



The Leawood Rotarian

The Newsletter of the Leawood Rotary Club

Celebrating Over 31 Years!

leawoodrotary.org

June 25, 2026

This Week: Board Meeting



Click link below to launch Zoom

[Launch Meeting - Zoom](#)

Meeting ID: 813 1042 7816

Passcode: Rotary

Upcoming Programs in July

July 2

Charlotte Belshi-Powell, Outreach International

July 9

John Paul Henry, Word by Word Uganda

July 16

Robin Kerkaert, The Sewing Labs

July Invocators:

July 2 – Stu Sharp

July 9 – Chuck Sipple

July 16 – Ron Slepitza

July Greeters:

Rachel Rubin, Paul Rueschhoff (Captain 7/2),
Prasad Saraph (Captain 7/9), Jake Schloegel, Ken Selzer,
Stu Sharp, Chuck Sipple (Captain 7/16)

Last Week

Last week, we welcomed new member Jack Brown and celebrated several Rotarians receiving Paul Harris Fellow recognitions. Leawood Mayor, Marc Elkins, provided an insightful mid-year update on the city's progress and vision for the future. We also took time to recognize Rod for his outstanding leadership this past year as Club President and welcomed Darren Lippe as the new Club President for 2026-2027.



Last Week



Paul Harris Fellow Recipients:

Paul Harris Fellow: Diane Stoddard, Cari Pemberton

Paul Harris Fellow +4: Dick Wetzler, Mike Best, Rod Pemberton

Paul Harris Fellow +5: Tom Sullivan

Paul Harris Fellow +6: Paul Rueschhoff

Paul Harris Fellow +7: Stephen Black, Doug Wesselschmidt

Paul Harris Fellow +8: Tom Koch

Save the Date:

TOGETHER, WE SHINE HOPE.

Candlelight VIGIL

TO RECOGNIZE SURVIVORS OF
HUMAN TRAFFICKING



JULY 5TH
SUNDAY • 8:00 PM



LOOSE PARK
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI



LET'S LIGHT THE WAY TO FREEDOM AND HOPE.
ROTARIANS STANDING TOGETHER TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

Rotary 
District 6040

Rotary 
District 5710



AWARENESS.
COMPASSION.
ACTION.
HOPE.



ALL ROTARIANS, FAMILY & FRIENDS ARE INVITED.
COME OUT. SHOW YOUR SUPPORT. MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Join the Rotary Alley Cats – July 15

The Leawood Rotary Alley Cats are participating in the Summer Bowl for Kids' Sake on Wednesday, July 15th from 6pm to 7:30pm.



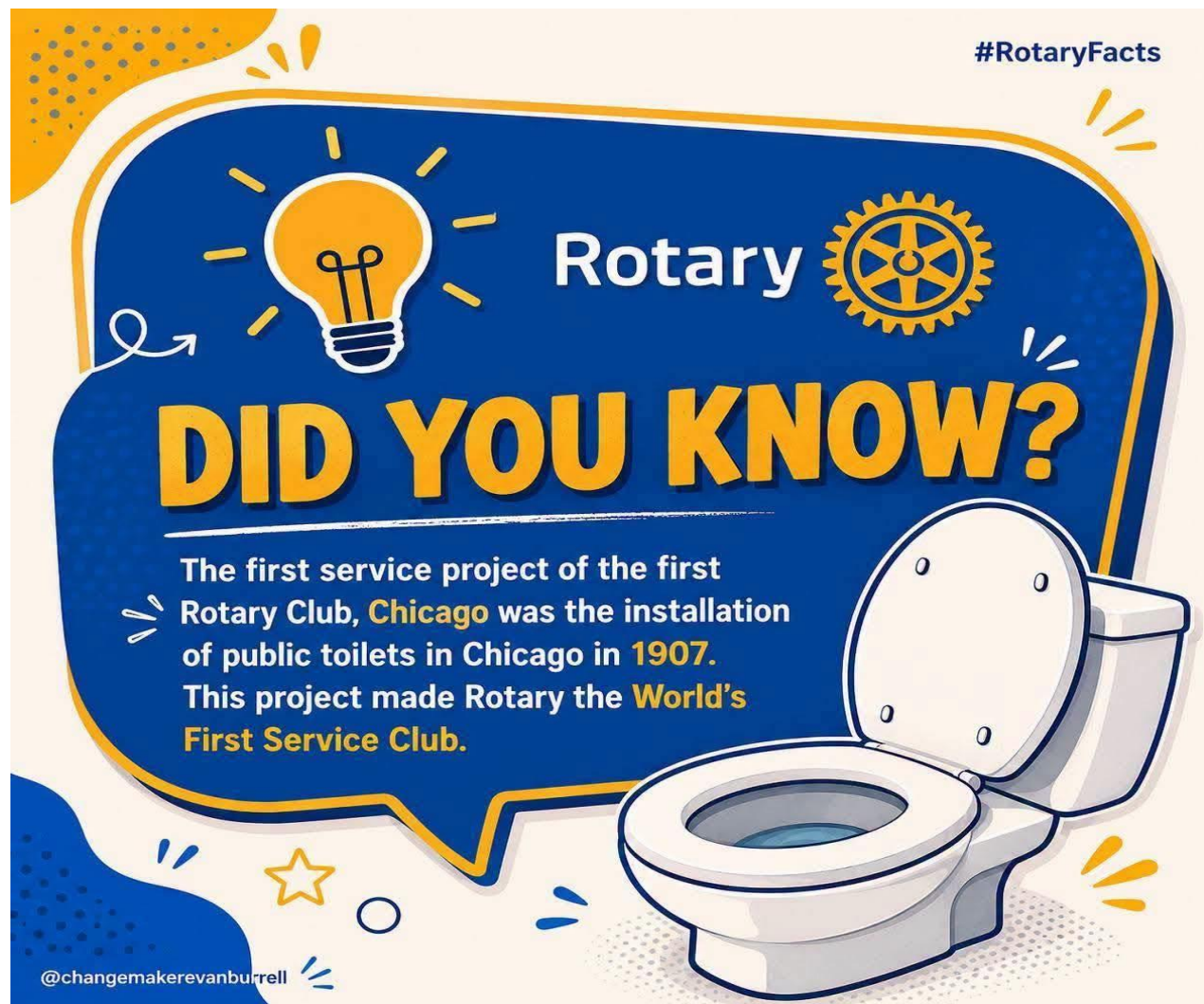
It's a great opportunity have some fun while supporting a fantastic organization!! You can also donate to the cause by clicking the donation link below:

<https://bbbskc.donordrive.com/team/6938>

Details:

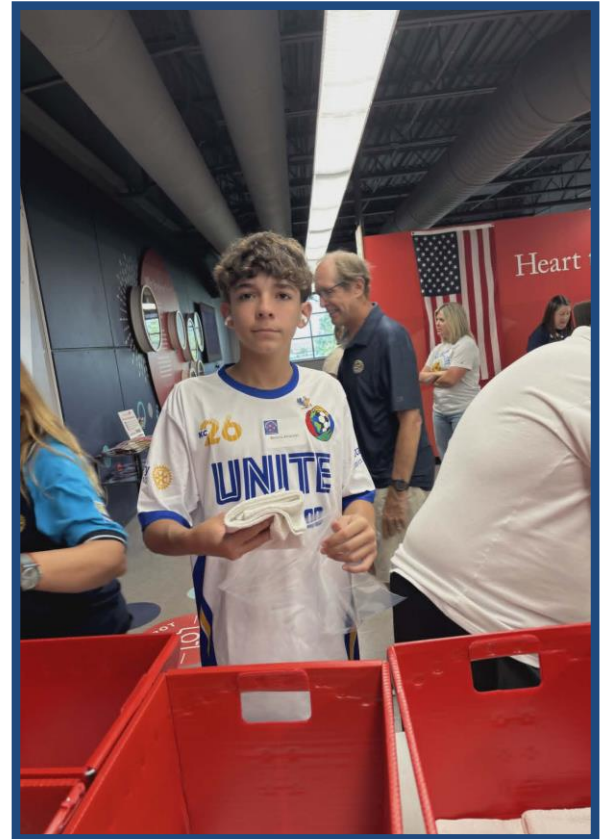
- Date/Time: Wednesday, July 15 from 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM
- Where: Park Lanes, 7701 Renner Road, Shawnee, KS

Please let Jonn Wullschleger know if you would like to join the team!



Heart to Heart - June 15

International teamwork in action! A huge shoutout to the Leawood Rotary Club for sponsoring a special event at Heart to Heart International! It was inspiring to bring together Rotarians from across the Kansas City area and welcome our incredible guests all the way from Argentina for a day of service, connection and teamwork. With World Cup excitement in the air, this was a beautiful reminder of what we can achieve when the global community teams up. The energy was unmatched as we worked together to assemble hygiene kits together for those who need them most. Thank you and Gracias!



Heart to Heart - June 15



Heart to Heart - June 15



World Cup Picnic - June 15

Many thanks to the Sharp family for hosting the combined Overland Park Rotary and Leawood Rotary Club World Cup Picnic! A fun time was had by all!



★ THIS COULD BE YOU ★ ★ THIS 4TH OF JULY! ★



★ Join us for **Leawood's Independence Day Parade!** ★

★ **Open to all ages**, so bring your kids, grandkids, parents, & grandparents to join in a once-in-a-lifetime celebration of **America's 250th Birthday** ★ & then enjoy your traditional **4th of July** activities.

★ **Parade starts at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday July 4th.** ★

Parade route length is roughly **1 mile** along Tomahawk Creek Parkway in Leawood.

Yes! I want to be one of the celebrities walking in the Parade!
(Gathering time 9:15 a.m. in front of Leawood Justice Center.)

Yes! I want to be in the Rotarian Cheering Section
(On the grass in front of American Academy of Family Physicians -
11400 Tomahawk Creek Parkway)

RSVP to Darren to reserve your spot.

(More details will be provided on **Monday June 29th.**)

Service Project, Wednesday, July 22nd

We have scheduled a Service Day at Project Cure for Wednesday, July 22, from 1 -3:30pm.

We will meet at 12:30pm in the parking lot just east of the old/new UMB bank site at I-435 and State Line for those who wish to carpool. This is another great chance to do good and have some fun with your Rotarian friends.

Please email Rick Robinson know if you plan to attend:

rickrobinson.kc@gmail.com

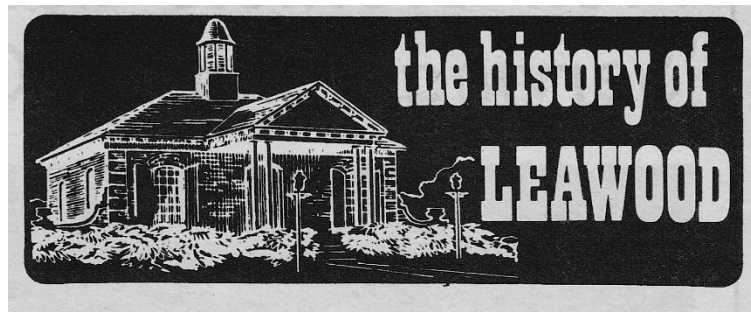


Friday, June 19, was a fun evening at the Monarch's baseball game with Rotarians where our own Ken Selzer threw out the first pitch!



Leawood History: As Told in 1976

This article was part of a special Bicentennial issue of the Johnson County Sun Newspaper published in July, 1976.



Time magazine, in its March 15, 1971, cover story on "Suburbia — A Myth Challenged," selected Leawood to represent the entire country as an "affluent bedroom community". The article brought out that Leawood was a sought-after neighborhood, and stated the following:

"Many of the residents are professional people, lawyers, doctors . . . and a majority of the newer, more transient residents are often transferred executives of major U.S. corporations. In many cases, their company helps foot the homeowner's bill just for the prestige of having a Leawood address for its man in Kansas City."

This is clearly the picture that Leawood paints today, in 1976. It is one of the leading residential areas in the country, a place known for its excellent schooling and beautiful grounds.

How did this vicinity become the booming residential city it is today? Who were the beginners of Leawood that shaped it into the suburban community of the present?

Like its neighboring municipalities, Leawood was built on farm land acquired by early settlers, dating back to territorial days, when this section of the state was first opened to white settlement.

One of the earliest families in this area, dating back to 1876, is the Voigts family. Herman Voigts, one of the original settlers, lived in the Mission Township (the name for this entire area before the 1900's) his entire life.

He tells how this area developed in his collection of personal memoirs: "We children attended Corinth Elementary School. It was a small, one-room building, containing a big stove in the middle. Of course, it

had no thermostat and if you sat close to it, you would burn up, and from the far side of the room you would freeze.

"One teacher taught all the grades and received \$40 to \$50 a month. A good fence was kept around the school and a small shelter was provided for the horses which some children rode to and from school. Most of us walked, however."

The area at that time had only a few scattered barns and farmhouses. The Voigts family owned a great deal of the land that is present-day Leawood. The Corinth Church was the only religious gathering point in the late 1800's. As the turn of the century developed, other churches came into being.

As people began buying automobiles and driving further to the denominational churches of their choice, a great many of these early churches were forced to close.

Continued...

Leawood History: As Told in 1976

The Leawood area was always one that could be identified with easy living. The hustle and bustle of the big city was never brought into the farmlands. People went about their daily duties, always against the landscape of open space, beautiful skies and the only noise coming from the animals nearby.

"I owned all of the land south of 103rd street and just east of State Line to a little west of Lee Boulevard. The opening of 75th street from Mission to Nall in about 1920 promoted development around it." Voigts' memoirs record.

"State Line was impassable from 75th to 103rd except by horseback until the '30s. Kansas and Missouri, after arguments as to whose responsibility it was, divided it, each paving a section. Next I gave the county the right of way for 103rd street, which got things moving."

Although the Voigts owned a lot of land, it was Oscar G. Lea who owned most of Leawood. His boundaries were 79th to 103rd, from State Line to three-fourths of a mile from Mission Road.

"Mr. Lea's offer to make a road through to Lenexa, which are thriving business as well as residential communities, Leawood always remains residential.

As the group of new-developing cities in the county showed increasing populations, there was a move toward official recognition.

Leawood was the first of the nine cities to be incorporated as a third class city. It took place in November, 1948. What this meant was that a city government would be formed to handle all the problems and conditions necessary.

Kroh Brothers was fundamental in this phase of the city's development. They helped fund the first police and fire departments, and also assisted in street paving and repair.

By the mid-1950's, Leawood was the leading residential district in the county, passing Mission Hills in population. Although that was because of the different cities' size, it still enabled Leawood to rank number one in Johnson County's residential listings.

Since the population had increased so rapidly, in 1959 Leawood was incorporated into second class status.

Kroh Brothers role in the city's development came to an end in the late 1960's. The area had reached almost complete capacity in housing lots, and the few remaining spots were owned by private investors.

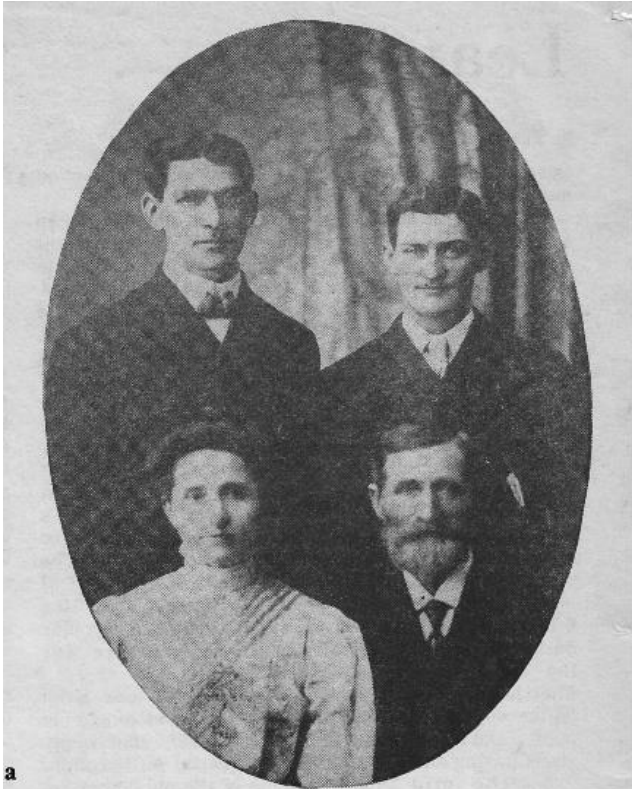
Since then, into the 1970's, Leawood has pretty well existed on its own. It has a city government that runs smoothly. The city's streets and grounds are kept in fine condition. The Leawood Park, located at 107th street and Lee Boulevard, is a popular recreational site for citizens.

Although it was Kroh Brothers development in the late 1930's that really got Leawood on the map, some of the old homes remain today. The Dubach home, where Herman Voigts' daughter now lives, dates back to the '30s. The Thompson home, on the north corner of 103rd and Lee Boulevard dates back to the late 1920's, although it was revamped in the 1940's after a fire.

The problems that faced the early suburban pioneers of Leawood have since been hammered out. Once there was no transportation except street cars, today the average family has two automobiles: once there was nothing but dirt roads, today the streets are well-paved and kept up by the streets commission.

Leawood has that distinction of being a residential area at its best. When one thinks of Johnson County, thoughts of beautiful homes and exquisite grounds center on to Leawood.

Leawood History: As Told in 1976



The Voigts family was one of the first in the Leawood area. Pictured here, from left to right are: top, Emil, Herman; bottom, Louise, father H.W. Voigts. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Ken Dubach)



The son of German immigrant parents, Herman Voigts was born in 1875 on his family's farm east of Mission Road and north of 83rd Street. He married Ella Busch in 1902. (Courtesy of Madelyn Voigts Moran)



Shown here immediately after its completion in 1923, Herman and Ella Voigts' limestone home at 103rd and State Line Road was the first structure listed on the Leawood Register of Historic Places. (Courtesy of Madelyn Voigts Moran)



Ella Adeline Busch Voigts riding sidesaddle on her horse on her father-in-law's farm near 83rd and Mission Road. (Courtesy of Madelyn Voigts Moran)