



# CITYLINE NEWS



QUARTER 1 VOLUME 08 ISSUE 33

## The Mayor's Line

Dear Residents and Business Owners,

I am sure I speak for everyone when I say we welcome 2021 and hope this year will bring some normalcy back to our lives. With all of the challenges 2020 brought, it also gave us time to appreciate our families, home and community.

I hope you had the opportunity to visit downtown Mansfield during the holidays. The lighting display of the downtown & Central Park area was expanded and more beautiful than ever.

All City departments have been working throughout the pandemic in the office, field and remotely when appropriate. Our Safety Forces have continued to serve our community throughout these challenging times with no changes.

The Municipal Building is now open to the general public, although some offices may still be operating with limited staffing so we strongly encourage visitors to call ahead before coming into the building.

You can access the city directory at: <https://ci.mansfield.oh.us/city-directory/>

We recently completed the updated website for the City. Updates include a virtual tour of the City, the ability to pay many fees and utility bills online as well as complete other forms. We are very pleased with the new look of the website and its many features that make information more accessible to the public. Go to <https://ci.mansfield.oh.us/> to see what's new.

Your continued support of the many local shops and restaurants, both new and established in Mansfield is appreciated. With spring around the corner, we can all look forward to dining outdoors and enjoying the many activities available in the Mansfield area. We hope you, your family and friends will get out and explore all that our community has to offer!

A full State of the City report which outlines the major accomplishments will be available for the community soon.

I look forward to sharing last year's accomplishments and future upcoming projects and plans for our community in the year to come.

### Inside This Issue

- ❖ [The Mayor's Line](#)
- ❖ [Fire Department News & Update](#)
- ❖ [Business Spotlight – Kafer's](#)  
<https://www.kafersflower.com>
- ❖ [Building & Codes – News & Updates](#)
- ❖ [Mansfield Police Department News](#)
- ❖ [Parks & Recreation to offer Drive Thru Easter](#)

***“We are a team dedicated to providing the highest quality of professional service to positively impact the citizens we proudly serve.”***

Mayor Timothy Theaker



## Mansfield Fire Department News & Updates

The fire department answered 11,123 emergency calls in 2020. Of those, 1,922 were fire-related and 9,201 were emergency medical calls. This represents an increase of just over 5% in call volume from one year ago. Unfortunately, we had one civilian fire death in 2020.

An order was placed in December for a new Braun rescue squad to replace Rescue 4 housed on South Main Street. Even with the slightly decreased revenue from EMS transports the capital equipment fund was able to provide the funding for the purchase.

A total of seven firefighters were hired in 2020 and two are currently finishing their necessary training as they were delayed with the closure of the Ohio Fire Academy due to COVID.

Starting in mid-March, the fire department has been operating with specialized daily procedures to deal with the effects of the pandemic caused by COVID-19. This changed our world immensely, both at the fire stations and in the places we respond to provide service. Lasting effects will be seen for many years to come as we study the lessons learned from the crisis. Fortunately, financial relief in the form of CARES act money and a grant from HHS allowed for us to make some much needed purchases.

We received two other small grants with the efforts of Lt. Yerian who has been writing grant requests for the department. One was for camera equipment for the fire prevention office. The other provided personal escape harnesses for each riding position on the department.

COVID, or symptoms of it, effected over half of our members at one time or another in 2020. Due to our efforts to prevent transmission throughout the stations, however, we saw two to three members out at a time rather than entire shifts.

Lastly, even with the COVID slowdown in April, the department responded to over 30 calls per day in 2020. I am very proud of the staff we have and can assure everyone that we will continue to provide excellent service to the citizens that utilize our services in 2021. The events of 2020 were not known ahead of time, and I am quite sure we will be surprised by new challenges in 2021. I am equally sure we will rise to those challenges in a capable, professional manner.



## Diamond in the Rough

### Highlight:

The City of Mansfield Safety Forces and the City's front-line workers have been chosen as our Diamond in the Rough award winners!

Our lives have been impacted in many ways by the pandemic and through it all, the First Responders and our front-line workers have worked to provide seamless service to the community, continuously putting themselves in harm's way.

If we have learned anything during this past year, it is to value one another and our community. We have worked diligently to serve in our own particular capacity, while recognizing we are all a vital piece in this puzzle.

Thank you, Division of Fire, Division of Police, and Service complex employees for your hard work and dedication. You are truly an asset to the City of Mansfield.

Respectfully,  
Director Lori Cope, SSD

## Parks & Recreation to Co-Host a Drive-Thru Community Easter Celebration

The City of Mansfield Parks and Recreation Department, along with the Mansfield Y and Richland County Children Services are partnering together to bring a drive-thru community Easter celebration to the children of Mansfield from noon- 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 27, 2021 at South Park. We would like to make this a community effort by offering an Easter experience with many community partners while giving children a socially distanced Easter celebration.

If your organization would like to participate by passing out pre-packaged candy, games or crafts, etc., please email Recreation Coordinator Angel Singleton at [asingleton@ci.mansfield.oh.us](mailto:asingleton@ci.mansfield.oh.us) or call 419-522-9801 before February 26, 2021.

## Building & Codes – News and Updates

The Bureau of Building and Codes Department continued to provide helpful services for our residents in 2020, with Covid-19 impacting the way our department operated we were able to transform our operation into an online service. With the help from IT we were able to adapt to new laptop computers which allowed this department to work remotely away from the office and still conduct the necessary inspections needed to maintain optimum performance within this department. This department also made improvements to our city website which included new online applications and the use of credit card payments making ease of operation for our citizens.

Our department has taken on a new look so when City Hall recently opened, our customers saw changes to the Codes and Permits office, such as our front counter is now surrounded in glass to help protect our citizens and workers from exposure to Covid-19. We are making available one front counter computer for individuals to apply for a permit, register as a contractor, submit a complaint or review maps and check for zoning.

Our main focus this past fall and into this winter is the implementation of new software, this software allows anyone with computer access to submit complaints, file as a contractor, apply for permits and make zoning requests. This software is called Open Gov and allows anyone with access to follow up on either their complaint or permit application. This software makes available to the applicant for any permit to find out if their project plans have been reviewed and approved, during the build process the applicant can follow up and receive detailed inspections results as they occur during the process. Complaints are easy to follow up on, the complaint is submitted, addressed by the inspector and either completed, fined or submitted to court.

### **Business Spotlight** **Kafer's Flowers**

We are pleased to recognize and congratulate Kafer's Flowers, our Business Spotlight for this edition. Kafer's has been offering high-quality floral arrangements in Mansfield since 1937, changing hands to two other families in the last 84 years. We've built relationships within the community that span generations. Many of our regular customers today are people who have been hearing the name, "[Kafer's](#)" since they were very young and it's an honor to have our business be associated with fond memories for so many people.

The owner, Angie Kunz, has been working in flower shops in some capacity since age eight alongside her mother. Angie purchased [Kafer's Flowers](#) in 2004 from Greg and Jackie Crawfis, after working for them at Kafer's since 1984. Kafer's is located at 41 S. Mulberry St. with parking available in a lot on Second Street. Kafer's is within comfortable walking distance from the square.

Owning a business and working in Mansfield connects you to a vibrant and continually evolving community made up of many multi-generational families. Kafer's has been open since 1937, which has given us an opportunity to grow with the community and have an effect on multiple generations. The way this community continually works together to grow and draw new citizens, business owners, and visitors— even in times of adversity has made Mansfield a wonderful place to work and own a business.

These attributes continue to bring new businesses or business owners to the community. Many people come to downtown Mansfield and see not only possibilities but a lot of history. We have a community that seems to inspire more than just our citizens and I think that the potential that exists in the Mansfield community comes from more than just available space but the mindset of so many— they want to see our community grow as much as our leaders!

Mansfield and particularly our shop, has provided me with many happy memories both personally and professionally. I've been able to grow up, become a small business owner, watch my kids grow up in the Flower Shop around me— all while interacting with members of our community in a really special way. We handle a lot of big life events for so many people and I've watched so many people grow up and start their own lives here.

[Kafer's](#) is available to follow on Facebook and Instagram for daily updates on what they're working on!



City of Mansfield  
30 North Diamond Street  
Mansfield, OH 44902



<http://ci.mansfield.oh.us>

## Upcoming Events:

Looking for things to do, visit the following links to events and activities in our community:

### First Friday Shop Hop

February 5<sup>th</sup> & April 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Held the first Friday of each month in downtown Mansfield.

### February

Black History Month – **Virtual Events**  
<https://www.mrcpl.org/events/30th-annual-black-history-celebration-virtual>

### Free Art Saturdays at the Mansfield Art Center

February 27<sup>th</sup> Black History Celebration  
<https://mansfieldartcenter.org/classes/categories/free-art-saturdays/>

### Tax Day

Thursday, April 15<sup>th</sup>  
Link to city tax – [click here](#)

### City Offices are Closed on

**President's Day**  
Monday, February 15<sup>th</sup>

**March 14, 2021**  
**DON'T FORGET TO...**



# Mansfield Police Department News

The Mansfield Division of Police was recently awarded a grant to purchase Body Worn Cameras. These cameras will be used in the Community Services Bureau. We are hoping to have the Body Worn Camera project up and running in the late spring or early summer. The Division of Police is also working on implementing a project called "ShotSpotter." The ShotSpotter technology will assist the Division of Police in responding to "shots fired" calls in a quicker manner. This technology aims to reduce gun violence in the City of Mansfield. In addition, the Division of Police applied for and received grants in 2020 totaling \$1.6 million, to be used for body cameras, vehicles, computers, cameras, and extra patrol officers.

The Division of Police will also be looking to hire as many as nine new officers this upcoming year. We currently have one candidate that has successfully completed the process and we look forward to swearing him in the very near future. We are also looking at revamping our recruitment efforts in an attempt to get more interest for candidates to apply for our open police officer positions.

We are also planning to enhance the Division's outdoor shooting range with the addition of a "Range Training Building." We hope to begin this process later this year.

Officer Jeffrey McKinley has announced his retirement from the division effective February 8<sup>th</sup>. Officer McKinley was hired on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1994. We wish Officer McKinley the best in his retirement and future endeavors.

