

A newsletter about what's happening in your Town of Mansfield

VOL. 4, ISSUE 6

DECEMBER 2024-JANUARY 2025

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## Message from the Town Manager Celebrating Our Shared Values of Resilience, Inclusivity, and Care

Greetings Fellow Residents!



As we enter the holiday season and reflect on the close of another year, I am reminded of the many ways Mansfield thrives as a community united by shared values of resilience, inclusivity, and mutual care. Local government plays a central role in nurturing and sustaining these values, ensuring that Mansfield continues to be a place we are all proud to call home.

Our work at Town Hall, and across all municipal departments, is guided by one simple but profound mission: to deliver services and programs that enhance your quality of life while fostering a community where everyone can feel connected and supported. This is both a privilege and a responsibility we take to heart.

As a municipal government, in recent months our efforts have focused on several key priorities, including:

- **Expanded and Improved Election Accessibility:** Recent efforts to promote accessibility included offering early voting options in multiple convenient locations, providing clear voter information, and ensuring all polling locations on Election Day were fully accessible. These initiatives reflect our commitment to making voting inclusive and convenient for all members of our community.
- **Strengthening Public Safety and Emergency Services:** With the addition of new personnel and emergency response apparatus, as well as upgrades to facilities, we are committed to ensuring resident safety remains a top priority.



- **Enhancing Public Infrastructure:** From road repairs to park improvements, these projects reflect our dedication to building a community that meets your needs today while planning for tomorrow.
- **Encouraging Economic Development:** By supporting small businesses and attracting new investments, we aim to sustain a vibrant local economy that benefits all Mansfield residents while staying true to our core community values and sense of place.

(Continued)



*(Town Manager’s Message cont.)*

- **Expanding Recreational Opportunities:** The recent completion of our comprehensive Parks & Recreation master plan, opening of a new six-court pickleball facility, and enhancements to the Mansfield Community Center are a testament to our commitment to fostering health, wellness, and connection for people of all ages and interests.
- **Responsive Services:** Whether you are seeking assistance at the Town Clerk’s office, engaging with our social services team, or visiting the library, we strive to make every interaction efficient, welcoming, and meaningful.

As we look to 2025, our focus remains steadfast: delivering exceptional municipal services, responding to the evolving needs of our community, and working together to create a future that honors Mansfield’s history while embracing opportunities for growth and innovation.

With these principles in mind, the following efforts and priorities lay on the horizon:

**Municipal Budget Development: Shaping Our Future:**

As we prepare for the journey that a new year represents, the Town is dedicated to thoughtful planning and prudent financial management. I am pleased to announce the commencement of the municipal budget development process. This crucial process lays the foundation for the upcoming fiscal year (Fiscal Year 2026: July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026), determining how resources are allocated to meet the needs of our growing community. As we embark on this process, a primary goal will be maintaining (and in some cases enhancing) the quality of Town programs, projects, and services while simultaneously promoting cost savings, leveraging revenues from the state and other “non-local” sources, and minimizing (or avoiding) any increases in the mill rate to help ensure that Mansfield remains a community where people of all economic means can afford to live.

Once again, the Town will be developing its operating budget and capital improvement plan using the web-based platform called ClearGov, which enables us to produce a comprehensive budget document that organized in a user-friendly manner similar to a fully functional website. Your input is invaluable in shaping our priorities, so I encourage you to stay informed and engaged as we work together to ensure a prosperous future for the Town of Mansfield.

**Town-wide Revaluation:** Having commenced the process roughly a year ago, the Town is in the process of completing its statutorily required town-wide revaluation, a critical step in ensuring equity and accuracy in property assessments across the community. Revaluations are conducted every five years in Connecticut, as mandated by state law, to reflect changes in the real estate market and ensure that property taxes are distributed fairly among property owners. During this process, certified appraisers are analyzing current market data, inspecting properties as needed, and

updating values for residential, commercial, and industrial properties. These updated assessments will be used to calculate future property taxes, which fund all the services, programs, and projects our Town and local school districts provide.

The Town is committed to transparency and collaboration throughout this process. Property owners will soon be receiving updated assessment notices and have the opportunity to review and discuss their preliminary valuations with professional appraisers.

**Mansfield Tomorrow Plan of Conservation and Development:** Following the recent formation of an ad hoc committee comprised of members of the Planning and Zoning Commission and Town Council that will help shepherd the process, the Town of Mansfield has officially launched its update to the Mansfield Tomorrow Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD).

This comprehensive plan serves as a strategic roadmap, guiding decisions on land use, housing, economic development, environmental sustainability, transportation, and community services. Updated every ten years, the POCD is not only a reflection of Mansfield’s long-term vision but also a tool to ensure that our growth and development align with our shared values and aspirations. Updating the POCD is critical to addressing new challenges and opportunities facing our community. From promoting affordable housing and fostering economic resilience to protecting our natural resources and enhancing quality of life, the updated plan will help us chart a thoughtful course for Mansfield’s future.



“Our work at Town Hall, and across all municipal departments, is guided by one simple but profound mission:

to deliver services and programs **that enhance your quality of life** while fostering a community where **everyone can feel connected and supported.”**



(Continued)



*(Town Manager’s Message cont.)*

**Municipal Facilities Master Planning:** The Town continues to actively evaluate our aging and outdated municipal facilities with an eye toward presenting the Town Council a series of recommendations related to needed investments in the coming months. We continue to work with design and engineering professionals on a comprehensive municipal facilities master plan to help us better understand the condition/viability of existing Town buildings with respect to adequately meeting current and anticipated future needs, as well as exploring alternatives.

We fully recognize the necessity to seek robust public engagement in this process to ensure any projects that may move forward are best positioned to meet community needs, and there will be more opportunities for public input during this process. It should also be noted that Town officials are actively exploring federal and state grant programs that may be able to offset a significant portion of the design and construction costs associated with various aspects of the municipal facility upgrades being considered. We want to build a future where our facilities are able to effectively deliver their intended services while also enhancing the wellbeing and vibrancy of Mansfield.

This season also reminds us of the importance of community engagement. We are grateful for the many residents who participate in public meetings, volunteer their time, and share ideas that inspire us to do better. Your voices and actions are vital to Mansfield's success, and I encourage you to stay connected with us in the year ahead.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Town Manager’s Office, 860-429-3336 or [townmanager@mansfieldct.org](mailto:townmanager@mansfieldct.org), if you have constructive feedback on how the depth and breadth of information provided in the newsletter can be optimized to meet the needs of our residents.

On behalf of the entire team at the Town of Mansfield, I wish you a joyful holiday season filled with peace, love, and the warmth of community. May the New Year bring continued blessings and opportunities for us all

Very respectfully,



Ryan J. Aylesworth

**Subscribing to the electronic newsletter is easy and straightforward. Simply:**

- Go to this page on the town’s website: <http://mansfieldct.gov/list.aspx>
- Enter your email address in the “Email Address” field
- Under the “Notify Me” section of the page check the box for “News & Press Releases”

Look for an automated email informing you that your email address has been added to the distribution list, then confirm your account. That’s it!

**Revaluation Will be Reflected in July 1, 2025 Tax Bills**



The Town of Mansfield Assessors’ Office, in conjunction with Tyler Technologies, Inc., has been conducting the state-mandated revaluation project over the past year. The last revaluation was completed for the October 1, 2019 Grand List. The October 1, 2024 valuations will be reflected in the July 1, 2025 tax bills.

Assessor Rochelle Lambert will be presenting an update on the status of the project to Town Council on Monday, December 9, 2024.



Residents are encouraged to watch their mailboxes for a revaluation assessment notice starting in mid-December.

If you want to learn more about Revaluation in Mansfield, and to get the latest updates on the impact to your taxes in the coming year, please [visit this special website](#).

If you have questions, another resource is to download [the FAQ’s Revaluation Brochure](#). Or you can also email your questions to [assessor@mansfieldct.org](mailto:assessor@mansfieldct.org).



## Elections 2024: Your Vote is Counted



Mansfield successfully executed elections for its registered voters this season, culminating on Election Day November 5. The Town took special efforts to communicate the expanded voting opportunities, including redirecting voters in District 2 to their new polling location at Mansfield Middle School.

The Registrars of Voters coordinated two Early Voting Centers where residents could register, if needed, and vote every day from October 21 through November 3. This year was the first time Early Voting has been offered in Connecticut. With a center at Town Hall's Council Chambers as well as a second activated at the UConn Bookstore, voting options were expanded. Residents were eager to vote at their own convenience, with many casting their ballot during the Early Voting period, including residents who were eager to avoid waiting in lines on Election Day. These ballots were securely stored, and opened and tallied on Election Day.

The Town Clerk's Office distributed Absentee Ballots to those not able to vote in person, including residents serving in the military and others not able to be present in person.

On Election Day, turnout at Mansfield's four polling locations was brisk. A Same Day Registration option was also offered to unregistered voters who reside in Mansfield, including any UConn student living on campus or in a Mansfield neighborhood. After offering proof of residency, they were registered and verified to not have voted elsewhere, then allowed to cast a vote.

For the 2024 Presidential Election, the results for Mansfield are as follows:

Democratic - Harris & Walz - 6,690  
Republican - Trump & Vance - 2,250

[Here are the full Election Results for Mansfield.](#)

The enormous task of operating a prolonged election season under the strict rules established by the Secretary of the State requires extreme organization, professionalism, and careful training of poll workers. Following the election, Registrars of Voters Vera Ward and Anne Greineder released a statement about the Mansfield election.

"As Mansfield's elected registrars, we take incredibly seriously our duty to ensure free, fair and secure elections that comply with Connecticut law.

"In accordance with state election laws, all voter registration forms were accepted by the Registrars of Voters or their designees by 8:00 PM on Election Day. Per the Secretary of the State's (SOTS) office, acceptance is defined as the verification of identity and residency, and approval of admittance as an elector by the Town election staff.

"All available results are required to be filed with SOTS by midnight on Election Day. Final results are due Friday of the same week, which was November 8th this year. The final election results for the Town of Mansfield were submitted within this timeframe.

"We are confident the election results in Mansfield are accurate. Protecting everyone's right to vote is of the utmost importance.

"Due to the crush of first-time voters at Town Hall on Election Day, processing all the registrations and votes was time-consuming. However, it must be emphasized that processing of registrations and tabulation of ballots was all completed within permissible timeframes.

"We were in regular communication with SOTS to insure compliance with all aspects of the law, and we were assured our results were submitted on a timely basis."

During voting on Election Day, Town Clerk Sara-Ann Chaine hosted students from Civics classes at E.O. Smith High School to understand all the aspects of voting day.

This included Same Day Registration procedures at Town Hall, and voting at the polling place at Mansfield Community Center. She explained Absentee Balloting and Early Voting, new this year. Students also spoke with party members and candidates who stood outside the 75-foot barrier.



**Tax and Trash Bill Reminders from the Revenue Office**



Tax bills, which encompass Supplemental Motor Vehicle bills along with Personal Property & Real Estate second installments, will be **due by February 3, 2025**. We do not mail the second installment bills for Real Estate or Personal Property, but you can access the bills through the Town of Mansfield website: <https://www.mansfieldct.gov/1715/Payment-Options>. (You can also look for the button on the Home page: Pay/View Bill.)

The Supplemental Motor Vehicle Bills will be mailed on December 30th and will also be **due by February 3, 2025**.

Trash/Recycle bills will be mailed on December 30th and 31st of 2024. These will be the first quarter bills of 2025 and are also **due by February 3, 2025**.

Online payments through the Town of Mansfield’s website are available for a service fee. Credit or Debit cards are charged 2.99%, and EFT bank account transfers are charged a flat fee of \$1.95.

**New! Property Tax Exemption for Veterans with VA Service-Connected Permanent and Total Disability**



Notice is hereby given pertaining to recently passed legislation establishing new exemption program for veterans with service-connected permanent and total disability rating in Connecticut, effective October 1, 2024 Grand List.

Public Act No. 24-46, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION FOR VETERANS WHO HAVE A SERVICE-CONNECTED PERMANENT AND TOTAL DISABILITY RATING (New law: Connecticut General Statutes §12-81(83))

As of October 1, 2024, Veteran must be alive, be a resident of this state, have served in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force or Space Force of the United States (includes National Guard), have proof of service-connected permanent and total disability rating as determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, proof of compliance with provisions of CGS §12-95 and CGS §12-93 requiring Honorable Discharge, proof of primary residency and verification that veterans benefits or homestead exemptions are not being granted in another town or state.

Veterans meeting the eligibility requirements for this program will receive exemption from municipal taxation, applicable in the following order 1). The dwelling the veteran owns and occupies as their primary residence or lacking such residence; 2). A motor vehicle (including motor homes) owned by the veteran or lacking such dwelling or motor vehicle; 3). The dwelling or motor vehicle belonging to or held in trust for the veteran’s spouse.

For additional, to submit copy of current VA permanent and totally disability rating award letter, or to verify documents on file conform to eligibility criteria for this new tax exemption program, please email: [assessor@mansfieldct.org](mailto:assessor@mansfieldct.org) for the fastest service.

Visit: <https://www.va.gov/records/download-va-letters/> to obtain copy of most recent VA benefits letter.

**MANSFIELD**  
CONNECTICUT  
Human Services

**TOY DRIVE**

**WED. NOV. 27TH -TUES. DEC. 10TH**

**Mansfield Human Services is collecting gifts to bring joy to children in need this holiday season.**

**We are collecting new unwrapped gifts for all ages from 3yrs to 18 yrs.**

**Drop off Locations**

Mansfield Human Services & Mansfield Senior Center  
303 Maple Road, Mansfield  
8:30 am - 4:30 pm Mon - Fri.

Resident State Troopers office  
(box outside the office)  
4 South Eagleville Road, Mansfield  
Mon - wed.: 8am - 5:15pm; Thurs. 8a-6:30pm

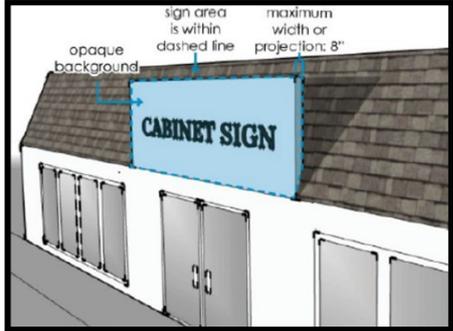
### Mansfield Enforcing New Signage Regulations



In June of 2024, the Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission approved a new zoning regulation related to signs. A sign is defined in the regulation as, "Any object, device, display, structure, or part thereof, or form of public announcement, situated outdoors or indoors but intended to be visible outdoors, intended to aid directly or indirectly in the sale of goods or services."

The full regulation, effective June 25, 2024, can be easily accessed at [Mansfield Zoning Regulations](#) and includes charts outlining types and sizes of signage allowed in both residential and non-residential districts and a section dedicated to temporary signage.

Any questions regarding signage can be directed to the Mansfield Planning Department, [planzonedept@mansfieldct.org](mailto:planzonedept@mansfieldct.org) or at 860-429-3330.



### Mansfield Senior Center Hosts Veterans Luncheon



The Human Services Department and American Legion Post 52 hosted more than 80 Veterans and their guests for a Veteran's Day celebration at the Mansfield Senior Center on Friday, November 8th.

Speakers included Mayor Toni Moran, who shared a Proclamation, Veterans and Town Council members Dr. Carlita Cotton and David Litrico, and Adjutant Len Theroux who explained the significance of the Missing Man table. E.O. Smith High School students presented original poems, letters, and handmade cards.



A delicious lunch prepared by our kitchen staff was enjoyed by all. Following lunch Bruce John entertained the group with music including the Military Branch Salute medley. Each guest received a jar of honey from Shooks Apiaries as a small token of appreciation.

We are grateful for all our Veterans for their service. We would also like to thank all our volunteers who helped make this celebration possible.

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**Assistance with Eversource plans**  
**Connection to resources**  
**Other support opportunities**

**Contact us today for more details:**  
**Mansfield Human Services**  
**303 Maple Road**  
**Mansfield CT**  
**human.services@mansfieldct.org**  
**860-429-3315**



**Mobile Foodshare Visits Mansfield Every Other Week. Open to All!**



From 11:30 AM to 12 noon every other Thursday, the Connecticut Foodshare Mobile Food Pantry stops along Wrights Way near the Mansfield Senior Center. No proof of residency or income required, but please bring your own bags or boxes.

**December 12 & 26**  
**January 9 & 23**



The Human Services Department is eager to connect you with food resources in our area, including our food bank on Maple Road, and others across town that might be more convenient. Learn more on our website: [www.mansfieldct.gov/1896/Food-Programs](http://www.mansfieldct.gov/1896/Food-Programs)

**New Staff Members Ready to Welcome You!**



The Senior Center for the Town of Mansfield is thrilled to introduce two new additions to our Team.

**Amy Garganese** The first new addition is the new Senior Center Community Outreach worker, Amy Garganese. Amy was born and raised in Providence RI, and graduated with her Bachelors from Rhode Island College. She has lived in Windham County for the past 9 years.



Amy is an avid volunteer in her own community and enjoys trying new things and finding new places to travel. We are excited to have Amy's enthusiasm and expertise in planning to help support our outreach and transportation programs for the Aging population within the Town of Mansfield. Amy brings with her a breadth of knowledge on resources, and creative ideas that will only help to improve the current programming that is in place. Feel free to stop by her office to say hi, or give her a call to find out how our Outreach and Transportation services can help you or someone you know.

**Kim Rontey** The latest new addition is our Program Coordinator, Kimberly "Kim" Rontey. Kim is well known to the Town of Mansfield as she has served the town for many years with supervisory experience within the Mansfield Community Center. Kim brings with her extensive knowledge of the Town, its resources, and knows many members of the community.



She has a lot of creative ideas to support and continue to grow the programming offered at the Senior Center. Please stop by to introduce yourself, share what you love about the Mansfield Senior Center, and what types of programs you would like to see!

**Mansfield Plan of Conservation and Development Update is Underway**



*Mansfield Tomorrow*, or Mansfield’s Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), is our community’s roadmap for the next ten years. An update to the 2015 plan is underway, and will be completed over the next year.

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Plan of Conservation and Development Update held its first meeting on Thursday, November 21. The Committee’s primary responsibility is to guide the POCD update, which will be informed by an extensive public engagement process. This process is designed to gather diverse feedback through focus groups, a town-wide survey, online engagement, participation in community events, and a community-wide meeting. For more information about the planning process and opportunities to get involved, visit [www.mansfieldtomorrow.org](http://www.mansfieldtomorrow.org).



**Plan of Conservation and Development: Update Now Underway!**



As part of Phase II of the Facilities Master Plan, Civic Brand conducted extensive public engagement to identify and define community values. While originally developed to guide municipal facility improvement priorities, this values framework provides important insight into the broader aspirations of our community. This framework will serve as a foundational starting point as we shape the vision for Mansfield's next decade through the upcoming Plan of Conservation and Development.

More information about the Facilities Master Plan is available at this [link](#) or by viewing the [August 12, 2024 Town Council meeting](#).

**Join in at the Mansfield Senior Center for Activities, Fun, and Friendship**

Check out our newly revamped “Senior Sparks” and all the great programs we have going on in the coming month: [Click here](#).



**Mansfield Celebrates New 100-ft. Quint Ladder Truck**



The Town of Mansfield hosted a traditional “Wet Down” ceremony on Sunday, November 17 to celebrate the new 100-foot Quint Ladder Truck recently added to its firefighting fleet. The ceremony and an open house was held at the newly renovated Four Corners Fire Station, 1722 Storrs Road. More than 75 members of the public, elected officials, and local firefighters attended the celebration.

The Town was honored to have Commissioner Seila Mosquera-Bruno, Connecticut Department of Housing, attend and speak at the ceremony. The new Quint was



partially funded by a grant of \$900,000 received by Mansfield in 2021 through a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Small Cities administered through the Department of Housing.

Mayor Antonia Moran, Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth, and Chief John Roache also welcomed guests and spoke about the new fire apparatus. Rep. Pat Boyd and several Town Councilors also attended.

The Town took delivery of the Quint in late October, and it continues to be outfitted and equipped while training takes place for the department on its optimum use. Mansfield’s newest apparatus, Truck 207 is called a “Quint” because it is designed to serve a number of different functions:

- A 100’ aerial ladder with pre-piped waterway capable of flowing 1000 gallons per minute
- A fire pump – capable of flowing 1,500 gallons per minute
- A water tank, which carries 500 gallons of water
- Over 180’ of ground ladders in assorted sizes – everything from 10’ to 35’ which can be utilized even if the main aerial device cannot get into position
- Over 600’ of supply hose

In addition to the typical Quint roles, the vehicle is also equipped with a complement of rescue tools, such as “the jaws of life”, and can effectively respond to motor vehicle incidents.

Chief Roache acknowledged in his remarks that obtaining this new truck was truly a team effort, from the grant-writing team to finance and everyone who helped make it possible. “On our side, we have had numerous different committees working on this project, from the Truck Committee that evaluated and designed the basic needs of the vehicle to those who worked on equipment and layout. We also have others helping with driver training and training on the aerial functions. I am grateful to all of these professionals who contributed,” he says.

Commissioner Mosquero-Bruno and Mayor Moran assisted Chief Roache in holding the firehose to wet down the new truck. Following this ritual all the firefighters present pushed the truck into the station bay, another part of the tradition.



The tradition of the Wet Down ceremony dates back over 100 years when the original fire “apparatus” was drawn by hand or horses. After each run, they were brought back to the station, washed down, made ready for the next call, and then pushed by hand back into the bay. When a fire department repeats the wet down and pushes the vehicle back in, it is our way of welcoming the new while paying tribute to our history.



### Taste of Mansfield Champion Award Winners Celebrated



The Taste of Mansfield and community partners, including the Mansfield Agriculture Committee and Economic Development Commission, have selected the recipients of the third annual Taste of Mansfield Champion Awards.

The Taste of Mansfield Champion Awards program was initiated to recognize Mansfield producers, sellers, and communicators/educators who are leaders in connecting the community through local food and have a demonstrated record of promoting the Taste of Mansfield mission. The public was invited to nominate, based on the following criteria, individuals, businesses or institutions that:

- Sells or serves local food or an agricultural product with a focus on Mansfield farms and farm stands,
- Educates customers/clients about where local food comes from through various media, or
- Acts as a leader and advocate for promoting local food

The 2024 Taste of Mansfield Champion Award Winners are: Stacey Stearns, Melanie Desch, Maraiah Popeleski-Tilley, & Dog Lane Café.

**Stacey Stearns** served as a member, including Chair, of the Mansfield Agriculture Committee for nine years, and was nominated for her leadership in promoting agriculture here. A tenth-generation dairy farmer from Mansfield, she worked on her family farm, Mountain Dairy, a vertically integrated dairy operation established in 1871. Stacey’s involvement on the farm started in her youth as a 4-H and FFA member, then she earned her Bachelor of Science in Animal Science from the University of Connecticut (UConn) and Master of Science in Agricultural Education and Communication from the University of Florida. She is the president-elect of the Association for Communication Excellence and has been an active member with Tolland County Farm Bureau. In her professional career as a Communications Specialist for UConn Extension, Stacy is a knowledgeable and vocal advocate for local farming, and she is an asset to our Mansfield agricultural community.



Mansfield resident **Melanie Desch** (below left) is an advocate for equitable access to local foods. She has recently worked with the Windham Community Food Network’s *Mesa Comunitaria* program which increases access to local food for those in need, and empowers farmers. Her dedication to food system equity extends beyond Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA), with her contributions to the "Rooting Deep and Scaling Up" initiative with Grow Windham. Melanie's passion for sustainability is evident in her volunteer work with CLiCK's education program teaching foraging classes, volunteering with the Windham Community Food Network composting program, Know Your Farmer Fair, Celebrate Mansfield Festival, and as a Mansfield Agriculture Committee member. As Market Master at the Willimantic Farmers Market, she fosters a vibrant space that connects local producers and consumers. Melanie and her partner also operate Foliota Farm in Mansfield growing floral products. Melanie's commitment to serving both the local farmers and community makes her a champion for the local food scene.



**Chef Maraiah Popeleski-Tilley, RDN**, (above right) was selected as a Champion for her strides in reimagining school lunches at Mansfield Schools. As the Food Services Director, she is focused on improving the quality of school meals through scratch cooking and using locally sourced/grown products. Maraiah was recently

(Continued)



***(Taste of Mansfield Champions Celebrated Contd.)***

awarded a Healthy School Food Pathway Fellowship from the Chef Ann Foundation, one of only 24 fellows from across the country.

As an educator, Chef Maraiah has provided training and growth opportunities for her food service staff and teachers. She has invited local farmers to lunch waves so students can meet them and try new locally grown vegetables, Chef Popeleski-Tilley is also active with food systems issues on the state level, incorporating University of Connecticut’s Extension program resources like the Put Local on Your Tray initiative.

**Dog Lane Café**, located on the corner of Betsy Paterson Square in Downtown Storrs claims “It’s all about the quality: seasonal, local, freshly prepared food.” Known as a great spot for breakfast, lunch or dinner, coffee or beverages, Dog Lane Café proudly promotes its relationships with 15 year-round and seasonal local growers and producers. Homemade soups and quality local meats are also on the menu. Dog Lane Café, part of the Green Valley Hospitality Group, has served Mansfield since 2012, and is an example of a hospitality venue connecting the community through local food.



The winners were recognized at a Taste of Mansfield Community Dinner held on November 13 at Mansfield Middle School. Mayor Toni Moran and Superintendent Peter Dart introduced the winners who were present.

Former Champions were also invited to the dinner, including Diane Dorfer, Chelsea Cherrier, and Dennis Pierce.

**Calling all Artists! Apply Today to Enter these Upcoming Shows**



## *Upcoming Art Shows*

*Location: Mansfield Community Center*

### **Art of Flowers Show**

Application to display deadline - Nov. 21  
Show Dates - Jan. 4 - Feb.15

### **Wonders of Winter Show**

Application to display deadline - Dec. 30  
Show Dates - Feb. 22 - Mar. 29

### **Annual Juried Art Show**

Call to artist beings in January 2025  
Application Deadline - Mar. 26  
Show Dates - April 4 - May 31

**Applications can be found at the Community Center, Lenard Hall, or on the Arts Advisory Committee website:**

[www.mansfieldct.gov/1502/Arts-Advisory-Committee](http://www.mansfieldct.gov/1502/Arts-Advisory-Committee)

**Submit applications by email to [artsadvisory@mansfieldct.org](mailto:artsadvisory@mansfieldct.org) or hard copy at the Community Center to: Arts Advisory Committee**

### Public Works Completes Improvements to Coventry Road



The Capital Improvement Plan in the approved Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget included a project to improve the gravel section of Coventry Road. The project was to improve both an 1800-foot and a 400-foot section of the road. These two sections experienced some major degradation due to historic rain events in late 2023 and early 2024.

The project removed approximately 1.5 feet deep of the existing gravel road in these two sections and replaced it with

stone and processed aggregate. A geocell grid and a geotextile fabric were installed to help to dewater the road surface and provide more stabilization.

The Department of Public Works completed this project in November.



1.) The project involved excavating the 1.5 feet of unsuitable material, as shown above.



2.) This excavation uncovered pipes that no one was aware of in the Department. The pipes were both collapsed and plugged (obviously not doing for what they were originally installed).



3.) These failed corrugated metal pipes (left photo) were replaced with smooth wall plastic corrugated pipes.

These failed corrugated metal pipes were replaced with smooth wall plastic corrugated pipes



4.) The geogrid was then covered with 3.5 inch minus gravel (which means gravel that fits through a 3.5 inch sieve) which was bulldozed level, rolled and compacted.



5.) The above process was the first or base stage of the project. After this was completed, a final surface of 1.5 inch minus gravel (which means gravel that fits through a 1.5 inch sieve) was added, bulldozed level, graded for proper crown and drainage, rolled, and compacted.



6.) Coventry Road will still experience muddy conditions during heavy rain and the spring thaw season but this project will minimize the impact of these type of weather events.



### Friends of the Library: Gingerbread House Decorating Contest

Join the Friends of the Mansfield Library in their first Gingerbread Decorating contest! This event is open to all, and the decorated houses will be displayed in the library for patrons to vote for. Prizes will be awarded! It will take place Saturday, December 14 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon\* in the Buchanan Auditorium.

To sign-up for this event, please register by December 10th to help us ensure there are enough materials available. Please [register here](#):

*\*This event runs between 9am and 12pm, but you do not need to be present for the full 3 hours.*



### Free, Frosty Fun at Winter Welcome in Downtown Storrs!

The [Mansfield Downtown Partnership](#) will host its 12<sup>th</sup> Annual [Winter Welcome](#) on Saturday, December 7 from 4:00 PM to 6:30 PM in [Downtown Storrs](#). This event is free and open to all ages.

The frosty fun kicks off at 4:00 PM with the sound of tubas. That's right, tubas! Members of the UConn Marching Band Tuba section will escort some special, jolly guests to Barnes & Noble UConn. Santa and Mrs. Claus will visit with friends there from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM.

Outside, there will be wintery activities set-up in Dog Lane and Royce Circle, including a "Puzzle Swap" with Mansfield Public Library. Trade in a puzzle you have completed for a new challenge to take home and enjoy on a snowy day.

On Betsy Paterson Square, marvel at the creative entries in the Trim-A-Tree Contest. Vote for your favorite at the Partnership's booth and receive a gift (while supplies last). The top 3 vote-getters win prizes!

There will be performances on the Square throughout the event from the UConn Tap Club, Mansfield Academy of Dance, and Miss Kelly's/Mansfield Parks & Recreation's Community Nutcracker. Mansfield Resident State Troopers will be stuffing their cruiser full of gifts for local families in need. Please consider donating a new, unwrapped toy for ages 3 years old to 18 years old.

For more information, please visit [downtownstorrs.org/winterwelcome](http://downtownstorrs.org/winterwelcome) or call the Partnership office (860.429.2740).



**Parks and Recreation’s Craft Fair & Jingle Jog: A Celebration of Creativity, Local Artisans, & Some Festive Fun!**

Parks and Recreation is thrilled to announce the Third Annual Craft Fair, set to take place on Saturday, December 14, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Mansfield Community Center Gymnasium, located at 10 South Eagleville Road, Storrs/Mansfield. This highly anticipated event will feature over 25 local artisans and crafters, showcasing a diverse range of handmade goods, unique creations, and one-of-a-kind gifts. Sales of commercial items, imports and novelties are not permitted. The Craft Fair is open to the public and free to attend.

From jewelry, pottery, and home décor to clothing, toys, and specialty foods, attendees will have the chance to browse and purchase a wide variety of high-

quality, locally made items. Whether you're shopping for yourself, finding the perfect gift, or supporting small businesses, the Craft Fair offers something for everyone. Interested? Visit [www.mansfieldcc.com](http://www.mansfieldcc.com) or call 860-429-3015 ext. 0 for more event info! A fun-filled day ahead – and who knows what hidden treasures await!

*\*The Town of Mansfield and Mansfield Parks and Recreation are not responsible for any agreements made by private parties at the Craft Fair. The Town of Mansfield and Mansfield Parks and Recreation reserves the right to ask any vendors to leave the grounds if Town Policies are not followed. We also reserve the right to ask you to remove any items we find objectionable.*

(Continued)





(Parks & Recreation Holiday Fun cont.)

Continue the fun with the Jingle Jog! Prance, dance, or blitz your way around the festive track for a chance to win free prizes! Jingle bells provided with your registration! Feel free to dress up in your best holiday attire. Hot chocolate and candy canes provided when finished! Saturday, December 14, 9 – 10 a.m.

**Jingle Jog**

Saturday, December 14th 9:00 -10:00 am  
**\*FREE FOR ALL\***  
 Pre-Registration Strongly Suggested  
 Activity #270080-A

*Prance, dance or jog your distance of choice.  
 Event located at MCC Track  
 Hot Chocolate, Candy Canes and Jingle Bells  
 provided.  
 Stay and shop at the Craft Fair!*

**Family Friendly  
 All are welcome!**

MANSFIELD COMMUNITY CENTER  
 Family, Fitness & Fun!

10 South Eagleville Road,  
 Mansfield, CT 06268  
[www.mansfieldcc.com](http://www.mansfieldcc.com) or  
 860.4298.3015

**Mansfield Senior Center Brings Community Together for the Holidays**



The Mansfield Senior Center continues to take pleasure in hosting events to find ways to celebrate and bring people together. On November 19th, the Senior Center hosted the annual Thanksgiving Holiday Luncheon. We hosted more than 80 seniors who attended this celebration to enjoy a delicious meal, the company of others, and share their gratitude for each other.

Our next celebration is schedule for Tuesday, December 17, for the Holiday Luncheon. Lunch will be followed by a performance from the Mansfield Senior Center Chorus group and a “Thieving Elves” gift exchange.

To end 2024 and ring in 2025, The Senior Center will be hosting a New Year’s Eve Celebration on Tues, Dec. 31st at noon. If you are interested in attending any of these events, please contact the Senior Center at 860-429-0262.

**Be Kind and Report Unhoused Felines as the Weather Changes**



Late autumn not only comes with colorful falling leaves but also falling temperatures. A large number of the calls we receive during the winter months are resident’s concerned about unhoused outdoor cats.

Mansfield Animal Control takes pride in staying on top of [Feline Overpopulation](#) with our [Cat Spay Neuter Ordinance](#) if you are concerned about an unhoused feline, please click on the links

above for more information.



## A Holiday Experience the Whole Family Will Enjoy: A Community Production of “The Nutcracker”

Get in the holiday spirit and create fond memories while watching this holiday tradition unfold! Mansfield Parks & Recreation, in partnership with Miss Kelly Productions, presents another year of “The Nutcracker” – a beautiful culmination of the season-long hard work of over 60 local youth – on December 14th and 15th at the Mansfield Middle School Auditorium. Tickets are on sale now at the Mansfield Community Center, and a limited number of tickets will be available at the door one hour before each show.



A local tradition over 20 years in the making, Miss Kelly’s “The Nutcracker” is a show not to miss! Each year Miss Kelly Productions uses a variety of unique elements to ensure the skills and energy of every participant, ages 3-18, shine through on stage. This year’s shows are filled with original ideas from students and include ballet, gymnastics, theater and tap dancing. What’s best? – Inexpensive holiday fun!

The weekend kicks off with the December 14th, 2pm Preview Show. Preview show tickets are \$8 per person. Full shows will be held December 14th at 6pm, and December 15th at 1 p.m. Tickets to full shows are \$10 for ages 3-17 and 62+, and \$15 for adults age 18-61. All shows will be held at the Mansfield Middle School Auditorium. Doors to the Saturday evening and Sunday matinee open 45 minutes before show time.

So relax and enjoy some holiday cheer in a tradition like no other. Visit the Mansfield Community Center at 10 S. Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT 06268, today to purchase your show-tickets! Questions? Call the Mansfield Community Center at 860-429-3015 (Ext. 0), e-mail [parksandrec@mansfieldct.org](mailto:parksandrec@mansfieldct.org), or visit [www.mansfieldcc.com](http://www.mansfieldcc.com), and have a happy holiday season!

## Special Family Events Welcome Winter at the Mansfield Public Library



**Noon Year’s Eve Party—Tuesday, December 31  
11AM-12:30PM in MPL’s Buchanan Auditorium**

Celebrate New Year’s Eve with a family-friendly party featuring New Year’s crafts, snacks, playtime and a Balloon Drop Countdown to Noon followed by a Bubble Dance Party.

### Winter Reading Bingo for Adults, Teens, and Kids! January 1 – February 28

Winter is a great time to cozy up with some good books and take part in Mansfield Library’s Winter Reading Bingo! Stop by the library to register and pick up one of our bingo cards. Bring your bingo card to the circulation desk each time you stop by the library. For each square that you complete anywhere on your card, receive a drawing ticket for a chance to win one of our larger literary prizes! Complete five squares in a row—up, down, across, or diagonal—to automatically win a small prize (limit of one small prize per person). Good luck and Happy Reading!

### Winter Wonder Workshop—Thursday, January 23 4-6PM in MPL’s Buchanan Auditorium

Families are invited to drop by for Snow Science activities, snowflake crafts and a Winter Wonderland-themed play area.

### Teen Movie Night: *The Nightmare Before Christmas (PG)*—December 19 6-7:30PM in MPL’s Buchanan Auditorium

Join us for a screening with free pizza & popcorn!

### Cozy Winter Crafts & Hot Chocolate Bar — January 16 6-7PM in MPL’s Buchanan Auditorium

Get cozy at the library! Join us in January for cozy crafts and a Build-Your-Own Hot Chocolate Bar featuring a variety of sweet treats.



**Mansfield Human Services**  
**Season of Giving Campaign 2024**

The Mansfield Human Services Department is welcoming donations for various assistance programs that benefit our community. Season of Giving focuses on several ways in which you can help your neighbors in need. We are so very grateful for any and all support!

All donations can be sent to: Mansfield Human Services, 303 Maple Road, Mansfield, CT 06268.

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <p><b>NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS</b><br/>This fund assists low-income families with basic needs in emergency situations. Residents are able to utilize the fund for heat, electricity, rent, or any number of other extenuating circumstances. This fund is used throughout the entire year.<br/><b>Checks can be made payable to:</b><br/>Town of Mansfield<br/><b>Memo: Neighbors Fund.</b></p> | <p><b>HOLIDAY FUND</b><br/>The Holiday Fund assists low-income families by providing resources for their children and families over the holidays. Donors can contribute monetary or gift card donations.<br/>*****<br/><b>Checks can be made payable to:</b><br/>Town of Mansfield<br/><b>Memo: Mansfield Holiday Fund.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>HAPPY Holidays</i></p> | <p><b>STUFF-A-CRUISER</b><br/>Stuff-a-Cruiser is an annual event where the Mansfield Resident State Trooper's office collects toys and gift cards for the holidays. You can drop off new, unwrapped toys or gift cards during the Winter Welcome or the Resident Trooper's office in Town Hall.<br/>*****<br/><b>Winter Welcome: 12/7/2024</b><br/>Resident Troopers Office:<br/>4 South Eagleville Road<br/>Mansfield CT</p> |
| <p><b>CAMPERSHIP FUND</b><br/>Summer time brings additional financial burdens that impact families that are struggling. Our Campership Fund helps send children in town to Camp Mansfield and other eligible camps.<br/>*****<br/><b>Checks can be made payable to:</b><br/>Town of Mansfield;<br/><b>Memo: The Betsy Hamill Memorial Campership Fund.</b></p>                                     | <p><b>WARM &amp; COZY</b><br/><b>SENIOR HOLIDAY DRIVE</b><br/>We are collecting new hats, blankets, heating pads, slippers, bath robes, and other cozy things for Meals on Wheels participants in the community.<br/>*****<br/><b>Donations can be dropped off to the Human Services Department, 303 Maple Road.</b></p>   | <p><b>FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS</b><br/>Our Food Pantry is in need of shelf stable food items and hygiene products. Consider dropping off donations at the locations below.<br/>*****<br/><b>10/1-10/31/24:</b><br/>Mansfield Fire Dept. Station 307<br/>999 Storrs Road<br/><b>All year: Human Services Dept. 303 Maple Road.</b></p>  |

**SNOWSHOE RENTALS AVAILABLE!**

**\$10/PAIR PER DAY**

Go out and explore Mansfield! Snowshoes are available to rent at the Mansfield Community Center during the months of December through March. Rentals are available on a first come first serve basis and are reserved in person only. Children and adult sizes available. Fee is per pair.

[WWW.MANSFIELDCC.COM](http://WWW.MANSFIELDCC.COM) 860.429.3015  
 10 S. EAGLEVILLE RD. STORRS, CT  
 Mansfield Trail Maps available at  
<https://www.mansfieldct.gov/1698/Parks-Preserves>

**MANSFIELD COMMUNITY CENTER**  
 Family, Fitness & Fun!

### Mansfield Local Government Academy Experiences Continue



The 2024 Mansfield Local Government Academy launched in September and will conclude on December 12.

Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth organized the Academy to inform and engage citizens in what is involved to operate a high-functioning community government. Department heads lead each session to provide the challenges and opportunities they face each day.

Recent presentations have included Mansfield Public Library services, Parks & Recreation and Open Space, Land Use Planning, Economic Development, Resident State Troopers and Animal Control services. Superintendents of Mansfield Public Schools and E.O. Smith/Region 19 will present in early December, followed by a session on Boards and Commissions and a general wrap-up of the program and feedback on how to improve it in the years to come.

Participants committed to attend at least ten of the 12 two-hour sessions at various locations across the Town on Thursday evenings throughout the fall. Feedback from the 53 participants who have completed the Local Government Academy since 2021 has been positive, and many have since volunteered or run for elected office to serve the municipality. Find more details on the [Town Manager's webpage](#). To express your interest in being added to the list for the next time this program is offered, please email [TownMgr@mansfieldct.org](mailto:TownMgr@mansfieldct.org).



The Parks & Recreation session included a tour of Lenard Hall, home of the Community School of the Arts, with Parks & Recreation Director Jay O'Keefe.



Using an electric Driving Under the Influence (DUI) Cart, MLGA participants put on goggles that replicate driving while impaired to demonstrate how one's ability is affected.



During the Land Use Planning and Economic Development session, Academy participants provided input to the POCD, and heard from staff about the planning process to manage growth in Mansfield.



Participants enjoyed a Q&A session with Sgt. Stephen King who provided an overview of Mansfield's Resident State Trooper program and services they provide.

### Firefighters Support School Meals for Mansfield Children



The Mansfield Career Firefighters - L4120 made a donation to the Mansfield Elementary School Lunch Program. This generous donation will directly help ensure that no student goes without a healthy meal, empowering our youth to focus on learning and growing.

### Town Council Accepts Master Plan for Mansfield Parks & Recreation



Dozens of Mansfield residents have participated in providing input to the Mansfield Parks & Recreation Master Planning process over the past 18 months. Part of the *Mansfield Tomorrow* planning effort, the Master Plan for services and facilities is critical to ensure the Town's recreational resources are accessible and financially sustainable long into the future.

As part of the Town Council Meeting on June 10, 2024, 110%, Inc., the primary/lead consulting firm retained by the Town to facilitate the completion of a comprehensive master plan and financial sustainability strategy for Mansfield Parks and Recreation, presented the first draft plan alongside Town staff. Over the course of the ensuing months, there was an opportunity for staff and several pertinent town committees to review the plan, solicit feedback, and consider incorporating this feedback where appropriate. More specifically, staff received comments and suggestions regarding the plan from the Parks and Natural Resources Committee, Recreation Advisory Committee, and the Arts Advisory Committee.

In November, the Council adopted the following formally stated policy direction/objectives to accept the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and, and to endorse the following policy direction/objectives:



1. Incorporate recommended investments in existing parks and recreation infrastructure into the capital budgeting process, with a particular emphasis on improving accessibility;
2. Further evaluate recommendations for new assets/infrastructure as part of the capital budgeting process, which includes the potential creation of a dog park and a splash pad;
3. Providing the operating resources needed – in a phased manner over a period of years – to ensure staffing capacity is adequate for meeting the current and future programming priorities and maintenance requirements of Town parks and recreation assets;
4. Utilize the newly developed Parks and Recreation Financial Sustainability Policy when updating/revising the Department's fee schedule to ensure alignment;
5. Evaluate the Fee Waiver Program, including the need to modify current fee waiver caps to account for inflation and possible implementation of a pilot program for MCC membership for people at 80% of median income;
6. Further evaluate options and alternatives for insurance-supported senior fitness programs;
7. Evaluate Committee structures and membership as recommended in the Plan.

Further, The Council voted to acknowledge that the Parks and Recreation Special Revenue Fund is not a self-sustaining enterprise fund. As such, the Council maintains its commitment to provide funding to the Department on an ongoing basis to support wide use of the Department's recreational facilities, open spaces, events, and programs, by all members of our community.

### Wayfinding and Signage Installed Across Downtown Storrs and in Parks



We've all been there. You're visiting a new place and wondering where to park, and how to get to local landmarks. In an effort to help visitors and residents alike find and identify Mansfield's most valuable resources and destinations, the Town is implementing a "wayfinding" program focusing on our parks and trails first.

Downtown Storrs, which hosts many newcomers every week, also added directional signage and information kiosks at key pedestrian points. Mansfield Middle School also received a new sign to match the new Mansfield Elementary School. Watch for the new signage as you drive and walk around!



Get Ready for Delicious! Restaurant Week January 27 to February 9!

# Taste 2 Towns

## Mansfield-Windham Restaurant Week

If your business is interested in sponsoring Taste 2 Towns 2025, please contact [Patersonkm@mansfieldct.org](mailto:Patersonkm@mansfieldct.org)

### Repair Café January 11: Learn to Fix It, Not Toss It!



Do you have an item that needs a little fixing, but still has plenty of life?

Bring it to the next Repair Café January 11 at the First Congregational Church, 199 Valley St., Willimantic from 10AM to 2PM. Meet some great neighbors who are willing to fix your item for free, or teach you how to fix it the next time!

### Assessor Updating PA490 Land to State Land Use Valuation Guidelines



As part of the ongoing town-wide Revaluation project for October 1, 2024, the Assessor is reviewing property owners PA 490 accounts for accuracy, to ensure the program is being administered fairly and equitably for all participants.

These special land classification use assessments are being updated to the most current per acre recommended

land use valuation guidelines prescribed by the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management. Learn more about PA 490 at: [www.cfba.org/pa-490/](http://www.cfba.org/pa-490/)



Please don't forget to notify the assessor if you sell, have a change in use or acreage of farm land or forest land, classified in your name. This special use classification is personal and does not run with the land.

**MAKE TIME TO GET YOUR SEASONAL VACCINES**

Get on board. Stay on Track.  
**Get Vaxed.™**

 [ehhd.org/vax](http://ehhd.org/vax)

The information contained is approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as part of a national public health strategy. ©2024. All rights reserved. For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

### Wondering What To Read Next?



The Mansfield Public Library now offers NextReads! Subscribe to NextReads and get NextReads reading lists delivered right to your inbox! Select as many newsletters to subscribe to as you would like.

You'll receive the most recent issue(s) immediately. Topics include Mystery, Thrillers & Suspense, Picture Books, New York Times Bestsellers, Historical Fiction, and more!

View all the NextReads topics and subscribe here: <https://www.libraryaware.com/4219/Subscribers/Subscribe>

### Talking, Listening, Understanding



In this time of division is there a way we can learn to express our thoughts in a way that people who disagree can listen without feeling attacked? Can we honestly express our opinions in a non-judgmental and non-threatening manner so that we can be heard? Can we learn to listen to the thoughts of people we disagree with without getting angry?

These negative emotions make it difficult to hear others and to have others hear us. How do we solve problems in our community if we can't talk to each other?

This seems to be a time when everybody has strong opinions. These opinions are often drastically different from each other, and not a lot of people seem to be curious about alternate perspectives. When conversations among people turn into a fight for control, people get angry and relationships are disrupted. If we focus on finding creative solutions and common ground, we can usually manage our disagreements. If we focus on having our viewpoint control the conversation, we generally have a lot of trouble finding creative solutions. One thing we can probably all agree on is that there are a lot of problems to be solved in any community, including ours. But very few of us are skilled at listening to other viewpoints without getting angry. Once anger takes over it's really difficult to listen or to think clearly. If it is not safe to disagree, we can't create new ideas. We get stuck.

What to do? The Human Rights Commission (HRC) recently sponsored a workshop on Non-Violent Communication ([www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org)) The purpose of the workshop was to teach people a set of skills that would allow them to find common ground with other people in areas of disagreement. Several primary human rights identified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights include freedom of belief, opinion and access to information. These rights also include a limit on right—rights are limited by the need to respect the rights of others.

In a society where differences of opinion are typically treated as competition, we haven't had much practice in collaboration. Our elections have winners and losers. We rarely see the kind of behind-the-scenes collaboration that leads to meaningful problem solving. We need practice if we are going to move beyond the conflicts that are plaguing us in so many areas, locally, nationally, and internationally. The HRC is planning follow-up sessions with facilitators from the Center for Nonviolent Communication to help interested people learn how to listen carefully, search for common ground and move toward problem solving. These skills can be used with family, friends, people in religious and civic organizations and anyplace else where decisions need to be made. If you are interested in learning these skills and practicing them with other Mansfield residents, watch for our publicity around the beginning of 2025. Our sessions will be free and open to the public. Everyone is welcome.

*(Submitted by Jane Fried, Chair, Mansfield Human Rights Commission)*

### Mansfield Community Center Voted “Best Health & Fitness Center.” Again!

The Mansfield Community Center is once again the recipient of *The Chronicle's* Reader's Choice Award for Best Health & Fitness Center in 2024! Center staff are proud to once again have attained this honor in the region. The year came with over \$175,000 in fitness equipment upgrades; come check out the new fleet!



We hope all residents will take advantage of Free Mansfield Days, stop by for a tour, or take advantage of the free one-week trial to see all the center as to offer. Discounted day-pass packs are also on sale in limited quantities through the end of December.

The Winter 2025 brochure is out and available [online on our website](#). Don't miss out on new programs like Teen Badminton, Ninja-Fit Programs for kids, Sound Playground, Singing Bowl Experience, Yoga for Every Body, Zumba, Sound Healing Mediation, Mindfulness-Based Stressed Reduction, and more!

### Registrars Office Recognized by Town Council Upon Retirement



Registrars of Voters Vera Ward and Anne Greineder and Assistant Terry Bitwinski were recognized prior to the Town Council meeting at a special reception on November 12 for their efforts in coordinating the 2024 Election, and their dedication to the Registrars’ office since 2019. Ms Ward and Ms Greineder did not run for re-election, and are concluding their service. Members of the Town Council, staff, and many poll workers attended the celebration.

Mayor Toni Moran presented a Proclamation to the team for their efforts, especially in the recent November election. The Proclamation acknowledged the Registrars’ integrity and dedication, and work to prioritize updating voter registration records, systems, and technologies upon assuming their roles. It cited their exemplary leadership and professionalism in overseeing numerous successful voting operations, including most recently the 2024 presidential election, especially their collaboration with numerous state and local stakeholders in the course of planning and implementing Early Voting for the first time during multiple elections in 2024.

The Town Council also recognized their conscientiousness and commitment to such important work to help cultivate and sustain voter faith and confidence in elections and their results. They were also complimented for collaborating so effectively in the spirit of bipartisanship since they took office.

Incoming Registrars of Voters are Ron Manizza, Democrat, and Al Fratoni, Republican.

### Taste of Mansfield and Mansfield Schools Host Community Dinner



The popular Community Dinner returned this fall, hosted by the Taste of Mansfield and prepared by Mansfield Public Schools Food Services.

The free vegetarian dinner was prepared by Chef Maraiah Popeleski-Tilley and her staff, and featured products and locally grown produce from area farms including Riverview Farm and Cobblestone Farm. The menu included Three Sisters Chili, Spaghetti Squash Bake, homemade corn bread, a roasted salad of harvest vegetables and greens, and local apple crisp—all regular items from Mansfield Schools’ cafeteria menus. Even the centerpieces were grown locally! More than 100 community members enjoyed the dinner and the conviviality at the Mansfield Middle School Cafeteria.



## Are you a homeowner who needs home repairs?



### Mansfield Housing Rehabilitation Program

Funding provided through a Small Cities Grant from the State of Connecticut Department of Housing as part of the HUD Community Development Block Grant.

#### HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Effective May 1, 2024

| Household Size | Maximum Income |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1 Person       | \$68,250       |
| 2 People       | \$78,000       |
| 3 People       | \$87,750       |
| 4 People       | \$97,450       |
| 5 People       | \$102,250      |
| 6 People       | \$113,050      |
| 7 People       | \$120,850      |
| 8 People       | \$128,650      |

Assistance is available to Mansfield homeowners and provides 0% interest loans to income-eligible homeowners to finance home repairs. Call us to discuss your eligibility questions and status of our waitlist.

**APPLY TODAY**  
Additional program information and an on-line application form are available at <http://mansfieldct.gov/2035/Housing-Rehabilitation>.

**Questions?**  
[delvalled@MansfieldCT.org](mailto:delvalled@MansfieldCT.org)  
860.487.9871

Eligible Improvements include (but are not limited to):  
 Roof repair/replacement  
 Windows and Doors  
 Heating, plumbing and electrical upgrades  
 Private well/septic repair/replacement  
 Accessibility for individuals with disabilities

### Digital Access Navigators Expand Services in Response to Needs



Mansfield’s Digital Navigator program launched in January with two Digital Navigators dedicated to assisting patrons with connecting to the internet, buying or borrowing technology, learning how to get the most out of digital devices, and troubleshooting technical issues. Since then, Paul Velazquez and John Cropp have had more than 300 appointments and walk-in sessions with requests such as signing up for government subsidized smartphone programs, computer program training, setting up online banking accounts, registering to vote, creating email accounts, and utilizing online job boards.

In addition to working with patrons from across the region with those initial initiatives, the Digital Navigators have expanded their program to meet the observed needs of the community. They have hosted or presented information sessions and presentations at the Mansfield Public Library and Mansfield Senior Center on topics such as internet safety and digital health navigation, they have conducted regular tutorial sessions with patrons, and they have visited Juniper Hill Village every other week to bring assistance directly to senior residents who are quickly getting up to speed with the latest communication and computing technology.

The Digital Navigators have spread the word about their program with outreach at Downtown Storrs events, tabling at the Mansfield Community Center, and as guests of John Murphy’s WILI AM 1400 radio show *On the Homefront*. The Digital Navigators are looking forward to rolling out new ways to connect with and assist community members in the new year. Follow Mansfield Public Library on Facebook, Instagram, and Threads to keep up to date with the program.

If you need help getting on Facebook, Instagram, and Threads, or if you are in need of any other sort of technology assistance, please contact the Digital Navigators at (959) 444-1305 or email them at [digitalnavigators@mansfieldct.org](mailto:digitalnavigators@mansfieldct.org). You are also welcome to walk-in and meet with them at Mansfield Public Library between 9am and 5pm on Fridays and Saturdays or between 5pm and 8pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Or, join Paul on the third Friday of every month at 11AM for his new technology course: Tech Savvy Seniors. The first class will be on Friday, December 20th and Paul will lead the discussion about online safety.

## TECH SAVVY SENIORS

**3rd Friday of every month**  
11: 00 AM  
**Library Program Room**  
Free and open to all. No registration needed.

**Friday, December 20, 2024**  
11:00 AM  
**Internet Safety**



**Friday, January 17, 2025**  
11:00 AM  
**Media Literacy**



**Friday, February 21, 2025**  
11:00 AM  
**Social Media**

**Friday, March 21, 2025**  
11:00 AM  
**Artificial Intelligence**



For more information contact  
Paul: 959-444-1305  
[VelazquezP@mansfieldCT.org](mailto:VelazquezP@mansfieldCT.org)





**Led by Digital Navigator,  
Paul Velazquez**

## Mansfield Library: Learn, Join in, Explore What's Happening



### More Special Family Events

**Worldly Wonder Workshop featuring Mansfield's Human Rights Commission on Thursday, December 12 from 4-6PM in MPL's Buchanan Auditorium**

Learn about Global Human Rights Day through a special craft led by Mansfield's Human Rights Commission along with activities to celebrate young human rights trailblazers from around the world.



### **Cozy Movie Monday: Wild Robot on Monday, December 23 at 1PM in MPL's Buchanan Auditorium**

Put on your comfiest pajamas and join us at the library for a family movie matinee featuring *The Wild Robot* (PG). Feel free to bring your own blanket; we'll provide fresh popcorn, hot chocolate and assorted treats!

### **Special Winter Storytime on Saturday, December 28 at 10:30AM**

Welcome winter with a special snowy storytime!

### **Elephant & Piggie Party on Take Your Child to the Library Day on Saturday, February 1 from 11AM-1PM**

Piggie & Gerald invite families to celebrate "Take Your Child to the Library Day" with a party at the library! Drop by MPL's Children's Area for crafts, games, & treats featuring the beloved duo from the *Elephant & Piggie* series by author Mo Willems.

### Weekly Children's Events

#### **Toddler Time: Tuesdays at 10:30AM in MPL's Buchanan Auditorium**

Learn, dance and play through stories and songs! After storytime, families are invited to stay and play with friends. This program is best for toddlers ages 1-3, but all families are welcome.

\*No program on December 24 or 31. Join us instead on the 31st for our Noon Year's Eve Party at 11AM!\*

#### **Wonder Workshop: Thursdays from 4-6PM (Drop-in!) in MPL's Buchanan Auditorium**

Families are invited to drop in for STEAM activities, crafts, and tactile play. This program is best for preschool and elementary-school age children, but all families are welcome.

\*No program on December 26\*

#### **Music & Movement: Fridays at 10:30AM in MPL's Buchanan Auditorium**

Let's move! Sing, dance and move your bodies in this interactive, music-based program, followed by group playtime. This program is best for ages 1-5, but all families are welcome.

\*No program on December 27\*

#### **Saturday Storytimes: Saturdays at 10:30AM in MPL's Program Room**

Join us for Saturday morning stories, songs & play-time at the library! This program is best for families with children ages 1-7, but all families are welcome

*\*As always, all youth library programs are FREE and no registration is necessary.\**

### Adult Programs

#### **Connecting to the Love Within Through Meditation This Holiday Season Virtual program via Zoom December 3, 2024 @ 6:00 PM**

Join long time meditator Eileen Carlotto as she offers this engaging workshop on how to use the practice of meditation to incorporate more love and peace in your life which in turn will have a profound transformation on your overall well-being.

Register for the Zoom link at: <https://mansfieldct.jotform.com/library/connecting>

#### **Unearthed: Exploring the Smithsonian National Gem Collection with Dr. Jeffrey Post, December 4 at 2:00 P.M., Virtual**

Join us for an absolutely dazzling presentation with the emeritus curator of the Smithsonian's National Gem Collection, Dr. Jeffrey E. Post as he talks about The Smithsonian National Gem Collection Unearthed: Surprising Stories Behind the Jewels.

Register for the link at: <https://libraryc.org/mansfieldpubliclibraryct/62289>

(Continued)



**(Library Programs Cont.)**

**Matt's Matinee Movies: Didi (2024) Rated R, Length 1h 33min**  
**December 7 at 1:00 PM Mansfield Public Library, Program Room**

There will be free popcorn.

Additional virtual showing and discussion: December 18, 2024 @ 8:00 PM

(Email Matt Ockmond at: [ockmondmj@mansfieldct.org](mailto:ockmondmj@mansfieldct.org) for more information)

In 2008, during the last month of summer before high school begins, an impressionable 13-year-old Taiwanese American boy learns how to skate, how to flirt, and how to love your mom. Preceded by the short documentary *Nai Nai & Wàì Pó* (2023) length 17 min.

**On Pulse-Pounding, Family Driven Mysteries: A Conversation with Laura Dave**  
**December 11 at 2:00 P.M., Virtual**

Join us for a captivating conversation with #1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Last Thing He Told Me*, Laura Dave, as she chats with us online about her newest book *The Night We Lost Him*.

Register for the link at: <https://libraryc.org/mansfieldpubliclibraryct/63019/register>

**Tech Savvy Seniors: Internet Safety**

**December 20 from 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM in MPL's Program Room**

Concerned about online security and privacy? This course is designed with you in mind!

Topics will include identifying secure websites, creating and remembering strong passwords, and avoiding scams and fraud. Participants will also have an opportunity to ask questions and discuss internet safety. Whether you're a seasoned internet user or just starting to explore the online realm, this presentation will empower you to make informed decisions and safeguard your digital presence.

Attendees are encouraged to bring their own laptops or other mobile devices for hands-on practice. The library does have devices available to lend if needed.

**Tech Savvy Seniors: Media Literacy**

**January 17 from 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM in MPL's Program Room**

Feeling overwhelmed by the flood of information online? Join Paul in a Media Literacy Course to learn how to evaluate news sources and separate fact from fiction.

In this presentation, you'll discover practical techniques to identify credible sources and detect misleading content. Ideal for anyone who wants to navigate the digital landscape with confidence, this course will help you become a more informed and discerning consumer of news.

**The Magic of Found Family: In Conversation with Author TJ Klune**

**January 15 at 7:00 P.M., Virtual**

Come have a magical moment with New York Times bestselling author TJ Klune as he chats about his *Cerulean Chronicles*, with special emphasis on his newest in the series, *Somewhere Beyond the Sea*.

Register for the link at: <https://libraryc.org/mansfieldpubliclibraryct/64205>

**Notes on Modern Irrationality with Bestselling Author Amanda Montell**

**January 23 at 2:00 P.M., Virtual**

Join us as we chat with the New York Times bestselling author, Amanda Montell about her newest book, *The Age of Magical Overthinking: Notes on Modern Irrationality*.

Register for the link at: <https://libraryc.org/mansfieldpubliclibraryct/64684>

**An Inside Look at Working with a Literary Agent: A Conversation with Seth Fishman**  
**on January 28 at 12:00 P.M., Virtual**

You're writing a book (or thinking about it), but what happens next? Join us for an inside look into working with an agent and the beginning stages of the publishing process with Seth Fishman, Vice President and Literary Agent at The Gernert Company.

Register for the link at: <https://libraryc.org/mansfieldpubliclibraryct/65163>

**Begin the New Year with the Healing Power of Meditation**

**Virtual program via Zoom on January 28 at 6:00 PM**

As we enter the New Year, we have an opportunity to look back at the things we want to continue to experience and those that we don't. Jim Rose will lead an interactive workshop where we will learn and practice techniques to reduce stress, and bring joy, peace, positivity and relaxation into our daily routines.

Register for the Zoom link on the library's event calendar.

(Continued)



(Library Programs Cont.)



**Recurring Adult Programs:**

Current Events and Politics Weekly Discussion Group  
Wednesdays: December 4, 11, 18 & January 8, 15, 22, 29 at  
1:00 PM in MPL's Program Room

Friday Films  
Fridays: December 6, 13, 20, 27 & January 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 at  
1:00 P.M in MPL's Program Room

Mansfield Library Monthly Book Discussion Group  
Tuesdays: December 10 & January 14, 6:45 PM - 8:00 PM  
Mansfield Public Library, Program Room  
Copies of all books are available at the Library

Adults 18+ Only Monthly Game Night  
Tuesdays: December 17 & January 21, 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM in the Buchanan  
Auditorium

Mansfield Library Monthly Knitting Group  
Thursdays: December 19 & January 16, 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM in MPL's Program Room

**WINTER WELCOME**  
Saturday, December 7 | 4:00-6:30 PM  
Free, Frosty Fun in Downtown Storrs

**PUZZLE SWAP!**  
Bring a puzzle, take a puzzle!  
Learn more at:  
[downtownstorrs.org/winterwelcome](http://downtownstorrs.org/winterwelcome)

MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP  
DOWNTOWN STORRS  
MANSFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

**It's Time to Brush Up on Your Recycling Practices for the Holidays**



Did you know that there is LOTS you can do to reduce waste and recycle more, especially in this busy time of year. Check out the recycling video playlist that is specific to Mansfield residents. [See these videos](#) and get that refresher on waste and recycling!

What Happens to My Recyclables?  
Visit our website and see!  
<https://www.mansfieldct.gov/recycle?>



### What’s Happening in Town? Don’t miss these *EVENTS!*

Watch for postings on the Town of Mansfield [website](#) . Watch for updates from [the Mansfield Senior Center](#) which hosts many online and in-person activities each month along with the [Mansfield Public Library](#) and the [Mansfield Community Center](#).

### Upcoming Municipal Meetings

For the most up-to-date schedule of Town meetings, go to our website at <https://www.mansfieldct.gov/calendar.aspx?CID=32>

We encourage residents to participate in Mansfield’s governance. Many municipal meetings are still being held virtually, but some are fully in-person. Hybrid meeting options (a combination of virtual attendees from remote locations and in-person at a central location) are offered for the Town Council and The Board of Education

Regardless of the meeting format, residents may still submit Public Comment prior to meetings. You may view some meetings as they occur via Live Video Stream on our YouTube channel. Other meetings are recorded so you may review minutes and recordings after the fact.



To find the log-in information for each of these meetings, go to the [Agendas/Minutes](#) page on the town’s website. Look up the name of the committee, and click on the arrow to the left of the title. The agenda for the upcoming meeting will appear. Click on it to open, and it will list who to contact to receive call-in information.

Minutes of past meetings are also posted there.

**Please Contact Our Department Leaders for What You Need**



Our staff is ready to help answer any questions you have about how to access the services of your community. Please reach out to them by phone or by email for anything you need.

| Department  | Department Leader                                       | Contact   |
|---|---|---|
| Animal Control                                    | Noranne Nielsen,<br>Animal Control Officer              | 860-487-0137<br>ACO@mansfieldct.org                                   |
| Assessor  | Rochelle Lambert,<br>Assessor                           | 860-429-3311<br>Assessor@mansfieldct.org                              |
| Building and Housing Inspection                   | Michael Ninteau,<br>Building & Housing Director         | 860-429-3324<br>BldgDept@mansfieldct.org                              |
| Downtown Partnership                              | Kathleen Paterson,<br>Acting Executive Director         | 860-429-2740<br>MDP@mansfieldct.org                                   |
| Eastern Highlands Health District                 | Robert Miller, M.P.H., R.S.,<br>Director of Health      | 860-429-3325<br>ehhd@ehhd.org   |
| Emergency Management                              | Adam Libros,<br>Emergency Management Director           | 860-429-3328<br>OEM@MansfieldCT.org                                   |
| Facilities  | Michael Posocco,<br>Facilities Director                 | 860-429-3320<br>facilities@mansfieldct.org                            |
| Finance   | Amanda Backhaus,<br>Finance Director                    | 860-429-3345<br>FinanceDept@mansfieldct.org                           |
| Fire Marshal                                      | Adam Libros,<br>Deputy Chief/Fire Marshal               | 860-429-3328<br>FireMarshal@mansfieldct.org                           |
| Fire & Emergency Services                         | John Roache<br>Fire Chief                               | 860-429-3323<br>firedept@mansfieldct.org<br><br><b>EMERGENCY: 911</b> |
| Housing Authority                                 | Rebecca Fields,<br>Housing Authority Executive Director | 860-487-0693<br>rfields@mansfieldhousingct.org                        |
| Shared Services                                   | Maria Capriola, Chief of Shared Services                | 860-429-3380<br>HR@MansfieldCT.org                                    |
| Human Services                                    | Jessica St. Louis,<br>Director of Human Services        | 860-429-3315<br>HumanServ@MansfieldCT.org                             |
| Information Technology                            | Jaime Russell,<br>Information Technology Director       | 860-429-3384<br>technology@mansfieldct.org                            |
| Mansfield Discovery Depot                         | Debbie Plourde,<br>Director                             | (860) 487-0062<br>MDD@mansfieldct.org                                 |
| Parks & Recreation/<br>Mansfield Community Center | Jay O'Keefe,<br>Director                                | 860-429-3015<br>parks&rec@mansfieldct.org                             |



**Please Contact Our Department Leaders for What You Need**

| Department                               | Department Leader   | Contact   |
|--|---|---|
| Planning & Development                   | Jennifer Kaufman, AICP<br>Director  | 860-429-3330<br>PlanZoneDept@mansfieldct.org                        |
| Public Library                           | Devon Andrews,<br>Library Director  | 860-423-2501<br>MansfieldLibrary@MansfieldCT.org                    |
| Public Works                             | John Carrington,<br>Public Works Director   | 860-429-3331<br>PublicWorks@mansfieldct.org                         |
| Registrars of Voters                     | Anne Greineder,<br>Democratic Registrar<br><br>Vera Ward,<br>Republican Registrar | 860-429-3368<br><br>860-429-3369<br>VoterRegistrars@mansfieldct.org |
| Senior Center                            | Jessica Tracy,<br>Senior Center Supervisor  | 860-429-0262<br>TracyJA@mansfieldct.org                             |
| State Police<br>(Resident State Trooper) | Sergeant Stephen King,<br>Resident State Trooper<br>Sergeant                      | 860-429-6024<br>Police@mansfieldct.org                              |
| Tax/Revenue Collections                  | Jerl Casey,<br>Collector of Revenue   | 860-429-3307<br>Taxes@mansfieldct.org                               |
| Trash and Recycling                      | Virginia Walton,<br>Recycling Coordinator   | 860-429-3333<br>waltonvd@mansfieldct.org                            |
| Town Clerk                               | Sara-Ann Chaine,<br>Town Clerk  | 860-429-3302<br>TownClerk@MansfieldCT.org                           |
| Town Manager                             | Ryan Aylesworth,<br>Town Manager  | 860-429-3336<br>TownMngr@mansfieldct.org                            |
| Youth Services                           | Sarah DeLuca, LPC<br>Youth Services Supervisor                                    | 860-429-3319  |