

December 2025



THE PARTNERSHIP

GREATER BURLINGTON PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER - VOL. 105 NO. 12



Where is
#GBPetey?

President & CEO's Letter



Dear Members and Friends,

As we close 2025, the Greater Burlington community is in a season of many transitions. When changes are announced, understandably, a wide range of emotions are expressed. Change can feel unsettling, but it is also a powerful reminder of the strength and resilience that define Greater Burlington.

Over the years, our region has weathered dramatic shifts, with industry turnover, workforce transitions and Downtown buildings burning. Each time, the community has come together, focused

on what came next, and grown stronger because of it. We do this because we care deeply about the people who call Greater Burlington home. They are our "why."

Even as long-standing institutions evolve and change, new opportunities are taking root all around us. Investors and public partners are pursuing innovative projects in energy, manufacturing, technology, and retail. Local entrepreneurs continue to launch and expand businesses. Our high schools and community college are advancing pathways that prepare our people for high-demand careers. Our quality of life continues to be a competitive asset for families and employers.

Change is not the end of stability; it is the beginning of possibility. At the Greater Burlington Partnership, we are working every day to guide these transitions, support those affected, and position our region to welcome new partners, new ideas, new people, and new investment. A changing economy brings challenges, but it also brings new momentum, and we intend to harness it.

As we enter the holiday season, let's take pride in our shared past and look forward with confidence to our shared future. Greater Burlington is strong, resilient, and full of potential. Together, we will continue building a region that not only withstands change but thrives because of it.

Wishing you a joyful holiday season,

President & CEO
Greater Burlington Partnership



Partnership Staff



Amy O'Brien
President & CEO
319-208-0043
aobrien@greaterburlington.com



Melissa Jones
Chamber of Commerce
Exec. Dir. 319-208-0052
mjones@greaterburlington.com



Amy Moyner
Downtown Partners, Inc.
Exec. Dir. 319-208-0056
amoyner@greaterburlington.com



Chris Gram
Convention & Visitors Bureau
Exec. Dir. 319-208-0045
cgram@greaterburlington.com



Taylor Collins
Economic Development
Exec. Dir. 319-208-0050
tcollins@greaterburlington.com



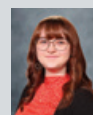
Crystal Jolin
Director of Finance
319-208-0044
cjolin@greaterburlington.com



Dustin Roth
Marketing & Communications
Dir. 319-208-0048
droth@greaterburlington.com



Telisha Van Rycke
Regional Director of
Workforce Innovation
319-208-0046
tvanrycke@greaterburlington.com



Kaylea Felland
Convention & Visitors Bureau
Prog. Coord. 319-752-8731
kfelland@greaterburlington.com



Mac Holford
Events Manager
319-208-0040
mholford@greaterburlington.com

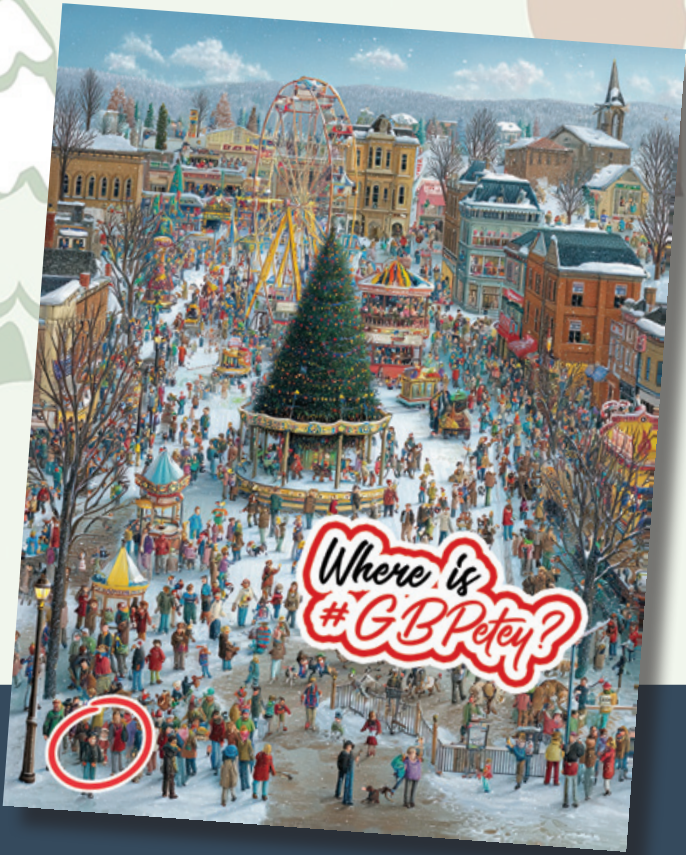
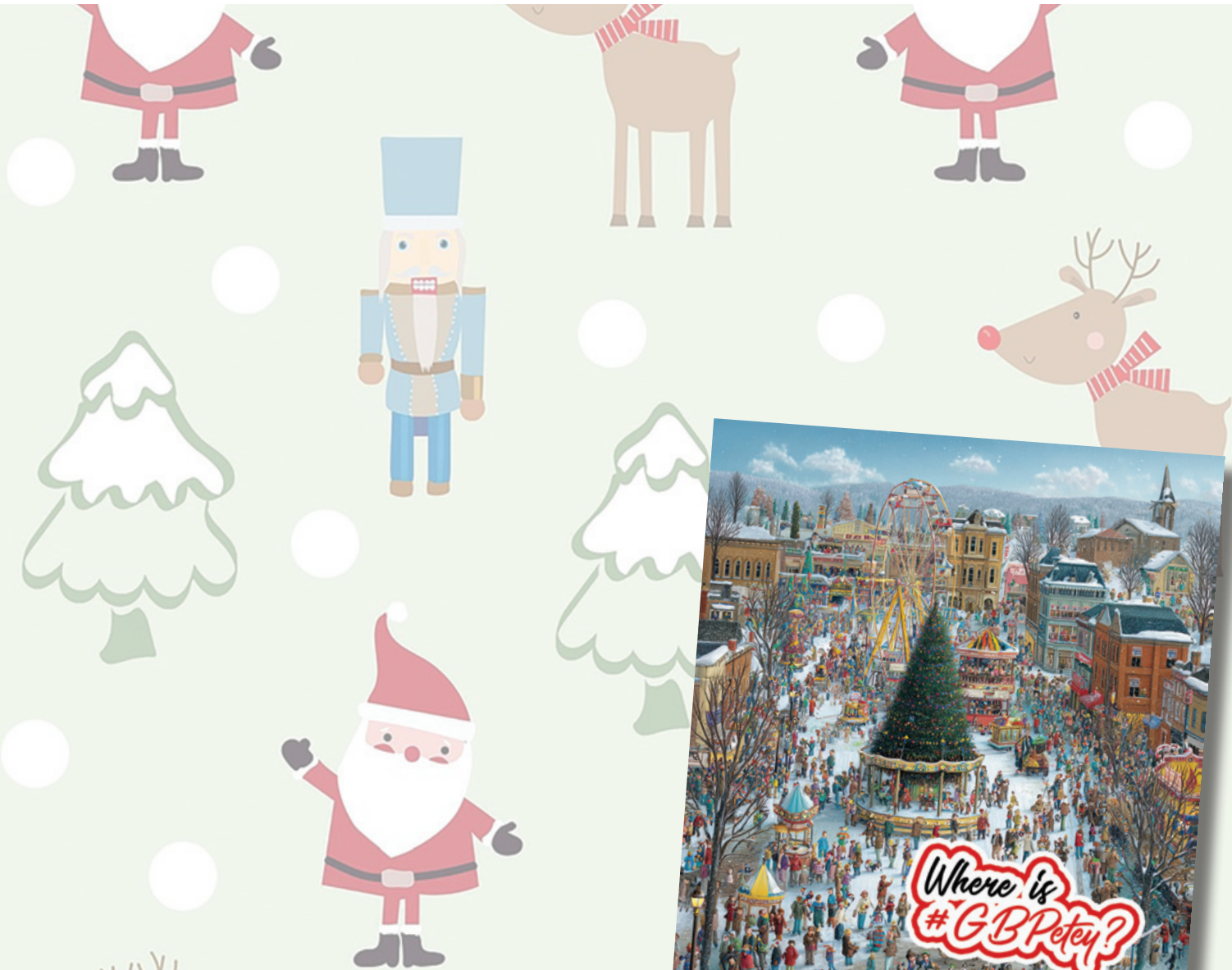


Brenda Levitt
Graphic Designer
319-208-0047
blevitt@greaterburlington.com



Pam Wright
Office Manager
319-208-0042
frontdesk@greaterburlington.com

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ON THE COVER

#GBPETEY

Santa's not the only one making a list this holiday season, #GBPetey is back and ready to help you check it twice.

Greater Burlington's favorite elf on the shelf is once again making merry mischief at Chamber of Commerce member businesses this holiday season. With a sparkle in his eye and a knack for hiding in unexpected places, #GBPetey is on a mission to remind you that the best gifts don't require long drives, crowded stores or overnight shipping.

From must-have toys for kids to stylish finds for fashion lovers and tech-savvy gadgets for the modern household, #GBPetey knows everything on your shopping list can be found right here in Greater Burlington. His message is simple, shop small, shop smart and shop local.

Each week through December 19, #GBPetey will "pop up" in new locations across the community, offering clues on Greater Burlington Partnership social media. Think you know where he is? Submit your guess and you could win that week's grand prize, a gift card or product from every location #GBPetey visited. One lucky winner is drawn each week, just in time to cross a few more names off your list.

So grab your scarf and some cocoa and join in the fun. Follow along on social media, support local businesses and keep an eye out for our sneaky seasonal sidekick. He's got holiday cheer to spare and maybe even a prize or two.

Where will he show up next. Only #GBPetey knows.



2026 DESTINATION GREATER BURLINGTON GRANT AWARD WINNERS

Each year, the Greater Burlington Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) awards up to \$25,000 through the Destination Greater Burlington grant program, supporting events and projects that attract visitors and elevate the local tourism experience. The initiative reflects the CVB's mission to drive economic growth by investing in opportunities that bring travelers to the region and showcase Greater Burlington to visitors from around the world.

This year's grant recipients demonstrate the diversity and creativity of the community's tourism landscape.

The Southeast Soccer Academy (SESA) continues to build on Greater

and shares Greater Burlington's rich heritage through engaging exhibits and events that connect visitors to the area's unique past. These cultural experiences deepen community pride while inspiring travelers to explore local museums and historical sites. Support from the CVB will help the Historical Society as it endeavors to add a significant new exhibit to its Heritage Museum.

The Burlington Jazz Festival, new in 2025, adds an important rhythmic pulse to the riverfront, offering a weekend of live music that attracts both regional jazz enthusiasts and casual concertgoers. Beyond entertainment, the event aims to



energize downtown businesses and enhance Burlington's growing reputation for arts and culture.

Burlington's reputation as a sports tourism destination by hosting youth soccer tournaments that draw hundreds of teams and families from across the Midwest, filling local hotels and restaurants during many events. Youth sports are one of Greater Burlington's largest tourism draws, and SESA continues to grow as a leader in youth sporting events in the tri-state region.

Southeast Iowa Swarm, a competitive youth baseball organization, hosts tournaments that bring hundreds of players and spectators to area fields, generating overnight stays and fueling spending in Greater Burlington's retail and dining sectors.

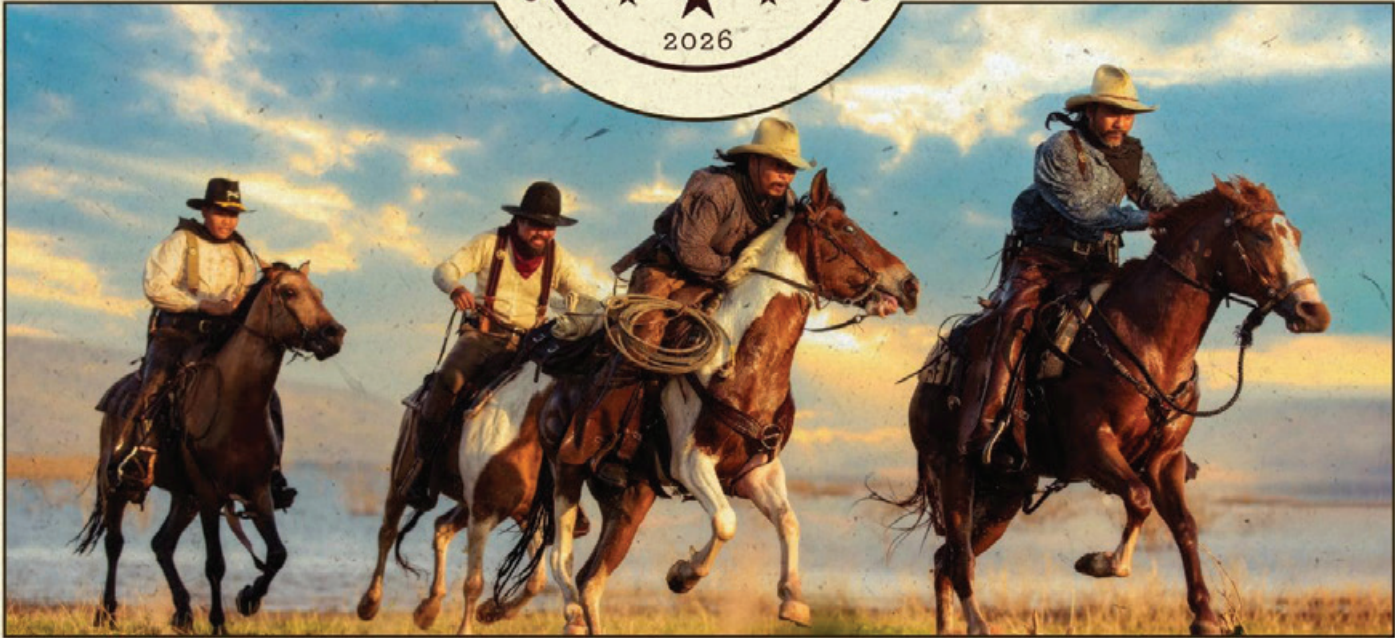
The Des Moines County Historical Society preserves

Bike Burlington's Snake Alley Criterium, one of the community's signature sporting events, showcases Burlington's iconic "crookedest street in the world" to cyclists and spectators from across the country. The event brings national attention to Greater Burlington through the grueling road race, highlighting Burlington as a premier destination for cycling enthusiasts.

Finally, United Hoops, known for its growing basketball tournaments at FunCity Courts, draws athletes and families to the FunCity Resort Complex, strengthening Burlington's profile as a hub for youth sports and family entertainment.

Through these partnerships, the Destination Greater Burlington grant continues to spark growth, creativity, and economic vitality, ensuring that visitors experience the best of what Greater Burlington has to offer.

ANNUAL DINNER
2026



TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW

JAN 23, 2026

The Annual Dinner is the Greater Burlington Partnership's annual gala, gathering over 500 business and community leaders for an evening of celebration. Guests enjoy a cocktail reception, plated dinner with live entertainment, and the presentation of community awards that honor the people and businesses shaping our region's success.

Each year brings a fresh and exciting theme that sets the tone for décor, entertainment, and attire. The 2026 event will transport guests to an unforgettable evening in the Wild West.

Table of 8: \$850

- Priority Seating, Logo on Table

Half Table: \$425

- Logo on Table

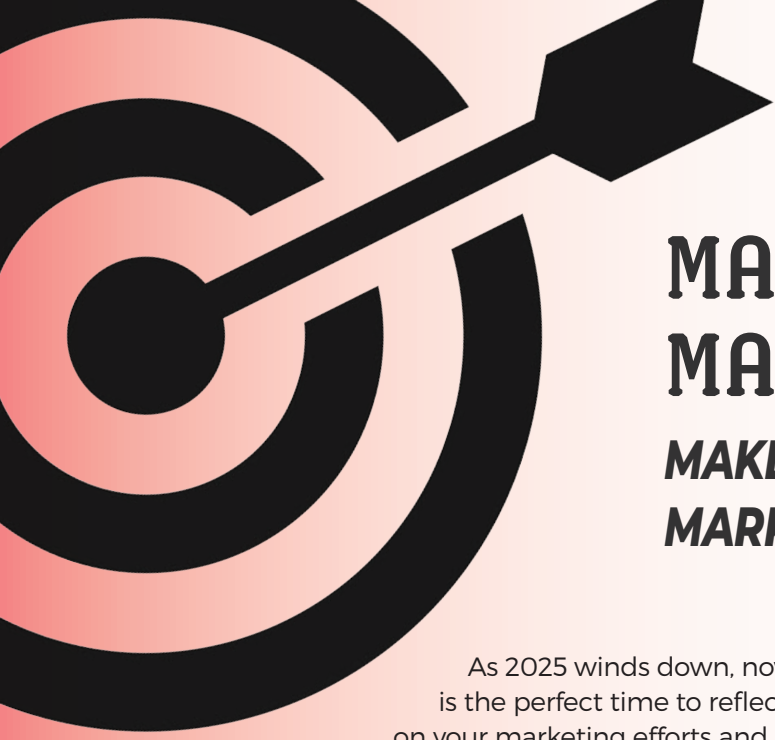
Individual Ticket: \$100

Reserve your seats by contacting Melissa Jones at mjones@greaterburlington.com.

EVENT DETAILS

Additional information, outfit inspiration, and more can be found by scanning the QR code.





MARKETING MASTERS

MAKE 2026 YOUR MOST ORGANIZED MARKETING YEAR YET

As 2025 winds down, now is the perfect time to reflect on your marketing efforts and set a plan for 2026. Whether you've already started or haven't given it a thought, it's not too late. A little planning now can lead to a smoother, more successful year ahead.

Marketing often feels like a scramble. One week you're wondering what to post, the next you're rushing to promote a sale. The constant pressure makes marketing feel like a burden, planning changes that. It gives you structure, saves time and helps you stay consistent without the stress.

Start by looking back at 2025. What worked? Which promotions brought in customers? What did your audience respond to? Take note of your wins and use them to guide what you repeat or improve.

Then set clear goals for 2026. Do you want to grow your audience, boost sales or promote a new service? Pick a few priorities and keep them in focus. From there, identify key campaigns. Think about known events, seasonal opportunities or product launches and jot them down by month.

Give each month a focus. It could be a theme, a service or a promotion. This makes content planning easier and ensures your message stays consistent. You don't have to plan every post, just outline the type and frequency of content you'll create, like a monthly newsletter, weekly social posts or seasonal promotions.

Think about your resources too. Who will handle graphics or emails? What tools do you need for

scheduling or design? Make sure your plan matches your capacity.

A marketing calendar is a great tool for organizing all of this. Start with your major promotions and layer in regular content. It doesn't have to be fancy, a simple spreadsheet or paper calendar works. For guidance, check out the January 2025 Marketing Masters article and download the free calendar template at GreaterBurlington.com/MarketingMasters.

As you plan, consider your channels. Where are your customers? Are they on social media, email, in-store, print? Make sure your content reaches people where they already are.

Finally, schedule time to review your plan. Monthly or quarterly check-ins help you stay on track and adjust when needed.

Here's a simple January example. Focus on a "New Year, New You" theme. Run a clearance sale from January 15 to 31. Send a kickoff email on January 5. Share weekly tips on social media every Monday, spotlight products on Wednesdays and count down to the sale on Fridays. In-store, you might set up a goal board where customers can write their resolutions.

You don't need to be a marketing expert. You just need to start. Even a basic plan will help you stay organized, reduce stress and get more from your marketing.

Start your 2026 plan today. Your future self, and your customers, will thank you.

--- Marketing Masters ---

JOIN 
US

SOUTHEAST IOWA REGION



SOUTHEAST IOWA DAYS 2026 DES MOINES • FEBRUARY 4 AND 5

Each year the Greater Burlington Partnership leads a regional delegation of more than 100 business and community leaders from Southeast Iowa to Des Moines for Southeast Iowa Days, a two-day advocacy event to influence state policy and secure resources for Des Moines County and beyond.

Together, delegates engage with legislators and state officials to advocate for policies that strengthen our workforce, support small businesses, and drive growth throughout our region. Beyond policy, the trip also builds lasting connections among leaders and communities, reinforcing a shared commitment to Southeast Iowa's success.

COST:

\$150 per person, which includes access to the luncheon, legislative reception, and Q&A sessions focusing on key regional issues. Scan the QR code to the right 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 6. Or book online through this QR code.



Scan Me



Scan Me

SOUTHEAST IOWA DAYS - A UNITED VOICE

ADVOCACY FOR REGIONAL IMPACT

Southeast Iowa Days is a platform for Southeast Iowa business and community leaders to lobby legislators and executive branch leaders on critical issues like workforce development and policies that support small businesses. By engaging with key state leaders, delegates push for priorities identified by the Partnership's government relations committee. These efforts ensure the voice of our region is heard.

STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS

Beyond policy, the trip fosters regional collaboration. Networking events spark partnerships, while programs like the Greater Burlington Leadership Class provide participants with policy experience and statewide connections.

SECURING THE FUTURE

With registration for the 2026 trip now open, delegates are poised to lobby for our region most pressing issues. Southeast Iowa Days isn't just a trip – it is a commitment to ensuring Southeast Iowa thrives through advocacy and collaboration.

Santa's Cottage is Moving to the Riverfront

Premier Sponsor: Addington Place of Burlington

Santa is getting a new holiday home in Downtown Burlington! This year, Santa's Cottage will be located on the Riverfront right next to the beautiful community Christmas tree, creating the perfect setting for magical family memories.

Visit Santa at the Riverfront from 1 to 4 PM on Saturdays in December - 6, 13, and 20, and during Living Windows on December 4 from 5 to 8 PM. Visits are free, and families are welcome to bring their cameras for photos.

With twinkling lights, holiday music, and the riverfront all aglow, it is the perfect place to make a family tradition.

Thank you to Kiwanis of Burlington for bringing Santa to Santa's Cottage, to Addington Place of Burlington for sponsoring Santa's new home, and to Burlington Riverfront Entertainment for helping bring Santa's Cottage to the riverfront. Additional thanks to Carl A. Nelson and Company, The City of Burlington, Boy Scouts Troop 3, and the DPI Design Committee for their support.

Bundle up, bring the kids, and experience the magic. Santa will be waiting!



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! Stocked with unique and locally-inspired treasures that capture the spirit of Greater Burlington! Starting November 29, enjoy \$2 off all Burlington 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 to shop local this holiday season. New Winter hours starting December 1.

Happy Holidays!




Discover
DOWNTOWN

FOR THE
HOLIDAYS

DISCOVER THE MAGIC.
DISCOVER COMMUNITY.
DISCOVER DOWNTOWN.





Living Windows Lights Up Downtown Burlington

December 4, 5 - 8 PM

Downtown Burlington will sparkle with holiday magic during the 23rd annual Living Windows celebration on Thursday, December 4 from 5 to 8 PM. This cherished community tradition transforms storefronts into live holiday scenes, offering an evening filled with festive entertainment and memory making moments for all ages.

Visitors can enjoy beautiful window displays, carolers, story readings, children's crafts, gingerbread houses, holiday lights, and free horse drawn carriage rides through the heart of Downtown. Santa Claus will be welcoming children and families in his cottage for the perfect seasonal photo opportunity.

This year brings an exciting new addition. Guests are invited to experience the first ever **A Very Vintage Christmas Market** on the 700 and 800 blocks of Jefferson. Favorite vendors from the Jefferson Street Farmers Market and A Very Vintage Market will bring extra holiday cheer with handcrafted goods, unique gifts, and seasonal specialties. Mulled wine, hot drinks, and delicious food vendors will keep everyone warm as they shop.

Downtown retailers will extend a warm welcome to guests with complimentary treats, beverages, and holiday shopping specials throughout the night. Living Windows is the ideal opportunity to explore Downtown, support local businesses, and celebrate the spirit of the season with friends, family, and neighbors.

Let the holidays begin in Downtown Burlington. It is sure to be a night full of joy, tradition, and winter cheer.

A heartfelt thank you to the partners who make this magical night possible.

- Premier Sponsor: Burlington Riverfront Entertainment
- Trolley Sponsor: Standard of Beaverdale
- Ice Carving Sponsor: F&M Bank & Trust



Winter
OPEN HOURS

MONDAY	CLOSED
TUESDAY	CLOSED
WEDNESDAY	10AM-4PM
THURSDAY	10AM-4PM
FRIDAY	10AM-4PM
SATURDAY	10AM-4PM
SUNDAY	10AM-4PM

CONTACT: FACEBOOK: BURLINGTONIAWELCOMECENTER
EMAIL: KFELLAND@GREATERBURLINGTON.COM
PHONE NUMBER: 319-752-8731



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:

PREMIER SPONSOR:



TROLLEY SPONSOR:





DOWNTOWN DEETS: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

January 12 - 8:30 AM

Downtown Partners, Inc. is excited to offer a new professional development opportunity through Downtown Deets, designed to support local entrepreneurs and business owners with practical tools to strengthen their marketing and customer reach.

Downtown Partners will welcome Tara Louisa Allen, a marketing educator, strategist, and founder of Eagle Eye Vision Consulting LLC. Tara helps entrepreneurs and organizations use creativity, data, and technology to amplify their impact. As the Lead Faculty of Marketing Management at Kirkwood Community College, she blends real world strategy with purpose driven learning and empowers leaders to view their business through a sharper, more innovative lens.

Tara brings years of experience in marketing, community engagement, and experiential education. She is widely known for inspiring, hands on workshops that leave small business owners feeling confident in using new tools with clarity and authenticity, especially when it comes to AI.

Training Topic

AI in Action: Smarter Social Media, Stronger Connections, and More Customers

In this interactive workshop, attendees will explore how AI can help small businesses attract attention, build loyal connections, and increase visibility across today's most active social platforms.

Participants will learn how to:

- Understand their audience and what they truly need
- Analyze competitors and uncover growth opportunities
- Create authentic content that engages and converts

Tara will guide participants through AI prompts that simplify marketing, clarify messaging, and save valuable time, all without added costs. The session is designed for beginners and those already experimenting with AI tools. Everyone will leave with practical strategies that can be implemented immediately.

This Downtown Deets session will help businesses enhance their online presence and strengthen customer relationships in today's digital marketplace, because It is Happening in Downtown Burlington.

To RSVP, contact Amy Moyner at amoyner@greaterburlington.com or call 319-752-6365.



COMMUNITY PROFILE AND MEMBER DIRECTORY

Get Your Business Noticed

The Greater Burlington Partnership and Chamber of Commerce are once again partnering with Town Square Publications to produce the new Community Profile & Member Business Directory. This full-color publication connects local businesses with thousands of residents, visitors, and fellow Chamber members, both in print and online. Don't miss this opportunity to promote your business and expand your reach. Town Square representatives will be in touch soon with advertising details.



GET READY TO PUTT FOR PROGRESS AT THE DOWNTOWN MINI GOLF CHALLENGE

March 6

Grab your team, bring your best putt, and get ready for an afternoon of fun, laughter, and friendly competition in support of Downtown Burlington. The Downtown Mini Golf Challenge returns on Friday, March 6, 2026 at Burlington Black Water Miniature Golf, and this is your invitation to join the action.

This event is more than mini golf. It is a community coming together to champion the continued growth and revitalization of our Cultural and Entertainment District. Local professionals, families, and groups of friends will enjoy a playful course filled with themed holes, surprises, and plenty of photo worthy moments. It is the perfect team building outing or family friendly way to kick off spring.

Participants will enjoy:

- A round of mini golf at Burlington Black Water Miniature Golf
- Team costumes, bragging rights, and prizes for creativity and skill
- Snacks, music, and a lively atmosphere that keeps spirits high

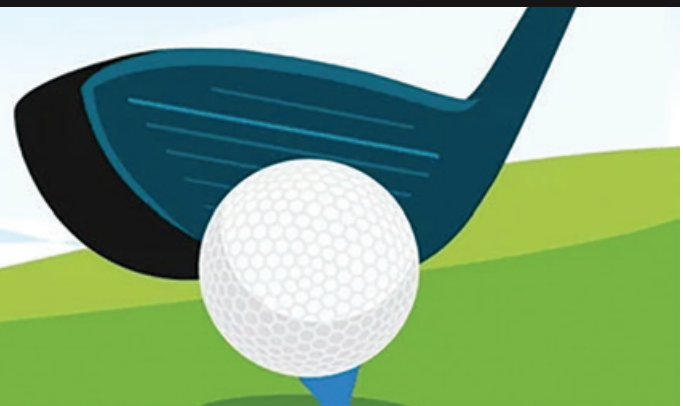
By signing up to play, you are helping support the businesses, public spaces, and experiences that make our downtown shine. Register a twosome, create a team costume, or sponsor a hole to show your community spirit. Businesses that sponsor will benefit from strong brand visibility, a highly engaged audience, and positive alignment with a meaningful local cause.

Save the date, rally your team, and prepare to Putt for Progress. Registration and sponsorship details will be shared soon.

Let us see who will take home the golden putter in 2026. Are you in?



If you are interesting in sponsoring this event, Please Contact Melissa Jones at mjones@greaterburlington.com.





LEADER LAB



INTRODUCING LEADER LAB 2025 - 2026: LAUNCHING A NEW ERA OF LEADERSHIP

Meet the first cohort for Leader Lab 2025 - 2026:

Front Row Left to right: Aurora Royer, Bark & Play Daycare and Suites; Kelsey Stanbary, Farmers Savings Bank; Justin Kinney, American Ordnance; Cathy Krieger, Farm Bureau Financial Services - Tim Lundgren; Megan Bell, The Busted Cup Brewhouse; Ashlee Madsen, CNH Industrial America, LLC; Jessica Hartz, Alcohol and Drug Dependency Services; Meagan Vogel, Great River Health; Ashley Williams, Martini's Grille

Back row left to right: Jeff Swanner, American Ordnance; Matt Brown, Burlington Riverfront Entertainment; Ollie Cobb, American Ordnance; Chris Lee, Des Moines County Conservation; Marcus Nack, Des Moines County Conservation; Curron Williams, American Ordnance; Tanner Grimm, Des Moines County Conservation; Josh Ernst, Drake Hardware & Software; Jerica Johnson, Energyficient Systems, Inc.; Crystal Bivens, CNH Industrial America LLC; Adam Magliari, Mediapolis Community School District; Luke Barnes, Refreshment Services Pepsi

The first session of Leader Lab kicked off on November 6 with an engaging 3-hour session featuring orientation and Principle One: Mission, Culture, and Excellence.

This program's content comes from BetterCulture's MindSet Leadership Program, designed by Dr. Kim Hooegeveen, a licensed psychologist with expertise in organizational, cognitive, and psychometric psychology.

Dr. Hooegeveen is the founding CEO of QLI, a company recognized five times as #1 Best Place to Work, known for exceptional customer satisfaction, strong financial performance, and low staff turnover. As a keynote speaker, Dr. Hooegeveen commands fees of up to \$40,000, and his MindSet Leadership Program has

received rave reviews from executives across hundreds of companies and industries. The program combines a robust theoretical knowledge base with proven real-world results, enabling individual leaders to grow rapidly and become stars within their organizations.

Companies that embrace this program are providing employees the opportunity to expand their skills and propel their businesses to new heights.

This year's Leader Lab cohort features Executive Directors, a school Superintendent, managers, supervisors, and more from a wide array of industries.



PUBLIC OFFICIALS RECEPTION

DECEMBER 2, 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 2 from 5 - 7 PM at the Art Center of Burlington. This exclusive Chamber member event, hosted by the Government Relations Committee, offers the opportunity to connect with local elected officials from the area schools, cities, county and legislators. Light appetizers will be served.

To RSVP, contact Melissa Jones at mjones@greaterburlington.com or call 319-752-6365.

5TH GRADE CAREER FAIR

December 15 at Southeastern Community College, 9 - 11:30 AM

The 5th Grade Career Fair will be held at Southeastern Community College on December 15, from 9 - 11:30 AM. Des Moines County 5th graders will have the opportunity to explore local careers, meet area businesses, and participate in hands-on activities, continuing a tradition they've enjoyed in past years.

In previous years, GBP hosted the 5th and 8th grade career fairs during the same week. This year, the events are separated to provide a more focused experience for each age group. While 5th graders continue to enjoy an interactive fair at SCC, 8th graders will now benefit from a five-week classroom curriculum through our partnerships with Junior Achievement, Lee County Economic Development Group, and the Mount Pleasant Area Chamber of Commerce, culminating in the JA Inspire Southeast Career Expo on February 11-12 at the Iowa National Guard Armory in Middletown, and an expo event in February.

A special thanks to Southeastern Community College for hosting the 5th Grade Career Fair!

If you'd like to volunteer or present this year or next at either event, contact Teli Van Rycke at tvanrycke@greaterburlington.com.

SPANISH TREASURES

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with Greater Burlington Partnership

*Give the gift
of travel*

10 DAY TOUR | OCTOBER 2, 2026

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From Madrid to Barcelona, discover the unique and varied culture of Spain as you travel through the must-see cities!

Price per person on double occupancy:

\$3759

Single Person Supplement:

\$1249



Join us on this exciting trip!
Brenda Levitt



**GREATER
BURLINGTON
PARTNERSHIP**

To book or inquire, please contact

Mac Holford T: 319-208-0040 | E: mholford@greaterburlington.com

For information and to book, scan the QR Code or find the booking link at: www.greaterburlington.com





TEACHERS APPRECIATION EXPO RECAP

The Teachers Appreciation Expo, formerly the Teachers Appreciation Reception, will be called the Area Educator Expo beginning next year to better reflect its expanded format. Prior to 2023, the event was a reception held after contract hours at venues like the Catfish Bend Convention and Event Center, where around 100 - 150 local teachers enjoyed appetizers, visited with businesses, and entered raffles.

In 2023, GBP partnered with local schools and Southeastern Community College to align the event with a shared professional development day, highlighting Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways and workforce opportunities, featuring speaker Mark Perna.

This collaboration has grown participation to 576 educators over the last two years. The Expo connects teachers directly with businesses for work-based learning, job shadowing, classroom speakers, tours, and resources.

The 2025 event, held on October 31 at Burlington Community High School during the Third Annual Des Moines County Educator Conference, included over 30

businesses and celebrated unity with the theme "Wear Your College Gear," supported by Premier Sponsor Shearer's Snacks and Platinum Sponsors KimAnne Portrait Design and Buena Vista University. Also, Refreshment Services Pepsi donated over 600 beverages and coffee for the event and Kiwanis volunteers cooked up hundreds of pancakes and sausage and for teachers. It was an incredible day.

The Greater Burlington Partnership sincerely thanks all the businesses, sponsors, educators, administrators, and school districts who made this year's expo possible. Their participation, collaboration, and dedication to connecting classrooms with real-world opportunities help strengthen the local workforce, inspire students, and support teachers in providing the best experiences and resources for their students. The event would not be possible without their contributions.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:

PREMIER SPONSORS:



PLATINUM SPONSORS:

Buena Vista University
KimAnne Portrait Design

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome these new Chamber of Commerce members by sending an email, liking their Facebook page or visiting their website. Even better, stop by to introduce yourself, exchange business cards and help grow their network as well as your own!

Viking Aggregates

319-753-5858, RasmussenGroup.com

Viking Aggregates proudly supplies high-quality sand, gravel, and stone materials across Iowa, Missouri, and Texas. Built on generations of experience and hard work, we're committed to delivering quality materials and dependable service with the same pride and precision our customers have trusted for decades. Backed by the Rasmussen Group, Viking Aggregates combines local expertise, family values, and industry-leading reliability to help build strong communities from the ground up.

The Other Guys Construction

309-504-1055, TheOtherGuysConstructionIL.com

The Other Guys Construction, based in Carthage, Illinois, offers skilled roofing, siding, and gutter installation for residential and commercial properties. They're known for transparent pricing, strong customer service, and craftsmanship tailored to each project.

MSM North America

MSM-NorthAmerica.com

MSM Group North America, headquartered in St. Petersburg, Florida, is a U.S. based defense manufacturer focused on medium and large caliber ammunition production and support. Committed to strengthening the domestic supply chain, they bring advanced manufacturing and engineering expertise to bolster national defense capabilities. MSM will be kicking off a project at the IAAAP soon.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO SCHEDULE A RIBBON CUTTING, CONTACT
MELISSA JONES AT MJONES@GREATERBURLINGTON.COM

RIBBON CUTTINGS & CELEBRATORY EVENTS



HETTA GILBERT - MILESTONE GIVING



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2026 Friday Forum - Join the Conversation! At the Greater Burlington Partnership or Virtually

Chamber members are invited to participate in our Friday Forums, held monthly at 8 AM in the Winegard Board Room or virtually. These forums feature discussions on important legislative updates and local issues.

2026 Forum Dates: January 16 | February 13 | March 13

MEMBER NEWS . . .

ALL MARKETING AND SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ARE NOW OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS

The right of first refusal period is now complete. That means all remaining 2026 marketing and sponsorship opportunities are now open to all members for purchase. Check your catalog from the mail to see what piques your interest. If you didn't get one, contact Melissa Jones at mjones@greaterburlington.com or 319-752-6365 and we will get one to you.

Don't miss your chance to shine in 2026!

ANNUAL DUES RENEWAL GOING DIGITAL

This year, Chamber membership renewals will arrive by email instead of mail. Be on the lookout for your renewal notice in your inbox in mid to late December. We are making this change to save on costs and increase efficiency while keeping the process quick and convenient for members.

CHAMBER AMBASSADORS

Spotlight

BRANDON ORTH
PERSONAL BANKER
MIDWESTONE BANK



As a Personal Banker at MidWestOne Bank, I enjoy working with customers to help them achieve their financial goals—whether that means opening consumer and business accounts or assisting with their loan needs. I value

spending time with each customer and helping them unlock their potential for financial freedom. MidWestOne Bank is dedicated to being a small-town bank with big-bank capabilities, and I'm proud to be part of that mission.

As a 2025 graduate of the Greater Burlington Leadership class, I was invited to become a Chamber Ambassador and quickly said yes. Fulfilling my desire to give back to the community, I've attended numerous Chamber events, ribbon cuttings, and committee meetings. I also serve on the Government Relations Committee, where I've had the opportunity to moderate several local candidate forums. In addition, I'm a Burlington Public Library Trustee and a member of the Burlington Kiwanis Club. These experiences have allowed me to make many meaningful connections—both professionally and personally.

A Burlington native and Notre Dame graduate, I moved away for several years, but Burlington pulled me back in. When I'm not volunteering or working, I'm currently back in school at Southeastern Community College, pursuing an Accounting degree. During my downtime, I enjoy spending time with my daughter, Kinley (8), watching her compete in gymnastics, reading, collecting vinyl records, and taking advantage of everything Burlington has to offer to live, work, and play.

DECEMBER

december

View more events at
GreaterBurlington.com/Events

EVENTS

1 - Dinner & Wine Pairing
 Corked 101, 6 pm
CorkedDowntown.com

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

4 - 30 - December Gallery Show:
 All-Member Show
 Art Center of Burlington, times vary
BTownArt.com

4 - Living Windows
 Downtown Burlington, 5 - 7 PM
facebook.com/downtownburlingtoniowa

4 - Comedy Thursday: Taylor Mason
 Memorial Auditorium, 7:30 PM
BurlingtonRiverfront.com

5 - First Friday: Ukrainian Holiday Traditions
 Burlington Public Library, 10 AM
Burlington.Lib.ia.us

5 - Trivia Night
 Starr's Cave Nature Center, 6 pm
DMCCConservation.com

5 and 19 - Friday Night Art Hop
 Art Center of Burlington, 6 - 8 PM
BTownArt.com

5 - Dueling Pianos
 Corked 101, 7 - 9 PM
CorkedDowntown.com

6 and 7 - Christmas Craft Show
 Memorial Auditorium
 9 AM Sat/10 AM Sun
BurlingtonRiverfront.com

6 - Miracle on Jefferson Street
 Art Center of Burlington, 10 AM - 4 PM
BTownArt.com

6 - That's Yesterday's News
 Burlington Public Library, 10 AM
Burlington.Lib.ia.us

6, 13 and 20 - Santa's Cottage
 Memorial Auditorium, 1 - 4 PM
facebook.com/downtownburlingtoniowa

6 - A Very Heritage Christmas
 Des Moines County Historical Society
 5:30 PM
DMCHS.org

6 and 7 - Lessons & Carols
 First United Methodist Church, 6 PM
 Sat/2 pm Sun
BurlBelCanto.com

6 - Glenn Anderson
 Night Cap Listening Lounge, 8 - 10 PM
facebook.com/nightcaplisteninglounge

6 - Matt Landon
 La Bohème, 8 PM
facebook.com/61552960887564

7 - Entropy Jazz Orchestra Holiday Concert
 Art Center of Burlington, 6 PM
BTownArt.com

10 - Veterans Coffee & Conversation
 Wake N Bake Breakfast Company, 9 AM
facebook.com/HWMCL

11 - Art of the Cocktail
 Nightcap Listening Lounge, 6 PM
facebook.com/nightcaplisteninglounge

12 - Pint by Number
 Art Center of Burlington, 5 - 9 PM
BTownArt.com

12 - Happy Howlidays
 The PARK Indoor Dog Park, 5 PM
TheParkBurlington.com

12 - Daniel Pappas Quintet & Friends
 Night Cap Listening Lounge, 8 PM
facebook.com/nightcaplisteninglounge

13 - Bel Canto Chorale
 Burlington Public Library, 11 AM
Burlington.Lib.ia.us

13 - Taylor Made
 Capitol Theater, 7:30 PM
BurlingtonCapitolTheater.com

14 - Danville Christmas
 Walk & Vendor Show
 Danville Community Schools, 12 - 6 PM
DanvilleEnhancement.weebly.com

14 - Blue Violin
 Capitol Theater, 7 PM
BurlingtonCapitolTheater.com

15 - 5th Grade Career Fair
 Southeastern Community College
 9 - 11:30 AM
GreaterBurlington.com

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

17 - Annual Holiday Concert
 First United Methodist Church, 12 PM
SEISO.us

17 - Community Christmas Carol Sing
 First Congregational Church, 7 PM
FCCBurlington.org

18 - Open Mic Comedy Night
 Night Cap Listening Lounge, 7 PM
facebook.com/nightcaplisteninglounge

20 - Ugly Sweater 5K
 Starr's Cave Park & Preserve, 9 AM
DMCCConservation.com

20 - The Nutcracker
 Memorial Auditorium, 7 PM
BurlingtonRiverfront.com

22 - Holiday Movie Night
 Burlington Public Library, 5 PM
Burlington.Lib.ia.us

27 - Holly Jolly Pickleball Tournament
 Burlington Area YMCA, 9 AM
BurlingtonY.org

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IOWA COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

DECEMBER 9 | 11 AM - 1 PM
CATFISH BEND CONFENTION AND EVENT CENTER

You are invited to join Burlington Community Leaders and the UI College of Public Health for a community-wide forum, Improving Employee and Family Health.

Who should attend: Any area employer or community organization leader interested in having a healthy and productive workforce. There is no charge to attend the forum and lunch is included.

MIRACLE ON SOUTH DIVISION STREET

DECEMBER | 5 - 7, 11 - 14 | PLAYERS WORKSHOP THEATER

The Novak family have always known they were special, ever since the Christmas miracle of 1942. However, when daughter Ruth reveals her plan to tell the family secret to the world, the family's faith is shaken to the core. A Comedy/Drama by Tom Dudzick. Director: Mary Fox.

Burlington on Facebook or visit:
PlayersWorkshopTheater.com.

A VERY HERITAGE CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 6 | 5:30 - 9 PM | DMC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Heritage Center will host our beloved "A Very Heritage Christmas" Dinner on Saturday, December 6, from 5:30 - 9 PM. This festive evening supports our mission to restore the Garrett-Phelps House to its former splendor. Enjoy a cozy, home-style meal, three classic silent films with live piano accompaniment, a guest violinist, silent auctions, and free Christmas card photos in our newly renovated "Over the Stack" Room.

Reservations are \$500 per table or \$75 per individual. To reserve your spot, please call 319-752-7449 or email coltonn@dmchs.org.

TIDINGS OF COMFORT & JAZZ

DECEMBER 7 | 6 - 8 PM | ART CENTER OF BURLINGTON

Entropy Jazz - students & alumni of the WIU jazz program - present a special holiday concert in the Gallery Lounge at the Art Center.

Blending timeless holiday classics with the vibrant improvisation of jazz, the Entropy Jazz Orchestra will put a jazzy twist on your favorite holiday tunes, making this a night to remember for music lovers of all ages.

Admission is \$10 at the door. Cash bar and food available for purchase. For more information, follow the Art Center of Burlington on Facebook or visit: BTownArt.com.

BLUE VIOLIN

DECEMBER 14 | 7 - 9 PM | CAPITOL THEATER

Yes, you heard that right: Music Makers Foundation calls the Blue Violin "The best rock and roll violinist of a generation."

Founder and first violinist of the award-winning Boston String Quartet, this internationally touring artist has shared the stage with legends like Gloria Estefan and Paul Simon - and now he brings his inspiring, genre-bending musical celebration to downtown Burlington for a holiday performance like none other!

The Blue Violin Candlelight Christmas Extravaganza will sell out fast, so don't wait - tickets are \$38 - \$57 for adults, \$16 for students and FREE for kids age six and under, online and at the Capitol box office.

Full concessions, including wine and beer, are available at the Capitol.

For more information, follow the Capitol Theater on Facebook or visit: BurlingtonCapitolTheater.com.



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