## Mansfield Now

NOVEMBER 2023

## Kayaking Adventures

Kevin Orsak appreciates the beauty of nature near home

2023 Holiday Shopping Guide

In the Kitchen With Kena Outlaw



Postal Customer

Also inside: Scavenger Hunt

Cestin 20.4

Crossword/Sudoku

Featured Business: St. John Lutheran Church



### Linda W., Arlington, TX

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#### November 2023 Volume 18, Issue 11

#### ON THE COVER



Kevin Orsak celebrates the serene environment while journeying around the area.

Photo by Lori Baur.

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Sandra

Sandra Walters *MansfieldNOW* Editor sandra.walters@nowmagazines.com (682) 554-1743

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Mansfield Family ...

Embrace this season with gratitude. As November starts, reflect on the significance of this cherished time of enjoying relatives and friends during this upcoming break. Thanksgiving is not just about indulging in delicious food. It's an opportunity to express gratitude for the blessings in our lives.

In a world where we often focus on what's lacking or what we aspire to have or be, remind yourself to appreciate what you already possess and the people who make your world a better place. Create new moments of togetherness or keep the traditions going with love and camaraderie. Don't overlook the small joys that bring meaning to your lives — the laughter shared over a board game, watching your favorite football team, the yummy food prepared, the warmth of a loved one's embrace or the simple act of kindness from a stranger. In these seemingly ordinary moments, lies the extraordinary beauty of enjoying life.

For those who are missing loved ones, give yourself permission to experience the emotion. Also, consider starting a new holiday tradition to honor the memories of those who have gone on. This can keep their spirit alive. Share stories, photos or mementos during family gatherings to celebrate the legacy.

So, as we prepare to celebrate during this season and relax, count your blessings, enjoy the presence of your loved ones and extend a helping hand to those in need. This year, let's make being thankful a daily practice, fostering a culture of gratitude and kindness.

Have an enjoyable November and Thanksgiving!





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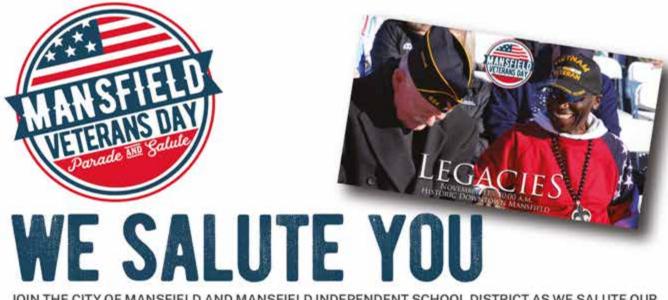
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#### FULL DETAILS & EVENT INFO AT MANSFIELDTEXAS.GOV/VETERANSDAY

#### Mansfield City Council Update

Mansfield City Council will start its regular business sessions at 6 p.m. beginning Oct. 9.



Make plans to celebrate the magic of the holidays all month. Visit www.mansfieldhometownholidays.com for all your Hometown Holidays details.





ome Health



PARADE START



MOUSER







SFIELD

Who would think of kayaking in this area? Kevin Orsak. Even though Mansfield may not have natural bodies of water as some other parts of Texas do, there are still kayaking options here. "As I explored the hidden nooks around, I could go for hours and miles while feeling like I was in the Amazon Rainforest in my mind," he said. "I can still see the beautiful erosion on the walls. It's amazing to behold these treasures close to home."

In 2015, he and his family relocated to Mansfield for employment, and Kevin quickly fell in love with the neighborhood. He enjoys the biking groups, which are formed depending on the cyclists' capacities for speed. He loves being a part, and when he moved to this location, he found himself thrilled with the activities of nature. Kayaking is, without question, his favorite pastime. It takes his mind off of the hectic tasks life brings.

When Kevin was a kid, he developed a passion for going on adventures. "My friends and I would find a pond to trudge and enjoy," he explained. "All day long, we explored the things outside had to offer and just loved it. In the summer, my mom wouldn't see me for hours. As a family, we traveled extensively because my father worked for American Airlines, so we always found ourselves on an excursion in the woods somewhere."

Kayaking



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He believes the hidden corners surrounding Mansfield should be explored and photographed. In his pursuit of exploits and, frankly, relaxation, he and a friend discovered a newfound hobby of uncovering gems. They navigated through shallow water, fallen trees and lots of laughter. The creek systems that flow through Joe Pool Lake offer scenery and expeditions just as exciting as the other places at the same latitude.

With a smile, he also recalled taking his wife on a date at the Oasis Restaurant. Following dinner, they rented two kayaks to enjoy the rest of the evening on the water. He said, "She is a trooper, although she doesn't like getting dirty. However, we had a blast." As Kevin, along with friends and family, ventures out into the creeks, ponds or lake, he said, "It's so low key. When I start close to the lake, I hear the loud sounds of cars, but as I continue, I hear birds. Then, finally, nothing — simply nothing."

Sometimes when he's out for a long period of time, the silence is broken by his cell phone ringing. His service is still available even though he feels like he's in another world. He recommends that people wear a life jacket and place their cell phone in a plastic bag in case it falls into the water.

While maneuvering through creeks and ponds, he saw many things. "There is a beaver who's always hanging out making a little bit of noise. I found approximately 100 dirty golf balls that washed up on the dry surface. And I even encountered a rattle snake. I just stopped and remained calm despite being thrilled about my finding. I noticed a carp trapped. A carp is like a big goldfish. Each time I go out, I'm amazed at what I find and by the consistent water level changes. There are always new adventures during each outing in this peaceful place of observing local wildlife. The best time to kayak is early spring through summer when it isn't too hot."

However, unlike other parts of the country, people take advantage of our unique weather and kayak yearround. Local locations offering such opportunities include Joe Pool Lake Marina, Lloyd Park, Lynn Creek and Cedar Hill State Park where you can bring your own kayaks or rent one to explore the scenic shoreline and coves. If you'd like to take kayaking journeys throughout Texas, the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's website can give you details about paddling trails.



Always check the rules and regulations regarding kayaking. Be aware of weather conditions before heading out on the water, and dress for immersion in either a wetsuit or a drysuit according to your determination. Wear a life jacket, and only journey out in safe conditions. Never go alone.

If you're interested in kayaking at a later date, Mansfield Parks and Recreation offers tours from March through October each year. Spring break is a good time to go kayaking as well. All supplies are provided, and children over 7 years of age can attend with an adult. You may locate the information on the city website at the first of the year. There are fees associated with this experience.

"As we celebrate National Stress Awareness Day on the first Wednesday in November, reduce stress by doing something you enjoy, or experiencing something new like kayaking," Kevin encouraged. "However, don't wait until National Stress Day to take care of yourself. Relax as often as you can."

Editor's Note: For more information on paddling trails, visit https://tpwd.texas. gov/fishboat/boat/paddlingtrails/ inland/. To calculate the water temperature, visit www.coldwatersafety. org/air-water-temperature.

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BusinessNOW St. John Lutheran Church

By Sandra Walters

#### St. John Lutheran Church

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Hours: Monday-Friday: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Sunday: 8:00 a.m.-noon

The pastor of St. John Lutheran Church reveals details of his calling and the mission of the congregation. When asked what made him decide to become a minister, Pastor Jon Thomas replied, "I really didn't want to be a pastor. Although it seemed like I played church at home my whole life. My mother was the musician, and I preached while my siblings



were the members at my play church. I even had a worship folder with sermons inside."

As Jon grew older, he didn't consider being a pastor. He attended college and received a bachelor's degree in psychology. Then, his grandmother encouraged him to obtain a master's in divinity. "I had no idea why she wanted me to do that, but my path was clear once I started taking classes. When I began an internship at a church, it was crystal clear," Jon shared.

Originally from Michigan, Jon eventually moved to Florida, where he married his beautiful wife, Margaret. Then, they transitioned to California. Shortly after, they learned they were expecting a child, and they had no aspirations of raising a family in California. Because of how their denomination works, they made the leaders aware of their desire to move, and people started reaching out to them from all over inquiring about Jon pastoring their church.

"After considering various churches and narrowing down our search, we selected St. John Lutheran Church in Mansfield, Texas. The opportunity of moving here spoke to us because it appeared to be a healthy church that cared about families. The committee even said, 'We want you to take two days off to be healthy and enjoy your family.' Therefore, the freedom of being a pastor at St. John was appealing. Not only did they care about people, but they believed in making an impact. We moved to this location eight years ago," Jon said.

"I really didn't want to be a pastor. Although it seemed like I played church at home my whole life."

St. John Lutheran Church strives to connect with Jesus, connect with others and change the world. Life is better with relationships, so they have small groups to build relationships. "It's neat to see small groups take care of the people in their groups if someone is experiencing any kind of hardship." They believe each individual has a spiritual fingerprint. A member of the church designed an assessment that determines where a person should work in ministry. Anyone, even nonmembers, may call and talk to the pastors. They simply want to love on the community.

The church has an ESL class to help people improve their English. They realized that 17 percent of the community is Spanish speaking, so they partnered with Pastor Juan Zamora, who started ESL classes for other congregations. As the impact grew, St. John added another leader, Omar Sarmiento.

"Mansfield is a great place to be. The pastors in this community meet to bring unity, and we all work together along with Mayor Evans. Our goal is to love on people and make our community better. We also believe in changing the world through local, national and international missions, which include Mansfield Mission Center, Academy 4, Alaska Mission for Christ, Jamaica, Belize and Africa. We partner with Habitat for Humanity to build new homes in Mansfield," Jon concluded. "If our church goes away one day and no one notices, we haven't done a good job."





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www.fundentist.com Thanksgiving



## **Zoomed In:** Aaliyah Banks

By Sandra Walters

Reading was a longtime challenge for Aaliyah Banks. The idea of reading created anxiety anytime she read aloud or sounded words out. However, Aaliyah has improved to the point she asked, "Mom, will you take me to the library, so I can check out some books?" With no hesitation, her mother took her to the library, excited that her daughter was excelling tremendously.

Now she reads chapter books and graphic novels on level for fun! Aaliyah's desire to read books goes beyond school assignments. Now she goes to the library to acquire books simply for the love of reading. In the picture above, Aaliyah stands studiously with a new confidence to read.

## Around Town



The Hibbs' whole crew shops at Market Street on one of the warmer fall days.



Benita and Barry Smith enjoy a date night in DFW.



The Saints win second place in the church baseball league at Big League Dreams.



Patt Hollingsworth retires after 28 years of serving as the director of the Regional Police Academy.

## NOW



Kaiden Dietrich enjoys the season while holding a colorful leaf.



Kristi Gonzales is celebrated by her staff, students and parents as an excellent principal.



Vang Krang and his granddaughter, Caline Krang, enjoy a morning walk.





November 14 - January 12

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 "Best Medicare Advantage Plan Companies of 2023," US News & World Report, accessed November 11, 2022, https://bit.ly/3Fxsgpl.

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"My love for cooking started about age 11 or 12. I stayed in the kitchen with my mother, and she was a master chef in my eyes. Growing up, my siblings and I could not create meals from a box or can until we could make the dish from scratch," Kena Outlaw said. No instant mashed potatoes, store-bought potato salad or waffles were welcome in their home.

Cooking became her passion and very therapeutic. She took what she was taught growing up and tweaked it to make it her own. "I love the reaction when someone tastes the food I prepared and responds, 'I can tell this was cooked with love,'" Kena said. "It brings a smile to my face and heart." Now

#### **Golden Catfish Bites**

1 1/2 lbs. catfish fillets
 2/3 cup lemon juice
 1 tsp. seasoned salt
 1/2 tsp. black pepper
 1/2 tsp. curry powder
 1 tsp. garlic powder
 1 1/2 cups yellow cornmeal

#### l egg 2/3 cup heavy cream Vegetable oil, enough for deep frying

 Wash the fillets by soaking them in lemon juice and water for 15 minutes.
 Take the fillets out; pat them dry. Cut the fillets into 1 1/2-inch pieces.
 Place the seasonings and commeal in a Ziploc bag. Place the egg and heavy cream in a bowl.

4. Preheat the oil in a large pot or deep fryer.
5. Dip the catfish in the wet mixture. Place the pieces in the Ziploc bag; shake well.
6. Drop the catfish into the oil. Within 2-3 minutes, the pieces should be golden brown.
7. Remove the catfish from the oil; drain on a paper towel and serve.

#### **Cauliflower Mashed Potatoes**

- 2 bags frozen cauliflower
- 4 Tbsp. Imperial margarine
- 1/2 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper

**I.** Rinse the florets thoroughly.

**2.** In pan, cover the florets with water; boil until tender.

3. Drain any excess water; combine the

florets with the margarine, cheese, sour cream, heavy whipping cream, garlic powder, salt and pepper.4. Reduce heat; continue to stir until the desired thickness is achieved.

#### Southern Potato Salad

4-5 russet potatoes

1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt or sea salt, plus more to taste (divided use)
6 large boiled eggs, 5 chopped and 1 sliced (divided use)
2 stalks celery, chopped
1 onion, chopped
1 green bell pepper, chopped
2 1/2 Tbsp. yellow mustard
1/4 tsp. Miracle Whip
1/4 tsp. black pepper
Sugar, to taste
1 jar sweet relish
Smoked paprika, for garnish

**I.** Place the potatoes and 1 1/2 tsp. salt in 4 quarts of water. Bring to a boil; cook until soft. Drain the potatoes; transfer to a mixing bowl. Add the 5 chopped eggs, celery, onions, green peppers, mustard and Miracle Whip; stir well.

 Add more Miracle Whip for a creamy consistency, but do not drown the salad in it.
 Add the pepper and salt and sugar to taste.
 Place the remaining sliced egg on top of the potato salad; sprinkle with paprika. Refrigerate and serve.

#### Cheesy Turkey Egg Rolls

Tbsp. vegetable oil
 Ib. ground turkey
 Tbsp. butter
 T transformed
 2 red onion, chopped
 2 green bell pepper, chopped
 2 yellow bell pepper, chopped
 tsp. seasoned salt
 tsp. seasoned salt
 tsp. Slap Ya Mama Cajun Seasoning
 Egg roll wrappers
 6 slices pepper jack cheese
 Small bowl of water

**I.** Place the oil in a pan on medium heat. Brown the ground turkey; remove and set aside.

**2.** Add the butter to the same pan. Caramelize the onions and peppers. Return the turkey to the pan. Add the seasonings to the mixture.

**3.** Lay an egg roll wrapper on a clean surface. Make a diamond. Take a half slice of pepper jack cheese; place it in the middle of the wrap.

**4.** Add 1 Tbsp. of the meat and vegetable mixture on top of the cheese. Pull the bottom corner over mixture. Take two corners and fold them toward the center.



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Saturday 5:00 pm-English Saturday 7:00 pm-Spanish

Sunday 7:30 am-English sunday 10:00 am- english sunday 11:30 am-english sunday 1:00 Pm Spanish



**5.** Dip your finger in the small bowl of water; rub a dab of the water on the corners of the egg roll wrapper. Roll the wrapper tightly over the filling.

6. Deep fry the egg rolls for about 1 1/2 minutes on each side or until golden.7. Drain on a rack or on paper towels and serve.

#### **Oven-baked Spaghetti**

Ib. ground turkey
 Tbsp. vegetable oil

- onion, chopped
   green pepper, chopped
   2 oz. marinara sauce
   16-oz. pkg. spaghetti, cooked
   2 Tbsp. garlic powder
   1 pkg. taco seasoning mix
- 1 Tbsp. curry powder
- 1 tsp. seasoning salt
- 1 16-oz. container sour cream
  1 1/2 cups Mexican cheese, shredded

**I.** Brown the ground turkey in the vegetable oil. Add the vegetables and the marinara

#### sauce. Fill the jar halfway with water. Add the water and cooked spaghetti; mix well. **2.** Add the dry seasonings; cook for 30-45 minutes.

**3.** Place the spaghetti in a baking pan. Add the sour cream; mix well.

**4.** Top with cheese. Bake at 400 F until the cheese is melted and golden brown; serve.



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## THE LOCAL TABLE

One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well.

#### - Virginia Woolf

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## EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC OF

As the holiday season approaches, McKinney, Texas, transforms into a winter wonderland that captivates visitors and locals alike. Known for its small-town charm and festive spirit, McKinney offers a plethora of holiday activities, events and decorations that create an enchanting atmosphere to delight all ages.

Christmas in

#### Home for the Holidays Festival — November 24-26

McKinney's Home for the Holidays festival, held every Thanksgiving weekend, is a beloved tradition that kicks off the Christmas season. The event features an array of activities, including live music and dance performances, arts and crafts vendors and food trucks offering delicious holiday treats. Children can delight in visits with Santa Claus in his workshop. And families will not want to miss the spectacular community tree-lighting ceremony on Friday evening followed by a concert on the square. Admission to the weekend-long event is free.

Throughout the holiday season, families can enjoy the Christmas Carousel, kids workshop craft area, visits with Santa and taking family photos by the community Christmas tree on the downtown square. Of course, you will want to take some time to stroll around Historic Downtown McKinney to be enchanted by the festive storefront displays.

Christmas shopping in McKinney is a delight, as the city boasts an eclectic array of boutiques, specialty stores and art galleries. Browse through the shops to find one-of-akind gifts for your loved ones, such as handmade jewelry, clothing, home decor, Christmas decorations, toys and artisanal chocolates.

After a day of shopping and exploring, enjoy the delightful dining options McKinney has to offer. From cozy cafes serving hot soups and sandwiches to upscale restaurants with seasonal menus, the city's dining scene caters to all tastes. Don't miss the chance to try some Texas-style barbecue, a local favorite, or indulge in a festive feast at one of the many restaurants offering special holiday menus.

### 50th Annual Holiday Tour of Homes — December 2-3 & 9-10

This year, Chestnut Square and the Heritage Guild of Collin County celebrate 50 years of this favored event that showcases several homes in McKinney's residential historic district. For this year's tour, there will be two sets of decorated homes, one set each weekend, and bonus stops and activities at Chestnut Square Heritage Village. In addition to the home tours, guests can enjoy tea served along with a full breakfast buffet in the recently renovated Bevel House. (Additional ticket required for this activity.)

#### Holidays at the Heard — December 8-9

This annual event at the Heard Natural Science Museum & Wildlife Sanctuary brings the beauty of the holiday season to nature. Children can take part in activities and snacks in the museum while visiting with Father Christmas, then head out to the nature trails adorned with thousands of twinkling lights. Make sure to look for the animatronic dinosaurs that visit The



Heard each fall and winter, all decked out for the season. Bundle up the kids, and enjoy this one-of-a-kind family holiday experience.

#### Christmas Parade of Lights — December 9

Each year, thousands of locals and visitors fill the downtown square for the Christmas Parade of Lights that includes decorated floats, marching bands and, of course, Santa Claus himself. Admission is free.

If you are seeking a magical and heartwarming Christmas experience for your family, look no further than McKinney with its rich traditions and strong sense of community. Plan your visit to McKinney to experience the magic that makes this North Texas town a must-see holiday destination.

Beth Shumate Communications Manager — Visit McKinney

Editor's Note: For more information, go to visitmckinney.com.

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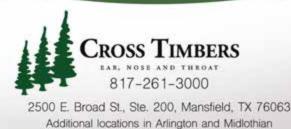
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#### Cross Timbers ENT welcomes Dr. Daniyan to their medical staff

Opeoluwa Daniyan, MD is a board-certified Otolaryngologist. She graduated from the University of Georgia with a major in microbiology and a minor in Spanish and attended medical school at the Medical College of Georgia. She then completed her Otolaryngology/Head and Neck Surgery residency at Jackson Health System in Miami, Florida.

Dr. Daniyan provides compassionate medical and surgical ear, nose, and throat care for children and adults and strives to treat her patients like family. She enjoys the full breadth of general ENT including thyroid surgery, neck masses, and sinus and nasal surgery.

Her interests outside of ENT include drawing, ping pong, shopping, traveling, and spending time with her husband, spunky daughter, and extended family.





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## **Crossword Puzzle**

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10	wraps Skateboarding jump	call? 26 Kind of PC	<ol> <li>Iron block</li> <li>Believe it</li> </ol>	21 Vituperative one
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12	- Icon	statement 28 Online	6 Belonging to us	27 Home on the range?
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	Military go- betweens	33 In unison 35 Old	device 8 Arrange by	32 Contend
	Devoted follower	watchmaker 36 Kind of eclipse	type 9 Takes the tiller	34 Pinch-hitter
	Anonymous Jane	37 Start over	10 Painting medium	
	Follow closely Sound of a finely tuned engine	38 1/2 fl. oz.	16 Welcome to Hawaii!	

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## Sudoku Puzzle

Easy										Medium									
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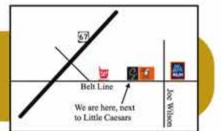
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NY

#### 11/9

#### The Farr Best Open Mic Night:

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#### 11/11

#### 2023 Veterans Day Parade & Salute:

The parade will begin at St. Jude Catholic Church and travel north on South Waxahachie Street before turning west on East Broad Street. From there, the parade will travel north on Smith Street, then south on Main Street after a brief turn to the west onto East Oak Street, and finally, east on East Dallas Street, ending at St. Jude Catholic Church. Free. 10:00 a.m., St. Jude Catholic Church, 500 E. Dallas St.

#### Our Holiday Shopping Edition:

We will have over 60 opportunities for you to shop with unique vendors (owned by Mansfield Women) for the holidays! Familyfriendly activities, food trucks, giveaways and photo opportunities with Santa! Free. 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., St. John Lutheran Church, 1218 E. Debbie Lane.

#### 11/14

#### Adulting 101-Simple Cooking:

Learn the basics of being a responsible grown-up in this three-part series covering various aspects of adult responsibilities. Registration is required. Cost: Free. 6:00-7:00 p.m., Mansfield Public Library, 104 S. Wisteria St.

#### 11/21

Family Nerf Night: Team up with your family and friends for a night of nerf fun around our obstacles and barriers. We supply the darts. You bring a blaster! Registration required. For 4 years, plus; under 13 must have a participating adult. \$6. 5:30-7:00 p.m., Mansfield Activities Center, 106 S. Wisteria St. For more information, call (817) 728-3680.

#### 11/23

#### Prairie Lights:

Be dazzled by Prairie Lights as you drive through 4 million lights set along 2 miles of adventure. \$50 per car. 6:00-10:00 p.m., Lynn Creek Park, 5610 Lake Ridge Parkway, Grand Prairie, TX 75052. https://prairielights.org/.

#### 11/30

Toys for Tots Drive & Holiday Event: Gather thousands of toys in partnership with schools, businesses and other community organizations to support families in Mansfield who are in need during this time. Free. 5:00-10:30 p.m., Mansfield Center for the Performing Arts, 1110 Debbie Ln.

#### 12/1

Hometown Holidays: Join us for our annual tree lighting, followed immediately by a spectacular drone show! Food trucks will be on-site, as well as entertainment at The LOT Downtown stage, plus this will be the spot to buy your 2023 Mansfield Holiday Mug. This evening will also kick off the month-long lights and holiday decor display for all your holiday photo ops. 5:00-9:00 p.m., The LOT Downtown, 110 S. Main St.

#### By Appointment

Mansfield Mission Market: Families, seniors or anyone in MISD who needs food is welcome to walk-in. Pets are provided for, as well. Monday-Saturday: 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., Mansfield Mission Center, 703 E. Broad, Thrift Store. For more information, call (817) 473-6650 or visit www.mansfieldmission.org.

#### Mondays

Miracle Mondays:

We pray at no charge for people with any issues and teach others to pray for healing and wholeness. 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., The Healing Place, 600 Strada Circle, Ste. 210. Bill Dasch, (817) 319-0129.

NOVEMB

#### Second Tuesdays

#### Mansfield Garden Club Meeting:

Come grow with others learning about native and adaptive plants for North Texas from Sher Dunaway, a Tarrant County Master Gardener. 6:00-8:30 p.m., Chris W. Burkett Service Center, 620 S. Wisteria St. Sonya Bryant, (817) 266-4422.

#### Second Wednesdays

#### Mansfield Lions Club Meetings:

We work closely with MISD to provide free vision testing and eyeglasses to students who need them. Noon-1:00 p.m., Mansfield Methodist Medical Center, 2nd Floor Conference Room, 2700 E. Broad St. RSVP to Karen Williams, president, (817) 729-4978.

Submissions are welcome and published as space allows. Send your current event details to sandra.walters@nowmagazines.com.

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