MansfieldNOW

MAGA7INE

APRIL 2025

Recognizing Inch Stones

Jessica Hinojosa shares knowledge, encouragement and teachable moments with Mansfield

Bunny in a Bag

Create the perfect

Easter carrier

In the Kitchen With Doug Gonzales

Also inside: Scavenger Hunt Sudoku

Featured Business: Weed Solutions, Inc.

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Dr. Alan M Taylor II

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ON THE COVER



Jessica Hinojosa recalls how the Mansfield Special Needs Moms Group started.

Photo by Lori Baur.

Publisher, Connie Poirier General Manager, Rick Hensley

EDITORIAL

Managing Editor, Becky Walker Mansfield Editor, Sandra Walters Office Assistant, Kristin Bato Writer, Angel Morris Editors/Proofreaders, Rachel Rich Virginia Riddle

GRAPHICS AND DESIGN

Creative Director, Chris McCalla Artists, Kristin Bato . Beth Davis Martha Macias . Anthony Sarmienta

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography Director, Chris McCalla Photographer, Lori Baur

ADVERTISING

Advertising Representatives, Bryan Frye . Cherise Burnett Dustin Dauenhauer. Kelsea Locke Linda Moffett . Linda Roberson Karen Schaefer . Jeremy Young

Billing Manager, Angela Mixon

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Sandra

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

EDITOR'S NOTE

Mansfield Community ...

This month is filled with a unique blend of humor, tradition, service and democracy. As spring fully takes hold, communities across the country embrace both lighthearted and meaningful events that define this time of year.

The month kicks off with April Fool's Day, a celebration of pranks and playful deception. From harmless office jokes to elaborate internet hoaxes, April 1st reminds us to embrace laughter and not take ourselves too seriously. While it's all in good fun, this is also a reminder to be cautious of misinformation — something that extends beyond just one day.

Shortly after comes Easter, a deeply significant holiday for many. For Christians, it's a time of spiritual reflection, marking the resurrection of Jesus Christ. For others, Easter is a time for family gatherings, festive meals, spring traditions like egg hunts and chocolate treats. Whether celebrated religiously or culturally, Easter symbolizes renewal and hope.

April is also National Volunteer Month, a time to recognize the selfless efforts of individuals who give their time to support their communities. From organizing food drives to mentoring youth, volunteers make an immeasurable impact. This month encourages us not only to honor them but also to contribute in our own ways.

Lastly, for many, this time represents early voting in local elections. Civic engagement is crucial, and casting a ballot ahead of Election Day ensures every voice is heard. Participating in democracy is important as we celebrate the season.

Enjoy the balance of joy, faith, service and responsibility that April brings!

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Our Mansfield community has achieved significant milestones, including the lowest crime rate in eight years, millions in early debt repayment, a 35-year low tax rate, an expanded homestead exemption, and a surge in job opportunities. Mansfield is a stable and thriving community, making it a wonderful place to live, work, and play.

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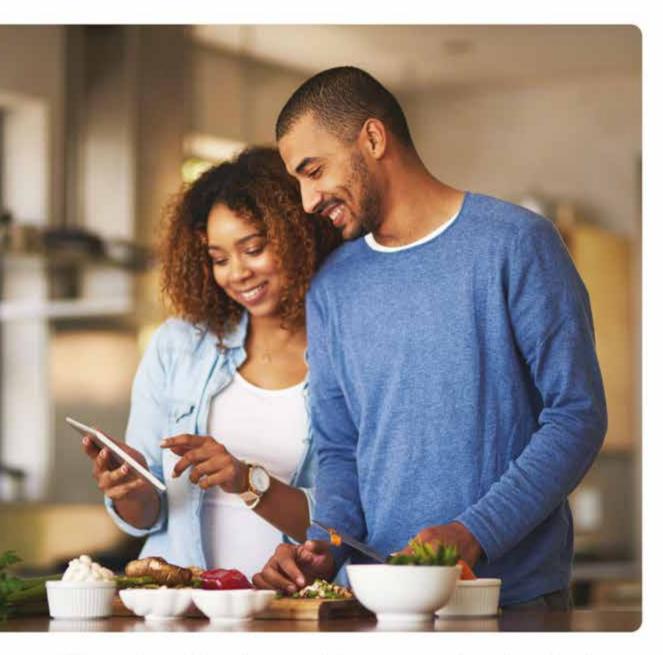
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RECOGNIZING INCH STONES

– By Sandra Walters

There is a special group in town — a community dedicated to love, support and advocacy for children and parents with unique abilities. The Special Needs Moms Group of Mansfield is dear to Jessica Hinojosa's heart. "I had a normal pregnancy," Jessica explained. "However, after I delivered my son, Evan, the doctor told us that he would have some challenges. We didn't even know how to receive the news, other than be in complete shock. He has a chromosomal disorder — Trisomy 4, Monosomy 15 — a rare, complex disorder, likely to cause lifelong physical and cognitive impairments."

Learning your child has a lifelong disorder brings uncertainty — not just over the diagnosis. "When Evan was born, I was overwhelmed with emotions. However, my husband reassured me that Evan's life was worthy, and we could handle this. Seeing my older son, Kohen's, immediate love for his brother helped me, and after connecting with other parents of differently abled children, I realized that my feelings were completely normal, which then lifted a heavy weight off my heart," she added.

This sparked a deep desire to connect with other parents of special needs children, so they could share journeys and learn to celebrate their children. They call these celebrations "Inch-Stones" — small but meaningful milestones that honor every step forward, no matter how small, reminding them that growth is not only about the journey, but also about the beauty in each moment along the way.

Jessica started the Special Needs Moms of Mansfield in May 2015 with a small group of friends, creating a space specifically for Mansfield families to foster real-life connections — a place where they could support and strengthen each other within the community. "Being special needs parents wasn't the journey we chose, but it's one we embrace with love, strength and unwavering dedication. We may be small, but we are mighty," she said with pride.









Now the group has grown to more than 1,000 members. They support families with multiple diagnoses, from Chromosomal Disorders, Autism, feeding disorders, congenital heart defects, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, global developmental delay and everything in between! "We host monthly meetups to strengthen these connections. Many of our children attend the same schools; participate in sports teams, which are a part of SN Ministries (an organization consisting of special needs ministries from various Mansfield Churches and other organizations); and engage in the city's Super Kids events. "It's a true blessing to witness so many of our children building friendships and recognizing familiar faces around town, all thanks to the unwavering support of Mansfield," Jessica said.

"They say it takes a village to raise a child, and just as importantly, it takes that same village to lift up and support the parents along the way. This support can mean the difference between helping a child grow and helping them truly thrive," Jessica said. Parenting a differently abled or neurodiverse child can feel isolating, but having a supportive, understanding group makes all the difference. No one understands the challenges and joys of raising a special needs child like another special needs parent. "Our group's greatest desire is to continue building a positive, empowering community, where our children know they are valued, worthy and an integral part of society. This shift in focus — from limitations to abilities — demonstrates that those with special needs offer unique strengths and perspectives.

"If we could teach the world one thing, it is to include our kids as part of the circle," Jessica said. "As parents, one of the best opportunities we have is to guide our children through their natural



"THEY SAY IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD. AND JUST AS IMPORTANTLY. IT TAKES THAT SAME VILLAGE TO LIFT UP AND SUPPORT THE PARENTS ALONG THE WAY."

curiosities. A moment many of us face is when a child asks, 'Why do they look weird?' Instead of reacting with, 'Don't say that,' or 'Don't stare,' we can use this as a teachable moment. You might say, 'Sometimes, people may look different. but that doesn't mean they're any less special. God made everyone unique. and what's important is who they are inside — their kindness, how they make others feel and what they bring to the world. Celebrating differences makes the world more interesting and fun!" This way, you're gently guiding them to focus on empathy, respect and the beauty of diversity, rather than just appearance.

"When Evan was born, we were worried he wouldn't have a fulfilling life, meaningful friendships or be truly seen," Jessica shared. "But today, he's more recognizable in Mansfield than I am. Though nonverbal, Evan is unforgettable, radiating positive energy and connecting with everyone. He's the ultimate hype man, spreading joy wherever he goes. He lives a life bigger than we could have imagined."

With support from other differently abled families, the Hinojosas gained the courage to fully engage in our community. Now, 10 years later, Mansfield is home, and their entire family has formed close, dear friends that they have found through their Special Needs Moms of Mansfield group. This group has carried many through huge, life altering struggles; shared in big celebrations: and been there for one another in even the mundane journey of life. Special Needs Moms of Mansfield is not just a group, but a close-knit community where parents find strength, understanding and unwavering support.

"To our neighbors, thank you for demonstrating the power of unity coming together as one community. Mansfield is a truly remarkable city, built on a foundation of love and support for one another. We are deeply grateful to be a part of this extraordinary place," Jessica concluded. "Thank you, city of Mansfield!" NOW







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JULIE SHORT for Mansfield Mayor









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A symbol of springtime and new life, the bunny rabbit is thought to align with the meaning of Easter and the celebration of Christ's resurrection in its own, whimsical way. If you're looking for how to partner the biblical story with bunny traditions, these paper craft carriers may be your answer.

As the perfect holder for classroom party treats or a way to distribute goodies to friends and neighbors, paper bag bunnies are simple and inexpensive. The required supplies are few, and younger children have the necessary skills to create them with minimal supervision.

What you'll need: Brown or white paper bags; pencil; scissors; Easter basket grass, crinkle paper or bag filler of your choice; twine or ribbon; Easter candy, treats or trinkets of your choice; pom-pom for bunny tail; and paste or hot glue. (You can also get more creative using crayons, markers or craft paper and a hole puncher and note cards.)

Place your paper bag flat on a table. Starting at the open side/top of the bag, sketch the two curved ears of a bunny (see photo). You can pencil in a 1-inch flat line between where the ears meet at what will be the bunny head, or you can sketch the ears in more of a V, where they come to a point at what will be the bunny head.

Carefully cut along the interior lines of your drawn ears, discarding the excess paper. Now, flatten out the creased sides of the bags so it is not folded inward on either side.

At this point, craftier kids might be interested in drawing a rabbit face on one side of the bag. This adds crayons, markers or craft paper to your supply list. The bunny face can be as simple as some lines to represent whiskers, or an entire face of eyes, nose, mouth and whiskers. (Encourage children to be as creative as they wish, but remind them you'll be adding a bunny tail and ribbon to the bag later, and it will be just as cute if left without a face.)

Now it's time to stand your bag up, opening from the top. Put Easter grass or crinkle paper in the bottom half of the bag, leaving enough room to fill as much as you wish with candy, treats or trinkets. The more grass/crinkle paper you use, the fewer treats you'll need to fill the bag, of course. (Eco-friendly idea: Fill the bottom of your Easter bunny bag with the paper from things you've been shredding all year. It's earth- and budget-conscious.)

Next, consider who the bags will be delivered to when determining what items to put inside. A few pieces of candy and a small toy are good for class parties. For friends and neighbors, you might tailor the items to their interests. Things like packets of flower seeds, earrings, lotions, votive candles, hair accessories, themed socks, art supplies or gift cards are potential paper bag stuffers. The possibilities are endless, as long as they fit in your bag without making it too heavy.

Once you have stuffed your bunny bags, it's time to apply



the tail. Using paste or hot glue (just a dot to prevent the bag and anything inside from getting burned!) attach the pom-pom tail to the lower portion of your paper bag. Hold it on until the glue has dried.

Gently gather together the sides of your bag until clasped in the center. Secure with twine or ribbon, but before tying the bow, consider attaching a note with an Easter Bible verse, quote about spring or note of encouragement. Hole punching a note card is the simplest way to create and secure your card. Pull one side of your ribbon through the card's hole and tie your bow.

There you have it — a simple, inexpensive bunny paper bag to share the treats and trinkets that remind you of Easter, as well as an opportunity to explain to children how the bunny somewhat symbolizes the meaning behind the holiday. Delivering these to classmates, friends and neighbors is a special way to share something handmade with care while delivering the special message of the day! NOW

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Around Town



The Serra family is on top of the world.

Baby Nora enjoys the sunshine at Gertie Barrett Park.



Daniel Henry is a 5A Texas State Swim Champion.

Zoomed In:

By Sandra Walters

Kenya Watkins and Scharaye Wyn

During the Mardi Gras season, Kenya Watkins and Scharaye Wyn celebrated locally on Fat Tuesday, embracing the festive spirit with friends and laughter. Kenya said, "We had a blast doing line dances to various songs like "Boots on the Ground," moving in perfect rhythm as the music filled the air. I love to dance, and the energy in the room was contagious."

Although they weren't in New Orleans, many wore purple, green and gold clothes, while embellishing their attire with the traditional beads. The smiles on everyone's faces revealed just how much joy they shared in those moments. Surrounded by great company, they truly enjoyed their time, making unforgettable memories during this vibrant celebration.



Summit's Boys Basketball team wins State.



Luna Sahagun poses outside of Main Street Tacos.



Ja'Quary Wyartt smiles as he prepares for a great day.



Ava and Ace Raymundo love to swing at Katherine Rose Park.





ACCESS MANSFIELD

Current Projects, Current News

Mansfield Sports Park Plays to Win with Game-Changing Renovations

Renovations are underway to bring athletics back to Mansfield Sports Park, the city-owned facility formerly known as Big League Dreams Mansfield.

The City of Mansfield has entered into a public private partnership with KemperSports and REV Entertainment to serve as the new management team of Mansfield Sports Park.

As part of the agreement, the park will undergo widespread repairs and/ or enhancements aimed to elevate both the player and spectator experience by integrating state-of-the-art technology, improving safety, and expanding the functionality of the field, concessions, indoor facility and spectator areas.

Renovations include:

- •New, high-quality turf on all 8 fields
- Modern lighting systems for enhanced visibility
- Field expansions to accommodate multi-sport play
- High-definition scoreboards and video displays
- Dugout upgrades for safety and improved player experience
- Flexible, air-conditioned indoor turf space with practice spaces, batting cages, pitching tunnels, and multi-sport fields
- Reimagined central

plaza with a new, shaded playground, seating areas, and open green spaces

- Inclusive Miracle Field for athletes of all abilities to participate
- Upgraded concession areas to allow for expanded options, in-seat ordering, and mobile food carts

KemperSports, a leader in sports complex, golf and hospitality management will oversee the park's renovation, rebranding, and day-to-day operations once the facility reopens.

REV Entertainment, a recognized leader in sports and entertainment and the operator of the in-progress Mansfield Stadium will provide consulting and management services.





KemperSports will lead efforts to program the facility, with plans for year-round activation that include youth and adult leagues and tournaments, camps and clinics, and community events for a variety of ages, interests and seasons, from movie nights to morning yoga and beyond.

"The City Council is excited to work with Kemper Sports and REV Entertainment to revitalize Mansfield Sports Park into a worldclass destination," said Councilman Juan Fresquez. "This project will provide remarkable experiences for our residents and visitors alike, strengthening Mansfield as a premier hub for sports and entertainment."

The revitalization process is underway and the park will reopen after the completion of renovations in Summer 2025. Scan the QR code below to follow project news.









BusinessNOW

Weed Solutions, Inc.

By Sandra Walters

Weed Solutions, Inc. Owners: The Seetons (817) 692-7693 https://www.weedsolutionsinc.com/

Hours: Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Weed Solutions, Inc. is a family-owned business with deep roots in Mansfield. Kevin said, "Family is everything to us. My wife, January Seeton, and our daughter, Makenzie Seeton, all play vital roles in the daily operations of our business. We don't see this as a job — we see it as working with the community. Unlike large corporations, where customers are just another account, we treat every client like a neighbor because that's exactly who they are."



As a small business, the Seetons offer personalized care, which removes the hassle and stress of lawn care. They provide affordable lawn care options, free lawn assessments, and a comprehensive lawn care program designed to improve soil health. By creating an optimal environment for turfgrass roots to thrive, they help lawns grow thick enough to shade the soil and prevent weeds from germinating.

In addition, if your recycling bins are empty when a technician arrives at the property, they will take them up to the homeowner's porch. "We believe in leaving a place better than we found it," Kevin said. "That may not be the norm, but why not take the initiative?" As a firefighter, Kevin's inclination is to help others, and he expects the same mentality from his employees.

"Our customers are top priority. We're not trying to be the biggest company around, just the best," Kevin said.

"Our goal is to make Weed Solutions a well-known name in Mansfield. I want the citizens to have total trust in our company and employees."

Weed Solutions, Inc. has been known for paying attention to details for 25 years. They don't simply check the grass and leave. Their technicians are trained to look at trees and shrubs for insect and fungus damage. "People are extremely busy these days and appreciate when we make them aware of landscape problems before they get out of control," Kevin stated.

"OUR CUSTOMERS ARE TOP PRIORITY, WE'RE NOT TRYING TO BE THE BIGGEST **COMPANY AROUND, JUST** THE BEST."

They do not believe in pressuring customers into services they may not want or need. "You will never get a call from me or my wife trying to sell you an extra service. It totally interrupts your family time, and that's annoying." If a technician notices something that needs to be addressed, they will write it on the information sheet and leave it at your door. Technicians will leave reminders throughout the season to let customers know about insects such as grub worms and fire ants, as well as deep root fertilization for trees and shrubs services. Weed Solutions, Inc. informs customers and allows them to make the decision. Kevin personally oversees every project, and his wife and daughter are behind the logistics, making things work. This team is dedicated to keeping lawns healthy and beautiful.

At the end of the day, they are more than a lawn care company — they are a dedicated part of the Mansfield community. Their promise is simple: to deliver trustworthy, high-quality service that makes a real difference. They would appreciate the opportunity to serve neighbors within the DFW area, but Mansfield is their favorite! Weed Solutions, Inc. is eager to help you improve your lawn and look forward to hearing from you! NOW







CookingNOW

IN THE KITCHEN WITH DOUG GONZALES

— By Sandra Walters



"I love to cook because it's so much more than preparing food. Cooking allows me to express myself, experiment with flavors and turn simple ingredients into something meaningful. What I love most about cooking is how it brings the family together. It's not just about the meals we share, but the moments we create around the table. I enjoy teaching people to cook — especially our two boys, who are learning to develop their skills," Doug Gonzales said.

He didn't formally study cooking, but watching others cook is an ongoing, informal culinary education. Each person brings their own flair, traditions and tips to the table. "One of my favorite cooking triumphs was placing in the top three at a barbecue competition with my Smoked Injected Wings and Bacon-Wrapped Stuffed Chicken. It was such an exciting and rewarding experience!" Now

Bacon-Wrapped Stuffed Chicken

- 4 medium jalapeños, diced
- 4 chicken breasts, boneless/skinless
- 1/2 oz. Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 16 oz. cream cheese
- 4 Tbsp. cheddar cheese, shredded
- I pkg. regular cut bacon Toothpicks
- **I.** Preheat a smoker to 230-250 E
- **2.** Wash and dice the jalapeños. Trim the chicken; butterfly the breast to about 1/4-to 1/2-inch wide.
- **3.** Season the chicken with the Worcestershire sauce, salt and pepper. Insert I jalapeño, 4 oz. cream cheese and I Tbsp. cheddar cheese inside each breast. Starting at the filled end, roll up the chicken; wrap with 3-5 slices of bacon until the chicken breast is fully and tightly wrapped. Insert a toothpick into each wrapped chicken to secure the bacon. Repeat this process until all the breasts are covered.
- **4.** Place on the smoker; cook for about 1 1/2 hours. Monitor with a probe. Once the chicken's internal temperature is 165 F and the bacon is cooked, remove the chicken. Let rest for at least 10 minutes; slice into 1/2- to 1-inch slices.

Smoked Injected Wings

Frank's RedHot Sauce, to taste Worcestershire sauce, to taste Meat injector syringe

- 3-4 lbs. chicken wings, flats and drumettes, separated
- **1.** Pour the hot sauce and Worcestershire sauce into a tall glass; mix. Fill the meat injector syringe with the liquid. Insert the end of the needle into each wing, and gently push down on the plunger to fill the wing with the sauce. Slowly remove the needle, and inject the remaining wings. **2.** Pat the wings dry with a paper towel.
- **2.** Pat the wings dry with a paper towel. Smoke the wings for 30 minutes at 250 F. Increase the heat to 425 F until the wings reach an internal temperature of 175 F. Grill for 10-20 minutes.

Smoked Queso

- 2 jalapeños
- 3 tomatoes
- 1 onion
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 32-oz. block Velveeta cheese
- 1 12-oz. block Oaxaca cheese
- 1 16-oz. pkg. breakfast sausage
- 1 10 1/2-oz. can cream of mushroom soup

Salt, to taste Pepper, to taste

- **I.** Dice the jalapeños, tomatoes, onion and garlic to make pico de gallo.
- **2.** Cut the Velveeta into 1-inch chunks; unroll the Oaxaca cheese. In a cast-iron skillet over medium heat, brown the sausage while breaking it into small chunks until cooked; drain the grease. Once the sausage is cooked, add the cheeses, homemade pico de gallo (about 10 oz.) and the cream of mushroom soup; place on a smoker at 350 F.
- **3.** While cooking, stir regularly, and add the salt and pepper. Cook for about 45 minutes.
- **4.** Note: To add a smokey flavor, the sausage can be smoked rather than placed on the stove top.

Smoked Tri-Tip

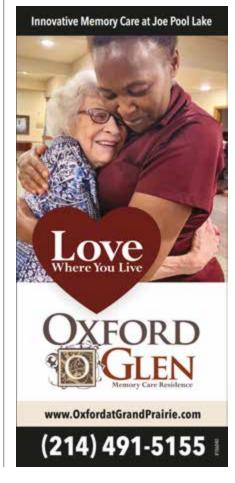
Tri-tip, trimmed Olive oil, to taste Montreal Steak Seasoning, to taste Salt, to taste Pepper, to taste Butter, to taste

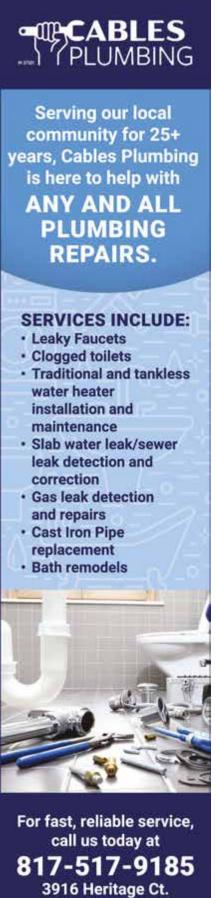
- 1. Preheat a smoker at 225 F.
- **2.** Trim the tri-tip by removing the fat. Coat the tri-tip with olive oil; season with the steak seasoning, salt and pepper.
- **3.** Place the meat in the smoker for approximately 2 hours. Monitor the internal temperature until it reaches 120-130 F in the center. Remove the meat from the smoker.
- **4.** On the stovetop, melt butter in a cast-iron skillet. Finish the tri-tip by searing it in the butter. This provides a piece of meat with a medium center or medium-well done. Cook longer if desired.
- **5.** Once the sear is done, cover in foil; allow it to rest for 10-15 minutes. Slice to desired thickness and serve. Leftover steak makes great fajitas or beef stroganoff.

Photos by Katharine Gann.









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- Virginia Woolf





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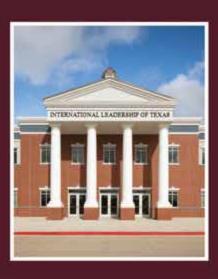


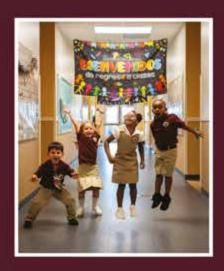
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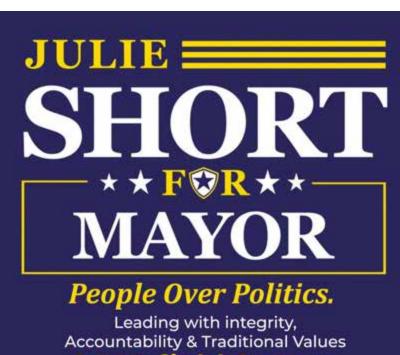
Sudoku Puzzle

Easy									,	viediu	111							
6			9					5			9	2		1				
					7	3							9		4			
3	5	2	6										8	2			1	6
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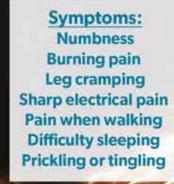








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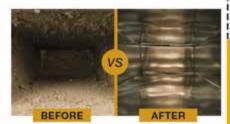
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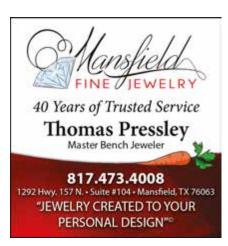
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4/5

Hoppin' Downtown:

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family-friendly Easter celebration!
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to Music Alley, there's something
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alike! Don't forget to bring your
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and sell unique merchandise.
Cost: Free. 2:00-4:00 p.m.,
100 N. Main St.

Music Alley:

An amazing evening of live music, dance, hands-on activities, food and more! Cost: Free entrance. 4:00-10:00 p.m., 100 N. Main St.

Murder Mystery Dinner:

The North Texas Civilian Historians re-enact Murder on Ragland Road, an infamous murder that took place in Mansfield in 1973. Proceeds will be put toward the restoration of the Demonstration Cabin at the Man House Museum. Tickets: \$50 each. 6:00 p.m., MISD Great Room, 605 E. Broad St. Purchase tickets at https://mansfieldtxhistoricalsociety.org.

4/8

Corsage Making:

For ages 15-plus. A corsage is a symbol of celebration and honor. From prom to award banquets, a silk corsage is a timeless accent for any special occasion. Design with silk flowers, ribbon and greenery.

All materials provided. Free. 6:00-7:00 p.m., Mansfield Public Library, 104. S. Wisteria St.

4/12 and 4/19

Spring Mulch Pickup:

Bring containers, a truck or a trailer to load your mulch. Scheduled dates are weather permitting. Cost: Free for Mansfield residents, but proof of residency is required. 8:00 a.m.-noon, 24 N. Mitchell Rd.

4/18

Live! Good Friday Art in Action:

You are invited to stop in and watch local artists create their inspirations on Good Friday. Cost: Free. 3:00-6:00 p.m., Trinity Grace

Church, 1200 Clover Hill Rd. For more information, call (817) 473-1712.

4/26

2025 Earth Day Mansfield Festival:

Educational opportunities, a butterfly release, children's activities, music and entertainment, food vendors, natural product vendors and a painted rain barrel silent auction. Free. 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Chris W. Burkett Service Center, 620 S. Wisteria St. For details, call (817) 728-3610.

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







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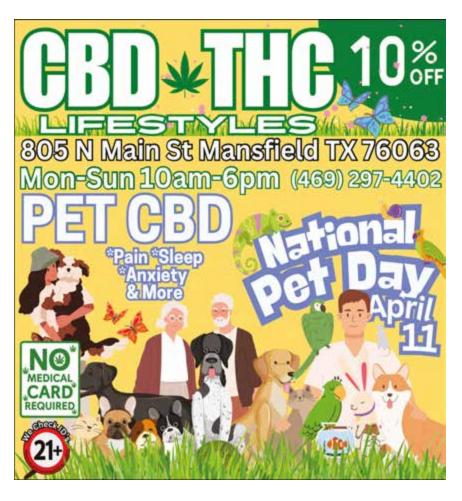
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