

RED OAK HILLS

July 2025 Newsletter

Betty Raes Ice Cream

The well-known ice creamery has announced plans to open a new store in Shawnee later this summer. Not long after debuting in one Johnson County city, ice cream shop Betty Rae's has already set its sights on another. Betty Rae's is coming to 22350 W. 66th St. The shop will open in a space at the Monticello Center, near Papa John's Pizza and Tanner's Bar & Grill. Previously, 9Round Fitness occupied that space. Owner Matt Shatto said the new store will likely open in early July.



Cleaning Hack

Use an old pillowcase to clean the blades of your ceiling fan. Slip the pillowcase completely over the fan blade and gather the dust as you remove it. Take outside and shake out the dust.



Stars and Stripes Picnic

The Stars and Stripes Picnic at the National WWI Museum and Memorial is Kansas City's official Independence Day celebration! Bring your friends and family to grab a bite to eat, shop from local vendors, listen to live music and enjoy the largest fireworks display in the city. Grounds open at 3 p.m. FREE to the public – rain or shine! Visit <https://www.theworldwar.org/stars-and-stripes-picnic> for more information.



Shawnee Park and Rec app.

You can download it for free from the Google Play Store or the Apple App Store. You can find activities and events for adults and kids, purchase memberships and passes and make reservations. Check it out



Jaycee Park

Explorers, pack your bags, the new Jaycee Park playground is open and ready for adventure! Climb among the treetops, camp out in the tent, or cross the tree stump bridge, this treehouse-themed playground is full of new features and ready for you to explore!

Visit Jaycee Park at 6815 Quivira Road.



Franklin General Store opens in Shawnee *with a focus on clean, local goods*

Brooke and Dave Franklin's mission of providing a "one-stop shop" for locally-made goods has finally come to fruition. While the husband-and-wife duo have been hard at work renovating and stocking the shelves of their new Shawnee store, they said the surrounding community has been curious about when they might be able to shop there. Franklin General Store opened at 11405 Johnson Drive. The store opened at the southwest corner of Johnson Drive and Flint Street in downtown Shawnee. On the shelves at Franklin General Store, customers are likely to find items from Kansas and Missouri-based vendors that they've seen around at farmers markets. In total, the store offers items from roughly 40 vendors. For just a few examples, the store offers juices from Zen Donkey Farms and Ruby Jean's Juicery, pints of ice cream from Flint Hills Pints, coffee from Hermetheus Coffee, pasta from Zero Zero Handmade Pasta, and cheese from Green Dirt Farm. In addition to food, the store offers a few non-edible items like puzzles from Kansas City Puzzle Company and soap from Clean Hands Organics. Even if customers aren't shopping, they can also stop in and grab coffee, tea, kombucha or baked goods from a rotating selection. Later on, the Franklins also plan to add grab-and-go sandwiches. Previous occupants include a law office, a chiropractic office, and the Red Thread gift shop. Franklin General Store's regular hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. Visit <https://johnsoncountypost.com/2025/06/09/franklin-general-store-shawnee-261370/> for more information.



Wish-Bone Salad Dressing's Beginnings in Kansas City

Wish-Bone Italian Dressing was originally created as the house dressing of the Wishbone restaurant in Kansas City, Missouri. In 1948, Phillip Sollomi debuted an Italian vinaigrette at his Kansas City fried chicken restaurant, the Wishbone. An immediate hit, the salad dressing formed the foundation for an empire: You can find that iconic Wish-Bone bottle in nearly every supermarket in the country. Decades after Sollomi left the company, his family has returned to the city to reclaim their legacy.

Before the supermarket aisles, before the ad campaigns, and before the iconic curvy bottle, there was just the Wishbone restaurant in Kansas City. A classy establishment located at 4455 Main Street, the Wishbone served family-style bowls of fried chicken along with prime rib, lobster tails, brook trout, corn fritters, mashed potatoes and gravy – and, of course, salad.

"I used to go to the Wishbone when I was very, very young," says Jasper Mirabile Jr., owner of Jasper's Italian Restaurant in Kansas City. "That's where I fell in love with fried chicken."

Opened in 1948 and located at 4455 Main Street in Kansas City, the old Victorian mansion overlooking the Country Club Plaza became

equally as famous over the decades for its antique Italian chandelier, neo-Roman style statues, elegant fireplaces, solarium and fine china. The iconic restaurant is gone now. But if you walk into almost any American grocery store, you'll see its name everywhere, even if you didn't realize it – immortalized in the form of Wish-Bone salad dressing.

Something important to know about Phillip Sollomi Sr. is that he liked to stay busy. Originally born in Cleveland, Ohio, he found his way to Leavenworth, Kansas, after being drafted to serve in World War II. "He was a veterinarian, believe it or not," says Phil Sollomi Jr. "And during the war, somehow he also opened a little restaurant with my grandmother called Brooklyn Spaghetti House." Lena Sollomi, an Italian immigrant from Sicily, had previously operated a café in Ohio. After the war ended, the mother-and-son duo moved to Kansas City, Missouri, to start another joint venture: the Wishbone restaurant, in the space of a former cocktail lounge.



The Wishbone was reportedly a hit right off the bat. But even the popularity of Sollomi's fried chicken was eclipsed when the restaurant debuted a zesty Italian vinaigrette based on a recipe that Lena Sollomi brought over from Sicily.

Patrons started bringing in their own bottles to be filled with the dressing so they could take it home. In 1950, Sollomi began mixing the dressing in a 50-gallon vat and bottling it himself in a converted carriage house behind the restaurant.

By 1952, the salad dressing had become more important to Sollomi than the fried chicken and other food. He sold the Wishbone restaurant to Joe and Dora Adelman – who kept it up for the next two decades – and instead operated Wish-Bone Salad Dressing Co. on Harrison Street.

"When Wish-Bone was first invented, it was sort of a signature salad dressing and people loved to have the bottled form that was the same as they could buy in the restaurant," says Ken Albala, a food historian at the University of the Pacific. "That's a phenomenon that is uniquely American – that a restaurant could market a product that they have so broadly and make much more money at that than running a restaurant." Food companies and restaurateurs had begun commercially bottling and selling salad dressings in the 1910s and 20s. But Wish-Bone is widely thought of as the second mass-produced Italian dressing, right after Ken's Steak House in 1941. "It was like almost an overnight success. It was very, very popular and it started becoming almost national in scope, certainly regional," says Phil Sollomi Jr. "But some of the big boys in the salad dressing company didn't like it. And they were out to kind of squash him."



Phillip Sollomi III and Phillip Sollomi Jr. with Wish-Bone salad dressing created by Phillip Sollomi Sr. in 1948

When Sollomi Sr. would consult business partners and family about how to take on the competition, everyone told him the same thing: "Lower the price." "And my dad, after hearing all this, he looks at 'em and goes, 'Nope, we're gonna raise the price,'" says Sollomi Jr. "'We have a great product. We're not gonna sell it for nothing and people are gonna realize it's a great product worth paying for.'" While other brands sold bottles of salad dressing for 29 cents, Sollomi Sr. ended up charging 39 cents. "It was all natural," recalls Sollomi Jr. "It was the finest ingredients."

About Us

Neighbors, Jana Bonham and Annissa Freeman, work together to create this monthly newsletter for our Red Oak Hills community members. Why? We love our community and want us all to stay connected not just for fun and sharing but also for help. The newsletter is to share news, events and fun things with one another. This newsletter will only be in electronic format however feel free to print and share with friends and family.