

Midtown Monitor

December 2014

Happy Holidays



Inside this issue:

- Holiday Events in Midtown
- Gallery and Theater Events
- Generating Your Own Solar Electricity
- and much more...



Holiday Events in Midtown

Lights of Aksarben Stinson Park

Join us in the heated tent when we turn on the LIGHTS in Stinson Park!
Every Friday we will have activities for the entire family to enjoy.

Horse and Carriage Rides
Face Painters Cookies, Coffee and Cocoa
Godfather's Pizza Holiday Music

Check the schedule and mark your calendar!
www.aksarbenvillage.com

Friday, November 28 – 7pm - 9pm

Lighting Ceremony at 7pm
Santa and Mrs. Claus Horse and Carriage Rides
Face Painters
Cookies, Coffee and Cocoa Godfather's Pizza
with Special Appearance from the Godfather
Holiday Music

Friday, December 5 – 6pm - 8pm

Activity provided by Learning HQ

Saturday, December 6 - 10am - 5pm

Holiday Market Sunday, December 7 - 10am - 5pm
Friday, December 12 – 6pm - 8pm
Activity provided by Village Canvas & Cabernet

Friday, December 19 – 6pm - 8pm

Santa and Mrs. Claus
Horse and Carriage Rides

Holiday Lights On Dundee

Thursday Dec. 4th 5:30 to 7:30PM.

Santa's Workshop at the Denim Saloon with pictures taken by Rachel Nuncio Photography
Dundee Bank will be hosting snacks, drinks and Hayrack rides around the neighborhood...provided the weather cooperates. Hot Cocoa & Apple Cider will be given out throughout the neighborhood.
Scout will be hosting festivities at the store from 4 to 8:30PM. The Central High Choir will carol around the neighborhood .



ADVENT SCHEDULE

December 7 - 10:30 AM
Children's Christmas Program

December 14 - 10:30 AM
Chancel Choir presents "The Christmas Story"
After Worship - Advent Workshop

December 21 - 10:30 AM
Worship
7:00 PM - Annual Wassail and Carol Sing

December 24 - Christmas Eve
4:30 PM - Prelude Music
5:00 PM - Candlelight Worship Service



First Presbyterian Church

216 South 34 Street, Omaha, NE 68131-3496
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Please Visit to Vote

Holiday Events in Midtown

Holiday Lights Spectacular

November 22- January 1 Nightly at 7 pm Turner Park at Midtown Crossing

Midtown Crossing is thrilled to ignite the holiday season with the region's newest highlight – the Holiday Lights Spectacular in conjunction with Miracle at Midtown, the development's season-long celebration of togetherness and good cheer.

Holiday Lights Spectacular promises an enthusiastic, choreographed blend of light and seasonal music projected onto the Turner Park side of Midtown Crossing's condominium buildings.

The once nightly show will run approximately 20-minutes, beginning at 7 p.m., from November 22 through Thursday, January 1, 2015.

The best area to view the show is in the middle of Turner Park, facing west. Parts of the show will be visible from the promenade surrounding the park.

Live Carolers Throughout Midtown Crossing and Turner Park

Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings, November 29 - December 20 6-8:30 p.m.

Miracle at Midtown Window Displays - Available for viewing 24 hours/day

- All voting will take place on-site. Voting stations are inside each Midtown Crossing restaurant and retailer All along Farnam Street, Omaha's creative non-profits will showcase their artistry and imagination by transforming ordinary window space into holiday miracles.

This year's Miracle at Midtown theme is Holiday Past, Present and Future.

The top 3 most miraculous displays, determined by public vote, will earn a donation courtesy of the Baer Foundation, a philanthropic endeavor that generously supports various charities, including Nebraska arts and educational agencies.



Holiday
LIGHTS SPECTACULAR

Embrace winter's chill by wrapping yourself in a chorus of carolers and the brilliant harmony of decorative lights. Marvel at an evergreen work of art, the artistry of *dazzling window displays* and the *Holiday Lights Spectacular* — a light show the likes of which we've never seen in Omaha before!

NOVEMBER 22 to JANUARY 1 • NIGHTLY LIGHT SHOW at 7PM
MIDTOWN CROSSING ◦ 31ST AVE & FARNAM ST

MiracleAtMidtown.com

Get on the Good Foot

by Ken Mayer

I attended a meeting recently where the featured speakers promoted an upcoming conference on neighborhoods. The program looked good on paper, so I listened intently to what they had to say.

The first speaker talked about crime, the second speaker talked about crime and the third speaker talked about those people who don't properly trim their shrubbery. Fortunately, the conference had a lot more useful content, but I was struck by the way the speakers chose to encourage attendance.

I have observed similar phenomena at neighborhood association meetings and in social networks used by neighborhood groups. During a Place Game workshop, I recall the mere mention of putting in a basketball court being seen as an attraction to the criminal element. Apparently, there's a lot more scary stuff out there than is imagined in my philosophy. Thankfully, the silly season is over, and I'm finally spared from incessant fear mongering intended to get my vote or sell me on a sponsor's product. It's gotten absurd. In my opinion, some folks are practicing a special kind of domestic terrorism to get power and money.

Yes, the world is a dangerous place, but arguably less so that it was for previous generations.

The reality is more about how we react to the world than the real danger it holds. Most of us are terrible at assessing risk, like fearing a plane crash more than a car accident when the odds are just the reverse.

But, the big factor here is an evolutionary mechanism known as the negativity bias. Reacting to bad things more quickly, strongly and persistently than to equivalent good things was a safety advantage to our ancient ancestors. Makes a lot of sense if a saber tooth tiger is chasing you.

Sitting on your front porch watching a kid with baggy pants and body art walk down the sidewalk – not so much.

Perception is critical here. We construct our experience of the world largely based on what we pay attention to. More often than we realize, the negativity bias kicks in.

Recognizing it and reacting properly influences not only how we feel, but how we perform, both individually and as a group. Cultivating positive emotions pays huge dividends.

The negativity bias can also prevent moving on to more useful and productive activities.

For me, a Neighborhood Watch program is a fine idea, but it's only a baseline. Too many associations don't seem to move much beyond being a small social club and crime prevention society.

I know it's difficult to engage people who have busy lives, but consider that the folks you really want

involved in your neighborhood are accomplished and successful. You will never hold the attention of the go-getters with fear. They long ago conquered the negativity bias in themselves and got busy making things happen.

Worse, if those people who can help make a difference don't see opportunities for positive change, they will leave for somewhere they can.

**Conquer the negativity bias.
Get on the good foot.**

Ken Mayer is a freelance writer, photographer, consultant and adjunct faculty member at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He has served on the boards of The Nebraska Choral Arts Society, Downtown Omaha Inc. and Landmark's Inc. Mr. Mayer has been a consultant and volunteer for Omaha by Design since 2002. Please send your comments about his column to ken.mayer@cox.net or teresa@omahabydesign.org.

Omaha by Design, founded in 2001, is an urban design and environmental nonprofit dedicated to improving the way Omaha functions, looks and feels.

www.edwardjones.com

Life Doesn't Stand Still

and Neither Should Your Investments.

Time can affect you as much as your investments. While you can't stop change, you can help ensure your investments match your current circumstances and goals.

Fortunately, doing that may be as easy as meeting with your financial advisor. A complimentary portfolio review from Edward Jones can help identify where your investments stand in relation to your goals and how to get them moving in the same direction.

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The Midtown Monitor is published monthly by Shurson Publishing. Direct all advertising inquiries to Ellen Shurson, Publisher at 402- 714-1016.

The Midtown Monitor is distributed with the Dundee-Memorial Park Association Newsletter, AEPNA and select midtown businesses, online and through email subscriptions.

Send all articles for submission and press releases to (Preferred) e-mail to ellenshurson@gmail.com or mail Shurson Publishing, 131 N. 31 Ave, Omaha, NE 68131, to arrive by the 1st of the month preceding publication. Please send articles as Word documents with photo as separate TIFF or JPEG attachments. Content may be edited for clarity and space considerations. No warranties of the products or services printed herein are expressed or implied by Shurson Publishing. Shurson Publishing reserves the right to reject unsuitable advertising or articles.

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Friends of the Omaha Public Library

Annual Meeting

Saturday, January 10th, 1 PM

W. Dale Clark Main Library,

215 Soth 15th, 4th floor

Guest Speaker: Sarah Baker Hansen, Omaha

World Herald Food Critic.

“Omaha’s Food Evolution”

The Public is welcome.

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Swanson Library 90th & W. Dodge Rd. **BOOK SALES**

Thursdays 10 am - 3 pm

(Except holidays)

First Saturday of every month 10 am - 3 pm

(Except holidays)

The Economics of Generating Your Own Solar Electricity

Speaker: Jared Friesen, Renewable Energy Specialist at Morrissey Engineering

When: December 11th – 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Where: UNO's Community Engagement Center, 64th & Dodge, Room 201

www.morrisseyengineering.com

No matter how efficient a home or commercial building is constructed, electricity will be consumed in its operation. Historically, producing your own clean OR dirty electric energy at a price competitive with purchasing it from the local utility was not practical or economically feasible. The precipitous drop in photovoltaic (PV) system hardware costs, ability to maintain utility grid support, and other available incentives have changed the economic reality for some building owners. With the developing PV industry in mind, this presentation will cover:

- What is the "value of solar" as it relates to the electric utility and electric user
- What is net metering, is it fair, and what are its pitfalls
- Performance and economic metrics a potential solar owner should understand
- The attainable levelized cost of solar-electric energy that can be compared directly to current OPPD energy prices for residential and small commercial customers
- Steps that must be taken to realize an attractive levelized cost of solar electricity
- Q&A

Interested attendees are invited to bring one year (12 consecutive months) of electric bills for self-evaluation during the talk. The workshop is free & open to the public, so please join us and bring a friend! Free parking is available in the reserved lot to the north of the Community Engagement Center, near the Durham Bell Tower. Let the lot attendant know you're there for the Nebraskans for Solar workshop in Room 201.

Sponsors include: Nebraskans for Solar, Green Bellevue, The Omaha Sierra Club, and the Nebraska Wildlife Federation

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Visit: www.midtownmonitor.com

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Holiday Historic Home Tour & Boutique December 5th and 6th 10 am - 5 pm

Visit four premier historic homes decorated for the holidays! Tour the Neo-Classical Revival S. B. Doyle House, the striking Ephraim W. Dixon Home, the elegant Reinhold B. Busch House, and the beautiful Joslyn Castle.

The Joslyn Castle Holiday Patron Party with special preferential shopping at the Boutique will be December 4th from 5 to 8 pmat the Castle. Tickets for the Patron Party and preferential shopping are \$75 and include admission to the tours on the following days.

Enjoy festive decorations at each home and a Holiday Boutique at the Castle. Shop for unique gift items from Voilá, The Afternoon, Stella and Dot, Togs, Chef2, and Early to Bed and many others at the Boutique!

Purchase tickets for either event online or by calling 402-595-2199. Tour tickets will also be available at the door on the days of the tour. www.joslyncastle.com



Midtown Business Owners You're invited to the MBA Meeting

The next MBA meeting will be Jan 28th, 2014
Noon, UNMC private dining room, just \$10. for lunch.
Must make reservations by Friday prior to meeting.
E-mail contact@midtownbusinessassociation.org
or call Judy Alderman at 402-213-6474.

What is a HERS Rating?

By David Holtzclaw of Transduction Technologies

If you or someone you know is looking at buying a new home, you might have heard about a HERS Rating. The Home Energy Rating System (HERS) Index is the national recognized, industry standard for measuring the energy efficiency performance of new homes. A certified RESNET Home Energy Rater, like Transduction Technologies, performs diagnostics testing on the home's air leakage or draftiness, and ductwork air leakage. The energy rater also inspects the HVAC equipment, hot water system(s), appliances, lighting, windows and doors, and insulation levels throughout the house. All of this information, along with location and weather data, is inputted to a computer model, which then generates the HERS Index. This HERS Index is ONLY for the house or building structure itself and is independent of occupant behavior. It assumes certain thermostat and hot water heater set points. Therefore, the HERS Index gives the homeowner, potential buy, or renter an indication of how energy efficient the house or apartment is and the customer can make comparisons to other similar homes or apartments.

The HERS Index score ranges from 0 up to infinity where 0 is a net zero energy consuming dwelling. The reference point for the HERS Index is a house built to the 2006 energy code, or International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) standards. A house built exactly to the 2006 IECC standards scores 100 on the HERS Index. A new house built in Omaha today to current building codes (2009

IECC) would have a HERS score around 80-85. Each 1-point decrease in the HERS Index corresponds to a 1% reduction in energy consumption compared to the HERS Reference Home (2006 IECC code). Likewise, every 1-point increase in the HERS Index corresponds to a 1% increase in energy consumption. So a typical midtown house would score around 150-300 depending on the condition of the house.

Since the HERS Rating is a rating of the physical building itself and is independent of occupant behavior is a real advantage for real estate transactions because it proves potential buyers with an idea of what their monthly utility bills will be with different occupants. Several sustainable building programs for new house require a HERS Rating: Energy Star, LEED, and the Passive House Institute. However, since it is independent of occupant behavior, several studies have shown that the HERS Rating can be a poor predictor of actual energy consumption of occupied homes due to variability in occupant behavior. Furthermore, since the reference home is a new home built to the 2006 energy building code, it proves little information for home buyers of older homes, which generally score poorly due to differences in construction technology over the decades. Because of this, the vast majority of HERS Ratings are on new homes. For more information, visit our website: <http://www.transductiontechnologies.com/hers-index.html>

Project Santa

Urgently needed for over 6,000 children in the Omaha metro area:

Fleece blankets, Action figures, Hot wheels, Baby dolls and Baby doll sets, Bouncy balls, Play-Doh, Crayons, Coloring books Puzzles, Legos, Art sets, Hand held games, Toys/Games for older children

These are just a few of the items we need to make this a happy holiday season.

Drop off a new, unwrapped toy at Charlie Graham Body and Service 42nd and Leavenworth Street.

For more info Visit our website at: www.opendoormission.org/get-involved/immediate-needs



Do You Have a Great Photo of Midtown?

Submit your photo for possible publication in the Midtown Monitor and/or online. Of particular interest would be great, high resolution, colorful photos for the front cover. Could be just about anything that relates to Midtown. A great scene, historic house, garden, fun event.

Send only your two favorite photos for submission to midtownmonitor.omaha@gmail.com (do not send whole collections, thumbnails etc.) Send along a detailed caption and statement that all permissions were obtained for photos of people, especially children.

Midtown Galleries & Theaters



Modern Artists Midtown (MAM)

3615 Dodge St. 402-520-8737
www.modernartsmidtown.com
Gallery hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
December 5 to January 3
Assemblages by Janet Eskridge
Opening reception, Friday, December 5, 6 to 8 p.m.

Cathedral Arts Project, Sunderland Gallery

3900 Webster St. 402-551-4888
www.cathedralartsproject.org
Gallery hours: Tuesday to Friday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.,
Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., third Sunday of each month
December 7 to January 31
What a Wonderful World: Photographs by Dan Bishop
Opening Reception, Sunday, December 7, 1 to 3 p.m.

Connect Gallery

3901 Leavenworth St.
402-991-8234 www.connectgallery.net
Gallery hours: Wednesday to Saturday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.
November 5 to 29
Paintings by Evelyn Render Katz and JK Thorsen
Artist Reception: Friday, December 5, 5:30 to 8 p.m.

Dundee Gallery

4916 Underwood Ave., Lower Level 402-505-8333
dundeegallery.com
Gallery hours: Tuesday to Thursday 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.,
Friday to Sat 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Sun 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Artworks include acrylics by Mark Niemeyer, glossy mixed
media works by Karen Schnepf, oil pastels by Jane
Chukas, jewelry by Jennifer Lawler, acrylics and mixed
media paintings by Teresa McFayden.

Anderson O'Brien Fine Art Old Market

1108 Jackson Street 402-884-0911
www.aobfineart.com
Gallery hours: Monday to Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 5:30
p.m., Thursday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Sunday 12
p.m. to 4 p.m.

Omaha Community Playhouse

6915 Cass St.
402-553-0800
www.omahaplayhouse.com

Hawks Mainstage Theater

A Christmas Carol—November 21 to December 23
An Omaha Christmas tradition for decades, this adaptation
of the Charles Dickens classic never gets old at the
Playhouse.

Howard Drew Theater

Yesterday and Today: An Interactive Beatles Experience—
December 5 to 31
Billy McGuigan and his brothers bring the magic of the
Beatles to life, and you get to pick the songs. This Beatles
tribute show brings back memories of mop-tops, screaming
girls, great beats and unbeatable melodies. No two shows
are the same, and every show is a guaranteed exhilarating
time.

Shelterbelt Theatre

3225 California St. 402-341-2757
www.shelterbelt.org
Next production in January.
brevity of childhood.

SNAP Productions

3225 California St. 402-341-2757
www.snapproductions.com
Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike— November 13 to
December 7
Middle-aged siblings Vanya and Sonia share a home where
they bicker and complain about the circumstances of their
lives. Suddenly, their movie-star sister, Masha, swoops in
with her new boy toy, Spike. Old resentments flare up, even-
tually leading to threats to sell the house.

Blue Barn Theatre

614 S. 11th St.
402-345-1576 www.bluebarn.org
Every Christmas Story Ever Told (And Then Some!)—
November 28 to December 21
A look at the holiday traditions we all remember, and a few
we'd like to forget. From Tiny Tim to the Grinch, from
Frosty to It's a Wonderful Life, nothing is spared in this
rollicking tour de farce.

**View Updates and Other
Community Affairs /Calendar Listings
Online at www.midtownmonitor.com**

A gift they'll always remember.

On Christmas Eve, at 6:00 or 11:00 p.m., bring them to our beautifully-decorated, historic sanctuary. Sing familiar Christmas carols. Pass the flame from candle to candle, turning the darkness to light. A Midtown family favorite for generations!



SUNDAY SCHEDULE
 Adult discussion group: 9:10 a.m.
 Music & message for all ages: 10:30 a.m.



**First Central
 Congregational**
 UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

36th & Harney
 402-345-1533
 FirstCentral.org

Christmas Eve at First Unitarian Church 3114 Harney St December 24th, 7 PM

Join the First Unitarian Choir led by Bob McMeen for this annual service.



Luther Memorial Church 61st and Western
 8:45am and 11am Worship - 10am Sunday School
<http://lmlchurch.org> 402- 551-4488
 Christmas Eve Services - 4:30 and 10:30pm
 Festival of Lessons & Carols Dec 7 at 8:45 a.m. & 11 a.m.
 "Night in Bethlehem," on December 14 at 4 p.m.
 FREE children/family activity Enjoy activities and food.
 Come experience Bethlehem.

These Open Forums are free and open to the public, and will be held at **First Central Congregational Church, United Church of Christ**, located in midtown at the corner of 36th and Harney Streets, at 9:10 a.m. on the dates noted. For more information, call 402-345-1533.

December 7 Is Internet Privacy a Lost Cause?

Deb Kirwan, member of First Central
 A recent episode of CBS's 60 Minutes painted a worrisome picture of the way information about us is being collected as we use the Internet. Is there anything a person can do to lessen the risk of exposure? We'll look at some steps you can take, and consider their pros and cons. With a little effort, you can make a dent in your public visibility. This session will be led by Deb Kirwan, a member of First Central who has had a career in computers going back to 1980.

December 14 Dickens and Modern Day Scrooges

Fred Nielsen, Member of First Central and history instructor at UNO
 Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" is the great secular gospel of the season. Continuously in print since its publication in 1843, it helped to revive celebration of the holiday and to shape many of our modern Christmas traditions.

December 21 Nostalgic Carol Sing

Meeting in Memorial Hall, we'll sing the songs you love to sing. We will have some song books for you to use if you don't have all the verses memorized.

Master Singers present "Jazz to the World" a cappella concert on Sunday, December 14, 2014 at 4 p.m. at the First Central Congregational Church, 421 South 36th St. and Harney, Omaha. The program features "jazzed up" holiday favorites, recent songs made popular by groups such as Straight No Chaser, as well as selections that may have never been heard before! Tickets are on sale at the door and are \$15.00 for adults and \$12.00 for students/seniors. Children 12 years and under are free. For more information, please check out our website: www.mastersingersomaha.com.



Midtown Business Directory



Branches Missing from Your Family Tree?

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All advertising must be prepaid for entire schedule, ads run consecutive months.

Call 402-714-1016

Email: midtownmonitor.omaha@gmail.com to inquire about display advertising rates.



Cub Scout Pack 17 and Boy Scout Troop 42 Christmas Tree Collection Service Project

The Dundee neighborhood Scouts are again offering to pick your Christmas tree and deliver for recycling. Dates are: ♦ Saturday, January 3rd, 2015 ♦ Saturday, January 10, 2015
Scouts will complete requirements toward their World Conservation Award. This project demonstrates renewable resources, solid waste reduction, and community service in our neighborhood. Cash donations accepted. Thank you!

To have your tree on our schedule

1. Return sign-up form
2. Remove decorations from your tree
3. Place tree on your curb by 9 a.m



Cub Scout Pack 17 & Boy Scout Troop 42 Christmas Tree Collection

Your Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Donation Enclosed: _____

Collection date (circle one): January 3 or Jan 10, 2015 Return by December 31st to:

Christmas Tree Service Project c/o Marc Anderson, 4914 Chicago St., Omaha, NE 68132

Or call 558-0727 or email anderson4914@msn.com to make a reservation

Please make checks payable to Troop 42

SOLD

When you want your home sale nailed, call Jeff.



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Recent Midtown Homes Sold

Find them online
www.midtownmonitor.com

\$130,500	5124 Poppleton	3	2	1	1.5 Story	1,832
\$138,000	4302 Woolworth	3	3	2	2 Story	1,690
\$139,500	2620 N 51 Ave	2	2	1	2 Story	1,855
\$145,000	5439 Seward	3	2	2	Rd Ranch	1,714
\$145,000	1610 N 59th St	3	2	1	Ranch	2,430
\$148,000	5010 Lafayette Ave	3	2	1	1.5 Story	1,858
\$155,000	923 S 36th Street	5	3	0	2.5 Story	2,151
\$155,000	1712 S 54 Street	3	2	1	Rd Ranch	1,681
\$167,900	2528 S 48th Street	3	3	1	1.5 Story	2,112
\$169,000	5427 Seward St.	3	2	1	Rd Ranch	1,649
\$171,750	1101 S 52 Street	3	2	1	1.5 Story	1,408
\$177,000	4301 Poppleton Ave	3	1	1	1.5 Story	1,658
\$178,000	4809 Davenport St	4	3	2	2.5 Story	1,649
\$180,020	4218 Davenport	5	3	1	2.5 Story	2,420
\$190,900	4338 Shirley St	3	2	1	1.5 Story	1,647
\$195,000	1017 S 46 Avenue	3	2	2	Mlti-Lvl	1,967
\$210,000	4912 California St	5	3	2	2.5 Story	2,191
\$234,000	4412 Woolworth	3	3	2	2 Story	2,297
\$261,803	4906 Davenport #1	2	3	2	Condo	1,487
\$320,000	121 S 51 Street	4	5	2	2.5 Story	3,136
\$332,000	530 S 53 Street	4	3	2	2 Story	2,320
\$360,000	5119 IZARD Street	4	4	2	2.5 Story	2,730
\$385,000	6456 Cuming St	3	4	2	Ranch	2,956
\$645,000	5406 IZARD Street	4	4	2	2 Story	3,576

Our thanks to Raquel Ahlvers, The Ahlvers Group, CBSHOME Real Estate for providing this information.

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Holiday Fun Abounds Through-out Midtown



Look inside for Events and Check Online at www.midtownmonitor.com

Master Singers

Jazz to the World 5

Holiday tunes with a "jazz" twist

Sunday, December 14th, 4:00 PM

First Central Congregational Church
421 South 36th Street

Tickets available at the door

\$15 Adult - \$12 Senior/Student - Under 12 Free

www.mastersingersomaha.com



Elves and Reindeer visit Midtown Crossing