

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2022



# mission *Kansas*



## BREAKING GROUND ON PHASE I

Mohawk Park improvements set to  
include a shelter, restrooms, water  
fountains and more

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## "A PLACE WHERE FRIENDS MEET"

Reliving the good old days at  
The Snack Shack on Johnson Drive

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# WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE ADVENTURE?

As another summer comes to a close, I hope yours was full of new adventures and happy memories! In this issue of the Mission Magazine, I think you'll enjoy reading about the adventures of local business owners, an artist, and two Mission middle school students who had an out-of-this-world summer camp experience.

Earlier this year, The Snack Shack moved from their downtown Overland Park location to occupy the former Town Topic restaurant building on Johnson Drive. Owners Rayna Andrew-Tolle and Matt Andrew, along with their son Jack, are excited to welcome new customers in addition to their strong established customer base. The Snack Shack serves up classic and timeless "burger joint" vibes and menu items, but as a vegetarian I very much appreciate the inclusion of a tasty, made-in-house veggie burger option on the menu. We're pleased to welcome them to downtown Mission!

This issue will also take you on a fun visual adventure with Mission artist Ed Bartoszek. Like me, I'm betting you'll take one look at his bright and engaging pictures and say, "Hey, I've seen these before!" Inspired and motivated by his high school art teacher, Ed's airbrush paintings start with sketchbook ideas of things from the world around him. Ed much prefers the in-person interactions afforded by art shows and fairs over social media, so next time you stroll past his booth at the Plaza Art Fair make sure to say, "Hi"



## On the cover:

Mission City Council and members of the Parks, Recreation + Tree Commission broke ground on the Phase I Mohawk Park Improvements on Aug. 15.

Photo by Denise Elam.



in Hutchinson, Kansas. Each year, two Hocker Grove Middle School students are selected to participate in this week-long learning experience with other students from around the state. Anna Randel and Nova VonOntjes not only had the chance to participate in simulated space missions and learn first-aid, both also spoke of the problem-solving and leadership skills this once-in-a-lifetime experience afforded them.

In August, I had the privilege to join with Councilmembers, Parks, Recreation + Tree Commission members, and neighbors in breaking ground for Phase I improvements to Mohawk Park. Bringing restrooms, a pavilion, and a relocated parking lot, we hope these long-awaited improvements will be the first of many outdoor park upgrades in the years ahead. This month, Mission voters will consider renewing our existing dedicated Parks and Recreation sales tax – "choosing their own adventure" with respect to recreation opportunities and experiences over the next decade.

I continue to be impressed by the unique adventures, experiences, and talents of our Mission friends and neighbors, and am so glad to be able to showcase them in the Mission Magazine. As we head into fall and our final issue of the year, I hope you will take time to try something new in our great City. Try a new restaurant, visit a new business, explore a park, or take a few minutes to connect with a neighbor and remember, life is meant for great adventures. Happy reading.

*Sollie*

-Sollie Flora, Mayor

and highlight that Mission connection.

In the final feature article, two local middle schoolers share their summer space camp adventure at the Cosmosphere

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A young boy with curly hair is lying in a blue hospital bed, wearing a pink and white oxygen mask. A woman, presumably his mother, is leaning over him, wearing a blue surgical mask and a beige cardigan over a teal shirt. A male doctor in a white lab coat, blue gloves, and a blue surgical mask is standing by the bed, using a stethoscope to listen to the boy's chest. The background shows a typical hospital room with medical equipment and monitors.

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# "A PLACE WHERE FRIENDS MEET"

The Snack Shack is a family-owned and operated neighborhood burger joint located at 6018 Johnson Dr. in Mission.





# Reliving the good old days at The Snack Shack on Johnson Drive

By Denise Elam

In today's fast-paced society, where the constant barrage of media, news and algorithm updates can make anyone feel weary, it's nice to have a reminder of the older, simpler times.

And that's exactly what you find when you walk through the doors of The Snack Shack on Johnson Drive. Immediately, you're transported back to a time of all-night diners with red-and-black checkered floors, jukeboxes and classic 50s music. The smell of burgers on the grill hearkens back to the days where summer was endless, and the good times rolled.

Co-owner Rayna Andrew-Tolle said The Snack Shack, which opened on 6018 Johnson Dr. in March of 2022, retained a lot of its local diner charm from the previous business there, Town Topic. A longtime staple in downtown Mission, Town Topic closed in 2020 after nearly 30 years in business.

"It's a classic American burger joint, and it has been for its entirety in that location," Rayna said. "We were not interested in changing the look or aesthetic or feel of that burger stand because that's just iconic; we love it."

Along with the jukeboxes, the diner retained a lot of its original features, including the vintage countertops, barstools and the wall safe commonly seen with Valentine Diners.

"It was just a good time back then and so many people relive that moment when they come in," she said. "The younger folks are starting to appreciate that too. The folks that are older than me, who grew up in the 1950s era, absolutely identify with those times and now the younger kids are just as equally excited about it, and they think it's pretty cool."

Rayna and her husband, Matt, originally opened The Snack Shack on Santa Fe in Overland Park in September of 2011. There, they rented a small corner building downtown for 10 years to showcase their passion for food.

"My husband did have some restaurant experience and we always kind of joked with him that he should have a diner or a restaurant just because we all enjoyed his food so much, but it was never something we set out to do," Rayna said. "It was kind of a fated opportunity that presented itself and we just took a leap of faith and decided then was the best time as any to get started."

The couple operated the business with the help of their son, Jack, who was in high school at the time and worked during the summers and holiday breaks. In 2022, they collectively made the decision to relocate to Johnson Drive in an effort to expand into a larger dining space and kitchen, with parking.

"We have always loved the history of the location and knew it had so much potential for us to continue





the tried-and-true tradition of serving all the burger-joint classics," she said.

The family wholeheartedly agrees that Mission has been a great city to move to, with a welcoming neighborhood and a unique and quirky vibe.

"It's generational and family-friendly and we've enjoyed meeting new customers since we opened," Rayna said. "It's nice to see the neighborhood really supports the small businesses located here."

With timeless burgers, fries and ice cream, The Snack Shack prides itself on keeping it simple, true and classic.

"We're a local family business that strives to produce the best in quality, ingredients and service to all of our guests," she said. "It's a simple menu that offers timeless classics — patty melts are a hit along with all of our burgers."

The signature cherry limeade is another fan-favorite, with freshly squeezed limes topped with a dollop of sherbert for an extra dose of pucker.

The family looks forward to the next phase of their business, with hopes to add additional hours on the weekends and possibly even expand the menu to include breakfast.

"It seems to me that the residents in Mission and our fanbase are very interested in seeing some sort of a



**"We have always loved the history of the location and knew it had so much potential for us to continue the tried-and-true tradition of serving all the burger-joint classics."**

**— Rayna Andrew-Tolle, co-owner,  
The Snack Shack on Johnson Drive**

breakfast option," she said. "That's always something we've wanted to do but recognizing that it adds a tremendous chunk to our day. With primarily Matt and Jack doing the bulk of everything, we want to make sure we have the right amount of staff for breakfast."

Ultimately, The Snack Shack plans to continue to be a place where friends meet for good food and conversation. Rayna said many customers come in for a quick burger and fry combo during their lunch hour and end up running into people they know.

"Next thing you know, everyone's having a conversation and waving and carrying on and smiling as you walk out the door on to the next shop ... it's a really genuine place."

The Snack Shack is open for lunch and dinner Tuesday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays. For more information, visit [www.thesnackshackonjohnsondr.com](http://www.thesnackshackonjohnsondr.com).



Jukeboxes from the former Town Topic diner remain in Snack Shack to this day.

The Snack Shack's interior hasn't changed much in the last few decades — with the timeless jukeboxes, red-and-black checkered floors and diner barstools.





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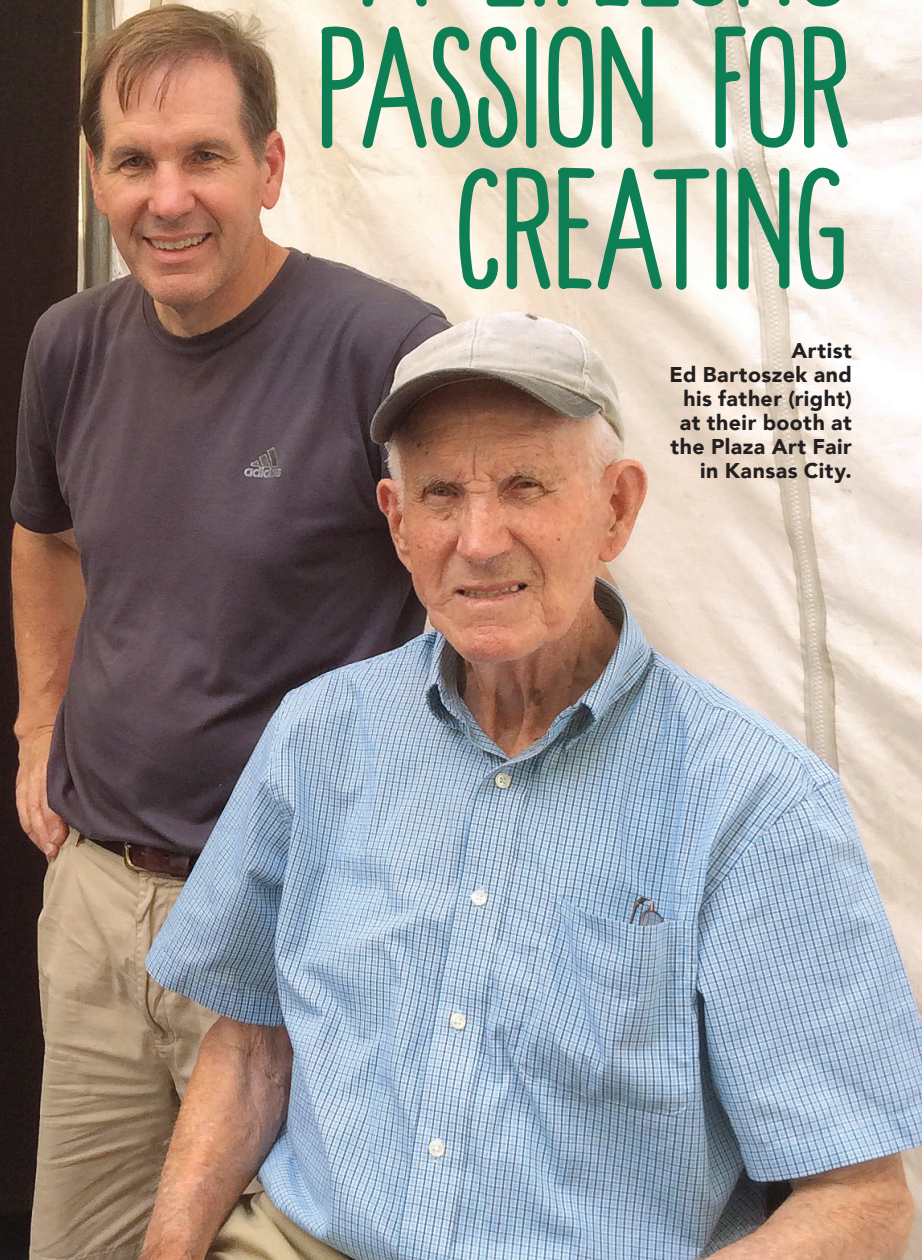
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# A LIFELONG PASSION FOR CREATING

Artist Ed Bartoszek and his father (right) at their booth at the Plaza Art Fair in Kansas City.



## Contemporary artist Ed Bartoszek uses airbrush techniques and black-line art to depict vivid scenes, landscapes

By Denise Elam

There's an old Japanese proverb that says, "Better than a thousand days of diligent study is one day with a great teacher." For Mission resident Ed Bartoszek, his semesters with Shawnee Mission North art teacher Greg Brantman were enough to inspire a lifelong passion for creating.

Bartoszek is a contemporary artist specializing in acrylic airbrush painting. He got his start in a semester's worth of ceramics under Brantman in high school. He went on to complete another course with the revered teacher, an independent study, before graduating.

"Greg Brantman was a major influence,"

he said. "He really helped me along the way to pursue it ... he's a very good man. A lot of people around here probably know him."

Bartoszek attended Kansas State University and graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts. For a while, he worked for a small architectural studio



creating architectural renderings. His experience there is reflected in his work today, which is mostly landscapes and flowers outlined in black airbrushed acrylic paint. His attention to detail and linework is evident in each painting.

After leaving the architectural studio, Bartoszek decided to pursue his art full time. Since 2000, he's worked out of a home studio to create commissioned work for others and to share at local festivals and art fairs.

He said he starts with simple sketchbook drawings inspired by the world around him.

"I'll start with a pencil drawing on a white canvas, then I'll do all my colors, my acrylic paints, then I will outline it all with a black line. I use the airbrush to do the black lines," he said. "I repeat that, study the piece, and repeat the process until I feel it's a finished product."

Bartoszek uses vivid colors to create idealized scenes. Recently, he was commissioned to create personalized art for a school in northern Kansas City. He's also completed several downtown skyline-themed pieces, some displaying iconic Kansas City landmarks like Arrowhead Stadium.

His art can take anywhere from 10 minutes to a week to complete, or longer. He doesn't put a set time on it. For the last few years, he's displayed his work at the Plaza Art Fair in Kansas City and at shows in Wichita, Prairie Village and Lenexa. He's had his art in a gallery before, but prefers the personable feel of the live shows.



Bartoszek's depiction of Arrowhead Stadium, sold on a metal or canvas print.



Bartoszek's painting of The Kansas City skyline on a 36-inch by 36-inch canvas.



"It's an opportunity to meet people," he said. "It's more personal. I'm right there with the people."

The Plaza Art Fair, which encompasses nine city blocks and welcomes crowds of over 250,000 each year, is notorious for its selection standards. Bartoszek said admission is granted only after review by a panel of judges. Around 1,300 artists apply each year and an average of 240 actually make the cut.

"I've been lucky to get in," he said.

"It's very hard. To be accepted, it's a big deal."

Bartoszek likes working in Mission because of its small-town atmosphere.

"I've always liked Mission," he said. "I like the downtown strip with all the small shops and businesses."

When asked what keeps him motivated, Bartoszek said he always thinks back to his days in Brantman's class at Shawnee Mission North.

"He's always been real passionate about his art, and he keeps going," Bartoszek said. "He always has the drive (to create). Art's really important to him

... he instilled that. He was there a long time, and I think he influenced a lot of artists."

Bartoszek said Brantman's impact is obvious today — the Patrons Gallery at Shawnee Mission North was renamed for him in 2012 and is now known as the Greg Brantman's Patrons Gallery.

Bartoszek takes the values he learned from Brantman with him where he goes. This fall, his artwork will once again be on display at the Plaza Art Fair and

he'll be at the Autumn & Art at Bradley Fair in Wichita. He's looking forward to showcasing new paintings and meeting new people who are just as passionate about art as he is.

Not much interested in keeping up with social media, Bartoszek can be found at [www.edbartoszek.com](http://www.edbartoszek.com).



Bartoszek especially enjoys creating landscapes and floral paintings with bright, bold colors outlined in airbrushed black acrylic paint.



Bartoszek said pieces like these can take anywhere from 10 minutes to a week to create.



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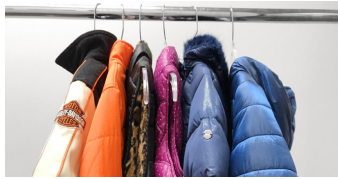
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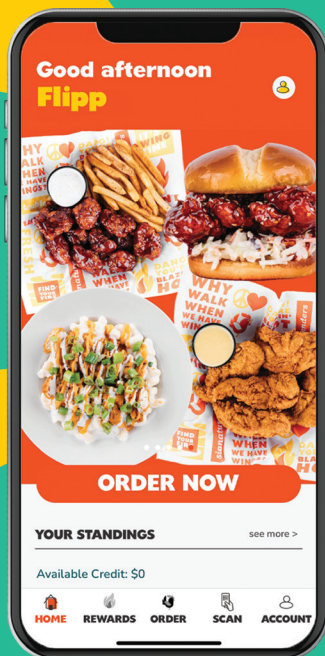
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# Breaking Ground on Mohawk Park improvements

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## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

**Community Development,  
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First Wednesday every month 6:30 p.m.  
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## CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

Third Wednesday every month 7 p.m.

## COUNCIL WORK SESSIONS

Fourth Wednesday every month 7 p.m.

All meetings are open to the public.  
Visit the calendar at [www.missionks.org](http://www.missionks.org)  
for a complete listing of meetings.

## GOVERNING BODY

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Sollie Flora 913.676.8351

### WARD I COUNCIL MEMBERS

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Kristin Inman 816.510.7698

### WARD IV COUNCIL MEMBERS

Ken Davis 913.669.7095  
Ben Chociey 816.332.7985

On Aug. 15, the City Council, members of the Parks, Recreation + Tree Commission and about 75 members of the public broke ground on the Phase I Mohawk Park Improvements.

Mohawk Park, once the site of Mohawk Elementary School, was purchased by the City in the early 2000s in an effort to provide greenspace south of Shawnee Mission Parkway. Except for demolition of the former school building, the 7.8-acre park has remained relatively unchanged for more than 20 years.

The Mohawk improvements are the first project to move to construction after two years of community-oriented park-planning processes. The Phase I improvements include a shelter (with an integrated storage facility) and restrooms along with a new sidewalk connection from the proposed facilities to the existing trails. Water fountains, trash and recycling receptacles, benches and additional site furnishings will also be installed. Phase I also includes demolition of the existing parking lot and construction of a new parking lot along 67th Street. Phase II will include a new inclusive playground feature, a half-court basketball/pickleball court and expansion of the trail around the entire park perimeter.

Construction is anticipated to begin mid-September and be completed in March 2023. For more information on this project, and plans for Mission's other parks, please visit [www.missionks.org/chooseyour-adventure](http://www.missionks.org/chooseyour-adventure).







# THANKS FOR A SUMMER FULL OF GREAT MISSION MEMORIES







Every October, as a part of the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) Fire Prevention Week™, Consolidated Fire District No. 2 (CFD2) visits local schools to discuss fire safety with the kindergarten, first and second grade children. In 2022, Fire Prevention Week™ will be Oct. 9-15 and the theme is "Fire Won't Wait. Plan Your Escape.™" Here are some tips from our local firefighters to help keep you and your family safe:

### Exit Drills In The Home (EDITH)

Performing Exit Drills in the Home (EDITH) can help you and your family prepare for an emergency. Most home fires occur at night when people are the least prepared. If you and your family have not practiced how to escape during an emergency, home fires can become a disaster.

### How to Design Your Fire Escape Plan

To design your own fire escape plan, sketch the floor plan of your home on a piece of paper. Your plan should include all doors, windows and other areas from which you could escape from each room in your home. Draw arrows to indicate the normal exits which would be your primary escape route. With an alternate color, draw arrows to indicate a secondary exit from each room in the home. Make sure to include your meeting place.

### Practice, Practice, Practice

Once you have designed your plan, test it to make sure it works. Make sure to run through the drills on a regular basis. Regular exit drills in the home will allow you to test the plan and make adjustments as needed. When practicing your exit drills in the home, remember to use alternate escape routes as well. Make sure that your children know what to do during the drill – this will help them know what to do in a true emergency.

### 911

Everyone should know the location of telephones in the home and where to find a telephone outside of the home (a neighbor's house). It is very important that children also know the 911 phone number to report a fire or other emergencies to authorities.

### Special Needs

People with physical or mental handicaps face greater risks during a fire emergency. People with special needs should sleep in a bedroom near someone who can help in the event of an emergency. A physically handicapped person may require a sleeping area on the ground floor. Design a special escape plan based on the abilities of the person.

If you have questions regarding Fire Prevention Week™ or fire safety in general, please contact CFD2 Fire Marshal Todd Kerkhoff at 913.207.0122.





## Want to keep up with development projects in Mission?



The Community Development Department maintains information and updates on the City's website on private developments that are under construction or are in the planning phase in Mission.

Residents can learn more about the project details, the development process and opportunities for public comment. Information and the calendar for regularly scheduled Planning Commission and City Council meetings may also be found on the site. Visit [missionks.org](http://missionks.org) and search "current projects."



## Remodeling for Accessible Homes



Homeowners in Mission have a new tool to help them with ideas to renovate their homes as they get older or their abilities change. "Remodeling for Accessible Homes" produced by the First Suburbs Coalition and KC Communities For All Ages, provides ideas, sample floorplans, cost estimates and other resources for those who want to update their houses to better serve their changing needs. Additionally, a video is available to further help homeowners learn about accessible home renovation ideas.

Mission became recognized as a Gold-Level city within the Mid-America Regional Council's Communities for All Ages Recognition Program by demonstrating through policy and action a desire to be a welcoming community for all ages.



## Fall Yard Waste Tips

As the leaves begin to fall you may be wondering what to do with your yard waste. Mission residents have several options for fall yard clean-up, such as mulching the leaves, composting the leaves, or disposing of them through the weekly trash pickup.

If you decide to bag your leaves, please ensure the yard waste is in biodegradable paper bags or in containers clearly marked "Yard Waste." Plastic bags will not be accepted for yard waste and set-outs should not weigh more than 40 pounds. Each household is allowed 10 bags or bundles of yard waste set-outs per week.

If you choose to compost your leaves, make sure to regularly turn the compost pile to prevent it from becoming a nuisance to neighboring properties. While leaves blowing from one property to another is not a violation of City Code, please consider doing your part to keep our neighborhoods looking clean and tidy this fall!



Mission is a participating city in the Johnson County, Kansas Government "Contain The Rain" cost-share program.

Funding is still available and applicants may receive up to 50% reimbursement of eligible expenses for following these best-management practices. This includes: rain barrels, native trees/plants and rain garden installations, and more. Find further program and application details on the City's website at [missionks.org](http://missionks.org) by searching "contain the rain."

Want to get involved with your community? There are many ways you, your family, or your co-workers can give back and be involved in making a difference.

Do you want to deliver copies of the Mission Magazine to local businesses? How about adopting a park or street for periodic clean-up and beautification? Want to volunteer at a special event? Or how about seasonal assistance with raking leaves or shoveling snow for residents who might need a helping hand?

For more information, or to have your name put on the City's volunteer list, please visit the website at [missionks.org](http://missionks.org) and search "volunteer."

## Volunteer opportunities





## Rock Creek Channel Emergency Repairs – Update



This summer, a section of the Rock Creek Channel just west of the Mission Market site collapsed and required emergency repairs.

InfraStructure Solutions worked to install large interlocking blocks and to provide slope and bank stabilization without completely disrupting the operations of the Mission Market. The City thanks Market patrons, downtown businesses and visitors to the downtown core for their patience during completion of these important repairs.



## PAVING THE WAY

The paving planned as part of the 2022 Street Preservation Project is winding down for the season. This year's projects included stormwater improvements or repairs; curb and gutter and driveway approach removal and replacement; and full-depth pavement reconstruction in the following areas:

62nd Street, Woodson to Lamar Avenue  
Reeds Road, 49th Street to 50th Street  
Outlook Street, 49th Street to 51st Street

We learned some valuable lessons along the way that will help improve the efficiency and budget-estimating on future projects. Although design may be wrapping up, design is underway for the 2023 projects. This important investment in neighborhoods is funded in part by the dedicated revenue raised by the 3/8-cent street sales tax renewed by voters in 2021. For the latest information about Mission's ongoing street project, please visit [missionks.org/streets](https://missionks.org/streets).







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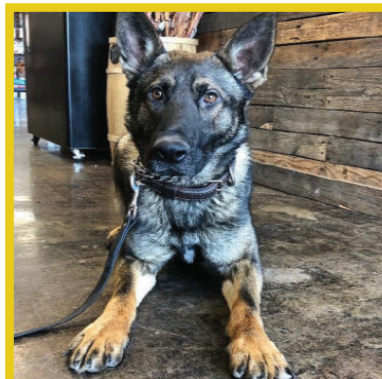
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## It's never too early to think about supporting Mission's annual Family Adoption Program.

To learn more about this partnership with our local schools, how to donate, or how to volunteer, please contact Penn Almoney at [palmoney@missionks.org](mailto:palmoney@missionks.org) or 913.722.8210



With cooler fall temps on the way, and daylight hours becoming shorter, please remember that wearing light-colored or reflective clothing while walking, running or cycling will increase your visibility for drivers—especially when walking with dogs or children at dusk or after dark. Stay safe in on our neighborhood streets.



## Don't miss out on these exciting fall events hosted by Mission Parks + Recreation

10/15 Howl-O-Ween – Andersen Park  
10/28 Spooky Walk – Streamway Park

[https://www.missionks.org/  
parks-recreation/special-events/](https://www.missionks.org/parks-recreation/special-events/)





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For more information or to volunteer, contact Rhonda Synovec at 913.563.5203

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In 2022, Mission voters will have the opportunity to participate in federal, state, countywide and local elections. Make sure you are registered to ensure your vote is counted in every election.

Visit [jocoelection.org/registration](https://jocoelection.org/registration) for details and to check your registration status. If you've moved, take a few minutes to update your address, and remember to encourage anyone 18 and older in your household to get registered.



**Thanks for a great season!**

See you next year!  
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Nova VonOntjes and Anna Randel pose as astronauts with the Mars Academy camp at the Cosmosphere in Hutchinson, Kansas. Photos by: Cosmosphere, Hutchinson, KS, cosmo.org.

# Learning to Survive on Mars

## Two Mission students experience out-of-this-world summer camp

by Denise Elam

Since the 1960s, humans have asked the question — is there life on Mars? And more importantly, can we survive there?

Two Hocker Grove Middle School students recently embarked on their own mission to find out.

This summer, Anna Randel and Nova VonOntjes attended the Mars Academy space camp at the Cosmosphere, a space museum and STEM education center in Hutchinson, Kansas. At camp, they learned how to overcome the challenges of gathering life-sustaining resources while operating robotics and geocaching. The camp lasted five days and was open to students entering seventh and eighth grades. Anna and Nova attended from June 22-26, sharing a dorm together for four nights.

"The camp taught me a lot more about space and science, and also leadership and problem-solving," Anna said.

During their adventures and studies, the girls completed a mission to orbit the Earth using the Cosmosphere's Mission Control Center and Astralis capsule-

based simulator, which is modeled after NASA's Orion capsule. They also trained like a real astronaut in the 4-G Centrifuge, the Multi-Axis Trainer (MAT) and a Russian Soyuz Spacecraft Simulator. Using teamwork and communication skills, they worked with other students to collect crates using Sphero RVR rovers and to complete engineering design challenges to build robot arms and a Mars Lander.

"My favorite part was when we did a simulated earth orbit," Anna said. "We were separated into groups and everyone had a position like a pilot or a commander. I was a pilot. We had a Mission Control Room and a capsule simulator. It was realistic and fun. We also learned to purify our water, used VR headsets, and completed an obstacle course."

Camp activities took place all day, from sunrise to sunset.

"We did a first-aid training and split up into groups of four people," Nova said. "They would give one person in the group a card and they would have to act out their symptoms and we would have

to treat it. It was fun."

The learning, adventure and fun was thanks in part to the generosity of the Frank Mohensky Scholarship Fund. Each year since 1999, two Hocker Grove Middle School students have been selected to attend summer camp at the Cosmosphere in honor of former Hocker Grove Middle School science teacher Frank Mohensky, who taught at Hocker Grove from 1987 until his retirement in 1995. Mohensky left much of himself behind at the school after his death, and had a profound impact on many students and colleagues, including Dave Long, who was instrumental in selecting the scholarship recipients through 2004.

His profound interest in the stars and planets left Mohensky in awe, and he wanted to share that delight with his students. Because he did so much to promote a love of science, and to keep his memory alive, the school created the Frank Mohensky Scholarship Fund to honor him and Long.

To enter the scholarship competition, students were required to write an essay





Camp attendees explore exhibits on display at the Cosmosphere museum in Hutchinson, Kansas. Photo by: Cosmosphere, Hutchinson, KS, [cosmo.org](http://cosmo.org).

detailing why they wanted to go to space camp, and include two references. Anna listed her soccer coach and math teacher as references, and Nova asked her Girl Scout astronomy club leader and her English teacher.

Anna said she wanted to learn all about space when she was younger, so the camp sounded like an amazing opportunity.

"I went to a Cosmosphere lock-in with my mom when I was a Girl Scout,"

she said. "I loved it and got to see the simulators they use in the space camps. It's one of the main reasons I wanted to apply for this camp."

Overall, the camp was an amazing experience for both girls — who just so happen to have been friends since childhood. Attending together helped ease any nerves and made the experience even more memorable.

"They've been best friends since kindergarten," said Julie Sparrow, Nova's

mom. "Which made it really cool. They're both really shy, so I don't know that either of them would have gone without each other."

Anna said she learned a lot about space and science. She hopes to go back next year to attend an eight and ninth-grade camp.

"(That camp) is focused on a mission to the moon," she said.

Her mom, Amber, noted that the camp challenged Anna to be independent and find success on her own.

"It wasn't a walk in the park," Amber admitted. "They were challenged every day and relied on each other to do their part to complete the tasks. She excels at math and science, and this was an opportunity for her to use those skills in a fun way. She met friends from different parts of Kansas and even a few from other states. I think this experience will help her feel more confident tackling future challenges."

Both moms recommend the camp to others who have an interest in science and the stars.

"One of her favorite parts about the camp was how realistic it was," Amber said. "They really got to experience what it would be like to work for NASA, in the control room and on a space flight."

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# COSMOSPHERE



The Mars Academy camp at the Cosmosphere is an overnight camp for students entering seventh and eighth grades. Pictured: Anna and Nova in the upper right corner of the last row. Photo by: Cosmosphere, Hutchinson, KS, [cosmo.org](http://cosmo.org).





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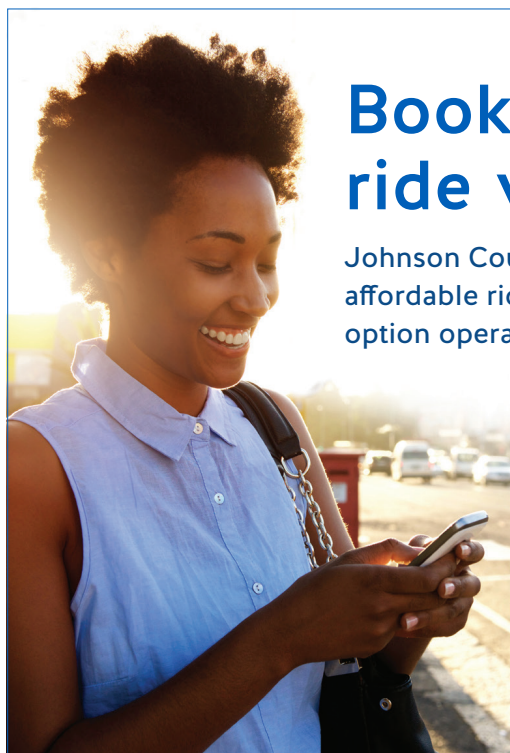
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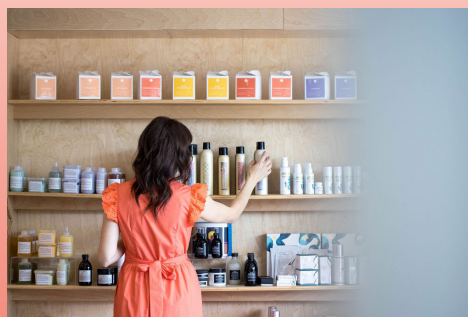
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# BROADENING THE INTEREST OF SOCIAL, BUSINESS AND CIVIC AFFAIRS OF THE COMMUNITY

## LOOKING BACK ON THE SOROPTIMIST CLUB OF SHAWNEE MISSION

by Kate Deacon

In the early 1950s, the Soroptimist Club of Shawnee Mission not only found a home in Mission, Kansas — they built one.

Chartered in Mission in 1947, the Shawnee Mission Soroptimist Club's largest accomplishment was to fund, construct and operate the Johnson County Community Center, formerly located at 6219 Martway St. in Mission, in 1954. A team of determined women raised the funds through a Penny Campaign, garden

tours, bake sales, fashion shows and tea parties, with hopes to build the area community center for all to enjoy.

According to club records, Soroptimist clubs were begun in the United States and England for professional working women to "foster the ideal of service as the basis of all worthy enterprises and to increase the efficiency of its members in the pursuit of their occupations by broadening their interest in the social, business, and civic



**Community Center Groundbreaking, 1953.** Edith Mills and Dorothy Breyfogle break ground for the Community Center while fellow Soroptimist Club members stand by. Photo Courtesy Johnson County Museum.



**Soroptimist Club "Patio and Western Shows" featured the latest fashions from Paul's Western Wear and frequently welcomed pets on the runway as well! April 23, 1959.** Courtesy Johnson County Museum.





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NEJC Chamber



affairs of the community."

Throughout the years, the group hosted many social events, including the ever-popular fashion shows featuring the latest styles from area retailers. Club members also enjoyed countless dances, holiday parties, and teas while keeping a special interest in community service, especially focusing on children in the community. From an active Polio vaccination campaign to sponsoring scholarships for youth, the group remained committed to community service and outreach in Mission and beyond. The club was active in social activities and charitable work in the greater Johnson County area until it disbanded in 2000 due to declining membership.

Women of  
Johnson County  
aimed to raise  
1,000,000  
pennies to fund  
the area's first  
community  
center, 1953.  
Photo Courtesy  
Johnson  
County  
Museum.

Dressed to the nines,  
Soroptimist Club  
members gathered  
for music and high  
tea. About 200 people  
gathered for the  
Soroptimist Concert Tea  
and Garden Party at the  
Old Mission Methodist  
Church in Fairway in  
1950. Courtesy Johnson  
County Museum.



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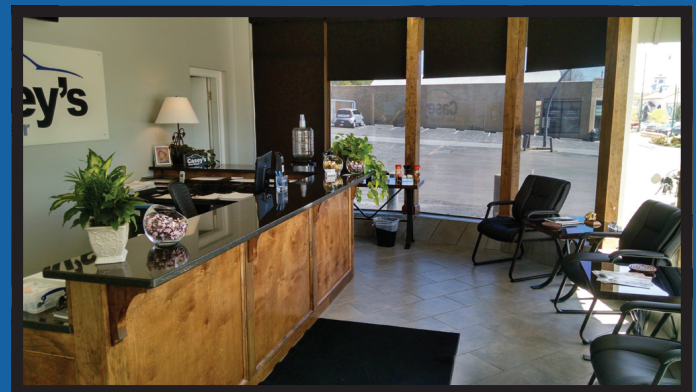
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