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M A G A Z I N E

NOVEMBER 2025

A Century of Roots

Multiple generations
of the Ray family have
called Mansfield home

2025 Holiday
Shopping Guide

In the Kitchen With
Valerie Jones

Also inside:
Scavenger Hunt
Crossword
Featured Business:
Allure Smile Dental

Postal Customer

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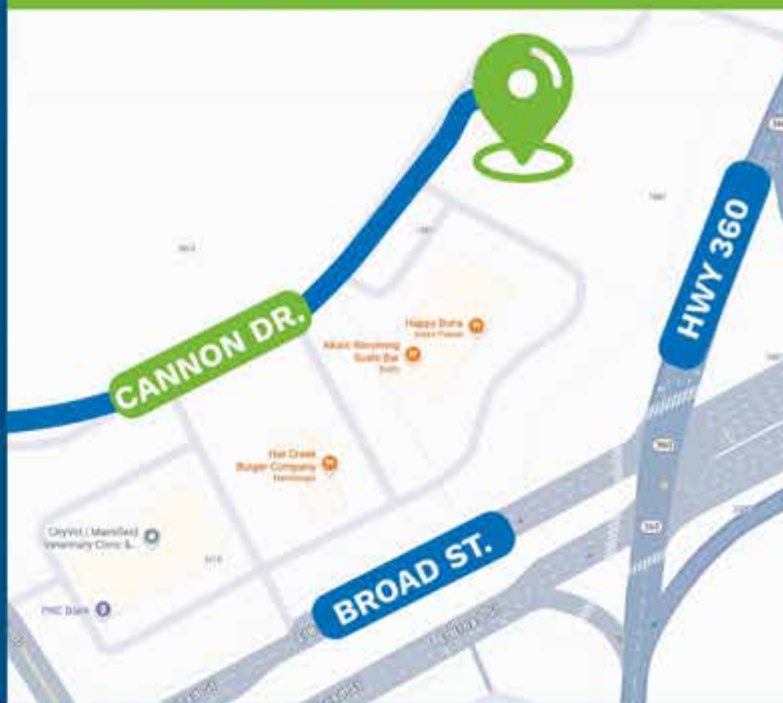
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Sandra

Sandra Walters
MansfieldNOW Editor
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She's so petite and cute. I'm not like that." I replied, "But you look fabulous." She beamed and said, "You made my day — I'm 69 years old." I was speechless because she looked amazing. Moments like that remind me why simple words matter, so let's notice more, connect more and give thanks for the good things and people surrounding us.

Have a great Thanksgiving!

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Mansfield Family,

Being thankful isn't just about listing what we're grateful for. It's about noticing what we often overlook: the people who show up, the moments that ground us, the small wins that carry us forward. Gratitude is perspective — it shifts how we see everything else.

This year, I'm especially thankful for the gift of connection. I've learned to slow down, to really notice people. Every sunrise, every conversation, every simple, "Hello," is a reminder that all lives are a treasure. I make it a point to speak to people, especially cashiers, by name, letting them know I see them, and sometimes I even give them a hug.

Recently, I met a woman in the grocery store — tall, fit and radiant. I told her she was beautiful. She smiled and said, "Hmm ... I looked at you and thought,

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ON THE COVER



The Ray family legacy continues to shape Mansfield.

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A woman with blonde hair, wearing a black sleeveless top and a green skirt, is in motion on a blue pickleball court. She is holding a pickleball paddle and a yellow ball is visible in the air. The background shows a grassy area and trees.

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A CENTURY



For more than a century, the Ray family has called Mansfield home. With four generations rooted in the community, Danny and Suzanne Ray's stories are woven tightly into the town's growth, from the days when Mansfield was just a small farming community to the thriving city it is today.

"My family's history in Mansfield stretches back to the late 1800s, when my great-grandmother, whom we called Grandmother Ball, raised 13 children here," Suzanne explained. "My mother, Jean Perry, graduated from Mansfield High School in 1922 and became well-known in the community for music, playing both piano and organ. My mother served as the executive director of the Mansfield Chamber of Commerce for nine years. Also, many of the schools are named after my parents' friends and our teachers. Ironically, most of my teachers taught my father and me, too."

The Ray family moved to Mansfield in 1954 and established the original Ray's Pharmacy on Main Street. They became members of First Baptist Church of Mansfield, where Suzanne's family attended and found community — a tradition that continues today. Suzanne and Danny's paths crossed at church, and she began working at his family's business. At the age of 14, she began dating Danny with her parents' permission. "He was 17, a little older than me, but they were OK with it because they thought he was an upstanding young man. After I graduated high school, we got married," Suzanne said with a smile.

Danny observed his father for many years and wanted to follow in his footsteps. He learned not just the business, but also the values that guide him. "I noticed that my dad made everybody feel important," Danny recalled. "That's what he showed me my whole life, so it was instilled in me to do the same."

Y OF ROOTS

— By Sandra Walters



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Since he is three years older than Suzanne, Danny immediately enrolled in college after he graduated from high school. Before applying to Southwestern State College in Weatherford, Oklahoma, for pharmacy school, he finished his foundational coursework at Tarrant County Junior College. Meanwhile, Suzanne enrolled in a pre-pharmacy program to acquire her degree as well.

Eventually, Danny graduated and began working as a pharmacist. In 1979, he purchased the business from his father, who retired at the age of 52. "I needed Suzanne's help, so she started working in the business alongside me doing bookkeeping, purchasing and traveling to the other stores to manage the business," Danny said. Over the next 43 years, Danny and Suzanne expanded Ray's Pharmacy into locations in Mansfield, Arlington, Kennedale and Hamilton.

As they managed their finances well, they lived in the house his grandfather built. "I remember them building the golf course on Walnut Creek, and I thought, *That's not going to work,*" he said with a smirk. Eventually, the couple built their forever home on what had been Rawdon farmland in the 1900s.

Faith and family have been constants in their journey. Both Suzanne and Danny have remained active at First Baptist Church. They also cared for their parents in their later years. Danny's father lived to 97, and Suzanne's mother to 94. Both of them enjoyed full lives in Mansfield.

From business to church life, from community leadership to family traditions, the Rays have left a lasting imprint on this city. Danny and Suzanne often reflect with gratitude. "I don't





consider myself to be the sharpest knife in the drawer. Only the Lord has allowed us to be so fortunate,” Danny added humbly.

Since they retired and sold all of the Ray Pharmacies, Danny likes to hunt more. His father taught him how to hunt sparrows when he was about 9 years old, but today, his hunting ventures have expanded to being guided by a professional hunter who assists him as he hunts for elk, deer, elephants, fox, sheep, warthogs and other animals. He said, “Recently, my grandson and I went to South Africa to hunt. We purchased hunting licenses to hunt specific species. In certain places this helps manage the overpopulation of some animals, which can be a nuisance for farmers. Killing animals creates resources that provide food and income for many people.”

“I used to have some calves, wild ducks, bulls and chickens on our land,” Suzanne said. “I incubated eggs, and that was hard work. Eventually, I got rid of the animals and started to enjoy shooting flying fish. It’s so much fun, not as adventurous and dangerous as Danny’s hunting ventures.”

“I’m fascinated by many animals and enjoy the challenge of outsmarting them,” Danny added.

“My father used to bring cattle from Fairfield through Mansfield to Fort Worth, and he thought it was such a small little country town that he passed in a blink. He never dreamed that he would live here, nor create generations in this place,” Danny said.

Today, the Ray family continues to be recognized as a pillar of Mansfield — not just for their business success, but for their faith, their generosity and their enduring commitment to the community. They love the city they’ve always called home. **NOW**

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Allure Smile Dental

— By Sandra Walters

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Dr. Man Le’s career began as a software engineer in the late ’90s and continued through the early 2000s. While the 1990s saw significant growth and innovation in the technology industry, it was not without its share of difficulties and layoffs. The industry experienced both boom and bust cycles during this period, leading to job cuts in certain areas.



“I considered making a transition to the medical field as I watched my brother enjoy his work as a dentist. Working as an employee for companies seemed unstable, so I started taking prerequisite classes after hours while I worked for the software company,” Dr. Le said.

After he was accepted into dental school in Houston, Texas, he quit his software engineer position and prepared for a new adventure. “I had to travel from Dallas to Houston every weekend. And the second year, we had our first child, so my wife managed while I was away during those days for a few years. However, after some time, I graduated in 2011 and took over my brother’s practice, Allure Smile Dental. It all worked out. I’ve been a dentist and business owner for 12 years. We’ve been happily married for 21 years, and we now have two amazing children.

“I learned that I love interacting with people, so being a

dentist was more suitable for me and more rewarding because I can see the results right away. People come to my office looking for answers, and they leave with solutions. Every day is different since I see different individuals daily. I will never get bored of being honest and caring about people,” Dr. Le said.

Dr. Le is the passionate owner of Allure Smile Dental who explains in depth and treats his patients with compassion. He also provides patients with the opportunity to get a second opinion, so they can make an informed decision about their treatments.

Allure Smile Dental offers a variety of dental services including basic services such as preventive dentistry. They emphasize brushing teeth with fluoride toothpaste approved by ADA and scheduling cleanings every six months. Allure offers teeth whitening procedures. According to the FDA, whitening restores natural tooth color and bleaching whitens beyond the natural color. There are many methods available, such as brushing, bleaching strips, bleaching pens, bleaching gel and laser bleaching.

The advanced services provided include dentures, crowns, bridges and root canal treatments. Full dentures comprise of a full set of upper and lower teeth, but partial dentures replace only a limited number of teeth, not an entire set. A dental crown (cap) is a restoration that is placed on teeth that have lost a lot of their structure. There are various types of crowns, ranging from full porcelain to full metal crowns. Also, a bridge is a dental appliance used to replace one or more missing teeth. They are designed to be cosmetically appealing and to restore proper occlusion. Like crowns, bridges are fully customizable and made of various materials, including porcelain and metals. A root canal treatment is the process of going inside the pulp space and removing the infected, dead tissue.

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Zoomed In: Hannah Burgess

By Sandra Walters

Hannah Burgess, a fourth-grader at Willie Brown Elementary, is making a powerful impact in the community. Her journey began at age 6 when her mother, Rachel Burgess, first noticed tics. By age 7, Hannah was diagnosed with Tourette syndrome, a neurological condition that causes involuntary movements and sounds. “Rather than letting the diagnosis define her, she has become a confident self-advocate, teaching her teachers, coaches and peers about Tourette’s,” Rachel said. Hannah’s courage earned her the Bravery Award and a place in the Tourette Association of America’s Jr. Youth Ambassador Program in Washington, D.C., where she participated in Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill. Mansfield Mayor Michael Evans presented a proclamation at her school, honoring Hannah as a true hometown inspiration.



Hollis Morrison believes there’s nothing like ice cream on any day.



Everett Pafford and his three children made a memory by doing a 5K together in Ohio.



H-E-B Mansfield donates snacks and sports drinks to the Mansfield Police Department to help make National Night Out a success!



The Turners enjoy the Grambling and Southern Football Game at the State Fair.



The MPM Conservatory crew shares its gift of music.



Kenia Hinton-Adetula and her mother, Nicole Empire, celebrate at the grand opening of Empire Studio 900.



Summer Bandy enjoys her birthday at the Fort Worth Zoo.



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Together As One: Mansfield Unveils its First Community-Collaborative Mural

The City of Mansfield unveiled a new public art piece, "Together As One," in October 2025 along the Pond Branch Trail within Historic Downtown Mansfield.

The billboard mural came together as a result of community collaboration and is representative of the City's growing commitment to public art. The mural was born from a series of community focus groups where residents shared thoughts on what brings the community together.

Local artist, Kirsten Maiwald, led these discussions and then crafted the themes into the design of the mural, celebrating unity. The mural was then painted over a weekend in September, as residents of all ages and abilities

came together to paint it. The artwork is centered by a pair of light-skinned and dark-skinned hands intertwined and forming the trunk of a tree. Its treetop is crowned with familial silhouettes having remarkable experiences together. The artwork's base features iconic images from Mansfield's history. This piece, like its imagery, really depicts what it means to live life together in Mansfield and underscores the spirit of community.

"Together As One" represents the beginning of Mansfield's Public Arts Program. In 2023, the City adopted its first Cultural Arts Master Plan, a landmark document outlining how arts and culture can enrich residents' lives. As part of this adoption, the City identified the desire

to implement a formal Public Arts Program in order to strategically bring art into the city's spaces.

In alignment, the City Council adopted the Percent-for-Art Program, dedicating up to 2% of the value of eligible capital projects to fund public art. This funding will allow art to remain a focal point within the community and ensure that, as the city grows, so will unique and special projects that make Mansfield home.

The City will unveil a second art piece along the Pond Branch Trail in spring 2026. Themed Celebrations and Traditions. It will be inspired by conversations from the city's second annual Common Table event held in October.



STATE OF THE CITY

Thursday, January 29
2 sessions available

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RSVP Requested by Jan. 16

State of the City Returns For 2026: Mapping Our Milestones, Navigating What's Next

The City of Mansfield's award-winning State of the City event will return in January 2026. This event offers residents an opportunity to hear from Mayor Michael Evans and City Manager Joe Smolinski about initiatives in 2025, while looking ahead in 2026.

Beginning in 2023, the City of Mansfield shifted to a fully city-produced State of the City to make the events more accessible and engaging for residents. Offering a morning and evening session gives residents the opportunity to pick the

session that works best for them. While seating is limited, the presentation is also recorded, so it can be watched at a time most convenient for the resident.

What to expect:

Each session offers an hour-long departmental open house, where residents can meet City staff, and share questions or concerns. The open house is followed by the Mayor and City Manager's presentation as they discuss key projects, celebrate milestones, and outline what's next in the

coming year. The event is free, but registration is required to secure your seat. Light refreshments and bites will be provided.

RSVP by Jan. 16, 2026.

Scan the QR code below to reserve your spot or visit **MansfieldTexas.gov/StateoftheCity**.



Previous State of the City January 2025

2025 HOLIDAY SHOPPING GUIDE



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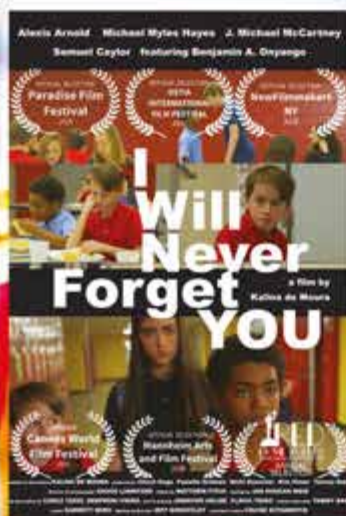


2025 Holiday Shopping Guide

A quick look at the gift items and discounts available locally.

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Banana Pudding Pie

CookingNOW

IN THE KITCHEN WITH

VALERIE JONES

— By Sandra Walters



“Cooking runs deep in my family. My mom has a gift of pulling something from the fridge and pantry to create an amazing meal from nothing. And, the women in my husband’s family are wonderful cooks as well as some of the men. Our Thanksgivings are incredible. The host cooks the turkey, and everyone else contributes side dishes and desserts. We eat in the early afternoon, go for a walk, settle in for some football and eat again ... and again!” Valerie said.

She shares her love language of cooking as a volunteer for Love and Light Ministries in Fort Worth. “God has blessed me abundantly, so it’s my privilege to be able to give a little something back.” She puts a smile on many faces. **NOW**

Banana Pudding Pie

Crust:
1 11-oz. box vanilla wafers (divided use)
1/2 cup butter, melted
2 large ripe bananas, sliced

Vanilla Cream Filling:
3/4 cup sugar
1/3 cup all-purpose flour
2 large eggs
4 egg yolks
2 cups whole milk
2 tsp. vanilla extract

Meringue:
4 egg whites, save yolks for filling
1/2 cup sugar

1. For the crust: Set aside 30 wafers for later use. Crush the remaining wafers; stir in the butter. Place the mixture in a 9-inch pie plate;

firmly press into the bottom, sides and onto the lip of the plate to create a crust.
2. Bake at 350 F for 10-12 minutes. Then, place on a wire rack until cool.
3. Arrange the banana slices evenly over the bottom of the cooled crust.
4. For the filling: Whisk the first 5 ingredients in saucepan. Cook over medium heat, whisking constantly 8-10 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in the vanilla.
5. Immediately spread half of the hot filling over the bananas. Top with 20 wafers; place the remaining filling over the wafers.
6. For the meringue: Using an electric mixer, beat the egg whites at high speed until foamy. Add 1 Tbsp. of sugar at a time; beat until stiff peaks form and the sugar dissolves. Spread the meringue evenly over the filling, sealing the edges. Bake at 350 F for 10-12 minutes. Remove from oven; let cool on a wire rack for 1 hour. Decorate with the remaining wafers (crushed or whole). Chill 4 hours.

Dutch Oven Pot Roast

3 lbs. boneless beef chuck roast
1 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
1 tsp. ground black pepper
2 Tbsp. olive oil
2 large yellow onions, peeled and cut into large chunks
4 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
1 cup dry red wine
2 cups beef broth
1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
2 Tbsp. tomato paste
2 sprigs fresh rosemary
2 bay leaves
1 lb. baby carrots
1 1/2 lbs. baby potatoes
8 oz. mushrooms (optional)

1. Preheat the oven to 300 F
2. Season the meat with salt and black pepper on all sides.
3. Heat the oil in a large 7- to 8-quart Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Sear the meat on each side until brown. Remove from the pot; set aside.
4. Reduce to medium heat; add the onions and sauté for about 3 minutes, scraping the bottom and sides of the pot. Stir in the chopped garlic; cook for 1 more minute.
5. Add the red wine and quickly deglaze the brown bits from the bottom and sides of the pot. Then, add broth, Worcestershire sauce, tomato paste, rosemary and bay leaves. Stir until evenly combined and bring to a low boil.
6. Return the meat to the pot with its juices. The liquid should cover about half of the meat. Cover; bake for 1 1/2 hours at 300 F
7. Remove from the oven; spoon the juice over the top of the roast. Add the baby carrots, potatoes and mushrooms. Cover; return to the oven. Cook for 2 hours more until the meat and vegetables are tender.

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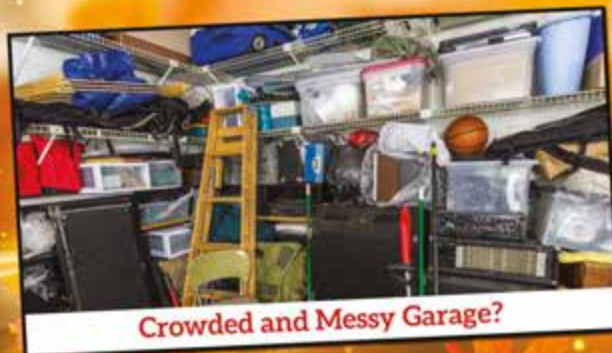


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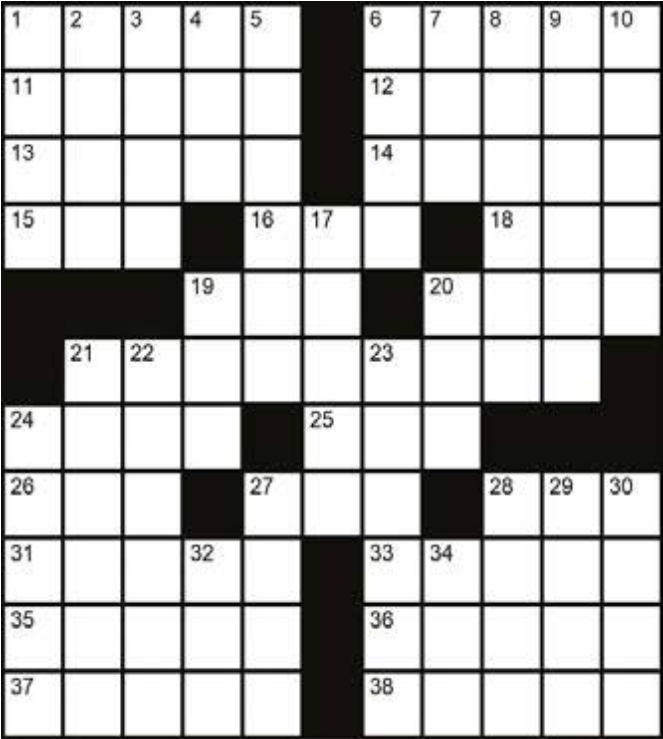


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Crossword Puzzle



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Across

- 1 Obama's youngest
6 One Note ---
11 Florida Keys, e.g.
12 Check for fit
13 Detroit gridders
14 Oak-to-be
15 Testing place
16 Kind of port
18 Kissing in public, perhaps, briefly
19 Hesitator's syllable
20 Claim against property
21 San Francisco sight
24 Duration
25 Wee boy
26 "It's pretty, but is it ---?" (Kipling)
27 Government agency controlling one-eighth of the country
- 28 Army detectives
31 Supple
33 Incongruity
35 Muzzle
36 "Bronco Billy" co-star Sondra ---
37 They might be smashed as Tom gets drunk
38 Persuades
- 10 UN head before Ki-moon
17 Nose
19 "Ode on a Grecian ---" (Keats)
20 Type of TV screen
21 Burst of speed
22 Military display
23 Some Sri Lankans
24 Chip dip
27 Takes a chance
28 Narcotic shrub
29 Deep black
30 Treats with tinctures
32 Sing wordlessly
34 Rank

Down

- 1 Ledge
2 Home to billions
3 Grubby guy
4 Cackleberry maker
5 Suppose Sue mixes it with Sam
6 Brief attempt
7 Curve
8 Short-sightedness
9 Place for a patrol

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Check with individual organizations or your city or Chamber websites to verify dates and times.

11/6

Texas Trees:

Learn about the best trees for North Texas. Free, but registration required. 6:00-7:00 p.m., Chris W. Burkett Mansfield Service Center, 620 S. Wisteria St. Register at <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/razxhpr>.

11/8

Furniture Restoration Workshop:

Work with museum experts to learn how to restore antique furniture back to new. Knowledge and supplies will be provided, but feel free to bring your own (small) pieces. Cost: Free; registration required.

9:00-11:00 a.m., Man House Museum Information Center, 604 W. Broad St.

Mansfield Veterans Day Parade & Salute:

Join the city of Mansfield and Mansfield ISD as they salute the military veterans with a parade down Broad Street beginning in front of City Hall. Cost: Free. 10:00 a.m., City Hall, 1200 E. Broad St.

11/16

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minor, Op. 95 "From the New World." Free. 6:00 p.m., First Methodist Mansfield, 777 N. Walnut Creek Dr.

11/27

Grand Prairie Lights:

Guests may enter the line from 6:00-10:00 p.m. or until the park reaches capacity, whichever comes first. Marked Prairie Lights vehicles will drive to the end of the line at that time. Open every night 11/27-12/31. Cost: \$50 per car. Lynn Creek Park, 5610 Lake Ridge Pkwy, Grand Prairie, TX 75052.

12/5

Hometown Holidays:

Join Mansfield for a month of

holiday celebrations, kicking off with the huge Hometown Holidays Tree Lighting & Fireworks Show. Free. 5:00-9:00 p.m., Mansfield City Hall 1200 E. Broad St. www.mansfieldhometownholidays.com.

12/7

Mansfield Women's Club Holiday Home Tour:

Visit homes decorated for the holidays. This fundraiser helps those in need. Purchase tickets at Tom Thumb, Mansfield. Cost: \$30. 1:00-5:00 p.m. (817) 932-2329.

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

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Friday - Saturday
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For more information: downtownwaxahachie.com

YMCA Santa Run

Saturday
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Registration information: waxahachieymca.org

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Saturday
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