places with perfect gifts for your loved ones. #GBPetey will be making mischief and giving out clues on his location on Greater Burlington Partnership's social media from now until December 15. Guess correctly where he is and you will be entered to win that week's grand prize: a gift card or product from each place #GBPetey was seen. One winner will be chosen each week until #GBPetey returns to the North Pole. Check out Greater Burlington Partnership's social media and keep an eye out. You will not want to miss the shenanigans he gets into this year!

Happy Holidays from the members of the Chamber of Commerce.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS RECEPTION

DECEMBER 10, 5 - 7 PM
ART CENTER OF BURLINGTON

Brought to you by the Government Relations Committee

Join the Greater Burlington Partnership for the annual Public Officials Reception on December 10 from 5-7 PM at the Art Center of Burlington. This exclusive Chamber event offers members the opportunity to connect with local leaders from the City of Burlington, City of West Burlington, Des Moines County, local schools, and legislators. Light appetizers will be served.

To RSVP, contact Teli Fedele at 319-208-0046 or tfedele@greaterburlington.com.



FRIDAY FORUM

Greater Burlington Partnership or Virtual, 8 AM

Chamber members are invited to participate in our Friday Forums, at 8 AM on the third Friday of each month, January through April. Forum's are held in the Winegard Broadroom and can be viewed virtually as well. These forums feature discussions on important legislative updates and local issues.

Upcoming dates: January 17 | February 21 | March 21 | April 18

Topics will be announced soon. Stay engaged and join the conversation!

Join the Conversation!

All Chamber of Commerce members will be invited to join the discussion in person or listen in online.



2025 SOUTHEAST IOWA DAYS

DES MOINES - FEBRUARY 5 & 6

Join the Southeast Iowa delegation of business and community leaders in Des Moines on February 5 and 6, 2025. This is a prime opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations about Southeast Iowa's 2025 legislative priorities and stay informed on the latest developments from the State of Iowa.

Who Should Attend:

Any Chamber member interested in advocating for pro-business legislation and seeking a hands-on experience at the State Capitol during the 2025 Legislative Session.

Cost: \$150 per person, which includes access to the luncheon, legislative reception, and various Q&A sessions focusing on Southeast Iowa's key issues. Scan the QR code to register.

Travel Details: Participants are responsible for their own travel arrangements. For lodging, contact Embassy Suites at 515-244-1700 and mention "Southeast Iowa Days." A block of rooms has been reserved until January 5.

For more information and to RSVP, contact Telisha Fedele.



SCAN ME

THE GREATER BURLINGTON PARTNERSHIP PRESENTS

2025

ANNUAL DINNER

You're Invited

Come one, come all - to the Greater Burlington Partnership's premier annual event. This year, be transported back in time by a vintage carnival extravaganza that promises a night of fun, wonder, and celebration.

Set to be attended by over 500 chamber members, this grand gathering serves as a platform to highlight the remarkable achievements of 2024 and recognizes the community members whose contributions have made a lasting impact.

The main event will open with a plated steak dinner and aerial silk performance by renowned aerialist Laura Ernst.

The evening includes a reception hour with live entertainment, live and silent auctions, an award ceremony, and after party.

Attire:

Attire is semi-formal to formal, with ladies encouraged to wear gowns or dresses and gentlemen in suits or tuxedos. While matching the event colors is not required, guests who wish to coordinate are welcome to incorporate the event colors: gold, red, and black.

FRIDAY

**JAN
24**

AT 5:30 PM



Ticket Information:

Tables of eight, half tables, and individual tickets are available for purchase through Melissa Jones at:

- mjones@greaterburlington.com
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Mini Golf Challenge

DOWNTOWN MINI GOLF CHALLENGE: A FUNDRAISER TO REVITALIZE BURLINGTON

March 6, sponsorships available, get a team together today!

Downtown Burlington is set to host an exciting new event: the "Downtown Mini Golf Challenge" at Burlington Black Water Miniature Golf. This fundraiser, organized by Downtown Partners, Inc., aims to bring the community together for a day of friendly competition while supporting essential downtown revitalization projects.

The Mini Golf Challenge isn't just a game, it's a powerful initiative to raise funds that will go directly towards enhancing Burlington's downtown area. Proceeds from the event will support the creation of new events, add beautification touches, and fund public art installations, ensuring that Burlington continues to thrive as a Cultural & Entertainment District that attracts both residents and visitors.

Local businesses and stakeholders are encouraged to get involved by sponsoring the event or forming teams. Not only does it offer a fun way for colleagues to bond outside the office, but it also highlights a commitment to Burlington's continued growth. Prizes will be awarded to the top teams, adding an extra layer of excitement to the day.

Participating in this event is an impactful way for businesses to support the community's transformation, strengthening Burlington's downtown core.

For those interested in sponsorships or team registration, please contact Melissa Jones at 319-208-0052.

Community Profile and Member Directory:

Get Your Business Noticed

The Chamber of Commerce has partnered with *Town Square Publications* to produce the full-color printed 2025 - 26 Chamber Membership Directory. Tell your story to thousands of business owners, residents, and visitors. The Chamber of Commerce Community Profile and Membership Directory is a great way to reach that market.

Don't miss this opportunity to promote your business!

Contact Town Square Publications at 319-595-2890, or marketing@tspubs.com.

Get your business noticed and keep it successful. Purchase your advertising space with the most effective publication distributed in Greater Burlington.





DISCOVER
DOWNTOWN
BURLINGTON
for the Holidays

PREMIER SPONSOR:

ADDINGTON PLACE
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Santa's Cottage

Saturdays in December, 12 - 2 PM

The jolly old elf himself will be greeting visitors in Downtown Burlington.

HOSTED BY:
DOWNTOWN PARTNERS
A MAIN STREET IOWA PROGRAM

Santa's Cottage

Premier Sponsor: Addington Place of Burlington

Santa Claus will be greeting visitors in Downtown Burlington at Santa's Cottage, located at the corner of Fifth and Jefferson Streets, each Saturday in December from 12 - 2 PM, (December 7, 8, 14, 21). This free, family-friendly experience welcomes all ages, and guests are encouraged to bring cameras to capture special memories.

Thanks to Carl A. Nelson & Co., the City of Burlington, Boy Scouts Troop 3, Kiwanis, and the Downtown Partners Design Committee for helping bring this holiday tradition to life. Special thanks to Addington Place of Burlington, the Premier Sponsor, for supporting Santa's Cottage in Downtown Burlington.



Living Windows

December 5, 5 - 8 PM

Premier Sponsor: Menke & Company

Trolley Sponsor: Standard of Beaverdale

Ice Carving Sponsor: Farmers & Merchants Bank & Trust

Dozens of storefronts will come alive during the 23rd annual Living Windows celebration on December 5!

This favorite holiday event includes lights, carolers, story readings, crafts, decorations, free horse-drawn carriage rides, and much more. And of course, Santa Claus will be on hand at his cottage.

Living Windows includes complimentary food and beverages at many Downtown stores. It's a great opportunity to do some Christmas shopping, see friends, and enjoy the holiday season.

If you would like to participate in a window, please contact Amy Moyner at 319-752-6365 or amoyner@greaterburlington.com.



Gift Ideas

Port of Burlington Welcome Center

The holiday season is here, and the Port of Burlington Welcome Center is ready to help you find the perfect gifts for everyone on your list! It is stocked with unique and locally inspired treasures that capture the spirit of Greater Burlington including Burlington Ornaments! In December, enjoy \$2 off all ornaments! These make beautiful gifts or special additions to your



own holiday décor. Be sure to stop by early for the best selection and take home a little piece of Burlington to hang on your tree. Visit us at the Port of Burlington Welcome Center and shop local this holiday season.

Open at 10 AM daily. Happy Holidays!



GREATER BURLINGTON PARTNERSHIP'S 5TH & 8TH GRADE CAREER FAIRS INSPIRE OVER 600 STUDENTS

December 16 & 18

The Greater Burlington Partnership will host the 5th and 8th Grade Career Fairs at Southeastern Community College on December 16 and 18. Over the course of two days, more than 600 students from Des Moines County schools will explore local career opportunities. Fifth graders will attend on the first day, followed by eighth graders on the second.

Students will be engaged with a variety of local businesses and professionals, learning about the many career paths available in Greater Burlington. The event offers hands-on activities and discussions, inspiring students to think about their future and the workforce options close to home.

By connecting students with local employers, the Career Fairs play a crucial role in guiding the next generation towards meaningful careers in the community.

Contact Teli Fedele if you would like to participate in the event.

Contact Teli Fedele for more information, tfedele@greaterburlington.com

Teachers Appreciation Reception Brings Together 578 Educators and Local Businesses

On November 1, 2024, Southeastern Community College's Blackhawk Student Recreation Center was abuzz with energy as 578 educators from across Des Moines County gathered for the annual Teachers Appreciation Reception. This year's event, held in an engaging expo-style format, proved to be the biggest yet, providing a fantastic opportunity for teachers to connect with local businesses, including premiere sponsor Shearers Snacks, and Platinum sponsors Buena Vista University, and KimAnne Photography. Thank you for your generosity. With booths lining the track area, businesses showcased career pathways, shared resources, and offered giveaways, making it a fun and enriching experience for the educators. The Partnership also gave away gift cards, baskets of classroom supplies, and two airline tickets donated by Southern Airways Express. The event featured a light breakfast, sponsored booths, and lively conversations that highlighted the importance of community support for our local schools.

A huge thank you to all who participated and contributed to the success of this special day, which celebrated the hard work and dedication of our educators, while fostering stronger ties between local businesses and schools. Thank you to Southeastern Community College for accommodating the large group of teachers and allowing the event to take place on their incredible campus. The Greater Burlington Partnership looks forward to continuing this tradition next year!

Premier Sponsor:





Destination Greater Burlington Grant Winners

The Greater Burlington Convention & Visitors Bureau is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2025 Destination Greater Burlington grant. This annual grant aims to support events and projects that not only increase tourism but also enhance the overall experience for visitors to Des Moines County. For 2025, the CVB has awarded funding to seven outstanding organizations whose events and projects will provide significant contributions to the growth of tourism in Greater Burlington.

The Southeast Soccer Academy received \$7,500, the highest award for 2025, to aid in its continued success in hosting soccer tournaments that draw thousands of visitors each year and result in millions of dollars in economic impact to Greater Burlington. Tournaments such as the Monster Match and the Mississippi Cup are anchors in Greater Burlington's growing segment of sports tourism.

The Capitol Performing Arts Center's Jazz Fest, a new applicant for 2025, was awarded \$5,000. This inaugural event has the potential to be a significant addition to Downtown Burlington's already robust Culture & Entertainment lineup of offerings. With the possibility of drawing thousands of music lovers from the Midwest and beyond, the Capitol's Jazz Fest

could eventually position Greater Burlington as a destination for music tourism for years to come.

The Snake Alley Festival of Film was awarded \$2,500 to support its showcase of independent films from across the country, which attracts both filmmakers and movie enthusiasts to Greater Burlington.

The Burlington Kennel Club received \$2,500 in support as it gears up to host the AKC Confirmation Dog Show in 2025, which will gather hundreds of four-legged participants - and their two-legged friends - from across the country.

Spirit Volleyball, Southeast Iowa Swarm, and Perfect Game each received \$2,500 to support their youth sports events, which are expected to attract a large number of players, families, and fans. These sports programs contribute to Greater Burlington's reputation as a premier destination for competitive youth athletics and provide economic benefits to local businesses.

The Convention & Visitors Bureau congratulates each recipient and is eager to see the positive impact of these projects on Greater Burlington's tourism in 2025.

RIBBON CUTTINGS & CELEBRATORY EVENTS



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2025 MARKETING & SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

2025 Farmers Market

It might be crazy to already be thinking about next summer, but now is your chance to snag the only remaining sponsorship available for the Jefferson Street Farmers Market. September 2025 is your month to shine.

2025 Chamber Golf Classic

Additionally, the 2025 Chamber Golf Classic is set to be held at Burlington Golf Club on Thursday, August 14. Sponsorships are selling quickly and only a few Birdie or team sponsorships remain available.

The Partnership Newsletter Advertising

Last chance to feature your business in the premier communication tool of the Greater Burlington Partnership, The Partnership monthly newsletter. As you're reading it now, many others are too! The publication is delivered to over 2,500 readers in the Greater Burlington area. Don't miss your chance to be part of the publication all year long in 2025!

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Do you have something special to announce? A work anniversary, a retirement, a special award or recognition, a conference attended, a sales record, a name change, a new location? We would love to share this with our membership. Please contact Brenda Levitt.

Community Foundation of Des Moines County grows to record levels in 2024 with their largest fund growing to over \$1 Million.

The Community Foundation of Des Moines County is proud to announce their assets have grown to over \$5.1 million as of October 28, 2024.

Milestones of this growth are:

- Five new funds so far this year totaling over \$781,000.
- Two new family funds of \$400,000.
- Total contributions of \$946,000 including the five new funds.
- 1st Family Fund founded in 2011 grows to over 1 million in 14 years.

The Foundation is expecting more growth the 4th quarter including another family fund of \$400,000 or more plus other contributions of \$100,000 which will result in a total assets of over \$5.6 million.

The Community Foundation of Des Moines County has been created by and for the people of Des Moines County. The Community Foundation's main goals are to support charitable projects and programs in Des Moines County (giving out \$855,407 in grants since 2009) and to attract additional funds to assist donors in creating lasting legacies through a variety of giving options.

BE ON THE LOOK OUT

From November 30 through December 20, follow me daily on Greater Burlington Partnership's Facebook page where I will leave clues to help you find me. If you solve my riddles and discover where I am that day, post the answer to be entered into a prize drawing.

I need to get back to planning my shenanigans. See you soon!

Yours in Mischief,

#GBPetey



NEW MEMBER LUNCHEON DECEMBER 4 AT NOON

On December 4, new members are invited to the Greater Burlington Partnership Winegard Room at 12 PM for a New Member Luncheon. The purpose of the event is for attendees to meet fellow new members while learning more about the Chamber of Commerce, its benefits and programs, how to set up InfoHub accounts, submit Friday Facts, Community Calendar events and more! Attendees are encouraged to bring a laptop to follow along and receive support as needed. New Member Luncheons are open to organizations that have joined the chamber in the past year and members whose businesses have been part of the Chamber of Commerce but are new to their leadership role.

Please RSVP to Melissa Jones, mjones@greaterburlington.com

DECEMBER

december

View more events at
GreaterBurlington.com/Events

EVENTS

1 - Elf on the Ridge
 Barn on the Ridge, 9 AM - 3 PM
BarnOnTheRidge.com

3 - Care-E-Oke
 Cornerstone Wedding & Event Center
 6 - 8 PM
UnitedWaySEIA.org

4 - ARTIST to ARTIST
 Art Center of Burlington, 6 - 8 PM
BTownArt.com

5 - Living Windows
 Downtown Burlington, 5 - 8 PM
facebook.com/downtownburlingtoniowa

5 - Comedy Thursday: Greg Hahn
 Memorial Auditorium, 7:30 PM
BurlingtonRiverfront.com

6 - Burlington High School Choir
 Burlington Public Library, 10 AM
burlington.lib.ia.us

6 & 20 - Friday Night Art Hop
 Art Center of Burlington, 6 - 7:30 pm
BTownArt.com

7 & 8 - Christmas Craft Show
 Memorial Auditorium, hours vary
BurlingtonRiverfront.com

7 & 21 - Chess Club
 Burlington Public Library, 9 AM - 12 PM
burlington.lib.ia.us

7, 8, 14, 21 - Santa's Cottage
 Fifth & Jefferson streets, 10 AM - 12 PM
facebook.com/downtownburlingtoniowa

7 & 8 - Miracle on Jefferson Street
 Downtown Burlington, 10 AM - 4 PM
BTownArt.com

7 - That's Yesterday's News
 Burlington Public Library, 10 AM
Burlington.lib.ia.us

7 - Festival of Lessons & Carols
 First United Methodist Church, 7 PM
BurlBelCanto.com

8 - Festival of Lessons & Carols
 First United Methodist Church, 2 PM
BurlBelCanto.com

8 - Winnie the Pooh
 Legacy Theater, Carthage, IL, 2 PM
TheLegacyTheater.com

10 - Public Officials Reception
 Art Center of Burlington, 5 - 7 PM
GreaterBurlington.com

14 - Bel Canto Chorale Holiday Concert
 Burlington Public Library, 11 AM
Burlington.lib.ia.us

14 - Crimestoppers Meat Raffle
 Roederer's Pit Stop, 2 PM
facebook.com/BurlingtonCrimestoppers

14 - The Gambler: Kenny Rogers
 Christmas Show
 Legacy Theater, Carthage, IL, 7 PM
TheLegacyTheater.com

14 - Surfin' USA
 Capitol Performing Arts Center, 7:30 PM
LiveAtTheCapitol.com

15 - Entropy Jazz: Free Holiay Concert
 Art Center of Burlington, time TBA
BTownArt.com

15 - Santa & the Mean One
 Appleberry Orchard, 1 - 4 PM
AppleberryOrchard.com

15 - Danville Christmas Walk &
 Vendor Show
 Danville School, 1 - 5 PM
DanvilleEnhancement.weebly.com

15 - Spoken Word Live Poetry Event
 La Bohème, 6 PM
facebook.com/61552960887564

16 & 18 - 5th & 8th Grade Career Fairs
 Southeastern Community College
 9 - 11:30 AM
GreaterBurlington.com

18 - Shepherd's Table Free
 Community Meal
 First Congregational Church, 4:30 PM
FCCBurlington.org

19 - Burlington High School
 Holiday Concert
 Memorial Auditorium, 7 PM
BurlingtonRiverfront.com

20 - A Very Diva Christmas
 Memorial Auditorium, 7:30 PM
BurlCivicMusic.com

20 - Levi & Jacqueline
 La Bohème, 8 - 10 PM
facebook.com/61552960887564

21 - Lena Adams Holiday Special
 Corked 101, 6 - 9 PM
facebook.com/Corked101

28 - Holly Jolly Pickleball Tourney
 Burlington Area YMCA, 9 AM
BurlingtonY.org

28 - Eclectic Music Night with
 Chris Powell
 La Bohème, 8 PM
facebook.com/61552960887564

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ELF ON THE RIDGE

DECEMBER 1, 9 AM - 3 PM | 14133 IRISH RIDGE RD

Yes, holiday shopping CAN be fun! Head for the Barn on the Ridge for all your favorite holiday vendors under one roof - with a special guest direct from the North Pole!

For more information, follow the Elf on the Ridge event on Facebook, or visit: BarnOnTheRidge.com.

SUNDAY BLOODY FUNDAY

DECEMBER 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 12 - 4 PM | LA BOHÈME

Every Sunday at La Bohème is Bloody Mary Sunday! Buy one, get one free.

LA BOHÈME DECEMBER EVENTS

Levi & Jacqueline will grace the stage on December 20 from 8 - 10 PM. Levi and Jacqueline are an acoustic duo playing in central Illinois and eastern Missouri. Their music covers classics such as The Beatles, The Everly Brothers and Fleetwood Mac, to modern pop hits from Bruno Mars and The Lumineers, to pretty much everything in between.

Zachary Freedom's I'll be Back Tour! December 21, 8 - 10 PM. Listen to the Funky Soul of Zachary Freedom Saturday, December 21 from 8 to 10 PM. Zack Freedom is a force. Even his covers seem as if the song was written for him. This guy is pure talent.

Matt Landon Duo. December 27 from 8 - 10 PM. The Matt Landon Duo featuring Emma Reynolds returns.

Eclectic Music Night with Chris Powell, December 28 from 8 - 10 PM.

COMEDY THURSDAY: GREG HAHN

DECEMBER 5, 7:30 - 10:00 PM

BURLINGTON RIVERFRONT ENTERTAINMENT

BRE's Comedy Thursdays are bringing some seriously funny folks to town. This month: Bob & Tom radio show regular Greg Hahn brings his rapid-fire laughs to the stage with opening act Mike Marvell.

Tickets are \$15 (general admission, balcony seating) or \$25 (table seating) and available online and at the auditorium box office.

For more information, follow Burlington Riverfront Entertainment on Facebook or visit: BurlingtonRiverfront.org.

MIRACLE ON JEFFERSON STREET

DECEMBER 7 & 8, 10 AM - 4 PM | ART CENTER OF BURLINGTON

Miracle on Jefferson Street is a self-guided day filled with all the magic of Christmas - holiday music and stories, family activities like creating a keepsake ornament, capturing a holiday photo, visiting Santa in his cottage, seeing a classic Christmas movie and much, much more.

And best of all, you choose the pace - and the activities you'd like to participate in.

Admission is \$12 per child until November 27; \$15 per child after this date if spots remain. Adult caregivers admitted free.

Choose from one of two dates: Saturday, December 7 or Sunday, December 8.

This event fills up fast, so make sure to register as soon as possible. Miracle on Jefferson Street is most enjoyed by children age 10 and younger.

To register and for more information, follow the Art Center of Burlington on Facebook or visit: BTownArt.com.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Submit member information, to Brenda Levitt at blevitt@greaterburlington.com

Access Energy Cooperative
A Teachers Energy Cooperative

Owned by the members we serve.
www.accessenergycoop.com

Merry Christmas!

ADDINGTON PLACE OF BURLINGTON
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