

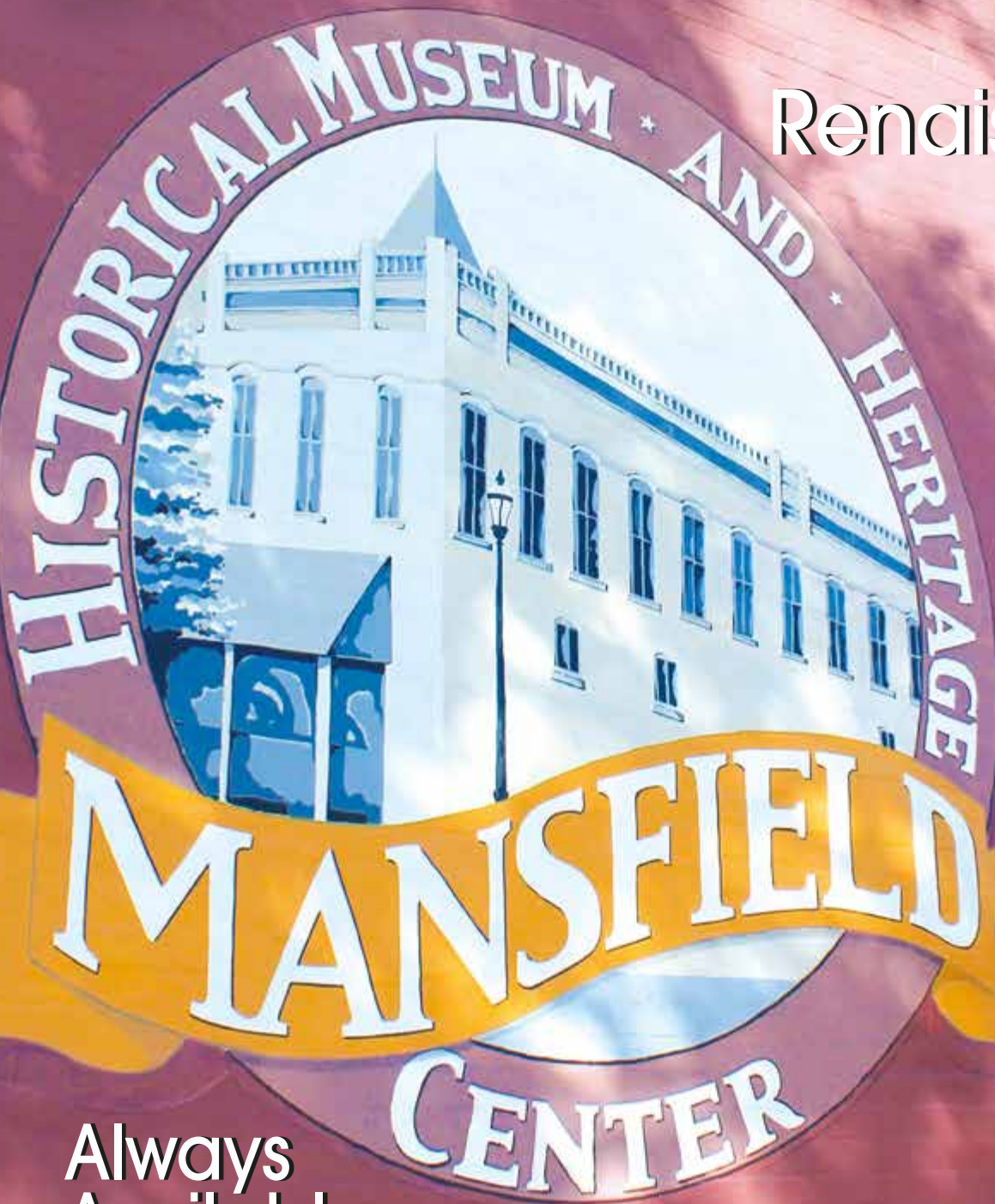
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ON THE COVER

All the world is a classroom for professional historian Chris Ohan.

Photo by
Joy Elmore.

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Melissa

Melissa Rawlins
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Hello, Mansfield!

In the burr-burr-burr chill of February, we can be readying ourselves for what will surely come. Our ancestors always have. The Ladybug Garden Club from Granbury — one of our other market areas — published a spiral-bound compilation of gardening inspirations in 1987. Look what I found while flipping through its pages:

“And in the begynnynge of March, or a little afore, is tyme for a wife to make her garden, and to gette as many good sedes and herbes as she canne, and specially suche as be good for the pottle, and to eate; and as ofte as need shall require, it must be weded, for else the wedes wyl ouergrowe the herbes.”

— Sir Anthony Fitzherbert (1470-1538)

That advice has me wondering so many things, none the least of which is whether I'll try making some Liqueur de Melissa. Otherwise known as lemon balm, the herb is not always easy for me to get started. But our modern marketplace, the Internet, makes it possible to find baby heirloom varieties of any plant I might choose to try! And our bustling local economy includes plant nurseries, where I always find the plants that are guaranteed to be prolific in my soil.

Have a great month!



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RENAISSA



The Ford Pinto is now history, the last year of production being nearly four decades back. It is still, however, the reason Chris Ohan loves history so much. "My parents would load us in a Pinto station wagon. We traveled all over the U.S.," Chris recalled. "One of the things I remember most, for some unknown reason, is seeing Archie Bunker's chair at the Smithsonian. I just love history. I remember social studies classes in grade school. I still have a trunk in my attic filled with historical objects."

Chris, now 49, grew up and developed an interest in European history. It led to him living and traveling to some interesting places, and to becoming a professional historian and associate professor of history at Texas Wesleyan University.

He is also in his first year as president of the Mansfield Historical Society. As such, he leads the organization's operation of the Mansfield Historical Museum and Heritage Center. "This is a departure for me. My own field is the early Franciscan Movement in 13th century Italy," Chris said. "But there is just so much history here in Mansfield to enjoy and embrace."

NCE MAN

— By Rick Mauch



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The museum, located in the old McKnight Building in downtown Mansfield, includes artifacts from throughout the city's history. Visitors are immediately greeted by a display featuring busts, photos and stories of the two after whom the city is named, Ralph S. Man and Julian T. Feild. The name of the city was changed to the more traditional spelling of field. "They opened a mill where the Mellow Mushroom — a popular downtown restaurant across from the museum — is," Chris said. "That's what started the area."

Most of the items in the museum have been donated by the Mansfield community. There's everything from church pews to an old-timey doctor's chair downstairs, while upstairs has displays ranging from old military and firefighter uniforms to an antique Texaco station gas pump and even a crank telephone. "My dad had one of those," Chris said. "I remember seeing it until I was in junior high."

Chris is from nearby Bedford, but has lived in Mansfield since returning from Kuwait — after living and teaching there for eight years — to take a job at Texas Wesleyan. He got involved with the MHS after a walk through downtown. "One evening a buddy and I were walking by outside," he recalled. "I came in and



talked to Vern Raven, the museum director. Next thing I know, I joined.”

Vern said Chris was the perfect choice to lead the MHS. He cited Chris’ passion, not unlike his own, as the main reason. “Chris brings the leadership we need. He’s passionate about history,” Vern said. “He’s a treasure we found when he came in the door.”

Chris taught at Texas Christian University from 1997-2001. He then accepted a Fulbright grant and taught at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations for two years, followed by two more years



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in an outreach program working with youths on the street. He then spent a semester in Armenia, which brought him closer to his family heritage. "My great-grandparents on my father's side are Armenian," he said. "They didn't make it out during the genocide, but their kids did. My grandfather worked for British Petroleum in Iran, and my dad was born there."

Chris' love for European history stemmed from being a chaperone on a trip to Italy. Later, he was introduced to the Franciscan Movement by a friend. "I fell in love with European history," he said. "It has everything: Mussolini, the Renaissance. I was like a kid in a candy store."

His favorite place to escape and do research is a monastery just outside of Rome, where he sometimes goes for a couple of weeks. He smiled as he recalled one of his favorite moments there. "I had the key to this library that had manuscripts back to the year 1,000 A.D.," he said. "I didn't bother any of them, of course, but just knowing they were there was so cool."

After teaching a year in Illinois, Chris took off for Kuwait to teach at the American University. "That was a fantastic experience," he said. "When you teach people from other parts of the world, they ask questions you don't get here. Take, for example, the Crusades. If they're from one of the countries that were affected by them,

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they were on the edge of their seats. About eight of us went to Istanbul, and those kids ate it up.”

In 2014, he returned to the U.S. for the Texas Wesleyan role, around the time Kuwait and ISIS were hitting the news. “I’d seen almost all of the region,” he said. “I’d bought a house here in Mansfield before I went to Kuwait, and I wanted to live in it. My mom lived in it until her death.”

He has reminders all around from his time in the Middle East — most notably, his rug collection. “I have about 20. I bought most in Istanbul, and some in Iran,” he said. “To me, the rugs tell a story no one else can read but me.”

As for local history, Chris is excited about what’s ahead for the museum and the MHS. It includes an enhanced website, an app from the group Historic Downtown Mansfield that offers a virtual tour and a DVD of the museum for school children. A downtown ghost tour, started in 2016, expanded from one week to two in 2017. Admission to the museum continues to be free. “The great thing about our museum and Mansfield is you can walk in the front door and spend a half hour getting a sense of history of the city, then walk out and see it,” Chris said. “As someone who loves history, that excites me.” **NOW**

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Sometimes it feels like Grand Central Station behind the Lueders rock walls so carefully selected by Danny and Suzanne Ray. Their white fence and country acreage says otherwise, keeping peace for their herd of five horses and a mule. Family, friends and even employees stop in frequently. The Rays' attentive graciousness makes everyone feel special, no matter their errand. When grandchildren visit, their Crowdaddy takes extra time to push them on the back porch swing while their Sweetie makes sure something yummy is on the big, dark maple kitchen table.

AT HOME WITH DANNY A

LE

— By Melissa Rawlins



Wrapped in cheeriness created by high ceilings, yellow walls and reddish cherry cabinets, Suzanne prepares Danny's game for steaming good meals. This month, their preference is elk, either chicken fried or stewed in the Crock-Pot. Suzanne can see through a vaulted opening into the game room, so named not for pool tables but for 13 mounted trophies from Danny's hunts. Set against smooth walls painted a deep, spruce green, the magnificent animals all seem to be looking with awe at the German-made,

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burl ash piano. People who are musicians can hardly resist Suzanne's invitations.

"I offer anybody who comes to please play the piano," she said. "My grandkids experiment. My son-in-law is a natural."

So is her mother, who played piano and organ at First Baptist Church where Suzanne grew up with Danny. She trusted his father, who owned Ray's Pharmacy on Main Street and filled a prescription for her when she was only 2 years old. "I always liked his dad's laugh and his family," she recalled.

Danny remembered that Suzanne's grandmother lived right across the street

from his family home. "I started noticing this little girl when she was pretty young, and it was pretty obvious from the git-go that she was what I was looking for," he said. "I got to take her to the sweetheart banquet at First Baptist Church when she was 14. Well, I didn't really get to take her. Her dad drove her there, walked her in, and then I walked her out. I picked up the perfect girl."

Suzanne began working for Mr. Ray when she was 16, and by 17 she knew she was in love with Danny. They married three years after Danny left for college, only two months after Suzanne graduated



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from Mansfield High School. "I applied to pre-pharmacy school in Oklahoma, and he was going to pharmacy school, so we found a furnished duplex for \$55 per month and lived there for three years," she said. Afterwards they moved to Houston, where Suzanne attended the University of Houston. By 1973, Danny was a registered pharmacist working for Eckerd's. When Danny's father wanted help with his store in Kennedale, they moved back and lived in the little house Danny's grandfather had built, close to Mr. Ray's original clinic and pharmacy.

In 1979, they adopted their son, Jared, who grew up and joined the Marine Corps, fulfilling three tours in Iraq. "He's been a paramedic and a fireman here, has two children going to school here and runs a Cross Fit center on Main and Dallas," Danny said. "Our daughter, Mandy, born in 1982, graduated from Texas Tech. She has been married 12 years and has three children." While Mandy and Jared were growing up, their parents maintained active membership in First Baptist Church. During this time, they bought and ran Mr. Ray's two stores. "And over the years we added two more pharmacies and then created another one," Suzanne said, summarizing their 38 years of running a business together.

They lived in a home on Pinion, near the country club, for 22 years until they realized they needed more land for horses. They began designing their dream home for a different piece of property. But in November 2001, when they found a 15-acre portion of the old Rawdon place, they both knew it was perfect. "It turned out better than I was dreaming, and I thought I was dreaming pretty good," Danny said.

He asked for a few key elements, like the Lueders stone and the handcut mesquite floors. Otherwise, Suzanne selected easy-care granite and tile, plus the wall colors and trim. The builder

admired her decision-making ability. She kept the process moving right along and the couple moved here in July 2002.

Their country lifestyle includes the equines, plus fowl-like chickens, chukars, pheasants, turkeys and guineas on the outside. The stocked pond makes for fun days fishing with grandchildren. Danny taught Suzanne to be an excellent fly fisherwoman,



loaning her his mother's waders, a box of flies and a fly rod on their honeymoon in Colorado. "Gradually, I got to where I enjoyed it more," she said. "Now we frequently go on fishing and hunting trips together."

When they're in Mansfield, Danny spends quiet time in his office, surrounded by a few hunting trophies and a lot of books. He smokes a cigar — a habit learned from his grandfather — while reading inspirational messages ranging from the Bible to *How to Make Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie. "I'm kind of still trying to make friends," Danny said, only half joking, "and to make everybody feel important." He and Suzanne regularly make themselves and their home available to people. Last May, the Rays hosted Danny's 50th class reunion, and in a couple more years will celebrate 50 years in their extraordinary marriage. **NOW**

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Go for the Gold Lifestyle

— By Melissa Rawlins

While she celebrates turning sweet 16, Jasmine Moore’s already intense lifestyle is ramping up. This amazing girl athlete, a junior at Lake Ridge High School, is heading unattached into two elite track competitions. Her wins require discipline fed by passion. Up at 5:30 a.m. for daily runs with her mother, Jasmine fuels herself with smoothies or oatmeal at breakfast. Granola and water — not sodas — energizes her during full days of schoolwork and workouts with her strength coach. At dinner with her family, she prefers grilled vegetables with a protein before practicing the triple jump and, finally, completing homework. “After school and on the weekends, my lifestyle is track,” she said.

Amazingly, she fits cheerleading into her busy schedule. When *MansfieldNOW Magazine* first covered Jasmine, in our

January 2016 issue, she did school cheer plus competitive cheer. “She developed her tumbling skills when doing competitive cheer,” Jasmine’s mother, Trinet Moore, said. Trinet has an extensive background in both tumbling and track, so she knows how to encourage Jasmine.

When our first article was published, she had not yet won the Cheerleading Worlds Championship for competitive cheer. “I wasn’t going to do it, but they needed someone to fill in. I did that all season. Then we won Worlds, and within a couple weeks, I won state in the long jump and triple jump,” Jasmine recalled. “Yet it’s just too much to do both track and cheer, because they’re each so time consuming.” Since there is no extra-curricular training for school cheer, and she can practice with the other cheerleaders during the school day, Jasmine enjoys the camaraderie of cheerleading. “Most of what we do is cheers and chants. It is not like I have to work on it outside of school. A lot of my tumbling is just muscle memory. It’s like riding a bike. You don’t forget.”

Jasmine is grateful for her family’s commitment to helping her excel. They have to travel far and wide to join the high-level competitions that challenge Jasmine, and the family makes the most of every trip they take. In 2017, they went

to the Bahamas so Jasmine could participate in a jump clinic, as well as to Cuba, where she competed at the Caribbean Scholastic Invitational in the long jump, triple jump and the 4x100 relay.

Last summer, after Jasmine broke the 5A State and the National Indoor and Outdoor Sophomore Records in the triple jump, the Moores went to Peru. There, Jasmine competed in the 2017 Pan American Junior Championships for the United States Junior team.

Earl and Trinette Moore, and Jasmine's grandparents, discovered the secrets of Trujillo, Peru, during the morning hours when Jasmine and athletes from South, Central and North America and the Caribbean, went to the track. In the afternoons, back at the high-security resort where all the competitors stayed, the athletes ate lunch and hung out together — sometimes playing with the well-behaved llamas roaming on the grounds. Only a few times did Jasmine leave the compound for dinner with her family in the city.

Smartphone videos of her triple jump in Peru hardly capture her joy. "The best part is when you feel your placement on the board and your posture, and you can tell it's a good jump. You know that if that first phase was good, then the next two will be good," she said.

Big meets are more than an opportunity to jump far and break records. For Jasmine, it's easier to perform better when she has people to push her. This month, she'll compete at the USATF Indoor Championships in Albuquerque, New Mexico, primarily against professionals and some college students. In March, she will defend the title she earned at last year's New Balance National Indoor Championships, where she broke the indoor sophomore record. Then in May, Jasmine will defend her long and triple jump titles while helping her LRHS team go for the gold at the state track meet in Austin. **NOW**



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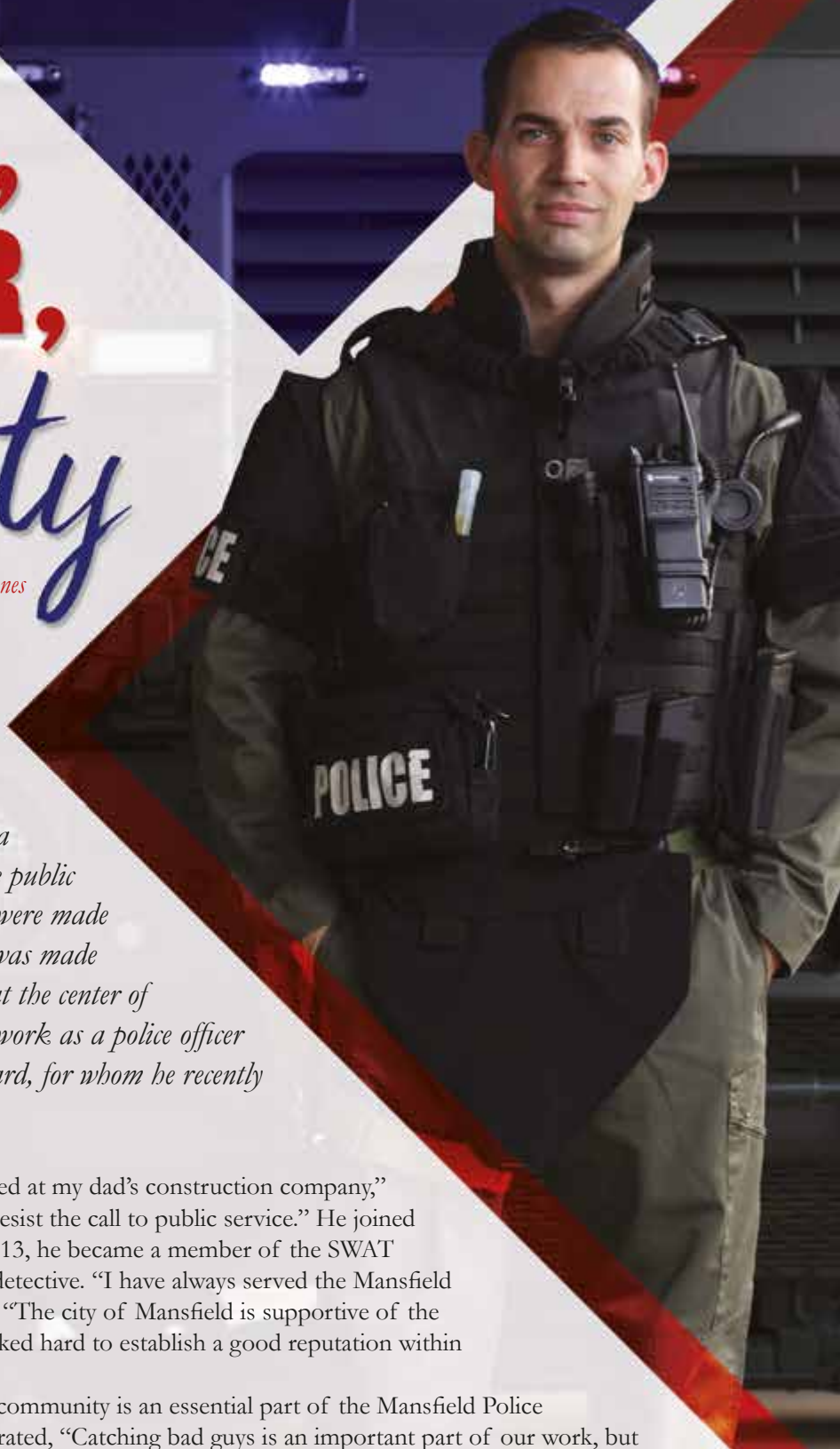
— By Derek Jones

For Detective Allan Hudson of the Mansfield Police Department, serving on the police force is more than a duty — it is a lifelong calling. “Most people working in the public service sector feel their job is something they were made to do,” Detective Hudson said. “For me, I was made to be a police officer.” Serving the public is at the center of Detective Hudson’s life, as evidenced by his work as a police officer and service in the Texas Air National Guard, for whom he recently deployed to Qatar.

“Before entering the police academy, I worked at my dad’s construction company,” Detective Hudson explained. “But I could not resist the call to public service.” He joined the Mansfield Police Department in 2011. In 2013, he became a member of the SWAT team and then, in 2016, he began working as a detective. “I have always served the Mansfield community, and I am proud of that,” he stated. “The city of Mansfield is supportive of the police department, and the department has worked hard to establish a good reputation within the community.”

Maintaining a positive relationship with the community is an essential part of the Mansfield Police Department’s mission. Detective Hudson elaborated, “Catching bad guys is an important part of our work, but it is not the only thing we do.

“Many times, when we are called to a scene, a victim is in distress, and we are the ones they depend on for support and to solve a problem. Serving and protecting with honor is how the community comes to trust us,” he added. “As a police officer, you have the power to change someone’s life in a positive way, and there is no greater joy for a police officer than receiving a simple ‘thank you’ from someone they have helped.”





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One-on-one interactions with the community are important. However, there are also ways to build trust with the community on a larger scale. Detective Hudson has served as president of the Mansfield Police Officers Association since 2015. This organization partners with other organizations, such as the Mansfield Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club, as well as other groups who present a positive vision for the community of Mansfield. "The key to this is networking," Detective Hudson stated. "We can be a part of bringing businesses to Mansfield and offering services to the community, as well as to our officers."

It is clear the Mansfield Police Officers Association takes its commitment to serve the community, and one another, seriously. Detective Hudson has a strong desire to see this commitment continue to grow. "We partner with the Rotary Club to serve an incredible lunch to all those who are working on Thanksgiving Day. For instance, jailors who have to work that day will have this amazing meal served to them since they are unable to leave their posts."

There is no denying that serving as a police officer is a stressful job. "We live in a time when a mistake on the part of an officer can end up all over YouTube," Detective Hudson

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acknowledged. Those pressures, added with officers' exposure to darker realities of life, make it difficult for them to find people they can talk to about the stresses of their job. "Depression and post-traumatic stress syndrome is a real thing among officers," Detective Hudson noted. "They need someone they can talk to who can give them guidance and counseling."



The city of Mansfield provides counseling services to officers dealing with issues such as PTSD. Lately, new services, from the broader community, are being made available to officers. Blue Banquet Outreach, for instance, offers free counseling services, which are completely anonymous. "This is a new program, and it offers a new angle to help officers deal with issues like PTSD and depression," Detective Hudson explained.



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Having a sympathetic spouse benefits those on the force as well. When Detective Hudson met his wife, they were both working as officers. "I think the fact that she served as a police officer and understands the life is the reason she puts up with me," he joked.

Detective Hudson has used his outside experiences to better serve not only his fellow officers, but also



the community at large. He was part of the push to ease the crisis from recent flooding in Houston. "I was activated by the Air National Guard and led a team of airmen to Ellington Field to help coordinate sustainment plans for the thousands of National Guard members being mobilized to the area," he explained. "I was there 11 days before we handed our plans over to the Army National Guard."

As president of the Mansfield Police Officers Association, Detective Hudson works to provide resources to officers, so they are better equipped to serve their community. He is quick to give credit to others, such as Blue Banquet founder Adrian Simmons, the mayor, the city manager, city council, the chief of police and the many other people who work tirelessly to support the police department. "We have the best support," Detective Hudson stated. "The city has our back, and the officers take pride in serving this great community." **NOW**

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In the Kitchen With

MICHAEL KEEL

— By Amber D. Browne



Michael Keel spends most days teaching AP U.S. History and coaching boys' soccer at Legacy High School. His Sundays are spent cooking. "I make my lunches for the week, and my family eats it for dinner. Then we have it for leftovers one night during the week."

His culinary influences are his mother, who passed away in 2015, and his uncle. Growing up in Southeast Texas, Michael acquired a taste for his favorite seasoning, Tony Chachere's Creole Seasoning. "I love creole cooking — gumbo, jambalaya and boudin." He also likes to try different spices including curry. Cookbooks are a starting point for Michael, but he always makes recipes his own. "I have never been one to measure, and each time I make a meal, it's a little different than the time before." **NOW**

Asian Fusion Jambalaya

Serves 10-15.

3 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken thighs
1 12-oz. jar Mae Ploy Sweet Chili Sauce
2 cups dry rice
6 cups water (divided use)
2 onions
3 bell peppers
1 Tbsp. minced garlic
1 bunch celery
2 lbs. andouille sausage
1 33.5-oz. box Hunt's Re-sealable Tomato Sauce
Salt, pepper and Tony Chachere's Creole Seasoning, to taste

1. Marinate chicken in Mae Ploy for 4-5 hours, or overnight.
2. *For rice:* Place dry rice in pot, rinse with water and drain. Repeat until water is clear. Add twice the amount of water than raw rice. Bring to boil; turn off heat. Cover and leave for at least 20 minutes. Set prepared rice to the side.

3. Grill the chicken until charred on the outside, or pan fry or boil, if you prefer.
4. Dice and sauté onions, bell pepper, garlic and celery.
5. Cube chicken and slice sausage into circles; add both to vegetables.
6. Combine rice with veggies and meat mixture.
7. Empty entire box of tomato sauce into mixture and mix well.
8. Add 2 cups of water and simmer on medium-low for an hour or two, stirring every 15 minutes to keep rice from sticking to the bottom.
9. Add salt, pepper and Tony Chachere's to taste.

Olive Dip

1 6-oz. can black olives, drained
1 6-oz. can green olives, drained
2 8-oz. packages cream cheese

1. Add olives to food processor; fold in cream cheese. Serve with crackers.

Stuffed Jalapeños

1 16-oz. package breakfast sausage, crumbled, cooked and drained
1 5-oz. package blue cheese crumbles
20 jalapeños, halved and deseeded
1 8-oz. package shredded sharp cheddar cheese

1. Preheat oven to 350 F
2. Combine cooked breakfast sausage with blue cheese.
3. Bake jalapeños for 10 minutes, or until soft. Stuff jalapeños with sausage mixture and cover with shredded cheese. Bake until cheese is melted.

Chicken Curry

3 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken thighs
3 quarts water
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
2 onions, halved and sliced 1/4-inch thick
1 Tbsp. yellow curry powder
2 carrots, sliced 1/4-inch thick
1 cup golden raisins
1/2 head garlic, minced
10-15 mini Golden Potatoes, peeled and cubed
3 Fuji apples, peeled and cubed
3 Bosc pears, peeled and cubed
Salt and pepper, to taste

1. Boil chicken in 3 quarts of water in a stock pot.

2. Add oil to skillet and sauté onion and curry powder until soft. Add carrots, raisins and garlic to skillet; simmer.
3. Remove chicken and cube; skim fat from water and return chicken to pot. Add potatoes, apples and pears.
4. Add onion mixture to pot, cooking until all vegetables are soft. Add salt, pepper and more curry to taste.

Red Beans and Rice

- 1 lb. red kidney beans, soaked overnight and drained**
2 ham hocks
1 onion, minced
1 head garlic, minced
Tony Chachere's Creole Seasoning, to taste
Salt and pepper, to taste

1. Fill a large pot with water; add beans and ham hocks; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium.
2. Sauté onions and garlic, and add to beans and ham hocks. Cook several hours, until beans are tender.
3. Remove about a cup of beans; mash and return to the pot. Season with Tony Chachere's, salt and pepper to taste. Serve over rice and with cornbread.


Chicken and Sausage Gumbo


- 3 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken thighs**
3 quarts water
1 cup vegetable oil
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 onion, diced
3 bell peppers, diced
1 bunch celery, diced
2 lbs. andouille sausage, sliced 1/2-inch thick and cooked
Tony Chachere's Creole Seasoning
White rice (optional)
1 tsp. filé powder

1. Boil chicken in water; skim and remove fat from water. Remove and cube chicken; save chicken broth for later use.
2. For roux: Mix vegetable oil and flour in skillet on medium heat; constantly stir mixture until beer-bottle brown color. If it smells like it is burning, throw roux out and start again. When correct color, mix in vegetables.
3. Stir vegetable/roux mixture into chicken broth; add chicken and sausage. Add Tony Chachere's to taste. Cook until vegetables are soft. Serve over scoop of white rice. Add a few shakes of filé powder to thicken gumbo.

To view recipes from current and previous issues, visit www.nowmagazines.com.

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BusinessNOW

The Porch Mansfield

— By Melissa Rawlins

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The creativity of Geovany Alvarez must be sampled. He recently introduced a renewed menu for his home-style restaurant in Mansfield, The Porch. Smart diners come for breakfast, lunch and dinner to taste fresh items incorporated with favorites of Geovany's loyal customer base.

They love the Chicken Fajita Salad, The Porch Burger and the Chicken Fried Steak. The new classic, Jalapeño Chicken, was Geovany's recipe — as are all the

Southwestern items. He experiments, putting his own twist on solid standards.

For instance, the Blueberry French Toast at The Porch was inspired by a memory Geovany enjoyed while eating a blueberry muffin with a coffee at another café. "Believe it or not, as a 10-year-old in El Salvador, my parents gave us children coffee with sweet bread," he recalled. "So one day in our kitchen, we baked a blueberry cake, sliced it, refrigerated it, took it out and French toasted it and served it with bacon and sausage. Now, people come from everywhere just to enjoy our freshly baked Blueberry French Toast every morning."

His business history was in real estate, but his kitchen management skills were built in his youth when his parents worked long hours. "I had to go to the kitchen to see what I had to work with," he said. "I have very good taste buds, which helped a lot with my creativity as I was growing up. I loved the kitchen, so it was weird when this opportunity to

own The Porch came about. I started the restaurant to help my parents and give them better opportunities.”

Almost 10 years ago, Geovany bought a house in Burleson with the intention of flipping it. He wrapped a huge porch around the property and leased it to a restaurateur. “When that owner left, I introduced myself there as the new owner. The more I investigated how it operated, it was calling me,” Geovany said. He called it The Porch, and put his own spin on the menu. People loved the changes, and within five years, The Porch was “one of the Top 40 places to eat in DFW,” Geovany said.

“People come from everywhere just to enjoy our freshly baked Blueberry French Toast.”

Three years ago, he opened The Porch Mansfield. Making it feel cozy, like being at home, was simply a matter of preparing satisfying food and training people like Kathy, Brenda and Heather to serve it. These full-time wait staff go out of their way to deliver what customers desire. They remember exactly what regulars like, and call each one by name.

Leading by example, Geovany also hosts, cashiers and buses tables when he’s not volunteering at local high schools or catering for big companies like Texas Trust and LyondellBasell. For one wedding, a customer wanted pancakes and bacon, but he couldn’t cook at their venue. “So we made 650 pancakes in our kitchen,” Geovany said. “Then we took small electric grills to warm the pancakes and make them fresh and fluffy for their wedding guests.”

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Photos provided by Town of Silverton/Silverton Area Chamber of Commerce.



TravelNOW

Basecamp for Adventure

— By Lisa Branner

Nestled at 9,318 feet above sea level in Colorado's San Juan Mountains, Silverton is a picturesque former mining town steeped in Old West history. Established in 1874 as Baker's Park, the town was named a National Historic Landmark in 1961. Today Silverton has a population of 600, and has become a perfect basecamp for adventurous travelers of all stripes.

The San Juans boast some of the most rugged and beautiful terrain in the lower 48, and are home to 13 of Colorado's "Fourteeners," mountains so called because their peaks rise to over 14,000 feet. The range is dotted with alpine lakes and waterfalls, fields of wildflowers and historic ghost towns that are relics of a bygone era.

Train buffs can enjoy an unforgettable adventure on the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, traveling by

coal-fired, steam-powered locomotive on the same tracks that miners, cowboys and settlers took over a century ago. Climbing nearly 3,000 feet, the train winds through spectacular canyons and remote wilderness. Travelers disembark on Notorious Blair Street, whose wooden sidewalks were once lined with saloons, gambling halls and bordellos.

The Million Dollar Highway, built as a toll road in the late 1880s by railroad magnate Otto Mears, is one of the most spectacular drives in the USA. This journey weaves through the mountains, clinging to tight curves and topping out at an elevation of 11,017 feet on Red Mountain Pass before dropping into the town of Ouray. In autumn, the abundance of Aspen trees makes this ideal for leaf peepers.

For the adventurous, a jeep or OHV tour along the Alpine

Loop provides a full day of thrills. This 65-mile, four-wheel-drive byway connects Silverton, Lake City and Ouray, climbing over two 12,000-foot passes. Along the way, stop for a visit to Animas Forks, a well-preserved ghost town. In its heyday, this bustling mining hub had more than 30 structures including hotels, saloons, a post office and a general store. Today fewer than a dozen buildings remain, restored by the San Juan County Historical Society.

Silverton is a mecca for winter recreation, too, with two ski areas and boundless backcountry. Kendall Mountain offers affordable family fun, with 240 feet of vertical drop, four groomed trails and one double chair lift. Ice skating, sledding and snowshoeing are allowed any time. For fat bikes and Nordic skiers, the Town Loop offers 2.5 miles of groomed cross-country trails accessed right from town. For the advanced skier, Silverton Mountain is a challenging big mountain experience with expert-only terrain and heli-skiing. The extensive winter trails on Molas Pass can be explored on your own or with a local snowmobile outfitter like Ice Pirates. Be sure to bring a camera to capture the impressive views.

Summer visitors seeking tranquility will relish Molas Lake Campground, rated "Most Scenic Campground in Colorado" by AAA. Just six miles south of Silverton, atop Molas Pass, the well-maintained campground provides unforgettable scenery, starry skies, a stocked 25-acre lake and hiking access to the Colorado Trail.

For year-round accommodations with historic flair, the Grand Imperial Hotel provides an upscale lodging experience in the heart of downtown Silverton. Built in 1882, recent renovations have returned this 135-year-old landmark to its original grandeur.

For more information or to plan your trip to the heart of Colorado's high country, visit www.silvertoncolorado.com. **NOW**

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The Sweetest Valentine

— By Zachary R. Urquhart

There is no bad time to open your heart to a new family member, but some people use Valentine's Day as the perfect reason to bring a four-legged friend into their home. If you have been thinking about adopting a pet, maybe this month is the time to make it happen. Here are some tips for selecting an animal for your family to love.

Choosing an Animal

- *Give it some thought.* There are dog people, and there are cat people. Probably the first thing you should do, if you think your family is ready to adopt a pet, is get an idea of what type animal you want to adopt. You might even decide that a bunny, bird or fish is what your family needs. There are so many animals out there that need a home. If you head into a shelter without any thought, you might be overwhelmed. Before heading out, a little research regarding animals, their personalities and needs may make your decision easier.

- *Be flexible.* Even though you should go in with a plan, do not assume the exact color or breed of dog or cat you want

will be there waiting to be adopted. If you are really wanting something specific, call the local clinics and shelters to see if they have what you are seeking. Because the size and temperament of dogs is so widely varied, if you are leaning toward a canine, there are some things you need to decide. Think about the size each breed is as an adult, how well they will interact with children and how much yard or house space you have to spare.

- *Start sooner rather than later.* If you are really set on a Valentine's Day adoption, you will want to get yourself ready within the first few days of the month. The actual adoption process at a clinic or shelter is relatively simple, but if there is any specificity in what you are looking



to adopt, you should give yourself a few days to find the pet that is just what your family wants.

Choose an Organization

• *There are many options.* Probably the most well-known pet adoption agency is the SPCA. But in any given area, there are typically dozens of adoption locations. If you are specifically looking for a canine or feline, veterinary clinics and city pounds will sometimes have pets that face a short future if they are not adopted. Different agencies will have varying services, fees and requirements, so your willingness to welcome a pet with an unknown health history may be a major factor in where you adopt.



• *There are online options.* In the last decade or so, many Internet pet-finder services have begun helping people find the pet that fits their family. If you have specific needs, or if you are looking for a less common breed or type of pet, using an online search engine may be your best bet. If you do find an animal this way, though, be sure to contact the pet's current home before leaving. Some sites are third parties, so there could be a lag from animals being adopted to websites being updated.

Get Ready

• *Make living arrangements.* If you are bringing a dog or cat into your home, you will need to have a place for them. With the relative cold this time of year, plan on having them inside the house, even if that means they are sleeping in a laundry room or other extra space. Have a litter box for your cat or a piddle pad if you have chosen a puppy. While you do not

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need to safeguard your house the same way you would when bringing a baby into the home, you do want to put up anything a new pet could either hurt themselves with or anything that you do not want damaged. And if your pet is a more contained animal like a fish or reptile, be sure you have a safe spot for the bowl or terrarium that a young child would not easily knock over or break.



- *Buy supplies.* You should wait until you are sure of the exact breed of pet you are getting before buying food, in case the Chihuahua you think you want turns into a Golden Retriever that needs a heartier diet. Buying more neutral items — like a water bowl or chew toy — might help the rest of your family and any existing pets transition more easily.

- *Prep the paperwork.* For the most part, all you will need to complete the adoption will be a nominal fee and your ID. Before you head to the shelter, make sure there is nothing else required. While you are getting any pre-adoption paperwork in order, make sure you have identified a local veterinarian so that you have a plan for the first time your pet needs to go in.

Use Valentine's Day to make your pet adoption a big event. Bring your pet home to heart-shaped tags, or wrap your crate, kennel or carrier with a red bow. Whatever pet you are considering, February 14 is a special time to add to your family through adoption. **NOW**

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Zoomed In: Andrew Ruiz

By Melissa Rawlins

Katherine Rose Memorial Park is a favorite place for Andrew Ruiz to challenge his skills, whether playing basketball or skateboarding. The 10th-grader shows off the new long board he bought with birthday gift money last fall. “I love its colors and shape. It’s got great balance,” Andrew said. “It’s harder to do tricks than on a short board, but I’m trying to teach myself. There is a lot I want to try to learn, like the 360-kick flip.”

A well-balanced student, Andrew enjoys art, friends and FFA through school. With his grandmother, Sherry Jenkins, he enjoys horses as a hobby. Walking is another of his pastimes. But skateboarding? “This is fun, and when you get the wind coming all over you — Bro, that’s the best feeling ever!”



Lawanda Lumbard looks at a potential retirement home with Richard Ash of Factory Showcase Homes.



Tannyr and Gavyn Venable help Landyn Cleveland love on his puppy, Creed.



Dirya and Krishnadev Bannai learn a lot during Baby Story Time at the Mansfield Public Library.



Doctors Jessica Jones and Alyssa Scott test the twirl of the pinwheels Eddie Phillips made to help them celebrate all the families they serve at The Jones Center.



At Mansfield City Hall, Shelia Rhodes and Janet Green give each other hugs for Happy Hearts Month.



Three engineers from Mouser — Darien Tran, Vincent Dang and Long Loi — dine at Sake Hibachi for lunch.



Lino Fuentes helps Gregory Dewbren, President of Harvesting International Food Bank and Pantry, load a pallet of chicken breasts into the chiller.



Kellie Wood polishes the crystals on a chandelier in Booth 360 at The Antique Mall of Mansfield, where over 110 dealers are revamping their booths.

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Calendar

February:

2, 16

Mansfield Connects: 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Mansfield Chamber of Commerce. The topics at these bring-your-own-bag lunches are: **Feb. 2**, Selling With Stories; **Feb. 16**, Networking For Results. (817) 473-0507.

5, 12, 19, 26

Sunrise Toastmasters Club: 7:00 -8:00 a.m., Methodist Mansfield Hospital, Canedy Community Room, 2700 E. Broad St. Become the speaker and leader you want to be. kevinorsak@mhd.com.

8

Business Unplugged: 5:00-7:30 p.m., 2300 Matlock Rd., Suite 4. Strong on Health sponsors and hosts this free, fun way to meet people you can help while enjoying delicious food and drinks. RSVP to Kathleen D'Agostino, Director of Member Engagement, membership@mansfieldchamber.org.



8 — 10

Household Hazardous Waste Collection: **Thursday** and **Friday**, 3:00-7:00 p.m.; **Saturday**, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Mansfield Environmental Collection Center, 616 S. Wisteria.

Contact David Macias at (817) 276-4239.

10

Craft a Valentine: Noon-2:00 p.m., Mansfield Public Library, 104 S. Wisteria St. Make something special for someone special. Supplies are provided. Free for individuals or entire families. Email faria.matin@mansfield-tx.gov.



14, 28

Mansfield Lions Club meeting: Noon-1:00 p.m., Mansfield Methodist Hospital, 2nd Floor Conference Room, 2700 E. Broad St. (817) 453-1170.

15

Spring Gardening: 6:00-7:00 p.m., Mansfield Public Library, 104 S. Wisteria St. Learn from a Texas Master Gardener about bulb planting and more. Free, but registration is required. Email faria.matin@mansfield-tx.gov.

Thirsty Thursdays 5K: 6:15-9:00 p.m., Steven's Garden and Grill, 223 Depot St. This free, fun run is for all ages and skill levels. (817) 475-7210.

17

National Audubon Society Great Backyard Bird Count: 9:00 a.m.-noon, Elmer W. Oliver Nature Park, 1650 Matlock Rd. Families are welcome to join the citizen-science project

collecting data on wild birds. Free activities include games, bird feeder making and nature walks. (817) 728-3680.

Mansfield Cares 19th Annual Charity Ball: 7:00 p.m.-midnight, Walnut Creek Country Club. This *Paint the Town Red* event, presented by Avante Salon & Day Spa, will feature the King David band, live and silent auctions, heavy hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. Valet parking will be available. \$125 per person/\$150 at the door. www.mansfieldcares.org.

21

Quilting With Heart: 1:00-3:00 pm, First Methodist Church Mansfield, 777 N. Walnut Creek. Open membership with no dues. Join us if you are interested in making charity quilts and would like to learn more about and share the art of quilting. qwhinfo@gmail.com.



March:

3

MISD Multicultural Festival: 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., The Center for the Performing Arts, 1110 W. Debbie Ln. Showcasing cultures within the school district and community, MISD's 6th annual free event features crafts, family activities, entertainment, fun regional games from every continent and tasty treats from more than 15 countries. (817) 299-1252.

Ongoing:

Mondays

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

First Mondays

Mansfield Area Marines: 7:00 p.m., Fat Daddy's Sports and Spirits Café, 781 W. Debbie Ln. Active duty, retired, honorably discharged Marines and FMF Corpsman are welcome. Contact George Miller, (817) 705-7984.

Mondays — Fridays

Senior Lifestyles Program: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Mansfield Activities Center, 106 S. Wisteria. If you're age 55 or

older, enjoy vital services, as well as life-enhancing activities. Contact (817) 728-3680, ext. 3687.

Mondays — Saturdays

Wesley Mission Center Thrift Store: **Monday-Friday:** 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., **Saturday:** 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., 777 N. Walnut Creek Dr. For more information, visit www.wesleymissioncenter.org.

Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays
The Fit Club: 9:30-11:00 a.m., Walnut Ridge Baptist Church. Relieve stress and maintain balance with senior adults, ages 55+, focusing on cardiovascular endurance, strength, balance and flexibility. (512) 963-3440.

Wednesdays

Veterans Support Groups: 6:00-9:00 p.m., C Building, First United

Methodist Church, 777 N. Walnut Creek. Contact Ann-Marie McLain, (817) 477-2287, x 231.

Thursdays

Rotary Club of Mansfield Sunrise: 7:00-8:00 a.m., Methodist Mansfield Medical Center, 2700 E. Broad St. Meet with others living by the motto Service Above Self. www.mansfieldrotarysunrise.org.

Fridays

Open Food Pantry: 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Wesley Mission Center, 777 N. Walnut Creek Dr. For more information, call (817) 473-6650 or visit www.wesleymissioncenter.org.

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New Year, New Habits

As we settle into a new year, investors might want to consider starting some new habits. Others may just need to review old habits and make some minor adjustments. Here is a list of things to consider discussing with your tax professional or financial advisor:

1. Contribute to your IRA or Roth IRA with your tax refund. Some people are efficient and have their tax returns done and submitted as soon as possible. Remember that you have until April 17, 2018, to fully fund a Traditional or Roth IRA for 2017. Make sure to discuss all the rules and eligibility requirements with your tax professional before making contributions.

2. Consider starting a Traditional or Roth IRA. If you do not currently contribute to a retirement account outside of work, discuss the possibility of starting an IRA this year. You can make monthly contributions directly to your account and might not even notice the difference in your bank account. If you have extra money in your paycheck, consider investing in your retirement.

3. Review your beneficiaries on all investments. If your family make up changed in 2017, review the beneficiary designations on all retirement accounts, IRAs, insurance policies and annuities. Weddings, divorces, births, adoptions and funerals may have an

impact on where you want your assets to go if anything happens to you.

4. Take time to review your life insurance. As life changes occur, so do our needs for life insurance. Young families have different needs than retired couples. Higher net worth investors may need different coverage than a couple just starting their life together. Work with your financial advisor to determine the best plan for your life insurance going forward.

5. Older investors may need to start taking Required Minimum Distributions. The Internal Revenue Service requires distributions from Traditional IRAs to start when the account holder turns 70 1/2 years old. The amount of the RMD changes each year based on account values and the RMD factor, so review of this requirement is important.

As with any decision you make, investing in financial products requires research and full disclosure. Consider all aspects of an investment before making a purchase. Financial advisors and tax professionals can help, but the ultimate decision lies with the investor. There is a wealth of information available to anyone willing to take the time to research. Content in the material is for general information only and not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual. **NOW**

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