NOVEMBER 2026

Discover a Healthy Life

KANNAPOLIS MATTERS

Join Us for a Kannapolis Christmas this Holiday Season



A Kannapolis Christmas returns this holiday season with events that have become treasured family traditions in North Carolina. Families return annually to celebrate with us and create their favorite family memories in the City.

The official kick-off to the holidays will be the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony & Celebration of Lights, 6:30 p.m., Friday, November 13, in Village Park, located at 700 West C Street. Following the lighting of the tree there will be a fireworks display, live musical performances and much more. The Celebration of Lights and Winterland Express will then run through December 30.

The annual tradition of the Celebration of Lights includes hundreds of thousands of twinkling lights in dozens of displays throughout Village Park. Adults and children are welcome to ride one of our two Winterland Express trains and count down the 12 Days of Christmas as you view unique holiday light displays from the popular song. This magical experience is one you do not want to miss – you will add it to your annual holiday traditions list.

Continued on page 2

Calendar of Events

NOVEMBER

3 **Election Day**

6 **Mystery Dinner Theatre** *(Tickets Required)* | 5:30 p.m. City Hall

7 **Run Kannapolis: Old Armor 5K for Heroes** | 8 a.m. Downtown Kannapolis

13 **Tree Lighting & Fireworks** 6:30 p.m. | Village Park

14 **Non-Certified CPR Class** 1-3 p.m. | City Hall

14-30 **Celebration of Lights & Winterland Express** | 5:30 p.m. nightly *(closed 11/26)* | Village Park

26-27 **City Hall Closed for Thanksgiving**

DECEMBER

1-31 **Celebration of Lights & Winterland Express** | 5:30 p.m. nightly *(closed 12/24-12/25)* | Village Park

8 **The Embers Christmas Show** 8 p.m. | The Swanee Theatre

11-13 **Holiday Train Display** | Daily Showings | The Swanee Theatre

12 **Kannapolis Christmas Parade** 6 p.m. | Downtown Kannapolis

18-20 **A Christmas Carol Live Performance** | Daily Showings | The Swanee Theatre

No pets or smoking, please.
More at kannapolisnc.gov.



Continued from page 1

Attendees will also be able to ride the Village Park Double Decker Carousel. Manufactured in Italy, it features 1,800 lights, Brazilian oak decking, and charming hand-painted Venetian murals that are sure to get you into the spirit of the holidays.



The carousel and trains accommodate adults, children and are ADA-accessible.

Santa Claus arrives during the Tree Lighting Ceremony and will be at the park every evening for children of all ages to visit him and have their photo made for free. Bring your phones and cameras for plenty of selfies.

Maestro Leonard Bearstein and the famed Leonard Bearstein Symphony Orchestra are back this year, spreading their holiday magic in Kannapolis. The 18 animatronic bears will delight children and adults alike with their witty banter, inspiring instrumental pieces and traditional favorite holiday songs! Visit the Leonard Bearstein Symphony Orchestra inside the Village Park Multi-Purpose Room throughout the Celebration of Lights.

The Celebration of Lights also features performances from our very own Kannapolis Singing Bears – the Chuckles Quartet – who will entertain you with a Christmas Carol performance. The Chuckles Quartet are housed outside in Village Park.

Food and drink are available for purchase at the concession stand. Enjoy the fire pit, making s'mores and much more Admission to the park and viewing of the lights and bears is free.

Reserve your seat on the Winterland Express, Sunday through Thursday, by purchasing tickets online at www.kannapolisnc.gov/Christmas. During the Tree Lighting Ceremony and every Friday and Saturday, tickets may be purchased onsite at Village Park on a first-come basis for the Winterland Express.

Tickets are $2.50 per person for the train and $2.50 per ride. No reservations are available for the train on Fridays and Saturdays; walk-up tickets are available nightly. Reservations are not available for the carousel. Walk-up carousel tickets are available daily onsite.

Chris Hill Promoted to Kannapolis Police Chief



Chris Hill has been promoted to the position of Chief of Police for the City of Kannapolis. He was previously serving as the Deputy Chief of the department.

As Chief of Police, he will be responsible for a department that consists of 131 sworn and non-sworn positions. His role is to ensure that the department prevents crime, protects people and property, and enforces laws and ordinances.

"I am honored to be chosen as the next Chief of Police. I am excited to lead the men and women of this agency as we continue to build upon the great reputation of the Kannapolis Police Department. I love the Kannapolis community and look forward to continuing working with community members to advance our goals of building bridges with residents and business owners. Proactively working together allows us to communicate and collaborate as our City evolves," stated Hill.

Kannapolis is one of the largest cities in North Carolina and has been recognized as having a crime rate that is low – the crime rate is 37% lower than the state average and the crime rate has dropped over the last five years.

Chris joined the Kannapolis Police Department in 2009 as a patrol officer. Since then, he has served as an investigator, a field training officer, instructor and field force operator. He was promoted to Sergeant in 2014, Lieutenant in 2020 and Captain in 2021. He was named Deputy Police Chief in 2024.



Community Organizations Receive Funding

The Kannapolis City Council recently approved $58,000 for its 2026-2027 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) fund allocation. The funds are designated for activities that benefit low- and moderate-income residents within the City of Kannapolis.

Grants were awarded to:

- **ALC - $3,000 –** to support before- and after-school tutoring programs for Kannapolis elementary schools.
- **AYA House, Inc. - $3,000 –** to support existing home and office expenses for transitional housing programs for individuals reentering the community after incarceration, substance use treatment and chronic homelessness.
- **Big Brothers Big Sisters - $3,000 –** to support youth activities with an international focus to give children mental health strategies for upward mobility.
- **Bethel Baptist Church - $2,500 –** to support crisis assistance program, which assists with rent, utility and housing for under-served individuals.
- **Cabarrus Health Alliance - $4,000 –** to provide dental services for uninsured Kannapolis City School children.
- **Classroom Central - $3,000 –** to provide free school supplies to Kannapolis City School teachers.
- **Conflict Resolution - $4,000 –** to cover overhead expenses for Teen Court and Truancy program.
- **Cooperative Christian Ministry - $4,000 –** to support staff salaries to assist families and individuals in crisis.
- **Faith Fellowship Church - $2,000 –** to help with the needs of the homeless.
- **Families First - $4,000 –** to help cover costs of homebased under-resourced childcare networks.
- **Lock N Key - $2,500 –** to provide program supplies, materials and tools for families impacted by incarceration.
- **Peek into a New Horizon: Peek Next Gen - $3,000 –** supports afterschool programming.
- **El Puente Hispano - $2,500 –** to provide culturally responsive workshops and activities for parents, youth and ESL classes.
- **Rowan Cabarrus YMCA - $2,500 –** to support Positive Youth Development programs after school and summer camp.
- **Rowan Helping Ministries - $4,000 –** to provide support for the Crisis Assistance Program, which assists those experiencing financial hardship.
- **The S.T.U.D.I.O. - $3,000 –** to support Project Uplift, providing mobile access and emergency assistance for those experiencing homelessness.
- **The Suda Institute - $4,000 –** to fund a physician-led clinical care program for those experiencing housing instability.
- **Vision for Life - $4,000 –** for mentoring and parenting programs in Kannapolis Schools.

The funds come from the federal Community Development Block Grant Program. Each year, Kannapolis receives funds that can be awarded to non-profit organizations that deliver pertinent services to residents who are in need. Applications are reviewed by the Community Improvement Commission and City staff, who present funding recommendations to City Council.

For more information on CDBG grants, the Community Improvement Commission or Community Development, visit www.kannapolisnc.gov/Government-Departments/Community-Development or contact Sherry Gordon at sgordon@kannapolisnc.gov.

New Items Added to Recycling List

Kannapolis residents can now recycle even more items in their curbside recycling bins! Plastic cups, fruit containers and clamshells, takeout containers, yogurt cups and paper cups are now accepted. Remember to keep recyclables clean, loose and dry before placing them in your bin. For more information on recyclable items or to get reminders of your pick-up days, you can download the free CARTology mobile application. It's easy and free; visit www.kannapolisnc.gov/garbage to learn more.



Enjoy Christmas at the Swanee Theatre

Get ready to celebrate the holiday season at The Swanee Theatre. Tickets for several exciting Christmas events and performances are already on sale and will make a wonderful addition to your family traditions this year.

Tickets for all events are on sale now at www.swaneetheatre.com. Additional shows are always being announced, so be sure to follow The Swanee Theatre on social media and sign up for the free email newsletter at swaneetheatre.com. All ages are encouraged to join us! Those under the age of 18 will need to be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

The Embers Christmas Show
8 p.m., December 8
Get ready for A Very Ember Christmas! The Embers, renowned for their expansive albums and hit singles, bring their exceptional showmanship and holiday cheer to the stage for a night of festive fun and incredible music. Join us for a memorable evening celebrating the season with one of the Southeast's most



beloved bands. This holiday show is sure to get you into the Christmas spirit.

Holiday Model Train Display
December 11-13
The Atlantic Coast S Gaugers model trains are back! For many years, families enjoyed the model trains as part of the Celebration of Lights. For the last couple of years, the holiday train engineers needed a long winter's nap, but now they are back and ready to entertain you this holiday season. For one weekend only, this year, their popular interactive model train display will fill the Swanee Theatre located at 200 West Main Street. This fun family event is free to the public.

5-9 p.m. December 11
11 a.m.-9 p.m. December 12
11 a.m.-5 p.m. December 13

***A Christmas Carol* Theatre Performance**
December 18-20
Sigmon Theatrical presents a performance of the classic, *A Christmas Carol* at the Swanee Theatre. This magic production is infused with music, dance, puppetry and illusions as we bring this traditional Christmas story to life. Tickets sales coming soon.

This performance is for all ages and is a wonderful way to celebrate the holiday season. Tickets are $25 per person, with VIP tickets available for $35. The show will include a 10- to 15-minute intermission, with a meet-and-greet after the performance.

7-9 p.m., December 18
7-9 p.m., December 19
3-5 p.m., December 20

Loose-Leaf Season Now Underway

The City of Kannapolis loose-leaf collection will run from November 2, 2026 to January 15, 2027. As a reminder, during the Loose-Leaf Season, there will be no loose-leaf collection on the following holidays observed by the City: Veteran's Day (Nov. 11), Thanksgiving (Nov. 26 and 27), Christmas (Dec. 23-25) and New Year's Day (Jan. 1).

After January 15, we request that you bag any loose leaves you have and place them at the curb for yard waste collection.

To find your loose-leaf collection schedule, visit www.kannapolisnc.gov/looseleaf, or download the free CARTology app in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

THE CITY OF KANNAPOLIS
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