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Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth (right) and Fire and Emergency Department Chief John Roache (left) offered remarks before the Town Council to honor Deputy Chief Kevin Danielson. D.C. Danielson was first on the scene and rescued victims from a burning house in late October. (See story on page 12)

### Message from the Town Manager

## Shared Values: Resilience, Inclusion, & Care

Greetings Fellow Residents!

As we enter this holiday season and look ahead to a new year, I find myself reflecting on how Mansfield continues to flourish as a community rooted in resilience, inclusion, and genuine care for one another. These shared values are what make our town special, and local government plays a vital role in helping them take shape in the everyday lives of our residents.

Across Town Hall and throughout every municipal department, our efforts are centered on a clear and meaningful purpose: to provide services and opportunities that enrich your daily life and strengthen the sense of belonging that defines Mansfield. It is a responsibility we approach with pride – and a privilege we never take for granted.

(Continued)

# WINTER WELCOME

Saturday, December 6 | 4:00–6:30 PM

Free, Frosty Fun in Downtown Storrs!

INFO: [downtownstorrs.org/winterwelcome](http://downtownstorrs.org/winterwelcome)

**MANSFIELD**  
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Business and Community

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STORRS**

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## Message from the Town Manager (cont.)

Over the past several months, our efforts as a municipality have focused on several key priorities, including:

- Investing in critical transportation infrastructure, including ongoing improvements to roads, pedestrian corridors, and other infrastructure that supports safety, mobility, and long-term community growth.
- Expanding housing options in alignment with adopted planning goals, and supporting thoughtful development that meets community needs – particularly affordable housing.
- Enhancing fire and emergency response capabilities through increased staffing, station improvements, and apparatus upgrades intended to strengthen community preparedness.
- Planning for the future of our municipal facilities, partnering with architectural and design experts to assess current and long-term facility needs and to guide strategic investments that ensure our buildings remain safe, functional, and responsive to the community’s expectations.
- Strengthening Mansfield’s commitment to sustainability in its many forms, as evidenced by our recent Gold Certification through SustainableCT.
- Delivering high-quality recreation, library, and human services programs that promote wellbeing, connection, and lifelong learning for residents of all ages.
- Engaging residents in meaningful ways, ensuring transparent communication and inviting community participation in decision-making processes that shape Mansfield’s future.



**“As we look ahead to 2026, our priorities remain clear:**

**to provide outstanding municipal services,**

**to meet the changing needs of our residents,**

**and to continue shaping a future that reflects Mansfield’s core values and welcomes new opportunities for innovation and responsible growth.”**

*-Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth*

As we look ahead to 2026, our priorities remain clear: to provide outstanding municipal services, to meet the changing needs of our residents, and to continue shaping a future that reflects Mansfield’s core values and welcomes new opportunities for innovation and responsible growth.

Guided by these commitments, the following initiatives and focus areas are on the horizon:

**Municipal Budget Development Process: Planning for Growth and Shaping Our Future** As we look ahead to the promise of a new year, the Town remains focused on thoughtful planning and responsible stewardship of public resources. We are beginning the annual municipal budget development process for Fiscal Year 2027 (covering July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027), and this incredibly important exercise will guide how we invest in the programs, services, and infrastructure that our community relies on each day.

As we approach this work, our goals remain clear. **First and foremost, we are striving to maintain – and where prudent enhance – the high quality of Mansfield’s municipal services. Furthermore, we will continue seeking opportunities to reduce costs and operate efficiently; maximize state and other non-local revenue sources; and work diligently to minimize pressure on the mill rate –** which was substantially lowered following last year’s Town-wide Revaluation – so that Mansfield remains a community that is accessible and affordable for residents of all incomes.

This year, we will once again prepare our operating budget and capital improvement plan using [ClearGov](#), the Town’s web-based, interactive budgeting platform. ClearGov allows us to develop a comprehensive, transparent budget document that is organized much like a user-friendly website, making it easier for residents to understand how their tax dollars are put to work. Your engagement remains essential in helping us prioritize the investments that matter most. I encourage all residents to stay informed, participate in upcoming public meetings and workshops starting in late March, and share your perspectives as we work together to build a strong and vibrant future for the Town of Mansfield.

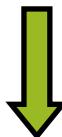
**Emergency Services** One of the Town’s key priorities in the coming year is continuing to strengthen the capacity of Fire and Emergency Services. This fall, Mansfield was awarded a significant federal grant that will allow us to further expand staffing and further enhance our already strong response times. This investment not only supports the dedicated professionals who serve our growing community every day, but also advances our long-term commitment to providing high-quality, dependable emergency response. In addition to growing our personnel capacity, the Town is actively evaluating the facility needs of our fire stations to ensure they remain safe, modern, and well-equipped to meet Mansfield’s needs in the years ahead.

Together, these efforts reflect our ongoing focus on public safety as a cornerstone of a thriving and resilient community.



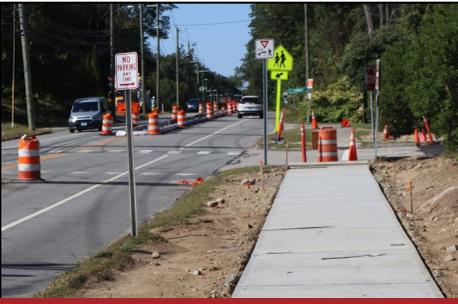
Firefighters work with E.O. Smith students in the Fire Explorers after school to build interest in first responder careers.

(Continued)



*Message from the Town Manager (cont.)*

**Pedestrian Safety** Enhancing pedestrian safety continues to be one of the Town’s top priorities in the year ahead, and we are making meaningful progress through a number of important infrastructure projects. The South Eagleville



South Eagleville Road now has expanded sidewalks, plus a multi-use path.

Road Pedestrian Safety Improvement Project – an effort that adds new sidewalks, multi-use trail connections, and roadway enhancements – is now nearing completion and will significantly improve safety and mobility for residents, students, and visitors (see story on page 14.) Looking forward, we anticipate breaking ground this spring on the Maple Road Reconstruction Project and final phases of the Downtown Loop Closure, each of which is grant-funded and includes new pedestrian facilities designed to create safer, more accessible routes throughout Mansfield. Together, these investments reflect our commitment to building a community where walking and biking are safe, convenient, and enjoyable for all.

**Affordable Housing** Ensuring that Mansfield remains a welcoming and inclusive community for residents of all incomes and life stages continues to be a central focus for the Town. Access to safe, stable, and affordable housing is essential not only for individual well-being, but also for the overall health and vitality of our community. As a university town, Mansfield experiences unique pressures on housing supply and affordability, but these same dynamics also create opportunities for thoughtful, well-

planned growth. **In the year ahead, we will continue working with regional partners, community stakeholders, and experienced developers to encourage projects that expand our inventory of affordable and mixed-income housing.** Our goal is to support development that integrates seamlessly into existing neighborhoods and provides options that meet the diverse needs of seniors, young professionals, families, and others who call Mansfield home.



Eagleville Green, Mansfield’s newest affordable housing, is fully occupied and provides an affordable alternative for families and individuals on South Eagleville Road.

**Mansfield Tomorrow Plan of Conservation and Development** Over the past year, the Town has made substantial progress on the update to the Mansfield Tomorrow Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), guided by the ad hoc committee of Planning and Zoning Commission and Town Council members formed to help shepherd this important effort. The updated POCD – our community’s roadmap for land use, housing, economic development, environmental stewardship, transportation, and public facilities – is now largely drafted. Shortly after the start of the New Year, the Town will begin the formal public hearing process required for its adoption. **This marks a significant milestone in a multi-year effort to ensure that Mansfield’s policies and priorities reflect both our shared values and the evolving needs of our community.** As we look ahead, the updated POCD will play a central role in shaping a thoughtful, sustainable, and equitable future for Mansfield – supporting affordable housing, economic vitality, environmental protection, and an exceptional quality of life for all who call our town home.

**Municipal Facilities Master Planning** The Town continues to make meaningful progress in evaluating and planning for the future of our aging municipal facilities. In recent months, we began working with an architecture and design firm that will lead us through the next phase of this effort – developing detailed conceptual and schematic designs that will allow us to generate reliable project cost estimates. **This work builds on the comprehensive municipal facilities master planning process already underway, which is helping us assess the condition and long-term viability of our current buildings and explore potential alternatives to better meet the Town’s evolving needs.** As this process moves



Human Services staff guide the Local Government Academy on a tour of the facility which is stretched for space.



The Animal Shelter lacks appropriate heating, basic facilities for staff, on-site laundry, and is short on storage.

(Continued)



## Message from the Town Manager (cont.)

forward, robust community engagement remains a top priority. Residents will have multiple opportunities to review concepts, share feedback, and help shape the recommendations that will ultimately be presented to the Town Council.

At the same time, the Town is actively pursuing federal and state grant opportunities to help offset design and construction costs associated with any future improvements. Our goal is to ensure that Mansfield's public facilities support high-quality services, reflect our community's values, and contribute to a vibrant, resilient future for all.

This time of year also serves as a meaningful reminder of how essential community involvement is to Mansfield's strength. We deeply appreciate the residents who attend meetings, offer thoughtful feedback, volunteer across town, and help shape the future of our community through their engagement. Your participation enriches our work and ensures that Mansfield continues to reflect the values and aspirations of the people who call it home. I hope you'll continue to stay involved and connected with us in the year ahead.

From all of us at the Town of Mansfield, I extend warm wishes for a joyful holiday season. May the coming year bring you peace, good health, and opportunities to enjoy the community we are fortunate to share.

Very respectfully,



Ryan J. Aylesworth



What's being discussed at this month's meetings?

What did that committee decide?

To Sign up to receive email or text notifications about meetings and minutes of Town Council, Planning and Zoning, and all committees you want to follow, register [here](#).



Flash Floods  
Chemical Spills  
Storm Damage Events  
Evacuation Instructions

How will you know?

To Sign up for **CODE RED**, or to update your contact information in our system, please [click here](#) to register.



How do I watch Town Council meetings at home?

Where do I find a meeting I missed last month?

To find the link to meetings being livestreamed, or to find previous recordings of meetings, [look here](#) through the Town's website.

## Youth Services Partners with Mansfield Public Schools on Service Projects

A new initiative, the Community Cares service program, is a partnership between Mansfield Youth Services and Mansfield Public Schools. Mansfield Middle School students are chosen to participate in service trips to local community sites to lend a helping hand on select school days.

Sites include local farms, police and fire departments, animal shelters, the Human Services Department, and others. By enjoying new experiences students gain confidence and connect to the larger community.



During "X" block, when students have a choice of how to spend their time, these middle school students opt to perform service at community sites.



## Congratulations to our Newly Sworn-in Town Council



Elections were held on Tuesday, November 4, ushering in three new Town Council members to help lead Mansfield in the coming years. At the Town Council meeting on Monday, November 10, the Council was sworn in by Town Clerk Sara-Ann Chaine.

(L to R): Lizzie Mullen, Gail Zaicek, Sarah Dufresne, Sam Bruder, Toni Moran, Ben Shaiken, Bill Tomecko, Chris Kueffner, and Carlita Cotton. Mr. Shaiken was voted as Deputy Mayor and Ms Moran was voted as Mayor by the Council.

For full results of the election, visit the [Registrars of Voters web page](#).

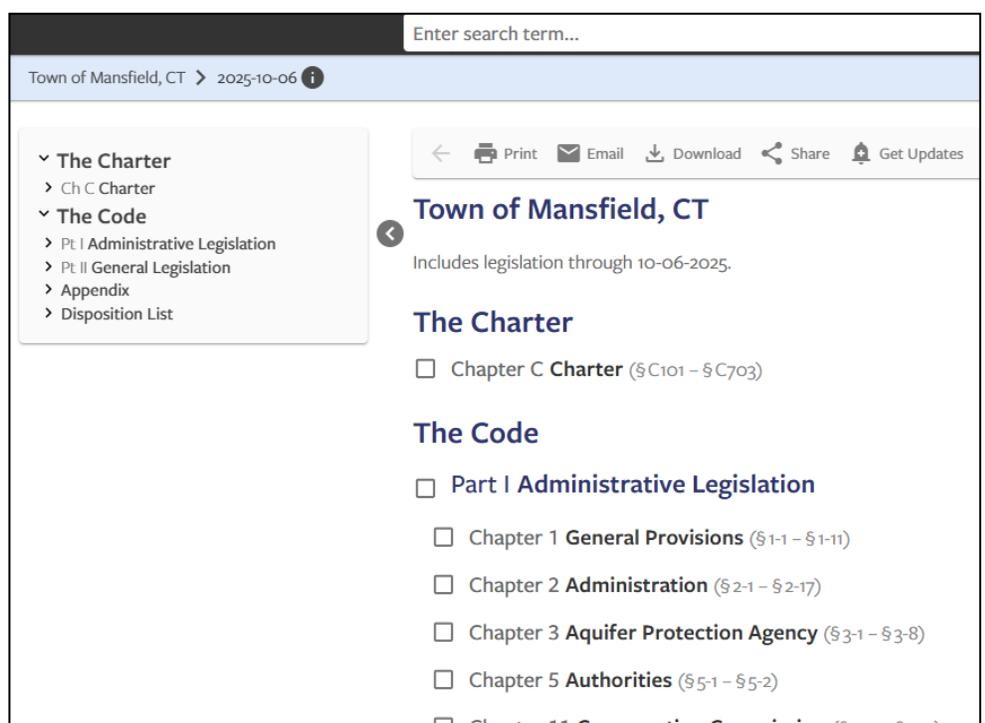
## Mansfield's Codes, Zoning Regulations and Charter are Easy to Find and Navigate

Ever wonder when the annual parking ban for snow removal kicks in? Curious about noise regulations in town? Want to know what's allowed under Mansfield's zoning laws before starting that backyard project? Those answers and more are available on the Town's website!

Mansfield's Charter, Code of Ordinances, and Zoning Regulations are online and fully searchable through [eCode360](#). Whether you're a longtime resident or new to town, this tool helps you stay informed and confident about the rules that shape our community.

To search [eCode360](#), use keywords, phrases, or chapter types to zero in on what you need. The layout is intuitive, with a handy table of contents and links that make browsing easier. New laws and updates are posted quickly and you can link directly to specific code sections in emails or social media, making it easier to share information.

Whether you're planning a project, resolving a dispute, or just curious, [eCode360](#) is a practical and reliable way to get the information you need.



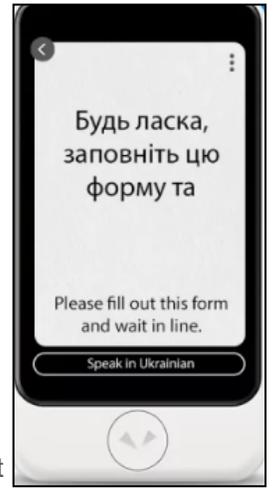
## Town Departments Now Access Language Translation in their Pockets

The Town of Mansfield has launched a new pilot program aimed at improving communication and access to services for all residents—no matter what language they speak. Pocketalk translation devices are now available in several key Mansfield departments, including the Building and Housing Department, Mansfield Community Center, Human Services (which includes the Senior Center and Youth Services), Mansfield Public Library, the Town Clerk’s Office, Assessor’s Office, and the Revenue Collector’s Office.

These handheld devices offer real-time, two-way translation in more than 80 languages, allowing staff and residents alike to communicate more clearly and confidently. In addition to spoken translation, the Pocketalk device also includes a document-scanning feature that can translate printed forms and written materials on the spot. This makes it easier for residents to understand and complete important paperwork in a timely manner.

As Mansfield continues to grow and diversify, the town recognizes the importance of ensuring that every resident feels welcomed, understood, and supported. Language should never be a barrier to accessing essential services like housing assistance, tax collection, youth programs, or library resources. This pilot program is a step toward closing that gap. By introducing Pocketalk devices, Mansfield is working to create a more inclusive environment where all voices can be heard and all needs can be met. Every person who walks through our doors, no matter their spoken language, should be provided the opportunity to engage fully with their local government and community.

We invite residents to take advantage of this new tool and share their experiences with us. The Mansfield Public Schools district has had very positive track record of using this device. Resident feedback will help shape how Mansfield moves forward, together, in building a town that truly serves everyone.



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## Mansfield’s Plan of Conservation and Development Nearing Completion

For the past year, Town staff, Town leaders, and residents have been engaged in providing updates to the 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development, *Mansfield Tomorrow*.

A draft plan is expected to be available for public view in early 2026. Stay tuned for information about the draft plan and the public meeting where it will be presented.

Stay informed and follow the plan’s progress at [www.mansfieldtomorrow.org](http://www.mansfieldtomorrow.org)



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## Important Tax and Trash Billing 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 2026**. 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: [www.mansfieldct.gov](http://www.mansfieldct.gov).

The Supplemental Motor Vehicle Bills will be mailed on December 30<sup>th</sup> and will also be **due by February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2026**.

Trash/Recycle bills will be mailed on December 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of 2025. These will be the first quarter bills of 2026 and are also due by February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2026.

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.



**NEWS&UPDATES**

## Mansfield Celebrated for Gold Certification

Mansfield was among the six communities awarded Gold Level Certification from SustainableCT, a statewide initiative that recognizes Connecticut municipalities for implementing practices that make communities more resilient, inclusive, and environmentally responsible. This recognition is a significant milestone in Mansfield's longstanding commitment to sustainability. Representatives of the Town of Mansfield attended the 2025 Sustainable CT Awards Ceremony at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam in late October to accept the certification.



"Recognition by Sustainable CT is a significant milestone in Mansfield's longstanding commitment to sustainability," says Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth. "This achievement reflects the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and community members who have consistently championed sustainable practices and bold ideas. We hope residents will not only be proud of this recognition, but, more importantly, proud of the meaningful impact these efforts will continue to have for generations who call Mansfield home into the future." Mansfield is one of just 12 Gold-certified communities.

[In its application](#) for Sustainable CT certification, Mansfield demonstrated significant achievements in 13 sustainable impact areas ranging from inclusive community building, thriving local economies, and vibrant arts and culture to clean transportation and diverse housing. Mansfield has recently completed its Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and is updating its Plan of Conservation and Development, both of which involving extensive community input. Sustainable CT noted Mansfield's POCD as, "thorough and thoughtful in describing the town's plans for open space, and fulfills the requirement to prioritize acquisitions, enhance your local ecosystem, connect open space parcels, offer recreational benefits, and ensure long-term viability of your open space (including management policies)". The Town has actively updated regulations to expand open space protections, is tackling invasive species, and is undertaking a forestry plan. Mansfield also recycles food scraps at all three of its public schools, and initiated a program to collect unserved foods at the schools for delivery to Covenant Soup Kitchen in Windham.

To achieve Gold certification, Mansfield was also required to achieve Climate Leader designation, completing a specifically identified suite of actions intended to control and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the impacts of climate change. Mansfield Elementary School, completed in 2023, is the state's first new net-zero public school and has been visited by many other towns and the University of Connecticut to see the school's energy-generating operation and 21st century learning design. The community is also aggressive with solar installation, accessible EV charging stations, and with keeping close track of energy efficiency of its Town buildings and has incorporated a Complete Streets policy.



**Accepting Mansfield's Gold Certification at the Sustainable CT Awards Ceremony at the Goodspeed Opera House is DEEP's Rebecca Stanton, Mansfield Sustainability Committee Chair Lynn Stoddard, Mayor Toni Moran, Trash and Recycling Coordinator Virginia Walton, Mansfield Schools Superintendent Candace Morell, and Communications Specialist Margaret Chatey.**

"I want to thank our Mansfield team for the investment in helping us apply for this certification," says Lynn Stoddard, Chair of the Town of Mansfield's 10-member Sustainability Committee. "From the very first input meeting two years ago, through all the interviews and drafts, we appreciate the leadership and the tremendous time, expertise, and dedication our town staff and volunteers put into helping Mansfield achieve Sustainable CT Gold certification," she adds.

"Congratulations to the Town of Mansfield," said Jessica LeClair, executive director of Sustainable CT. "We are inspired by the leadership and commitment of our Gold certified communities. From elected officials and town staff to resident volunteers, these towns are improving opportunities and the quality of life for all."

"Once again, our municipalities have successfully initiated and implemented projects that address climate resilience, energy efficiency, equity, land conservation, waste reduction, and economic development, among other important priorities," said Nicole Chevalier, co-chair of Sustainable CT's Board of Directors. "The work these towns do is critical to achieving the state's ambitious environmental and climate objectives and we are incredibly proud of them."

The program includes actions that help towns and cities build community connection, social equity, and long-term resilience. It includes an action roadmap and support tools that are especially relevant as towns seek practices and resources to promote racial justice and respond to the on-going challenges of climate change and economic uncertainty.

## Inviting the Community to Help Support Our Neighbors in Need

The Town of Mansfield Human Services Department is coordinating a season-long campaign encouraging residents to assist their neighbors in need. Over the past year, the department has seen a significant increase in families requiring assistance to help stay in their homes, keep food on the table, and keep people warm during the winter months. With this increase in need, Mansfield Human Services is providing several options for people to offer hope and help—whether by giving a warm hat, a new toy, sponsoring a family, or writing a check toward summer camp.

The Town of Mansfield Human Services Department receives the bulk of its funding for programs through the generosity of people in the community. Mansfield Human Services offers support for families and individuals throughout the year, include seasonal/holiday giving programs, an active food pantry, monthly meal kits, Holiday meal kits, back to school programs, as well as emergency financial assistance. The Emergency financial assistance program is a vital program that helps families to keep their homes heated in the winter when all other resources are not available, keeps the lights on and helps others to stay in their home or find temporary housing if needed.

### Thank You, Mansfield: A Community That Shows Up

In times of uncertainty, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. Lately, however, Mansfield Human Services staff have been able to see something extraordinary — a community that rises to the occasion with compassion, generosity, and heart.

As the federal government shutdown created unexpected challenges for many, our town immediately responded with open arms. From food drives and drop-off donations to wish list orders and monetary gifts, the outpouring of support for our local food pantry has been nothing short of inspiring. We are deeply grateful to every resident who contributed, whether with a bag of groceries, a few dollars, or a moment of their time. Your kindness has made a real difference.

We've always known Mansfield was special, but moments like these remind us just how thoughtful and giving our neighbors truly are. When times became uncertain, you've shown what it means to care for one another. Thank you for being the kind of community that doesn't think twice about showing up for each other.



“While the Town of Mansfield provides some funding to these programs, the vast majority of the funds comes from generous donors,” says Human Services Director Jessica St. Louis. “Without the caring community who provides donations both in the form of physical resources and monetary donations, we would not be able to keep our programs running,” she says. “We sincerely appreciate all the donations that have been committed already—the Mansfield community really shows up when there’s a need.”

There are a variety of opportunities to support neighbors provided by the Human Services Department:

**Giving Tree.** The Mansfield Senior Center at 303 Maple Road has established a visual and accessible symbol of caring outside of its center. A spruce tree is covered with plastic bags pinned to the tree that each contain warm gloves, hats, scarves and other warm items donated by residents. The sign invites anyone to take what they need.

**Sponsor a Family/Child.** The Human Services Department is still accepting commitments for generous individuals, businesses, departments, or other organizations to sponsor a child or a family in need during their holiday season. To sponsor a child or family, the community is asked to complete the online registration by the close of business on Wed. 12/3/25. Toys, gift cards, or other seasonal items are being accepted through December 10<sup>th</sup>.

In past years this sponsorship opportunity falls short of the total need in Town. The Human Services Department, including Youth Services and the Senior Center, coordinate a shopping opportunity for select families to pick out toys, gift cards, and other gifts. Toys and gifts for all ages, including gift cards, are also being collected for this program, spearheaded by the Mansfield Resident State Troopers Office. Last year 150 families received support through sponsorships or the shopping experience. Donations can be dropped at the Town Hall, Mansfield Public Library, Mansfield Community Center, and both the Senior Center and the Human Services Department. The Resident Troopers Office will have a cruiser (or two if needed) at the Winter Welcome in Betsy Paterson Square on December 6 from 4:30 to 7.

“We are continually looking to find new and innovative ways to provide food to those in need,” says Ms St. Louis. “Our food pantry has seen a 300% increase in usage over the past six months. The recent outpouring of support with food donations to our pantry and checks has been heartwarming, given the instability of SNAP Benefits delivery in early November. Access to food is the most basic need of all.”



A well-stocked food pantry at Mansfield Human Services, 303 Maple Road. Mansfield Career Firefighters, several UConn departments, and Price Chopper have all contributed volumes of food.

(Continued)



**Support Neighbors in Need (Continued)**

With grant funding harder to access, and American Rescue Plan Act funding ending, Innovative fundraising and reliance on community support is required.

**Getting Creative with Fundraising for a Great Cause.** The Department hosted a Comedy Show Fundraiser at the Willimantic Elks Lodge on October 17, 2025 which was successful at raising \$4,000 for the Financial Assistance program. About 200 families access this program in a year.

Plans are underway to host a PJ 5K fundraiser that will include the 5K run/walk and a one mile fun run on March 28, 2026. The first \$10,000 raised will go directly to providing camp scholarships to children who otherwise would not have this opportunity, and the rest of the proceeds will go directly to the Financial Assistance programs. “Mansfield does not have an established road race here, so we hope this will evolve into a major annual event raising money for our own families,” says Ms.St.Louis.

Those interested in donating can choose to allocate to any of these programs or to find more information on all that we listed above can go to our webpage at [www.mansfieldct.gov/humanservices](http://www.mansfieldct.gov/humanservices) or can reach out to the Human Services Office Directly by email: [human.services@mansfieldct.org](mailto:human.services@mansfieldct.org) or by phone at 860-429-3315. The department accepts food items, other necessities, monetary donations and donations of time through volunteering year round



**MANSFIELD**  
CONNECTICUT  
Human Services

# Season of Giving Campaign 2025

This holiday season, Mansfield Human Services invites you to join us in giving back to the neighbors in your community. The campaign focuses on several programs, and you can choose how you help others in need.

All donations go to: Mansfield Human Services, 303 Maple Road, Mansfield CT

**Community Assistance Program:**

This is a program that was established to assist low income households with items such as basic needs, emergency assistance, energy assistance, and other financial assistance programs. This fund also contributes to the Back to school program and our Community Giving Programs, which assists households with assistance for celebrations throughout the calendar year.

**Food Assistance Programs:**

Mansfield Human Services has various ways that it provides food security to those in need. We provide summer food distribution, on-site food pantry, monthly meal kits, seasonal meal programs, and collaboration with FoodShare for their Mobile Food Pantry twice per month. We accept direct donations of non-perishable food items, as well as monetary donations.

**Seasonal Giving Program:**

Each year we sponsor families to provide assistance during the Winter Holiday season. We coordinate programs to provide gifts for those families that are financially struggling during this season. We are looking for assistance in two ways this year:

1. We are seeking households, businesses, etc that would like to sign up to Sponsor a family of any size for this holiday year.
2. We are seeking both monetary donations, gift cards and any donation of new gifts for all ages.

**Betsy Hamill Campership Fund**

Summer time brings with it additional financial burdens to families that are already struggling. Our Campership Fund helps to send children in town to Camp Mansfield or other eligible camps. This opens up an avenue for new experiences that they may not otherwise have.



## Mansfield Local Government Academy Informs Community Members



The 2025 Mansfield Local Government Academy, which launched on September 11, is winding down to a conclusion after 12 total Thursday evenings this fall. The sessions conclude with an overview about how to become involved with Boards and Commissions, and features party chairpersons, Mayor Moran, and a volunteer commission chair as guest speakers. Town Manager Aylesworth will then lead a wrap-up to solicit feedback and reflections on what the group has learned about local government in Mansfield.

Among the 20 participants, eight people were on the ballot for public office positions here and now sit on key commissions. This overview of all the departments' inter-related workings should prove valuable to them in their new roles in Town.

Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth organized the Academy in 2021 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.



Mansfield Schools Superintendent Candace Morell (above) and Region 19 Superintendent Sharon Cournoyer provided an overview of their districts and opportunities provided to students.



Thursday evenings are always training nights for the fire department. Mansfield Fire & Emergency Services demonstrated their response to a victim trapped in a vehicle, utilizing the Jaws of Life to dismantle the car. As participants watched, the "victim" was removed and taken to the ambulance.



Public Library staff offered a walk-and-talk tour of the facility, including the tool and toy libraries, adult and special historic collections. Attendees expressed appreciation of the extensive programs and services, including technology support and free online resources.



Senior Center Coordinator Jessica Tracy and her peers took participants on a full tour of the Senior Center and Mansfield Human Services Department facilities, including the gym and dance studio. Participants also enjoyed a dinner prepared by the Senior Center staff, one of the many services they offer members.



The Animal Control team brought a special guest to their presentation—a rabbit rescued a few years ago. At the same session, Mansfield's Resident State Troopers provided an overview of their services emphasizing community.

## New Agricultural Use Regulations Proposed

Public Hearing Scheduled for December 15, 2025, at 6 pm.

This past spring, the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) paused action on proposed agricultural regulations and asked the Town's Agriculture Committee to develop an alternative approach that supports farm diversity while protecting public health and the environment. The Committee met regularly through the spring and summer, consulting with livestock experts from across the state, and presented their comments to the Planning and Zoning Commission, which decided to propose amendments to the regulations based on the Agriculture Committee feedback.

The newly proposed regulations remove outdated lot-size requirements for keeping livestock, including roosters, and instead set clear standards to safeguard neighbors, water quality, and natural resources. Highlights of the proposed changes:

- Animals must be kept on the property owned or leased by their caretaker.
- Manure storage and spreading must follow strict rules to protect wells, wetlands, and waterways.
- Manure storage will not be allowed on steep slopes.
- Setbacks for high tunnels and hoop houses would be reduced to 10 feet, providing farmers with more flexibility.

At the Public Hearing, residents will have the opportunity to share their feedback.



## The New Way to Get to the Game: The Gameday Shuttle

# GAMEDAY SHUTTLE

## Hop on, Huskies Fans!

Get to the game the easy way:

Skip the campus traffic & hop on the **free Gameday Shuttle!**

- Starts 1 hour before the game
- Runs on a continuous loop, takes about 10 minutes
- Picks up in Downtown Storrs
- Drops off on-campus, close to Gampel Pavilion
- Return loop continues for about 1 hour after the game

Learn more at [downtownstorrs.org/gameday](https://downtownstorrs.org/gameday)

Brought to you by  
**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP, INC.**  
with support from:



A once popular amenity has returned to Downtown Storrs for the upcoming collegiate basketball season: The Gameday Shuttle!

The Mansfield Downtown Partnership is offering free shuttles this basketball season, with the support of its "Champ" Sponsors: Gansett Wraps; Huskies Restaurant & Bar; LAZ Parking; and Nikki's Dog House.

Fans are invited to park in the Downtown Storrs Parking Garage and hop on the shuttle across the street from the Nash-Zimmer Transportation Center. The shuttle will start approximately 60 minutes prior to tip-off and continue through the game until approximately 60 minutes after the final buzzer.

"We are excited to bring back the Gameday Shuttle with the support from our businesses," said Steven Ferrigno, Executive Director of the Mansfield Downtown Partnership. "We hope fans

will enjoy gathering downtown, grabbing a bite to eat, and then skipping the traffic and riding the shuttle to campus."

Fans can choose from over twenty restaurants in Downtown Storrs to grab a bite to eat before or after the games. To see a full directory of dining options, please visit [downtownstorrs.org/dine](https://downtownstorrs.org/dine). Parking in the Downtown Storrs Parking Garage (33 Royce Circle) is free for the first two hours and just \$1/hour thereafter during daytime hours (6AM – midnight). The Nash-Zimmer Transportation Center (23 Royce Circle) adjoins the garage.

The Gameday Shuttle will be available for every regular men's and women's basketball game played at Gampel Pavilion, beginning November 3 and continuing through February 28.



**NEWS & UPDATES**

## Mansfield Community Center Retains Seniors' Insurance-Supported Programs

Mansfield Community Center announced last month that it has secured new agreements with the management of both SilverSneakers and Renew Active. Those members with these insurance-supported plans can now roll into the new year without any interruption in service and without completing any new forms or re-registering.



Over the last few months, the Town's administration has been actively negotiating the terms of potential successor agreements with two vendors – Optum (RenewActive) and Tivity (Silver Sneakers) – regarding their respective insurance-supported membership (ISM) programs that the Town has participated in for some years. Although the Town Council voted back in June to discontinue these programs effective January 1, 2026 at the recommendation of staff, efforts have been made in the ensuing months to negotiate new terms that would be in the Town's best interest to enable continued participation in the respective ISM programs. Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth and Mansfield Parks and Recreation Director Jay O'Keefe hosted a public meeting for members at Council Chamber in early September to outline why the existing contracts needed to be terminated for the long-term financial sustainability of the programs and the community center. They asked for members' understanding as the terms were renegotiated with these providers.

Based on the newly negotiated terms, the Town Council rescinded its earlier vote to discontinue participation both ISM effective the end of the present calendar year.

In a letter to SilverSneakers and Renew Active members, MCC leadership staff said, "We know many of you have been following this process closely, and we appreciate your patience and engagement along the way. The Town Council's recent decisions, paired with significantly improved contract terms, make it possible for these valued programs to stay right here at the Mansfield Community Center.

"We sincerely value your continued loyalty and support of the Mansfield Community Center," they added.

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## Deputy Chief Receives Commendation for His Efforts Rescuing Fire Victims

The Town Council, Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth, and Fire and Emergency Services Chief John Roache acknowledged the courageous actions of Deputy Chief Kevin Danielson prior to the Council's meeting on November 24. Deputy Chief Danielson was the first to arrive at a structure fire near his home that occurred October 21, and after communicating with the emergency responders who were en route, went into the house to aid two members of the household who were trapped inside. Although they were both responsive to his calls when he arrived, tragically one victim did not survive. Deputy Chief Danielson was also hospitalized for smoke inhalation to the Connecticut Burn Center at Bridgeport Hospital.

In the commendation presented to Deputy Chief Danielson, read by Town Manager Aylesworth, "Your decisive actions, courage, and unwavering commitment to saving lives led to the rescue of three residents and three dogs from an active and rapidly spreading fire. Despite the intense conditions and personal risk, you entered the burning home without hesitation, exemplifying the highest ideals of the fire service.

"The Town of Mansfield extends its deepest appreciation for your heroism and your continued dedication to the safety and well-being of our community, and we honor the profound effort you made to save every life possible. Your actions bring great credit to the Mansfield Fire Department, and your courage stands as an inspiration to our entire community."

The Chief acknowledged his fellow firefighters who took special care communicating with his family and with him during a challenging time.

D.C. Danielson's efforts came moments before fire personnel responded with fire suppression and emergency medical apparatus. Due to the challenges presented with this rural area and limited nearby water supply, Mansfield Fire Department requested mutual aid assistance and many surrounding towns sent aid. In total, more than 30 firefighters and medical professionals responded to this incident.



**Deputy Chief Kevin Danielson received much press attention and was interviewed by newspapers and four Connecticut television stations about his actions during the rescue on October 21.**



**Deputy Chief Danielson was moved by the commendation, and credited his fellow firefighters who took care of the victims, and him, on that evening.**



Here is a taste of all the holiday happenings around Mansfield. For more details, visit our [Merry Mansfield page!](#)

## Festive Celebrations at the Mansfield Senior Center!

The Senior Center is the place to be to find festive fun as we celebrate the holidays with:

- [The seasonal Senior Center Chorus concert](#)
- A [holiday luncheon](#) and gift exchange
- Santa letters & cookie decorating (with the big man himself)
- \*Winter Holidays Around the World\* educational program
- A special early Christmas Eve morning café!
- “Jazzed for the New Year” Noon-Year’s Eve party and celebration.

## Joining in on the Spirit of Giving

Get into the spirit of giving by attending the Senior Center PJ Party or by donating a new or gently used item to the Giving Tree.

The Senior Center is taking steps to share warmth this season at their Giving Tree. The tree is set up outside the Center, at 303 Maple Road, allowing individuals of all ages in need to choose items they require for the upcoming season. No check-in is required to take advantage of the items on the Giving Tree. The Center invites you to bring your new, gently used, or handmade scarves, mittens, gloves, earmuffs and hats to the Mansfield Senior Center staff.



## Mansfield Public Library Offers Much Merry Fun!



**COOKIE SWAP**

All you have to do to participate is show up. Bring in a batch of cookies if you want to share and swap with the group.

We meet on the 3rd Thursday of every month.

# COOK BOOK CLUB

Next meeting  
Thursday,  
December 18  
6 - 7 pm  
Main Library

**Winter Wonder Workshops with Special Wintry Crafts:** Thursdays in December from 4-6PM in MPL’s Buchanan Auditorium

Each Wonder Workshop in December (4th, 11th, & 18th) will feature a unique, wintry craft for kids and families to create together. Take a completed craft home each week- perfect holiday gifts! Activity stations also include LEGOs, block building, play-doh, classic board games, coloring and magnetic play. Drop-in!

**Nutcracker Stories & Mini Ballet Showcase:** Saturday, December 13th at 10:30AM in MPL’s Buchanan Auditorium

Thread City Classical Dance returns for a special ballet storytime featuring stories and dancing from the Nutcracker Ballet, followed by an interactive dance demonstration!

**Friends of the Mansfield Library’s Annual Gingerbread House Decorating Contest:** Saturday, December 20th drop in between 9:00 AM-12:00 PM, Buchanan Auditorium

Join the friends for the return of our 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. To sign-up for this event, please click [HERE](#) to register by December 15 to help us ensure there are enough materials available.



Here is a taste of all the holiday happenings around Mansfield. For more details, visit our [Merry Mansfield page!](#)

## Free, Frosty Fun in Downtown Storrs at 13th Annual Winter Welcome

The Mansfield Downtown Partnership invites residents and friends of all ages to celebrate the start of the new season at its 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter Welcome. This fun, free event will take place on Saturday, December 6 from 4:00 PM to 6:30 PM on Betsy Paterson Square in Downtown Storrs.

Winter Welcome will feature hands-on, wintry fun with local businesses and community organizations. Activities will include a puzzle swap, animal tracking and habitat games, snow-themed fun, and even (toy) ax-throwing!

Be on the look-out for some special visitors who will appear throughout the event, including a 12-foot tall polar bear, a ton of tubas, everyone's favorite Husky, and two jolly friends! Santa and Mrs. Claus will visit with friends indoors at Barnes & Noble UConn from 4:00 PM until 6:00 PM.

During Winter Welcome, the Mansfield Resident State Troopers will collect new, unwrapped toys and gifts for kids and teens. Bring your donation to help stuff their cruiser! Donated items will be distributed to local families in need by Mansfield Human Services.

Be sure to check out the entries in our Trim-A-Tree contest, which will be set-up on Betsy Paterson Square. Vote for your favorites at the Partnership's booth and receive a gift (while supplies last). Enjoy seasonal stories and songs with Mansfield Public Library and performances by Mansfield Academy of Dance, Miss Kelly's Productions, and the UConn Tap Club on the stage of the Jeffery P. Ossen Family Foundation Pavilion on Betsy Paterson Square. And, visit participating Downtown Storrs businesses for sales, specials, and treats during Winter Welcome.

To accommodate Winter Welcome, the following streets will be closed from 1:00 PM until approx. 7:30 PM: Bolton Road Ext., Dog Lane from Storrs Road to Royce Circle (near Jefferson Fry Co.), Royce Circle from Dog Lane to Wilbur Cross Way, and West Access Road (behind 33 Wilbur Cross Way) There will be no on-street parking on the above listed streets beginning at 12:00 PM.

Parking will be available in the Downtown Storrs Parking Garage, which is located at 33 Royce Circle and is about a 2-minute walk to Betsy Paterson Square.

Winter Welcome is free and open to everyone to attend. The event will take place rain, snow, or shine. Some activities may be adjusted due to weather. Changes will be announced on the Downtown Storrs website at [downtownstorrs.org/winterwelcome](http://downtownstorrs.org/winterwelcome).



## WINTER WELCOME

Saturday, Dec. 6 | 4:00-6:30 PM

Free, frosty fun in Downtown Storrs

INFO: [downtownstorrs.org/winterwelcome](http://downtownstorrs.org/winterwelcome)



NEWS & UPDATES



Here is a taste of all the holiday happenings around Mansfield. For more details, visit our [Merry Mansfield page!](#)

### **The Nutcracker: Mansfield Youth Delight Holiday Audiences with this Tradition**

Mansfield Parks & Recreation and Miss Kelly Productions present *The Nutcracker* on December 13-14, 2025 at the Mansfield Middle School Auditorium. This community tradition showcases the hard work and creativity of more than 60 local youth.

Tickets are on sale now at the Mansfield Community Center: Preview Show/Story Time: \$8 per person  
Full Shows: \$10 for ages 3 - 17 and 62+, \$15 for adults (18 - 61)  
(A limited number of tickets will be available at the door beginning one hour before each show.)

For over 20 years, Miss Kelly's production has brought holiday magic to Mansfield. This year's show features fresh ideas from students, blending ballet, gymnastics, theater, and tap into a lively and family-friendly performance.

**Show Schedule: Saturday, Dec. 13 at 2 PM** – Preview Show

**Saturday, Dec. 13 at 6 PM** – Full Show

**Sunday, Dec. 14 at 1 PM** – Full Show

Doors open 45 minutes before the Saturday evening and Sunday matinee shows.

Enjoy a festive weekend and a tradition that brings the community together. Visit the Mansfield Community Center at 10 S. Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT 06268 to purchase your tickets!

Questions?

Call 860-429-3015 ext. 0, email [parksandrec@mansfieldct.org](mailto:parksandrec@mansfieldct.org), or visit [www.mansfielddcc.com](http://www.mansfielddcc.com).

A promotional poster for 'The Nutcracker' featuring a blue and white winter theme with snowflake graphics. The text reads: 'The Nutcracker TICKETS ON SALE NOW! Come enjoy the magic of The Nutcracker, December 13th and 14th! \*All shows held at the Mansfield Middle School Auditorium\* Children &amp; Senior Tickets (ages 3-17 &amp; 62+) - \$10/person Adult Tickets (ages 18-61) - \$15/person Preview Show &amp; Story Time (all ages) - \$8/person TICKETS ARE NON- REFUNDABLE OR EXCHANGEABLE A COMMUNITY PRODUCTION WITH MANSFIELD CONNECTICUT Parks &amp; Recreation &amp; MISS KELLY PRODUCTIONS'. The poster includes three small photographs of the production: a group of dancers in red and white, a group in blue and white, and a group in red and white.



## Freedom of Speech and the Public Right to Access Information

The integrity and health of a democratic society depends on how freely its citizens are able to speak. Freedom of speech is the foundation of public dialogue, but also has a more practical purpose; it enables people to share concerns, question authority and participate in shaping public decisions. The First Amendment to the U.S. The Constitution prohibits the government, and other entities from restricting your ability of expression. Similarly, Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) firmly establishes the right to “seek, receive, and impart information and ideas,” while Article 20 protects the right to peaceful assembly and association, reinforcing that free expression also depends on people being able to gather and act collectively. These globally recognized documents acknowledge that when speech of the people is restricted, democratic power is in the hands of the government rather than its people.

Recent national events have brought widespread attention to how this right functions in practice. Student activism, public broadcasting, and public protest have become strong topics in political affairs. Currently, questions have emerged regarding the handling of protest, press access, and the full extent to which a government can influence public information and opinion. For instance, federal budget proposals have called for the elimination of funding for public broadcasting services such as the National Public Radio (NPR) and the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), raising concerns about the role of a political administration-run media. These developments demonstrate that freedom of speech does not only apply to the right to speak but also the public right to access diverse and independent sources of information.

Locally, freedom of speech is most noticeable in our schools and public meetings. Students and citizens learn how to challenge ideas, express themselves, and understand one another long before they vote. When society, and in particular students, are encouraged to speak openly, they develop the necessary skills to participate in civic life. Mansfield benefits when all residents are taken seriously as contributors to decisions and public conversations. Supporting open — and honest — dialogue at the local level strengthens the democratic values we expect from the national level.

*Contributed by Hasana Davis, Mansfield Human Rights Commission Member*



**December 10 we celebrate**  
**International Human**  
**Rights Day**

***Human Rights are positive,  
essential, and attainable.***

## Taste of Mansfield Community Dinner: Celebrating Farms and Local Food



Mansfield Schools Food Service Director Chef Mariah Popeleski-Tilley created a menu that included a choice of locally grown chicken, kimchi-style pickled cabbage, and roasted radish or baked local eggplant with house-made marinara sauce and braised fennel. Butternut soup and apple crisp rounded out the dinner. The chef and her staff prepared and served more than 120 meals to families, seniors, and honored guests. Ingredients were grown at The Good Farm, Cobblestone Farm, Cloverleigh Farm, Karabin Farm, and Mountain Dairy



The Taste of Mansfield’s goal is to connect the community through local food—and these free Community Dinners help to do that. Families meet new friends, local farmers, and celebrated the Taste of Mansfield Champion Award winners.

## Coming in the New Year at the Senior Center

The Mansfield Senior Center continues to bring activities you won't want to miss. Get all the details at [mansfieldct.gov/seniors](http://mansfieldct.gov/seniors).

Looking ahead to 2026, watch for the Wii Bowling Tournament with our friends at the Windham Senior Center, another riveting read and discussion at the Genealogy Book Club, Free AARP Tax Preparation appointments (schedule available after January 5th), and more! The full January program schedule will be released in mid-December at [mansfieldct.gov/seniors](http://mansfieldct.gov/seniors). Save the date for another visit from Mr. Magic's Magic Show, followed by a Café on Friday, February 13th! These activities will welcome all ages (children must be accompanied by a guardian); perfect for the day off from school!

# MSC BOOK CLUB

Meets 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each Month at 2 p.m.

Upcoming Meetings:

**Join us for lively discussions!**

Monday, Dec. 22nd **The Snow Child**  
by Eowyn Ivey

Monday, Jan. 26th **Esperanza Rising**  
by Pam Munoz Ryan




Mansfield Senior Center programs are available to individuals age 55+ from all towns.

## So Many Services to Enjoy at the Mansfield Senior Center!

### SENIOR SPARKS

MANSFIELD SENIOR CENTER NEWSLETTER

**December 2025**



**Happy Holidays**

303 MAPLE ROAD, MANSFIELD, CT 06268  
TEL: 860-429-0262  
WEBSITE: [WWW.MANSFIELDCT.GOV/SENIORS](http://WWW.MANSFIELDCT.GOV/SENIORS)



The December 2025 *Senior Sparks* newsletter is out! [Click here to find it online](#), and don't forget to [subscribe](#) to receive it right in your inbox each month.

LUNCH & LEARNS



## A LITTLE BIT OF LEARNING & A LIGHT LUNCH

# Free; while supplies last

### PLEASE RSVP TO 860-429-0262

**Monday, December 8th, 12 p.m.**

**Brain Bites**

Quick, easy tasks for improving both your brain power & your balance.

**Monday, December 29th, 12 p.m.**

**Budget Bites**

Tips and tricks for healthy eating on a budget.

Open to individuals age 55+ from all towns.

303 Maple Road, Mansfield, CT 06268 860-429-0262 [mansfieldct.gov/senior](http://mansfieldct.gov/senior)



## Repair Café on January 10. Don't Scrap It—Fix It!

The next Repair Cafe is Saturday, January 10, 2026 from 10 am to 2 pm (snow date January 17) and held at the First Congregational Church, 199 Valley St. at Walnut St., Willimantic. Free repairs are offered bicycles, toasters and other small appliances, vacuum cleaners, lamps, and clothing. Carry it in and learn from volunteers how to get it working again. If it can be fixed, we can do it, or better yet—show you how to do it yourself next time!

Contact Virginia Walton at 860.429.3333 or [waltonvd@mansfieldct.org](mailto:waltonvd@mansfieldct.org) with questions. Information can be found on Facebook [@repaircafe.willimantic](#).

Upcoming Repair Café Dates for 2026: April 11, July 11, and October 10

## FREE REPAIRS

### Repair Café

**Sat. 10 to 2**

First Congregational Church  
199 Valley St. Willimantic

SEWING & MENDING · ELECTRICAL ITEMS · ELECTRONICS · KNIFE SHARPENING · BOOK REPAIR · WOOD & MECHANICAL REPAIR



## Rte. 275/South Eagleville Road Improvements Will Improve Safety

One of the most discussed road construction projects of the past few months is nearing completion. It seems like everyone who uses South Eagleville Road, whether a vehicle operator, a driver or a cyclist, has had a comment or concern about the South Eagleville Pedestrian Improvements Project. For those who don't know, this is the road, sidewalk, and multi-use path construction along Route 275, South Eagleville Road, from Route 195, Storrs Road, to Maple Road. The majority of this project was funded by a Community Challenge Grant from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development which was awarded to the Town of Mansfield on April 6, 2022. The urgent need for this project arose from a tragedy of November 30, 2021 when a pedestrian was hit and killed while crossing South Eagleville Road at Eastwood Road during his walk home during the early dark hours of a November afternoon. This portion of Downtown Storrs will only see increasing pedestrian traffic in the years to come.

The grant proposal, as briefed to the Town Council in 2022, called for improved pedestrian safety and traffic calming measures on South Eagleville Road between Separatist Road and Storrs Road. The concept included narrowing of travel lanes, installation of a landscaped median to create a boulevard, widening the existing walkway on the south side of the road to create a multi-use trail that accommodates both pedestrians and bicyclists, extending the multi-use path to Separatist Road, adding sidewalks to the north side of South Eagleville Road along the frontage of the municipal complex and between Eastwood and Westwood Road. Due to cost, the sidewalk between Eastwood and Westwood was not constructed. In late May of 2025, the Town awarded the construction of this project to the Richards Corporation.

The project converted this section of South Eagleville Road into a median-divided road. Prior to construction, South Eagleville Road was very wide and made drivers comfortable driving at speed limits well above the posted 30 miles per hour. A Safety Audit in September 2022 indicated speeds were in excess of 46 miles per hour.

The three pedestrian crossings (crosswalks) were almost 40 feet across with no center refuge. The new road with medians and more visual midblock pedestrian crossings provide drivers to additional vertical features that have been shown to reduce operating speeds. The crossing is now composed of (2) 14-foot crossings because of a center pedestrian refuge created by the raised median. The three crossings will be illuminated with Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) to improve crossing safety. The crossing near the community center is elevated to increase visibility and slow down traffic.



Slightly elevated crosswalks, well marked with arrows and signage, are designed to increase visibility and slow down traffic. Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons will be installed at these crosswalks, too.

A 10-foot wide multi-use path is also installed on the south side of the road for pedestrians and cyclists. The path will also be illuminated to improve safety. Unfortunately the light poles are on a backorder with a delivery expected in January. Installation will be weather-and schedule-dependent, but they will be installed at last in the spring months.

The RRFBs are waiting for delivery of poles to be installed soon.

The largest delay, at this time, is the utility relocations which began in April 2025. Eversource and Frontier have begun relocating their wires on new poles within the snow shelf area (between the road and trail) to allow for removal of the old poles that are too close to the multi-use trail. Once all the wires have been restrung the old poles can be removed, the final pavement of the multi-use trail will be installed. During the winter the multi-use trail will be open for the traveling public.

Although some local motorists have expressed concern that this road's traffic-slowing features are inconvenient, just remember someone died here—just walking home. This project should reduce the probability of a similar occurrence and make bicyclists and pedestrians feel safe traveling here in any season.

## Taste of Mansfield Announces its Fourth Annual Champion Awardees Who Connect the Community Through Local Food

The Taste of Mansfield and community partners including the Mansfield Agriculture Committee and Economic Development Commission honored the recipients of the fourth annual Taste of Mansfield Champion Awards at a Community Dinner held on Wednesday, November 19.

The 2025 Taste of Mansfield Champion Award Winners are Dominic Shooks, Shooks Apiaries, Robert Landolphi, Director of Culinary Development, UConn Dining Services and cookbook author, and G.M. Thompson & Sons, Inc., a family owned pet, feed, and farm store

**Dominic Shooks** is the proprietor of Shooks Apiaries located on Wormwood Hill Road in Mansfield. He produces and markets local honey and other related products, at farmers markets throughout the region.

Dom has served as a resource to the Taste of Mansfield and the Town of Mansfield on many occasions, acting as an educator at local events, answering questions and sharing his observation hive with children and guests at the Community Center and Senior Center. Dominic was the authoritative speaker at a beekeeping seminar hosted by the Mansfield Agriculture Committee, sharing his knowledge about the role of pollinators in our environment and agriculture. In addition to products including raw honey, raw creamed honey, beeswax, candles, and lip balm, Dominic produces delicious honey that sweetens plates across our town and broader community. His commitment to local foods as both a producer and an educator truly makes Dominic a Taste of Mansfield Champion

**Rob Landolphi** has been contributing to the “community feel” of Mansfield for a long time, starting by opening a favorite drop-in cafe in Mansfield called The Sugar Shack. Today, as Director of Culinary Development at UConn Dining Services, Rob influences the food culture of UConn by continually developing new menu items for UConn students and inspiring his staff. Rob spearheads the Culinary Olympics at UConn each year, a popular challenge that has brought UConn national recognition.

Rob also founded a summer cooking school, “UCann Cook”, an experience for local youth providing basic culinary skills while also utilizing local ingredients sourced from a local garden. Additionally Rob has been a participant each year at Mansfield’s Celebrate Mansfield Festival. At the festival, Rob offers culinary demonstrations in front of a large audience, often utilizing local ingredients, and supplying recipes and tasty samples. Rob is also a nationally renowned author of three best-selling cookbooks on gluten-free cooking. As an advocate and an educator, Rob deserves to be called a champion.



(Left to right) Economic Development Commission Chair Dwight Codr, Mayor Toni Moran, Champions George and Becca Thompson of Thompson & Sons, Dominic Shooks of Shooks Apiaries, Rob Landolphi of UConn Dining Services, plus Steve Ferrigno, Mansfield Downtown Partnership Executive Director and Chef Maraiah Popeleski-Tilley, Mansfield Food Services and Field to Tray program Director.

**G.M. Thompson & Sons, Inc.** Thriving agriculture requires a solid infrastructure—those business resources that support farms and farming. For nearly a century, G.M. Thompson & Sons has delivered feed, bedding and much more to production agriculture operations and homestead farms throughout this region. The Thompsons were involved in the store along the railroad tracks in the early 1900s, and again since the 1930s and incorporating in 1963. From straw bales to salt licks, seed packets to chicken coops, Thompsons General Store has been a reliable resource to the Mansfield local agriculture community. And there’s no extra charge for the wisdom and advice these family members share, as well, on their blog on the website or in the aisles. And don’t forget to check the bulletin board—an old-school marketplace for pet and animal lovers.

The store supports other local farm ventures, too, selling honey and syrup, and serving as a distribution spot for a local farm’s CSA when needed. As the landmark in historic Mansfield Depot, G.M. Thompson & Sons is truly a proven champion for local farms and farmers.

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. Each year the public is invited to nominate community members.



*We're cooking up something good. . .*

# Taste 2 Towns

Mansfield-Windham Restaurant Week

**JANUARY 26 - FEBRUARY 8, 2026!**

Explore our region bite-by-bite at participating restaurants!

Learn more at [taste2towns.com](https://taste2towns.com)

*Taste 2 Towns is a collaboration by:*



## Visit the William Benton Museum of Art Exhibit on the UConn Campus:

**Encounters with the Collection: [Exploring America at 250](#)**  
through August 2026

## Does Your Organization Want to Help Mansfield Celebrate 250 Years of Independence?

As the year 2026 approaches, our country is preparing to celebrate our 250th year. The State of Connecticut is inviting all communities to create local celebrations that Tell Inclusive Stories, engage people for the Common Good, Do History, and celebrate the Power of Place.



Are you engaged with a committee, an organization, a faith-based community, or a business that would like to help Mansfield celebrate? The Town of Mansfield is willing to help promote lectures, tours, workshops, exhibits—whatever the community creates to mark and commemorate the ideals and values of America's 250th year. Mansfield's commission has formed that includes UConn, Town staff, and Mansfield Historical Society members who are here to help. Read about Connecticut celebrations at the [Connecticut 250 Commission!](#)

For details, and to indicate your group's interest in organizing a local tribute to this year-long celebration, please visit this special web page we have created and complete the form: [mansfieldct.gov/america250](https://mansfieldct.gov/america250)



## Walking into Winter: How to Keep Your Dog Cozy and Visible at Night

With daylight savings occurring last month, we are officially heading towards winter. This seasonal change effects our pet's routines just as much as it effects ours. Whether you are enjoying a hike to look at the leaves, or trying to squeeze in some exercise for you (and your pup) at the end of the day Mansfield Animal Control has some tips for staying safe on walks:

- In the forest, stick to well-marked trails and make sure you and your pet are in bright colors to be visible to hunters
- Wear high visibility vests and utilize reflective leashes and collars when walking after dark. Flashlights and lights on collars can help you and your pet be seen at night
- Be cautious of mushrooms both growing in the forest as well as your yard. Some mushrooms can be very toxic to pets
- Stay on top of parasites, whether by using preventatives or checking your pets for ticks. Leaf piles are a perfect place for ticks to hide
- Keep your pets warm on outdoor walks, especially young and older animals.



Keeping this tips in mind will ensure you and your pet will be safe and comfortable.



Thank you to the volunteers who joined in picking up litter on November 8 all across Town including students from E.O. Smith High School, members of the Lions Club, and Adopt-a-Road volunteers. At UConn, 104 UConn students tackled roads adjacent to campus, and gathered more than 1,000 pounds of litter. The fraternities also pick up along Hunting Lodge Road regularly as part of Mansfield's Adopt-a-Road program.



### Parking Ban Reminder

From November 1 to April 1, parking overnight 12 AM to 6 AM on public roads in Mansfield is prohibited.

During any snowstorm, at any time of the day, there is no on-street parking. Vehicles parked on the street disrupt plowing efforts and will be ticketed or towed, with any costs the responsibility of the vehicle owner.



## The Mansfield Public Library is Your Place to Be for Winter Fun and Learning

At the Mansfield Public Library, the staff is always planning new and exciting programs for adults, for families, for teens, and tots! Here's a quick snapshot of what's happening at the library in December and January. Want to find all the details, plus more events? [Check out our website!](#)

### Special Family Events:

- Toy Swap, Collection Dates: December 1 through 12,
- Toy Swap Event: December 13 and beyond, as supplies last.
- Winter Wonder Workshops with Special Wintry Crafts, Thursdays in December
- Nutcracker Stories & Mini Ballet Showcase, December 13
- Friends of the Mansfield Library's Annual Gingerbread House Decorating Contest, December 20 (registration required)
- Noon Year's Eve Family Party, December 31
- Cozy Movie Matinee: Frozen, January 2
- Snowflake Storytime, January 10
- Community Card-Making at Wonder Workshop, January 15th



### Teen Nights\*:

- Cozy Wintry Crafts & Build-Your-Own Hot Chocolate Bar, December 18
- Cookie Decorating Contest, January 15

\*Teen Night programs are open only to middle school and high school students!

### Adult Drop-In Jewelry Making Craft

Supplies & tools will be provided




6:00 PM - 7:30 PM
TUESDAY  
DECEMBER 9, 2025
MPL BUCHANAN  
AUDITORIUM

Get creative! Make some beautiful jewelry for yourself or give as a gift. No registration is necessary.

### Adult Programs:

For upcoming meeting dates, check our [Events Calendar](#).

- Adult Drop-in Jewelry Making, December 9
- Tech Savvy: Password Managers and Safety, December 19
- Craft & Chat, January 8
- Start the New Year with Meditation, January 22 (virtual)

### Recurring Adult Programs:

- Current Events and Politics Weekly Discussion Group, every Wednesday
- Weekly Friday Films at the Library, every Friday
- Mansfield Library Book Discussion Group, December 9 and January 13

- Adults 18+ Only Monthly Game Night, December 16 and January 20
- Matt's Monthly Zoom Movie Discussions, December 17 and January 21
- Mansfield Library Monthly Knitting Group, December 18 and January 15
- Cookbook Club, December 18 and January 15

### Virtual Author Talks:

- The Creative and Compassionate Art of Seeing Others Deeply with David Brooks, January 13
- Nature, Art, and Service as Medicine with Journalist Julia Hotz, January 20
- Secrets and Second Chances with Liz Moore, January 28

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month  
@ 6:00 pm  
Beginning 1/8/26



# CRAFT & CHAT

Mansfield Public Library  
Program Room

## 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 re-view 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.

## NEWS&UPDATES

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

- Go to this page on the town’s website: <http://mansfieldct.gov/list.aspx>
- Enter your best email in the “Email Address” field
- Under the “Notify Me” section of the page check the box for “News & Press Releases” (and check out other topics you might want to be notified about, from committees to events.)

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!

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

## Please Contact Our Department Leaders for What You Need

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